

Real World Strategies

towards Education for All

by 2015

A STORY OF CIVIL SOCIETY ADVOCACY

A Project Documentation & Assessment Report

Commissioned by the Global Campaign for Education, 2010

Authors

The report was researched and written by Kate Moriarty, with regional case studies researched and written by Barbara Fortunato (Asia and Pacific), Omar Ousman Jobe (Africa) and Ilich Leon Ortiz Wilches (Latin America and the Caribbean). The Colombian case study was researched and written by Yenny Carolina Ramirez.

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Foreword

The Global Campaign for Education welcomes the opportunity to share this documentation and assessment report on the Real World Strategies II project. Over the past five years, GCE has collaborated with our regional network members in Africa, Asia and Latin America to successfully carry out this project, providing strong, flexible support for the work of national education coalitions. We invite you to explore the analysis of RWS II achievements and challenges in Part 1, and to read and learn from the 12 case studies in Part 2. The final part of the report succinctly summarises recommendations for national coalitions, regional networks and the GCE Secretariat and Board.

RWS II has provided crucial support to national education coalitions who advocate for the right to education in local, national, regional and global spaces. National coalitions and regional networks have used the RWS II funding provided by the Government of the Netherlands to take diverse and creative action on education: reaching out to involve excluded children, youth and adults directly in campaigning; engaging with national election and budget processes; and taking the bold new step of using legal action to challenge violations of the right to education. Through RWS II, coalitions have strengthened their abilities to conduct robust research work, such as the Education Watch publications, providing persuasive evidence to governments to show them the real state of education and pressing for the changes in policy, practice and budget allocations that will make a difference to the lives of girls, boys, women and men in their country.

The evidence gathered for this report points to the overall conclusion that RWS II has been a success. The report does not shy away from the flaws and challenges the project experienced, but presents these openly for learning. The case studies and analysis presented on the following pages bring to light “a multitude of achievements, some big, some small” and they point to the urgent need to sustain the gains made, not just in coalitions’ own capacities, but in the real world. Coalitions do not exist for their own sake, but to make positive change for fellow citizens, by advocating for education for all, a right that faces even greater threat in the current climate of austerity. Education coalitions can and do make a difference. But they cannot do this without resources. Thus, ongoing donor support is imperative.

This report highlights how, in the lead author’s words, “*projects such as RWS II are the foundations for building a strong, democratic global movement of activists, who together will be able to demand the change that is needed to achieve EFA*”. With less than five years to 2015, we need to pursue the EFA agenda agreed in Dakar with renewed determination. Let us take inspiration from the learning in this report, and reaffirm our belief that, despite the complexities and challenges of the real world, civil society, governments and donors can together transform society so that everyone benefits from education.

Kailash Satyarthi
 President, Global Campaign for Education

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India/NVE



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Belem/Tarvit/Ministam



Philippines/E-Net



Fábio Possesborn/Agência Brasil



India/NCE

Acronyms and abbreviations used in this report

- A&E – Accreditation and Equivalency
- ABI – Alternative Budget Initiative
- ACHR – American Convention on Human Rights
- ALE – Adult Learning and Education
- ALS – Alternative Learning Systems
- ANCEFA – Africa Network Campaign on Education for All
- ASEAN – The Association of Southeast Asian Nations
- ASPBAE – Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (formerly Asia South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education)
- AU – African Union
- BALS – Bureau of Alternative Learning Systems
- BBA – Bachpan Bachao Andolan (save the children movement), India
- BCRE – Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education
- BTVET – Business Technical and Vocational Training
- CAQi – Initial Cost of Quality Education, Brazil
- CBOs – Community-Based Organisations
- CEAAL – Council of Adult Education in Latin America
- CED – Coalition for Educational Development, Sri Lanka
- CEF – Commonwealth Education Fund
- CEJIL – The Centre for Justice and International Rights
- CLADE – Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education
- CNTE – National Federation of Education Workers of Brazil
- CONEB – National Conference on Basic Education
- CONAE – National Conference on Education
- CONFINTEA – International Conference on Adult Education
- COSYDEP – Coalition des Organisations en Synergie pour la Défense de l'Éducation Publique
- CSCQBE – Civil Society Coalition for Quality Basic Education, Malawi
- CSEF – Civil Society Education Fund
- CSO – Civil Society Organisations
- DP – Development Partners
- Ed Watch – Education Watch
- ECCD – Early Childhood Care and Development
- ECCE – Early Childhood Care and Education
- ECD – Early Childhood Development
- ECDG – Education Donor Coordination Group
- ECOWAS – The Economic Community Of West African States
- ECOZI – Education Coalition of Zimbabwe
- EFA – Education for All
- EFA Net – Education for All Campaign Network
- EI – Education International
- E-Net – Civil Society Network for Education Reforms, Philippines
- ESCR – Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights
- ESWG – Education Sub-sector Working Group
- EYC – Elimu Yetu Coalition, Kenya
- FAWE – Forum for African Women Educationalists
- FBOs – Faith-Based Organisations
- FECODE – Federación Colombiana de Educadores
- FENU – Forum for Education NGOs of Uganda
- FGD – Focus Group Discussion



Limbani Nspato/ahamessburg/Goal



Zambia



Philippine/Raquel Casillo

- FISC – International Civil Society Forum (at CONFINTEA VI)
 FTI – Fast Track Initiative
 FUNDEB – Basic Education Maintenance and Development Fund, Brazil
 GAW – GCE Global Action Week
 GCE – Global Campaign for Education
 GMR – Global Monitoring Report
 ICAE – International Council for Adult Education
 ICESCR – International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
 IDS – Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex
 INGOs – International Non Governmental Organisations
 JTWG – Joint Technical Working Group
 KESSP – Kenya Education Sector Support Programme
 MDA – Mid-Decade Assessment (EFA)
 MDGs – Millennium Development Goals
 MDGS – Malawi Growth and Development Strategy
 MoEYS – Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports
 NCE – National Coalition for Education, India
 NASCECZ – National Civil Society Education Coalition of Zimbabwe
 NEP – NGO Education Partnership, Cambodia
 NEPAD – New Partnership for Africa’s Development
 NGOs – Non Governmental Organisations
 ODA – Official Development Assistance
 OSISA – Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa
 OSY – out-of-school youth
 PASEC – Programme of Support to Education systems in French-speaking countries
 PCE – Pakistan Coalition for Education
 PEAN – Papua New Guinea Education Advocacy Network
 PETs – Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys
 PINASAMA – Pinagsamang Samahan ng Magulang Youth Organisation, The Philippines
 PROPAG – Pro-Poor Advocacy Group
 PRSP – Poverty Reduction Strategy
 PTA – Parent Teacher Association
 QEI – Quality Enhancement Initiative
 REPEM – Red de Educacion Popular de Mujeres
 RTE – Right to Education
 RWS – Real World Strategies
 SAARC – South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
 SADC – Southern African Development Community
 SEAMEO – South East Asian Ministers of Education Organization
 SMC – School Management Committees
 SWAP – Sector-Wide Approach
 TEN/MET – Tanzania Education Network/Mtandao wa Elimu
 TLM – Teaching and Learning Materials
 TSG – Technical Support Groups
 UNDIME – National Union of Municipal Education Leaders, Brazil
 UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
 UPA – United Progressive Alliance
 UPE – Universal Primary Education
 VCEFA – Vietnam Coalition for Education for All
 VSO – Voluntary Services Overseas

Executive Summary

The participation of civil society is a key part of democratic societies; ordinary people need opportunities and spaces to hold their governments to account. The *Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All Meeting our Collective Commitments* (2000) recognised this and included the participation of civil society as a key strategy to track progress to EFA and to demand change. The *Real World Strategies – Towards EFA 2015* project set out to honour this principle, aiming to support national education coalitions in the global south to develop strategic advocacy agendas and increase their capacity to hold governments to account on progress to EFA. Funded by the Government of the Netherlands and coordinated by the Global Campaign for Education the project, which ran from 2006-2010, provided support to a total of 52 coalitions.

This report provides an insight into the implementation and achievements of the project at national, regional and the global level, highlighting some of the shared lessons, with recommendations for future advocacy on EFA.

At the outset of the second phase of *Real World Strategies Project* (RWS II) the ability of civil society to hold governments to account in many countries in the global south was still limited with many coalitions at a critical, still fragile, stage of their development. At the same time the challenges towards achieving the six EFA goals were great, with many countries still off way off track from the 2015 deadline.

Managed and implemented through GCE's regional partners – the Africa Network Campaign on Education for All (ANCEFA), Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) and *Campaña Latinoamericana por el Derecho a la Educación* (CLADE) – the project has increased advocacy directed at national governments and regional bodies in relation to EFA. Underpinned by a belief that change on EFA needs to be located at the national level, close to where the denial of the right to education is occurring, the project sought to

develop and strengthen the voice and capacity of southern activists.

In a context of limited internal capacity and significant external challenges RWS II has led to important changes in the ability of civil society education coalitions in the global south to influence change in their national contexts. It has also resulted in some valuable changes in policy and opened spaces for increased dialogue between civil society and government on EFA.

RWS II supported the establishment of new coalitions and contributed to the development of advocacy capacity of the new and existing coalitions. The increased ability of coalitions to plan and act for change on EFA is evidenced in both output and outcomes supported through the project. Sustained pressure on all arms of government – the executive, legislative and judiciary – has been key to influencing positive outcomes such as increased budget allocations to education and new policies and legal changes to support the right to education. The building of constructive relationships with politicians and civil servants, another widely embraced strategy, has resulted in the establishment of policy dialogue on EFA and suggests more positive changes on EFA policy are likely to follow. The pioneering use of the human rights frameworks and the legal system, show that taking new and innovative approaches can provide a useful strategy for achieving the EFA goals and upholding the right to education.

The report provides an insight into the project through 12 campaign case studies made possible by RWS II. These examine the work of 11 national coalitions in Kenya, Malawi, Tanzania and Uganda; Cambodia, India, the Philippines and Sri Lanka; Brazil, Colombia and Guatemala. A twelfth case study details the case on discrimination taken to the Inter-American Human Rights Commission by CLADE.

The growing strength of the regional networks, an unanticipated yet important contribution of RWS II, is also examined in

the report. Through RWS II the regional networks have grown in institutional strength and capacity, with increasing advocacy interventions. CLADE has shown the most significant changes over the course of RWS II, developing from a small organisation to a regional hub of advocacy activity on EFA. Each region has chosen slightly differing models in implementing RWS II and providing capacity development for the national coalitions.

The shift of power away from the global centre in relation to day-to-day implementation of the project is evident with the role of the GCE Secretariat and board largely administrative. Limited central engagement left gaps in knowledge management and in fostering relationships between countries in different regions.

In its totality, the evidence collected for this report points clearly to RWS II being a worthwhile experience for those who took part. It highlights a multitude of achievements, some big, some small, that lead to the conclusion that RWS II has been a success, however, there is scope for more effective policy and practice at all levels. RWS II has increased advocacy on a global scale (i.e. in multiple countries across the globe), however, the pace of change is different in each country and across regions – people and context factor in to create different scenarios with different outcomes. Advocacy is, however, a process and the impact of RWS II is ongoing.

A number of lessons have emerged through this examination of the RWS II, which require reflection for future practice. These suggest that: (i) local action, global change is valid concept but requires a strategy and will not be achieved without a deliberate path from national to international advocacy; (ii) that technical capacity building is of course important but unsustainable unless it goes hand in hand with institution building; (iii) in a desire to be inclusive and reflect all the interests of their members coalitions are spreading their resources too thinly and should in fact limit advocacy focus; (iv) the

strategy of constructive dialogue with government is important but there should be no compromise on rights and that using the law and human rights can pay huge dividends in the struggle for EFA; (v) coalitions need flexible and reliable financing if they are to be sustainable; and (vi) research to provide evidence for key advocacy demands is an important tool and, through the development of new knowledge, coalitions can take their advocacy in new directions, creating new ways of working and demanding change on EFA in their national context.

With less than five years remaining for the achievement of the EFA Goals agreed in Dakar it is clear that the reality of EFA will fall far short of the promises made. National civil society coalitions along with their regional partners need to act with renewed vigour in the remaining years and projects such as RWS II are key to doing so. GCE, the regional networks, the national coalitions and their funders need to address the weaknesses identified by this research and build on strengths to ensure more effective and sustainable advocacy on EFA. Projects such as RWS II provide the foundations for building a strong, democratic global movement of activists, who together will be able to demand the change that is needed to achieve EFA.



Introduction

Each day millions of children, women and men face practical, social and economic challenges due to their lack of education. Reading a simple set of instructions or getting the job they want are all, to a large degree, determined by their level of education and the socio-economic status this affords them. While it might sound like just another cliché, the reality is that education is critical, fundamentally affecting life trajectories.

Education is a powerful weapon in the struggle for justice and the reduction of global poverty¹ and its importance is recognised in the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals² (MGD 2 and 3). Without improvements in access to quality education an eradication of global poverty, avoidable child deaths, inequity and discrimination will not be possible.³ Being excluded from the benefits of education because of class, ethnicity, caste, gender, physical or intellectual impairment, religious belief or geographical location is unnecessary, unacceptable and a violation of the universal right to education.

Governments have the power to change this. In the year 2000 more than 164 governments committed to making **education for all a reality** by 2015, drawing up the six Education for All (EFA) goals.⁴ Unfortunately political expediency has meant promises have been broken and even rights – which are universal and indivisible, and to which all signatories have obligations – are frequently ignored.

An underlying problem is the failure of many governments to put higher priority on policies that extend opportunities to the most marginalized sections of society. Failure to change this picture will result in the international community falling far short of the promise made at Dakar in 2000.⁵

Beyond failing to meet their own promises made in Dakar, governments in

many countries are also in breach of their obligations under international law to protect, respect and fulfil their citizens' right to education.⁶ The exclusion of the most marginalised groups from quality education perpetuates existing inequality, with a significant impact on hundreds of millions of people each day. The human face of government failure to tackle this problem can be seen in the 69 million children who never enter the school gate; the millions more in over-crowded classrooms, with under-qualified teachers and inadequate learning resources who will never enjoy the pleasure of learning nor benefit from the opportunity it affords them;⁷ it is millions of out of school youth put at increased risk of violence and exploitative labour,⁸ consigned to a life of poverty because of barriers to education; it is the tiny child who by the age of five has his or her life chances seriously limited by the denial of early childhood care and education;⁹ it is the girls forced to grow up before their time, married or caring for siblings rather than enjoying the benefits of an education equal to that received by the boys in their communities;¹⁰ it is the 776 million¹¹ women and men who face repeated humiliation trapped in lives of poverty and exclusion through illiteracy. These well worn figures and phrases fail to convey the human tragedy that being denied an education creates: perpetuating intergenerational cycles of poverty and exclusion,¹² creating social and economic inequity and social tensions that can, and do, spill into violence.¹³ The political will to prioritise education, matched by adequate resources, are central for the achievement of EFA. National governments and donors have responsibility to make this happen; however, competing demands, weak systems and corruption take their toll, slowing progress and in some cases even reversing it.

Yet with scrutiny and pressure governments can be reminded of their promises; they can be encouraged to review

1 So much so that it is often manipulated and/or subject to violent attack for political ends, see O'Malley 2010

2 See <http://www.undp.org/mdg/basic.s.shtml> for full details on the MDGs and their history

3 See a recent joint publication by UNESCO, UNICEF, The State of Qatar and Save the Children for a discussion on the role of education in achieving the MDG goals – 'The Central Role of Education in the Millennium Development Goals'

4 See http://www.unesco.org/education/efa/ed_for_all/dakfram_eng.shtml

5 UNESCO Global Monitoring Report 2010, p. 41

6 See Amnesty International 2005, p.20

7 See UNESCO GMR 2007

8 Collier 2003

9 See GTZ 2009

10 Action Aid estimates that at least 55% of out of school children are girls, excluded through discrimination and violence. See <http://www.actionaid.org/main.aspx?PageID=168> (October 2010)

11 16 per cent of the world's adult population according to UNESCO, figures obtained in October 2010 from – <http://www.unesco.org/en/efa/ef-a-goals/adult-literacy/>

12 Bivens at al 2009

13 Violence and conflict have a huge impact on access to education. An estimated one third of all out-of-school children live in countries affected by conflict (see research by Save the Children and the 2011 GMR). Millions more children, especially girls are subject to violence in or on the way to school impacting on their attendance and learning (see research by Amnesty International)



Belém/Tanvir Mumtazim

their practice and implement new policies. The majority of politicians – even corrupt ones – find it hard to ignore coordinated, vocal and persistent public opinion. It was for this reason and because children and adults have a right to express their opinions and a right to participate in their own development,¹⁴ that the Dakar Framework for Action included within the core strategies for achieving the six goals: “the engagement and participation of civil society in the formulation, implementation and monitoring of strategies for educational development.”¹⁵

The participation of ordinary people to demand their rights is the cornerstone of democratic societies, and essential in accelerating progress on EFA. This report documents one such experience, the Global Campaign for Education’s *Real World Strategies – Towards EFA 2015* project. Sharing stories of success, innovation and challenges in the struggle for EFA, the report tells how ordinary people from Africa, Asia and Latin America, motivated by a vision of equality and justice have, and continue, to make their opinion known and to find the pressure points to leverage change in local, national, regional and international political spaces on EFA. The stories shared here will both inspire and frustrate; so much energy, commitment and drive have led to many successes but also at times to



Philippines/E-Net

disappointment and misplaced energy.

Eduardo Galeano, the Uruguayan writer suggests that holding onto a vision of better society helps activism continue even when progress appears slow: “*Utopia is on the horizon. I walk two steps and it moves two steps further away and the horizon moves 10 steps further. What purpose does Utopia serve then? For this – it helps us to walk forward.*”¹⁶

The struggle for EFA did not begin or end with the stories shared here but it is fair to claim that it has been shaped by them and that their legacy is a step in ensuring more and better education around the world.

14 See UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the UN Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights

15 UNESCO 2000, p.8

16 Author’s translation of “*La utopía está en el horizonte. Camino dos pasos, ella se aleja dos pasos y el horizonte se corre diez pasos más allá. ¿Entonces para que sirve la utopía? Para eso, sirve para caminar.*” See <http://www.sabidurias.com>

Purpose, scope and methodological limitations

The purpose of this report and the research that informed it is to document and assess the second phase of the Real World Strategies project (RWS II), which ran from mid-2006¹⁷ to December 2010.¹⁸ It is intended to provide readers with an insight into the functioning, outputs and outcomes of this large-scale, cross-regional and multi-country project, designed to increase the voice of civil society advocacy and campaigning on EFA. It set out to identify achievements and best practices on strengthening the capacity of civil society to develop processes for influencing public policies to achieve the EFA goals, and more widely, moving towards the full realisation of the right to education.

The research set out to examine the specific approach that RWS proposed to support the advocacy of civil society in education and to highlight specific examples of how this approach was applied, using case studies to draw out good practice developed by diverse actors. As a result this report offers a number of generalised insights into how civil society can play an important role in influencing progress towards EFA, pulling together an interesting collection of in-depth experiences from Africa, Asia and Latin America. It hopes to show how ordinary people from all walks of life can come together to make their demands heard by local and national government authorities, by regional bodies, by the UN and other international actors to increase opportunities and the quality of education for all. It is hoped that the innovation and flexibility, which characterised the project, along with attention to some of its strengths and weaknesses, will encourage reflection and lead to new and more effective action.

The research for this report was conducted by four independent researchers,¹⁹ between July and September 2010, following the development of a methodological framework²⁰ for data collection for the agreed case studies format. Data collection combined a review of relevant literature, one to one interviews, focus groups and surveys. Research informants were

selected from a sample of staff, board members, activists as well as external contacts from civil society, UN, foundations, government officials and ‘school community’ beneficiary groups.²¹ The research design was given careful consideration and data collection was carried out systematically across the three regions, however, the research team recognise that there are limitations in both the scope of the research conducted and the findings presented in this report. The report did not look at all the RWS experiences, choosing instead to focus in-depth on 12 of the possible 52 countries. These 12 case studies were pre-selected by members of staff of the GCE Secretariat, ANCEFA, ASPBAE and CLADE who were also responsible for the management of the project implementation, leaving the research open to the accusation that case studies were ‘cherry-picked’ to highlight the positive outcomes. It also runs the risk of important information being missed from the other countries that have been part of the RWS II. To counter this a questionnaire was sent to all RWS II countries, the response rate was however relatively low leaving significant gaps in information.²² Furthermore not all the stakeholders selected for interview were available and the number and sample of research participants may be a limiting factor. Despite these limitations the research team feel that the evidence presented is both credible and informative. The team have endeavoured to reflect concisely the views shared and have sought to highlight issues not only of accomplishment but also those that may have limited the overall success of the RWS work.

It is not the intention of this report to provide a detailed evaluation of all aspects of the project. Instead the report aims to capture a selection of unique stories through case studies that can form the basis of collective learning for those who participated in RWS II. For all involved in the research and drafting of the report, and more importantly for those whose decisions and actions inform these pages it is hoped that this report acts as encouragement for increased and stronger activism on EFA.

17 RWS II should have started in January 2006, however, a delay in the release of funds meant that the project did not become operational until the middle of that year. This had a knock-on effect that year and further delays in release of funds in subsequent years also impacted on the implementation of the project including the loss of valuable staff

18 Phase II of Real World Strategies was still operational during the research and writing of this report

19 The research was carried out by a team of four researchers, see Appendix 1 for more information

20 Please see Appendix 2: ‘Methodology’ for more information

21 This includes teachers, students, parents and school workers and also the teachers’ unions

22 Overall response to the survey was less 50% in total, with the highest percentage (relative to number of coalitions in the region) from Asia, followed by Africa and none from Latin America. Questionnaires were translated into French and Spanish so language was not a factor limiting participation in the survey

A note on reading this report

This report is structured into three separate parts:

Part 1

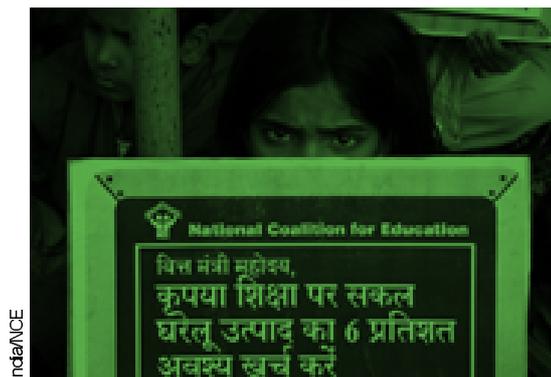
Is intended to tell the story of RWS; to present an overview of the project since 2006, providing some basic background on how the project functions, its scope, the context in which it took place. It provides a generalised view of each project level – national, regional and global – aiming to highlight achievements and draw attention to issues that require reflection.



Philippines/Raquel Casillo

Part 2

The second part of the report presents 12 case studies, along with a contextual overview from each region where the project was operational: Africa, Asia and the Pacific, and Latin America and the Caribbean. It is in the detailed case studies that a full picture of the work supported by RWS II emerges and that an understanding of the common threads across the work can be located. Part 2 is divided into three sections each written in a distinct voice of the regional researcher.



India/NCE

Part 3

The third part of the report presents conclusions, reviewing some global lessons and recommendations for the future, directed at the national, regional and global level.



Johannesburg/Goal

Reference material

Reference materials for Part 1 and Part 2 of the report, such as the bibliography, a note on methodology and appendices can be found at the end of the report.



Camilla Croso/CLADE



Part 1

Real World Strategies

towards EFA 2015:

an assessment

SECTION 1

The background to RWS II

The theoretical underpinning of RWS advocacy

In 2008 Oxfam became the first of the big international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) to try to explain, in-depth, its theory of how social change happens, in its book *From Poverty to Power*.²³ The sub-heading of the book identified what it saw as the two key components to bring about a more just and equitable world – active citizens and effective states.²⁴ Both of these ideas can be found in numerous publications relating to education for all, including the Dakar Framework for Action. It is the first component, active citizenship in its organised form, which lies at the heart of the Real World Strategies approach to accelerating progress to EFA.

The theory of change that drove RWS (I and) II stems from a belief that advocacy for policy and practice change on EFA needs to be located at the national level, close to where the denial of the right to education is occurring. ANCEFA and ASPBAE realised soon after the World Education Forum in Dakar in 2000 that there was an imperative to ground action for change on EFA in the *real world* and to advocate for change at the national level, rather than rely solely on a trickle-down effect from international advocacy.²⁵

Rather than the centralised advocacy agendas developed in head offices of the big international NGOs – or even the secretariat of GCE – it is key that national coalitions²⁶ are the drivers of change in their context. As one research informant noted, while the intentions of the large INGOs were good and in fact “acted as an important catalyst in the early days of the coalitions, coalitions needed to own their own agenda.”²⁷ This idea is reinforced by the findings of work by the University of Sussex’s Institute of Development Studies (IDS) on ‘Reimaging Development’, which concluded that: “one idea that has resonated throughout the research sites from around the world is that development models generated in the north

are frequently not replicable, sustainable or desirable in the South.”²⁸

The theory of change underpinning RWS affirms the fundamental importance of southern activists being able to define their own messages and to learn through doing even if progress is not always linear.²⁹ The idea was to build a movement, a cadre of campaigners analysing and articulating the injustices they saw in their daily lives. Encouraging people who knew children were out of school in a local village to believe that they had the capacity to change this situation.³⁰ To use well-worn terminology: to try and build the foundation of change from the bottom up, from where the violations of the right to education were most strongly felt, connecting with actions in different arenas in the north and on the international EFA circuit. The change that RWS II has sought to make is based on a theoretical understanding that the struggle for EFA, although global and linked to regional and international advocacy, is rooted in local and national action.

The origins and aims of RWS II

When GCE and two of its regional partners – ANCEFA and ASPBAE – submitted the RWS II funding proposal to the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the project was described as aiming: “to provide structured facilitation and capacity-building support to Southern civil society groups wishing to improve the focus, coherence and creativity of their advocacy efforts to increase impact at the national level and get countries on track in achieving all the EFA goals and targets.”³¹

The project’s overarching goal was to strengthen the advocacy and campaigning potential of civil society organisations in the global south with the hope that this would speed progress towards the six EFA goals set in Dakar, which by that time were already off track.³² According to one source within GCE involved in drafting the project there was a recognition of a ‘higher order’

23 Green, 2008

24 Although not directly linked to the book it is worth noting that Oxfam is a member of GCE and holds a seat on the GCE board.

25 This view was reflected in interviews with Maria Khan and Gorgui Sow, leaders of the Asian and African regional networks involved in RWS.

26 This paper uses the term coalition in its commonly understood use as an alliance of different groups to achieve a common goal, such as civil society groups or political parties (such as current UK government). For ease and clarity the paper uses coalition for national grouping and networks to describe the regional bodies involved in this work. For an interesting and informed discussion on coalitions see Tomlinson and Macpherson 2009

27 Janice Dolan, Senior Consultant CiBT Education Trust.

28 See IDS Annual Report 2010 p.8 for more information

29 Various interviews

30 Geoffrey Odaga former Global Coordinator of the RWS project and now Global Coordinator of the Civil Society Education Fund (CESF) at the GCE Secretariat spoke of a vision of RWS as a ‘movement’ and not a discrete project

31 GCE Final SALIN 2006-2010 Application Form, p.14

32 See page 1 of the 2006 UNESCO Global Monitoring Summary Report for a full picture of progress on EFA at the outset of RWS II

objective to mobilise political will on EFA and that a key piece of the puzzle, the capacity of civil society to hold governments to account, was still ‘patchy’.³³

The project application referred to civil society in the global south as vital partners and advocates who through mass public support for their actions and providing evidence could hold government to account on progress to EFA. The project had a number of specific (although not necessarily SMART³⁴) objectives focused on developing the capacity of civil society groups to contribute to global advocacy on EFA (see Box 1).

The RWS II project application reaffirmed the concept of delivering change through the *real world approach* with scaled-up and expanded campaigns, increased coordination at different levels and strengthening alliances.³⁵ The project proposal stressed the centrality of the project to GCE’s overall advocacy work, making the case that: “GCE coalitions are the voice of excluded children, illiterate women and poor families, and supported by RWS they can be a truly effective fighting force to demand change for good.”³⁶

RWS II was designed to build on and expand the progress made during RWS I, which had increased the number and capacity of southern civil society coalitions and enabled them to take more lobbying and campaigning actions. RWS I was also said to have strengthened links in advocacy from local through to international level.³⁷ At the end of RWS I, however, it was GCE’s opinion that: “Leadership and institutional capacities (human and financial) of the education coalitions to sustain education campaign and policy work at the national and regional level remain slim and fragile.”³⁸ Because of this and the belief in the critical role of national level advocacy GCE felt continuing this line of work into a second stage was needed.

Despite the fact that RWS II was a continuation of an existing project, the planning for the implementation of phase two was weak. Plans for the initial year and half of the project were clearly formulated, however, for the remainder of the project they were described as ‘rather nebulous’.

Box 1: The RWS II project objectives

- To strengthen and deepen the work of existing education civil society coalitions such that they are able to mobilise public demand and concern for free quality Education For All
- To build further education coalitions in countries and regions where none exist
- To align the work of education coalitions with other networks, coalitions and movements
- To deliver timebound, coherent national and regional advocacy strategies
- To contribute to the delivery of effective global advocacy work by GCE, ensuring consistency, coherence and cross-fertilisation between national advocacy plans and regional/global strategies
- To build broad-based movements with other interest groups, linking education interests with others working on public sector service delivery, aid, debt and children’s issues
- To bring about specific policy changes at global, regional and national level, consistent with overall objectives of GCE Global Strategy

Rather than being a weakness the lack of fully articulated plans, along with the extraordinary flexibility shown by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs (as funders), was in fact positive and meant that RWS II was able develop more organically.³⁹ Although the work remained true to its central component of capacity building, this flexibility allowed the regions to develop the project in different directions. In Africa the focus of the work remained strongly rooted in technical capacity training; in Asia supporting research and EFA monitoring at the national level grew and in Latin America (which only joined RWS in this second phase) a focus on the justiciability of the right to education took precedent (see the section below on regional work and country case studies for more a more detailed picture).

The flexibility shown by the Netherlands Government also allowed for an increased amount of the funds to remain at the regional level in later years.⁴⁰ This strong regional dimension within RWS II distinguishes it from other projects such as the Commonwealth Education Fund⁴¹ or the more recent Civil Society Education Fund.⁴²

The Government of the Netherlands acknowledge the flexibility of the grant,

33 Interview with Lucia Fry currently the Global Policy Coordinator at the GCE Secretariat.

34 A commonly used acronym SMART objectives refer to objectives which are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound

35 It is worth noting from the outset that RWS II (as was the case with RWS I) was submitted to the Dutch Government under their Strategic Alliances with International NGO (SALIN) grants programme, as one side of a joint project proposal with Education International and as such teachers’ unions in countries were seen as strategic partners from the outset of the project (although this relationship manifested itself differently in different contexts).

36 GCE Final SALIN 2006-2010 Application Form, p.20

37 For more information on the final outcomes of RWS I see: RWS final narrative 2003-2005

38 GCE Final SALIN 2006-2010 Application Form, p.14

39 Lucia Fry, Global Policy Coordinator, GCE Secretariat

40 Interview with Owain James, Global Coordinator of GCE

41 The Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) gave advice and funding to education groups in 16 Commonwealth countries for the promotion of free primary education. See <http://www.commonwealtheducationfund.org>

42 In 2008, EFA FTI agreed to support GCE to scale up support to national civil society education coalitions in FTI-eligible countries through the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF), which is coordinated by the GCE at the global level. See <http://www.educationfasttrack.org/financing/epdf/csef>

likening it to core funding.⁴³ It is, according to a Ministry of Foreign Affairs representative, in the Dutch tradition to invest in advocacy and strengthen support for development activity and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were keen to fund a continuation of RWS. The project was in line with their policy priorities; increasing public support for EFA and strengthening civil society advocacy. It also built on an existing relationship with GCE, which post-Dakar was recognised as an important lobbying organisation. The Dutch government believed that GCE could help develop policy and strengthen civil society advocacy in a number of countries.⁴⁴

The project's ambitions, despite a comparatively small budget of € 5 million,⁴⁵ were big in scale. The project aimed to increase the number and reach of national coalitions, encouraging the formation of strategic alliances with other anti-poverty campaigning networks and human rights groups. It aimed to change policy and practice to propel progress towards EFA. The aim was to build a 'global movement' of EFA activists.⁴⁶

The RWS grants (I & II) were part of a larger grant given to Education International (EI) and on through to GCE.⁴⁷ The two sides of the project had limited overlap, however, like much of GCE core's work it encouraged the inclusion of teachers' unions as key members of the national coalitions.⁴⁸

RWS in operation

Central coordination was limited, with day-to-day management and implementation of RWS II led by staff in the regional networks ANCEFA and ASPBAE and CLADE.⁴⁹ In Asia and Africa regional steering groups were set up, constituting among others regional network members and EI members.⁵⁰ The RWS Global Coordinator was the sole post for the project within the GCE Secretariat; in hindsight this is regarded (by more than one interviewee) as too little. The regional networks were responsible for the management of the project in their region; this included the development of regional advocacy strategies and support to national

coalitions.

Funds were allocated through the regional networks to national coalitions to support their capacity development and advocacy activity. Allocation of these funds was largely demand-driven with coalitions identifying a particular campaigning activity or capacity need and submitting a proposal to the regional networks. Based on the regional secretariat or steering committees' appraisal of the absorptive capacity of the coalition in each year, a grant was made. At other times the need was identified by the regional network, which then either facilitated the establishment of a coalition or helped to develop and support actions by existing coalitions. In later years increasing amounts of funding remained at the regional level, and was used to develop the organisational capacity of the regional networks and/or to fund regional advocacy initiatives.

A mechanism for operational decision-making does not appear to be formally articulated but annual reporting and planning, including financial reports, were in place to monitor the project's progress. The RWS Global Coordinator was responsible for facilitating and overseeing these processes.

Ultimate accountability for the project sits with the GCE Board⁵¹ who have oversight of all work and projects funded through the GCE Secretariat. All three regional networks plus two of the RWS project countries are represented on the board.⁵² Only limited copies of the reports given to the board on RWS II were available and no documentation was seen in regard to decision-making at board level on the strategic direction of RWS or budget allocations of RWS II. According to interviews, GCE board operates on the basis of consensus and decisions on RWS II were reached amicably despite the three regions each bidding for a percentage of the overall funds.

The range and scope of RWS II

RWS II is not limited to advocacy on one specific EFA goal but allows national coalitions and regional networks to identify and address the most pressing issue(s) in their context from across the full spectrum of EFA

43 Interview with Yvonne van Hees, Senior Policy Advisor, Education and Research Division (Social Development Department) Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs

44 Ibid

45 For example, compared to CSEF which is US\$17.6 million over two years (2009-2011) whereas RWS II is approximately US\$ 6,793,267 over five years

46 Geoffrey Odaga, former Global Coordinator of RWS II and currently Global Coordinator for the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) at GCE global secretariat

47 Initially the grant was intended to go directly to GCE with 'throughput' to EI, however, due to the legal identity of GCE at that time this was not possible and so it went the other way round – interview with Lucia Fry

48 Education International has a permanent seat on the GCE Board and as such all GCE affiliated coalitions are encouraged to include national teachers' unions

49 CLADE only joined RWS in the second phase and was not involved in the project design

50 It was felt this set up worked better in Asia than in Africa due to greater diversity of opinion/approaches between regional staff and EI representatives

51 A full list of current board members is available on the GCE website – <http://www.campaignforeducation.org/en/about/board/>

52 It should be noted that two national coalition seats are part of the GCE Board composition, electable via the General Assembly process, and are not linked to membership of the RWS project

goals. The majority of RWS II is focused on basic education, in particular issues surrounding barriers to access such as cost and discrimination. Literacy and non-formal education are also areas of focus. ECCE has had and in Latin America is gaining increased attention, emerging as the priority issue in Peru and of greater priority in CLADE work.

In addition to supporting work across the EFA spectrum RWS II has supported multiple forms of action that reflect different traditions and a diversity of approaches in bringing about change. They range from classic evidence-based lobbying (the *Education Watch* reports), to mass public rallies (India), out-of-school youth advocates (the Philippines), radio phone-ins (Uganda) to pursuing legal recourse to the violation of the right to education (Colombia). The range of activities and actions taken with the support of RWS II – some of which are detailed in the case studies in Part 2 – demonstrate examples of tried and tested methods along with innovative actions, which, while context specific, may provide a basis of cross-contextual learning. They also demonstrate the breadth of RWS II and reaffirm the concept of actions taking place in the ‘real world’ where a need for specific in-depth understanding of context must inform practice.

The context of the project

To fully understand why and how the RWS II developed and operated it is necessary to locate it within the broader context of EFA

discourse and progress during the last five years; marked by periods of both optimism and frustration. RWS II began the year after the global Make Poverty History campaign, when the translation of donor and government promises into real change seemed imminent. The power of ordinary people to come together and achieve change created a sense of optimism and renewed energy among civil society groups in many countries. Just over two years into the project the banking crisis and austerity measures that followed dramatically changed the global context, as noted by the EFA working group meeting in Paris in late 2009.

“The global financial crisis has provided a stark reminder of the realities of global interdependence. There is now a danger that, after a decade of encouraging progress, continued advancement towards the 2015 education goals will stall in the face of rising poverty, slower economic growth and mounting pressure on government budgets.”⁵³ The crisis, which coincided with an increased focus on learning outcomes, also changed the discourse, with a shift away from the right to education to education as an investment for economic recovery.

Despite these increased challenges it is clear that progress has been made in the lifetime of RWS II, however, important targets have been missed.⁵⁴ In 2006 the UNESCO GMR estimated that approximately 100 million children were not enrolled in primary school.⁵⁵ The most recent UNESCO EFA global monitoring report put the total



⁵³ Tenth meeting of the Working Group on Education for All (EFA) 'Concept paper on the Impact of the Economic and Financial Crisis on Education'. Paris, 9-11 December 2009

⁵⁴ The 2005 gender parity goal was missed by 100 countries according to the figures analysed in the 2006 UNESCO GMR and many will still miss the goal in 2015. 72 million children were still out of school according to data presented in the 2010 UNESCO GMR, despite the fact that 2009 the last year by which all children needed to be enrolled in school for universal completion of primary education by 2015

⁵⁵ UNESCO 2006, GMR



E-Med Philippines

out-of-school figure at 69 million⁵⁶ and is clear that at current rates of progress more than 56 million children will still be out of school in 2015.⁵⁷

The reality for the poorest and most marginalised groups of children is that they are still denied their right to education. Why is this the case? Surely global resources – even in the face of the current economic crisis – are sufficiently plentiful to ensure enough classrooms, with enough trained teachers for all children of school age. Surely there is money to care for and stimulate the development of young children and to provide opportunities as they reach their teens. If economic development is so closely linked to education levels as research suggests then surely funds should be made available to tackle illiteracy. The greatest barrier to achieving EFA is not a lack of resources or know-how; it is political will – education is too often simply not a priority either for governments or donors. That is not to underestimate the real challenges that exist; cultural beliefs about girls or disabled children, or contexts of war, natural disasters or remote rural location and nomadic lifestyles, however, these barriers can be tackled when the political will is present. If and where national governments are facing serious financial constraints,

overseas development aid can help meet shortfalls, and the pledge made at the Dakar meeting should not be forgotten: “No country seriously committed to education for all will be thwarted in their achievement of this goal by the lack of resources.”⁵⁸

Despite this pledge, where national budgets fall short international donors are failing to meet the shortfall. According to the most recent EFA Global Monitoring Report:

“Overall aid has been increasing, but commitments are falling short of the US\$50 billion increase pledged in 2005. Africa faces the greatest projected shortfall, estimated at US\$18 billion.”⁵⁹

In addition to the failure of governments and donors to meet the promises they made at Dakar, legal obligations under human rights law (that governments have freely signed up to) are often being ignored. Many countries still charge fees⁶⁰ and discrimination against groups of children including girls, disabled children, children from linguistic and ethnic minorities (to name a few) is commonplace.

The political and economic contexts in which RWS II has been and is operating are clearly challenging and highlight vividly the need for continued pressure to be exerted on governments and donors alike if progress is to be made on realising education for all.

56 GMR 2011

57 GMR 2010 main report, p.1

58 See the Dakar Framework for Action, p.3

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001211/121147e.pdf>

59 EFA GMR 2010 Summary, p.5

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001865/186525E.pdf>

60 A groundbreaking report by Katarina Tomaševski in 2006 found that more than half of countries still charge for education in breach of article 28 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Although some countries have stopped this practice, as the case studies in Part 2 of this report highlight, is still commonplace

Localised action, global change

SECTION 2

RWS II sought to root change at the local level and by doing so create change on a global scale. At its heart RWS II has been concerned with empowering ordinary people to bring about change for EFA in their local and national contexts. Not new in and of itself; local action by local people has a long tradition in movements for social change. The actions, for example, of Rosa Parks, an ordinary woman whose refusal to give up her seat to a white person fundamentally impacted the Black Civil Rights struggle; or Chico Mendes, the Brazilian rubber tapper whose activism and tragic murder helped draw the world's attention to the struggle to preserve our environment. These are just two examples from among the millions of women and men who over the course of history have taken action to make the world a fairer, more just place.

Ultimately judgement of RWS II must be measured by what new or strengthened capacity to demand – and achieve – government action on EFA now exists among national southern civil society coalitions. However, the role of the regional networks and the global centre of GCE cannot be ignored and an important part of this research will be to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the project at all levels.

This section of the report provides a synopsis of achievements of RWS and highlights areas that require additional attention at each of the project levels –national, regional and global.

Changing landscapes in national EFA advocacy

The research undertaken for this report was qualitative. It set out not only to document and assess the concrete outcomes in regard to size and number of coalitions and policy changes but to draw out less tangible results, such as increased levels of confidence of civil society groups to demand their rights; levels of awareness and value placed on education by beneficiary groups; and the sensitivity of governments in the light of increased public scrutiny.

Box 2: RWS II works for and with children and adults denied their right to education⁶¹

Jamaica Malapit was 15 years old when she quit school. *“I had just finished second-year high school,”* she recounted. With several children in school at the same time, her parents were forced to take a loan to cover their expenses, but it simply wasn't enough. Giving way to two older siblings, Jamaica and a younger sister dropped out of school, *“just for a while,”* they hoped. Her mother, a day care teacher in their urban poor community, had taught them to value education, so this was a painful decision for everyone.

After a year spent selling vegetables in the market, Jamaica saved enough to help her younger sister resume schooling. Jamaica herself was still unable to go back to high school, and so signed up to free training courses in her village. There was a two-month computer literacy course, and another on English proficiency. She even signed up for a two-week call centre training, although her chances of landing a job at a call centre without a high school diploma were nil.

In 2009, she joined the Pinagsamang Samahan ng Magulang (PINASAMA) Youth Organisation, the youth arm of a community-based organisation working for urban poor and women's rights. A long-time member of E-Net Philippines, PINASAMA initiated its own Alternative Learning System (ALS) programme. The response was overwhelming, dozens of out-of-school youth signed up, one of them Jamaica.

After a few months, PINASAMA ran into problems. They didn't have any funding for ALS and had to charge a fee for photocopying the modules, which many learners could not afford. Some learners had children or part-time jobs that left them too exhausted and distracted

⁶¹ Information presented here formed part of data collected in Asia by Barbara Fortunato. More information on E-Net Philippines can be found in Part 2 of the report

Box 2 (continued): RWS II works for and with children and adults denied their right to education

during the all-day Saturday classes. The teachers, too, were tired, after handling full-time day care responsibilities the previous five days. After 3-4 months, PINASAMA decided to suspend the ALS programme. *“Our biggest lesson is that ALS won’t work without a budget, without money for instructional materials. We really need to prepare ourselves more,”* said PINASAMA president Estrella Soriano.

For Jamaica, the door to education was again temporarily closed.

Jamaica later joined the E-Net ‘Claiming Our Future Today!’ campaign as a youth volunteer. *“I joined because of my own experience of being forced to drop out.”* The Advocacy and Campaign Skills and Leadership Training was fun, she said. *“The atmosphere was light-hearted, with lots of kidding around. The trainers didn’t come across like our strict teachers in school. At the end of the training, we were given a chance to say what we thought. I also learned other things like the rights of women and children.”*

Jamaica was among the five youth volunteers invited for the dialogue with representatives of the Department of Education Bureau of Alternative Learning System. *“[...] I talked about dropping out of school, about having to spend to photocopy modules for the PINASAMA Alternative Learning Systems. I also asked them to support E-Net. The government staff were gentle with us, they were willing to listen.”*

So what change has occurred? Has RWS II strengthened the collective voice of southern education coalitions and have they been able to bring about concrete changes in education policy and practice?

Looking at the testimonies collected during this research and reviewing existing

documentation, the answer is that a great deal of change has occurred. There are more coalitions; stronger coalitions and some important policy changes, which have been made possible because of RWS II. To fully understand the dynamics and achievements (as well as weaknesses) it is necessary to engage with the case studies in Part 2 of this report, yet even at a glance there are some impressive developments to celebrate as this summary below highlights.

Size and outputs

There has been a marked growth in numbers of new coalitions⁶² developed through the support of RWS, the majority in Africa. RWS II is now supporting 51 coalitions compared to the 25 African and Asian countries supported by RWS I.⁶³ Taken together the RWS II membership base runs to millions of activists across the world,⁶⁴ an increasing pressure that governments cannot simply ignore. This only provides a partial picture because while size is important, what matters is what these organisations do with their newly formed status or newly built capacity.

To complement the picture created by the increase in numbers we also need to look at the outputs generated by the coalitions. Given the number of coalitions involved in RWS II it is not feasible to list the outputs, it is important however to offer a flavour of these diverse, creative and innovative activities. These range from a public march in India involving thousands, to presenting a case to the constitutional court in Colombia, to producing an election agenda in Malawi. In addition there are numerous policy briefings, media slots and in-depth reports such as those of the Education Watch initiative. There have also been policy workshops for members in Tanzania, consultations with activists in Brazil and a mother’s convention in Sri Lanka. In Guatemala joint documentation of the violation of the right to education with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, and partnerships in Tanzania with the government. These are among the activities of just some of national coalitions that you can read about in more detail in the case studies in Part 2 of this report.

62 This means new group constituted with formalised structure, legally registered, with vision and mission agreed

63 GCE report: *RWS final narrative 2003-2005*

64 This figure is based on the membership of all the CSOs and teachers’ unions that are part of the national coalitions participating in RWS II

Only 12 coalitions are featured in the case studies although 51 countries are part of RWS II. The box below provides a snapshot of what has taken place in some other RWS-supported coalitions:

Box 3: A snapshot of non-case study RWS coalition activity 2006-2010

2006 Lesotho: ZANEC, the well-established Zambia coalition, assisted in convening a workshop in Lesotho and Botswana in early November 2006, co-funded with CEF. This has helped the nascent Lesotho coalition (Campaign for Education Forum) begins to move towards having a country campaign strategy in place.

2007 Papua New Guinea: Following the completion of the PNG *Education Watch* report, the Secretary for the Department of Planning and Monitoring agreed to launch the Report and publicly announced that he would like his department to enter into a formal collaboration with Papua New Guinea Education Advocacy Network (PEAN) and ASPBAE to extend the survey to *all* provinces of PNG. It also prompted an invitation to PEAN to the Education Sector Wide Approach (SWAP) Steering Committee as CSO representative, thus extending lobbying to the donor community in PNG.

2008 Burundi: The national coalition on education called BAFASHEBIGE published a report on *The Quality of Education in Burundi*, the outcome of the Education Watch survey conducted in 2007. The report indicted the ‘double-shift and multi-grade class system’ adopted by the government to enhance access. The evidence adduced indicated that learning outcomes are barely being met and that the overcrowded classrooms and acute teacher shortage compromise education quality. BAFASHEBIGE, by mobilising the support of teachers’ unions and NGOs to engage in policy dialogue with the government, has embarked on an aggressive campaign to address education quality concerns.

2009 Chile: RWS enabled the following activities: a participatory process for the elaboration of the Forum’s Position Paper on Financing of Education in the country; the publication and distribution of the Forum’s publication *Cuaderno* on the issue of public education; the training of the members of 10 School Councils; the elaboration and dissemination of the Statement “Towards the Reform of Higher Education”; the submission of the Forum’s proposals on education to representatives of the presidential candidates and the ensuing debate; and the support to the Regional Forums of Valparíso and Maule.

2010 Pakistan: The Pakistan Coalition for Education (PCE) printed and launched an ODA for education study on January 22, 2010. There was successful turnout of participants and the participation was of good quality, eliciting much debate around the issues on aid effectiveness and equitable allocation to neglected areas. Around 175 participants including managers and executives of different INGOs, donors, etc attended. There was much media coverage of the launch, published in all leading newspapers across Pakistan in Urdu, English and Sindhi languages.

These outputs are shaping the national debate on education and moving the issue of education for all up the political agenda, shifting the discourse from if, to how to bring about change. Furthermore as these coalitions grow in organisational and advocacy capacity, and increase their coordinated engagement with regional and international actors their influence at the national level will grow. National coalitions have also played a central part in many activities led by regional networks, such as: the CLADE-led

lobbying of the Durban Review Conference in Geneva in 2009; input into the UNESCO EFA mid-term review coordinated by ASPBAE in 2007; and ANCEFA’s coordinated lobbying to promote adult and youth learning in 2008 in the run up to the African Regional Conference in support of Global Literacy.⁶⁵

Numbers and even activity don’t necessarily result in changes in government policy, however, it is reasonable to argue that most governments begin to take notice when their citizens group together and take action

⁶⁵ The meeting itself was convened by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning and hosted by the government of Mali, for more details on ANCEFA’s lobbying see Box 10 on CONFINTEA VI page 42

to demand change. They listen more if their citizens do so in large numbers and consistently over time. As a former MP from Asia said: “*If the demand for quality education can be generated, then the system will comply.*”⁶⁶

It is clear that the support of RWS II has allowed national coalitions to increase their size, capacity and level of activity, however, the success of RWS II becomes apparent when we review some of the impressive outcomes of the work highlighted below and described in detail in Part 2 of this report.

Policy change

In Guatemala RWS II permitted the continuation of a long-term effort to prevent the charging of school fees, which culminated in 2008 when school fees were declared illegal. Pressure from the coalition also led to the establishment of conditional cash transfers for education for the most marginalised families. In August 2009 the lower house of the Indian Parliament passed into law the ‘Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act’ following broad CSO pressure, including significant involvement by the national education coalition with support from RWS II. More recently, RWS II funding enabled the Colombian coalition to take a case to the Colombian Constitutional Court. A successful outcome saw the right to free and compulsory basic education upheld. In Cambodia support from RWS II provided the national coalition with resources to campaign for the end of informal school fees. The coalition linked the charging of informal school fees to the issue of low teacher salary and contributed to change on two fronts: the issuing of a sub-decree on teachers’ professional conduct making it an offense to charge fees, and a declaration by Prime Minister Hun Sen that teachers’ salaries would be increased by 20% every year, starting 2010. In Tanzania RWS II allowed the national coalition to continue to build a positive working relationship with the Ministry of Education and play an important part in the development of the new Education Bill, which should shortly be passed into law.

RWS II also contributed to many other important policy changes in the last five years. In Brazil the national coalition used extra resources made available through RWS II to lobby for the adoption of its *Custo-Aluno Qualidade Inicial (CAQi)*⁶⁷ by the National Conference of Basic Education; CAQi is now accepted by the National Council on Education in Brazil as a benchmark for the public financing of education. The national coalition of the Philippines has increased the attention and activism around the issue of alternative learning systems (ALS) for young people who have dropped out of school; they mobilised many out-of-school youth and convinced legislators that this issue required increased investment. Their efforts led to an increase in the 2010 budget of PhP 40-million⁶⁸ more than the previous year, and although it was less than hoped for, even getting support for ALS from legislators can be counted as major step forward. In Malawi the national coalition’s advocacy focused on the country’s budget cycle. They worked in partnership with the Ministry of Education to lobby the Ministry of Finance, leading to an increased allocation of resources for the education sector. Details of these RWS II stories and more are provided in Part 2.

The role of RWS II in developing the research and policy analysis capacity has been critical in achieving these gains. Regional coalitions invested a significant amount of resources in training in this area. These capacity development events and trainings, along with nominal sums to develop research and other actions, led to significant change on the ground.

Process

Concrete outcomes are only part of the equation and it is useful to remember the often quoted saying that “*not everything that can be counted counts, and not everything that counts can be counted.*”⁶⁹ Process is an important part of the RWS II story. Why? Because it is the strengthening of process that will ultimately ensure sustainability.

It is the process of building the coalition’s knowledge, skills, experience, and self-

66 See Asia regional overview in Part 2 of this report

67 This financing tool, known in English as the Cost of Initial Quality Education per Student sets out the minimum cost of quality education per student. For more information on this tool in English see: http://arquivo.campanhaeducacao.org.br/publi-cacoes/CAQi_ingles.pdf

68 Approximately US\$ 911,161

69 An anonymous quote, which according to more than one website, hung on Einstein’s office wall

confidence rather than just a focus on short-term results that will ensure the longer-term pressure to achieve the EFA goals beyond the lifetime of the project. And even though in some countries RWS II has not delivered concrete policy changes, it has opened up and created change at the level of political discourse, itself an important part of the policy change process.

At the same time as arguing, with reason, that more change may yet come from RWS II we should also acknowledge that change takes time and is built in the course of the long process of social struggle in each country. The nature of policy change often goes beyond one intervention or project. It is about long-term processes, strongly dependent on the country's political context. It is about political literacy, alliances and opportune moments to increase pressure to increase influence. One actor or one intervention rarely influences change. The success and failures of RWS II are then not those of the coalitions alone, however, the structure and working practice of the coalitions and their ability to read the political context are critical factors in establishing a strong platform for mobilising activists and bringing pressure to bear on the government.

Forthcoming research by the University of Amsterdam, also funded by the Government of the Netherlands and linked to the RWS II project, looks at GCE member coalitions and transnational advocacy for EFA, and draws similar conclusions. Their research highlighted three types of external changes by GCE coalitions: political, procedural and symbolic impact.⁷⁰ They relate closely to policy (political) and process (procedural) as discussed above. Their third category, symbolic impact – the changing of public attitudes and awareness – can be seen in case studies, for example Mothers' Empowerment in Sri Lanka or out-of-school youth in the Philippines. The evidence, however, was largely implicit rather than explicit. In other words although it is likely attitudinal change took place during the different mobilisation activities, it has not been measured by the coalitions in a systematic way. For example, in Sri Lanka, the national coalition addressed the issue of mothers' education, documenting

the extent of the problem, raising awareness and organising a huge national convention of 600 people, pole-vaulting a previously invisible issue into the public domain. It is highly probable that many people beyond the 478 mothers they worked with and others who attended the convention now have an increased understanding of the issues facing poor women in marginalised communities as a result of press coverage and community work, however, there is no measure of the extent to which this has occurred.

Structures and systems

Recent development discourse and practice has emphasised the need to invest in listening to and enabling activists in the south to speak and to lead, particularly where advocacy and campaigning are concerned. This does not, however, mean coalitions should be treated with unquestioned reverence. Where failings have occurred they should be identified and addressed. This research has thrown up some examples of where personalities, along with political loyalties can – and have – created tensions that reduced the effectiveness of the work and led to divisions in coalitions. The case of the national coalition in Kenya is one example.

The national coalition in Kenya was formally constituted in 2006 when it registered as a Trust in November that year. It had been functioning for seven years prior to that as network of CSOs, which since 2002 had been supported by CEF. The coalition was housed in the ActionAid Kenya office and was subject to the same "robust financial and accounting policies, systems and procedures for the effective management of its activities, resources and information."⁷¹ However, when the coalition left the management control of ActionAid Kenya, tensions between the board and coordinator emerged leading to a crisis that almost destroyed it. The research conducted for this report concludes that weak management systems were to blame. Thankfully the crisis was resolved and the coalition is now engaged in forward-looking work.

The experience is not unique to Kenya, and teaches us that it is imperative to

⁷⁰ Research was conducted by Master's students, under the guidance of Professors Mario Novelli and Antoni Verger, who did fieldwork based at the education coalitions in Brazil, Ecuador, India, The Philippines, Ghana and Zambia. RWS II also provided support to the coalitions to engage with this research process, for example holding national/regional workshops to discuss findings

⁷¹ Extract from the Kenya case study below in Part 2

establish strong management systems and structures. Privileging visibility and action over institutional effectiveness can compromise effective advocacy (in both the short and long term) and is an important lesson for national coalitions and the regional and global structures which support them. Management capacity should be a key area for investment in developing and strengthening coalitions. The temptation to move too quickly to action can create problems of sustainability and effective working practices. Overcoming breakdown in coalitions when differences surface requires strong democratic decision making systems and capacity development in the area of management.

This issue of adequate management systems is intricately linked to the operating model of coalitions, which unlike NGOs or CBOs, need to represent the diversity of voices advocating on EFA in their country. As such, their structures need to ensure internal democratic accountability. The case of the Colombian coalition offers a positive model: With regard to organisational decision-making an organisational structure was established. It is made up of five main [decision making] bodies: (i) the General Assembly; (ii) the Support Committee or Board; (iii) the Secretariat; (iv) the thematic Committees; and (v) the Regional Focal Points which all link to create a structure that is circular instead of pyramidal. This means that the decisions and actions developed by the Coalition are the result of the discussion and the participation of all the organisations.⁷²

Certain criteria are critical to the coalition's institutional legitimacy and overall effectiveness. In the framework of RWS II the definition of coalitions seem to have been taken for granted, leading to diverse practice where some coalitions were simply small secretariats operating as NGOs and not necessarily representative of the diversity of the organisations working on education in the country, or the beneficiaries of its work.

There is a tendency among coalitions and NGOs in general to focus outwards and ensure external engagement, sometimes at the cost of internal systems and structures that would ensure long-term sustainability of the

networks. Spending more attention and resources on internal functionality is necessary to the longer-term success of the coalition.

Sustaining activism through reflection

Notwithstanding some limitations, it is evident that RWS II has helped create increased political space and activism on EFA at the national level. It has contributed to building a movement of EFA activists, although more needs to be done to ensure joint actions across regional boundaries. The coalitions have made mistakes but they have (in the main) acted in good faith, with the commitment to bring about a positive change that will enable all children and adults to enjoy their right to education. Coalitions are made up of extremely motivated women and men, but even the most committed are only human and opportunities have been missed and weaknesses remain which need to be addressed. This has to be done with support from the regions and/or global centre and also through learning from their own practice and from each other.

As previously stated an objective of this research was capturing some of the stories of RWS II at the national level and in doing so facilitate a process of collective learning. It is important that all those involved in RWS II are willing to reflect on the issues raised here as a means to learn and grow their activism in the future. As the Brazilian educator, Paulo Freire, notes in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*: "Looking at the past must only be a means of understanding more clearly what and who they are so that they can more wisely build the future."⁷⁴

Ideas on critical thinking and reflection (developed from Freire's work) have informed progressive adult education and transformative education⁷⁵ processes for many years. Coalitions can benefit enormously by reflecting on ways of working and their achievements; activism without reflection is less likely to be sustainable. This point is also made in the previously mentioned research by the University of Amsterdam:

72 This description is based on information in Colombian case study in Part 2

73 This fits with the idea articulated by Coe and Mayne, in their 2008 publication (p.11) that "A participatory approach to monitoring and evaluation can promote vital learning and empowerment of staff and the communities for and with whom you are campaigning. By assessing achievements and problems, participants involved in monitoring and evaluation enhance their analytical capacity and critical awareness. It can also increase their motivation to participate in planning and implementing future activities and take responsibility for their own lives"

74 Quote from http://www.goodreads.com/author/quotes/41108.Paulo_Freire

75 See for example work by Jack Mezirow; also see Oswald and Moriarty 2009 for discussion on transformative and quality education

Critical reflexivity allows the coalition to evaluate and learn from past experiences, revise strategies and formulate new strategies according to contextual changes. This strategic learning can contribute to better opportunities and more impact for E-Net. Critical reflexivity is intertwined with all aspects of the research as members should reflect on the political and educational context, on the network and on themselves.⁷⁶

As coalitions move ahead with their work, it is important that they learn from their experiences while building their knowledge and capacity on key issues, underpinned by strong institutional structures and systems. This report is intended as one block in this learning. Going forward, the regional networks and global centre (discussed below), also have an important role in supporting this process beyond RWS II.

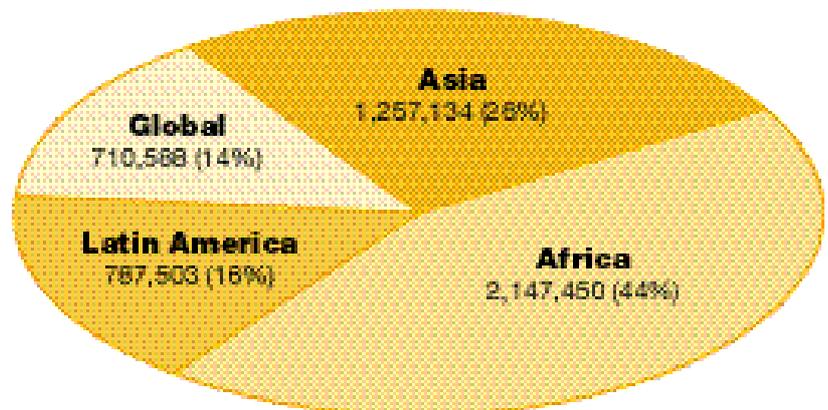
Regional Networks: builder, initiator or enabler?

The regional networks – ANCEFA, ASPBAE and CLADE – are sometimes mistaken as simply the regional extension of the GCE secretariat. They are in fact autonomous organisations with their own unique histories that sometimes predate the GCE by decades. All three affiliated regional networks are core members of GCE are represented on the board and, as such, ultimately accountable for GCE work in its totality, and management of the global secretariat staff. ANCEFA and ASPBAE were part of RWS I, and instrumental in the development of the RWS II funding proposal. Given their unique identities it is unsurprising that each region has translated the implementation of RWS project in different ways based on capacity and context, with resources supporting a range of activities at both regional and national level. All three regions use project funds toward some of their regional staff and office costs.

In each region the RWS II has counted for

a significant proportion of total regional funds, for example in 2010 it accounted for 50% in the case of Africa, 45% in the case of Latin America and 25% in Asia,⁷⁷ enabling important work to take place. Funds are divided up between the three regions, with Africa taking the largest share, followed by Asia. Latin America has received a significantly smaller share. The global centre received only marginally less than Latin America over the course of the project:

RWS grant income 2006-2010 (EURO)



Before looking a little closer at the work of the regional networks we must bear in mind the different socio-economic and political context of each region. To take universal primary education (UPE) as one indicator of progress towards EFA, stark differences are apparent: Latin America, home to many middle income countries, has the best regional indicators at primary level, highest among the three regions. It is, however, a continent of extreme inequality, which faces remaining challenges in retention, completion and education quality across the region.⁷⁸ Asia, home to two of the so-called BRICs⁷⁹ has made mixed progress on UPE with a decline in regional net enrolment ratios during the last few years.⁸⁰ Africa has the worst indicators on universal primary education, accounting for nearly 45% of the global out-of-school population.⁸¹ It is also a continent with many low-income countries and a large number of fragile states, many affected by conflict.

Each context brings its own unique challenges. These contextual differences play their part in the type and speed of change possible by civil society groups – including

⁷⁶ Joosje Hoop, University of Amsterdam, Master Thesis on E-Net Philippines, p.113

⁷⁷ In Asia it had previously accounted for 45% until this year

⁷⁸ GMR 2010. Regional Overview Latin America and The Caribbean

⁷⁹ BRIC is a term coined by the Goldman Sachs economist Jim O'Neill to describe the four largest developing economies of Brazil, Russia, India and China which are projected to increasingly dominate world financial markets

⁸⁰ GMR 2010: Regional Overview East Asia and the Pacific

⁸¹ These 2007 figures are quoted in the 2010 GMR; Regional Overview sub-Saharan Africa, p.4

the regional networks – although strategy choices and effectiveness also come into play.

What is apparent from this research is that different operational models appear to have emerged in each region. These can be divided into three categories: (i) builder, (ii) enabler and (iii) initiator⁸² although these distinctions are not black and white and each network reflects characteristics of the other two:⁸³

- ANCEFA appear to base their activity on a model of *builder* focusing the most significant part of their efforts on building the number of coalitions and their capacity to establish a base from which national level advocacy can grow.
- For ASPBAE the model is that of back-seat *enabler*, taking a less visible role themselves but instead building the capacity of a small number of national coalitions to advocate on EFA in their own national context and in regional platforms.
- In Latin America, in contrast, a model has developed where CLADE is an *initiator* initiating and leading advocacy at the regional level and in pursuing this agenda working with and increasing the capacity of national coalitions.

These models may be a reflection of the cultural dynamics of activism in each region, or of the roots of the network itself, that have developed either intentionally or organically. The short descriptions and analysis below provides more detail on how each has interpreted their part in implementing RWS II.

CLADE and RWS

During the lifetime of RWS II, CLADE has developed from a small organisation with limited reach into a powerhouse of advocacy within the regional EFA sphere. Creating strong links and joint work streams among its members and taking innovative action on the right to education in regional spaces. RWS II accounts for at around 45% of CLADE's budget and the support and the opportunity this brings has been the major factor in its rapid development in just a few years.⁸⁴

Developing advocacy capacity at the regional level is an explicit objective of RWS II and CLADE has risen to this challenge, making good progress and supporting policy change through its regional advocacy work. It has been at the forefront of the 'justiciability' of the right to education,⁸⁵ taking a case to the Inter-American Commission for Human Rights. Working in partnership with a variety of stakeholders including the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education. CLADE has led this work, along with joint actions with national coalitions.

CLADE members include 18 national coalitions (10 of whom are supported through RWS II) and nine regional networks to whom they provide guidance on good governance and support in both institutional and technical capacity development. CLADE runs many collective learning opportunities,⁸⁶ which strengthen both regional and national advocacy. Despite this CLADE does not see its primary function as that of capacity builder. CLADE do, of course, realise it is not possible to do advocacy and policy making without strong national coalitions, however, they see themselves more as a partner working with the national coalitions. In this sense CLADE is perhaps different from the other two regional networks.

Two areas emerge as points for reflection going forward: these relate to sustainability and balance in CLADE's work. The first is a question of institutional sustainability. Time and again in interviews for this research named staff in the CLADE secretariat were held up as a critical force in its success with some concern as to whether the momentum could be sustained if they moved to new jobs. Furthermore, by the staff's own admission



Fabio Possadori/Agência Brasil

82 These categories are taken and developed from a paper on civil society networks by Smith, 2007

83 No value judgement is being assigned to the models and more research is required to fully validate the typology and to understand the implications of each for future practice

84 GCE provided CLADE with a Euro 9,409.33 (approx US\$12,779) from non-RWS sources to kick-start the RWS programme in 2006 (information from 2006 Annual report)

85 Not just in Latin America but arguably they have been pioneers in this work globally

86 E.g. Finance seminar (Buenos Aires 2007 and Sao Paulo 2010), Discrimination Seminar (Sao Paulo 2010), Early Childhood (Sao Paulo 2010) etc

Box 4: A snapshot of CLADE activities 2006-2010

2006 – CLADE began the task of setting up political alliances and partnerships, the programmatic framework and identification of activities to be carried out, the putting in place of adequate institutional structures capable of seeing through all the processes involved as well as drawing clear criteria for the selection of national coalitions to be part of the RWS.

2007 – CLADE held its 4th regional assembly in Panama. This was very important in bringing together all the national coalitions. It allowed the development of a Letter of Principles and a two year political agenda, based on a consensus. The Assembly also produced the Panama Declaration, a political statement that presents the collective vision that regional networks and national fora agreed to work with regarding Latin American education.

2008 – The establishment of a regional advocacy sub-group on free quality public education: Following the adoption of the conceptual and operational framework, a regional advocacy sub-group on free quality public education was established, constituted by five national coalitions that had earlier prioritised the issue in their national policy agendas. This group enabled CLADE to promote a collective action in the region, which had both a national and regional dimension. The five countries that focused on this campaign were Paraguay, Peru, Colombia, Guatemala and Haiti.

2009 – CLADE played a leading role in bringing together national coalitions and other regional networks and their members to lobby the CONFINTEA IV meeting held in Belem, Brazil in December that year. CLADE used the opportunity of CONFINTEA VI to strengthen its relations with the ministries of education of the region. Through its delegation, composed of four national forums, CLADE worked directly with the official delegations that represented their governments to advocate for the reaffirmation of the assumed commitments. CLADE also had notable engagement around the creation of the International Civil Society Forum (FISC) and work done jointly with the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), its members and the Council of Adult Education in Latin America (CEAAL).⁸⁷

2010 – CLADE, jointly with a group of regional networks of Latin-America and the Caribbean and Spanish NGOs, produced a joint document with the aim of influencing the debate and the final outcome of the Iberoamericano Congress on Education held in Buenos Aires in September attended by all education ministers from Latin American and the Caribbean who were discussing their newly formed ‘2021 Goals’.

they have been less good at documenting (in a systematic way) process, actions and outcomes meaning that much of the institutional memory rests in just two individuals. CLADE has taken steps to address this through its newsletters and annual reports and a recent learning event was held in Buenos Aires in September 2010,⁸⁸ showing increased momentum in this area.

The second area of potential weakness is the need for CLADE to have a check and balance between regional and national initiatives. It is important to ensure that regional advocacy does not take precedence to the detriment of strengthening coalitions at the national level. CLADE recognise the need to increase their presence and foster more national coalitions, in particular in the Caribbean. Of the 41 Nation-states within

the region, CLADE works with only 18 national coalitions, nine of whom are part of RWS II with one additional sub-regional grouping of countries in Central America.⁸⁹

These two areas of potential vulnerability should be issues for reflection among CLADE’s Board (made up of six National Coalitions; two regional networks and two INGOs) and staff.

Importantly this research finds that CLADE’s growth and the development of an effective advocacy strategy over the course of just a few years is cause for celebration and should be noted as a major achievement of RWS II.

(As the new network joining RWS in its second phase CLADE was chosen for a more in-depth review as part of this documentation and assessment process please see Box 5 on page 30).

⁸⁷ Information for snapshot of activities was taken from the RWS annual reports for the respective years mentioned. These reports offer an in-depth review of RWS each year, along with lists of activities for each region

⁸⁸ More information on this meeting can be found (in Spanish) at <http://www.campanaderechoeducacion.org/action.php?i=507&L=es>

⁸⁹ For full listing of RWS supported coalitions in Latin America and other regions see Appendix 3 of this report

Box 5:**Campaña Latinoamericana por el Derecho a la Educación: an RWS II success story**

Of the three regions involved in the RWS project it is strikingly obvious that the EFA community, especially powerful donor governments, see Latin America as less of a priority than Asia or Africa. This view was also to an extent ‘naturalised’ within the GCE board, and a glance at indicators – such as those on universal primary education – lead easily to that conclusion. Scratching just below the surface, however, it is soon apparent that Latin America still faces many challenges in achieving the EFA goals. Serious obstacles remain in regard to quality, discrimination and adult literacy, undermining the right to education for all in the region. There is also a massive equity gap.

When the second phase of RWS II began, the Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education held a seat on the GCE Board (a seat they will hold until February 2011) and were able to open up discussion to persuade the board that Latin America could benefit from inclusion within RWS II. As a result Latin America joined RWS in 2006, a process described in the RWS annual report that year in the following terms: “[...] the implantation process of such a complex and challenging initiative and expanding the GCE membership in the continent was in itself a major endeavour.”⁹⁰

Notwithstanding the challenge, the inclusion of Latin America into RWS II began, and as a result it enabled CLADE to become the strong regional network it is today. In fact CLADE’s development is an achievement, which owes much to RWS and without doubt should be noted as one of the big success stories of RWS II.

CLADE came into existence in 2002, formed of a loose grouping of organisations from the platform of the Inter-American Human Rights network, who decided a specific focus on education was necessary post-Dakar. Today CLADE has 18 national coalitions as members – ten of whom have received direct RWS funding – and nine regional networks as members.

It was not until 2006 that a coordinator was hired, and a strategic planning meeting was held in Lima, Peru in November 2006, attended by key partners, among them CEAAL, ActionAid Brazil and the Brazilian Campaign for Education.

2007 marked a significant milestone in the organisation’s development when all the members came together in the 4th regional assembly held in Panama. CLADE used this meeting – made possible with support from RWS II – to launch its mission and vision, and to make operational decisions for future work. Among the issues the meeting discussed was how RWS resources should be used, agreeing to share the funds between regional actions and small grants for national coalitions’ advocacy of up to US\$10,000. CLADE continues – as do the other regional networks – to hold annual assemblies that, in the words of one interviewee, provide a democratic space for decision making and planning. CLADE has also changed the composition of its board; of its ten members, six are national coalitions, two regional networks and two international NGOs, ensuring that varied perspectives are brought to bear in the decision-making processes.

From its inception – and prior to its incorporation in the RWS project – CLADE clearly saw itself as political actor in its own right; a regional network that has established a consensus with national coalitions but maintained its own political agenda. CLADE continues to view itself in these terms and this vision has shaped its work and the strategic use of RWS funds. Of the three regional networks in RWS, CLADE has pursued regional level advocacy to a much greater extent, with positive results that could offer a model (taking into account different regional structures and human rights charters⁹¹) for ASPBAE and ANCEFA’s future actions.

Central to CLADE’s mission and approach is the international human rights framework. Quality education is a fundamental right, which governments have an

90 RWS 2006 annual report p.11

91 The African Commission on Human and Peoples’ Rights has oversight and interpretation of the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights. A protocol to the Charter was subsequently adopted in 1998 whereby an African Court on Human and Peoples’ Rights was to be created. The protocol came into effect on 25 January 2005. Unlike all other regions, Asia and Pacific does not have a regional inter-governmental system in place – such as regional courts, commissions and related institutions – to monitor and protect human rights

obligation to respect, protect and fulfil⁹² and a quick glance at CLADE's mission, principles and objectives all place human rights at the centre of their work.⁹³ Their understanding of this framework, and importantly how to move beyond simply re-articulating that the right exists to demanding it legally, have led to one of their most innovative advocacy initiatives funded by RWS II – challenging discrimination in education through the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (a detailed account of this work is included in the Latin American case study reports in Part 2). CLADE's work on the justiciability of education is ground breaking; this only the second case on education to be taken to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. It provides an example of innovation and paves the way for future action in Latin America and a model for action elsewhere.

CLADE provides some interesting learning that shows how legal paths can force governments to fulfil their obligations in areas previously considered firmly as development issues and matters of political choice rather than law. Their work bridges the world of EFA and the world of human rights, and as such could offer an interesting example for the big international development NGOs adopting a rights based approach, and the big human rights organisations taking on the economic, social and cultural rights. The case of Colombia and the change in the constitutional law to provide free education is another example (see the Latin American case study section in Part 2 for a detailed analysis of this work).

This research has shown that CLADE have made a positive impression on many external bodies in the region including UNESCO, the former Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, and human rights organisations. These organisations have praised CLADE for giving high visibility to issues such as discrimination and defending the right to quality education. One external respondent said they had “*never encountered a network with such a level of sophistication and organisation*” pointing to their “*well prepared materials*” and “*nice website*”. What was also evident from these testimonies is that these alliances not only enabled CLADE to progress its advocacy agendas but were also of great value to the other parties. For example, the relationship with Vernor Muñoz, the former Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education⁹⁴ meant he was a resource for CLADE but they were also a resource for him.⁹⁵

This externally facing, regional advocacy has led to a highly positive reputation for CLADE among external actors in the region. It is not though the only remit of CLADE, especially within the framework of RWS II, which is deeply concerned with increasing the strength of national coalitions. CLADE's approach here is also distinct to other RWS regional networks principally because of how they view themselves and their relationship with the national coalitions. CLADE describe themselves as having a very horizontal relationship with national coalitions and although they do support capacity building it is not seen as their primary role, and instead priority is given to joint actions where issues identified by both CLADE and the national coalition are taken up by CLADE to regional and even international platforms. It has been difficult to form a full picture of how CLADE is viewed by the national coalitions as none of the coalitions responded to the questionnaire (even though it was translated into Spanish), although available evidence from interview sources suggest this relationship is in general a good one.

It is important for CLADE to maintain a balance in its work and in the words of one national coalition member: “*CLADE could... should, have a closer relationship to the national coalitions, not only to create spaces where they can come together but also to really know the coalitions in order to broaden CLADE.*”⁹⁶

Other respondents also stressed the need for more capacity building. Stronger national coalitions will be not only lead to increased effectiveness for national level advocacy they will be able to support and lead (if necessary) regional advocacy from a point of knowledge and strength.

92 For more information on international law, human rights and education see the website of the 'Right to Education Project' <http://www.right-to-education.org/node/234>

93 see the CLADE website <http://www.campanaderechoeducacion.org> for more information

94 Vernor Muñoz, a Costa Rican academic held the post of Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education from July 2004 – August 2010

95 Interview with Vernor Muñoz

96 Author's translation from original Spanish

Box 5: (continued)**Campaña Latinoamericana por el Derecho a la Educación: an RWS II success story**

This research did not set out on a mission to find fault with any part of the RWS but neither has it shied away or ignored failings or areas of weakness where they have been found. In the case of CLADE the message is overwhelmingly positive and this research has revealed few areas for criticism, however, this issue of sustainability and institutional memory is a serious concern. The concern arises from the fact that much of CLADE success is seen as being due to exceptional staff:

“A good part of the success [of CLADE] is because of the team; the human factor is very evident but this raises questions of sustainability when there is a change of staff.”⁹⁷

Of course, it would be wrong to criticise excellence in staff – something flagged repeatedly as a critical factor in CLADE’s success – what is needed however, is the development of systems and structures which would allow for smooth transition if or when secretariat staff move on. The construction of institutional memory on processes and successful strategies, along with knowledge management are areas that CLADE needs to address to ensure it can sustain its progress. CLADE, while very keen on the idea of being a learning organisation, has through this documentation and assessment process already realised that most of this learning is oral, that “documentation of learning so far has been a weakness but we are using this [process] to systematise learning.”⁹⁸

This is not to be over alarmist, structures and mechanism already exist in CLADE – such as the board, thematic working groups, and assemblies – which ensure a spread of knowledge and process management. In the words of one board member the democratic functioning of CLADE “*is a very important aspect*” and the board and staff are in “*permanent communication*.”⁹⁹ Furthermore already initial learning from this research is to take other measures to preserve the ‘learning’ that occurs and ensure a strong institutional memory.

Other suggestions from outside of CLADE would be to increase influence with the media in Latin America not only to reach policy makers but to raise more awareness among population at large to help combat false beliefs and negative attitudes.¹⁰⁰

With more than half of their funding coming from RWS – including salaries, office costs, regional activities and money for national coalitions – it is clear that RWS II has been ‘absolutely decisive’, ‘very important’, ‘key’ in CLADE’s development, and in spite of some areas of potential weakness, the growth of CLADE as an organisation and its successful advocacy can be flagged as a major achievement for RWS II.

97 Author’s translation

98 Interview with Camilla Croso, General Coordinator of CLADE

99 Interview with Nelida Cespedes, President of CEAL and a member of the CLADE board

100 This would mean, in the framework used by University of Amsterdam, that CLADE would build on their symbolic impact (media, public opinion) as well as the political and procedural impact areas



ANCEFA and RWS

ANCEFA's mission is: "To promote, enable and build capacity of African Civil Society to advocate and campaign for access to free quality education for all."¹⁰¹

True to this statement and to the core purpose of RWS II, ANCEFA has used the resources of RWS II to engage in a massive expansion of the number of national coalitions in the region. ANCEFA's efforts to support national coalitions is impressive, increasing the number of coalitions it has supported in the region from 19 to 35 during the lifetime of RWS II, of which 16 were part of RWS I and 31 are part of RWS II.

ANCEFA came into formal existence in

2000 as a response to the Dakar EFA meeting and has made a useful contribution in supporting progress towards EFA in light of the extremely challenging context where it works. It describes its work under RWS II as being 'demand driven': building national platforms and strategic alliances when a country asks for such support. During RWS II it identified its achievements in building new coalitions and it is proud of the technical capacity development it has supported such as research skills and budget tracking (see box below). These are seen as important tools for national advocacy, enabling coalitions to track government expenditure on education and demand increases from a more informed position.

Box 6: Highlights of ANCEFA capacity building support 2006-2010

- Provision of start-up financial support to coalitions from 2006 to 2010 e.g. coalitions in Botswana and Mozambique in Southern Africa, Kenya/Somaliland in East Africa, and Senegal, Cameroon and Togo in West and Central Africa. In many cases the financial support has led to setting up of a secretariat, recruitment of staff and coordination of coalition activities.
- ANCEFA has also provided funds and technical support to national coalitions to undertake targeted advocacy campaigns. For instance in 2008 and 2009 ANCEFA provided support to coalitions in Malawi and Kenya to undertake election and budget cycle projects; in 2009 ANCEFA provided funds to coalitions in Zambia, Senegal, and Mali for EFA Gender Assessment and advocacy, and in 2008 and 2009 provided support to coalitions in Tanzania, Nigeria and Ghana to undertake policy advocacy initiatives. This support has enhanced skills among coalitions for policy influencing around education financing, gender and inclusive education.
- ANCEFA has supported capacity building workshops for coalitions across all African regions. For instance the 2006 Southern Africa Workshop on policy advocacy and resource mobilisation held in Zambia; the 2008 Lusophone Workshop on Education for All held in Mozambique, the workshop with ECOWAS¹⁰² Parliamentarians and Journalists held in Senegal in 2009; and Sub-Regional Education Financing workshops in Kenya, Malawi and the Gambia in 2010. These workshops have equipped coalitions with skills in various areas that have boosted their coordination and advocacy work.
- ANCEFA has embarked on developing training manuals, toolkits and leaflets in a number of areas such as coalition building, budget tracking, and policy analysis and advocacy. These will provide coalitions with resources for them to undertake capacity building activities with their membership at country level.
- In 2010 ANCEFA facilitated a learning visit for two ANCEFA staff members and 15 representatives of the Senegal and Mali national coalitions on the ASER¹⁰³ tool for assessing child learning skills practiced by PRATHAM in India. This was done to offer the staff and coalitions exposure and skills for monitoring learning outcomes at country level in the bid to promote quality teaching and learning.

101 As described on their website in October 2010 – http://www.ancefa.org/english/index.php?rub=about_mission

102 The Economic Community Of West African States

103 Annual Status of Education Report. Aser also means 'impact' in Hindi

RWS II has been significant in supporting the work and development of ANCEFA – accounting as previously mentioned for 50% of its budget – supporting institutional growth through funding of staff salaries and office space and enabling ANCEFA to roll out a programme of technical capacity building. For some, this effort is seen as having been too much, too fast; creating increased numbers of coalitions who are not fully prepared for the challenges of their context.¹⁰⁴

This raises the question whether ANCEFA has been strategic in its approach or whether it has responded in a more ad hoc manner to the demands from the countries. In its desire to increase the

number of coalitions in the region, ANCEFA may have spread its efforts too thinly. In its pursuit of scaling up the number of national coalitions (demand-driven or not) there have been weaknesses in the strategy in terms of consolidating the effective formation and representativeness of some coalitions; resulting in the establishment of a secretariat but not an effectively functioning coalition with solid management systems. That is not to say ANCEFA have ignored management capacity; they have provided guidance in written and training form on coalition governance, with success, however, looking at the big picture it would seem that the strategy was too fast but not necessarily deep enough. Even the *Education Watch*

104 A view expressed by external commentators

105 Programme d'appui des systèmes éducatifs des pays de la CONFEMEN (Programme of support to education systems in French-speaking countries)

106 Pro-Poor Advocacy Group

107 Information for snapshot of activities was taken from the RWS annual reports for the respective years mentioned. These reports offer an in-depth review of RWS each year, along with lists of activities for each region

Box 7: A snapshot of ANCEFA activities 2006-2010

2006 – ANCEFA supported the establishment of an expert team that went round to fine-tune the methodology and to put the regional frameworks for the Education Watch (EdWatch) project in place. The expert team of representatives from PASEC¹⁰⁵ and PROPAG¹⁰⁶ – working on quality tools and budget tracking tools respectively – met in Dakar in November 2006 to finalise the monitoring tools. These tools were submitted to coalitions and disseminated at country level to allow the actual monitoring in the 12 countries to begin.

2007 – A consensus-building workshop facilitated by ANCEFA was arranged in Angola at which CSOs working in different sub-sectors were brought together to identify priority education issues around which a campaign could be focused. A co-coordinating team was established to work towards setting up a Coalition and to open a national Secretariat.

2008 – The Africa regional approach to capacity building involved several regional and sub-regional events, where representatives from country level were invited to take part in joint and coordinated regional training workshops. During these workshops countries were supported to develop their country campaign plans and to spearhead campaigns at national and local level. A process to revive the coalition in Zimbabwe, which had been badly affected by the country's socio-economic and political turmoil was initiated, following a stakeholder meeting with Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa (OSISA) in Johannesburg. ANCEFA also supported the revitalisation and consolidation of Lusophone coalitions in Africa through the Lusophone Conference held in Maputo. A strong coordination framework through the Lusophone Moderator in the ANCEFA Board emerged and this constantly mobilises otherwise excluded actors in Africa.

2009 – ANCEFA visited the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) offices and engaged education officials from these bodies. In addition, ANCEFA developed a concept for engaging the African Union (AU), which will be implemented from 2010.¹⁰⁷

2010 – ANCEFA initiated, facilitated, and supported EFA awareness campaigns during two major soccer events, the Africa Cup of Nations in Angola (January), and the FIFA World Cup in South Africa through the 1Goal Project. In Angola ANCEFA worked with the Angola EFA Network in presenting trophies and holding press conferences on EFA, while during the 1Goal Project ANCEFA collaborated with GCE helping coalitions in Africa mobilise soccer stars and politicians to raise awareness on EFA during the Global Action Week (April), and during the World Cup Tournament (June-July). Jointly with GCE, EI and ActionAid, ANCEFA facilitated three sub regional education financing workshops (in Kenya, Malawi and the Gambia) and one national workshop in Zimbabwe.

reports – a flagship initiative of RWS II (mentioned above) are considered by some to be weak and an area where ANCEFA should have provided much greater guidance.

Another key issue after establishing the coalitions has been financial sustainability especially in a period before major funding could be realised. ANCEFA thus learnt that one of the things to do is to provide funds for institutional support as members and management board strove to get adequate funding for their work. These are areas for critical reflection as ANCEFA takes this important work forward.

To be fair to ANCEFA, there are obvious reasons to celebrate the changes that they have supported under RWS II. ANCEFA itself has been able to maintain and grow its own capacity through the support of RWS, supporting coalitions and ensuring an African voice at the table of important EFA discussions. Over the lifetime of RWS II, ANCEFA has positioned itself at the table of many important international debates and ensured the regional voice was represented in these forums. This is an area of work that ANCEFA is increasing, very recently coming together to develop an advocacy strategy for engagement with the African Union (AU). Using the space of regional platforms can be valuable (as we have seen with CLADE) but ANCEFA should be cautious that its engagement in these international forums is balanced and does not distract from its stated core function of building the capacity of national coalitions.

ANCEFA received warm endorsement from many of its affiliated national coalitions in response to a questionnaire commissioned for this report. The national coalitions are happy with the type and amount of support they have been receiving; many now have a voice in government policy discussions that has led to concrete policy changes. The coalitions said they would also welcome more peer-to-peer learning opportunities and coming together in sub-groups; as well as longer term funding. In order to save time and money it would be worth ANCEFA investing more in its website to create easy access to resource materials such as manuals etc.¹⁰⁸

ASPBAE and RWS

The Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE) is the oldest of the three regional networks affiliated to GCE. Formed in 1964 by a group of adult educationists it was only in relatively recent times that its focus expanded to include the full spectrum of EFA goals. ASPBAE began its collaboration with GCE in developing and implementing RWS I, in response to the need to build stronger CSO capacities for policy engagement at national levels. The approach to RWS (I and) II in Asia has, like its African counterpart, concentrated largely at the national level, supporting national level research and advocacy. It has a growing focus on regional advocacy and has influenced regional UN bodies such as the UNESCO Asia Pacific Regional Bureau for Education and sub-regional bodies such as the South East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO).

A feature worthy of note is that in Asia the national coalitions who have been supported through RWS were not – unlike in Africa or Latin America – necessarily affiliated to ASPBAE. They were instead selected on the basis of the project criteria of existing or emerging coalitions with the potential to engage in policy change for EFA. Of course the coalitions are encouraged to affiliate to ASPBAE and GCE if they wish.

In Asia there were only two national coalitions in existence in 2000 when RWS I begun, Bangladesh and the Philippines. By the end of that first phase new coalitions were developing and the idea going into RWS II was focused on strengthening competencies. At the outset of this second phase of RWS, ASPBAE was working with seven national coalitions. Now RWS II has 11 full time coalition partners and has links to three other national coalitions within this project. It has been a deliberate strategy on the part of ASPBAE to work with a limited number of coalitions.

RWS II has allowed ASPBAE to develop its own organisational capacity, putting in place teams in Asia and South Pacific who maintain frequent contact with the national coalitions. During the course of RWS II it has accounted for 45% (previous) to 25%

¹⁰⁸ This is equally the case for the global centre – see below

(current) of ASPBAE total funding. Even now that it accounts for only 25% of their total funding and is according to one interview a “very significant 25%” because of the high degree of flexibility of the fund which allows them to prioritise their most relevant needs.

ASPBAE’s approach of building the capacity of national coalitions to do their own research for advocacy, such as in the case of the mid-decade EFA review (see Box 9 on page 38) and the Education Watch initiative had very beneficial results and led to increased influence of national coalitions with their governments. These two initiatives helped start a dialogue at national level between the coalitions and their

governments.

RWS II has also established the value of regional advocacy, which was previously less well articulated, and increased regional solidarity, capacity and participation in joint regional actions. Through the course of the project sub-regional groupings have emerged, with coalitions coming together and developing unique themes of action. These regional sub-groups included: South Asia whose primary focus has been budget tracking; South East Asia who have pursued a mapping of disadvantaged in relation to education; and the Asia-Pacific sub-regional group who have focused their attention on issues around literacy.

Box 8: A Snapshot of ASPBAE activities 2006-2010

2006 – In March 2006, a regional Asia Pacific Education Watch Planning Workshop was convened in Jakarta, Indonesia. Two sub-regional consultations and trainings were organised, one in Asia – the South Asia Education Watch Researchers Meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka in July and another – the South Pacific Education Watch Training also held in July, and conducted in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea. As a direct consequence of these, national trainings on Education Watch were organised in seven of the eight participating countries in Asia, primarily with the technical support of ASPBAE staff.

2007 – The project expanded its work to Sri Lanka and Cambodia in the year, working with the national education coalitions in these two countries. Both coalitions participated in the Education Watch initiative and other coordinated lobbying and campaign opportunities in the period.

2008 – A meeting held in Mumbai, India in July devised a methodology for alternative budgeting which was to be used in the pilot countries. Participants from Sri Lanka and Pakistan took part in the workshop with ASPBAE staff. During this workshop, the experience of alternative budgeting from the Philippines was shared to help shape and define the methodology to be used in Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

2009 – RWS facilitated the participation of coalitions in a CSO Forum on the eve of the South Asia Education Ministers’ Forum in Dhaka on December 14, 2009, and it was immensely useful for reaching a common set of demands to put to the ministerial. It was hailed as a historic event, as this was the first time the South Asian CSOs had a prep meeting on education before an official event. Output from the meeting included two documents: the Declaration, and the ‘Strategies for Reaching the Unreached and Regional Collaboration’, a one-page Collective Statement set down bullet point commitments including: justiciability of the right to education for all; 6% of GDP to education; 6% of education budgets to adult education; role of civil society (came out very strongly in the declaration); need for comprehensive assessment of resource requirements.

2010 – At the 6th Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) People’s Forum on September 23-26, 2010 in Hanoi, a month before the actual ASEAN Summit, ASPBAE worked with E-Net for Justice Indonesia, E-Net Philippines, NGO Education Partnership (NEP Cambodia), Vietnam Coalition for Education for All (VCEFA) and youth organisations, and successfully influenced civil society engagement with the ASEAN Summit to ensure inclusion of the education agenda among other social development concerns, in the context of the financial turmoil, price crises, global warming, and trade and general economic downturn, in informing the policy discussions of the ASEAN leaders.

According to responses to a survey conducted for this research national coalitions are happy with the support they have received from ASPBAE. A more holistic, sector wide approach was identified as an area for increased attention and longer term support to make advocacy more effective was also raised. ASPBAE has played an important role in enabling the coalitions to engage in regional advocacy. Coalitions have, with support of RWS II, been able to participate in regional platforms and meetings. Being at the table of such meetings has had the double impact of giving them a voice in the regional forum and to having more credibility in the eyes of their own governments.

ASPBAE appears to take a middle route between ANCEFA's big push to build national coalitions and CLADE's vocal presence in regional platforms. ASPBAE has also (according to one non-ASPBAE source) gone further and better along the cross-fertilisation of advocacy between countries than the other two regions.

There is scope, however, for ASPBAE to reflect on its practice going forward. By their own admission ASPBAE haven't yet fully exploited the potential of action at the regional level and this needs to be an area for increased action in the future. Another point for reflection is required in regard to ensuring

that long-term capacity development is not compromised in the desire for short-term outputs. One external commentator pointed to an example where it appeared that a coalition was encouraged to undertake a national level research but capacity was not strong enough, resulting in delays and a missed opportunity. ASPBAE needs to bear these concerns in mind and ensure that national coalitions have the necessary capacity for sustained work and not just to deliver of discrete pieces of work or one-off activities.

In late 2009, ASPBAE began to develop an 'RWS Creative Narratives and Knowledge Sharing Project' for joint reflection and documentation of RWS II. This process has fed into this report and highlights the commitment to learning going forward.

RWS and the regions

The regional networks are a pivotal point of power in RWS II and are most definitely a critical piece of puzzle for progressing advocacy on EFA. They are key in supporting national coalitions, who overwhelmingly value their support.¹⁰⁹ What is more it is clear that ANCEFA, ASPBAE and CLADE are dynamic actors in current EFA circles and well respected in their regions.



¹⁰⁹ In fact 100% of responses received expressed satisfaction, however, it is worth noting that overall response to the survey were less 50% in total, with the highest % (relative to number of coalitions in the region) from Asia, followed by Africa and none from Latin America. Questionnaires were translated into French and Spanish so language was not a factor limiting participation in the survey.

Box 9: Building high level influencing through regional action

RWS II has permitted all three regional networks to support the capacity and advocacy of national coalitions in their respective regions. It has also played a key role in the development of the networks themselves, both institutionally and as regional advocates. Latin America has pursued this strategy furthest¹¹⁰ but both ASPBAE and ANCEFA are also engaged in high level influencing in their regions and in international forums.

A key feature across all three regions (as well as in national contexts) has been the use of regional platforms and spaces to bring about policy change. In Latin America this is evident in its collaboration with human rights groups such as the Robert Kennedy Foundation and former Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Vernor Muñoz, to take a case to the Inter-American Human Rights Commission. In Africa, ANCEFA has proactively engaged with forums of UNESCO, the AU, ADEA, and sub regional blocks (like SADC and ECOWAS) and is currently stepping up its work in this area. ASPBAE recognised that most policies (which have a significant impact) are decided at the national level by governments and/or globally by donor governments and multilateral aid agencies and not regionally. ASPBAE considered it critical therefore to identify and engage in the strategic regional policy spaces that had significant impact on the ability of countries to deliver on the EFA promise.

In the region, the UNESCO Regional office (Bangkok) was identified as a strategic partner and ASPBAE sought to maximise the spaces opened by UNESCO Bangkok, especially around the Mid-Decade Assessment (MDA) of EFA. The process of inputting to and influencing the content of the mid-decade review spanned more than two years and benefited from the increased resources available through RWS II. In February 2007 ASPBAE facilitated the participation of CAMPE Bangladesh, E-Net Philippines and NEP Cambodia in the 8th UNESCO EFA Coordinators' meeting held in Bangkok. The coalitions, with other CSOs, made a joint presentation on the indicators they felt should be looked at in the EFA review. In the forum, relevant government reports from countries were shared, providing the coalitions and the RWS team an opportunity to review and influence the official reports with data and evidence emerging from the Education Watch processes. In the same meeting, ASPBAE was elected as a member of the Sub-regional Advisory Group for South East Asia. This was a significant outcome of the work supported by RWS II because it allowed them to monitor how the EFA assessment reports were shaping up, to point out the gaps in these reports, and to suggest how to address various issues.

During the year, ASPBAE was also invited to be a member of the Technical Support Groups (TSGs) of UNESCO's Mid-Decade Assessment Steering Committee and to nominate coalitions to be part of this. To review the draft national EFA MDA reports and assist in the preparation of the EFA MDA Sub-Regional Report, TSGs were constituted to review the draft national and sub-regional reports with a focus on the specific EFA goals: early childhood care and education, universal primary/basic education, life skills and lifelong learning, literacy, gender equality, and quality education. ASPBAE joined the TSGs on Literacy and Education Quality and nominated CAMPE Bangladesh, E-Net Philippines, E-Net Justice Indonesia, and NEP Cambodia for the other areas. Membership in these TSGs provided another opportunity for lobbying national governments' policy positions backed by Education Watch evidence.

ASPBAE, NEP Cambodia and E-Net Philippines also participated in the UNESCO Bangkok organised Writers' Workshop for the EFA Mid-Decade Assessment for East Asian, South Asian, and South-East Asian Member States in Bangkok, Thailand in

¹¹⁰ See Box 5 and the Latin American case studies in Part 2 of this report

September 2007. The Writers' Workshop provided a venue for countries and partners to participate in a peer review of draft National MDA Reports. In addition, countries and partners collaborated to generate common themes and issues to be included in the MDA Sub-Regional Synthesis Report.

This continued in 2008 with ASPBAE and the coalitions engaging in another strategic opportunity during the South East Asia EFA Mid-Term Policy Review Conference, which brought together UNESCO representatives from South-East Asian countries, UN agencies and partners involved in EFA. The Review Conference aimed to translate the findings of the EFA Mid-Decade Assessment into concrete action, identify policy gaps, and propose policies and strategies towards reaching the unreached.

With the participation of education CSOs, the key recommendations from the conference were presented at the SEAMEO Education Ministers Council Meeting in Kuala Lumpur in March 2008. Again, the conference was an important opportunity for the RWS South-East Asian countries and EFA partners to verify and validate the Insular South-East Asia and Mekong EFA MDA sub-regional synthesis reports. Both conferences provided unique moments for the Asian RWS countries and EFA partners, including UNESCO and governments, to work together and agree on the general direction for EFA in the region.

In addition to developing the capacity of coalitions¹¹¹ for this regional advocacy, APSBAE also took on a regional representation and lobbying role. For example, representing the RWS II coalitions at a meeting of 70 high level representatives from SEAMEO, ASEAN and UNESCO. The theme of the meeting was *Reaching the Unreached: Meeting of South-East Asian Countries to Achieve the EFA Goals together by 2015* and the education officials from the region and EFA partners came up with concrete proposals for joint collaborative targeted activities in education.

Through RWS II ASPBAE has been able to increase their own and the national coalitions' influence in regional spheres, as the example above demonstrates. Furthermore, gaining an international perspective through RWS II is consistently mentioned by the national education coalitions. The opportunities to participate in ASEAN and UNESCO events enriched their understanding of the dynamics between international organisations and national policies.

*“Before E-Net joined RWS, we were already engaging with the Philippine government on EFA. But we didn't always understand why the government was involved in certain interventions. When we joined RWS in 2004, we were able to engage at the regional level. It was here that we saw where government was often taking its cue.”*¹¹²

Furthermore the participation of national coalitions in these regional forums opened dialogue between the coalitions and their governments, when they met in this regional space. The coalitions gained credibility by being at the table of these important discussions. Coalitions and governments sometimes found they were in fact 'singing a similar tune' and agreement and consensus were possible.¹¹³

With the support of RWS II ASPBAE, ANCEFA and CLADE have been able to increase the voice of civil society at the regional level. They have utilised existing EFA forums in alliance with UN agencies such as UNESCO Bangkok; exploited political openings such as the AU second decade for education or sought out new spaces to push the fulfilment of the promises made in Dakar in 2000, seen in the justiciability work led by CLADE. As they go forward they must continue to assess and evaluate the strategic importance of regional platforms in leveraging change on EFA and the fulfilment of governments' human rights obligations.

111 i.e. through sub-regional Policy Strategizing Workshops for South Asia coalitions (May, 2008) and South East Asia coalitions (August, 2008)

112 Interview with Cecilia Soriano, E-Net Philippines for the RWS Creative Narratives video case study

113 Interview with Maria Khan

The regional networks' own institutional growth and advocacy represent a significant success for RWS II. Furthermore it is evident through a review of annual reports and testimony given for this research that they are playing an important function in supporting increased advocacy in national contexts on EFA. The support that RWS II has been able to provide to the regional networks is unusual¹¹⁴ and highly valued by the regional networks.

The research points to the regional networks possessing much strength; it also highlights areas where their capacity and action need to be strengthened and their purpose and identity considered.¹¹⁵ One research informant said that trickle-down could not be certain and if you focus too much at the regional level there is a risk that change will not occur at the national level; another view was that actions at the regional levels helped create spaces for national coalitions to engage their governments and created greater pressure. There are clearly different perspectives on which strategies work, however, a number of issues stand out for reflection:

- Regional networks are social actors in their own right and to see them purely as a vehicle to express the views of national forums is naïve, and their active political voice should be welcome. The key is to ensure a mixed and balanced approach so regional networks pursue regional advocacy as well as supporting national coalitions.
- Support to building national coalitions needs to happen at a suitable pace and capacity development needs to ensure sustainability. While regional coalitions need to support growth in numbers and size of national coalitions, a greater focus on capacity in management and governance¹¹⁶ is required to ensure coalitions can manage their resources and procedures adequately.
- The regional networks create a space for knowledge and skill development, which is valued by the national coalitions. Despite the flexibility offered by the RWS II grant there has been a generalised tendency to see capacity development as training with less attention to follow up

and longer-term qualitative engagement that is critical for the success of sustainable national advocacy.

- Regional networks need to keep a balance in their work and guard against becoming over 'institutionalised', focused too much on their own growth and voice. They should ensure continued consultation with their members to determine strategic priorities in order to ensure the legitimacy of the direction of their work going forward.

The different histories and context of each network have of course shaped them. Going forward, however, these reflections should allow for a more strategic approach.

RWS global coordination and action

Theory can sometimes be easier than practice and shifting power is not always as simple as it sounds. Many INGOs have (and continue to struggle) with being 'partners' with southern affiliates, especially when a funding relationship is a core part of the relationship.¹¹⁷ RWS II was a genuine commitment to shifting this power dynamic of the work and the allocation of resources and management reflect this.

Day-to-day management over RWS II was firmly located at the regional level and staffing and resources at the global centre (the GCE secretariat) were limited. The project had only one centralised global post, that of the RWS Global Coordinator¹¹⁸ who has been described as more of 'an onlooker, a purse keeper, a keeper of relationships'. The secretariat staff member did not play a major role in capacity strengthening although there are examples of some involvement, the role was more of a facilitating one to bring the regions together, to share lessons relevant to all three regions to support reporting and planning processes. Secretariat staff and others now question if this was the right balance and this research points to a need for a stronger role from the secretariat in knowledge and resource management; providing joint forums for learning and actions, and creating stronger links between

114 Other well known civil society education funds such as CEF or CSEF do not have such support at the regional level, although CEF did provide some funding to ANCEFA and ASPBAE for regional work, separate to its support to national coalitions

115 A question was asked why a more significant evaluation of the regional networks was not taking place; such an in-depth evaluation is not the within possibility of this project as the regional networks are bigger than RWS alone

116 There was some suggestion that the new Civil Society Education Fund could run into similar problems, especially around absorptive capacity

117 INTRAC NGO Policy Briefing Paper No.4, April 2001

118 Since the start of RWS II this post has been held by three different people Lucia Fry (who managed the project although this was not her main function post within GCE), Geoffrey Odaga, and Jill Hart

nation-regional and global level advocacy.

The idea that advocacy at the national level would link with advocacy at the global (or perhaps more accurately to say international level) was articulated in two of the seven specific project objectives (and is reflected in the presentation of progress in the annual reports) which state:

- To contribute to the delivery of effective global advocacy work by GCE, ensuring consistency, coherence and **cross-fertilisation between national advocacy plans and regional/global strategies**
- **To bring about specific policy changes at global, regional and national level, consistent with overall objectives of GCE Global Strategy** (authors highlights)

Looking at RWS as a whole the available information suggests that the link from national to specific international level policy change has been the weakest area of advocacy within the project. This is not to say there are not examples, however, policy changes at the international level that have come about as a result of RWS II are less easy to identify. One research informant said a certain naivety existed in believing that it would be easy 'to join the dotted line between the two levels of advocacy when in fact these needed to be created, and that global policy lines didn't have automatic resonance for national coalitions'. In hindsight the same person felt that the project shouldn't have 'pegged itself to high level policy objectives'.¹¹⁹

The learning from this may be that this link is simply not easy to create or that this area of work was overlooked in the implementation of the project, with the latter of the two appearing the most plausible explanation. Limited levels of staffing at the global centre and limited allocation of resources for global work from the RWS II budget meant the global coordination was too limited and overstretched to follow through on this important aspect of the project. Specific and intentional connections need to be made in order to foster this cross-fertilisation from national to international policy change.

To ensure that the dynamic of change is located at the national level – a key vision of

the project – any future work under the RWS banner must ensure that national messages feed up to the global advocacy in a more intentional manner.

Another area where the global secretariat's facilitating role could have been used to greater effect was creating more concrete actions between the regions and between countries from different regions. In 2006 a good start was made around the Education Watch with the 2006 annual report noting that:

*In March 2006, ANCEFA took part in the Asia Pacific Education Watch Planning Workshop held in Jakarta, Indonesia. In August 2006, ASPBAE attended the Africa Education Watch Planning Meeting held in Dakar, Senegal. The experiences developed through this inter-regional collaboration will facilitate development of a model that will see the operation of the EdWatch project translated from research to a popular political agenda in all the regions.*¹²⁰

This early collaboration does not appear to have been pursued as fully as it could. There are very few examples between a country in one region linking up with a country in another region – a potentially valuable process for learning and advocacy was therefore missed.

One success story in terms of joint action – even though it resulted in frustration in regard to the policy changes sought – was the combined actions in the run up to and during the CONFINTEA VI. This provides a blueprint for joint action at all levels – national, regional and international – that is useful for future action.

Box 10: RWS II and sixth international meeting of CONFINTEA: a story of coordinated global advocacy

The sixth international conference on adult education (CONFINTEA VI) entitled ‘Harnessing the power and potential of adult learning and education for a viable future’ was held in Belem, Brazil in December 2009. The meeting provided a focal point for joint advocacy among RWS II members. All three regions, many national coalitions and the global centre worked independently and together in order to influence governments and international donors.

The UNESCO-convened CONFINTEA meetings only take place every 12 years and the opportunity to influence the outcomes could not be missed. GCE globally, including RWS II participant countries, decided on a coordinated approach, with actions across the movement. The previous meeting of CONFINTEA V in 1997 produced an agenda for the future, which set out a number of comprehensive paths to promoting equitable adult education to reduce literacy and empower marginalised groups such as women. By 2006, however, the UNESCO Global Monitoring Report (which has a special focus on literacy) was clear that literacy was getting ‘short shrift’ with governments and aid agencies giving insufficient priority and finance to youth and adult literacy programmes.¹²¹ The GMR called for a three-pronged approach to tackling illiteracy that included achieving UPE and scaling up youth and adult learning programs, as well as the promotion of literate environments. The 2010 GMR published just prior to the Belem meeting (in the autumn of 2009) highlighted some progress in reducing the total number of illiterate people while making it clear that: “adult literacy remains one of the most neglected of the Education for All goals. There are currently some 759 million illiterate youths and adults in the world. Reflecting the legacy of gender disparities in education, two-thirds of this number are women.”¹²²

With this backdrop the need to advocate for increased attention to literacy was crucial and GCE and its affiliated members began their strategic engagement well in advance of the actual conference. CLADE and others, lobbied for the meeting to be held in Brazil because (as one informant explained) they were anticipating that President Lula would attend and throw weight behind the progressive changes demanded by GCE members.¹²³ Others considered it of symbolic significance that the meeting should be held in “the home land of Paulo Freire”¹²⁴ whose work has so greatly influenced the form and purpose of adult literacy.¹²⁵ National, regional and global activities were planned well in advance and coordinated across the GCE movement.

In Africa ANCEFA began preparatory lobbying at least two years before CONFINTEA VI, targeting actions at the African Regional Conference in support of Global Literacy¹²⁶ held in Bamako, Mali in September 2007. At that meeting ANCEFA coordinated a number of activities including a public march to lobby the Ministers in charge of literacy, as well as representatives of multilateral and bilateral agencies. Together with PAMOJA and ActionAid, ANCEFA engaged the press, making clear the message that literacy is the responsibility of the government as much as other education sectors and should not be ignored. They called for a greater budget allocation to education in general and especially to literacy; highlighting the link between literacy levels and improvement in health and in the most marginalised communities. ANCEFA with its partners EI Africa, GCE and other CSOs were able to influence the final Conference Communiqué that included the policy demand to increase the allocation for literacy to at least 3% of the education budget.

ANCEFA and a number of national coalitions continued to focus on the issue of literacy in the subsequent years and in 2008 published a report entitled ‘Forging partnership towards a renewed vision of adult education in Africa’, which was a key civil society contribution to both the Regional Preparatory Conference in Kenya in November

121 UNESCO 2006 GMR, summary document, p1
<http://www.unesco.org/en/efareport/reports/2006-literacy/>

122 UNESCO 2010 GMR Full document, Chapter 1, p.7
<http://www.unesco.org/fileadmin/MULTIMEDIA/HQ/ED/GMR/pdf/gmr2010/gmr2010-overview.pdf>

123 Interview with Camilla Croso

124 Nelida Cespedes is the President of CEAAL and a member of the CLADE board

125 Paulo Freire is the Brazilian educator and educational philosophy whose work in 1960s Brazil (up until his death in 1997) challenged conventional literacy teaching, suggesting that literacy was more than just reading and writing per se but also through literacy the ability to critically read the world

126 The meeting itself was convened by the UNESCO Institute for Lifelong Learning and hosted by the government of Mali

127 CONFINTEA VI Regional Conference (Nairobi, Kenya November 2008)

128 GAW is, as the name suggests, a week of action on a specific policy issue that GCE identify (through a process of consultation) as key for increasing progress on the EFA goals

129 See the GCE website
<http://www.campaignforeducation.org/en/big-read-campaign-materials/>

130 Global Action Week takes place every April and the mass mobilisation would have dovetailed with CONFINTEA VI that was originally to take place in May 2009 but was postponed until later that year due to fears over the Swine Flu pandemic

131 See
<http://fisc2009english.wordpress.com/2009/12/02/civil-society-caucus-proposals-to-strengthen-the-belem-declaration/>

132 Interview with Maria Khan

133 Interview with Camilla Croso

134 It should be made clear that although this short case study picks out different types of work from each region, national and regional activity in the run up to CONFINTEA were seen across all three regions and only limited examples are shared here

2008¹²⁷ as well as to CONFINTEA VI in 2009 in Brazil. The literature review was based on work done by national coalitions, but also at regional and international levels.

In 2008 GCE adopted literacy as the theme for the 2009 Global Action Week¹²⁸ and planning and development begun under the banner of 'The Big Read'.¹²⁹ The GAW was intended as the culmination of the lobbying work, which had begun years before at national and regional level.¹³⁰ In total GCE mobilised an estimated 13 million people worldwide and sent a powerful message to governments and donors that this issue was important.

Among this global effort for GAW were many of the national coalitions supported by the RWS II project. In Asia these included, among others, three of the case study countries (see Part 2) who engaged in a range of creative activities:

- **Cambodia (NGO Education Partnership)** – More than 700 people joined the Big Read Launching Event on 25 April at the National Institute of Education in Phnom Penh organised by GCE Cambodia, with support from NEP. Local Big Reads also took place in eight selected provinces in Cambodia. The key message for the event was on lobbying for more resources to education.
- **Philippines (E-Net)** – Simultaneous Big Reads were held in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao where more than 1000 people were mobilised on 22 April to call for youths' right to quality and free education. In Quezon City, members of the coalition shared an eight-point agenda for policy advocacy on education, before an audience of children, out of school youth and students. Local celebrities and members of local government officials and the Department of Education joined in the Big Read.
- **Nepal (GCE Nepal)** – The Big Read on 25 April brought together different politically affiliated youth groups, the Youth Minister, the Department of Education to tackle issues on youth and adult literacy. India (National Coalition for Education) – Local Big Read Books were produced and distributed to 14 states in India. A reading event led by more than 300 children, youth and adults and a big concert was held on 28 April in New Delhi. Local artists and celebrities took part in the Big Read through their music and messages of solidarity.

Action also took place in other countries coordinated by ASPBAE, who, like ANCEFA and CLADE, began preparation well in advance. ASPBAE also actively lobbied regional bodies as part of the coordinated approach.

For CLADE and its members, tackling illiteracy is a key focus of work and with the agreement by the government of Brazil to host the meeting, their work took on global significance within GCE. Lobbying ahead of and at CONFINTEA VI saw a 'pooling of resources led by a professional team' with important preparatory work led by CLADE. They played an instrumental role in the organisation of the International Civil Society Forum (known by its Portuguese acronym FISC). This meeting was held in the days running up to CONFINTEA to prepare the participation of civil society groups and also to create working links with other movements, networks and organisations that have been working on the right to Youth and Adult Education. CLADE, with others in GCE, were influential in setting out recommendations to strengthen the Belém Framework for Action in the form of the document *From rhetoric to coherent action*¹³¹ that was presented December 1st, 2009. Civil society was represented on the main panels at the meeting and on the drafting committee of the final declaration although this was ultimately described as 'frustrating' because 'the language in the final communiqué could have been stronger'.¹³²

Despite the pre-lobbying that took place, there was too much expectation about what could be achieved at the actual conference, which was in the main attended by lower ranking government officials, articulating decisions that had already been taken elsewhere. This according to one informant highlights an important lesson about knowing how much time and energy to invest in one meeting when in fact much of outcome has been decided in advance.

The space opened by the national coalitions, the regional networks and the global centre in the run up and during the conference drew attention to literacy as fundamental right and was an important step in getting governments and donors to give more attention to this EFA Goal.¹³³

The real success story lies not in the outcome this time but in the blueprint that coordinated action across the GCE movement, in part made possible by RWS II. It supported the work of national coalitions such as those in Asia, it contributed to regional actions such as those of ANCEFA and facilitated action taken at the meeting, led in great part by CLADE.¹³⁴ The coordinated action in the run up and during CONFINTEA VI is, despite some disappointment in the final outcome, a success story and outlines how the different RWS II countries and regional networks can work together for greater effect.

Overall, however, the findings of this report suggest that the link between national and international advocacy, as well as between regions and between countries from different regions could have been much stronger. It is also an area in which some national coalitions would have appreciated more activity. Despite this, it is worth noting that GCE as a global coalition has been praised for its ability to bring together multiple sites of action: “The nature of the GCE is that it is simultaneously linking across all levels of action. This challenges assumptions about a simplistic vertical or layered model of change.”¹³⁵

An obstacle to assessing the contribution of RWS II to the international policy debates has been the lack of specific brand identity of the project. This was borne out in interviews with external research informants who, while knowledgeable of GCE, the regional networks and some of national coalitions, knew very little about RWS II and as such were unable to validate the impact of its success in the field of global advocacy. It is fair to stress here, that this lack of external branding was not considered an issue by the Government of the Netherlands and according to the former RWS Global Coordinator it was a deliberate choice not to brand the project but rather allow it to make a contribution to building a movement on EFA.¹³⁶

Despite the weakness of the project in aggregating advocacy and campaign issues from the national level to global advocacy it is clear that for national coalitions there is considerable benefit from these wider affiliations. The Peruvian Campaign for Education for All, among others felt strongly that their association not only with CLADE but to GCE globally afforded increased credibility and enhanced their image in the eyes of the Peruvian government.¹³⁷ Or as In Samrithy of the Cambodia national coalition put it: “*I think Real World Strategies is about global links. We feel that ok we are not alone, we have friends in other coalitions in other countries who care about us and we care for them*”.

Furthermore being part of a global coalition provides access to a direct source of information for coalitions to understand the

dynamics of the EFA global political context, which can provide useful ‘intelligence’ for influencing their own governments. One further benefit from international and regional links is possible protection in the face of government hostility; although not a major concern in the countries where RWS II has been operating, there are examples. The coalition coordinator in Haiti was harassed by the military and his passport marked to identify him as a dangerous person, CLADE issued a statement about this harassment and it is hoped the increased public attention will provide protection for him to continue his activities.

One area where local RWS action did link to a globalised action can be found in the contribution made to the annual GCE Global Action Week (GAW). Although not a stated objective of RWS II, according to one source RWS II countries accounted for 70%¹³⁸ of the GAW numbers. This claim, however, is difficult to assess for accuracy as money at the national level was at times ‘folded together’ with other funds.¹³⁹ It is also worth noting that despite the importance of high visibility mobilisation on a global scale, some research participants said that GAW detracts from defining national advocacy agendas. There was a view that GAW focuses a lot of time, energy and resources on an advocacy theme that may not be the most relevant or timely in the national context.

A notable gap at the global level is the lack of centralised database of resources that could serve as means of documenting the project’s output in one centralised location and facilitate the sharing of good practice, advocacy tools, and training materials (subject to language and/or cultural differences); it could help save time and money and act as a catalyst of ideas for others. It would also help reduce pressure on the regional networks to undertake this task. While a balance is important and the majority of funds should support the needs of national coalitions, a marginal increase in resources at the central level could be extremely beneficial for projects such as RWS II.

The issue of ‘operational space’ was highlighted during this research process and it is worth touching on to order to avoid similar

135 Gaventa and Mayo (2009) IDS Working Paper 327, p 23

136 Interviews with Yvonne van Hees, Geoffrey Odaga and Lucia Fry

137 Interview with Madeleine Zuniga, National Coordinator, Campaña Peruana por el Derecho a la Educación

138 Interview with Geoffrey Odaga

139 Various interviews – Owain James



confusions arising in the future. GCE is a global coalition working on EFA with affiliated members in over 100 countries; it does not however work with all existing education networks or coalitions. ANCEFA, ASPBAE and CLADE are the affiliated regional networks with whom GCE partners for the core of its activities in those respective regions. An understanding exists, articulated in GCE's strategic plan, that all regional activities will be done in cooperation with these regional networks, however, there are some examples where this has not been the case. For example in South Africa a parallel process of coalition building occurred that did not include ANCEFA, and in Bolivia some confusion arose regarding the allocation of the new CSEF grant and which coalition was affiliated to CLADE/GCE. The danger is that parallel processes or separate relationships can lead to a perception (to both insiders and outsiders) of a lack of internal communication and/or a lack of trust within the GCE 'family', and warrant some reflection by GCE secretariat and board.

One final issue that emerged in relation to the global centre during this research is the perception that the GCE Board tends to see RWS as a side issue and not as a core aspect of GCE work. Research informants felt that

the project was dealt with as an administrative issue and that the Board did not focus sufficient attention on the richness or importance of the work. This reinforces the findings of the GCE Mid-Term review in 2007 that noted: "RWS currently appears to many as a 'bolt-on' rather than a core part of GCE's programme. Despite their key role in managing RWS, many feel that GCE has not realised the potential of regional networks, or reflected their contribution in its governance."¹⁴⁰

Others also asked to what extent the 1Goal Campaign¹⁴¹ has absorbed a disproportionate amount of secretariat and board attention during the last couple of years, draining energy from work such as RWS. There was also a concern that 1Goal messaging was too centrally driven and not enough space given to national coalitions, undermining the aims of projects such as RWS II that aim to increase the voice of southern activists.

These comments and questions would suggest that at the very least a perception exists that questions whether the GCE Board has been sufficiently focused on RWS II, an issue which may require reflection from the board about its future engagement in such work.

¹⁴⁰ Mid Term Review of GCE 2007, p.9

¹⁴¹ See <http://www.join1goal.org/home.php> for more information

Did it work?

One purpose of this report is to capture some of the unique stories of RWS II, another to examine the individual elements and the project in its entirety and to respond to the question of has RWS worked? The overview above has attempted to generate an understanding of RWS II and to document some key aspects of the project, as well as offer an assessment of some of the highlights and challenges. There have been limitations in the way the project was monitored and evaluated, including limitations in the research for this report and as a result, not all that is either good, or less good, about RWS has been unearthed.

How far then has the project realised its core aim? How many objectives have been met and what is the project's contribution overall to helping shape progress to reaching the EFA goals? Has the money invested by the Government of the Netherlands and the effort of so many helped to change the landscape of national EFA advocacy?

As with any multi-faceted issue the answer is often more complex than a simple yes or no response: RWS has led to some amazing policy and legal changes that will without doubt have a fundamental impact on access to quality education for all. Naturally it has also had its failings; issues of personal and/or political tensions that hindered the work and resulted in missed opportunities.

From the testimonies collected it is clear that RWS II has been a valuable experience for those organisations that took part. RWS II has enabled the building of national EFA coalitions where there were none; increasing the capacity of others already in existence and significantly strengthened the work of the regional networks. Building civil society advocacy capacity cannot, however, solely be measured by increased numbers or professed self-esteem of coalitions (regardless of how important this is in itself). It must also be measured against its own objective of whether or not, having been strengthened, civil society can deliver on policy changes to further progress towards EFA.

The research team faced a double hurdle in documenting and making an assessment of how far this was achieved: firstly, the well recognised difficulty regarding attribution for changes as a result of advocacy and second in the case of RWS II the significant lack of external (or at times even internal) branding of the project. Although attribution of a policy change to a single event or organisation is sometimes possible it is more feasible to assess the contribution to a desired result. One internal research informant was very clear that “*you have to think of RWS [II] – what was its contribution, rather than attribute changes to it.*”¹⁴² This view is more credible because change rarely occurs as the result of a single process but (as already touched on in the discussion on ‘policy change’ above) change is achieved over time and influenced by a variety of factors. Building in good monitoring and evaluation systems for advocacy, however, reduces the difficulties of attribution to some extent.¹⁴³

This generic challenge of attribution of advocacy was exacerbated by a lack of branding of RWS II. It was (according to more than one internal informant) a deliberate policy not to create an RWS brand;¹⁴⁴ no matter how valid the rationale for this decision it made the process of assessing RWS II's unique contribution more complicated. Despite these challenges it is evident that RWS II has contributed to some significant policy changes in a number of national contexts, and that it has helped increase size and effectiveness of many coalitions, suggesting that further policy changes will follow.

It is the conclusion of this research that RWS II has been a success, making a worthwhile contribution in the struggle for EFA. What's more, taking a top line look, the project provides value for money. The overall budget for this project was €5 million¹⁴⁵ over five years – only a fraction of the cost for example of G8 and G20 Summits held in Canada in 2010¹⁴⁶ – not insignificant of course but considering some

142 Lucia Fry

143 For practical suggestions see: <http://www.intrac.org/data/files/resources/672/Tracking-Progress-in-Advocacy-Why-and-How-to-Monitor-and-Evaluate-Advocacy-Projects-and-Programmes.pdf>

144 Interviews with Geoffrey Odaga and Lucia Fry

145 Approx. US\$ 6,793,267

146 According to an article by Geoffrey Sachs in the UK newspaper the Guardian (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2010/jul/04/g8-aid-pledges-broken>) “hosting this year's G8 summit reportedly cost Canada a fortune, despite the absence of any significant results. The estimated cost of hosting the G8 leaders for a day and a half, followed by the G20 leaders for a day and a half, reportedly came to more than \$1bn [€ 717,865,737,913.84]. This is essentially the same amount that the G8 leaders pledged to give each year to the world's poorest countries to support maternal and child health.”

of the changes in law, policy, budgets, and increased levels of activism of EFA it appears to be money well spent.

That is not to say that the project was without its weaknesses. Reports of poor governance, questions over sustainability and even lack of transparency have all been raised and must be addressed by the national coalitions, the regional networks and GCE secretariat and board.

RWS II success is then evident in the strength of coalitions and the policy changes their actions have influenced. It is also evident in the impact it has had on the real lives of the women, men and children who have been part of it, from activists to school community beneficiaries. It is worth pausing to reflect on the words of Jamaica, the 15 year old girl who after being forced to drop out of school became an activist in an RWS II-supported campaign run by E-Net in the Philippines:

Philippines/Claudine Claridad



“I learned from E-Net that all of us can help in education. I’d like to teach children myself. Before the campaign, I didn’t talk much except to say yes when someone asked me a question. I talk more now.”¹⁴⁷

These simple words illustrate a powerful point that goes to the heart of RWS, which is that creating spaces and opportunities allows ordinary children (and adults) to find their voice and – when they believe it is correct – raise it for their right to education.¹⁴⁸



Philippines/E-Net

¹⁴⁷ Interview conducted by Barbara Fortunato as part of the RWS Documentation and Assessment process in Asia

¹⁴⁸ See the Asia regional case studies below in Part 2 to learn more about the work of E-Net Philippines

SECTION 4

Global lessons

Context and different political environments can have a huge bearing on the type and impact of advocacy on EFA. Each story must be read with an understanding of the cultural and political situation in which it has taken place. Action that generates a positive response in one country may lead to a negative reaction in another. Despite cultural and contextual differences, a reading of the case studies highlights some common issues facing nearly all the countries, and also highlights some common strategies.

Across the countries and the regions it is clear that many barriers to the right to education are universal and coalitions face similar issues. It is clear that all coalitions are operating in environments with multiple challenges to achieving EFA including barriers to access and quality, weak government systems and policy frameworks. Lack of resources and widespread charging of fees (formal and informal) is commonplace. Cultural barriers that designate some children – girls, children with disabilities, children from particular ethnic or social groups – less worthy of an education are resulting in unequal access to formal education and higher rates of illiteracy for these discriminated groups – another shared reality.

Despite poor education indicators, the coalitions face governments whose public discourse on education is supportive. The notion that these governments lack resources rather than political will was widespread and coalitions face the challenge of highlighting inaccuracies in government data and/or dispelling the myth that governments would do more if only they could. Of course, some countries do face real resource constraints but political prioritisation of education is often lacking. The starting point for much of the advocacy is one where policies and practice needed updating, changing or proper resourcing.

In addition to sharing many similar external obstacles in moving the debate and action on EFA forward, coalitions also shared some common characteristics. At the start of RWS II, as GCE acknowledged, many coalitions lacked leadership and institutional

capacity and their ability to advocate effectively was described as ‘slim and fragile’.¹⁴⁹ Coalitions were at once trying to tackle the huge barriers to EFA in their countries while also needing to develop their own systems, structures and capacity.

The commonality of experiences is not only reflected in the context and starting point of the coalitions’ work but also in the strategies and tactics they pursued, guided and supported by the regional networks. Their tactics included lobbying different parts of the State, although most commonly the Ministry of Education. Of course the political culture of different countries led to different relationships with government, in some cases the coalitions formed very close working relationships with government, acting as advisers and allies. For coalitions in both Africa and Asia, adopting an insider approach to government was seen as extremely important, whereas in Latin American coalitions focused on legal changes, using the division of State powers to hold the executive to account.

Another pattern evident across most of the work is the importance of lobbying consistently across a defined period of time and using the political and/or policy calendars to maximise impact. For example lobbying prospective MPs and getting their sign up to key demands prior to elections, or finding out key dates in the national budget cycle and lobbying in the run up to key decisions. Coalitions have become increasingly aware that they need to target lobbying further and wider, not just focusing on the executive and the legislative arms of the State but also with the judiciary, something that has paid enormous dividends in Latin America. Mobilisation of the public and beneficiaries is another tool that has been used to good effect during RWS II, as has reaching out to the wider public (and decision makers) via the media.

Another common tool in advocacy was the generation of new research to support use of evidence-based advocacy. Generating reliable evidence serves as an alternative to official government data that is often limited (and possibly misleading) and it demonstrates to

149 See quote on page 17 of this report

government that coalitions are serious and credible actors with a good understanding of the education sector. RWS II gave a great impetus to evidence-based advocacy through Education Watch, a flagship initiative in the early years of the project.¹⁵⁰ Participation in Education Watch increased confidence of the sector to engage with government from an informed position. The research highlighted the issues at hand and the weak institutional data collection capacity at the State level. The inability of the State to generate the same quality data, therefore its inability to effectively respond to the education needs on the ground, was highlighted indirectly through the process of engagement with decision makers.

RWS II started not long after the mass mobilisation of organisations and individuals in the Make Poverty History movement that culminated around the 2005 G8 Summit. With this backdrop and because it makes sense, the project objectives stressed the importance of building broad-based alliances. This did happen, the work with the teachers' unions in particular (at times strained) has resulted in an important collaboration, which has been greatly facilitated by EI. For example in Tanzania, the national coalition and the teachers' union worked together to press for an Teachers' Professional Board, however, they have met resistance from the government as to whether this board should be independent or government controlled. In Brazil the national coalition and the teachers' union cooperated to get the 'Teachers' Wage Floor Law' approved by the Congress. This represented a very important victory, however, there are still problems with its implementation in some states where it has yet to be rigorously enforced. In India the power of the teachers' unions has been used by the coalition in their public mobilisations.¹⁵¹

Despite some successes linking with other social movements and forming wider alliances, this has perhaps not come to fruition in the way the project envisaged. Some coalitions noted the difficulty in getting education high on the agenda of wider social movements. There are examples, however, where forming strategic alliances has paid great dividends, such as the important alliance built with the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education in Latin America, or ASPBAE's strategic relationship with the

UNESCO regional office (Bangkok) around the Mid-Decade Assessment of the EFA goals. Building alliances, while time consuming, can be useful but they need to be decided strategically rather than being a blanket objective.

RWS II has taught us that collective action based on a clear targeted strategy can influence government and lead to progressive change toward achieving EFA. The rich case studies presented in this report (see Part 2 below) offer us an opportunity and a challenge. They offer us an opportunity to connect with the 'real world' of women, men and children who are committed to take action, to speak out, to demand the right to education for all. They offer us the opportunity to assess approaches in light of outcomes and importantly to learn for future practice. They also pose a challenge because there is not a one-size fits all model. Even where we can draw out examples of commonalities and highlight good practice it is not always possible to replicate models as context and capacity must be factored in.

Key Lessons

Local action, global change is valid concept but requires a strategy.

The theory of change that underpinned this work, as the name '*real world strategies*' suggested, saw the need to locate change at the grassroots. Power was most definitely devolved from the global centre in RWS II. In fact it seems reasonable to conclude that so little focus was given at the global level that it had a detrimental effect on the project's potential outcomes. The global centre could have served an important function in terms of centralised mechanism for sharing materials, facilitating cross-project learning and actions, and making more explicit links between national and international advocacy. While power shifted from the centre, it did not shift as far as was intended, and a significant yet previously unarticulated growth in the size, field of operation and voice of the regional networks occurred. Many positive outcomes have been achieved as a result and clearly they point to the need for increased advocacy towards regional bodies. If this model is to be extended then it should be accompanied by

150 The 2006 RWS annual report describes Education Watch as the 'centrepiece of the RWS project in 2006'. It goes on to explain that EdWatch as it was known "is an independent, alternative, citizen-based assessment of the status of basic education in 20 project countries. It is designed to strengthen local and community-based capacities for claim-making on education, and intended to bolster national education coalitions' capacities to sharply define, pursue and achieve their policy change objectives, armed by credible alternatives, and based on grassroots-locally generated evidence."

151 The earlier mentioned research on transnational advocacy conducted by the University of Amsterdam, which was also funded by the Government of the Netherlands, looks more specifically at the relationship between teachers' unions and their membership of national coalitions (publication forthcoming in 2011)

more accountability mechanisms so that national coalitions remain at the heart of regional decision-making processes.

GCE did not fully implement its vision of change through RWS II. It was not able to adequately connect the local level concerns to the international policy objectives of GCE. And it failed to create meaningful links between coalitions from different parts of the world. GCE should, in future projects, be more deliberate in creating horizontal and vertical linkages across geographical contexts. More explicit action is required to foster these links, as they do not necessarily emerge organically. This not only facilitates learning and mentoring but also supports the creation of a web of influence that will strengthen the entire GCE 'movement'.

Build institutions

One of the main aims of the RWS II project was to strengthen the advocacy and campaigning potential of CSOs in the South; to build new coalitions where there were none and to deepen their work where they already existed to mobilise public demand and concern for EFA. The evidence in this report shows this happened. There are more coalitions and there has been an increase in advocacy activity and achievements as a result of RWS II. A question, however, remains over the sustainability of such a rapid growth in action and actors.

Sustainability requires well-developed systems and structures that are able to capture and systematically store and retrieve institutional memory. Documentation of the project processes and achievements, so important for future use and reference, need to be strengthened. Access to reference materials and examples of good practice would save resources. User-friendly databases and intranet sites could provide a repository for resources at global, regional and the national level. Sustainability also calls for knowledge, skills and experience to be spread across the members to ensure continuous learning from the project for all staff in the coalition, regional network or even the global centre.

The tendency to concentrate capacity development on technical knowhow has in some cases been to the detriment of developing enabling strong internal systems and structures. Strengthening governance and management

should be prioritised over a rush for outputs. Increasing numbers of coalitions in some regions did not go far enough and in others it went too fast. The regional networks need to be strategic in their choices so as not to reactively respond to every demand for support. In some cases the money disbursed through to the national coalition was very small and a look at the future use of budgets and how they can be used most effectively is required. The well-intentioned desire to take on more issues and responsibilities rather than to deepen and consolidate existing work is also a lesson that some coalitions need to reflect on.

Limit advocacy focus

An RWS II objective was the development of time-bound advocacy strategies at both the national and regional level. While this has obviously occurred, there needs to be far more consistency and coherence in the way strategies are developed. Strategic development processes need to factor in both process objectives that will achieve a capacity development outcome and impact objectives.

Ambition is good, however, limited resources mean that advocacy should be more focused. Coalitions should plan their advocacy cycle and choose one, or two, main issues. This was summed up nicely by researchers at the University of Amsterdam who said "*Busier agendas may facilitate cohesion, but limit impact.*"¹⁵² This does not mean that other EFA goals will be ignored but it is clear from the experiences of RWS II that resources should be used effectively and not spread too thinly.

Constructive dialogue but no compromise on rights

Influencing change is a process that requires judgement. Coalitions need to understand the issues, problems and the context in which they operate. They also need to be politically literate and understand the power dynamics at play; change after all often rests in the hands of just a few people. An important point noted in this research is that coalitions are not simply trying to change the education system, they are trying to change the political system as it relates to education, and political literacy is therefore key.

A clear message emerging from the case studies is that building constructive relationships rather than opting for confrontational

¹⁵² Quote included in a power point presentation on the 15th June 2010 at World Council of Comparative Education Societies, Istanbul

approaches pays greater dividends. Using the language of the target and highlighting the benefits of education that are of most interest to them is an effective tactic. Building constructive, positive relationships helps build trust and opens up policy dialogue, although coalitions must be aware of the danger of co-option.

Compromise and constructive engagement opens up dialogue, and using advocacy tools that identify a problem but also propose a path towards a solution is necessary. However, compromise must only go so far and the bottom line is that the right to education is not negotiable. A number of widely ratified international human rights conventions exist that carry with them legal obligations and coalitions should use these obligations to demand change. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is the most widely ratified human rights convention and sets out the right to free quality education in primary education that governments have to respect, protect and fulfil. It is important for coalitions to know and understand these rights and if necessary take legal action for them to be upheld.

Flexible and reliable financing for sustainability

When the Government of the Netherlands decided to fund the second stage of the RWS II project their trust in GCE resulted in an extraordinary amount of flexibility in the administration of the grant. This flexibility was widely acknowledged as strength of RWS II. The flexibility of the grant meant it functioned more like core support than project money. It throws up an interesting comparison with the modality of sector or general budget support which donors increasingly favour. Of course accountability mechanisms need to be in place, however, this type of support for national coalitions could prove very favourable, strengthening the institutional and capacity development of the coalitions and networks. The new Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) is structured to offer this type of support, however, it does not provide support to the regional networks.¹⁵³ For coalitions there is need to have more stable sources of funding that not only allows them to plan ahead but also to take more innovative action.

One issue not covered in detail in the report but that affected RWS II was the delay in the release of funds each year up until 2009. This

was quoted as a considerable problem leading to delays in implementation, missed opportunities and in at least one case the loss of a valuable staff member, when salaries were not available. Ensuring swift and appropriate disbursement of funds is important to the successful running of any project but when such a large degree of reliance is invested in one pot of money delays can have knock-on effects. This is something for grant recipients to factor in and find strategies to manage the risk effectively. It is incumbent on the donors or those central bodies to guard against such delays.

Research and knowledge creation

The vision of RWS II to drive change at the national level, to empower ordinary people to take action, extended to coalitions engaging in research, generating evidence to hold governments to account. The benefits are considerable, having both an external and internal effect.

The ability to identify key issues in achieving EFA and conduct research into the scale of the problem and to propose solutions was a key feature of the Education Watch work. It provided key data and evidence by which coalitions could hold their governments to account. It exposed the failure of both government policy and weakness in official data. It recommended feasible steps for governments to address the problem. Research proved a useful lobbying tool and increased the credibility of the national coalition. It also increased the coalitions' sense of confidence in itself, shifting power dynamics between the coalition and their governments.

Furthermore, through external engagement and alliances with regional and global partners, coalitions develop new knowledge that allows them to move their advocacy in new directions, creating new ways of working and new knowledge regarding EFA in their national context.

Learning for future practice

The global lessons above reflect some of the learning that has emerged from this research of RWS II (with more highlighted in the regional summary following the case studies in Part 2 below). It is hoped that these lessons offer a starting point for reflection, which along with the recommendations in Part 3 will result in more effective advocacy on EFA.

¹⁵³ The CSEF is focused on supporting CSOs at the national level and although it is managed through structures within the regional networks they cannot benefit from the funding themselves





Part 2

EFA Advocacy in the Real World:

the country case studies

Introduction

For all of the national coalitions that have been part of RWS II the experiences and outcomes – both in organisational development and policy change – will be different. RWS II was a flexible funding stream designed to allow each coalition to build their capacity for advocacy in a way that was most appropriate for them. The result is a rich and diverse set of stories that reveal common challenges and shared strategies yet unique paths and distinct results. Across and even within regions, different coalitions had their own particular set of circumstances and priorities. Some were able to progress further and faster in their advocacy demands but all were able to benefit from being part of this project.

One report cannot capture all these stories, however, 12 unique case studies, four from each region, are shared below as an illustration of how RWS II has enabled the development of more and stronger civil society advocacy on EFA during the last few years.

In keeping with the belief of giving a voice to southern activists, the RWS Reference

Group¹⁵⁴ chose researchers native to each region to collect the data and write up their case studies. The result is a rich collection of stories, which although distinct in style and form, have many common threads running throughout (many of which were highlighted in Part 1) and it is clear that RWS II has made a significant contribution to advocacy on EFA. The outcomes differ; in some countries change is witnessed by the coalition's ability to engage in dialogue with the government and in other countries there have been concrete changes in policy and law. Each one represents progress and suggests sustained advocacy on EFA during the coming years.

Part 2 of this report is divided in three regional sections. They include a brief introduction to the regional context, the case studies and a regional summary pulling together some of the learning emerging from the research process. Although each has its own distinct style, research was standardised across the regions in accordance with the agreed case study and data collection methodology (see Appendix 1).

Section 1: Latin America & the Caribbean
by Ilich Leon Ortiz Wilches page 55

Section 2: Africa
by Omar Ousman Jobe page 76

Section 3: Asia-Pacific
by Barbara Fortunato page 97

The regional case studies are followed in Part 3 of the report by final conclusions and recommendations for future action.

¹⁵⁴ As previously mentioned this group is made up of representatives from the regional networks and global centre who managed the research and editing of this report

RWS II in Latin America & the Caribbean

by Ilich Leon Ortiz Wilches

Context

It is long known that the Latin American and Caribbean region is characterised by increasing social and educational inequality, due to processes that give rise to poverty and social, political and economic exclusion. Marginalised groups such as ethnic minorities like indigenous and afro-descendants as well as migrants and refugees are the most affected – over 40% of the population lives below the poverty line and more than 21 million people in the region migrated to United States or Europe,¹⁵⁵ for the most part, in the pursuit of better living conditions. Some States in the region are oriented to a social platform while others are reviving conservative and antidemocratic practices – States, it is worth mentioning, where democracies are recent and fragile.

Education, a right of all people, key to the realisation of all of the other rights and to social transformation, is still a low-priority issue for Latin American and the Caribbean States, although the opposite is affirmed in most of their discourses. Ensuring free, universal and quality education for all – the framework where the Latin American Campaign for the Right to Education/ Campaña Latinoamericana por el Derecho a la Educación (CLADE) works – requires overcoming obstacles of a structural, political and cultural nature.

In the region, there are still 35 million illiterate people and another 88 million people who have not completed primary education. The financing allocated to the realisation of the right to education, which was already insufficient, has suffered the effects of the economic and financial crisis. Additionally, there are several forms of discrimination in education, which prevent thousands of people from exercising their right to education. Noteworthy improvements in terms of access can be observed; however, children, young people and adults in the region still face huge challenges in order to remain in school and complete their education. In this scenario, the action of civil society's forces is relevant and necessary in exerting pressure on States so that they fulfil their role of guarantors of rights. CLADE is one of the organisations that have been working dynamically in the field of policy advocacy to help achieve this.

155 CEPAL 2006

SECTION 1



Case Study:

The policy advocacy experience of Colectivo de Educación para Todos y Todas of Guatemala in the search for free basic education

Context:

Between the 1960s and 1990s, Guatemala went through a brutal armed conflict that lasted for over 35 years. This war between leftist insurgent forces and the anti-communist reaction of the successive governments jointly with the army left a trail of destruction and violation of human rights across the country, with more than 300,000 victims and millions of displaced people. This armed conflict was solved only by negotiation in the 1990s, thanks to an intense international mediation effort as well as a succession of governments elected democratically since the late 1980s which, despite some failed attempted coups, managed to establish peace agreements and reintegrate the combatant forces back into civil life in 1996.¹⁵⁶

Agreements were signed in peace roundtables to tackle the need for deep changes in Guatemalan society. These agreements addressed the future implementation of public policies that would guarantee access to public services and the realisation of economic and social rights by the entire population. However, the implementation of these agreements and the design of these policies remained as pending tasks for future governments. Although constitutional order and the rule of law were maintained and strengthened after the agreements were signed, much remains to be done to set in motion reforms and policies to improve the population's socio-economic conditions.

Within the context of the peace agreements, two important reforms related to the right to education were proposed, intended to broaden citizens' participation in the design and social watch of public policy,

and improve teachers' working conditions and salaries. First, to establish and regulate municipal and departmental education councils in order to foster popular organisation and enable citizens' participation in the decision-making process around education's direction in each locality. Second, a proposal of mass professionalization of teachers was presented; this would allow teachers to have broad access to higher education, thus achieving an improvement in their salaries and working conditions.

During Portillo's democratic government (2000-2004) attempts were made to set both reforms in motion but did not succeed due to opposition in parliament, where right-wing forces opposed to any real reforms held the majority. Therefore, attempts to improve participation in and availability of the education service in Guatemala have been quite restricted until today due to the impossibility of putting into practice deep reforms that guarantee the realisation of the right to education for the majority of the population.¹⁵⁷

Guatemala has the lowest rate of education investment in the region, at less than 2% of GDP. In addition, the lack of sufficient education centres to provide primary education and high drop-out rates result in the country having the lowest primary education completion rates in the region (72.5% in 2006); likewise, the enrolment rates in secondary education (34.7% in lower secondary and 20% in upper secondary) are also the lowest in Latin America. There is a contrast between having only one national public university (University of San Carlos) and nine private

156 About this see: Guatemala as Cold War History, Richard H. Immerman. *Political Science Quarterly* Vol. 95, No. 4 (Winter, 1980-1981), pp. 629-653. Published by: The Academy of Political Science, Pásara, Luis, Torres-Rivas, Edelberto (2003) *el proceso de paz, sus actores, logros y límites*, and Fondo Xavier Clavijero (2003), Guatemala, Guatemala. S.J. – ITESO (Mexico): Universidad Rafael Landívar, Instituto de Investigaciones Jurídicas

157 It was only the current democratic government of President Colom, under pressure from civil society, that put a definitive end to the charging of school fees and developed programs to increase access to education. Even so, parliamentary opposition means that the increase in the education budget is still blocked

universities. In 2006, a study on the “Status of the Education System” (Ministry of Education/USAID) showed that 49% of schools did not have drinking water, 36% did not have electricity, 8% had their roof in bad condition, 5% had the walls in bad condition and 8% had the floor in bad condition. Thus, only 15% of public education centres meet the quality criteria to develop their activities.

Within this context, full of obstacles to public policy democratisation and beset by an urgent need for substantive improvement of the education system, the *Colectivo de Educación para Todos y Todas* (Education for All Group) emerged as a diverse coalition of organisations that seek to develop actions of citizen mobilisation and advocacy before the State to make clear advances towards improvement of education. Since its inception the *Colectivo* has dedicated its efforts on the achievement of the EFA Goals in Guatemala. As it began to network with CLADE,¹⁵⁸ it deepened and incorporated a clear human rights perspective in its work in order to understand public education policy.

Advocacy processes of The *Colectivo De Educación Para Todos Y Todas*

The *Colectivo* was born in 2003, and set out to make the Dakar EFA goals signed by Guatemala more widely known at a time when the State made no reference to these international commitments. The main challenge was to raise awareness of the international promises and commitments of the State of Guatemala in order to promote their fulfilment.

Facing a political context adverse to reforms in education, the *Colectivo* carries out concrete policy advocacy actions to press government to fulfil their obligations to the EFA goals and make significant advances concerning the realisation of the right to education in Guatemala. As a consequence, since 2005 the organisation developed a lobbying process to use the visit of UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education as a mechanism to open up a broad and participatory debate around the difficult conditions of education in the country. This



¹⁵⁸ *Colectivo* has been a member of CLADE since its Assembly in Panama in March 2007, where the Charter of Principles of this network was signed

took place when the Guatemalan group joined CLADE, gaining a link to the international debate on education in the Latin American and Caribbean region.

During the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2005, and thanks to CLADE's invitation, Colectivo was put in contact with Vernor Muñoz, UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education for the period 2006-2010. During the forum, the Guatemalan group told him of their interest in having his presence in Guatemala to which he was very receptive. Colectivo immediately began once more to contact the government and call for an official mission of the Rapporteur. The Colectivo used sustained pressure and lobbying. It maximised informal contacts with the Human Rights Office of the President's Office, the favourable participation of the Office of UN High Commissioner on Human Rights in the country, and the establishment of formal communications between these bodies, however, it was not possible to obtain the authorisation for the visit until the new government of President Colom took office in 2008.¹⁵⁹

The campaign for Free Education

Colectivo also developed a campaign on the need to universalise free education in the country and, through it, pressed for the elimination of enrolment and school fees, which by then were legal due to the existence of a Governmental Agreement that authorised them.

Colectivo understood that it was necessary to contrast the right to free education with the programme *Autogestión Educativa* (Education Self-Management), led at the time by the Ministry. The *Autogestión Educativa*, based on a neo-liberal model, burdened schools and communities with the responsibility of partially financing the education process.

The activities carried out by Colectivo both in the interlocution with the government and through a gradually increasing communication with the citizens did not obtain the desired government responsiveness during the Perdomo government (2004-2008).

Perdomo neither authorised the visit of the Rapporteur nor created an atmosphere for the abolition of school fees. However, these actions by Colectivo gathered momentum and a window for opportunity was opened with the election of Colom.

Colectivo had already developed mobilisation and communication actions regarding free education such as radio publicity against school fees, publications on free education as part of human rights, and an agenda of sensitisation about free education as a condition for the achievement of the EFA goals. It used these tools to incorporate the concerns about the status of the education system in the agenda of the presidential candidate Colom.

RWS support to advocacy actions and results in Guatemala

Thus, after the presidential election took place, Colectivo established a direct dialogue with the government, finally obtaining Presidential authorisation for the official mission of the Rapporteur in the country. Ultimately, this created important political conditions and generated public opinion and as a result, in September 2008 the government took action to prohibit fees.

Both actions – the pressure and lobby to achieve the Rapporteur's visit as well as the campaign for free education – had the support of RWS II since 2007. Colectivo also benefited from increased support at regional level for CLADE, which coordinates the execution of the RWS II funds in Central America.¹⁶⁰

Vernor Muñoz' visit to Guatemala, which finally took place 20-28 July 2008, opened a space for the debate on the education policy in the country, unprecedented since the Peace Agreements. As a consequence, Colectivo, jointly with a wide group of organisations, prepared a comprehensive report on the different aspects involved in guaranteeing the right to education in the country, showing infrastructure's precarious conditions, the low provision levels, the very low investment rates and the absence of a clear proposal for the inclusion of traditionally discriminated

159 In 2008, President Alvaro Colom Caballeros of the center-left political party Unidad Nacional de la Esperanza (UNE) took office

160 CLADE itself has been able to scale up its presence and advocacy in the region in large part to the support of RWS II in the last five years – as outlined in Part 1 of this report

groups of people. This report was developed in a participatory manner and included the voice of numerous grassroots organisations. These organisations played a key role in showing the Rapporteur that the report's findings matched the reality in the field, repeated in most municipalities of the country.

In his final press conference Vernor Muñoz depicted thoroughly the panorama of the precarious status of the education system and stated very emphatically that free education is an integral part of the right to education and that school fees had to be eliminated in order to make advances towards the realisation of this right. This message, specifically intended for the new government, was vital for the actions of the Campaign for Free Education, led by Colectivo since 2006, to have concrete results. In September 2008, the Executive abrogated the Governmental Agreement that authorised the charging of school fees and established a new one that prohibits them definitely (A.G. 223/Septiembre de 2008). Colectivo advocacy had led to a memorable achievement and crucial progress towards the realisation of the right to education.

This measure had immediate consequences: access, education provision and enrolment rates increased around 20% in the 2009 school year. A great number of boys and girls moved from private to public education; this, in turn, affected citizens, who pressed the government to allocate larger resources to the public education system. As a result, in 2009, the government presented an ambitious budget project, which in addition to larger resource investment aimed at schools and teachers, included the establishment of a broad programme of conditional cash transfers to families to support the payment of costs associated with their children's education, covering 180 municipalities. Nonetheless, the Parliament was still averse to it and decided to not approve the budget project, so the Executive had to resort to public indebtedness to fund the conditioned transfer programme.

As a result of the pressure by the Congress (where the opposition party were strong) on the Colom Government, the Minister of Education Bienvenido Argueta, who was

leading the negotiation of the education budget, became the target of political persecution. He was removed from office due to an administrative ruling of a high tribunal that he had refused to share information on the beneficiaries of the conditioned transfer programme, when in fact this information had already been submitted to the Comptroller General's Office. This was part of a strong campaign to discredit the government, using corruption scandals, accusations of murder¹⁶¹ and Parliamentary obstruction of bills seeking to affect the inequitable structure of taxes, incomes and wealth.

In 2010, as a result of this political intimidation and undue pressure, the Government had to implement its programmes with the same budget as 2009 and the Ministry of Education had to change and appoint two Ministers in this last year. During this time, the Colectivo, reflecting the concerns of civil society in regard to education in the country, advocated very closely on the proposals for increased resources and rise of enrolment rates implemented by the Ministry of Education, while playing a participatory role in policy design and social watch of the implementation.

RWS II impact on the capacity building of Colectivo

Despite the adverse political conditions, Colectivo is currently undergoing a process of capacity building and institutional consolidation. This allows the coalition to maintain a direct interlocution with the Ministry of Education and other governmental bodies as well as with different citizens' strata and education agents. This strengthening is mainly due to the result of the advocacy process conducted around the visit of UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education as well as to the Campaign for Free Education that resulted in the abolition of school fees.

RWS II did not only contribute with the necessary resources for the operations of both processes, helping to meet the coalition's financial needs, but also tightened the bond between the advocacy at regional level led by CLADE and the Guatemalan forum.

¹⁶¹ In May 2009 extremely unusual events surrounded the death of lawyer Rodrigo Rosenberg, assassinated while riding his bike through Guatemala City. After his funeral a video was released which featured Rosenberg accusing the country's President of being involved in his death. After a thorough investigation of the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (sponsored by the UN), Colom was cleared and it was found that Rosenberg himself had organised his own assassination in attempt to destabilise the government

Colectivo de Educación para Todos y Todas is now member of the CLADE Steering Committee¹⁶² and a key member of the network's construction and capacity building processes at regional level.

The tightening of the bond between the national and regional levels was clearly and explicitly seen in the 5th CLADE Assembly in Guatemala City. In that event, a workshop on the justiciability of free education at all levels of the education process was held; this would be also vital for establishing contacts that later led to rulings favourable to free education in other countries, e.g. Colombia. International organisations participated in this event: the Robert Kennedy Foundation, The Centre for Justice and international Rights (CEJIL) and the Institute of Latin American Studies of the University of Costa Rica. The workshop initiated an activity of the regional group to legally demand the right to free education, established in 2007 by four countries of the region, coordinated by CLADE and supported by the RWS II policy advocacy project.

By being part of a regional network and receiving financing from the cooperation with a distinct focus on advocacy, such as RWS II, the Guatemalan group gained, among others, the following capacities:

- Knowledge of and communication with international bodies and organisations liable to be mobilised to give visibility to and demand the right to education in the national context (e.g. the Office of UN Special Rapporteur); More capacity for interlocution with governments by having international support around the commitments to the frameworks of two global agreements concerning education: Education for All (Jomtien 1990 and Dakar 2000) and the International Covenants on Human Rights (ICESCR and General Comments 11 and 13 of ESCR Committee);
- Deep knowledge of the content of the right to education expressed fully and integrally not only in international covenants but also in the conceptual framework developed by the previous UN Special Rapporteur of the Right to Education, Katarina Tomaševski. This framework incorporates, besides the

access and availability of the education service, education adaptability and acceptability; these issues are currently being developed by the Colectivo for its new policy advocacy period.

The organisation and the membership were strengthened particularly by the Campaign for Free Education, and at the time of the preparation of the report for Vernor Muñoz' visit to Guatemala, when numerous organisations joined the coalition and an extended bureau on education was established for discussion of the report and the organisation of the Rapporteur's visit.

All the above mentioned are advances that, even if they cannot be ascribed solely to the use of the RWS II resources, took place within a framework of cooperation between organisations at different levels involved in the implementation of this project, and are linked to the possibilities that were opened as a result of mutual cooperation.

Current challenges faced by Colectivo de Educación para Todos y Todas:

At present, the main challenges Colectivo seeks to address are: immediate advocacy with other organisations and trade-unions around the upcoming electoral process to press the future government to acknowledge the concept of the Right to Education as guiding principle of public policy; and demonstrating that the demands for new places at schools and more access to classrooms – a result of the establishment of free education – require larger resource investment in infrastructure, improvement of teachers' working conditions and broader adaptability and acceptability conditions for all traditionally discriminated populations.

Finally, for the coalition's future advocacy process, the old aspiration of civil society is still pending: to regulate, open up, foster and participate in municipal and departmental education councils proposed since the time of the peace negotiation roundtables. This debt of the Guatemalan State to civil society has been pending for almost fifteen years and needs to be repaid.

¹⁶² Colectivo have been on the CLADE board since 2008

Case Study:

Brazilian campaign for the Right to Education

Leading the drive for quality education resourcing and strengthening civil society advocacy for education

Context:

During the 1990s, Brazil, like most Latin American countries, applied public policies formulated on the basis of a neoliberal model that opted for a minimal role of the State and very restrictive macroeconomic conditions in terms of public expenditure, as part of structural adjustment program. Price hyperinflation resulting from the debt crisis had been a serious problem in the country. It led to the implosion of the monetary system and its substitution during the early 1990s through the promotion of the ‘Plan Real’.

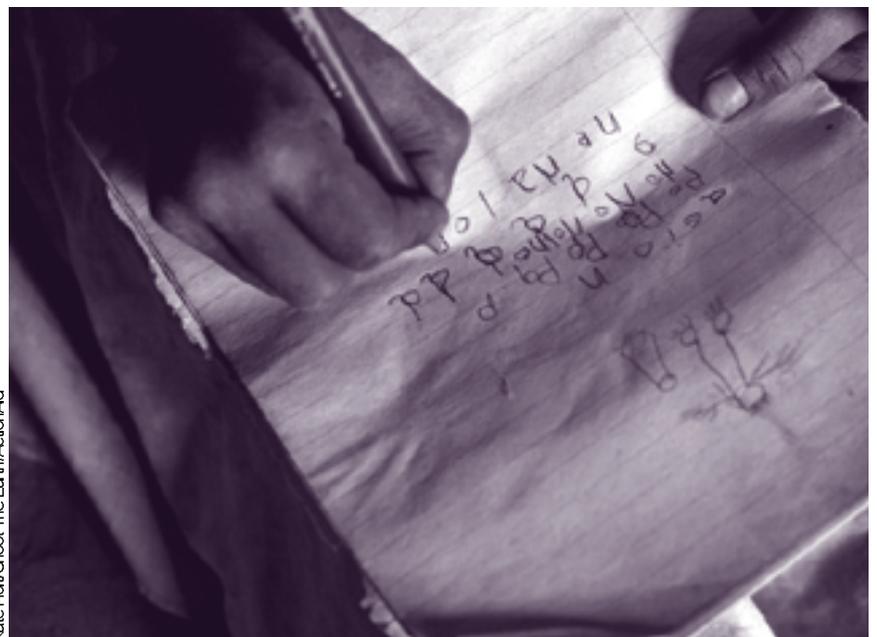
Opting for a prevailing neoliberal policy also resulted in assuming and legitimising the trend of the State withdrawing from its responsibility for ensuring the realisation of the Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights (ESCR); restricting the active growth of social policies and hindering important structural reforms to reduce the grave economic inequality, that is characteristic of Brazil.

Several of the agents interviewed in this case study recognise that this posture of the Executive was visibly rectified after the progressive leftwing government of President Lula was elected. It opened once again the dialogue on the State’s responsibility concerning human rights; it undertook ambitious policies to overcome poverty and fostered a leading role of the State in the country’s social and economic development. As pointed out by Roberto Franklin Leão, president of CNTE (National Federation of Education Workers of Brazil) and member of the Steering Committee of the Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education (BCRE): *“It is clear that the election of the President who is currently in office¹⁶³ opened new dialogues and facilitated the relations with the civil society, which finds more favourable conditions to make itself heard. Today we scheduled a hearing with the*

Ministry of Education over the phone and in a month we will be received by the Minister. This did not happen before. Everything becomes more accessible for social movements, leaving us in a differentiated situation in relation to other countries.”

However, in spite of the change in the attitude of the national government regarding the dialogue with civil society and the prevalence of social policies, it is still very difficult to make structural changes aimed at the realisation of the human right to education. This is partly due to the fact that a more progressive public policy promoted by the Executive does not suffice. In addition, legal and regulatory frameworks must be modified; to this end, important majorities in the parliament must be reached. Moreover, once the laws are passed, it is necessary to develop an exigibility process that takes years to be applied in each and every federated state. As observed by Leão: *“Even if we manage to get important laws passed by the National Congress, these are not enforced because the*

¹⁶³ At the time of the interview President Lula was still in office



Kate Holt/Shoot The Earth/ActionAid

most powerful groups and people use artful devices to prevent those laws from being enforced. The fact that Brazil is a Federative Republic, with states and municipalities with high autonomy levels, is a factor that adds to that situation. This way, if one of them considers that their right to legislate was affected, they take the case to the Supreme Court and the ruling takes years.”

That is precisely what happened with the Teachers’ Wage Floor Law approved by the Congress. It represented a very important victory of the civil society, with the participation of the BCRE and the teachers’ unions with the aim to dignify the profession of teaching; however, to this day it is not being rigorously enforced by most states across the country.

Background of the Brazilian campaign for the Right to Education and previous advocacy processes

The history of the BCRE goes back to 1998 when a group of CSOs that were going to participate in the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal (2000), discussed the need to establish a national coalition that would allow civil society to influence the education public policy agenda. This process of the Campaign’s organic constitution went on until 2003, when the Campaign’s Steering Committee was consolidated and tasks were set in motion to create regional committees and establish links with youth movements across the Brazilian Federation States. By 2006, 27 state committees had been created already and were present in all the most populated regions of the country; boards were duly consolidated and the first policy advocacy actions aimed at achieving national impact were developed.

Between 2005 and 2007 the BCRE developed a policy advocacy process very important for the consolidation of a national fund of resource redistribution among the states to be invested in education (FUNDEB, its acronym in Portuguese). To this end, an in-depth strategy of knowledge production and leadership training on the education financing scheme in the country was developed. For years the BCRE has been characterised by

having great expertise in two specific issues related to the right to education: a) the democratic management of education system and policies; b) financing of education.

Both thematic strengths, developed within the framework of the advocacy process meant that, for the first time in Brazil, a civil society initiative was able to modify in-depth a federal law and affect a Constitutional amendment. By combining technical strength with effective parliamentary policy advocacy, the BCRE managed to modify totally the Fund regulation project proposed by the government and processed by the Parliament in 2007. Five specific points were included due to the advocacy work led by the BCRE: (1) wider coverage of the Fund to include initial education kindergartens (public institutions of early childhood education and care); (2) the regulation that the Fund adopt *Custo-Aluno Qualidade Inicial* (CAQi),¹⁶⁴ Cost of Initial Quality Education per Student, as the criterion for the minimum investment per student. This costing was based on an extensive consultation and collective construction with a range of civil society stakeholder on the inputs and resources needed to put into practice an education process with quality standards; (3) inclusion of the creation of a major social watch system over the Fund’s resource flows and transfers so to make possible the monitoring of FUNDEB resource allocation and execution; (4) inclusion of teachers’ wage floor which would be later regulated in another law; and (5) supplemental budget for the Fund transferring a federal budget item to compensate the poorest States with the aim of resourcing spending per student and teachers’ salaries, regulated by this very law.¹⁶⁵

Brazilian campaign processes and advocacy achievements supported by RWS II:

When the RWS policy advocacy project was initiated in Brazil at the end of 2007, the BCRE had already developed the above-mentioned process of lobbying and modifying of the Constitutional Amendment and FUNDEB Law. The BCRE was already very strong and with technical, political and social mobilisation capacity to develop new

¹⁶⁴ See brief explanation of CAQi on p24 in Part 1 or full explanation in the following paragraphs

¹⁶⁵ According to the law in Brazil states have to spend a percentage of their budget on education. However, sometimes, as the case of the poorest States, this amount is not enough to guarantee teachers’ salaries etc. Due to this mechanism, the Federal Union must send more money to these states allowing them to achieve a minimum

advocacy processes at national level.

RWS II enabled the Brazil coalition to support, and partially fund, two new wide-ranging policy advocacy initiatives and, in particular, BCRE participation at the National Conference on Education (CONAE). The coalition aimed to first, advocate on the consensuses established in that space from the rights perspective and; second, position CAQi as the central reference for public education financing in Brazil, working towards its full endorsement not only by FUNDEB but also by all public policy across the country. Both advocacy processes would later become fully interlinked since within the framework of the National Conferences on Education, CAQi was approved by consensus as the parameter of the education budget.

Furthermore, with the support of RWS II, BCRE managed to take part in the organisation and deliberation of the National Conference on Basic Education (CONEB), achieving the coordination of two themes: i) financing of education and ii) democratic management of the education system, consistently with the expertise already developed in-depth by the BCRE. Likewise, the BCRE also managed to participate in CONAE, coordinating the theme of financing and achieving in both instances the approval of CAQi as a minimum parameter in the debate on the education budget.

The above represented the main challenge for BCRE: to ensure CAQi became the basic reference in the debate on the public education budget and that this was affirmed within the context of the consensuses reached by CONAE. This participation also sought to achieve greater recognition of BCRE as the voice of civil society education groups, as well as the strengthening of CONAE as legitimate space for the discussion of public education policy by civil society, with decision-making and binding character.

The political positioning of the student/quality cost:

CAQi is the result of a social consensus process around the minimum inputs and resources necessary for quality education. As such, it is a technical and political advance. In

its technical aspect, the CAQi implies the production of knowledge about the material and non-material requirements of education. As for its political facet, CAQi implies a major consultation and agreement process involving the education agents in order to define the minimum parameters of quality, such as, the minimum for teachers' salary, the minimum for student ratio per school and per classroom, the need for and frequency of teacher training, the coverage and scope of the associated costs, etc.

From 2006 onwards, after wide consultation and agreement on these basic inputs, a political strategy was developed to position this initial, technical and political agreement as a benchmark for the decisions on education public policy across the country. The first positioning process was its inclusion in FUNDEB regulation. This opened up a big space for CAQi incorporation in the political decisions that followed. This Law stipulated a whole mechanism of resource allocation, transfer and execution at local levels so that the application of CAQi financing parameter is guaranteed through FUNDEB, provided that the Federal Government assumes the responsibility of supplementing the resources according to the estimated amounts in this costing parameter.

That was precisely the aspect to reinforce at the National Conferences on Education: pressing for public policy to adopt the CAQi parameter as the minimum budget allocation per student so that the Federal Government is committed to transfer the necessary resources to guarantee that minimum in all regions of the country, particularly in the poorest States with no capacity to fund an investment of such magnitude.

With the support of RWS II, the Brazilian Campaign adopted the strategy of positioning CAQi as a central theme in CONEB and CONAE. Consensus was sought around the issue, encompassing the participation of several CSOs and other organisations that did not yet know of this tool, and even making it known in political sectors that were not necessarily in agreement with its enforcement but which would agree to discuss it anyway – an important advocacy achievement in itself.

According to Daniel Cara, National

Coordinator of the BCRE, “CAQi’s central discourse as policy advocacy tool is that in order to have a better education the central government has to participate in the financing of education. This is an effort the Federal State can do because it raises a net 53% of taxes and fees. The sum total collected by the municipalities and states of the federation is lower than the sum collected by the federal government. This does not happen in other federated countries. In real terms, the Federal Government is the one that has the conditions to make a larger investment. And the Brazilian Campaign was the first to notice that disparity”.

Advocacy at the CONEB and CONAE:

CONAE, held in 2009, was the first major national conference on education organised by the Brazilian State. It was an interesting process that started out in the municipalities and the regions and went through the States, finally arriving in the national sphere. Guidelines for the National Education Plan were approved by it; its objective was to build the foundation of a national education system that was absent due to Brazil’s federative and unequal character. The Conference represented the possibility for a new and fully participatory National Education Plan, based on feasible goals to be constantly monitored. It was about a mass, participatory and direct advocacy on the formulation of a public policy that would be passed as Law and as such would ensure more resources for education, increasing the federal government’s investment.

Thanks to the advanced positioning of BCRE, which managed to achieve the coordination of the roundtables on financing, it was possible to put forward the issue of education’s financial structure for ample discussion and propose the incorporation of CAQi as the minimum education investment. As Carlos Eduardo Sánchez, President of UNDIME (National Union of Municipal Education Leaders) declared: “specifically in relation to CAQi, taking that discussion to the National Council on Education represented a

breakthrough. We are now waiting for the Minister to homologate that decision this year thereby transforming CAQi into an indispensable tool for improving the quality of education in the country. The creation of this tool enabled us to comprehend the real dimension of what should be done in order to bring quality into basic education schools.”

The consensus around CAQi collectively validated the acknowledgement that new and further investment in education had to be made by the Federal Government. Moreover, it was publicly acknowledged that since the Constitution of 88, the States and especially the municipalities had been undertaking extraordinary efforts to increase the resources allocated to education. This acknowledgment permitted sustained demand and consensus around the need to substantially increase the financing of public education, up to 10% of GDP.

Moreover, at CONAE the BCRE also managed to position the issue of democratic school management, around which consensus was also reached.¹⁶⁶

Currently, CONAE is on the verge of negotiating a national education plan that will be sent to Congress and the challenge now is to achieve the approval of those proposals. The situation is very similar to that of FUNDEB and there are even more favourable probabilities. The Campaign has gained much social legitimacy and the Conference agreements are backed up by so many groups of civil organisations that it could be very expensive for the executive to put forward a proposal on public education policy different to the one agreed by consensus at the CONAE. “We will make our biggest effort at the Congress in order that our National Education Plan gets approved”, Daniel Cara says. “Civil society is organised for this and civil society is much stronger than the one that struggled at the time of FUNDEB, when the Campaign was the leading network. Now we are part of the leading group and it is much better to have collective leadership because chances for success are much bigger. Half of the organisations that lead the CONAE process have joined the Campaign”.

¹⁶⁶ The coalition, along with other civil society groups had agreed their position prior to the actual meeting, which meant they presented a unified view, making it easier to gain acceptance of BCRE proposals in these forums of social civil participation

Lessons learned along the advocacy process:

The campaign was a very collective process. It had a very active steering committee and its coordination focused on promoting consensus and assisting in settling disagreements. In the BCRE Steering Committee there are national-scope organisations with great capacity for mobilisation but, at the same time, with marked interest in the education policy. As a result, reaching consensus may not be easy, but once achieved there is a great capacity to take it to the public policy debate and mobilise actors around this discussion.

The coordination role has been key in ensuring that consensus is built around the public agenda and considered and endorsed by other social actors in decision-making spaces. To this end, the advocacy methodology combining technical expertise, grassroots training and exact precision in negotiating and convincing decision-makers has permitted groundbreaking advances towards the adoption of really progressive measures in Brazilian education policy.

The RWS II project supported this advocacy capacity building process in a satisfactory manner, highlighting the flexibility granted in the use of resources. Although these resources represented a fraction of the BCRE's total budget, from 2006 onwards they allowed the Campaign coordination more discretion when taking action in crucial times, thus ensuring that the advocacy measures were effective and that the proposed changes were accepted.

RWS II, by supporting the participation in CONEB and CONAE, offered a valuable contribution to the broad recognition achieved by the Campaign, which went from being an organisation with great technical and advocacy capacity at the Parliament to becoming one of the benchmarks of social mobilisation for education in Brazil. This fact is widely acknowledged not only by the education sector NGOs or by BCRE member organisations, but also by all civil society actors and the State itself that participated in the broad consultation, debate and decision-making processes of the National Conferences on Education.

The networking capacity within civil society has been strengthened with the inclusion of CAQi in the CONAE. The BCRE showed its deep expertise, political clarity and aptitude for building valid leadership from the grassroots and capacities for real change, the backdrop of what the RWS project sought to develop in the first place.

The Brazilian Campaign is a clear example that the policy advocacy approach that supports knowledge production and the articulation of well-informed grassroots citizens is able to mobilise important changes; changes that the traditional political bodies of representative democracy are not able to bring about.

As noted by Carlos Eduardo Sanchez, from UNDIME: *“The element that sets apart the Campaign from other organisations is its mobilisation power, its networking capacity. We like not only the practical results it has achieved but the process developed to achieve them. The process is as important as the results. Gathering different organisations and institutions with different approaches and profiles around a table and reaching consensus is something the Campaign delivers.”*

All those capacities built during the advocacy process are clearly part, as proposed by RWS II, of a strategy building process to bring about a real change in the political processes, along the path towards achieving the realisation of the right to education for all people. In this sense, international cooperation such as RWS II, is important not only because of its contribution of financial resources but because it shows the solidarity between agents that respond to diverse realities, allowing for the circulation of approaches, shared knowledge and purposes. It shows that advocacy in each country is not a solitary process; it responds to a worldwide wave that seeks to empower citizens in order to achieve deep transformations that enable them to enjoy their rights.

Case Study:

Colombia – advocacy for recognition of free basic education

Context:

Colombia has been characterised by being one of the most unequal countries in Latin America – the most unequal region on the planet. Despite the fact that Colombia underwent a rapid urbanisation process during the second half of the 20th Century and that it grew an industrial foundation protected by the State, the fruits of that wealth have not been distributed through public policies to ensure all citizens' rights universally. In fact, quite the opposite: large sections of the population have been marginalised from the benefits of economic growth. High poverty levels still exist, in rural areas in particular, as well as a structure of wealth and land ownership concentrated in the hands of a small elite. The combination of inequality, exclusion and a democracy model¹⁶⁷ closed to the participation of the majority of the population constituted a background that led to the emergence of insurgent forces, which have sustained an armed struggle against the State, demanding more social justice, political equality and inclusion, thus giving rise to a social conflict that has lasted for over six decades.¹⁶⁸

In the field of the right to education, Colombia has faced transformation processes, advances and regression. According to the mandate undersigned in the Constitution of 1991, the country has a decentralised structure that establishes the transfer of resources aimed at health care and education in relation to the growth of the nation's current revenue. However, facing the economic crisis of the late 1990s, the National Government issued Law 715 of 2001 as a temporary measure. In that law, the introduction of *per capita* criteria concerning the allocation of resources to health care and education was established, freezing the growth of available resources, and incorporating new modalities for the management of education services by means

of contracting private service provision as well as administration of these public institutions. This law, as a temporary measure, will be in force until 2016.

These measures resulted in a gradual reduction of the financing of education with a significant reduction of resources transferred to territorial bodies, which was by then barely enough to cover the costs of teacher's wages in poor and marginalised communities and only a minimal budget was available to cover other aspects linked to the right to education. Thus, this right faces a situation of de-institutionalisation since it has become a service for which citizens must pay, or in the case of those who are entitled to targeted support, a gift that can only be accessed by the most disfavoured people.

Actions and results of the RWS II project in Colombia

Facing the complex context of education policy in Colombia, in 2007, the Colombian Coalition for the Right to Education positioned itself as an emerging organisation that seeks to engage different social actors in the debate and endorsement of basic political consensus for the achievement of changes in the public policy required to guarantee the right to education. RWS II support strategically strengthened those initiatives at both national and regional levels.

Mobilisation of civil society took and public debate processes took place in several parts of the country (Cartagena, Santa Martha, Quindío, Risaralda, Caldas, Antioquia and Bogotá), which later opened up a space for debate on the right to education. In that space, essential issues relevant to the advocacy process were covered e.g. the education financing, the absence of free education, comparing the education budget with debt payments, and the cost of quality education.

167 After the civil war in Colombia in the 50's, known as La Violencia, the elites of the two major political parties (the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party) made a pact to alternate in power and allocate quotas and bureaucratic patronage between them, leaving out any participation of other political forces. This agreement became known as the 'National Front', which lasted over three decades, between 1960 and 1990; many experts called this regimen 'restricted democracy'. About this see: Leal Buitrago, F. (1989). Estado y política en Colombia. Siglo XXI

168 About this see: Sánchez, G. (1991) Guerra y política en la sociedad colombiana. El Ancora Editores, and Pécaut, D. Presente, pasado y futuro de la violencia. En publicación: Análisis Político, Nro.30. IEPRI, Instituto de Estudios Políticos y Relaciones Internacionales. UN, Universidad Nacional de Colombia, Santafe de Bogotá, Antioquia, Colombia: Colombia. 1997

Ruling of the Constitutional Court of Colombia in favour of free basic primary education:

The debates and the consensus promoted by the Colombian Coalition for the Right to Education within Colombia and at the regional level¹⁶⁹ resulted in the Coalition's member organisations recognising free education as an essential element around which policy advocacy efforts should be articulated, with the support of the RWS II project, to advance the right to education. Thus, the Coalition began a strategy formulation and implementation process around free education, starting by establishing contact with other organisations that had already advanced debates or actions in favour of free education in different spaces. That gave way to the establishment of a special thematic committee on free education that comprised national and international organisations, linking several kinds of knowledge related to jurisprudence on the right to education and on the financing of public education policy. This Committee worked on the elaboration of an analysis of the state of free education in the country and the conceptualisation of free education on juridical, financial and administrative levels. This allowed mobilisation towards the actionability – to demand through legal action – of free education and made it possible for the Coalition to file a complaint on grounds of unconstitutionality against Article 183 of Law 115 of 1994, which grants the National Government the authority to regulate the collection of payment of academic fees in State education centres. This infringes Articles 93, 44 and 67 of the Political Constitution, Article 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), Article 26 of the American Convention on Human Rights (ACHR), Articles 13 and 16 of the Protocol of San Salvador and Article 28 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states education is a universal and free right. In the process preceding the filing of the complaint, a campaign was undertaken within the Coalition to collect and systemise life stories of boys and girls who had been left out of the education system due to the fact

that their families could not afford to pay school fees. This documentation strengthened the arguments of the complaint as, drawing on concrete cases, it showed that accessing the education system was impossible for a large number of Colombian boys and girls. After a process of studies and debates, the Constitutional Court of Colombia through the Ruling C -376 of the 19th of May of 2010 declared by unanimous decision the enforceability on condition of Article 183 of Law 115 of 1994, which does not apply concerning the basic primary education level. The latter, according to the Court's ruling, is compulsory and free.

Budget monitoring drawing on economic literacy and the debate on the public financing of the right to education:

When considering the possibility of citizen oversight and follow up of the public resources earmarked for education, one of the main difficulties faced by any initiative is the average citizen's lack of knowledge on the basic concepts of economy and the fiscal structures where the nation's budgets are set. Facing this problem and taking into account the policy advocacy proposal presented by the RWS project, the Coalition began its policy advocacy work in the area of education budget monitoring with an economic literacy initiative in several regions of the country. These efforts resulted in the creation of a literacy team on the issue "Economy and the Right to Education" as well as in the design of a basic thematic programme featuring contents and methodologies pertinent to the subject.

The connecting thread of these discussions revolves around the analysis of the high levels of public debt payment that amount to 30% of the annual public budget and generate increasing pressure for social expenditure adjustment; and, on the other hand, the research on cost per child for quality education that resulted in the creation of a simulator of the costs involved in the realization of the right to quality education.¹⁷⁰ This made evident the urgency of increasing the investment in education gradually to

169 In August 2008, with the support of CLADE and the presence of UN Special Rapporteur Mr. Vernor Muñoz, a workshop was held in Bogota with the participation of all the Coalition's member organizations around the issue of free education and its meaning for the country

170 This research was carried out by the research centre, School for Development, based on the experience of the Brazilian Campaign for the Right to Education around CAQi, seeking to create a useful simulation tool for advocacy on the issues of financing the right to education in Colombia. This research drew on various capacity building activities undertaken by CLADE, such as economic literacy workshops in 2005 and 2006, and workshops on financing of education carried out later

achieve minimum quality standards.

In addition, within the framework of the policy advocacy processes fostered by the RWS project, the Colombian Coalition supported students' mobilisation and engaged in several forums and debates that promoted the opposition to budget cuts, even at municipal level.

Positioning of the Colombian Coalition for the Right to Education as civil society actor:

Since the very moment of its inception, the Colombian Coalition for the Right to Education started to do networking with different CSOs with the aim of advancing the realisation of the right to education. With the experience and expertise of its member organisations and a clear policy advocacy project, the Coalition positioned itself as an important interlocutor in the debate on the right to education and in the field of education public policy.

Starting with a process of building and socialising knowledge on the socio-economic conditions of education in the regions and on the trends of budget allocation in territorial entities, the organisations linked to the coalition at regional level positioned themselves as significant interlocutors before the public education authorities and even fostered processes of participatory education planning in some municipalities.

Moreover, during the process of political election of candidates for mayors and governors, especially in Quindío and Cartagena and in Soacha (Cundinamarca) education proposals were discussed with the candidates. These approaches gave the Coalition visibility in those regions and opened windows of opportunity to articulate the Coalition's proposals with a rights-based perspective within the development plans of the new local authorities for the period 2008-2011.

At national level, the Coalition also participated in the consultation roundtables on the Decennial Plan on Education. This process was led by the Ministry of National Education, and the Coalition was also present in the discussion on the counter-proposal

presented to the national government by Bogotá's local government.

During the period 2007-2010, the Coalition, with the support of RWS II, achieved a significant linkage with international networks on advocacy for the right to education. The link with CLADE and GCE was formalised and the Coalition started to participate organically in both of them.¹⁷¹

The sustained work in those spaces and, especially, in the workshops on legal accountability of the right to education held by CLADE in Sao Paulo (2008), Bogotá (2008) and Guatemala City (2009), was key to raising visibility of the need to articulate the efforts made by Colombian organisations around the issue of free education and establish a follow-up plan. Those workshops allowed the Coalition to connect with international actors familiar with strategic litigation on ESCR, particularly with the Office of UN Special Rapporteur of the Right to Education, the Robert Kennedy Center for Justice & Human Rights and the International Human Rights Clinic of Cornell Law School, which linked to the complaint filing process developed by the Coalition in relation to the Colombian case.

Furthermore, this mobilisation strategy around free education allowed the Coalition to approach other national organisations that, until that moment, were not participating organically in the Coalition, such as teachers' trade unions, the Office of UN High Commissioner on Human Rights in Colombia, the Office of the Ombudsperson, the Attorney's Office and the Secretary's Office for Education of the Capital District.

Finally, the Coalition contributed to the debate on the status of adult learning and education via joint work with several organisations such as Red de Educacion Popular de Mujeres (REPEM) and Federación Colombiana de Educadores (FECODE), among others, in the elaboration of the document from the civil society "Analysis of the National Report on Development and the Status of Adult Learning and Education (ALE) presented by the Ministry of National Education of Colombia on the 30th of April of 2008"; this document was presented at CONFINTEA VI.

¹⁷¹ The Colombia Coalition has been an official member of CLADE since the March 2007 Assembly in Panama, and a member of GCE since the January 2008 General Assembly in Sao Paulo

Consolidation of the organisational structure:

At an organisational level, during the period 2007-2009 the Coalition, with the support of RWS II, created a more cohesive dynamic of collective work and a more participatory decision-making structure. For example, the many discussions regarding the work of the Coalition allowed it to reach consensus with the member organisations on the network's work horizon, while outlining a vision, a mission and one of the long-term strategic objectives. All this took place while deepening the knowledge on the content of the right to education among the coalition's organisations, drawing on the study and socialisation of the national and international legal frameworks, with special emphasis on the issue of free education as an integral and basic part of this right.

With regard to decision-making, an organisational structure was established, comprised of: the General Assembly; the Support Committee or Board; the Secretariat; the thematic Committees; and the Regional Focal Points. The steering and representation functions have a structure that is circular instead of pyramidal, and it should be highlighted that this structure implies that the decisions and actions developed by the Coalition are the result of discussion and participation of all the organisations.

Lessons learned:

Although the Colombian Coalition for the Right to Education is a network of organisations that is still undergoing a building process, the processes developed within the framework of RWS II allowed for learning some lessons.

The first one relates to the generation of consensuses, which are necessary in any policy advocacy process that demands a clear objective of change and a platform of allies willing to promote it. In the Colombian case, even if the different organisations linked to the coalition

converge in their interest in the right to education, they work in different areas of this right according to their own specialisations. Nonetheless, the research undertaken on the issue of financing and the dialogues with CLADE regarding the legal obligations under this right enabled the organisations to acknowledge free education as a policy advocacy objective fundamental for the development of other dimensions of the right to education.

A second lesson was the experience of articulating the knowledge of the experts in financing and jurisprudence with the objectives of the social movement. The case of the demand for free education showed that when academics and social movements get together it is possible to achieve a political process of demanding and fighting for the right, advanced and sustained by social forces.

A third lesson was product of the coalition's organisational restructure, which showed the need to establish a collective steering body that included the presence of the regions more actively. The aim was to have knowledge about the local processes and foster them by collective work in order to achieve an interlocation between the different work fields of organisations, thus allowing joint efforts around the advancement of the EFA goals.

Finally, the challenges faced by the coalition are, among others, the following: The advancement of the campaign for free education so that the Court's ruling becomes a reality in every corner of the country, starting from a strengthening of the regional focal points in order that they can join in the citizens' oversight of the fulfilment of that right; The strengthening of relations with the actors involved in the education process (students, teachers, parents), as the Coalition is mainly composed of NGOs and it needs these actors' participation to achieve real changes in education policies; The development of a strong media strategy positioning the Coalition as a significant actor at national level in the discussion and decision-making process around the issue of the right to education.

Case Study:

CLADE advocacy experience regarding several forms of discrimination in education

Context:

The Latin American Campaign for the Right for Education (CLADE) is a diverse network of CSOs acting in the defence and promotion of the right to free public education for all people. The responsibility of the State in regard to the right to education includes the dimensions of availability, accessibility, acceptability, adaptability and accountability.¹⁷² Since 2001, in the scenario following the World Conference on Education for All (Dakar, 2000), CLADE has been promoting networking so that today it includes 18 National Education Forums in Latin America and the Caribbean, plus eight regional networks.

Building on the framework of the affirmation and protection of the human right to education, CLADE has been working on several development and advocacy processes drawing on networking among several actors in Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as at international level, while fostering mutual cooperation. Over the past years, the issues concerning different forms of discrimination in education gathered momentum and gained a more central place in the network's political agenda. This was stated clearly in its Charter of Principles. Moreover, through a series of activities, meetings and communication strategies, CLADE started a process to establish a knowledge framework that would allow the network to understand the different forms of discrimination and address them at local, national, regional and international levels.

The network identified that the social inequality of the region as well as the multiple forms of discrimination constitute the first cause of social and educational exclusion and the main obstacle to the achievement of the right to education and all the other rights. Furthermore, the multiple forms of discrimination cross-cut and add to each other: the most discriminated groups on account of

race, ethnicity, gender, geographic location, sexual orientation, disabilities, migration and deprivation of freedom are usually the poorest and their condition of poverty becomes, in turn, a factor for increased discrimination.

In parallel, CLADE, its forums and networks went through a process of in-depth understanding of the legal frameworks – national, regional and international – in the field of the human right to education. Workshops were held; activities, information dissemination and actions that relied on the valuable alliance of the Office of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education were carried out. In that sense, the multiple forms of discrimination are regarded as explicit violations of the right to education and thereby can be denounced in the systems of justice.

RWS support for visibility – seeking and advocacy actions addressing different forms of discrimination in education (2007–2010)

Supported by the RWS II project, CLADE's executive initiated a set of regional advocacy activities to carry out visibility-seeking and lobby actions and exert political pressure at several regional and international opportunities. In 2008, a sustained regional strategy to fight all forms of discrimination was set in motion. This case study highlights four key moments:

1. the advocacy process at the Durban Review Conference (April, 2009);
2. the elaboration of a collective strategy to work on the issue (August 2009);
3. the Hearing before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (November 2009);
4. the initiatives aimed at sensitising the population and giving visibility to the issue (since 2009).

¹⁷² "For education to be a meaningful right it must be **available, accessible, acceptable** and **adaptable**. The concept of these 4 As was developed by the former UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, Katarina Tomaševski, and it is one of the best ways to assess and act upon the situation." – for more information see <http://www.right-to-education.org/node/226>

1. Participation in the preparatory process towards the UN Durban Review

Conference (November 2008 – April 2009)

The aim of this participation process was to join the global movement against discrimination and racism, with two specific messages. First, to show the need to incorporate education policies and schools as spaces to fight against all forms of discrimination while showing that some education policies are discriminatory and that some education contents reinforce discrimination. And second, to point out that an education respectful of human rights is a fundamental tool to fight against all forms of discrimination since it has the noteworthy potential to modify culture and prejudices that are at the basis of all discriminatory practices.

In order to carry this two-pronged message to the Durban Review Conference in Geneva, CLADE began preparation in late 2008 using knowledge production and collection of specific cases of violation of the right to education on account of different forms of discrimination. It also produced a public position paper with 13 specific recommendations on the issue. In particular, case studies on two population groups that are particularly discriminated against in Latin America (indigenous and African-descendant people) were commissioned. Furthermore, four international cases of violation of the human right to education on account of discriminatory practices were documented.

The Durban Review Conference in Geneva (also called Durban II) was one of the toughest negotiation moments within the UN. As such, the conference was marked by very deep tensions between some countries (Iran, Palestine, Israel). The United States did not attend the conference, and in the middle of the event a group of ten central countries withdrew from the negotiation as a result of the tensions. Despite all that, civil society's pressure and the leadership of some governments prevented the conference from being a complete failure; all the agreements proposed in Durban I (the first conference, in 2001) were reaffirmed and therefore no regressions ensued – a risk always latent during the preparation period prior to the development of the Conference.

CLADE attended the Conference with a delegation, participated in the civil society

meeting and its drafting committee – held in parallel to the governments' meeting – and submitted a statement to the UN plenary reinforcing its standpoints before the participating nations. Furthermore, it disseminated information and positioned the issue of education amidst the official delegations and CSOs present at the conference. In that sense, it is worth noting that links and alliances were established. After the conference, these bonds (e.g. with the African-Caribbean Women's Network) were strengthened and made the most of during the following steps of the visibility-seeking advocacy campaign on the different forms of discrimination.

CLADE achieved a profound awareness on the meaning of discrimination in education through its participation in the Durban Review Conference and the preparation it made for the conference, taking concrete steps in knowledge production and generating consensus for the public position paper jointly with other regional and global networks. Such vision permeated the national forums too, which received information through CLADE's communication network and were directly involved in the information gathering for the cases on discrimination, thus sharing the issue across all branches and threads of the whole regional network. This way, the fight against xenophobia, racism, homophobia and, overall, against all forms of discrimination, achieved a central position in the network's political agenda.

2. Designing a regional advocacy campaign against all forms of discrimination in education (March 2009 – August 2009)

Thanks to the impact of the mobilisation around Durban II, in August 2009 CLADE's executive coordination convened a Regional Workshop to design a precise advocacy plan to fight against discrimination in education. This workshop was held with much success in Sao Paulo and, in addition to the participation of six National Forums and several organisations working on ESCR justiciability such as CEJIL, DEJUSTICIA and the Center of Latin American Studies of the National University of Costa Rica, it also benefitted from the active participation of UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education. This plan envisaged a short-term strategic action with the presentation of a report before the Inter-American Court on

Human Rights on some form of discrimination in particular. Moreover, it contemplated a set of sustained visibility-seeking actions as well as the will to establish alliances and joint work with several organisations that work in Latin America producing knowledge and fighting against the different forms of discrimination.

3. Report and hearing before the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

Immediately after the Sao Paulo August 2009 workshop, CLADE, jointly with CEJIL and the Office of United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education, filed a petition to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights for a regional thematic hearing. The issue chosen to be brought forward before the commissioners was the Status of the Right to Education of Persons with Disabilities. The petition was granted and scheduled to take place in November 2009 in Washington, USA.

The hearing before the Commission represented a big step for CLADE because it was the first time it had reached an international system of justice and, moreover, in alliance with the Office of UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education. Both circumstances determined that the hearing was a success: the commissioners were deeply sensitised and did not only recognise the peculiarities of the violation of the right to education of this population in particular but they also encouraged CLADE to bring the

Commission further cases and reports concerning the human right to education.

Many commissioners expressed their interest in receiving more demands arising from civil society related to Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: one commissioner, Paulo Sergio Pinheiro, Rapporteur on the Rights of the Child in the Inter-American Human Rights System, expressed his interest in establishing a direct link with CLADE with the aim of developing alliances and joint work.

4. Actions aimed at giving visibility to the different forms of discrimination in education

Consensus was also reached at the August 2009 workshop, on advocacy actions to give visibility to issues related to discrimination in education. In Latin America and the Caribbean, the myth prevails that racial and ethnic discrimination has been substantially overcome. The argument given to sustain this notion is that the majority of the continent's population is composed of people of mixed-race or multiracial and therefore it is inclined towards the integration of communities. However, reality shows us that the traditional forms of discrimination have fused with new ones of a socio-economic nature thereby perpetuating a matrix of exclusion that affects indigenous and African-descendant ethnic and racial groups more distinctly and gravely.

Considering the above-mentioned issue, CLADE devoted itself to seek methods to make these populations visible since very often they are not even recorded in the national censuses, thus proving that they are discriminated even in public policies and at schools, and to make known to citizens how those facts explicitly contravene international human rights frameworks.

Among the awareness raising activities, a photographic exhibition on the subject was presented in May 2010 on the occasion of the CLADE VI Assembly in Sao Paulo. The exhibit lasted for over a month in a public space that is visited by more than 700 thousand people annually – by teachers, students and persons interested in the matter. Afterwards, it was taken to Buenos Aires within the framework of the Ibero-American Congress on Education. Three thousand delegates attended the event: representatives of ministries of education,



universities and CSOs. A virtual dissemination of the exhibition was also created and it was visited by over 3,200 people.

Furthermore, a document addressing the issue was published. This publication addresses in detail the international human rights frameworks that condemn the different forms of discrimination and how these are still a latent part of Latin America and the Caribbean's reality. Finally, the team has been making efforts to approach the mass, public and community media so that they include the issue in their coverage. As a result, approximately 100 communication media covered the issue, whether in relation to the exhibition, events or interviews.

Lessons learned

- A requirement for successful advocacy processes is the production of knowledge and evidence on the issue the advocacy is aimed at, which results in more effectiveness and capacity for dialogue with lobby targets.
- Advocacy is a collective process that needs to include as many actors as possible around programme agreements and consensuses that could be shared widely by means of public statements. All of this is transformed into more capacity to exert pressure and develop lobby efforts at the events and conferences targeted. It is very important to have very clear messages to take into spaces such as UN Conferences.
- Evaluation of a policy advocacy process, should take into account what aspects of public policies or regulatory frameworks are affected favourably and, moreover, how that advocacy capacity building process enhances CSO vision and deepens the agenda towards the future of organisations and networks that promote advocacy.
- In order to achieve a higher capacity to exert pressure and develop dialogue at regional and global levels, previous and thorough work is needed, mapping the actors involved, creating alliances, producing knowledge and formulating advocacy strategies. In turn, this work should be supported by sufficient resources to carry out the tasks at regional level as that level is able to link the efforts made by several countries and increase their power in supra-national decision-making spaces.
- Among the most valuable alliances, apart from those with the civil society networks and organisations at regional and global levels, there are those that can be established with the members and actors of the systems of justice and protection of human rights, in both the Americas axis and the Inter-American System.

Regional Summary: Latin America & the Caribbean

Commonalities between how coalitions in the region approached campaigns

- Qualities in common included: organisational flexibility; internal democracy and collective constructions; grassroots mobilisation; and willingness to talk with different stakeholders
- Structure included a small team (staff) and a Steering Committee that represents the education community and the diversity of the country with its social movements, all of them in a given human rights political field;
- Successful coalitions have a clear definition of principles, revised, updated and consolidated throughout time. They do ongoing political reading and strategic definition, enabling them to give responses to the context by providing proposals and monitoring compliance. They are clear about the legislative and juridical sphere, and the jurisprudence concerning the advocacy issue;
- Reflection, knowledge production, constant thinking should be present;

thinking must occur constantly while building bridges with academia. Advocacy proposals as well as key messages should be formulated on the basis of knowledge production, reflection and collective debate;

- Positions and actions should occur simultaneously at national and local levels, at macro and micro levels;
- Very concrete and precise proposals should be made, on the basis of the context;
- It is beneficial to have a broad-scope alliance with the university, movements and trade unions;
- Sensitisation and awareness raising of the general public and mass media is a national priority;
- Coalitions should have autonomy before the State; ensure a relationship of non-subordination;
- A strategy and a clear communication policy should be promoted. This includes having a policy regarding languages and the language used;
- Relations with the legislative, judicial and executive powers should be established and maintained.

How RWS specifically made a contribution in the region:

RWS has promoted the consolidation of CLADE as a regional/ international actor, thus strengthening the call for implementing the EFA Agenda and the right to education, taking into account national, regional and international levels.

There have been key political improvements around the agenda put forward by CLADE, particularly in terms of education rights, free education, non-discrimination, adequate education financing and Youth and Adult Education.

Through RWS, CLADE has been able to put in practice the principle of liaising with different stakeholders around common action, including NGOs, social movements, teachers' unions, women's groups, and indigenous groups, among others.

Additionally, RWS has fostered dialogue between Civil Society and the State, including

legislative, executive and judicial powers at the regional level.

Through RWS, CLADE has been able to consolidate a regional platform of debate and action, involving 18 National Education Forums and nine Regional Networks, thus articulating a collective analysis and strategy for social and political action in the field of education.

There has been an improvement of all advocacy strategies inside the region: conducting research, strategic communication, social mobilisation, inter-institutional networking, thus increasing legitimacy and power to influence decision making processes and policy making.

National level work within the region has made important steps towards EFA goals, despite facing huge challenges. National highlights include the Brazilian coalition, that, in the framework of RWS led the first National Conference on Education and influenced approval of the Student/Quality Cost Parameter as benchmark for policies. Also of note is Colombia, where the national coalition demanded at the Constitutional Court the abolition of fees in the public education system, therefore, generating an unprecedented victory of an education social movement.

The lessons (positive and negative) of key learning for the region.

Overall

- Education has great power to bring people together. However, networking with new organisations and movements, requires clarity about the coalition's ideological field (e.g. does it include the business interest group movement). We must have the same vision on the world. It is important to not 'negotiate' positions that lessen the principles. Agreements that go against basic principles should not be made. Autonomy is to maintain the principles, to uphold those principles and standpoints in the political arena.
- There is a need to articulate the fight for the right to education with other struggles and social fields. Social movements are

dispersed and this fact prevents building a deeper and more structural agenda for change. Meanwhile, coalitions must be aware that there is a struggle for agendas in this deeper and structural change. The fight revolves around a new education system but above all, of a new political system.

- Pretexts for political action, debate strengthening and articulation should be always identified as, for instance, the UN Conferences and other international and regional Congresses. Coalitions must know how to make the most of these opportunities and view major events as part of processes that allow for major articulations and collective debates.
- Caucuses should be used more intensely as an advocacy method when preparing to face the major Conferences.;
- Coalitions need to continue to build capacity for dialogue and negotiation with stakeholders, both national and from international bodies, drawing on knowledge about their standpoints, proposals and decision-making mechanisms.
- The achievements reached during an advocacy process should be acknowledged as achievements, the strengthening of civil society in collective advocacy processes is an achievement per se, not just when it achieves the final advocacy objective. This strengthening and recognition generates potential, helps future advocacy actions.

Main obstacles faced in the region:

- Tendency towards a reduction in governments' willingness to engage with civil society, that hinders the possibility of debate and denies dissent as legitimate.
- Governments that act against human rights and, notwithstanding, are very popular.
- Criminalisation of social movements and activists e.g. human rights activists persecuted and arrested in Haiti, systematic murder of teachers' union leaders in Colombia, students' persecution in Argentina and Chile after their involvement in protests and riots, among others.
- Closed mass media that are positioned in another paradigm.
- The influence of churches and their dogmas (e.g. affecting gender issues).
- The denial, on the part of the State, to

acknowledge society as a legitimate interlocutor and acknowledge dissent as legitimate. Lack of institutionalised spaces for civil society participation, spaces for civil society to be heard. This gives way to a very vulnerable State-Civil Society relationship. When there are no such spaces, the possibility of dissent, critical vision and denouncement by civil society is extremely low.

- The vulnerability of civil movements and organisations regarding their funding and sustainability.
- Struggle for legitimacy and spaces with business interest groups and movements. Business sector corporate social responsibility groups have different interests and priorities; the latter tend to match the status quo and do not 'inconvenience' the State so much and, for that reason, can serve States as priority interlocutors under the concept of 'social participation'.
- Difficulty in achieving the mobilisation of grassroots.
- Risk of being co-opted by the State: it might be more difficult to do advocacy in a context where the government's ideological field is closer to that of the Forums and Networks. It might reach a point where the State sees itself and conducts itself as civil society.¹⁷³
- Difficulty in incorporating more progressive issues in the agenda within a context of diverse and antagonistic standpoints;
- At international level, language is a big obstacle to the possibility of putting forward our agenda in the global scenario and presenting our proposals. It is crucial to think of ways that prepare us all, collectively, to overcome this barrier.
- In major conferences, such as CONFINTEA and the Ibero-American Congress, workshops and roundtables end up being a huge distraction that takes place while the political decisions are being made elsewhere. It is important to do advocacy to even change the format of these major conferences.
- In advocacy situations that take place in international spaces and conferences, a prior advocacy process should be planned, jointly with the ministries, having all information possible on how the conference is going to work and who the leading stakeholders are. Advocacy work should begin far in advance.

¹⁷³ The concept of civil society, based on political science authors, refers to a diverse group with different citizens who, out of the government bodies, act in a collective way in decision making process at the public sphere

RWS II in Africa by Omar Ousman Jobe

Context

The pace of progress towards achieving the Education for All Goals (EFA) is all but slow and uneven across sub-Saharan Africa and remains a formidable challenge: to governments to deliver on their Dakar 2000 promises; to CSOs to hold such duty-bearers and service providers accountable through policy influencing and monitoring and to development partners to pledge the right quantum of resources to finance the six EFA goals. The EFA Global Monitoring Report published annually by UNESCO to track progress paints a grim picture of the state education in Africa: According to that report, Sub-Saharan Africa still continues to account for 47% of the out-of-school children worldwide (2006 figures), despite the remarkable achievements registered in terms of access to basic education between 1999 and 2006. And adult literacy (EFA goal 4) is still neglected by African governments.

While many countries have made some progress towards achieving the EFA goals, many more are lagging behind and the absence of a clear 'political will' is one of the key sticking points that deter progress towards the set targets and hence limits the prospect for poverty reduction. This assessment highlights both the challenges and achievements of a number of national coalitions in their drive to achieve the EFA goals.

To engage with governments, development partners and other stakeholders at the national, regional and international levels, ANCEFA and GCE worked together through Phase I and II of the RWS project. RWS I and II were aimed at building strong constituencies for the purpose of lobbying and advocating for the achievement of the EFA goals by 2015. RWS II is the instrument through which ANCEFA in partnership with GCE gives support to the 32 national coalitions that are members of ANCEFA. Using the RWS I end of project report as the baseline to gauge the performance of RWS II against the objectives set, it could be argued that considerable ground has been covered in the areas of coalition building and/or strengthening. RWS II funding has enabled ANCEFA to support national coalitions to engage in research (in particular the Education Watch initiative); advocacy; communication and publications. ANCEFA has been responsible for the coordination and management of the project in the region. When ANCEFA started rolling out RWS II only 16 coalitions were up and running. As of today, 33¹⁷⁴ national coalitions are already firmly established and have proven to be respected advocacy platforms in their own right and in their country specific contexts.

¹⁷⁴ 32 national coalitions participated in the last ANCEFA General Assembly in Dakar in April 2009. Since then, the membership was brought to 33 with the building and acceptance of Somaliland EFA coalition. The coalition building process is ongoing in some countries, which are not yet recognised/registered as ANCEFA members.

Case Study: Malawi

Civil society influence in election and budget cycle processes

Introduction:

The Civil Society Coalition for Quality and Basic Education (CSCQBE) was set up in 2000 in the immediate aftermath of the Dakar Education Forum to serve as a proactive hub and an umbrella network for education advocacy. It is mandated to: “promote transparency, accountability, equality and access for all to quality education in Malawi”. Since its inception, the membership has steadily grown to reach its current level of about 70 organisational members spread across the country. The coalition has decentralised structures (the District Education Networks) in 27 districts through which it implements its activities. The Coalition is committed to the EFA goals and has been supported by ANCEFA and other development partners to advocate and campaign at national and regional levels.

The RWS was able to bring Malawian CSOs together so that they could build a consensus on education advocacy issues. The coalition was able to engage with national education processes through the organisation of campaigns. Although CSCQBE already existed in Malawi (supported by CEF¹⁷⁵ and other donors) before RWS II, the project succeeded in galvanising the coalition further by refocusing its agenda on the urgency of achieving the EFA goals.

The key informants interviewed are of the opinion that the coalition is strong and is a valued partner of the Ministry of Education, exemplified by its participation in most of the technical working groups set up by the Ministry. The coalition uses that forum as a valuable source of knowledge and information about the evolution of government policy and presents possible options and issues for consideration. CSCQBE also use this forum to deliver policy advice services to the government aimed at enhancing educational outcomes. Through its budget and election cycle advocacy it has

succeeded in placing education as the third most important priority in the government’s top 11 priorities for the country in the Malawi Growth and Development Strategy¹⁷⁶ (MGDS). Before that policy shift, the MGDS had only five (5) themes (Social and Economical Growth, Social Protection, Social Development, Infrastructure and Governance, prioritised in that order). Education was a mere sub-theme under the third theme of social development, clustered with health and community development. In the Revised MGDS of 2009, Education is the third priority and is not under any theme, but stands alone as a sector, after agriculture and water development.

Perception of the Status of EFA in Malawi:

The local concerns in Malawi revolve around the following issues: inadequate funding of Early Childhood Development (ECD) programmes, although coverage increased by 1.2% (in 1996) to 26.7% (in 2006); low participation of men in literacy programmes taking the adult literacy population to 4.6 million, translating into an adult literacy rate of 60.9% (urban 90.5% and rural 58.7%); high pupil/teacher ratio of 81:1 and a pupil/trained teacher ratio of 92:1; shortage of teaching and learning materials; low teacher motivation/high dropout rate and inadequate educational infrastructure as exemplified by a pupil/classroom ratio in all primary schools at 116:1. Despite these serious challenges, progress is being made towards the achievement of the EFA goals – particularly in the areas of access (goal 2) with a Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for the 6-13 age cohort at 115% and a Net Enrolment Ratio (NER) of 99% (2009)¹⁷⁷ and gender parity (goal 5). The allocations to education are increasing but Malawi is still a far cry from the 2015 goals. It is not surprising therefore that the majority of respondents consider that the impact of the

175 The Commonwealth Education Fund promoted free primary education for all children. CEF gave advice and funding to education groups in 16 Commonwealth countries.

These groups work independently or together in a national coalition to identify and act on the problems that stop children from attending school

176 The country’s current development framework

177 2009 Education Statistics Report, Ministry of Education (Malawi) EMIS Report

coalition's EFA campaigns has been positive, albeit moderately. CSCQBE has been responding to the issue of budget inadequacy to finance educational requirements in Malawi and all the attendant issues linked to it: lack of hardship allowances for teachers etc. The level of education financing is at 12.2%, which is far short of the international benchmark of 20% of the national budget or 6% of GDP.

Documenting best practice from Malawi: the Election and Budget Cycle Advocacy initiatives:

CSCQBE has made laudable efforts in education advocacy worthy of being showcased for international learning and sharing. The coalition's budget cycle advocacy project supported by ANCEFA with RWS funds is a year-long process of sustained engagement with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Finance, parliamentarians, CSOs and the media. During this process, the coalition consults community stakeholders on their priorities for the education sector with a view to critically informing the national budget and the advocacy agenda of the coalition (the pre-budget phase). Policy briefs and statements are then issued to serve as the basis for engaging with the media (for them to amplify the position of the coalition); for engaging with Parliamentary Committees (the legislators) to foster Parliamentarians' buy-in; the Ministries of Education and Finance (the duty bearers, policy makers and decision makers) for them to adequately resource the sector. Advocacy packs are produced at this stage for use by regional constituents to influence the budgetary processes and outcomes. The approach to influencing education policies is multi-pronged in that the coalition engages with the Education Select Committee of the Parliament; influences the party manifestos at another level and through its decentralised structures brings enormous pressure to bear on the political machinery for education issues to be considered as a high priority in national politics.

I. The Budget Cycle Project:

Preparation stage : As a key partner of the Ministry of Education, serving in some of the technical working groups, CSCQBE uses that privileged position to leverage the outputs of the pre-budget consultations for consideration as inputs into the sectoral estimates submitted by Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Finance. The coalition lobbies the Ministry of Finance; consults with sister networks to have a united front and to avail themselves of the 10 minute presentation time allotted during the interface forum to build a convincing case for the education sector. To bring further pressure to bear on the decision makers, the coalition elicits the support of the donor community and CSO partners; organises radio phone in programmes and does not hesitate to petition the relevant ministries whenever necessary.

Legislative stage : During the legislative stage the budget is presented, deliberated upon, amended and passed in parliament. The coalition monitors the budgetary processes; distributes leaflets and flyers underscoring the emerging issues in the budget; engages in one-to-one lobbying with targeted members of parliament perceived as highly influential in the legislative process; convenes press briefings to advance issues that it feels MPs are not paying greater attention to. The coalition mobilises sister networks like the Malawi Economic Justice Network, the Civil Society Agriculture Network, the Malawi Health Equity Network etc. to organise marches or demonstrations to make its case heard.

Budget execution stage: The coalition constantly monitors the performance of the budget in terms of: implementation rate; efficiency and effectiveness of the budgetary processes; development initiatives and Ministry of Education recruitment provision. CSCQBE uses the district education networks to provide oversight of the procurement and distribution of teaching and learning materials in schools. The coalition also monitors the disbursement cycle to determine resource flow from central government to local assemblies, in line with the decentralisation policy. CSCQBE monitors receipt and usage of direct

support to schools. It organises community hearings with Members of Parliament and local assembly officials in selected constituencies to profile gaps in the budget implementation and collectively offer solutions to emerging problems. Such a social audit process enhances civic engagement of the communities with local leaders and policy makers.

Monitoring and evaluation/ Reporting stage :

The coalition conducts a mid-term budget review to monitor progress and gaps in the budget implementation process; undertakes post-budget analysis looking at the overall budget performance against set indicators; assesses internal efficiency of the Ministry of Education and the local assembly; examines the extent to which the School Management Committees (SMCs), Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs) and the community at large are involved in education budget implementation.

Results: CSCQBE's proactive engagement at different levels using practical evidence helps to push for increments in the budget provisions for teaching and learning materials (TLM) and development. The TLM budget line for instance, increased from MK1.8 billion (US\$ 11.7 Million) to MK2.1 billion (US\$ 13.7 Million). The coalition pushed for: greater support towards special needs education, recruitment of more teachers and the construction of more classrooms. During the 2009 financial year, government made clear allocations in the overall education budget to provide for: recruitment of 400 teachers; construction of 1,000 extra classrooms; construction of a special needs education institute; and the establishment of a special needs education department with a special monitoring and supervision section.

II. The Election Cycle Processes:

Introduction: Another important project implemented by the CSCQBE and supported by ANCEFA with RWS II funds is the election cycle project aimed at identifying priority education issues for political party/politician buy-in during the electoral

process. The project was designed at a time when Malawi was about to hold parliamentary and presidential elections and the coalition used the opportunity to demand strategic political commitments towards education from aspirant members of parliament and their party apparatuses.

Engagement process: The coalition consulted different stakeholders across the country to generate issues that citizens felt were important for the promotion of quality education in Malawi. The data collected was validated to ensure that it represented the views of the stakeholders consulted and was consolidated in a document dubbed the *Education Agenda*. A literature review was also conducted to systematically document the priorities and gaps in education. Political parties' manifestos were critiqued in terms of their responsiveness to the education agenda; Community stakeholders were sensitised on emerging issues from the consultation and how they could use the *Education Agenda* to monitor education service delivery in Malawi.

The coalition succeeded in summoning all the political parties (the Secretary General or the President), and all the relevant national stakeholders for the launching of the *Education Agenda* – the climax of the election cycle advocacy. All political parties made commitments towards supporting education and signed an addendum that once voted into office they will implement the agenda. Tools used to engage with the general public included a massive radio campaign to popularise the *Education Agenda*; translation



James Oatway/Panos/ActionAid

and distribution of advocacy booklets to community stakeholders through the District Education Networks; t-shirts with the message 'have a vote by supporting education'; news features in the daily newspapers. The development of the *Education Agenda* unified the nation regardless of political affiliation or grouping to exert pressure on the prospective government.

Results: National education coalitions in sub-Saharan Africa should endeavour to benchmark the processes employed by CSCQBE to put together an *Education Agenda* which serves as the yardstick to assess government's performance against policy commitments. The Malawi coalition continues to monitor education policies and budgets against the commitments made during the launching of the *Education Agenda*, the implementation rate, and the effects it is having on the EFA agenda. Come the 2014 elections, CSCQBE will have an opportunity to comprehensively measure the degree of achievement by the current government in education service delivery and the extent to which opposition parties have been holding the government accountable. The coalition also critiqued political parties' manifestos to determine to what extent they were promoting or prioritising education and held a series of live-phone-in programs to create space for citizens to put across their views. Some Development Partners (DPs) used the *Education Agenda* information as a basis for their engagement with the political parties and the elected government. CSCQBE was the first network to come up with a clear agenda for its sector and this served as good learning point for other sectors.

Other coalitions could learn from this model of partnership between government and CSOs. Constructive engagement with policy makers pays. Devolving power to the district level also helps to build a very strong power base to support headquarters. The coalition's election and budget cycle processes have been hailed as international success stories by the World Bank, UNESCO and OSISA.¹⁷⁸ The budget cycle advocacy initiative has aroused keen interest in countries like Mozambique, The Gambia,

and Ethiopia who have embarked on a study tour to Malawi to learn best practice and see how they could possibly import the model, taking due cognisance of their country-specific circumstances.

Challenges:

- Staff turnover is a challenge for the Malawian coalition, just as it is for some other coalitions, including those in Kenya and Tanzania (see case studies that follow). The coordinators have all been in post for less than two years. The approach to capacity building must therefore change to target not just the national coordinators but the wider membership like the coordinating committees of the national coalitions.
- Activities are expanding but funds are limited. And by trying to satisfy all the regional structures, the impact of activities conducted can only be limited.
- Some key informants take the view that coalitions are endowed with the requisite expertise. The problem at issue is duplication of efforts and inadequate knowledge management within the coalitions and therefore the perceived inability to leverage such competences to benefit the network.
- There has also been limited learning and experience sharing platforms. Members felt that problems in the African countries were similar and thus learning from successful coalitions is very important.
- Evidence-based research should be promoted at all levels. Respondents are advocating for the increase of resources to cater for district-based research activities to inform policy at both the decentralised and national levels.

178 The work of the coalition (along with other civil society organisations) was praised during the launch of the Demand for Good Governance Network; a world bank led initiative in June 2008 at World Bank Headquarters in Washington DC

Case Study: Tanzania

Effective participation of CSOs in policy reforms

Introduction:

The Tanzania Education Network/Mtandao wa Elimu (TEN/MET) emerged as a coalition in 1999 when a group of CSOs came up with the idea of building an education advocacy platform and were supported by Save the Children to set it up. TEN/MET can boast of having a very strong Secretariat based in Dar Es Salaam and a significant membership comprising of a spectrum of NGOs, Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), Faith-Based Organisations (FBOs) and other interest groups (about 200 of them). The challenge, however, remains the commitment and active participation of its members in its campaign platforms. The coalition is represented in 12 task force committees of the Ministry of Education, a positioning that enables it to raise pertinent issues and have inputs in the policy development and implementation processes. The institution participates in meetings with the Ministry of Education at least every week.

TEN/MET work revolves around the following focus areas: Policy Analysis and Advocacy; Information Sharing and Networking; Capacity Building; and Administration and Finance. Its strength lies in the fact that it is not just a Secretariat, but a network with a nationwide coverage and outreach. Consequently, when TEN/MET takes a decision, it is a strong representation of Tanzanian civil society in all its administrative layers that decide: from the national, zonal (8), regional (26) and district (128) levels. The organisation can therefore boast of a strong mobilisation capacity when there is an advocacy issue to be tackled. For the purpose of dealing with issues, the Tanzanian coalition communicates with its membership through the decentralised structure given above for the message to filter down to the grassroots level. But for the purpose of disseminating advocacy material and publications, the

coalition sends information directly to the institutions and partners.

TEN/MET gained strength from the Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF) as a result of the capacity building interventions initiated by the project from 2002-2008. TEN/MET promotes Citizen Watch¹⁷⁹ for policy change and its activities are very visible in Tanzania. The current Education and Training Policy is largely influenced by the coalition. A dialogue structure is in place with TEN/MET serving as the education privileged partner of government. The coalition was therefore instrumental in spearheading the current national Basic Education Strategy.¹⁸⁰

Stakeholder Perception of the Status of EFA in Tanzania:

According to the key informants interviewed, access is improving in Tanzania but there is still a lot of room for enhancing enrolment. There are a few excluded and marginalised groups that need to be targeted properly. These are mainly girls living in the rural areas, and other vulnerable groups such as the children of pastoralist communities and physically challenged individuals. Quality is considered to be a serious challenge. Early Childhood Care and Education remains somewhat patchy; pre-school NER stands at 27.7%. The government is trying to extend primary school downwards in a separate entity rather than having ECD facilities embedded in existing primary school structures. The problem has to do with the difference in methodology and the transition factor. Adult literacy is sliding backwards after the gains of the 1980s, when Tanzania almost achieved universal adult literacy.

Quality, a cross-cutting issue, is the chief concern. Some key informants were categorical that they do not anticipate total achievement of the EFA goals by 2015. The strategy consisting of emphasising quantitative aspects related to access and

179 The scrutiny by citizen groups of public service delivery by duty bearers (policy and decision makers) based on an accountability relationship aimed at maximizing development results.

180 Tanzania Education Strategy for Improving the Quality of Education (2009-2013)



Lisa Taylor/ActionAid

focusing more on enrolment is having some unintended consequences. Quality, in all its different facets: quality teacher; quality teaching and learning materials; professional development; pupil/teacher ratio and pupil/classroom ratio etc are still not being addressed properly.

Consequently, learning achievements (in terms of exam pass rates, acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills) are low, at around 50%. As a result, monitoring and evaluation of the impact of education on communities needs to be conducted. The problems highlighted by the respondents as being areas of concern in the country include: girl child education; education financing; quality, teacher motivation and pupil/teacher ratio – which is at 52:1, while the pupil/classroom ratio stands at 73:1. Gross enrolment ratio has jumped from 77.6% (2000) to 109.9% (2005) while NER progressed from 58.8% to 94.8% (Education Watch report). Education spending as a percentage of GDP was at 3.9% (2006), 2.1% below the recommended 6% benchmark.

Example of best practice: Working to reform the 1995 Education Policy:

Policy engagement with the Ministry of Education is one of the key strengths of TEN/MET. The institution has already established a track record of working successfully with the Tanzanian government to develop a policy document (the Education Bill), that is on the verge of being promulgated into law.

The policy reform agenda: The 1995 Education Policy was outdated and consequently was not meeting the challenges of the day. People with disabilities, children from pastoralist families, girls' educational requirements, re-entry policy etc were glaringly absent in the policy framework. Participatory methodologies promoting inclusiveness were not given due prominence. The issue of school fees and other mandatory contribution by parents were seen as barriers to access to basic education in Tanzania. The establishment of TEN/MET created the platform for education focused NGOs and CBOs to urge the government to remove school fees and put in place a capitation grant. Prior to that, a study had been undertaken to document the facts and to use them for evidenced-based advocacy to inform policy. A heavy campaign was mounted by TEN/MET in 2001/2002 to ensure that the Tanzanian government abolished the payment of school fees as a means of boosting access to basic education. That resulted in a significant increase in the number of children attending schools. That notwithstanding, many still remained out of the system: the marginalised and excluded communities, orphans, the physically challenged etc. Some key informants underscored the fact that Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, Tanzania's first President, had a clear vision of what he wanted for the education sector of the country: education for self-reliance through competence-based education. After his retirement from politics, the country went astray. Entry qualifications for teachers were lowered, so was the duration of teacher training. The Education Policy of 1988 dismantled the legacy of the Nyerere era. It was much later that people started to reconnect with Nyerere's policies.

The first point of entry was thus to review the 1995 Education Policy and to lobby for enhanced allocation of resources to the education sector (after it had been lowered during the preceding decade) and for the promotion of competence-based approaches to education.

In 2006 therefore, it was agreed that stakeholders should sit together to review the policy of 1995. A dialogue and consultation process was triggered at all levels (regional,

district, council and zonal) to seek the views of stakeholders and TEN/MET being an education-focused NGO played a prominent role in the process, collecting the views from around the country. Those inputs were used to serve as the basis for drafting the new Education Policy Bill, entitled: The Education and Training Policy. Following due process and an approach to participation, the Ministry again circulated the draft to elicit civil society inputs in an attempt to entrench all the issues that were relevant to Tanzania's development needs. Thereafter, the final draft of the policy was posted on the Ministry's website for ease of access, but was later withdrawn to accommodate further adjustments. The policy reform engagement model (as described above) was effective in helping to influence the development of the new Education Bill and is certainly a worthy example for emulation by other national coalitions.

The Draft Education Bill that should replace the 1995 Education Policy is widely cited as an example of CSOs successfully influencing education policy outcomes in Tanzania. The model used by TENMET to support advocacy initiatives goes through the following stages: a small team is formed drawn from the membership and is tasked to analyze an issue; then determine how to engage with the government; a core team is selected that would represent the coalition for the purpose of engaging with the Ministry of Education. The lobbying and advocacy for the review of the Education Policy of 1999 went through that process and involved high level meetings with the decision makers at the Ministry of Education.

Unfortunately, the Bill has stalled at the Ministry of Education since 2006 and is yet to be enacted into law. The Bill was the result of a strong advocacy campaign to ensure that every child in Tanzania has access to a quality teacher and quality education.

The Teachers' Union was involved in the process through the TEN/MET platform but also had its views captured separately from an exclusively teachers' perspective. Using research as a tool to inform policy, the Union also conducted research entitled: *Why every child needs a quality teacher*. The Teachers' Union later managed to convince the Minister

to attend the validation workshop where the findings of the research were disseminated. As an active member of TEN/MET, the Teachers' Union of Tanzania has helped to enhance the negotiating capacity of the coalition.

Other examples of best practice:

- TEN/MET and the Teachers' Union initiated the formation of a Teachers' Professional Board, so that teaching is given the respect that it deserves. The Bill was initiated by the pair and after due consultations with the Parliamentarians' drafting committee it was introduced for consideration and enactment. This Bill is also in the pipeline. The problem however is that, TEN/MET and the Teachers' Union want an independent Teachers' Professional Body whereas others are in favour of a government controlled Teachers' Professional Body
- To maximise the effectiveness of civil society participation in the technical committees of the Ministry, the former were first trained by the government and then given the space to engage meaningfully with ministerial committees and processes. TEN/MET is a member of the Basic Education Development Committee and the Quality Improvement Task Force. A stronger group emerged from the process.

Challenges:

- The challenges of TEN/MET include: the issue of sustainability. With the UK Department for International Development moving more towards budget support, CSO resource mobilisation possibilities may dwindle; the strategy of the association could be considered too ambitious.

Recommendation: It will be important to refocus the activities of the coalition to what it does best, for instance, influencing policy change at the macro level. The issue of membership and what is expected of each member within the coalition continues to be a challenge. Relationship with donors has improved a notch and needs to be sustained over time.

Case Study: Kenya

When education financing matters

Introduction:

The Elimu Yetu Coalition (EYC) was established in 1999 in the aftermath of the Jomtien World Education Conference of 1990, and was registered as a Trust in November 2006. Prior to that, it was functioning as a network of CSOs with an education focus, supported by the Commonwealth Education Fund (CEF). ActionAid Kenya provided an institutional home to EYC. That arrangement availed EYC of the agency's robust financial and accounting policies, systems and procedures for the efficient management of its activities, resources and information.

At the outset, it was a one-person Secretariat, supported by a board of nine people. The organisation emerged when stakeholders deemed it necessary to have all education-focused CSOs under one umbrella so that they could speak with one voice to influence education policy and outcomes. The coalition currently has around 120 members spread across the country. It has a national Secretariat and regional level affiliated members. The campaign structure of the coalition has many layers: the Executive Committee, Secretariat, thematic groups and regional chapters. And according to the dispensation and provisions of its new Constitution, the structure should also embrace the newly established counties. For campaign efforts, the level of commitment of the membership is quite impressive, at around 80%. But participating in the campaign efforts aside, the issue of registration and payment of subscriptions to the parent body is a sticking point. In that regard, only about 20% of the members could be considered active. EYC has thematic groups (sub-networks) structured around the EFA goals as follows: Early childhood development and education; Disability and special needs education; Gender and girls' education; Teachers and Quality; Basic Education in Urban Slums and Arid Lands; and Adult Literacy.

EYC has a Constitution, a functional structure and all the legal instruments to function effectively. The coalition's image among its membership and partners, particularly the donor community has changed drastically in the last couple of years after some major internal challenges (see below). Confidence and credibility have increased a notch resulting in more funding opportunities to conduct EFA-related advocacy activities.

Perception of the Status of EFA in Kenya:

Under the Kenya Education Sector Support Programme (KESSP), the country has made significant progress towards EFA. The local challenges in Kenya however revolve around the following issues: improving Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) opportunities, particularly for vulnerable children; ensuring that all children have opportunities to access and complete their education; ensuring that teaching and learning are available and accessible; attaining a 50% improvement in adult literacy levels for women; eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education and improving all aspects of quality education. Respondents lamented the lack of adequate support (both financial and human) to early childhood development and education; the low quality of education; the high teacher/pupil ratios; overcrowded classrooms (a ratio of 1 teacher to 80 pupils) and high numbers of unreached children especially in slum areas. Access has increased tremendously since the government's introduction of the Free Primary Education Programme in 2003/2004 but the absence of a capitation grant has compromised access to quality basic education among poor, vulnerable and marginalised groups. However, primary school gross enrolment rate increased from 107.6% in 2005 to 109.8% in 2008. Transition rate from primary to secondary increased to 60% in 2007, up from 45% in 2003. The education sector budget as a percentage of the total

national budget has been constantly increasing and currently stands at 17% – but still 3% less than the FTI World Bank benchmark of 20%. Differently stated, the Government of Kenya spends over 6% of GDP on education.

The respondents unanimously agreed that government, through the Ministry of Education, also developed policy frameworks on Early Childhood Education, Adult and Continuing Education, Non-Formal Education, Nomadic Education and Gender Policy in Education. Under the Economic Stimulus Package, the government has embarked on improving the infrastructure in schools and has also increased the number of teachers by hiring teachers on short-term contract basis. A teacher/pupil ratio of 1:100 is common, especially in rural areas and that tends to have a negative impact on learning outcomes.

Challenges of Coalition Building

As described in the regional lessons learned below, EYC experienced the kind of governance challenges that pose a risk to both established and new coalitions. Around 2005, EYC, despite strong performance over previous years, had arrived at a low point and was experiencing difficulties in campaign and organisational management issues, leading to a loss of focus, trust and confidence, which led to the emergence of different factions within the coalition. In 2008, a special AGM was successfully organised to revive and revitalise EYC, and an interim office was set up to oversee the affairs of the coalition for a period of one year. ANCEFA, via RWS II initiatives, assisted EYC to get back on track, providing a project support officer and administrative support to strengthen the network and bolster the Secretariat. Thereafter, a full-blown AGM supported by ANCEFA was organised in 2009 to set up proper structures, leading to the rejuvenation of EYC. This is an example of the important support role that regional organisations can play in sensitive and often secretive matters such as internal cohesion and governance. The flexibility of the RWS II grant allowed ANCEFA to respond when this risk emerged, and to prevent the loss of a coalition that had until that time been seen as a strong advocacy leader.



Piers Benatar/Panos Pictures/ActionAid

Documenting best practice from Kenya:

the Election Cycle Advocacy with linkages to Education financing via the National Budget:

The manner in which EYC is trying to engender value-based politics in Kenya is exemplary and worthy of emulation by other national coalitions. In anticipation of the 2012 elections, the coalition evolved an election blueprint (manifesto) encapsulating the problems, issues, policies and possible solutions for the education sector and is presenting it to the political parties for stakeholder buy-in and also putting the citizenry on notice when casting their votes and also for the purpose of tracking electoral promises. That strategy is premised on the view that politicians are more responsive to political and social stimulus when they are canvassing for votes during election times. Then it becomes possible to hold them to ransom, thereby influencing their party manifestos in favour of the Education for All goals. Elimu Yetu Coalition's Election and Budget Advocacy project financed by ANCEFA is intended to create that space for CSOs to engage constructively with the election cycle processes having strong linkages to education financing through the national budget.

This is an example of good practice that has been tested. Already in 2007 (prior to the election and the post-election crisis that ensued) political parties published their party manifestos to seek the mandate of the electorate and were competing for the attention of education-focused CSOs in terms of the robustness of their education sector plan. CSOs engaged with the processes to inform and influence the party manifestos. EYC is taking stock of the achievements made in the education sector thus far by keeping track of the electoral promises and the extent to which they have been implemented by the coalition government. The lessons learned served to inform the EYC Manifesto to political parties for the 2012 elections. The coalition has elaborated a 'minimum package' for party manifestos in 10 agenda points, taking on board all the EFA goals, followed by a call to action from

all the citizens of Kenya. Major political parties in Kenya cannot afford to be indifferent to such a clarion call.

The key stages in the election and budget cycle project observed in Kenya to hold politicians to account are as follows:

- Review and analysis of the education sector plans and budgets (pre and post elections)
- Review and analysis of manifestos of major political parties to underscore the specific pledges and commitments they made while canvassing for the votes of the citizens
- Review of the evolution and implementation of the education sector plans in line with EFA, the Vision 2030 framework and the KESSP
- Tracking of electoral pledges and promises made in 2007 to determine to what extent these have been adhered to and finally, the development of a shadow education manifesto to serve as a selling point for the 2012 election. That document serves as the benchmark to determine who is serious about educational development in Kenya to deserve endorsement by the coalition.

These budget and election cycle processes in Kenya are reminiscent of those in Malawi, except that in Kenya the processes are intertwined (election cycle processes with budgetary implication), while in Malawi, the election cycle and the budget cycle advocacy outreaches seem to be parallel processes that are mutually supportive (see the Malawi case study). The commonality that they both have is the manner in which national coalitions are able to lobby for enhanced resource allocation to the education sector by applying pressure on political formations to make commitments against which they will be judged in future elections. This model could be exported to other ANCEFA countries. But the effectiveness of such a strategy will depend largely on the structure of party politics in country-specific contexts. In an environment where one party clearly dominates the political landscape, a coalition's leverage to influence political outcomes may not be that significant.

Points of learning:

- Part of the internal crisis that EYC faced was linked to a lack of management instruments. EYC left the ActionAid fold (where it had been housed in its early years) before management instruments were developed. The lack of oversight, control mechanisms and reference points that the situation created gave rise to various conflicts of interest in the award of contracts without due process. The Executive Committee and the Coordinator had not been on the same wave length, leading to a crisis situation that almost provoked the demise of the coalition.
- The brand of advocacy and mode of engagement: EYC adopts a constructive engagement approach in its dealings with the government. The coalition positions itself strategically in sector committees and tries to influence policies from within rather than overly involving itself in confrontational mode of advocacy and campaigning. That strategy has enabled EYC to develop joint documents with the Ministry; partake in joint task force committees to prepare for certain conferences and to draft position papers to influence educational policies and outcomes.
- The EFA goals are so broad. EYC has tried to do so much at the same time. In order to be more effective, campaigns need to be more focused. It would be necessary to focus the education campaigns mounted by national coalitions to three things at most and not to try to do everything at the same time, with little resources.
- Using the education donor coordination group to influence policy: one of the key points being driven home is the tacit alliance between the donor community and CSOs as to who should take the lead in pushing certain policy agendas in each forum. Such a strategy is premised on the understanding that sometimes government would be more receptive to home-grown advocacy positions. Other times, CSOs could lean on the donor community to promote a certain policy position on their behalf.

Best practice:

- In Kenya, there is a sector wide approach geared towards inclusiveness that brings together all those who have a stake in education. EYC is considered by the Ministry as a key development partner and as such is present during the planning, implementation and monitoring processes of the Ministry. Joint missions/ interventions are carried out in an effort to promote best practice. The impact of the education sector in national development is palpable, resulting in strides being made in reforms. EYC exerts positive pressure on the Ministry for them to be more responsive to the challenges of the day. The Ministry offers consultancy contracts to the coalition aimed at reviewing progress towards the EFA goals. Quality remains a big concern for development partners.
- EYC is part of the Education Donor Coordination Group (EDCG) and helps the Ministry to show donors how they could help in education. They are also active in the non-formal education campaign to achieve the EFA goals. Elimu Yetu helps in the area of policy advice as part of the planning team and engages constructively with the Ministry. The coalition can easily have access to the Ministry and have played a prominent role in the review of KESSP.
- Media Advocacy: EYC has a robust media strategy through which strong ties were established with media houses.
- The work of the coalition is well documented for learning and sharing with partners. The publications are made available to members and development partners to keep them abreast of the activities of the coalition.
- EYC is good at unpacking issues using the network. A national conference is held every year to bring CSOs together in an effort to take stock of what is happening.

Case Study: Uganda

The quest for transparency in policy implementation

Introduction:

The Forum for Education NGOs in Uganda (FENU), like TEN/MET, EYC and CSCQBE, is a founding member of ANCEFA. FENU has 83 members and around 65% of them are actively engaged in the coalition's advocacy efforts. The network has a national Secretariat but is not so successful in mounting district chapters due to among other things, resource constraints. FENU is structured as follows: The Annual General Assembly (organised every year) is the supreme body, followed by the Board of directors, the Secretariat and three district chapters that are independent of FENU.

Four out of the seven Board members come from upcountry, thereby conferring a good rural/urban balance. The organisation has both an administrative manual and a financial manual to guide procedures and processes. It operates on five thematic groups: Access and Quality; Gender Parity; Early Childhood Education; Adult Education; HIV/Emergencies and Multi-lingual Education. The model observed for the management of the network is as follows: FENU chairs the first meeting. The subsequent meetings are supposed to be hosted by other members every other month on a rotational basis.

FENU was established in 2001 to serve as a forum for networking, capacity building and advocacy on education policy and practice. The cohesiveness of the coalition, like that of EYC in Kenya, did not stand the test of time. The coalition was very strong before 2008 but deteriorated thereafter due to governance challenges around leadership and management of the affairs of the coalition. Members at one point started distancing themselves from the network, resulting in a reduction of vibrancy of the institution. FENU has fortunately regained its prominence, but needs to bring back the lost members into the coalition fold. One key

informant alleged that the Secretariat tends to be the coalition and the staffing levels seem to be grossly inadequate to deal with the challenges at hand. The coalition, according to another interviewee, is overly dominated by INGOs. Two others underscored the challenges to coalition building, but hailed the fruitful relationship they have with the media as a good example of a successful partnership. Unlike RWS II, RWS I was very visible in Uganda. There was a support mechanism (including a package for the recruitment of a programme staff member and institutional and outreach support) and FENU had a moderating role within the ANCEFA board from 2005 to 2009 until it supported Kenya to take over the moderating role for the East African region, when it was felt that Kenya was ready for the job. That support mechanism changed under RWS II and the provision for a support staff member was not renewed. There is evidence that FENU participated in a trip to Djibouti (with one ANCEFA Programme Officer), to set up the coalition there and also attended the Nairobi Board meeting to discuss RWS issues.

Perception of the Status of EFA:

FENU played a key role in influencing the adoption of the free Basic Education Act, guaranteeing access to education for all the children of Uganda. Uganda has largely achieved access to basic education with a Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) of 122%, but is not very much on track with respect to the issue of quality. FENU has been doing well in the area of advocacy and has spearheaded the: 'go back to school'; 'back to school'; 'stay in school' campaigns across Uganda. The coalition also celebrates the Global Action Week (GAW) and the Day of the African Child. But the challenges are huge and parents are expected to bear some of the burden, e.g. hidden costs, to keep their children in school. When school-related costs



Georgie Scott/ActionAid

are attached, there is reluctance on the part of certain parents to get their children into the school system. For cultural reasons, the girl child is more vulnerable and is less likely to be kept in school; girls are often married off early, resulting in a pyramid-like structure, showing a wide base of female pupils at the school entry point that gradually tapers off towards the upper levels.

The government has not committed itself to providing Early Childhood Development services. It only coordinates the private providers but is not delivering that service. Today, enrolment in ECD stands at 2.6% of new entrants in primary one. There are gaps in basic education provision, although there has been increased allocation. The provision of midday meals is proving to be a formidable challenge contributing to the high dropout rate. Repetition rates for grades 1-5 is at 7%. Enrolment is increasing but the retention rate is a matter for concern. Recognising that some children cannot fit into the traditional mould, ActionAid Uganda is involved in providing non-formal education school services. The organisation influences government to consider the issue of non-formal education for children of primary school going age that cannot access the conventional schools. The government is gradually coming in to provide the funds to build permanent structures for non-formal schools. Teachers

are being included in the government payroll; a curriculum for teachers has been developed and a two year training programme has been evolved. In May 2010, the government trained 800 non-formal teachers and that in itself, could be seen as a great achievement.

Examples of best practice:

- One strategic objective being vigorously pursued by FENU is to position and entrench itself in the places where policy and practice happen, to be able to influence the decision making process. The strategy is to influence from within rather than be engaged in protest processions that are more often than not, counterproductive. It is a strategy of constructive engagement aimed at bringing FENU's voice to the table. That objective has been met to a large extent. FENU has now reached a certain level in the government machinery that has enabled it to be regularly consulted on education issues. The coalition is in various working groups of the Ministry namely: Monitoring and Evaluation; Teacher Education, Business Technical and Vocational Training (BTVET), Basic Education and the Education Sector Consultative Committee – the top policy organ in the Ministry of Education. As a result of that constructive engagement,

FENU enjoys legitimacy, recognition and respect. The coalition can no longer be ignored and is never closed out when it comes to discussing education issues in Uganda. The relationship has been cemented to such an extent that FENU does not need an appointment to see the Minister of Education or the Prime Minister.

- The outcome of FENU's policy of entrenchment within government bodies was that it was able to influence policy, over a period of years, culminating in the government's enactment of the 2008 Education Act. This Act was many years in the making. It began as the 2000 Education Bill, which was stalled, having been subjected to a protracted debate from 2001 to 2008 and amended about five times. The issues in the bill include: the need for basic education to be free and compulsory; non-formal education to be recognised in law; the gender parity issues that need to be adequately mainstreamed. In 2008 after the Social Services Committee has reported to the plenary, there was a clause FENU called into question: parents could be punished for not taking children to school. FENU contested that and the committee was forced to take it back, thereby bending its own rules. But FENU lost the battle due to inadequate preparation to argue out their case. The problem at issue was: what do we do with parents who decided not to take their children to school? It is evident that the coalition did not adequately research the issues to tease out the information that could inform their lobbying and advocacy strategies. For future GCE interventions, it would be critical to enhance capacity in lobbying and negotiating with duty bearers and decision makers on education advocacy issues.
- FENU enjoys good relations with the Ministry of Gender, taking care of gender mainstreaming and adult education issues, and seeks to influence their policies to promote the related EFA goals. The coalition is now working hard to entrench itself with the Ministry of Local Government, taking advantage of the new dispensation devolving authority to the decentralised level.
- There had been serious issues with the payment of teachers' salaries. The district education officers took time to register the names of teachers on their payroll. The coalition took up the matter through lobbying and advocacy to reduce the layers through which the funds transited. The funds transfer process changed. Today, teachers are now being paid by the Ministry of Finance directly into their accounts. The capitation grant also goes directly into the school bank accounts, which enhances accountability at the decentralised level, but that has its own challenges also in terms of readiness of the local community structures to engage with the processes. Efforts are currently being made to rejuvenate the School Management Committees and to make them functional and capable of playing an oversight role. The guidelines are currently being published to empower local structures for the task at hand.
- FENU is represented in the highest policy organ where policy related issues are discussed and affronted. The meetings are chaired by the Permanent Secretary and the big donors take part in such meetings, creating a good opportunity to engage with the education sector processes. The Education Sector Review Meeting takes place in November and offers CSOs the opportunity to influence policy and the decision making process.
- The Government of Uganda is spending about 30% of the national budget on education, 65% of which is going towards basic education – according to the FENU national coordinator. That is 10 points higher than the FTI World Bank benchmark of 20% of the national budget to be allocated to the education sector.
- A Quality Enhancement Initiative (QEI) and Community Participation outreaches are to be promoted in Uganda. This will go a long way in putting the issue of quality as a cross-cutting issue high in the government's agenda. Other ANCEFA member countries need to do the same.

Regional Summary: Africa

Commonalities in approaching EFA campaigns, lessons learned, lobbying and advocacy and operational challenges

- One of the key lessons learned during this exercise is that the best way for national coalitions to achieve development results is to lobby government or the relevant sectors (education in this instance) to be represented in their working groups and to be seen to be key planks in those structures. Then it becomes possible for civil society to be privy to what is happening and to be able to influence the processes from within. That is one key commonality between EYC, TEN/MET, FENU and CSCQBE. They have all succeeded in entrenching themselves in the technical working groups of their respective Ministries of Education and have proven to be worthy development partners capable of offering policy advice service and alternatives to government for the common good. The point of learning here is that: the principle of constructive engagement from within offers a higher pay-off than confrontational modes of advocacy!
- TEN/MET's Strategic Planning period is aligned to the national election cycle. The premise of that strategic positioning is to avail its network of members of the opportunity to engage meaningfully with politicians by getting them to commit to the coalition's agenda, and that commitment serves as the yardstick to measure their performance in an accountability relationship. This has proven to be an effective way to push the EFA agenda. Without aligning its strategic planning period to the election cycle, the CSCQBE uses the same approach to get political parties and politicians to take education issues into their party manifestos to get their support. Such an approach needs to be replicated in all ANCEFA member countries as politicians are more responsive to civil society demands when they are busy canvassing for citizens' votes.
- The election and budget cycle advocacy project undertaken in Malawi as two distinct projects supported by ANCEFA through RWS II are reminiscent of the Election and Budget Advocacy project conducted by EYC in Kenya. Both are designed to track political promises, government programmes and budget allocations for basic education. EYC has elaborated a 'minimum package' that all parties vying for government should buy in block whereas the CSCBQE has evolved the Education Agenda to foster stakeholder buy-in. Both coalitions have the ability to summon political parties to one forum and to get them to commit to these agendas.
- Building and managing a coalition is a challenging endeavour. While ANCEFA, through projects like RWS, supports ongoing internal processes of strengthening, there is still a lot of room for improvement. There are staffing gaps to be filled as a matter of urgency. The monitoring and evaluation systems of the institutions are often weak and need to be developed. Lack of institutional memory is an issue and a challenge.
- The national coalition of Malawi has succeeded in demystifying the education budget and has raised awareness among duty bearers, policy makers and decision makers to give consistent support to the education sector. This is done through a consistent, unrelenting year-round advocacy strategy. The coalition's success stories have been recognised by the World Bank, UNESCO and OSISA. The budget cycle has been a learning point for other African countries, and CSCBQE has already welcomed study tour visits by Mozambique, The Gambia, and Ethiopia.
- Before engaging a serious development actor like the Ministry of Education, coalitions need to be adequately prepared and to think through all the possible arguments that could be advanced by the other party at the negotiation table. FENU (Uganda), according to a key stakeholder, engaged the Ministry unprepared.

A sample of the specific contributions of Real World Strategies in Africa – coalition building, resuscitation and strengthening within country-specific circumstances:

ANCEFA has been working to deliver change at the national and regional levels. Coalition building is one of the key planks of ANCEFA's strategic plan aimed at building and sustaining capacity to engage with national education processes.

ANCEFA's role as a change agent and the organisation's ability to build, nurture, resuscitate and revitalise national coalitions is well established. A number of countries have, during RWS I and II, learnt/benefitted from ANCEFA's coalition building/strengthening blueprint. They include but are not limited to Zimbabwe, Senegal and Kenya.

1. Zimbabwe: CSOs in the eye of the storm: Zimbabwe is the country that is most unlikely to reach any of the EFA goals by 2015 and gives credence to the view that local political and economic circumstances matter! The political climate in Zimbabwe did not bode well for the national education coalition. From being one of the best education systems in Africa, with a literacy rate of 98% by the late 1990s, the performance rating of the country dropped to between 40–50% in 2006. Teachers were deliberately targeted for their role in the political education of communities leading to the defeat of the ruling party, and repression, violence and intimidation became the order of the day. The political deadlock over power-sharing that ensued between ZANU-PF and MDC, the high cost of education, closure of public schools, poor wages of teachers and low morale all contributed to the crumbling of the education system. Mass teacher exodus into neighbouring countries followed in order to escape persecution and economic hardships. It was difficult under those circumstances to have a legal platform on which to stand to advocate for the EFA goals. The

atmosphere of suspicion that prevailed made it difficult for the National Civil Society Education Coalition of Zimbabwe (NASCECZ), set up in 2003 and nurtured to play its role until 2007, to have an input, output or influence on the education sector processes. The coalition was therefore reduced to trying to make the best out of a bad situation and was forced to scale down its operations and eventually had to go underground.

A political compromise has since then been reached between ZANU-PF and MDC, and Zimbabwe is gradually moving from the jaundiced years of political suspicion and crackdown into a new era that is more conducive to learning and development. In September 2008 ANCEFA and OSISA held a meeting in Johannesburg to strategise for revival of a coalition in Zimbabwe, culminating in the birth of the Education Coalition of Zimbabwe (ECOZI). A new Steering Committee emerged with the Forum for African Women Educationalists Zimbabwe Chapter serving as the Focal Point for Coordination. The organisation is now in a learning curve and is encouraging dialogue and consensus building with a view to also gaining a foothold at the Ministry of Education, as had been the case in 2007 when NASCECZ had a cordial relationship with the government. The current situation therefore calls for 'guarded optimism'. A fact finding visit was commissioned in October/November 2008, followed by stakeholder mapping in June 2009, and a consensus building workshop in June 2009. As at end June 2009, the Steering Committee was leading discussions on an MOU that would facilitate full revival of the coalition. It is interesting to note that a coordinator has now been appointed.

2 ANCEFA's coalition building methodology:

ANCEFA has developed its coalition building methodology based on the following elements and processes: ANCEFA provides start up funds; facilitates the stakeholder mapping exercise, and organises a stakeholder briefing session with the Steering Committee. After the conclusion of that process, the Committee is expected to undertake the following: develop MOU/Constitution for the coalition; mobilise NGOs to take part in the coalition; get involved in preparations and holding of an NGO Education Forum; facilitate a coalition membership workshop; reach a consensus for the coalition vision and mission; establish a secretariat and enhance its visibility in the country. The start-up funds that the newly set up coalition is endowed with are used, among other things, to: recruit a skeleton staff; acquire office space; acquire office equipment – computers, printers, photocopiers, furniture, telephone, fax machine etc; introduce activities to stakeholders; communicate with members and partners. But the challenges to coalition building include: inadequate finances to run good campaigns; limited coordination, political interference and the capacity to undertake evidence-based campaigns.¹⁸¹

3. Kenya: The successes and challenges of coalition building

EYC provides a vivid example of the successes and challenges that can beset a coalition and the potential pitfalls that established or emerging coalitions should avoid. The 2005 AGM that culminated in the election of a new Board was dominated by organisations outside Nairobi. Few people were therefore left to run the affairs of the coalition and the campaign. All the others felt left out due largely to the lack of consultations on campaign and organisational management issues. The difficulty of communication between the Secretariat, the Board and the regional membership resulted in the loss of focus. Opposing camps developed, culminating in the



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absence of trust and confidence in the organisation by members and partners, thus threatening the organisation's very existence. But committed individuals seized the moment, took ownership of the problems and invested an enormous amount of time and energy to assuage the coalition stakeholders. The values that sustain an enabling coalition were once again espoused, culminating in the evolution of an all-encompassing consensus to ground the coalition on a

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sound footing. This is a clear example of ANCEFA using its diplomatic good offices to resolve the problems of a national coalition and to iron out the terms of the new arrangement with the members.

The rejuvenation of EYC:

The approach was in two stages:

- one-to-one consultation with stakeholder institutions to prepare the ground,
- followed by a consultative and consensus building meetings.

The Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) Kenya was approached to host the institution temporarily and a caretaker committee was put in place. Members were convinced to have a meeting in 2008 to form a caretaker committee for one year, entrusted with the mandate to: revive the coalition and get a Secretariat and skeleton staff. Two staff members were then recruited and housed in a small room to operate. After that process, the biggest challenge lay in trying to rebuild the confidence of the coalition's constituencies and to reconnect with the Ministry of Education and the media. EYC now have a strategic partnership with the Ministry of Education and have a robust media strategy for engaging with journalists to amplify their campaign messages.

- 4. Senegal:** The Republic of Senegal offers a good example of CSOs successfully influencing policy change in the area of teacher recruitment in addition to constantly playing a mediation role between the Teachers' Unions and the Senegalese Government. This role aimed at appeasing the tensions between the various unions and has galvanised them to be a formidable advocacy platform to support the campaign for EFA in Senegal. Today, some 32 Teachers' Unions are members of the coalition.

In 2006, the Senegalese coalition was mired in a crisis with the ANCEFA Secretariat when it failed to provide a

narrative and a financial report on the implementation of activities as per its contractual obligation to ANCEFA. It later emerged that some financial malpractices occurred and the stakeholders involved could no longer be perceived as credible partners, and the coalition was therefore suspended by the GCE and excluded from RWS activities. The coalition's collapse created a vacuum between 2006 and 2008. In 2008 the Coalition des Organisations et Syndicats pour la Défense de l'Éducation Publique COSYDEP emerged first as a consultation forum of NGOs and Teachers' Unions (with the support of ANCEFA) and later evolved into a fully fledged coalition, following a consensus building workshop in Mbour, in April 2008.

Today, COSYDEP has positioned itself as a credible, well-respected and proactive CSO that offers mediation services between the Senegalese government and the Teachers' Unions when necessary to pre-empt industrial actions that can only harm learners in the school system. On invitation by the Ministry of Education, the organisation offers its diplomatic good offices and explores viable win-win solutions that satisfy the different parties to a conflict. That is a good testimony that the Ministry of Education has trust in the coalition and its ability to galvanise the Teachers' Unions around a reasonable arrangement. COSYDEP has also been chosen by the Ministry to play an oversight role, ensuring that the commitments made during negotiations are respected by the parties involved. In that respect, the coalition participated in a September 2010 meeting aimed at appraising the implementation of the commitments made by the different parties and the impact it was having on the social climate in the education sector.

- 5. The Gambia:** ANCEFA has strengthened the EFA Network in The Gambia to enhance education service delivery through the institutionalisation of budget tracking. The coalition has been engaging with the National Assembly to sensitise



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them on the need to support greater resource allocation to the education sector. That process has been complemented by a sustained engagement with the Ministry of Education for the latter to provide feedback on inputs and resources in the education sector through tracking strategies. EFA Net has been participating in policy planning, formulation and monitoring of the education process. That has enhanced the awareness of the National Assembly Members of the urgency to support policy change and greater resource allocation to the sector. ANCEFA supported the organisation of a regional training workshop on budget tracking in The Gambia in August 2007. ANCEFA, via RWS II, also financed the Education Watch research as part of the first group of countries to be supported. ANCEFA also enabled the coalition secretariat to participate in the GCE Africa pre-meeting in Dakar in the same year. In an effort to create transnational synergies, ANCEFA supported the cross-border Global Action Week celebrations at Kerr Ayib between the Gambia and Senegal and the publication of the *Education Watch* report. In 2009, ANCEFA commissioned a gender assessment¹⁸² and the deepening of the Education Watch research of 2007.

General Challenges

The dilemma of national coalitions is whether or not they should address some or all of the EFA goals, given their financial, technical and human resource shortcomings. Many coalitions have not been able to make that trade-off and to invest their energies and limited resources in the few things that they do best.

More national coalitions should develop the capacity to: engage more proactively with national budgetary processes all year round, contribute articles in the print and electronic media and play host to radio/TV talk-shows to boost coalition visibility. Obtaining quality data for evidence-based advocacy continues to be a challenge in many countries. The Education Watch research project attempted to bridge the gap. Unfortunately, only half of the ANCEFA member countries have been covered by the project.

The issue of coalition governance and accountability has been raised by certain stakeholders. As shown in the previous pages, governance challenges around accountability, leadership and commitment threatened the very existence of *Elimu Yetu*, and corrupt management led to the demise of the first Senegalese coalition. In terms of feedback on results and outcomes, coalitions also need to ensure that there are formal processes to keep members in the loop.

182 This study was aimed at providing a detailed assessment of the state of gender mainstreaming in the education sector, the progress registered and the hurdles in terms of sector preparedness, capacity gaps etc with a view to advocating for policy reform.

General Recommendations

- **Visibility of Real World Strategies (RWS) as an instrument**: Knowledge of RWS as an instrument for giving support to national coalitions is somewhat patchy among coalition members. Since other instruments like the Civil Society Education Fund (CSEF) are also providing support to coalitions via GCE and the regional networks, it is useful to note which activities are supported by RWS. That will help to enhance the visibility of the project among coalition members.
- **Fundraising**: Expectations are very high for ANCEFA to provide enhanced support services to the national coalitions and their decentralised structures. However, the funds available are not commensurate with the national demands to scale up capacity building and advocacy interventions. Without step-down mechanisms that target the decentralised structures, the impact of RWS may be limited and only confined to the urban areas. As a context-based and demand driven approach, the trickle-down effect to meet the needs and aspirations of grassroots structures is largely unsatisfied due to funding gaps.
- **Enhancing vertical and horizontal networking and support mechanisms**: The importance of results orientation to the success of the EFA agenda cannot be overemphasised. Coalitions are all proactively interacting with ANCEFA and not sufficiently with each other. They are not harnessing the powers of information technology enough (as campaign tools) by having a vibrant e-network to share information on best practices for 'quick wins' and peer-to-peer learning and support mechanisms. ANCEFA needs to create that space for the development of a learning culture and the management of knowledge for enhanced results orientation. That could add value to their campaigns going forward.
- **Building the capacity of the coordinating committee for institutional memory**: The research has revealed that the attrition rate at coalition Secretariats is high, and each time a coalition coordinator leaves there is a risk that the coalition will lose the learning acquired through training offered by ANCEFA and other agencies. Targeting the coordinating committee as a whole would be a better approach to coalition building or strengthening.
- **Coordination only for coalitions**: The ideal situation should be for coalitions to have a coordination role and to delegate activities to the organisation (within the coalition) that has a comparative advantage to deliver on a particular project to take the lead.
- **Policy consultation and operational collaboration**: Policy and budget monitoring needs to be intensified. The CSCQBE has amply demonstrated that it is possible to improve the quality of the policy consultation approach at all stages of the budget and election cycles to exact accountability, focusing constantly on the action items that are critical for achieving development results. That case study is a testimony that it is possible to scale up operational collaboration at national level. That way, they can collectively work towards improving the responsiveness of their respective governments to the EFA agenda.
- **Inclusive approach**: Education focused NGOs are no longer conducting advocacy in solo but are working together as a coalition to plan and implement education advocacy activities. The teachers' unions and the coalitions in East Africa enjoy a very fruitful partnership based on mutual trust and confidence. That confidence is replicated between the coalitions and the Ministries of Education of the respective countries.

RWS II in Asia-Pacific

by Barbara Fortunato

The following case studies present various advocacy campaigns in response to challenges to achieving Education for All (EFA) in their particular countries:

- In the **Philippines**, the Civil Society Network for Education Reforms (E-Net Philippines) campaigned for a bigger budget for Alternative Learning Systems, to provide educational opportunities for drop-outs and others not reached by the formal school system.
- In **Cambodia**, the NGO Education Partnership (NEP) lobbied with government to halt the collection of informal school fees which restrict children's access to education, and to increase teachers' salaries.
- In **India**, the National Coalition for Education (NCE) campaigned for legislation to guarantee free and compulsory education for children from 0-18. Making education compulsory, they argued, would deter child labour.
- In **Sri Lanka**, the Coalition for Educational Development (CED) campaigned for adult literacy, particularly for women who were forced to drop out of school early – both for their empowerment and in order to support their children's education.



Philippines/E-Net



Cambodia/NEP



India/NCE



Michael Garcia/Sri Lanka/CED

SECTION 3

Although the national coalitions addressed other challenges to education, the case studies focused on these particular advocacy campaigns which were supported by the Real World Strategies programme (RWS) coordinated in the Asia-Pacific region by the Asia South Pacific Association for Basic and Adult Education (ASPBAE). The campaigns were distinct and separate, but the education issues they addressed shared many common threads:

- Although public education is supposedly ‘free’, in reality students and their families spend a significant amount for education-related expenses such as school supplies, transportation, food consumed in school, fees for examinations and other school events, and school uniforms. The high cost of education is consistently cited as the primary reason why students drop out of school. A related issue is poverty, which forces children to forego school and work instead to supplement their family’s income.
- Girl children are particularly disadvantaged: they are often seen as less valuable than boys and therefore not worth the investment in education, or are expected to stay home and do the housework. Girls who marry early spend fewer years in school. As a result, girls often have lower enrolment and literacy rates. Among the four case studies, the Philippines is the exception, with more boys dropping out than girls, yet this too may still be a gender issue, with males expected to earn money to support the family.
- Governments unanimously hail the importance of education, but do not provide adequate resources for quality education. Thus, advocacy campaigns inevitably touch on the issue of education financing.
- Most national coalitions prioritise the education needs of children and young adults, but Sri Lanka’s campaign is a reminder of the value of lifelong learning. The great bulk of the budget goes into the formal education system, with just a minuscule share going to non-formal education programmes that cover adult

literacy. Thus, governments failed to adhere to their official pronouncements of a Lifelong Learning framework for education as they neglected adult literacy, one of the EFA goals.

- The national coalitions’ advocacy experiences also exemplify the often contentious relationship between governments and NGOs. Although governments are gradually acknowledging the participation of NGOs and CSOs in development, they are more comfortable with NGOs in service delivery roles and less receptive to NGOs or CSOs in advocacy roles. Education campaigners face many challenges in pushing for their participation in policy development.

Likewise, the national coalitions employed similar strategies and activities:

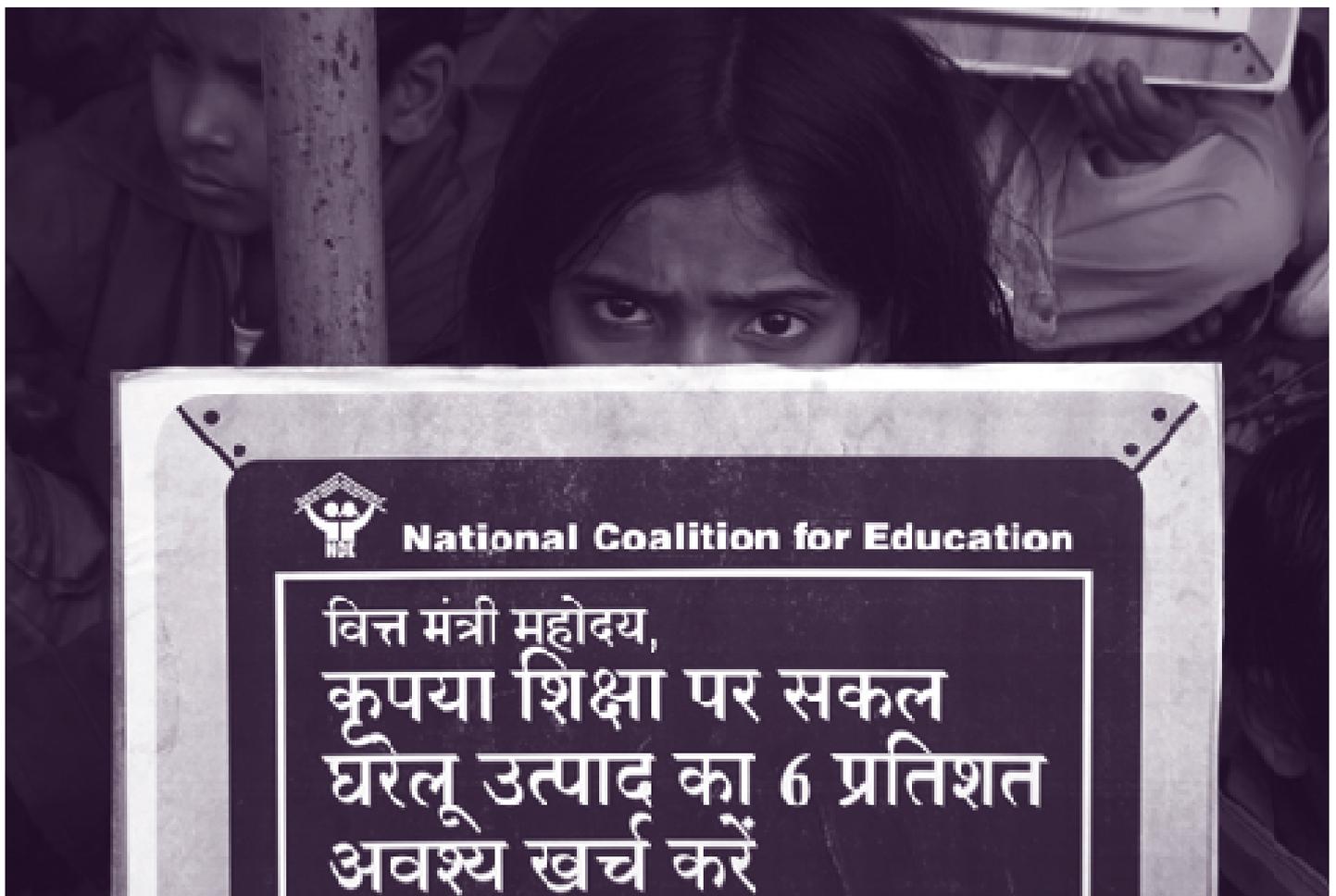
- *Providing evidence for advocacy*. As a former representative to the Philippine Congress noted, good research is essential in lobbying with legislators.¹⁸³ The education coalitions’ experiences reinforced the need to continually update or expand the scope of their evidence. The need for evidence was the impetus for the RWS Education Watch project (EdWatch). Through EdWatch, education coalitions in Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, and Thailand were able to generate new data and analysis to support their respective advocacy campaigns. National coalitions also provided evidence by quoting government data, which officials could not refute, and by presenting out-of-school youth, formerly bonded children, and illiterate mothers as physical evidence of deep-seated problems in education.
- *Mass mobilisations*. Another former Member of Parliament in India declared, “If the demand for quality education can be generated, then the system will comply.”¹⁸⁴ Education coalitions utilised mass mobilisations as a common means of expressing their demands and putting pressure on government to take action.

183 Interview with Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel, 2 August 2010

184 Interview with Ravi Prakash Verma, 12 August 2010

These mobilisations generated media coverage, which amplified their message and further added to the pressure.

- **Lobbying with Parliament/Congress and other significant players in government**, both at national and local levels. National coalitions were aware that decisions and policies are often made by key officials, and they sought to provide information and convincing arguments to influence these leaders' positions.
- **Deploying education stakeholders in both mass mobilisations and lobbying**. National coalitions' activities included children, out-of-school youth, illiterate women, and other learners who had the most stake in the government policies they sought to influence. These were also constituents who wanted to hold accountable their representatives to government. Lobbying required preparations such as consultations, briefings, and workshops which had the added benefit of building the capacity of learners and campaigners.
- **Developing and using allies in government** bodies such as Congress/Parliament, Joint Technical Working Groups, and other policy-making fora. Allies helped national coalitions to understand the policy development process and maximise the openings better. Allies also spoke on behalf of the national coalitions inside government circles and helped recruit more advocates among their peers.
- **Meeting policy makers and high government officials in regional and global platforms**, and then continuing the lobbying with them at country level.



Case Study:

National Coalition for Education (NCE) India – campaigning for the Right to Education Law

Education in India has come a long way. In 1951, soon after the country's independence, only 18.33% of the people were literate. By 2001, when the last national census was undertaken, literacy had risen to 64.84%.

But, India has still a long way to go. Many inequalities persist. The literacy rate, for example, is 75.26% for males in contrast to 53.76% for females,¹⁸⁵ and 79.9% in urban areas in contrast to 58.7% in rural areas. For education campaigners, one of the biggest issues is that millions of children are not in school because they are being made to work. The 2001 Census registered 12.66 million child workers, an increase over the figure ten years before. There is also the issue of the so-called 'nowhere children' – not in school but not at work either, who number 72 million.¹⁸⁶

There is no precise figure for children who drop out without completing primary school, as different surveys cite different statistics. The 2001 Census reported the dropout rate in primary classes at 31.5%.¹⁸⁷ Another government study puts the figure at 2.7 million every year.¹⁸⁸ Many issues conspire to keep children away from school. With 37% of the population living below the poverty line as of 2010,¹⁸⁸ children are often put to work to contribute to family income as bonded labour outside the home, unpaid labour in farms and family livelihoods, or especially in the case of girls, to assume responsibilities at home while the parents work. Human trafficking, including that of children, is a chronic problem. Muslims, scheduled castes, and scheduled tribes have traditionally had less access to education, a pattern that persists today. The standing of women in society also affects girls' access to education. Figures consistently show girls lagging behind in literacy, school attendance, and completion.

The Indian government has sought to redress the problems in various ways, e.g., providing incentives to scheduled castes and tribes, minorities, and girls, and providing midday meals, uniforms, and school supplies to reduce the financial burden on families. Nevertheless, millions of children are still deprived of education.

The National Coalition for Education (NCE) and the Second Freedom Struggle to Break the Chains of Illiteracy

NCE's mission is "to restore the fundamental right of every child without exception to receive free and quality education up to the age of 18 on the basis on equal opportunity, without discrimination on the basis on gender, class, ethnicity or religion, in an environment of love and care and with appropriate facilities conducive to joyful learning". Its membership is a virtual powerhouse of Indian social movements, including:¹⁹⁰

- Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA or Save the Children Movement), a network of more than 760 organisations and 80,000 social activists working on child rights;
- All India Primary Teachers Federation, a union of 1.3 million primary teachers;
- All India Federation of Teachers Organisation, a union of 1.2 million teachers;
- All India Secondary Teachers Federation, a union of 0.85 million secondary teachers;
- All India Association for Christian Higher Education, a network of principals and teachers from 300 colleges and 20,000 schools, and
- World Vision India, an NGO foundation working for child rights, education, and development in 6,000 communities across India.

185 <http://indiacurrentaffairs.org/>

186 Rama Kant Rai, "The Justiciability of Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act 009 in India," National Coalition for Education, undated

187 Laura Grant, "The Second Freedom Struggle" Transnational Advocacy for EFA Case Study: National Coalition for Education India. Thesis paper submitted in partial fulfillment of MSc International Development Studies, Universiteit van Amsterdam, 16 February 2010, page 16

188 10th Joint Review Mission of the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan, Government of India, 20-31 July 2009, Aide Memoire, page 12

189 <http://www.economywatch.com/indianeconomy/poverty-in-india.html>

190 Laura Grant, page 38

NCE is an offshoot of joint activities by activists. Since the 1990s, they had worked together to push government to pass a Constitutional amendment on free and compulsory education as a fundamental right of children until the age of 18. They believed this would be a decisive weapon not just to promote education but also to protect children against exploitation, including bonded labour. Within Parliament, allies established a Parliamentary Forum on Education in 1999 to lobby for education reforms. Outside, in the streets, NCE member organisations and their supporters launched demonstrations to claim their right to education, which culminated in a *Shiksha Yatra* (Education March) in 2001 covering 15,000 kilometres over 20 states.

Finally, in 2002, Article 21A, the 86th Amendment of the Constitution was approved: “The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of 6 to 14 years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine.” This was a significant victory, but only the first of many steps in India’s elaborate bureaucracy and legislative processes. Parliament still had to pass a law to enforce children’s right to education. NCE threw all its energies behind what they dubbed “The Second Freedom Struggle to Break the Chains of Illiteracy”.

In 2004, the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) was elected into power and promised to pass a law on the right to free and compulsory education, as required by the Constitution. Draft bills were consequently introduced in Parliament in 2005, 2007, and 2008, but failed to muster the necessary votes. Nor did the bills have the full support of NCE and its member organisations who opposed several provisions. For one, NCE wanted the scope of the bill expanded to guarantee education for children from 0-18 years old, rather than just 6-14. More demonstrations, lobbying, and dialogues with government officials took place. But by the time the UPA government reached the end of its term in 2009, a right to education (RTE) bill had still not been passed in Parliament.

When general elections were called in April-May 2009, NCE pulled out all the stops to ensure the elected MPs would consist of those who supported their cause. It launched a campaign with the following components:

Pledge letter signed by individual candidates . NCE and its member organisations in 12 states persuaded candidates for parliament to sign a pledge letter stating they would support legislation assuring free, compulsory, and quality education for children aged 0-18. Campaigners were often accompanied by children from child-friendly villages or children who had been rescued from bonded labour, and therefore spoke with particular passion about the need for education to be made compulsory so that children go to school and not to work. “*We will declare a list of child-friendly (bal mitra) candidates who sign the pledge letters in favour of child rights.*” *The catch: “The candidates who will oppose it and not sign the pledge letter will be blacklisted and opposed by the mass campaign.”*¹⁹¹

Appeal for inclusion of children’s education right in party manifesto . Likewise, all major political parties were enjoined to adopt NCE’s policy positions in their party platform. In addition, NCE examined the platforms of all political parties and monitored their policy pronouncements on education. It also gave ammunition to opposition parties by reminding them of failed UPA promises, such as 6% of GDP expenditure on education.

In the end 80% of those who had signed the pledge were elected into office,¹⁹² and the Parliamentary Forum on Education gained 61 new members.¹⁹³ In addition, four parties responded positively by either inserting NCE’s demands into their manifesto or agreeing to work for the right to education.

Media campaign . NCE organised press conferences, sent out press releases, and personally spoke to contacts in media to persuade them to report on NCE’s campaign. It also told media which candidates had signed the pledge and which refused to do so – stories that media eagerly grabbed.

Lobbying Parliament . NCE did not let up the pressure. It sent congratulatory letters to all newly elected Members of Parliament (MPs), reminding them yet again about the pending bill on the right to education, and enclosed a detailed critique of the bill, urging them to rectify these weaknesses. When the 15th

191 NCE Press Release, no title nor date, page 3

192 Laura Grant, page 42

193 Interview with Ravi Prakash Verma, 12 August 2010



India/NCE

Parliament convened, NCE campaigners knocked on the doors of parliamentarians in Delhi and legislative assembly members at the state level. NCE also continued its effective strategy of feeding questions to parliamentarian allies so they could be raised during official sessions. As a result, 95 MPs and more than 100 state legislative assembly members raised education-related questions in their respective houses, spurring more discussion and awareness. NCE also organised roundtable discussions to brief parliamentarians and legislative assembly members who were less familiar with the education issues.

In August 2009, the *Lok Sabha* (Lower House of Parliament) passed the Act, and shortly afterwards it received the assent of India President Pratibha Singh Patil. The celebrations were sweet but short: to be enforced, the act had to be notified, i.e. government needed to set a date by which the Act takes effect and the people are held accountable. Intense lobbying resumed once more.

Mass mobilisations. In February 2010, NCE mobilised 5,000 activists including teachers and children to demonstrate in front Parliament and demand action from the President and Prime Minister. NCE also mobilised children in a week-long campaign where they knocked on the doors of MPs' houses. At least 16 MPs signed the pledge letter and promised to raise the issue in Parliament.¹⁹⁴ Similar activities were organised outside Delhi.

It took eight months from the time the Act passed before the wheels finally moved. On April 1st, 2010, The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act of 2009 was notified for implementation in all states and union territories of India.

Outcomes of the campaign

NCE does not claim sole credit for passage of the right to education law. But having campaigned relentlessly since 2002 at both the national and state level, some of the credit is certainly due to NCE. Anjela Taneja, Education Programme Officer for ActionAid, said NCE's presence in the capital was critical in influencing Delhi-based policy makers and donor agencies. *"While there were a number of voices demanding a Right to Education Act in the beginning of the process, there has been something of an advocacy fatigue on the part of many coalitions. Consequently, there has been little actual coalition-based work at the end of the process. My personal impression is that NCE played a significant role at this point filling a vacuum created by a lot of larger networks that had effectively imploded or took a more radical (and in my opinion unrealistic – in the sense of beyond their capacity to realistically deliver based on their strength) stand. NCE took a more balanced middle ground position."*¹⁹⁵

NCE identifies three major outcomes of their campaign:

First, a guarantee that children will be provided education, and a tool – even a 'weapon' – to compel children to be sent to school instead of to work. Already, children are starting to benefit by gaining access to schools. A landmark ruling by the Delhi High Court declared that 874 children who were previously denied access to education be admitted to schools. Most children came from disadvantaged sectors, and 350 of them were disabled.¹⁹⁶

Second, greater awareness of education rights and issues. This is evident, for example, in the greater attention to education and children's stories in media and in the increased number questions on education and longer time discussing these issues in parliament. The Parliamentary Forum for Education whose establishment NCE had helped facilitate, has been cited as both an outcome of the campaign as well as critical factor for the campaign's success.¹⁹⁷ The Forum's existence ensures that education issues will always be highlighted in Parliament.

¹⁹⁴ NCE website
<http://nceindia.org/220210.php>

¹⁹⁵ Email correspondence with Anjela Taneja, 26 and 30 August 2010

¹⁹⁶ <http://southasia.oneworld.net/todayshadlines/indian-court-opens-education-for-874-children>

¹⁹⁷ Laura Grant, page 41

Third, greater budgetary allocation for education. NCE has pushed government to convert its rhetoric into reality by actually providing the resources needed to make quality education accessible. It contributed to pressurising the government to agree (at least in principle) to expenditure on education amounting to 6% of GDP. Actual expenditure has increased, though not at the scale promised: the actual figures are 3.2% of GDP in 2009 and 4.32% in 2010. The education budget for 2010 has also increased by 14.5% from the 2009 level.¹⁹⁸

Having spent so much time campaigning for the right to education law, NCE itself has been transformed by the experience:

- **Within the coalition**, more members and partners, improved capabilities in planning and implementation, better advocacy skills, a clearer role about their role as a coalition
- **Among coalition members** like the All India Primary Teachers Federation, increased attention to child-focused advocacy, rather than just working to promote teachers' interests.

The campaign highs and lows

Factors that supported success

- **Evidence-based advocacy**. Research, NCE agreed, is the basic ingredient for successful advocacy. NCE's evidence came in the form of the Education Watch research and briefing papers for MPs. NCE did its own research, but it also quoted from official reports, e.g. on early marriage, child trafficking, children affected by disasters, etc, which the government could not refute. On occasion, NCE would also show physical evidence, for example by presenting children who had been rescued from bondage during media conferences, or by screening a video on other rescued children. Research continues to be a priority. Data gathered from participatory research covering 10 states in early 2010 will be used for future advocacy.
- **Mass mobilisations**. "If the demand for quality education can be generated, then

the system will comply."¹⁹⁹ This observation comes from someone who has an intimate knowledge of how government works: Ravi Prakash Verma, a former three-term MP and President of NCE. Mass mobilisations serve several purposes:

- A show of force to remind government, particularly MPs, of the scale of organisations behind the demands – and the size of NCE's constituency is particularly impressive
- A magnet for media attention, which both adds to pressure on government and amplifies NCE's message to the general public
- An opportunity to directly bring the issues to people in the streets
- **Direct lobbying with MPs and state legislators**. NCE organised countless face-to-face meetings to lobby for education legislation and financing. Delegations came to meetings prepared not just with evidence but also with practical details of what legislators could do. NCE made repeat calls and follow up visits, almost always accompanied by children who, with prior briefing, became effective, assertive campaigners.
- **Parliamentary Forum and critical allies**. The Parliamentary Forum is also cited as an NCE achievement. "Without the NCE there would have been no space to create a dialogue amongst legislatures and parliamentarians about the educational issues India is facing and how to go about change."²⁰⁰
- **Astute messaging**. "Our messages to government and legislators were: a) this is good for your political agenda, and b) education is a good investment for the future." NCE had monitored political parties' platforms and public statements of parliamentarians, which it quoted back to them. "We would say '*we're not asking for anything new, this is what you said in your platform.*' It's more effective to convince them it was their idea all along, instead of making them feel we were selling something new."²⁰¹
- **Organisational cohesion**. "Campaigning is a matter of energising everyone." That starts with NCE's board members who,

198 Interviews with Rama Kant Rai, 16 August 2010 and Sandeep Mishra, 17 August 2010

199 Interview with Ravi Prakash Verma, 12 August 2010

200 Laura Grant, page 74

201 Interview with Rama Kant Rai, 16 August 2010

although busy with their own organisations' tasks, were unanimously active in the campaign. Likewise, member federations and network partners at district level contributed much to the campaign. NCE also said working together on long campaigns contributed to its internal cohesion.

Problems encountered and lessons learned

- **Volume of MPs/legislators vs. limited time.** There are more than 740 MPs in the Rajya Sabha (Upper House) and Lok Sabha. For lobbying to create results, NCE tried to meet MPs not just once, but 3-4 times a year.²⁰² The workload required by lobbying was heavy, even for a coalition with a deep bench of members. One of the most frequently cited lessons is the need for more lobbying with MPs not just in Delhi but also when they are in their respective states – they spend more time there, and it would be easier to arrange meetings with local constituents. The challenge, however, is to build the capacity of district-level NCE members, partners, and supporters to undertake these.
- **Expanding NCE's reach.** Laura Grant wrote, "Right now the NCE's presence in the south is by association only through member organisations, so the NCE is virtually unknown in the south. This also limits their strategies to the level of advocacy, with little or no local mobilisation."²⁰³ She summarised the following lessons learned that have influenced NCE strategy:
 - The importance of advocacy at all levels of government;
 - The importance of getting Members of Parliament informed and involved (as a point of entry into the government);
 - Taking advantage of the judiciary and Supreme Courts (to make the government accountable);
 - The impact of moral leverage and mass mobilisation (following Gandhi's example) to make the government liable for its promises and obligations;

- The importance of grassroots activity to garner a strong base for evidence-based advocacy.

Continuing challenges

There is consensus that the Act represents a significant gain for Education for All. In the same breath, there is agreement that the Act is imperfect and retains many provisions which NCE had previously opposed as well as loopholes that undermine education access and quality.

In particular, NCE is frustrated that the Act's scope continues to cover only children aged 6-14 years, such that pre-school and secondary education are not included. NCE is also worried that under the 65%-35% cost-sharing agreement between central and state governments, states which are poor and have limited resources, or whose local administrations lack commitment to education, will not match the funding required. Other misgivings concern the establishment of School Management Committees which provide a bigger role for civil society participation but could also be vulnerable to manipulation or politicisation. Public-Private Partnership, promoted by the Act, is viewed as a move towards further privatisation of education.

Meantime, model rules (state law) defining how the Act will be implemented at the state level are required to be framed and approved before July 2011. By August 2010, only four of the 28 states had drafted their model rules. And that, for NCE, is both a challenge as well as an opportunity. "*The Act states the minimum, but not the maximum, therefore some states can do more*", said NCE convenor Rama Kant Rai. Naturally, NCE will be campaigning for the 'maximum.'

What happens next?

NCE will continue its campaign on the Right to Education law – for greater public awareness so that children can claim their rights, for the law's implementation so that access to education can be broadened, for model rules to be drafted immediately at state

202 Interview with Sandeep Mishra and Umesh Kumar Gupta, 13 August 2010

203 Laura Grant, page 43

level, and for some sections to be amended to address loopholes. NCE leaders have been holding meetings with member organisations and partners in the different states to step up actions there. NCE will also sustain its advocacy for government to increase financing to levels adequate for quality education.

Almost 10 years ago, NCE mobilised its forces for a *Shiksha Yatra* (Education March) which helped push government to introduce the vital Constitutional amendment guaranteeing education as a fundamental right. NCE plans to retrace its steps. In November 2010, another *Shiksha Yatra* march/motorcade will cover 70,000 kilometres, with the following objectives: a) To collect evidence of the situation of children's education, e.g., violations of the Right to Education law and examples of good practices in education, and b) To campaign for changes in the RTE law by lobbying with state/district officials and communities in 10 states to draft model rules and guidelines that are in line with NCE's advocacy.

Reflections on the Real World Strategies (RWS) programme

NCE is one of the first partners of the RWS programme in the Asia-Pacific region. Its campaign to pass the Right to Education law received financial support from RWS. NCE counts ASPBAE, which facilitated RWS implementation in the region, as one its most major partners – not just in this particular campaign, but also in building capacity.

NCE convenor Rama Kant Rai said, “We are thankful to ASPBAE for training, events, materials, and exchanges with other countries. Because of the opportunity to meet counterparts from other countries, we started doing introspection on our work. That gave us more confidence, especially in extending our work to more than 13 states.”²⁰⁴

Rama credits ASPBAE and RWS for its engagement in education financing. “In education financing, ASPBAE gave us a very, very powerful tool for advocacy and planning how to move ahead. After attending a training on official development assistance (ODA) and budget tracking, NCE did three

training-workshops at national and state levels on the same topic. These generated new understanding among members on ODA and education financing. It made us look at a new angle in advocacy. Now we have become more detailed in how much government should allocate, how much government should spend, and pressure on government to ensure timely release of funds.” Publication of the ODA and budget tracking booklets was also supported by RWS.

Rama also expressed appreciation for NCE's exposure to advocacy on a regional level, for example in the December 2009 South Asia Education Ministers Meeting. ASPBAE convened the national coalitions on education in the region who drafted a set of recommendations to submit to the ministers. As a result of intense lobbying by RWS representatives, the ministers' Dhaka Declaration on Education for All encourages member countries to spend 6% of GDP on education and supports the role of CSOs. “We saw how this forum can make binding commitments on member countries.”

RWS has contributed to NCE's plans for long-lasting advocacy by building its capacity to undertake this; in turn, NCE has built that of its members and partners. NCE wants to do better. Umesh Kumar Gupta, NCE's National Advocacy Coordinator, asked, “How can we innovate in the campaign, especially in community-based strategies or in using information technology? Our current approaches may be effective, but we want to continue to grow and develop. Maybe this is something that could be considered by RWS.”²⁰⁵

204 Interviews with Rama Kant Rai, 16 and 17 August 2010

205 Interview with Umesh Kumar Gupta, 13 August 2010



Case Study:

Coalition for Educational Development (CED), Sri Lanka – campaigning for mothers’ education

At first glance, Sri Lanka appears to have made enviable progress in education. Education has been considered a basic right since 1943. Government provides free education at the primary, secondary, and tertiary levels, which, since the 1980s includes free textbooks, uniform material, midday meals, and subsidised bus tickets. In 1997, education for children age 5-14 was made mandatory and enforced through the School Attendance and School Supervision Committees down to the lowest government level.²⁰⁶ As a result, figures for youth and adult literacy and enrolment in primary school in Sri Lanka are consistently among the highest in the South Asia region.²⁰⁷

But many challenges remain, the government admits. These include lack of school infrastructure and qualified teachers, disparities in educational standards between rural and urban children (with only 37% of rural children mastering local language skills and a mere 38% having numeracy skills), and a recent drop in the completion rate for primary school.²⁰⁸ A study by Transparency International on dropout rates also shows a significant gap: 1.4% overall in contrast to 8.4% in plantation schools. Poverty and lack of parental support were cited as the primary reasons for dropping out.²⁰⁹

One bright spot is the increase in female participation in education. Today, girls are even more likely than boys to finish primary school. But that has not always been true. Many years ago, when primary education was not yet mandatory, large numbers of girls – who today are mothers – were unable to go to school or were forced to drop out early, thus resulting in de-learning or reverting to illiteracy.

The result is social exclusion. The women have less access to information because they cannot read newspapers or notices in community bulletin boards, such as those about dengue prevention. They have difficulty moving about as they cannot read bus signs. As



Michael Garcia/Sri Lanka/CED

mothers, they cannot read letters their children bring home from their teachers, much less help them with homework. They also have less access to services such as loans. Improving adult literacy is one of the six Education for All (EFA) goals, and it urgently needs more attention.

Responsibility for adult education (both functional literacy and vocational training) falls under the Non-Formal and Special Education Branch of the Ministry of Education. The director, Mr H.P.N. Lakshman, admitted his agency’s reach, scope, and effectiveness are constrained by their limited budget. “*Sri Lanka is not alone in this*”, he said. At a South Asia conference he attended, all countries complained of meagre funds for non-formal education. It is an “attitude problem. Most people don’t get attention on this project.”²¹⁰

The impact of funding constraints may be glimpsed in vocational training. Many learners have expressed interest in computers and information technology, but vocational centres have limited facilities and instead offer training on making traditional crafts. But the market for crafts is small, and learners have difficulty selling products they learned to produce in vocational training. A zonal education officer admitted that livelihood skills do not necessarily translate into higher income.²¹¹

Thus, critics complain there is no coherent adult education policy, no programme that makes a substantial impact on the affected population.²¹²

206 Interview with HPN Lakshman, 23 August 2010

207 EFA Global Monitoring Report, *Reaching the Marginalized*, UNESCO and Oxford University Press, 2010

208 MDGs Country Report 2005 – Sri Lanka, quoted in http://www.mdg.lk/inpages/thegoals/goal2_primary_education.shtml

209 Student Drop-Out Rate in Estate Schools Alarming, *Daily Mirror*, 23 August 2010, page A4

210 Education for All Mid-Decade Assessment Report Sri Lanka, pages 10-11 and interview with HPN Lakshman, 23 August 2010

211 Interview with K.V. Karunaratne, 19 August 2010

212 Interview with Chandana Bandara, 16 September 2010

The Coalition for Educational Development and the Campaign for Mothers' Education

The Coalition for Educational Development (CED) was established in 2004 and formally registered as a legal organisation in 2006. Its mission is "To promote and advocate the involvement of civil society organisations (CSO) from community level to national level in the formulation and implementation of national policy of quality education for all and to support achieving innovative educational programmes at all levels to ensure quality and equal opportunities."

CED has 61 member organisations from all nine provinces of the country. As a relatively young coalition, CED has only recently started flexing its muscles to do national level advocacy. Most of its key member organisations were focused on improving education at provincial and lower levels, whether through direct service provision or local level advocacy. CED has sought to address issues such as school enrolment and dropouts. Education financing is another major concern, and the subject of CED research. An executive summary of the research findings were published, entitled *Budget Process and Budget Tracking in Formal School Education in Sri Lanka*.²¹³ This has also been the subject of several workshops and fora among members.

Many CED member organisations, particularly those based in communities, had been working with women/mothers for many years and in varying degrees. As early as 2007, CED had already thought about national-level advocacy on mothers' education for empowerment. There were other reasons that spurred CED's interest in the issue. Mothers played a critical role in decisions on their children's education. If mothers were educated, CED reasoned out, then they would be more supportive of their own children's schooling and help arrest the dropout rate.

In 2008, the CED Executive Committee recommended holding a national convention where mothers themselves would articulate the need for a coherent and effective adult education policy in the country. CED submitted a project proposal to ASPBAE,

which had earlier funded, through RWS, the publication of the executive summary of CED's research on budget tracking in education. ASPBAE agreed.²¹⁴

CED's plan was to hold a one-day convention in December 2008 of mothers who were either functionally illiterate or who had very few years of education – their way of demonstrating that adult illiteracy exists on a significant scale in the country. But CED also wanted the process to be empowering and give a voice to the mothers who had been kept in the shadows for so long.

General objective

To advocate to policy makers to effect necessary changes in the existing national adult education policy so that it gives more prominence to women and especially mothers' education.

Specific objectives

- To mobilise women, especially mothers from disadvantaged communities, to come together and build a broad national alliance to advocate for change in the adult education policy and a gender sensitive adult education policy.
- To build a common consensus that there is a vacuum in the present adult education policy by not recognising the importance of improving educational standards of women, especially mothers.
- To create a platform for women in the provincial and national levels and raise their voices to draw policy makers' attention to the need for a gender sensitive adult education policy.

Pre-campaign activities included:

- *September*: Displaying banners that proclaimed "Literacy is the key to health and well being" in time for International Literacy Day
- *October*: Convening 34 CED member organisations from eight provinces to plan the convention (Armed conflict prevented CED members from the Northern Province from travelling to Colombo.)
- *October-November*:
 - Holding village consultations and drawing out the mothers who were either non-literate or had low

²¹³ Research was funded by Save the Children, and the executive summary published with funds by the RWS Education Watch project.

²¹⁴ Listening to the Voice of the Mothers, CED report to ASPBAE on the Mothers' education Campaign, 2008, page 10

educational attainment to understand the links between illiteracy and other problems in their lives

- Facilitating dialogues between the community women and the education extension staff / higher-level zonal education officers
- Seeking the mothers' feedback on the planned national convention

The response was overwhelming. Mothers were very enthusiastic about a project involving them. Some were understandably nervous about publicly admitting their illiteracy, but majority acknowledged the importance of such a convention and were very keen to participate.

Finally 13 December 2008 came and the mothers gathered in the capital, Colombo. From the start, CED was determined the convention should be as wide and inclusive as possible, thus participants came from eight of nine provinces and 18 of the 24 districts in the country. The women represented all major ethnic groups: Sinhalese, Tamil, and Muslims. In all, 478 mothers were present, along with 75 men from the same communities. Their participation was facilitated by 39 CED member organisations who brought them to Colombo. Guests from international NGOs, multilateral development agencies like UNICEF, and CED member organisations brought the total number of participants to approximately 600. Government was represented by officials of the Ministry of Education, including the deputy director for Non-Formal Education and the director of the National Institute of Education, and provincial education officials, including the Secretary of Education at the Central Province. The convention was also reported in mass media such as Tamil newspapers and the National Television News Telecast.

That day marked a watershed in the mothers' lives. Not only did government and NGO leaders speak to them and about them, they too were accorded opportunities to talk about their lives before a distinguished gathering. Mothers also participated in cultural presentations through songs and dances.²¹⁵

CED member organisations continued to

raise awareness of the need for mothers' education and to lobby for this during meetings with government staff assigned to the field and even with grassroots politicians. In their own livelihood training courses, they integrated literacy, numeracy, and leadership skills.

In 2009 CED submitted another proposal to RWS-ASPBAE with the objective of empowering women/mothers to achieve their full potential by educating them to become co-equal members of society and productive members of every available field of work.

Using their own very limited funds, some CED members also started to compile a database of mothers with little or no education in four provinces: Western Province, Southern Province, North-western Province, and North-central Province.²¹⁶ In these provinces, CED mobilised 19 partner organisations whose staff underwent a one-day research orientation before proceeding to interview mothers in the villages as well as collect data from divisional secretaries.

The research report was completed in June 2010.²¹⁷ In these provinces, researchers identified 831 women: 696 of whom were illiterate, and 135 with education up to Grade 6. In general, these mothers came from low-income, marginalised communities. Some had children who were disabled or who were not in school or had dropped out of school, and were thus illiterate. Other mothers were currently in jail or had recently been released from jail.²¹⁸

Research findings were shared with the adult education authorities in the respective provinces and officials of the National Education Commission. In closing, the research listed several recommendations such as income-generating activities coupled with literacy training, establishment of Adult Education Centres, multi-level advocacy for provision of government programmes on mothers' education, establishment of a mothers' education fund, etc.

According to a CED board member who presented the research findings to provincial authorities, some government officials were stunned at the report and asked: do we really have illiterates in the 21st century? In community meetings to discuss the research, some mothers cried after doing a roleplay/short

²¹⁵ Ibid

²¹⁶ Mothers' education in Selected Four Districts (Project proposal), CED, no date

²¹⁷ Interview with M.A.P. Munasinghe, who drafted the research report, 23 August 2010

²¹⁸ Capacity Building for Advocacy on Neglected Goals of EFA by Developing a District level Front for Mothers' Basic Education (research report, June 2010)

skit depicting their problems. “They said, ‘*All our lives we had to face challenges. In this activity we gain strength.*’ The mothers are brave, but they don’t always realise it.”²¹⁹

Outcomes of the campaign

Three major outcomes emerged from CED’s campaign:

- **Greater awareness of illiteracy and low educational attainment of many mothers, and the consequences on their empowerment and on their children’s education.** Before CED embarked on this campaign, much had been made of Sri Lanka’s impressive statistics in education and literacy, and perhaps there was even smugness about these records. By shifting the spotlight to illiterate mothers, CED has in effect reminded government and the public of persisting challenges before Sri Lanka can achieve Education for All. This awareness has been amplified at the local levels through community meetings and dialogues with local officials, and at the national level through discussions with government officials and development organisations. Much needed publicity was also generated through media coverage of the December 2008 mothers’ convention. Greater discussion within CED and the resulting awareness among its member organisations has produced more commitment to address the issue. This is evident, for example, in the interest of members to deepen the research in the North-Western Province, even without external funding. The study, still in progress, aims to identify gaps in current implementation procedures of non-formal education divisions in the province for empowering women and to formulate recommendations for raising the educational level of mothers.
- **Greater self-esteem for the mothers.** Some mothers admitted to feeling ashamed of their illiteracy. Gradually, the attention given them has reduced some of the stigma. By coming together for the first time, the mothers felt less isolated. By

being acknowledged by government, mothers move one step away from exclusion. By having their aspirations for education recognised, the mothers become more determined to pursue their dreams.

- **Improved capacity for CED and member organisations to engage in advocacy.** “A national level campaign is not enough, we have to do local at the same time.”²²⁰ For CED and its member organisations, advocacy is still a very new endeavour. NGOs and CBOs at ground level are more familiar with service delivery, and some are starting to organise mothers at the village level. They continued training and other forms of support for mothers, with additional advocacy activities. Initial success has been reported by member organisations in Kurunegala and Puttalam districts in obtaining funds (150,000 and 50,000 rupees, respectively) from local government offices for mothers’ education.²²¹

CED itself is a new organisation with limited capabilities. “*Before, we thought advocacy means demonstrating, like anti-government forces do*”, a CED board member admitted.²²² With this issue, CED found that was not so, and was forced to learn the ropes in lobbying with government officials and making persuasive presentations. Its ability to convene up to 600 participants in the mothers’ convention added to CED’s confidence and credibility.

The recently completed research also provides CED with evidence to strengthen its advocacy.

The campaign highs and lows

Factors that supported success

CED credits the gains made through the campaign to the mothers’ interest and commitment to make themselves available for meetings and consultations. It also commends CED member organisations for their commitment to mothers’ education and for their willingness to step outside their comfort zone and engage in advocacy activities.

219 Interview with Daya Ariyawethi, 21 August 2010

220 Interview with Charles Elamaldeniya, 20 August 2010

221 Ibid.

222 Interview with Chandana Bandara, 16 September 2010

Challenges Encountered and Lessons Learned

Some challenges encountered in the field related to practical issues like:

- Difficulty in finding available time for meeting with mothers who have both work and family obligations. One lesson learned was to try to make meetings 'attractive' by showing films or drama which communities appreciated.
- Difficulty in navigating the government bureaucracy, for example in arranging meetings with government officials. Some officials are reluctant to meet NGOs unless prior clearance has given by higher level officials, but that can be even more difficult to obtain. Despite this difficulty, CED has found it easier to reach local officials rather than those at the national level, which reinforces their interest in local level advocacy.
- Limited funds, for example for transportation and meals, which constrained the number of mothers and community representatives that CED could mobilise for the national convention in 2008 or for more in-depth research in 2009.

Other challenges concern CED's capacity, such as skills in basic research, writing, and analysis. In hindsight, the one-day research orientation should have been expanded to more in-depth training.²²³ Capacity building in advocacy and other aspects of programme and organisational management should also be sustained.

The biggest challenge involves policy makers: how to get them to change their priorities and allocate more resources for non-formal education, and mothers' literacy in particular.

Given the chance to start the campaign all over again, CED would recommend two actions: first, building district-level mothers' organisations that can serve as pressure groups during advocacy campaigns, and second, participatory planning and implementation with other education stakeholders at the district, provincial, and national levels to expand the constituency for mothers' education.

What happens next?

The campaign for mothers' education will be sustained by CED members working at grassroots level.

At the national level, one venue for advocacy pertains to the new Education Act which is currently under consideration in the Parliament and will be voted on in early 2011. CED and other education stakeholders want to see the law expand the reach of non-formal education. To this end, CED and other stakeholders met in August 2010 and agreed to gather one million signatures to create pressure for a progressive education law.

Reflections on the Real World Strategies (RWS) programme

Capacity building is what CED associates with RWS and ASPBAE. Like Cambodia's NGO Education Partnership (NEP), CED's first exposure to RWS capability-building was at the Asia Regional Training on Popular Communications for Education Advocates and Campaigners in Kuala Lumpur in September 2006. Since then, CED members have participated in other RWS capacity-building and advocacy training courses. As a result, CED drafted a national framework and identified priority areas for advocacy, including the development of CSOs' capacity for advocacy and education reform and development, which is currently supported by RWS and the CSEF.

CED Director for Adult and Inclusive Education Chandana Bandara added, "*Due to RWS, CED developed its capacity in advocacy. We learned what is meant by advocacy, where it can be applied, what it can change, and how to plan effective steps in a campaign.*"²²⁴

CED Board Chairman Charles Elamaldeniya wrote, "The CED learned about advocacy from RWS. In so doing, RWS helps to bring the idea of Education for All a reality. It would not have been successful without funds and proper guidance from RWS."²²⁵ Charles also credited RWS as "the turning point in relation to making contact and links with regional and global networks" and for gaining "knowledgeable exposure via making participation at various regional and international forums and seminars". This

223 Interview with M.A.P. Munasinghe, 23 August 2010

224 Email correspondence with Chandana Bandara, 16 September 2010

225 Email correspondence from Charles Elamaldeniya, 7 September 2010



Michael Garda/Sri Lanka/CED

includes CED's participation in the UNESCO Collective Consultation of NGOs Conference held in Dhaka in March 2010.²²⁶

In particular, RWS and ASPBAE have provided funding and mentoring support in CED's first ever national advocacy campaign on mothers' education in 2008. Getting the needed State intervention/attention was one of our achievements. We reached many government bureaucrats who were leading personalities in the local education fraternity, supported by raising awareness of the issue in responsible policy circles. By calling attention to this issue, CED also became known as a pioneering organisation in discussions on a national education policy.

The lessons learned by CED member organisations in this project resulted in follow up activities at the regional and local levels. They maintain an abiding interest in working with the regional non-formal education authorities to mitigate the issue in their locations. What we did in the past was just an initiation and what have to do in future would be of much more worth in making true remedies for the issue. In particular, the advocacy programme should be brought to war-affected regions and areas with ethnic minorities. The dropout rate in the North province (affected by war) is reportedly more than 60%. Civil society organisations must advocate with relevant parties to bring those children back to schools, and so our future mothers' education programmes should explore strategies for dealing with the responsible government authorities.

CED members should be trained for policy advocacy. Therefore it's better if we can organise a policy advocacy programme for CED members and other educational organisations and officers.²²⁷



Michael Garda/Sri Lanka/CED

226 Charles Elamaldeniya, in RWS Questionnaire, no date

227 Charles Elamaldeniya, in RWS Letter to Raquel Castillo, 10 October 2010

Case Study:

NGO Education Partnership (NEP), Cambodia – campaigning against informal school fees

Article 31 of the Cambodia’s Education Law states: “Every citizen has the right to access qualitative education of at least nine years in public schools *free of charge*.”²²⁸ These nine years cover six years primary school and three years lower secondary school which constitute basic education in the country.

In reality, basic education comes at a price. A 2007 study by the NGO Education Partnership (NEP) exposed what it called ‘informal school fees.’²²⁹ Examples include:

- Daily costs, e.g. food consumed in school and fee for parking bicycle:
 - Some teachers sell food items to supplement their salaries. Children feel obliged to buy from teachers, fearing that failure to do so would negatively affect their marks.
 - The parking fee reportedly goes to someone who ensures the bikes’ safety, but some accounts say a share of the fee goes to the school administrator.
- School fees, e.g. teachers’ fee paid either on a daily or monthly basis,²³⁰ private tutoring, and lesson handouts and exam papers:
 - Teachers charge fees to supplement their salaries. Children are often too embarrassed to go to class if they don’t have money.
 - ‘Private tutoring’ is done by the same teachers. Lessons are often part of the curriculum rather than supplementary. These are often held in preparation for exams. Children who don’t attend private classes invariably do poorly on the exams and may have to repeat the grade.
- Start up costs, e.g. school uniform (daily uniform, sportswear, shoes), study materials (bag, notebooks, pens), and school registration fees (registration forms, photographs, study record booklets, fees for sports):
 - These are one time purchases at the

start of the school year, the large amount of which might prevent parents from sending children to school.

- Miscellaneous fees, e.g. study and class supplies, bike maintenance, gifts for teachers and ceremonies, water, electricity, and garbage disposal:
 - Gifts for teachers were not commonly practiced in grades 1-6 in some provinces. There were cases, however, where supplies intended for some lessons actually went to teachers, e.g. ‘manual production’ classes became opportunities for teachers to receive items purchased by students.
 - Schools have a budget for maintenance and repair, but funds are often insufficient, thus students are asked to contribute.

NEP was very concerned because 63% of respondents cited as their reason for quitting school “Parent is poor and no ability to pay”. As such, informal school fees prevent Cambodia from achieving the Millennium Development Goal of universal primary education.

The government is fully aware that informal school fees are being collected and has issued several statements calling for their abolition. As early as 2002, for example, the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports (MoEYS) issued a *Directive on Taking Measures to Prevent Abnormalities in Primary Schools*, which listed teachers’ fees and sale of food items among the ‘abnormalities.’ In 2005, MoEYS issued *Direction Statement Implemented Prakas No. 513 About the Abolishment of Money Collection from Students at Public Primary and Secondary Schools*. More recently, the Education Strategic Plan 2006-2010 set a target of abolishing informal payments in grades 1-9 nationwide by the end of 2008.²³¹

Nevertheless, the practice remains as widespread as ever.

228 Education Law, Kingdom of Cambodia, 2007

229 The Impact of Informal School Fees, ASPBAE and NEP, 2007, pages 12-17

230 Some informants for this case study say teachers fees are seldom solicited in rural areas where families simply cannot afford these.

231 Education Strategic Plan 2006-2010, page 10



Cambodia/NEP

NEP and the campaign to stop informal school fees

NEP was organised in 2001 as a channel for NGOs to engage with government on education policy.²³² Today, NEP has 85 member NGOs, both local as well as international.

One of NEP's biggest advocacies is stopping the collection of informal school fees. The issue is repeatedly raised by NEP member NGOs, particularly those working at the grassroots level, who witness the implications when families withdraw children, especially girls, from school. Initially, NEP did research in one province but needed broader and more in-depth studies to demonstrate the problem was widespread. In 2007, funding support came from the RWS programme of GCE, in partnership with ASPBAE. RWS was then implementing Education Watch, a regional initiative to equip education campaigners for evidence-based advocacy.

In December 2007, NEP launched the research findings in a big gathering. Although invited, the MoEYS minister did not make an appearance; instead he sent a representative. NEP was disappointed but undeterred. Now they had the evidence to back up a sustained campaign.

The concept of 'campaign' has different meanings in different countries, prompted by their political realities. In Cambodia, for example, mass mobilisations in the streets or outside government offices would endanger people's safety and freedom, without assuring the results sought. Instead, NEP conducted lobbying activities in high level inter-agency bodies where it was a member. These included the Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG) composed of government ministries and donors/development partners and the Education Sub-sector Working Group (ESWG) composed of multilateral and bilateral agencies and NGOs engaged in education programmes. *"In all meetings, in all these fora, we say the same thing: we don't blame you, but we need to address this in order to expand access to education. Please stop the collection of informal school fees"*, said In Samrithy, executive director of NEP.²³³ NEP's *Education Watch* study was distributed during these meetings.

The research was also quoted by NEP representatives and member organisations in numerous presentations, such as the government's Education Congress in 2009 where Samrithy talked about informal school fees as a barrier to accessing quality education. The Minister of Education

²³² <http://www.nepcambodia.org/pages.php?mainid=6&key3=history>

²³³ Interview with In Samrithy, 30 July 2010.

acknowledged Samrithy's remarks and instructed government delegates to take action on violators. Media, both local and overseas, picked up the issue.

Another form of campaign was lobbying with groups with more clout, such as UNICEF and UNESCO, to use their influence with government. *"We ask them to speak against the informal school fees because when they talk, we know that government will listen."*²³⁴ Meanwhile, some NEP members campaigned against the fees at grassroots level.

NEP knew it couldn't merely oppose the fees, it also had to propose a sustainable solution. Thus, NEP engaged in a parallel campaign to raise teachers' salaries and improve their working conditions. Once again, NEP engaged in research to gather evidence, by teaming up with Voluntary Service Overseas (VSO) in producing *Teaching Matters: A Policy Report on the Motivation and Morale of Teachers in Cambodia*, published in 2008. The report painted a detailed, vivid, and poignant picture of the daily lives of teachers who cited 'inadequate salary' as their top cause for dissatisfaction. "Public school teachers perceive themselves to be underpaid, undersupported and working in under-resourced schools."²³⁵ At the time of the study, they earned on average between U.S. \$30-60 per month, depending on qualifications, years of experience, and number of shifts worked. In contrast, an NEP board member estimated a city-based family with two children needs US\$200-250/month just to survive.²³⁶ The problem is compounded by delayed releases. Following up salaries would require teachers to go all the way to the provincial education office, taking them away from teaching assignments. "Teachers see themselves as having no option but to seek other income generating activities; 93% of individual interviewees had second jobs and 99% of them said that a teacher's salary alone is not enough for them to live on."²³⁷

As a consequence of low salaries, teachers resort to collecting informal school fees. NEP board chairperson Chim Manavy asked, *"If teachers are hungry, can they be justified in finding ways to make money? Does the system force teachers to become corrupt?"*²³⁸

In closing, the research called on government to increase the salaries of teachers, school directors, and staff of the provincial and district offices of education to a level appropriate to the cost of living and linked to inflation.

To step up pressure on the government, VSO facilitated the visits in 2008 and 2009 of two British Members of Parliament who raised the issue of teachers' salaries during their meetings with MoEYS.

Outcomes of the campaign

NEP did not run a conventional campaign with planned activities and a structured timeframe. Instead, it utilised all available opportunities in meetings with government, development partners, and fellow NGOs to remind them that the practice continued in violation of the law and could only be solved by raising teachers' salaries. For their part, development partners also lobbied with government on the issue. Thus, credit for any success belongs to all who participated in the campaign.

- *Greater awareness on teachers' salaries and challenging working conditions and on the impact of informal school fees.* Of all the outcomes, NEP agrees this is what can be most directly attributed to their research and campaign efforts. Public awareness has been raised, too, as a result of media coverage. Even MoEYS gave NEP credit for "helping the MoEYS in information dissemination."²³⁹
- *Issuance of Sub-decree No. 126 on Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers,* which states, "Teachers shall not raise or collect money informally or make businesses in the classroom. Teachers shall avoid doing business in the compound of the educational establishments." Unlike earlier directives issued at the ministry level, the sub-decree is signed by Prime Minister Hun Sen, signifying greater commitment from government.
- *Government measures to ensure equal access to education services and student retention.* "To reduce parental cost barriers and retain students in schools,

234 Ibid.

235 Teaching Matters: A Policy Report on the Motivation and Morale of Teachers in Cambodia, 2008, page 8

236 Interview with Kan Kall, 28 July 2010

237 Teaching Matters, page 25

238 Interview with Chim Manavy, 29 July 2010

239 Interview with Sorn Seng Hok, 29 July 2010

efforts have been made such as increasing school operational budget, eliminating unofficial payments in schools, and providing scholarships to poor students, in particular 17,667 girls per year in grades 7 to 9.”²⁴⁰

- **Increase in teachers’ salaries**. In 2009, Prime Minister Hun Sen announced that teachers’ salaries would be increased by 20% every year, starting 2010. In January 2010, Secretary of State for Education Nath Bunrouen announced that, effective immediately, teachers’ salaries would now stand at: Primary school teachers = US \$50; Lower secondary school teachers = US \$75; and Upper secondary school teachers = US \$100. Teachers posted to remote areas would receive an additional allowance as incentive.

The campaign highs and lows

Factors that supported success

- NEP carried out two distinct but overlapping campaigns: opposing informal school fees and demonstrating their negative consequences on children’s access to education, and proposing the increase of teachers’ salaries as one means of stopping the practice. By taking two complementary tracks, NEP increased the chances that its advocacy would yield results.
- As mentioned earlier, NEP was not alone in campaigning against informal school fees. The campaign was taken up by many other organisations, acting singly or in collaboration with NEP. And NEP did not just have many allies, it had powerful allies such as UNICEF, UNESCO, the Asian Development Bank, and other bilateral donors. Because Cambodia is heavily reliant on official development assistance, these agencies wield considerable influence over government. “*When they push, change comes more quickly,*” NEP said.²⁴¹ A MoEYS official agrees, “*Development partners help to speed up change processes.*”²⁴² Even UNICEF supports NEP’s strategy of working through high-level bodies like the Joint Technical Working Group. “Development partners and NEP/NGOs having the same voice will be more powerful and effective.”²⁴³
- NEP has actively worked at cultivating good relations with government. “We try to get ideas and feedback from MoEYS about our plans before implementing these. We engage, rather than confront. Our message is always ‘*We’re not here to harm you.*’” As a result, MoEYS is more willing to listen to NEP, for example, to its research findings.²⁴⁴
- NEP has also worked hard to build its credibility as a coalition. “During speeches we don’t say ‘*On behalf of NEP.*’ We say ‘*On behalf of the 85 member organisations of NEP.*’ That makes a difference.”²⁴⁵ With more than 100 NGOs working in education in Cambodia, majority of whom are field-based, coordination can be a problem. And that, UNESCO wrote, is where NEP serves a crucial role. “UNESCO and NEP have excellent cooperation in the last couple of years, in advocacy and some pilot projects on the ground. It will be very meaningful to keep and strengthen this cooperation.”²⁴⁶
- For NEP, perhaps the most effective way of building credibility was by generating evidence for advocacy through its research papers. “Talk is not enough, but we have evidence.”²⁴⁷ This was verified by development partners who expressed appreciation for NEP’s thorough research and documentation. Using quotes and personal stories also added a more emotional and human dimension to the issues. Because the report contained direct quotes from the teachers themselves, or school directors and local education officials, the Cambodian government was not in a position to reject the report findings. Research has been NEP’s distinct contribution to a campaign supported by many players.
- NEP acknowledges the vital role played by RWS and VSO in providing much needed financial and technical support throughout the research and advocacy activities.

240 National Strategy Development Plan Update 2009-2013, page 63

241 Interview with Ang Sopha and Leng Theavy, 30 July 2010

242 Interview with Sorn Seng Hok, 29 July 2010

243 Email correspondence with Chie Takahashi, 12 August 2010

244 Interview with In Samrithy, 30 July 2010

245 Ibid.

246 Email correspondence with Sun Lei, 6 August 2010

247 Interview with Ang Sopha and Leng Theavy, 30 July 2010

Challenges and lessons learned

- The most obvious challenge is that the practice of collecting informal school fees is as widespread as ever. Government has missed its target of abolishing the practice by 2008. The sub-decree, while significant, has not eliminated the problem, and there are doubts if it is seriously being enforced. Public awareness of the sub-decree appears to be low, and families have not directly benefitted from it. Teachers' fees have even increased since the study was made in 2007. Then, the daily fee was 200-300 riels; today it is between 500-700 riels.²⁴⁸
- Public awareness is not enough; NEP wants to see this translated into behavioural change. "Parents may be aware that it's wrong to pay informal school fees, but they continue paying instead of coming together and opposing the practice."²⁴⁹ This challenge may indicate a role for field-based NEP member organisations with local constituencies.
- Despite the increase, teachers' salaries remain inadequate. Cambodia's resource constraints simply prevent government from giving more. One of the NEP board members was present during a meeting when an Asian Development Bank official offered to cover teachers' salaries to the required level for two years. Not surprisingly, the Cambodian government refused, knowing they could not sustain the salaries after the grant expired.²⁵⁰
- Although some in the NEP board suggest tackling the issue of government corruption head on, because this is what prevents government resources from being used for services like education, this view is not widely shared within the coalition. NEP has always had to tread carefully in relating with government, knowing that government's ambivalent attitude toward NGOs could easily swing against them and negate any gains made in more quiet diplomacy. Anticipating government's reactions and ensuring they do not lose face is always paramount in the campaign. "We have to phrase our advocacy (criticism) in a positive way so

that government will not be angry with us."²⁵⁰

- Advocacy campaigns are central to NEP's work, but they do not have full-time staff for advocacy. In the past VSO volunteers advised them on advocacy work. A three-year advocacy plan is currently being drawn up, and an experienced local staff member dedicated to advocacy must be recruited to see this through.
- "NEP alone is not powerful enough, we need the voices of local NGOs to say the same thing".²⁵² NEP member organisations have campaigned against informal school fees in varying degrees. These efforts have to be stepped up and coordinated.



Cambodia/NEP

What happens next?

NEP is committed to continue campaigning for teachers' salaries to be increased and informal school fees to be abolished. It will continue speaking on the issues during inter-agency meetings and coordinate with development partners to similarly lobby with government. Other tentative plans include:

- More aggressive media and public information campaign about informal school fees, the laws banning these, and the consequences for violators
- Training and capacity building for NEP partners so they can run their own campaigns in their communities
- Gathering NEP partners and other stakeholders to exchange experiences on their varying approaches to the problem

248 Interview with Seng Hong, 30 July 2010 This is equivalent to an approximate figure of 8 US cents to 17 US cents

249 Ibid

250 Interview with Kan Kall, 28 July 2010

251 Interview with Seng Hong, 30 July 2010

252 Ibid

Reflections on the Real World Strategies (RWS) programme

NEP formally joined RWS in 2007. For Seng Hong, NEP's executive director at the time, the support of ASPBAE, which coordinated RWS implementation in the region, came at a critical point when institutional funding from a donor agency would be ending soon. Hong credits ASPBAE's endorsement for eventually obtaining multi-year funding from Misereor, a German donor agency. ASPBAE also introduced NEP to Deutschen Volkshochschul Verbandes International, which today supports NEP's programme on adult literacy. These funds enabled NEP to make long-term plans and expand its programmes.

RWS support went beyond finance. "They were actually interested in building our capacity," Hong said – something NEP had not experienced in their institutional donor. During periodic meetings, ASPBAE gave advice on their advocacy plan, updates on international campaigns like Global Action Week, and experiences of other national coalitions in expanding membership and working with media.

Through RWS, ASPBAE contributed to capacity building of NEP members. This included a three-day training on monitoring and evaluation and seminars on the Education Law. RWS funds enabled two NEP member NGOs to conduct campaigns to increase school enrolment.

ASPBAE also introduced NEP to other groups engaged in education, such as Save the Children Sweden and Education International.

NEP staff met other RWS partners in international conferences where they exchanged experiences on effective campaigns. "Some of their ideas could not be applied to Cambodia", NEP research coordinator Ang Sopha admitted, "but they made me think hard about what approaches will work here."²⁵³ "Before RWS, all I knew was the Cambodian context. After joining meetings organised by RWS, I learned that Education for All is a commitment of governments all over the world, not only in Cambodia. I also realised a lot of information is available here. During meetings we had to make presentations which forced me to research and, in so doing, understand the issues better."²⁵⁴



Cambodia/NEP



Cambodia/NEP

RWS also facilitated NEP's participation in regional-level advocacy, for example in UNESCO Asia-Pacific Regional Office conferences and workshops. This included the Mid-Decade Assessment processes where NEP met with its MOEYS counterparts, including State Secretary for Education, Mr. Nath Bunrouen. These engagements were considered both as advocacy events and capacity building opportunities in policy advocacy through the RWS.

For Samrithy, "I think Real World Strategies is about global links. We feel that okay we are not alone, we have friends in other coalitions and countries who care about us and we care for them."²⁵⁵

253 Interview with Ang Sopha, 30 July 2010

254 Interview with Ang Sopha, 2 March 2010

255 Interview with In Samrithy, 2 March 2010

Case Study:

E-Net Philippines – mobilising out-of-school youth to advocate for education financing

Poverty has forced many millions of Filipino children to drop out of primary and secondary school – either because they cannot afford the many school-related expenses or because they have to work to supplement their families' income. Many children quit school even before they reach functional literacy. Ironically, their low level of education reduces the children's chances of employment, or limits them to low-paying jobs.

In 2006, the Department of Education Bureau of Alternative Learning System (DepEd BALS) estimated that 1.84 million Filipino children of the 6-11 age group and 3.94 million of the 12-15 age group were not in school.²⁵⁶ Another study covering four communities found that only 81.1% of children aged 6-11 were attending elementary school, and only 55.8% of those aged 12-15 were in high school. Sixty percent were behind their school levels by one or two years.²⁵⁷

Males comprise the majority of the dropouts. In high school, for example, there are two boys who drop out for every girl who does. For every 100 boys who enter first year, only 57 earn a high school diploma, compared to 71 girls.²⁵⁸

For more than a decade, the Civil Society Network for Education Reforms, or E-Net Philippines for short, has been campaigning for alternative learning systems to reach these out-of-school youth (OSY). Organised in 2000, E-Net Philippines is on a mission "to expand and strengthen civil society participation in reforming the Philippine education system and in developing alternative learning systems with special concern for marginalised, excluded, and vulnerable sectors."²⁵⁹ Today, E-Net Philippines counts 150 members and partners. These include NGOs, community-based and people's organisations, day care centres, and teachers' associations.

Because of the magnitude of dropouts and OSY in areas where they operate, many E-Net

member organisations are engaged in popular education, adult education, and distance learning, with a growing number involved in the government's Accreditation and Equivalency (A&E) programme for drop-outs.

At the local level, E-Net Philippines members have lobbied with local government units to invest in ALS, for example, by utilising special education funds for OSY. As a result, some members have received local funds for education of indigenous children and child labourers in sugar plantations. Other members have been accredited as service providers to implement ALS in their communities.

At the national level, ALS advocacy is addressed to both DepEd and Congress who often blame drop-outs or their parents for leaving the formal education system and insist they return to school. This argument ignores the poverty, armed conflict, natural disasters, overcrowded classrooms, or inaccessible schools in the countryside that caused students to drop out in the first place. The focus on formal education has meant that BALS receives a pittance: an average of just 0.15% of the total DepEd budget in the last ten years, and just 0.26% in 2009.²⁶⁰ BALS's limited funds are not proportional to the vast numbers of OSY it seeks to reach, nor are they adequate for quality services.

E-Net and the campaign to increase the budget for alternative learning systems

Since 2005, E-Net and other civil society organisations have been part of a Social Watch-Alternative Budget Initiative (ABI) that lobbies with Congress to increase budgets for their particular advocacies. As head of ABI's education cluster, E-Net called on government to invest at least 20% of the national budget and 6% of GNP in education.²⁶¹

256 Mapping Out Disadvantaged Groups in Education: Philippines Summary Report. Philippines: ASPBAE and E-Net, 2007.

257 *Ibid.*, page 3.

258 <http://pcij.org/stories/when-classes-open-today-many-boys-wont-be-in-school/>

259 <http://www.e-netphil.org/amisvis.html>

260 Figures provided by Carolina Guerrero, BALS director, during 2 August 2010 interview

261 E-Net, Education Legislative Agenda for 15th Congress, no date



Philippines/Raquel Castillo

In 2009, E-Net Philippines decided to scale up its advocacy by mobilising OSYs to get Congress to allocate one billion pesos to ALS. Around 25 youth volunteers were identified, the majority of them in their teens. In preparation for lobbying, the youth volunteers attended training courses on advocacy, campaign, and leadership skills and on education financing. They were mentored by the E-Net secretariat and member organisations, did role plays on negotiation, took the lead in that year's Global Action Week activities on the theme of *Youth and Adult Education and Lifelong Learning*, and learned painting and art skills for making campaign materials.

Highlights of the campaign included:

- Mobilisation outside the DepEd office on the first day of school in June 2009. In response to the mobilisation, BALS officials invited the group's representatives to come inside for a dialogue. E-Net Philippines had hoped for such a dialogue and prepared the following messages:
 - DepEd must work for more investments to enable ALS to reach out to more out-of-school children and youth and to enable BALS to innovate
 - in adult education programmes
 - Provide modules for use of ALS learners
 - Make available free trainings for ALS facilitators from NGOs and people's organisations
 - Create more venues for civil society groups to inform ALS and other education policies

E-Net Philippines also informed BALS it would bring the campaign for a bigger ALS budget to Congress.

In turn, BALS agreed to:

- Involve E-Net Philippines in the ALS Omnibus Guidelines formulation
- Look for more funds for printing the modules
- Provide training to E-Net Philippines members on ALS, free of charge. (This did not actually materialise, although BALS Deputy Director Joble and Senior Staff Edna Golusino were resource persons in E-Net-organised training courses on ALS.)
- Extend other technical assistance to E-Net Philippines members implementing ALS
- Lobbying with Congress, which consists of the Senate and the House of Representatives.

- Mobilisation of OSY and students during the President's State of the Nation Address in July 2009, to stress the need for a bigger ALS budget.
- Mobilisation of youth volunteers during the DepEd budget hearing in September 2009. Although only legislators are allowed to participate in Congressional discussions, the youth volunteers were able to observe legislative procedures. An E-Net ally, Rep. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel read the E-Net position paper, particularly its call for a PhP 1-billion budget for ALS. The paper was also used for interpolations on the legislative floor.
- Lobbying for an ALS budget linked to livelihoods for OSY in armed conflict areas with Rep. Risa Hontiveros-Baraquel and Rep. Teofisto Guingona III.
- Distribution of E-Net Philippines policy briefs to some offices in the House of Representatives and the Senate, from July to November 2009.
- Youth volunteers' attendance during Social Watch presentation of the consolidated alternative budgets of civil society organisations to the minority parties in Congress and during Social Watch briefings for individual members of the Appropriations Committee.
- Youth volunteers' serenade outside a building where the Bicameral Committee of Congress was meeting to make the final decisions on the national budget, December 2009.
- School roving campaign. Youth volunteers visited four universities and a high school where they set up booths, distributed information materials, and spoke before students in their classrooms.
- Awareness-raising through the media. This includes:
 - Press conferences during Global Action Week, launch of the Big Read campaign which focused on youth and adults, and the DepEd forum on financing programs for OSY.
 - Interviews by radio stations and newspapers, and features in a popular TV programme
- Issuance of press releases, for example, on the June 1st mobilisation, September 24th hearing in Congress, and Senator Edgardo Angara's promise to raise the ALS budget by PhP 500-million
- Use of Facebook and e-mails to promote the campaign of youth volunteers
- Although not a deliberate part of the campaign, E-Net Philippines also ran a one-day orientation workshop for media on Education for All and the need to support ALS. The workshop was supported by RWS.

Midway through the campaign, E-Net Philippines and its members were set back when Typhoon Ketsana battered Metro Manila and adjacent provinces. The E-Net office was flooded by almost two metres, destroying files and equipment, including two computers. Urban poor communities suffered even more damage, as floods and mud washed out flimsy shanties. After that, it became difficult to mobilise community and youth participation in the campaign, as they were understandably more engrossed with surviving the aftermath of the typhoon.

Later, the campaign tried to get back on track. E-Net Philippines was overjoyed when Edgardo Angara, head of the Senate Appropriations Committee, assured them of his support for a PhP 500-million²⁶² increase in the ALS budget. This was less than the PhP 1-billion they sought, but E-Net was ecstatic nevertheless.

At the end of the budgetary process, deliberations hinged on the Bicameral Committee which met behind closed doors. In the final version of the 2010 budget, BALS got PhP 40-million²⁶³ more than the previous year. It was less than what E-Net Philippines had hoped for. Even so, E-Net believes that getting support for ALS from legislators who initially had no idea about the programme was in itself a victory. The Bicameral Committee's decision not to grant a more substantial budget increase poses a challenge to intensify awareness-raising on ALS in Congress.

262 Approximately US\$11,389,521

263 Approximately US\$ 911,161

Outcomes of the campaign

- Increased capacity and commitment of OSYs to campaign on education issues affecting them, and increased self confidence, in general, as attested by the E-Net Philippines secretariat and the urban poor organisations who have more frequent contact with them.
- Increased capacity of E-Net Philippines member-organisations to understand processes in the DepEd and Congress, engage in advocacy, and appreciate the link between policy change and their own programmes. This is evidenced in initiatives of urban poor organisations who participated in the campaign to later lobby with their local government units for support in establishing an ALS programme, or to represent E-Net in subsequent DepEd workshops and conferences.
- Greater recognition of E-Net Philippines and its work from the Department of Education and other concerned agencies:
 - Public citation by BALS officials for E-Net's help in campaigning for the budget increase
 - Consistent invitations from the DepEd for E-Net to represent civil society organisations in discussions concerning ALS and even in judging national education contests
 - Invitation to represent civil society organisations in a UNICEF-led working group that would map children at risk of dropping out and investigate the inordinate dropout rate among boys
- Greater awareness of individual members of Congress of issues contributing to the massive dropout rate from school, the problems affecting access to public education, and the role of ALS in providing education for OSY.
- Greater awareness of local government units of the situations of the OSY in their areas, what is ALS, and how can it be implemented.
- Succinct policy briefs produced by E-Net Philippines on the problems of impoverished out-of-school youth from their perspective and the impact of ALS on their development.

The campaign also prompted changes within E-Net Philippines:

- Increased exchanges between and support among E-Net members because of the camaraderie they developed.
- Realisation that the youth sector should be represented in the Board of Directors to influence the policy agenda and actions of the coalition.

The campaign highs and lows

Factors that supported success

- **Evidence.** Allies in Congress emphasise good research is essential in lobbying. E-Net Philippines's research through the RWS-supported *Education Watch* provided the compelling evidence they used in the campaign. "Research on Education for All deficits prepared the youth spokespersons and other E-Net members to confidently talk about statistical realities on the OSY."²⁶⁴
- **Organisational buy-in.** The E-Net Philippines board and members, particularly the urban poor organisations, gave full support to the campaign. For example, the urban poor organisations took responsibility for identifying youth volunteers, monitoring them in the communities, and mobilising them for campaign activities. E-Net partners such as Action for Economic Reforms, Education for Life Foundation, and Social Watch were also critical in crafting the campaign plan and strategies.
- **Allies in Congress.** E-Net Philippines gained a foothold in Congress through allies such as party-list groups who represent disadvantaged sectors, and even those from more traditional political parties who nevertheless adopted progressive positions on education. These allies helped facilitate the entry of youth volunteers into Congress and presented E-Net's policy briefs in their behalf.
- **Youth volunteers' commitment.** E-Net Philippines gives the biggest credit to the youth volunteers who made themselves available and spoke from the heart. As one of the volunteers attested, that commitment stems from personal

²⁶⁴ Email correspondence, Cecilia Soriano, 4 August 2010

experience and disappointment of leaving school, and their desire for education.²⁶⁵

The youth leaders were excited about their role as campaigners and constantly asked what more could they do. Hearing directly from the youth volunteers made a difference to politicians who asked questions afterwards. Even E-Net Philippines itself learned more nuances of school dropout issues.

- **Support from ASPBAE and RWS.** E-Net Philippines's Education Watch report done with ASPBAE in 2007, and supported by RWS, was a key resource for writing policy briefs on the situations of OSY in the country. On a wider scale, ASPBAE's support via RWS expanded the capability of E-Net Philippines in areas such as research, analysis of EFA deficits and building partnerships for EFA, and campaigns that promote the interests of the marginalised groups.

Challenges and lessons learned

- For E-Net, Philippines the most strategic challenge is changing the mindset in both DepEd and Congress that the solution to the problem of OSY lies in formal education. One approach could be to update research on the number of OSYs and show the long-term benefits of investing in education programmes that address their difficult circumstances, empower them economically, and build their confidence to participate in society.
- ALS is not unique in being underfunded. The social sector has suffered the brunt of the budget squeeze in the last five years, including declining per capita spending on education by government. The actual DepEd budget may have increased, but its share of the national budget went down.
- E-Net Philippines' collaboration with the rest of the CSOs for an alternative budget requires long-term and sustained engagement. E-Net's former Advocacy and Campaigns Associate, estimates that, to be effective, the campaign to increase the ALS budget should have been undertaken for at least 18 months.
- E-Net Philippines was hobbled by

resource constraints, particularly after their long-time source of institutional funds changed their priorities in the region and stopped core funding. By the end of 2009, E-Net secretariat staffing was reduced to two, from the original four who already juggled multiple assignments. Although the board and member-organisations were very supportive, they were busy with their own programmes and could not commit to more of the hands-on, time-consuming work that advocacy requires. This affected the campaign, to some extent, e.g. the limited activities of the school roving campaign not producing the results sought, and the inability to sustain some aspects of the media campaign. E-Net activities to build the capability of youth volunteers were likewise constrained by funds.

- Personal circumstances prevented some OSYs from participating until the end of the campaign: some relocated to a different community, two got married in the midst of the campaign, but the biggest deterrent was their need to work or to find work. Over time, the number of OSYs mobilised dwindled. As a result, E-Net Philippines had to deal with new representatives from member-organisations and further boost the confidence and morale of the original team.

The lesson for E-Net Philippines is the need for comprehensive and continuing capacity-building of a larger and new pool of youth volunteers – in the knowledge that several will be unable to sustain their participation, but also in order to build a reliable constituency of youth campaigners who could be mobilised. Such capacity-building requires a range of training courses, workshops, and mentoring, which in turn require resources. In light of the OSYs' challenging circumstances, E-Net deems it necessary to convene an annual gathering of youth advocates, for example, among ALS learners who stay in a programme for 6-10 months until their A&E test. They can be tapped as advocates for a year and possibly beyond that, if they stay in the same

²⁶⁵ Interview with Jamaica Malapit, 26 July 2010

community or remain in contact with their community organisation.

Indeed, if E-Net Philippines was to go through the campaign again, it suggests organising more one-on-one dialogues between the youth volunteers and members of Congress, and not just lobbying at the committee level. Another proposal is to encourage OSYs to develop a national organisation to promote their issues.

What happens next?

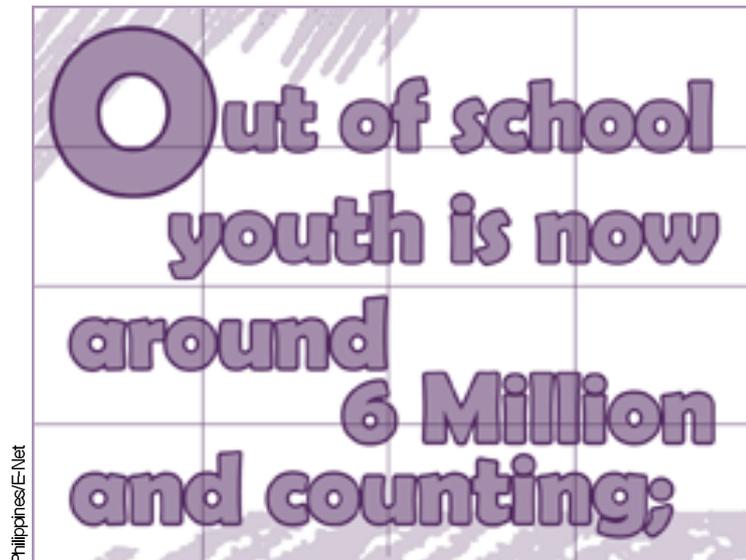
For E-Net, the campaign to increase the ALS budget did not end in 2009. The campaign started years before that, and it will continue. “Budget advocacy is an institutional advocacy of E-Net and continues to be part of yearly and long-term education financing advocacy.”²⁶⁶ In February 2010, for example, the youth pursued the campaign by participating in the *People’s Voices for Education*, which presented to electoral candidates an education platform which included an agenda for the OSY.

There is slightly more room for cautious optimism in the newly elected 15th Congress for 2010-2013. Some key allies are now in the majority party, which increases E-Net’s chances of being heard, and new allies have been identified among the newly elected. Within DepEd, E-Net expects to maximise opportunities for advancing their advocacies in the team crafting the ALS Omnibus Guidelines.

At the local level, E-Net members who have been trained in education financing expect to continue lobbying with local government units and local development councils for support to ALS.

Reflections on the Real World Strategies (RWS) programme

E-Net Philippines’s campaign that mobilised out-of-school youth to campaign for education financing was supported by the GCE in partnership with ASPBAE through the RWS initiative. ASPBAE and RWS have left a strong imprint on E-Net



Philippines’ capacity: from undertaking primary research which in turn became a powerful tool for advocacy, to linking with other national coalitions for a regional advocacy platform on ODA and education financing. Its national-level campaigns as well as those of member organisations on the ground have increased their effectiveness and credibility with both government agencies and local communities.

For E-Net National Coordinator Cecilia Soriano, “RWS for E-Net Philippines means three things: information, transnational connections, and innovation. RWS provided us access to information, connections to powerful institutions and people in the education sector, and skills to do work better...”²⁶⁷

E-Net Philippines President Edicio de la Torre admitted, “It is very difficult to find venues or even to have the capability to come together and engage regional sub-regional formations.” RWS helped in this regard. With RWS support, the national coalitions of the Philippines, Indonesia, and Cambodia initiated the Southeast Asia Education Network as a platform for engaging with ASEAN. “Like all national coalitions, our primary focus tends to be work within our borders. Sub-regional, regional, and global work are secondary and perhaps would not even be addressed, were it not for the additional resources, stimulus, and assistance from a programme like Real World Strategies.”²⁶⁸

²⁶⁶ Interview with Cecilia Soriano

²⁶⁷ Interview with Cecilia Soriano, 8 March 2010; Reflections on the RWS from E-Net Philippines, Powerpoint presentation, 2 March 2010; and email correspondence with Cecilia Soriano, 25 July 2010

²⁶⁸ Interview with Edicio de la Torre, 2 March 2010

Regional Summary: Asia-Pacific

Successes and remaining challenges

Attribution will always be a ticklish question in advocacy campaigns where many forces are involved. All national coalitions admit they cannot claim sole responsibility for any successes; credit must be shared by all who collaborated to achieve the outcomes, including teachers' unions and even supporters within government. "The plurality of voices... adds to the overall pressure on the government."²⁶⁹ The advocacy campaigns achieved the following:

- ***Enactment of legislation or issuance of government pronouncements that advance education rights***. In India, the government passed an Act to guarantee the right to free and compulsory education for children between the ages of six and 14. In Cambodia, the Prime Minister issued a sub-decree on Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers that reiterates the ban of the practice of collecting informal school fees. Although the Act fell short of the NCE's full demands and NEP reports the sub-decree is lacking in enforcement, nevertheless these are significant tools coalitions can use to further promote their advocacies.
- ***Greater awareness of education rights and issues***. This is evidenced in greater discussion within Congress/Parliament, in government meetings at national and local levels, and in media reports.
- ***Bigger budget for education***. In the Philippines and Sri Lanka, coalition members started to gain access to funds from local government units and agencies. In India, the government made a policy commitment to increase spending in education. In Cambodia, the government increased teachers' salaries.
- ***Improved capacities*** of children, out-of-school youth, mothers, the national coalitions, and their members. Participation in the campaigns also benefitted those mobilised, for example by gaining skills in research, lobbying and advocacy, organising, making effective presentations, and even analytical skills.

They also gained a deeper understanding of legislative and decision-making processes

- ***Evidence for sustained advocacy***. EdWatch had several results: it produced evidence that the national coalitions could use for continuing campaigns; it helped those involved, particularly the coalition members, gain research and analytical skills; and the publication of research added to the national coalitions' credibility. The value of EdWatch can be seen in how even governments used these studies to inform their EFA mid-term assessment report. In Indonesia, for example, findings of the coalition's EdWatch paper were included in the government's Millennium Development Goals report. In Papua New Guinea, the national government announced its interest in expanding the survey to all provinces, in collaboration with the national coalition and ASPBAE.²⁷⁰ Education International, one of the founding members of the GCE and a member of the RWS Steering Committee, also said it "benefited and utilised quite a lot of these research materials for our advocacy and campaign work."²⁷¹

Nevertheless, many challenges remain.

- Legislation and government pronouncements signify important milestones in the campaign rather than the destination itself. National coalitions need to continue campaigning for the implementation, enforcement, and even amendment of laws, or for actual allocation of budgets and release of promised funds.
- A lot more needs to be done to translate awareness of education issues into behavioural change or action. In Cambodia, impoverished communities and families resent paying informal school fees, but continue to do so. In the Philippines and Sri Lanka, local government funding for non-formal education programmes benefitting school

²⁶⁹ Email correspondence with Anjela Taneja, 30 August 2010

²⁷⁰ 2007 Asia RWS Annual Report

²⁷¹ Interview with Aloysius Matthews, 1 March 2010

drop-outs is still relatively new and, therefore, more the exception rather than the rule.

- Most countries involved are underdeveloped, their governments hobbled by resource constraints. All have huge internal disparities and significant numbers of their population live in chronic poverty. Consequently, advocacy for bigger spending on education (and other social services) will always be an uphill battle. The challenge is to demonstrate that government investment in education pays high dividends in the long term, and that failure to do so will have harsh consequences.
- Education campaigns require long years of sustained advocacy. Governments can be selective about the policy pronouncements they will actually implement. The RWS Asia 2008 report, for example, noted that although policy recommendations by education coalitions were accepted in UNESCO regional workshops in South and Southeast Asia, these still await concrete policy action at country level. Armed conflict and natural disasters can also wreak havoc on even carefully planned campaigns.
- The search for effective strategies is something that has continually occupied education campaigners. An RWS report noted, “Given the slow progress on meeting the EFA promise – with damaging consequences especially for the poor and marginalised – coalitions need to more carefully strategise on a campaign approach that is likely to bring about the more decisive ‘wins’ for EFA. A targeted, more focused approach – combining lobbying, engagement with sustained public and political pressure may be considered. Greater coordination between local and national level advocacy efforts need consideration. The use of the media, Global Action Week high profile events in a manner that more effectively serve policy change strategies should be contemplated.”²⁷² Identifying the right strategies is particularly crucial when education campaigners confront governments with sensitive issues or ‘uncomfortable truths.’
- Other education coalitions tended to go for advocacy activities they are already familiar with, instead of trying approaches outside their comfort zone. Or, if they were to try something new, as E-Net Philippines did with education financing, they did so under the umbrella of larger collaborations, rather than venturing off by themselves. This is especially true when organisations had limited funds: they were less able to make long-term plans and less open to experimentation which might entail risks.²⁷³ There are exceptions, of course. RWS II marked new forms of engagement for the national coalitions such as advocacy on education financing and advocacy addressed to sub-regional and regional platforms.
- Education coalitions were hampered by other organisational constraints: few full-time staff who were inevitably overstretched, lack of a full-time staff dedicated to advocacy and campaigns, leadership changes (in 2008 alone, seven of the ten national coalitions changed leaders), and member organisations who likewise face resource constraints and are preoccupied with delivering their own programmes.
- Advocacy requires organisations to be innovative, agile, and to think on their feet. In general, much needs to be done to increase organisational capacity of national coalitions. On the more positive side, progress made by education coalitions is a testament to their determination as well as the mentoring support provided by ASPBAE.

Along the way, important lessons were learned.

Lessons learned

- As mentioned in the Cambodia case study, the political realities in each country dictate which forms of campaign and advocacy are possible. Education coalitions have to assess what the government allows or is responsive to, what captures the public imagination, as well as what the coalitions are capable of

272 2007 Asia RWS Annual Report, page 9

273 Interview with Raquel Castillo, 11 September 2010

delivering within their limited resources. Thus, while there are benefits of exchanging experiences amongst education coalitions, at the end of the day each one has to reflect on what works for their specific context, how can others' approaches be adapted rather than adopted wholesale, or whether they can simply be inspired by someone's success but carve out their own path.

- Whilst the campaigns were national in scope, the coalitions also realised the need for local-level advocacy activities. This poses many challenges for coalition members who may also be more adept in organising or services delivery but unfamiliar with the advocacy processes and their requirements. Multi-level advocacy, while imperative, places greater demand on capacity- and constituency-building at the local level.
- Education financing – including budget tracking and official development assistance – is one area that education coalitions ventured into only recently, in large part due to RWS support, including the EdWatch studies. Coalition member organisations in India, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka have already benefitted from local advocacy by accessing local funds for their education programmes. Education financing is attractive because campaigns can be applied at various levels, covering any education issue, and the gains are tangible. For ASPBAE Secretary General Maria Khan, the budget tracking process was a crucial starting point in demystifying the whole issue of education financing. *“Budget tracking sends the message that not only does the issue affect me but that I can do something about it.”*²⁷⁴
- Education coalitions can explore more advocacy approaches, such as strategic engagements with media to rally public opinion and generate awareness outside the direct stakeholders. However, stepping up media engagements will require resources and organisational capacity. Advocacy consultants also attest to the effectiveness of local government officials (legislators, policy makers, programme directors) learning from their peers over

hearing the same ideas from civil society organisations. Education coalitions and their members may want to consider promoting best practices and organising dialogues or cross visits with other local officials who adopted the policy/programme they advocate and who can attest to its value or demonstrate its success. Again, this will require resources and organisational capacity.

- Yet another important learning for the RWS team is timing. Advocacy plans, it said, should be designed around national events such as summits, national elections, and major EFA reviews. However, it cautioned, expectations on deliverables need to be scaled down during periods of political turmoil.²⁷⁵
- The experiences also underscored the lesson that advocacy is not a one-shot deal but rather, a sustained and focused process. India, Cambodia, and the Philippines were able to score policy gains because they built their campaigns on previous years of effort. CED in Sri Lanka was just starting to inform and engage government around mothers' education and literacy, non-formal education, and lifelong learning; consequently, it did not yet register policy gains in two years.

The impact of RWS in each country and national coalition went beyond the education campaigns featured in the case studies.

- The primary objective of the RWS programme was to build the capacity of civil society organisations, and more specifically the national education coalitions, to engage effectively with government to achieve the goals of Education for All. The work of RWS should be viewed in this frame, and not just in terms of the outcomes of the campaigns in the case studies. In Asia-Pacific, RWS was implemented through ASPBAE, which undertook capacity building through in-country workshops and training, mentoring the coalition board and secretariat, acting as a sounding board for their ideas, providing information on sub-regional/regional/global education campaigns and

274 Interview with Maria Lourdes Almazan Khan, 14 September 2010

275 2008 Asia RWS Annual Report, page 25

initiatives, organising sub-regional and regional workshops/training, facilitating the exchange of experiences with other coalition networks, facilitating links to donor organisations and other education players, and facilitating the coalitions' participation in regional and sub-regional platforms such as ASEAN, South Asia Ministers of Education Forum, SEAMEO, and UNESCO.

- Gaining an international perspective through RWS is consistently mentioned by the education coalitions. The opportunities to participate in ASEAN and UNESCO events enriched their understanding of the dynamics between international organisations and national policies, e.g. national education programmes in consonance with their governments' commitments to international or regional agreements.

Even during the first phase of RWS, it had always been emphasised that education coalitions would not simply have a one-on-one relationship with ASPBAE, but engage with coalitions from other countries. As a result, coalitions identified together common issues that needed concerted action. For example, the coalitions in the Philippines, Indonesia, and Cambodia worked together to address privatisation issues in education. Listening to experiences of other coalitions also prodded them to reflect on strategies and approaches they could adapt to their particular context. Coalitions were buoyed by the spirit of solidarity among their peers and gained confidence in their work.

- Through RWS, national coalitions gained access to regional platforms for education advocacy. In turn, coalitions have also been acknowledged by sub-regional or regional bodies on EFA and invited to participate in regional conferences and fora, unlike in the past when they had to gatecrash UNESCO EFA Coordinators' Meeting, for example.²⁷⁶

Spaces for regional policy advocacy need to be created. "It's often taken for granted it will take place, but it actually requires deliberate effort. We need to enlarge regional policy spaces, e.g.,

with UNESCO, Asian Development Bank, ASEAN, SAARC, and World Bank Asia, because in some instances processes and decisions here can be highly decisive in terms of policy directions at national level."²⁷⁷

- RWS also provided funding support for advocacy campaigns such as those described in the case studies. As a funding mechanism, RWS is unusual in that it allowed coalitions much leeway in determining the subject of the campaigns, the forms these would take, and the kind of support requested from RWS. Coalitions appreciated this flexibility.

However, RWS fund releases were repeatedly delayed. It was only in 2009, more than halfway through RWS II, that the full project funds were released within the calendar year to which they were allocated. This caused complications for both region-wide and country-level plans. National coalitions were forced to postpone some activities and then spend the funds (implement activities) in a much shorter timeframe. On the regional level, ASPBAE sometimes had to advance funds to cover staff salaries and the first tranche of RWS country allocation.²⁷⁸

A review of RWS in the Asia-South Pacific region would not be complete without discussing the role of the RWS Steering Committee, which is responsible for programmatic oversight and strategic planning for RWS in the region. The Committee consists of representatives from four organisations: ASPBAE (Maria Khan), Education International (Aloysius Mathews), Global March Against Child Labour (Priyanka Ribhu), and the representative of the national coalitions for Asia in the Global Campaign for Education Board (Edicio de la Torre). As RWS project holder for Asia, ASPBAE acts as convenor of the Committee.

One of the Committee's roles was to facilitate better understanding and forge greater cooperation among the key constituent groups of GCE in the region – NGOs, teachers' unions, child rights activists – who, at the onset of RWS, had limited experience of working together. Committee members acknowledge there have been tensions in working together. Differences in

276 Interview with Raquel Castillo, 30 March 2010

277 Interview with Maria Lourdes Almazan Khan, 14 September 2010. SAARC is the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation.

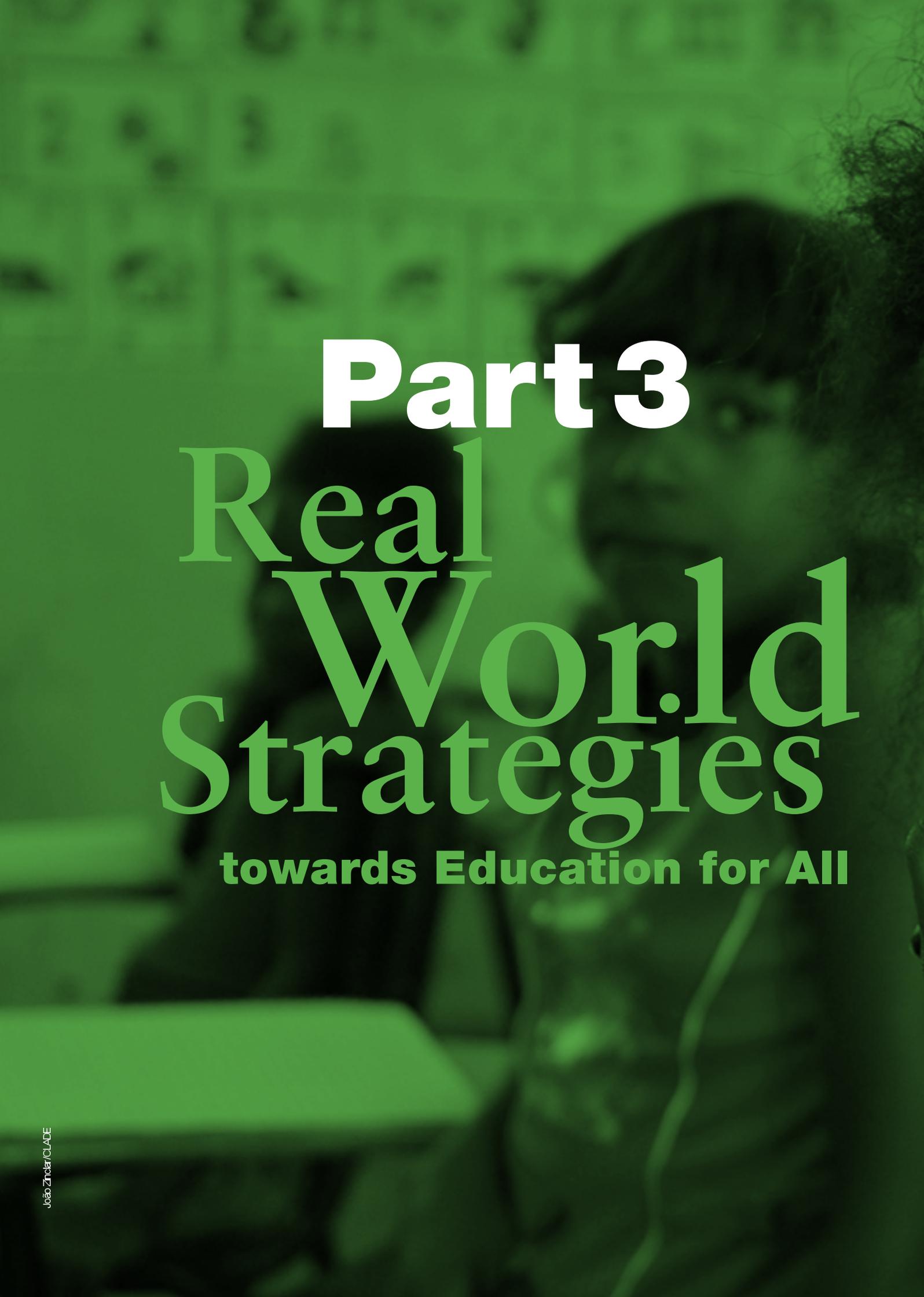
278 Interview with Raquel Castillo, 25 July 2010

size, focus of work, and organisational character of unions and NGOs made for many differences in ways and styles of working which needed to be understood by each group as they started interacting more closely. Over time, relations did improve and parties came to see the benefit of working together.

During the first phase of RWS, the programme covered Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. In 2006, at the start of RWS II, the programme covered the same countries, except for Vanuatu. By 2010, RWS included two more countries, Cambodia and Sri Lanka, and linked up with education advocacy networks in Thailand, Vietnam, Japan, and Australia through various activities.

Both ASPBAE and the national coalitions are unanimous in hoping the RWS programme can be sustained. Without RWS, national coalitions might suddenly lose the space where they “collectively strengthened themselves, collectively learned things, and collectively advocated around specific priority policy issues. The movement in Asia Pacific might not be as vibrant.”²⁷⁹ Continued advocacy in regional platforms, which is still at a relatively new stage, is particularly vulnerable without RWS support. The timing is also crucial, with only five years left to go before the target dates for achieving Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals in 2015. “The cohesive force that transforms national coalitions into a movement should be kept.”

279 Interview with Raquel Castillo, 30 March 2010



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Conclusion

The evidence collected for this report points clearly to RWS II being a worthwhile experience for those who took part. It highlights a multitude of achievements, some big, some small that overall lead to the conclusion that RWS II has been a success.

It is not possible, however, to say without reservation that every aspect of the project has been successful and there is scope for improvement at all levels. RWS II has increased advocacy on a global scale (i.e. in multiple countries across the globe), however, the pace of change is different in each country and across regions – people and context factor in to create different scenarios with different outcomes. Advocacy is, however, a process and the impact of RWS II is ongoing.

Going forward

With less than five years remaining for the achievement of the EFA Goals agreed in Dakar it is clear that the reality of EFA will fall far short of the promises made. That should not create apathy among activists but instead fuel a sense of urgency for more and better advocacy over the next few years. Projects such as RWS provide an opportunity for national coalitions and their regional partners to demand the change that is needed.

“The Real World Strategy works – you have got to trust and invest in people, let them run with their commitments, their passions and help them make informed judgements.”²⁸⁰

If the six EFA goals are to be met and the right to education fulfilled, ordinary women, men and even children need the political spaces created by projects such as RWS II to hold their governments to account.

GCE, the regional networks, the national coalitions and their funders need to address the weaknesses identified by this research in order that future projects of this kind are sustainable. Easily understandable decision making processes and clear lines of accountability to the school community beneficiary groups they work with and for are essential. They need to consolidate their successes by focusing their work, building on strengths and embracing innovation. Projects such as RWS II are the foundations for building a strong, democratic global movement of activists, who together will be able to demand the change that is needed to achieve EFA.

Recommendations

Recommendations for national coalitions

1. Use the political spaces and calendar to good effect:

- Use the run up to elections as a prime time to get prospective parliamentarians on board and signed up to your agenda.
- Find out the key moment in government planning process such as the budget cycle and ensure lobbying is timed accordingly.
- Understand that the change you are trying to effect is not just change in the education system, it is also change in the political system, and power mapping and political literacy are key to influence the real decision makers.
- Engage with the donor community and get them onside.
- Engage ‘school community’ beneficiaries meaningfully in the advocacy process.

2. Spend time planning and building capacity

- Develop robust advocacy strategies with SMART objectives.
- Build in participatory monitoring and evaluation from the outset.
- Focus on fewer issues for greater impact.
- Conduct research to back advocacy demands so you start from an informed position.
- Use a mix and match of tools to influence key targets consistently over a defined period of time.

3. Relationships with government

- Working in partnership with Ministry of Education and other government departments offers more opportunity to influence policy dialogue than a confrontational stance.
- Coalitions should take the position of ‘critical friends’ of the government and avoided being co-opted. A balance is needed between engaging to influence policy and acting as an extended branch of the MoE.
- Engage with all arms of the State, the executive, the legislative and the judiciary.
- Solution-orientated engagement is important but there should be no negotiation over the States’ obligation in regard to human rights conventions.

4. Democratic structures and modus operandi

- Secretariats must guard against acting as ‘the coalition’, they must ensure proper consultation and representation maximising specific expertise and competencies through the use of sub-groups and other working structures.
- De-centralised structures ensure representation from different parts of the country and avoid concentrating all activity and/or decision making in one place.
- Membership must take responsibility for joining actions and not expect the secretariat to do it all, especially in many cases when there is no paid coordinator.
- Systematise work to create an institutional memory, making reports and accounts open for scrutiny to ensure accountability and sustainability.

Recommendations for the regional networks

1. Regional advocacy

- Engagement in focused regional advocacy must be maintained or increased; regional networks are and must be seen to be using regional platforms effectively.
- Where possible, joint actions with national coalitions and/or the global centre should be sought.
- Build in institutional learning as part of monitoring and evaluation systems.

2. Capacity development

- Developing capacity of the network membership should remain a key area of activity. This should focus on a gradual increase of coalitions (i.e. across different countries) with an emphasis on effectiveness (i.e. the institution and advocacy capacity of coalitions).
- Capacity development should prioritise institutional strengthening with a strong focus on management skills and democratic decision-making structures.
- Capacity development should go beyond training of national coordinators to ensure the spread of knowledge and skills among a range of coalition members.
- Technical training is important but should be timely and focused, and not over reliant on regional workshops which may not lead to trickle-down at the country level.

3. 'High level' advocacy

- Lobbying regional and/or international conferences takes considerable pre-planning and it is important to consider that most decisions are made before the actual meeting and plan lobbying accordingly.
- Regional and/or international conferences can be a valuable space to build relationship with government and donors and raise the visibility of coalitions, network or GCE as a global movement. Having one or more clear messages across the movement is important.

4. Bridge the gap between development, human rights and humanitarian fields

- Understand and make effective use of human rights law and mechanisms.
- Build relationships with key external actors such as the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Education or the national human rights ombudsperson.
- If feasible, consider the use of legal frameworks and the justiciability of the right to education.
- In situations of national disaster engage with the education cluster to ensure a quick return to school.

Recommendations for the GCE global centre

1. Increase human and financial resources

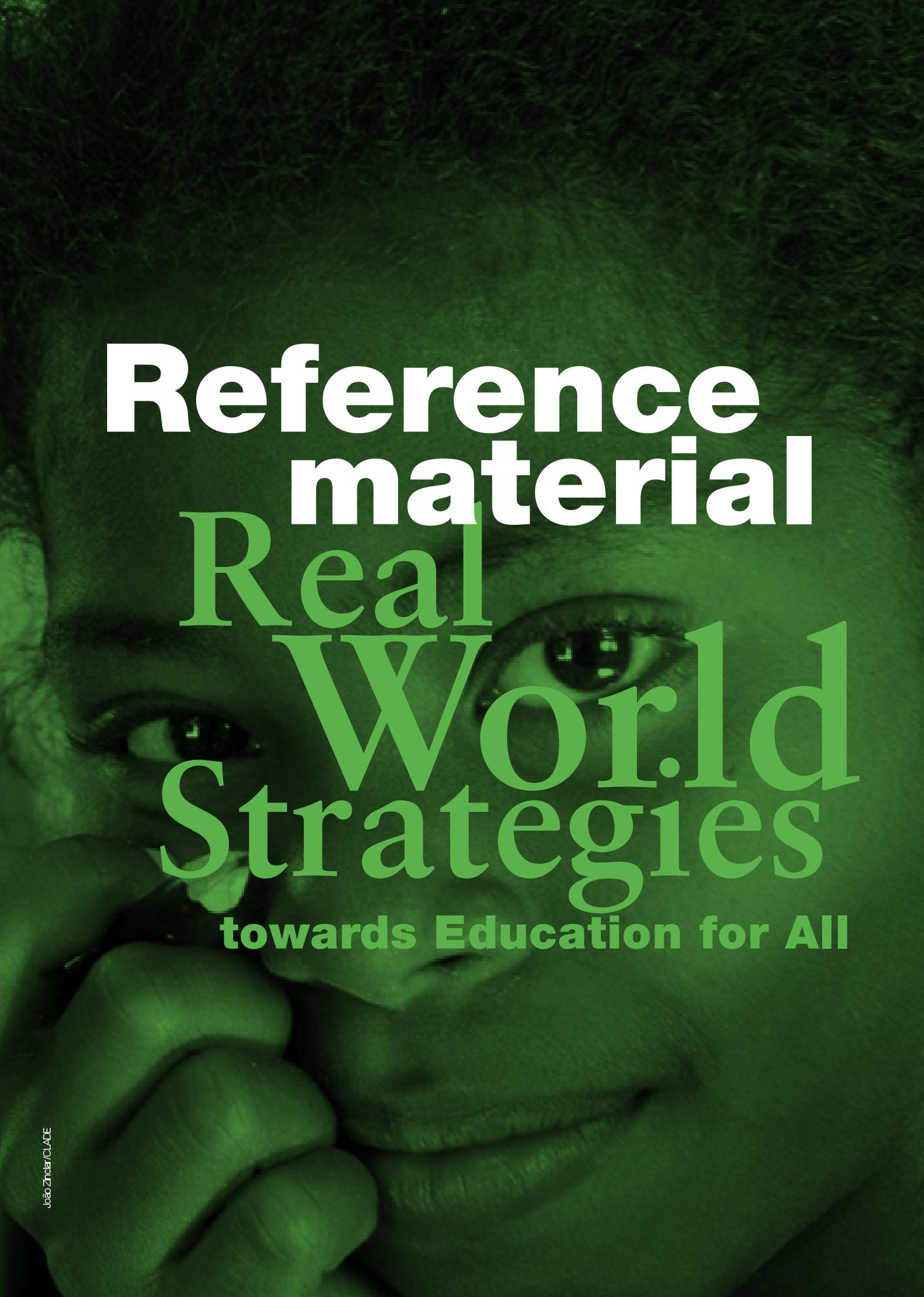
for 'movement building' within clear parameters of operational space and agreed roles and responsibility.

2. Create explicit strand of work to link national advocacy and international advocacy.

3. Build a central database of materials for collective learning (i.e. examples of good practice and innovative training materials such as workshop agendas with accompanying materials, manuals etc).

4. Review strands of work/projects in terms of strategic fit with organisational objectives and interrelationship of projects.

5. The GCE Board needs to develop mechanisms for closer board involvement in all projects including small grants such as RWS II and increase their visible engagement with the work.



**Reference
material**

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Appendix 1: *Note on Methodology*

Case studies were the principal method used in the documentation and assessment process, to allow an in-depth examination of strategies, achievements and lessons learned in the implementation of RWS II. Given the theory of change underpinning RWS II it was considered appropriate that this type of qualitative investigation of the project was most valuable. Twelve case studies (four from each region) were selected from a pool of 51 possible coalitions. The case studies were selected by GCE Secretariat and Regional Network staff according to the following criteria: geographical representation, type of intervention and issues addressed. The process of this sampling for the specific case studies including the identification of key informants (drawn from multiple stakeholders) and the size of the sample was made individually by each regional researcher with guidance and input from the RWS reference group.

The research drew on primary and secondary data, with fieldwork carried out between July and September 2010. Approximately 4-5 days were spent on primary data collection in each country using a mix of face-to-face interview, focus group discussion. Telephone interviews and a questionnaire survey were also conducted during the same period. The research was conducted by four independent researchers (see Appendix 2): two men and two women from Africa, Latin America, Asia and Europe respectively. An additional fifth researcher was hired for the Colombia case study in order to prevent any perceived conflict of interest as the main regional researcher for Latin America had been directly involved with the Colombian Coalition during the implementation of the RWS project.

Prior to the start of data collection a methodological framework for the project was developed by the lead researcher with input from the regional researchers. It outlined standardised data collection processes across the different locations to

allow for the global lessons to be drawn. It included: (a) understanding of the core objectives of RWS II and the relevant case study. To this end, access was granted to the global and regional documentation on RWS including planning documents, annual reports, and copies of other relevant publications on Dakar goals and the status of the Right to Education etc was consulted; (b) Agreement on basic field procedures, such as sourcing of information, ethical considerations etc; (c) Agreed research questions that could be adapted as required in situ dependant on the context and the informant being interviewed; (d) guidance on the presentation of data (outline, format for the narrative).

Reference groups members managed the researchers in their respective regions, providing copies of documentation and background information where and when needed. In addition to the main research questions outlined in the framework document, researchers developed specific research tools to fit the context.

Data Collection

Data collection for each case study and the overall analysis of RWS II involved a range of data collection methods.

- Literature review:** The literature review included a review of relevant global, regional and local literature by each researcher with guidance from the RWS management team and included: Internal policies/statements/reports/publications; relevant external literature on EFA; external literature on civil society activism etc
- Field data collection (outcomes and perceived impact):** Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussion, workshops and surveys with: (i) staff/activists; (ii) beneficiaries (iii) key government local and national, donor

Note on Methodology (continued)

officials (iv) other civil society organisations (v) foundations (human rights; education) and (vi) UN officials. Data collection tools (interview questions, focus group guide, email questionnaire, workshop agenda) were developed by individual researchers based on the main research questions agreed in the methodological framework.

3. **Analysis of internal and external policies:** Analysis of internal coalition policy and approaches and how they change as result of RWS II influence. Analysis of relevant government policy and/or law, and how it changed as result of RWS II supported activity. An examination of coalition's institutional structures, plans and activity. Review of relevant education indicators i.e. % of budget to education, access figures, retention, drop out, numbers accessing adult literacy programs etc.

Limitations

The case studies used in this research fall into the category of 'Program Effect Case Studies' and as the name implies they are used to determine the impact of particular program of work, in this case RWS in specific contexts. The use of such case studies does present methodological concerns in regard to generalising findings, especially when drawing generalised conclusions and principles of good practice. In order to address some of these limitations the research team endeavoured to make data collection systematic across the case studies and to triangulate through the collection of additional data to help verify these findings from the case studies. This included the examination of external data, reports and relevant literature, as well as consultation of other external stakeholders.

The purposeful sampling used to select just 12 of a possible 51 case studies (in which the researches themselves were not involved) leaves the research vulnerable to an accusation of 'cherry-picking' the best cases. It also limits the reliability of findings in the report as more than 75% of RWS II has not been scrutinised.

Appendix 2: *Biographical information on the research team*

Kate Moriarty:

Lead Researcher and report author

Kate is an independent consultant working in the area of international development and human rights. She is a specialist in the field of education with policy and advocacy experience on a range of education themes including: education quality, early childhood care and education, education in fragile states and emergencies and the financing of education. Kate has extensive experience in advocacy and human rights education gained over 15 years through work with international human rights and development agencies such as Amnesty International and Save the Children. Kate has a BA in Sociology from the London School of Economics, and an MA in Latin American Development Studies. She is a qualified teacher with specialism in special needs education and sociology.

Omar Ousman Jobe:

Africa Regional Researcher and co-author

Omar is a Development Studies and Management specialist. He is currently the Head of Programmes and the Policy and Budget Analyst of the Pro-Poor Advocacy Group (Pro-PAG) – a Gambian NGO, specialising in budget work (budget analysis, participatory budgeting, child-friendly budgeting, gender budgeting etc), social accountability and PRSP monitoring. He is also a part-time lecturer in Management and Development studies at the University of The Gambia and works as an International Consultant. Omar Jobe studied at the University of Pantheon-Sorbonne and the Conservatoire National des Arts et Métiers (CNAM) and holds a Post Master's degree in Local Development and Territorial Dynamics in Third World Countries; an MPhil in Development Economics; an MPhil in Geography and Development Practice in Third World Countries and a Master's degree in Management Science.

Barbara R Fortunato:

Asia Regional Researcher and co-author

Barbara is a freelance development worker

based in the Philippines. She is involved in research, writing, editing, training, and evaluation.

Ilich Leon Ortiz Wilches:

Latin America Regional Researcher & co-author

Ilich is an economist with Master's studies in Philosophy from the Colombian National University and a Master's in Development Economics at Bordeaux University in France. He is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in Economics at GRETHA -CNRS laboratory of Bordeaux. For more than a decade, Ilich has worked with social organisations, NGOs, international cooperation organisations and government agencies, on the relationship between public policy, macroeconomics and social rights in Latin America. He is a founding member of the School for Development, based in Colombia, an academic centre which seeks to strengthen social movements and civil society advocacy through the academic research. His work has been closely involved in the production of knowledge for policy and finance debate of education from a human rights perspective.

Yenny Carolina Ramirez:

Colombia Researcher

Yenny has a Master's in Sociology from the National University of Colombia (Universidad Nacional de Colombia). She is a Member of the School for Development and a researcher with expertise on issues related to rights and early childhood. Yenny has worked as a coordinator in the construction of a simulator of costs associated with the implementation of the Rights of Early Childhood in Colombia. At the academic level, she has worked as a teacher at the National University of Colombia in the area of sociological theory and has published articles on topics related to the concept of individualism in classical sociology. Her latest research work was regarding the development of subjectivity in neoliberal times.

Appendix 3: *Coalitions involved in the RWS project*

Asia

1. **Bangladesh:** Campaign for Popular Education (CAMPE)
2. **Cambodia:** NGO Education Partnership (NEP)
3. **India:** National Coalition for Education (NCE)
4. **Indonesia:** Education Network for Justice in Indonesia
5. **Nepal:** Campaign Coalition for Education in Nepal (CCEN)
6. **Pakistan:** Pakistan Coalition for Education (PCE)
7. **Papua New Guinea:** Papua New Guinea Education Advocacy Network (PEAN)
8. **Philippines:** Civil Society Network for Education Reforms (E-Net Philippines)
9. **Solomon Islands:** Coalition for Education in Solomon Islands (COESI)
10. **Sri Lanka:** Coalition for Educational Development (CED)
11. **Vietnam:** National Education Coalition in Vietnam (NECV)

Africa

12. **Angola:** Rede de Educacao Para Todos
13. **Benin:** Coalition Béninoise des Organisations pour l'EPT
14. **Botswana:** Botswana Coalition on Global Campaign on Education
15. **Burkina Faso:** Cadre de Concertation pour l'Education de Base CCEB
16. **Burundi:** Bafashebige
17. **Cameroon:** Cameroon EFANetwork CEFAN
18. **Cape Verde:** Rede Nacional da Campanha de Educaçao Para Todos
19. **Central Africa Republic:** Focal point (Teachers Union)
20. **Côte d'Ivoire:** Focal Point SNEPPCI (Teachers Union)
21. **Djibouti:** Forum des Associations pour le Développement de l'Education
22. **Ethiopia:** Basic Education Association BEA
23. **Ghana:** Ghana National Education Campaign Coalition GNECC
24. **Guinea Bissau:** Rede de Educacao Para Todos –GB
25. **Kenya:** Elimu Yetu Coalition
26. **Lesotho :** Campaign for Education Forum
27. **Liberia:** Liberian Technical Committee on EFA LETCOM
28. **Malawi:** Civil Society Coalition for Quality Basic Education CSCQBE

Africa (continued)

29. **Mali:** Coalition des Organisations de la Société Civile pour l'Education Pour Tous (COSC- EPT)
30. **Mozambique:** Movimento Para Education Para Todos MEPT
31. **Niger:** Coalition EPT du Niger
32. **Nigeria:** The Civil society action coalition for EFA CSACEFA
33. **Republique Democratique du Congo:** Coalition Nationale pour l'EPT
34. **Senegal:** Coalition des Organisations en Synergie pour la Defense de l'Education Publique COSYDEP
35. **Sierra Leone:** Sierra Leone EFA network
36. **Sudan:** Sudanese Network for EFA
37. **Swaziland :** Swaziland Network Campaign for Education For All
38. **Tanzania:** Tanzania Education Network Mtandao wa Elimu TEN/MET
39. **The Gambia:** The Gambia EFA Net
40. **Togo:** Coalition Nationale Togolaise pour l'Education Pour Tous CNT/EPT
41. **Uganda:** Forum on Educational NGO's in Uganda FENU
42. **Zambia:** Zambia National Education Coalition ZANEC

Latin America

43. **Argentina:** Campaña Argentina por el Derecho a la Educación (CADE)
44. **Bolivia:** Foro Educativo Boliviano (FEB)
45. **Brazil:** Campanha Brasileira pelo Direito à Educação
46. **Central America:** activities were developed by CLADE, including work with Colectivo de Educación para Todos y Todas of Guatemala as described in Part 2 of this report
47. **Chile:** Colectivo de Educación de Calidad para Todos y Todas
48. **Colombia:** Coalición Colombiana por el Derecho a la Educación
49. **Ecuador:** Contrato Social por la Educación en el Ecuador
50. **Haiti:** Reagrupación por la Educación para Todos y Todas (REPT)
51. **Mexico:** Incidencia Civil en la Educación (ICE)
52. **Peru:** Campaña Peruana por el Derecho a la Educación (CPDE)



Global Campaign for Education

Postal address:

PO Box 521733, Saxonwold,
Johannesburg 2132, South Africa

Physical address:

26 Baker Street, Rosebank, Saxonwold,
Johannesburg, South Africa

Telephone: +27 (0)11 447 4111

Fax: +27 (0)11 447 4138

Email: info@campaignforeducation.org

Website: www.campaignforeducation.org



ANCEFA Regional Coordinator

Address:

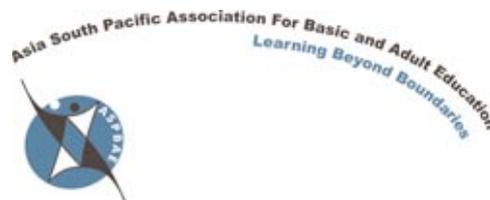
Amitié III, Villa 4566B
BP 3007 Yoff
Dakar, SENEGAL

Telephone: +221 33 824 2244

Fax: +221 33 824 1363

Email: ancefa@sentoo.sn

Website: www.ancefa.org



ASPBAE Secretariat Office

Address:

C/o MAAPL 9/F Eucharistic Congress Bldg 3
5 Convent St, Colaba, Mumbai – 400 039
India

Telephone: +91 22 2202 1391/ 2281 6853

Website: www.aspbae.org



Campaña Latinoamericana
por el Derecho a la Educación

**Campaña Latinoamericana por
el Derecho a la Educación (CLADE)**

Address:

Rua Costa Carvalho 79
05429-130
São Paulo – Brasil

Telephone: (55-11) 3853-7900

Email: campana@campanaderechoeducacion.org

Website: www.campanaderechoeducacion.org

GLOBAL CAMPAIGN FOR
EDUCATION
www.campaignforeducation.org

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



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por el Derecho a la Educación

