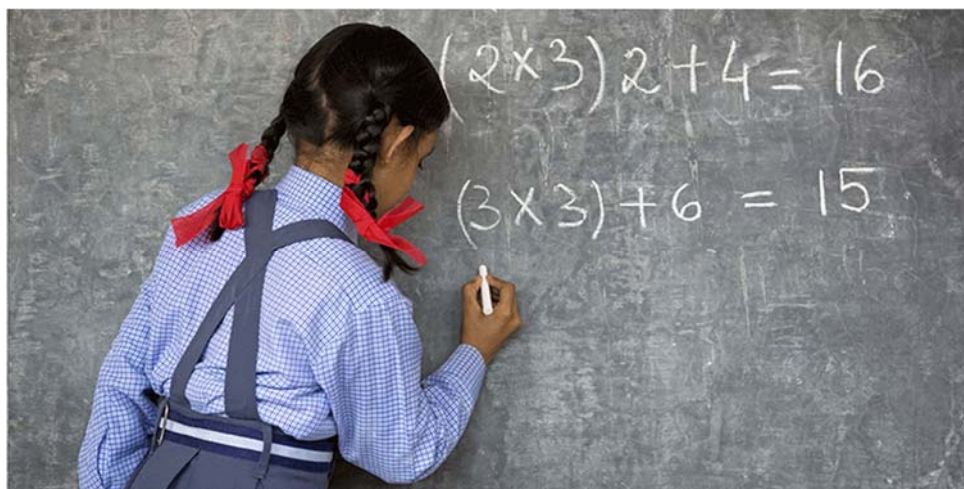


# NEQMAP PROGRAMME EVALUATION REPORT

From March 2013 – June 2019



*By*

**M.A. Jyothi, PhD**

**Independent Research Consultant**

**REPORT**

**An Independent Evaluation of the Governance and Activities of  
Network on Education Quality Monitoring in the Asia-Pacific (NEQMAP)**

**From Mar 2013 – Jun 2019**

**By**

**M.A. Jyothi, PhD**

**Independent Research Consultant**

**Commissioned**

**by**

**UNESCO Bangkok**

**July 2019**

## INTRODUCTION

### Background and Rationale

At the Incheon summit in 2015, the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* was signed where 193 member states pledged to work towards sustainable development of the world, especially in terms of sustained and inclusive economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection. Through a new global partnership, the countries that signed this declaration endorsed 17 *Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)* to be achieved in 15 years, for fostering peaceful, just, and inclusive societies. Of these 17 goals, two goals specifically addressed Education and several others had implications for it. SDG 4 on Education states, *'Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all by 2030* (UNESCO-UIS, 2018). SDG 4, with its emphasis on providing 'quality education for all', intended to move beyond 'equal opportunity' and 'access', the focus of the *Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)*. This goal stressed inclusiveness as well, while ensuring quality education. There was a strong commitment to improve processes and systems in these new goals. The preamble of the Incheon Declaration, Agenda 2030, stated, *'We will ensure that teachers and educators are empowered, adequately recruited, well trained, professionally qualified, motivated and supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems.'*

In the 2030 Agenda, Quality Education was conceptualised thus: *'Quality education fosters creativity and knowledge, and ensures the acquisition of the foundational skills of literacy and numeracy as well as analytical, problem-solving and other high-level cognitive, interpersonal and social skills. It also develops the skills, values and attitudes that enable citizens to lead healthy and fulfilled lives, make informed decisions, and respond to local and global challenges through education for sustainable development (ESD) and global citizenship education (GCED).'* These are reflected in the SDGs related to education.

The 2030 Agenda states, ‘*We commit to quality education and to improving learning outcomes, which requires strengthening inputs, processes and evaluation of outcomes and mechanisms to measure progress.*’ This clearly envisaged setting explicit and measurable *learning outcomes* as *indicators of quality*. Assessment of learning outcomes was to be used to improve the *inputs* and *systemic processes* thereby strengthening quality.

Several countries in the Asia-Pacific region, had begun participating in international assessments like the *Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS)*, *Programme for International Student Assessment, (PISA)*, *Progress in International Reading Literacy Study, (PIRLS)*; and/or regional assessments like *Programme for the Analysis of Education Systems, (PASEC)*, *Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA)* etc.

A few others had developed and implemented their own national assessments. The spurt in regional, sub-regional and national assessment programmes that had begun almost a decade earlier became mandated by the 2030 Agenda bill.

While some countries had started using data from these large-scale assessments to inform policy, others were still struggling to develop their own assessments. However, one thing was certain - there was a lot of rich and varied experience in the field. It was in this context, that the idea of a network to enable countries share knowledge and experience about learning assessment as a tool for quality monitoring, was born. In March 2013, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) regional office at Bangkok, launched the **Network on Education Quality Monitoring in the Asia-Pacific (NEQMAP)** for this purpose. NEQMAP was established even before the 2030 Agenda was passed, calling for establishing multi-stakeholder partnerships for mobilising and sharing knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources to support the achievement of SDGs in all countries (UNSSC, n.d).

NEQMAP served both as a programme of UNESCO and a network to achieve this end. The Inaugural statement of NEQMAP (2013) stated: *“Countries/jurisdictions of the Asia Pacific region, with diverse experiences from a wide range of perspectives, have tremendous potential to learn from each other and synergise efforts in improving the way learning is monitored and in using assessments to improve learning across the region. Countries have been showing increasing interest in sharing of experiences and expertise, and also the desire to learn from others in issues related to assessment, including the use of assessment data to improve policy and learning. Recognising this demand, UNESCO’s Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (UNESCO Bangkok), has the mandate to facilitate a regional platform for networking and information exchange on monitoring learning to raise the quality of education in Member states. This regional platform, NEQMAP, is hereby established on 28 March 2013, in Bangkok, Thailand.”* Thus, several organisations which had a stronghold in learning assessment area were invited to come together to form a network and an expert committee was set up to guide them in their activities. An office was set up in Bangkok and a Terms of Reference (TOR) for NEQMAP was drafted in which the objectives, activities and governance structure of the network were spelt out (See Appendix I, p.94).

## **NEQMAP EVALUATION**

In the six years since its inception in 2013, NEQMAP has become a leading network in the Asia-Pacific region and gained recognition for its activities in the area of learning assessment. The network, having a membership of 29 countries mostly from the Asia and Pacific region, serves as one of the largest platforms for networking and sharing knowledge on assessment practices and policy. The network, through its three pillars of activities- *Capacity Building, Research and Knowledge Sharing*, has supported the efforts of countries in the region to provide quality education. On the occasion of NEQMAP’s 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary, on 28 March 2018, UNESCO Bangkok (NEQMAP Secretariat) and the Steering Group (SG) felt a strong need for an interim evaluation of the network to

take stock of its achievements since inception. This evaluation of NEQMAP's governance and activities was undertaken on the behest of UNESCO Bangkok.

### **Purpose of the Evaluation**

The purpose of this evaluation was to study the effectiveness, relevance and sustainability of NEQMAP's governance structure and activities. In order to do so, NEQMAP's governance and outcomes of activities, since inception, were reviewed and assessed against the stated objectives of the network.

### **Criteria for Evaluation**

The evaluation was based on three criteria:

- **Effectiveness** was measured against the objectives set for a program/network. The evaluation studied the extent to which NEQMAP and the programme's objectives<sup>1</sup> were achieved, or are expected to be achieved.
- **Relevance** evaluated the program objectives vis a vis the expectations and goals of various stakeholders of the program: UNESCO, NEQMAP members, donor(s). The study evaluated the extent to which NEQMAP and the programme activities were aligned to the priorities and policies of the stakeholders.
- **Sustainability** focused on the continuation of a program. With this criterion, the evaluation studied the extent to which NEQMAP and the programme's governance and activities are able to continue under the current TOR, management (e.g. financial and technical assistance, resource mobilization).

---

<sup>1</sup> According to the current TOR, NEQMAP is both a program of UNESCO Bangkok and a network.

## Scope of the Evaluation

The evaluation aimed at looking into the relevance and effectiveness of the network's overall vision, objectives as well as current governance structure (Secretariat-SG-Members). For this purpose, the roles and responsibilities of NEQMAP Members (including SG, Institutional/Individual and Associate Members) were closely examined. The TOR of NEQMAP states that NEQMAP is both a program of UNESCO and a network. For purpose of this evaluation, however, NEQMAP has been considered as a network. The evaluation also examined whether the current governance structure is sustainable in terms of human and financial resources.

Another aspect the evaluation focussed on was, assessing the effectiveness and relevance of NEQMAP's activities undertaken at both regional and national levels during the indicated period. These activities include *Capacity Development Workshops (CDW)*, *Research and Analytical Works* and *Knowledge Sharing* (i.e. NEQMAP knowledge portal, Annual meeting, newsletter, website and webinars). The evaluation was carried out for the entire programme of NEQMAP during the period- March 2013 to June 2019.

## Delimitation

In accordance with the TOR, this evaluation was carried out for the entire programme of NEQMAP- its governance and three pillars of activities during the period between March 2013 and June 2019. The evaluation did not cover other UNESCO programs with which some of NEQMAP Members were associated.

## Evaluation Questions

### 1. NEQMAP Governance

1.1.1 To what extent has the management structure (SG, Secretariat) contributed to the achievement of the programme's objectives.

1.2.1 What is the stated purpose and vision of NEQMAP? Do they well reflect the needs and priorities of the Network members?

1.2.2 What are the stated functions of the SG, and how well do these functions fit or serve the purpose of the network?

1.2.3 What are the membership categories and functions? How well do they fit or serve the purpose of the network?

1.2.4 What is the expected role and function of the NEQMAP Secretariat hosted in UNESCO Bangkok? How well does it fit or serve the purpose of the network?

1.2.5 How have any or all of these components evolved since the programme started?

1.3.1 To what extent is the management structure sustainable (e.g. SG, Secretariat mechanism, membership status, etc.) in terms of financial and human resources and resource mobilization.

## 2. NEQMAP Activities

2.1.1 To what extent have the national and regional capacity development activities of Pillar 1 achieved their set objectives?

2.1.2 To what extent has the Research and analytical work (and activities?) of Pillar 2 achieved its set objectives?

2.1.3 To what extent have the Knowledge sharing activities (e.g. *knowledge portal, newsletter, webinar, annual meeting*) of Pillar 3 achieved their set objectives?

2.2.1 To what extent do Network members participate in activities and utilize the outputs from the programme in their own work/context at the country level.

2.3.1 To what extent are the programme's activities (capacity development, research, knowledge sharing) sustainable (e.g. financial and human resources) from regional level down to national level.

## Implications

The findings from this evaluation will inform the development of a NEQMAP *Strategic Plan* as agreed upon at NEQMAP's 6th SG meeting. The recommendations from the evaluation shall not only help enhance the governance structure but also renew or redefine the *Vision, Mission, Goals* and *Scope of Activities* of the network. The *Strategic Plan* for 2020-2023, would be developed in line with UNESCO Bangkok's *Education Support Strategy* 2014-2021. NEQMAP's *Strategy* should also reflect and be in line with global and regional frameworks and strategies, such as SDG4 - Education



2030 Agenda and the Regional Roadmap on Education (for Asia-Pacific). NEQMAP's objectives should also contribute to the advancement of SDG Target 4.1 in particular, but also SDG Target 4.7.

Preliminary findings of this evaluation were presented in the Annual meeting at Bangkok, Thailand in November 2019. They were vetted by the SG before the final report was drafted.

## **METHODOLOGY OF THE EVALUATION**

### **Theory of Change**

The *Theory of Change* used in this evaluation is described in this section. The *primary stakeholders* of the network were the Members, UNESCO Bangkok (Secretariat), Non-member participants and SG. The officials of the education system of the member nations, donors, in this case, Global Partnership in Education (GPE) and Malaysia Funds in Trust, as well as partner organisations such as United Nations Education Fund (UNICEF) and Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation (SEAMEO) formed the *secondary stakeholders*. Teachers and students of the member nations formed the *tertiary stakeholders*, the ultimate beneficiaries of the network.

The network aims to strengthen the quality of education by providing expertise and capacity building to its members, primarily in the area of learning assessment while also making links to curriculum, pedagogy and teaching so as to enable members improve the quality of education within their nations. The ultimate goal of this network is to enable member nations move towards SDG 4. In smaller networks, members come to a common understanding of goals serendipitously. However, in larger networks such as NEQMAP, goals are often set by a parent organisation (in this case by UNESCO Bangkok) in alignment with the goals of individual members (Provan & Kenis, 2007). To a certain extent, alignment with donor goals also plays a role in deciding program goals and beneficiaries of the network. In this case, agreement with GPE was that the network focus on learning assessment and members from OECD countries be sponsored for attending the workshops and annual meetings. The agreement with Malaysia- Funds-in-Trust was that Malaysia be one of the beneficiaries.

In order to meet the network's objectives, inputs were provided to the members in the areas of Learning Assessment, SDGs, Transversal Competencies and other relevant topics using three modes of activities. Learning assessment is linked to target 4.1.1 and transversal competencies is linked to Target 4.7, together these help members achieve SDG4. Inputs have been provided to members through workshops, research, panel discussions, field visits, group discussions, webinars, web portal, newsletter articles, lectures etc. Experts included members of the SG, officials from UNESCO, partner organisations, non-governmental organisations and Education department of universities etc. Participatory research has provided another means of learning for the members. Capacity Development Workshops, Research and Knowledge sharing, are the major outputs of NEQMAP.

**I Pillar:** Capacity Development Workshops, where Member countries and Associate members gained knowledge and acquire new skills in the area of Learning Assessment and Transversal competencies.

**II Pillar:** Research & Analytics, where members participated in collaborative research with experts in the field. Transversal competencies and Learning assessment have been the key areas of research.

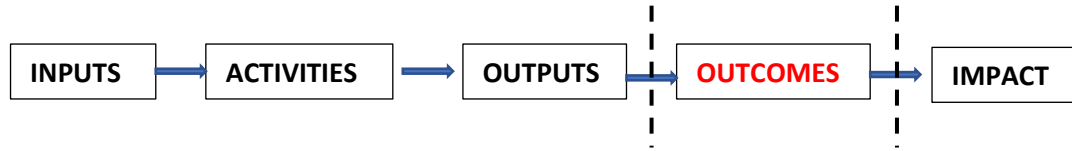
**III Pillar:** Presentations in annual meetings, articles for newsletter, web portal, blog and webinars are the outputs of the Knowledge-sharing activity.

### **Evaluating Effectiveness of a Network's activities using Outcome Mapping**

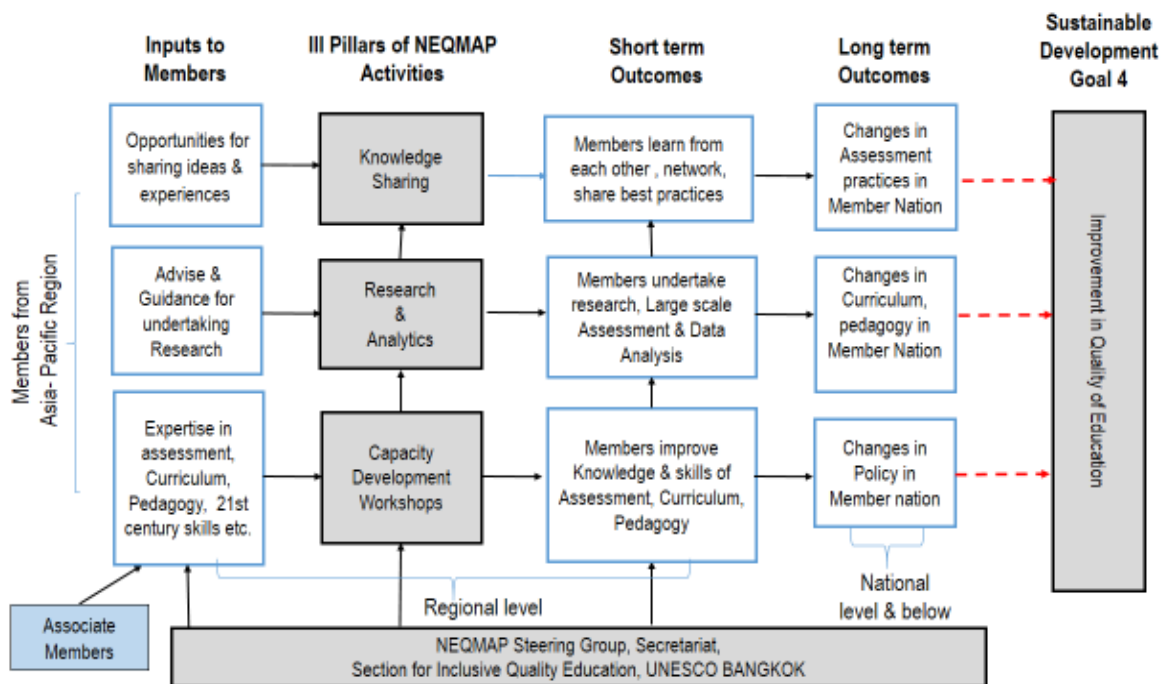
Traditionally, program evaluation focus on impacts rather than outcomes. Outcomes are said to be the immediate effects of inputs of a program, while impact is defined as the permanent, long-lasting changes brought about in a system. However, in a complex open system such as a network between organisations of diverse countries, it is not possible to attribute changes in a country's education system to a single program/ network. Linear causal relationships between a network's inputs and effects it is seeking among its members, is difficult to establish when large number of external factors are at play outside the network. Moreover, several unforeseen interactions may occur between

members of a network leading to unintended network effects. Also, impact cannot be predicted to happen at a particular time.

**Fig.1 Evaluation of Outcome (Earl. S, 2008)**



In such a situation, it is more appropriate to study network effectiveness by looking at ‘outcomes’ as *changes in attitudes, actions and behaviours, of partners* that are direct outcomes of a network’s work. The *theory of change* here, is to observe the change process along the way as incremental behavioural changes rather than as ‘impact’. This method, called *Outcome Mapping* provides a better understanding of changes effected in a system due to programs or interventions (El-wadi & Lublinski, 2007; Earl, 2007; IDRC, 2001). Creech & Ramji, 2004 vouch for the usefulness of the method to study networks as well. With this rationale, the evaluation has looked only at the ‘outcomes’ of NEQMAP, without going beyond to ‘impact’ level.



**Fig.2 NEQMAP Evaluation Design**

The Theory of Change for NEQMAP has been depicted in the above figure as an *Outcome Hierarchy Model* as outcomes are seen as incremental changes leading to long term changes.

However, the limitations for using this method were a) lack of pre-defined outcomes b) lack of baseline data c) the large size, complexity and diversity of the network with several players d) Field validation of outcomes.

## **Data Collection Techniques**

The evaluation used the following techniques for data collection:

### **1. Review of Documents**

More than a hundred documents were reviewed. Table.2B (see p.78) gives a list of the literature reviewed together with their purpose.

### **2. Questionnaire for members**

An online Questionnaire was sent to the focal points of various member organisations (*Regular, Associate, observers, individual members*) and two non-member participants who attended the workshop at Manila. The focal points of the member organisations were contacted by e-mail. In the case of organisations whose focal point was an SG member, an alternate contact person from the same organization was requested to answer the questionnaire. Two non-member participants were also contacted for their inputs as they were active participants of the network. Except these non-member participants and individual members, all respondents were instructed to keep in mind the views of their organisation and not their individual viewpoints while answering the questionnaire. All members (N=54) were contacted, however, only 22 answered the questionnaire. This has provided a sizeable sample for data collection from members who have been active participants of the network. The Questionnaire data was analysed using qualitative methods. Quantitative methods were used only where it was necessary. See Appendix IV D, (p.121) for questionnaire.

### **3. Interview Schedules**

Interview schedules were developed based on review of documents, preliminary discussions with the Secretariat members and ex-secretariat over Skype/e-mail. The following interview schedules were developed: (See Appendix IV A-IV C, p.102)

- Interview schedule for SG
- Interview schedule for Secretariat (past & present)
- Interview schedule for Facilitators, Funders and other stakeholders
- FGD with sample of Members

#### **4. Participant Observation of NEQMAP Activities**

The evaluator attended NEQMAP's regional workshop titled, '*Promoting Transversal Competencies across Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment*' from September 16-19, 2019 in Manila, Philippines, and the 7th Annual Meeting of NEQMAP, held at Bangkok, Thailand, on 11th -12th Nov. 2019. This provided an opportunity to observe NEQMAP's activities first -hand.

#### **Sampling & Data Collection Method**

Data was collected from various stakeholders of the network in order to get varied perspectives of the network. Table 1, p.77 presents the sampling from the study population.

In-depth interviews of ex-Secretariat members, current Secretariat members, SG members and a sample of facilitators were conducted by the evaluator mostly by online means (Table 2A, p.77 for list of interviewees). Questions were sent in advance to the various interviewees. Contact person's names and e-mail was suggested by the Secretariat and these persons were contacted over e-mail. Interviews were conducted through online means (SKYPE). Face-face interviews were conducted for a few current secretariat members, partner members and funder during the two events the evaluator participated in.

A focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted with a sample of members who attended the workshop at Manila in Sept 2019. These members were selected using purposive sampling. The criteria for selection was their participation in at least two events of NEQMAP and willingness to participate in the FGD. The interviews were transcribed and systematically coded to analyse the viewpoints of various stakeholders of NEQMAP. The data was triangulated and analysed.

### **Data Analysis**

Analysis of the data was done keeping in mind each specific evaluation question. An evaluation framework was drawn to identify the sources of data for each evaluation criteria. Once the data was collected from various sources, they were interpreted. The responses were triangulated and conclusions drawn. Literature reviewed and the evaluator's prior experience with programs in the development sector helped in drawing conclusions. The findings of the analysis are presented in the following section.

## FINDINGS OF THE EVALUATION

In this section, the findings from a systematic analysis of the interview data, questionnaire data, literature review and participation observation are presented.

### Vision of NEQMAP

This section pertains to the evaluation question 1.2.1, *‘What is the stated purpose and vision of NEQMAP? Do they well reflect the needs and priorities of the Network members?’*.

According to the TOR of NEQMAP (Appendix I, see p.94), the goals of NEQMAP are stated as follows: *‘The network serves to strengthen education systems to improve the quality of education in Asia-Pacific through collaborative efforts. The network will provide a forum for exchanging of expertise, experiences and lessons to improve the quality of learning in education systems of countries in Asia-Pacific, with the eventual aim of influencing policy reforms.*

*While the network will primarily focus on issues relating to assessment to ensure alignment with curriculum and pedagogy, other closely related topics, including teaching will also be addressed.’*

*‘Activities of the network focus on research, knowledge sharing and capacity building among all stakeholders of the network and beyond.’*

Former members of UNESCO Bangkok (who were founder members of the network as well) explained the context in which the above goals were formulated: Around the beginning of this decade, there was a general move towards improvement of quality of education in the Asia-Pacific region. Countries in the Asia Pacific were participating in international assessments like PISA, TIMSS, or had their own well-established national assessments to monitor education quality. There was a lot of rich knowledge regarding learning assessments in the region. In several countries in South Asia, East Asia and Southeast Asia, there was an increasing tendency to ‘teach for the test’, moving away from holistic development of children. At that point, UNESCO Bangkok strongly felt that given the challenges that

countries in the Asia - Pacific region were facing for monitoring quality of education, it would be useful to have a network that facilitated an exchange of knowledge and experience regarding learning assessment. It was envisaged that the network could bring in some elements of capacity development for countries which were still developing/undertaking assessment programmes. Collaborative research would also enhance personal learning across countries. The leaders in UNESCO Bangkok felt that a forum to present and discuss individual country's challenges in large-scale assessments was meaningful. They were also clear what the network should not do: Develop yet another assessment programme for the region. As countries of the region had varied levels of development it was meaningless to have members participating in the same assessment programme. This shows that the network's goals were based on a sound understanding of the context.

Interview statements and meeting presentations show the background work done by UNESCO Bangkok in order to set up the network. First, UNESCO Bangkok officials studied a few other networks such as Eurasian Association for Educational Assessment (EAOKO), Latin American Laboratory for Assessment of the Quality of Education (LLECE), The Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ), Education Research Institutes Network (ERI-Net) and UNESCO Arts in Education Observatories. Next, they conducted an informal survey from potential NEQMAP members to a) collect information about the types of activities the network should focus on b) institutional arrangements for the network. The findings of both these background studies were eventually presented in the inaugural meeting held in March 2013 (source: Interview statements with founder member of NEQMAP & Meeting Agenda, 2013). As revealed by interview statements of the founder members of NEQMAP, care was taken to see that this network does not compete with other existing models of networks, but provide a unique forum for countries of the region. This shows that the goals of NEQMAP were set by using a participatory process, that is a survey for understanding the needs of future members.



The former Director of UNESCO, Mr. Gwang Jo Kim said during his welcome address at the first Steering group meeting in Sept 2013: *“I would like to close by emphasizing how important this network is to UNESCO Bangkok and UNESCO in general. With the post 2015 dialogue on education very much focusing on issues of quality in education as well as the work of initiatives, that is, the Learning Metrics Task force and PISA for Development, it seems that learning and the critical question of how learning is assessed will be the major issue in this education space. We thus count very much on this network and on all of you to lead the way on the topic for the Asia Pacific region.”* (source: Meeting notes, SG meeting 2013). This shows how the goals of the network were aligned to UNESCO’s own goals - to support nations to achieve quality education in the Asia-Pacific region. UNESCO took the lead role in formulating the goals of the network.

### **Core Group**

Interview statements by founder members and SG members show that the then Director of UNESCO Bangkok approached experts in the area of learning assessment to discuss the modalities of building a network. A **core group** with expertise in learning assessment was formed: Dr. Esther Sui Chu Ho, from Hong Kong PISA centre, Hong Kong, Dr. Jimin Cho from Korea Institute of Curriculum Evaluation, Korea, Dr. Suman Bhattacharjea from Annual Status of Education Report, Pratham, India, Mr. Ivan Nikitin from the Eurasian Association for Educational Assessment network, Russia and Dr. Ana Raivoce, Director, SPBEA, Fiji. This core group of experts were invited for a meeting in UNESCO Bangkok to discuss the goals, structure and functioning of the network for monitoring education quality. This core group of experts, which eventually became the Steering Group (SG), further vetted the goals put forth by UNESCO Bangkok.

### **Inaugural Meeting March 2013**

Interview narratives of founder members of the network reveal that, subsequently, UNESCO Bangkok approached countries (who had earlier participated in the survey) whether they would be

interested in attending a meeting in Bangkok to discuss the constitution of a network for monitoring education quality. Formal invitations were also sent out to organisations through UNESCO's field offices and national commissions located in different countries, to attend the network meeting and to suggest representatives who would be interested in doing so. Institutions involved in learning assessment from thirteen countries from the Asia-Pacific region and three partner organisations attended this meeting in March 2013. In this meeting, UNESCO Bangkok presented before the participants findings from the background research on networks and survey results. The name, objectives, structure and modalities of the network were decided in this forum through a democratic process (Source: Inaugural Meeting Agenda, list of participants). Thus, NEQMAP was officially launched at UNESCO Bangkok in this meeting. An inaugural statement carrying the signatures of the participants was released at this foundational event. (see Appendix III, p.101, for Inaugural statement).

Therefore, NEQMAP may be said to be a 'goal-directed network' in contrast to 'serendipitous networks' which may come together with no clear purpose in mind and eventually formulate goals (Kilduff & Tsai, 2003 in Provan & Kenis).

### **UNESCO Bangkok's Focus**

Although for a brief period, the goals put forth by an ex-Secretariat member was slightly different, NEQMAP continues to have the initial goals as laid out in the TOR.

Interviews with a present secretariat member showed that UNESCO Bangkok would like to work in the area of social-emotional well-being of the child, which is aligned to SDG Target 4.7. There is also an effort to bring more links between assessment, curriculum and pedagogy.

### **Needs and priorities of the current Members**

An ex-secretariat member said that, initially, there was skepticism among the members, regarding the value of the network and the quality of support it might be able to provide them. However, their perceptions regarding the network in more recent times has changed. '*They now*

*express their kind of gratitude and also keep sharing the importance of capturing opinion and telling us the importance of the network and how we can improve or should improve in moving forward ... but definitely, I think there's a sense of bringing a positive change over the years in the countries' attitudes.'*

Members who participated in the FGD expressed that there was great value in participating in NEQMAP. One representative from a member organisation said that NEQMAP had empowered them with new innovative ideas that would greatly assist them in their education system. When they returned to their home country, they get to know and benchmark themselves with other participating countries, and what is working and best practices that they can take with them. And what is likely to work when they go back to their country. And sometimes NEQMAP gave them a direction as to where education system should go way forward. Another member said, that NEQMAP was actually a very good platform at the Asia Pacific level, especially the countries get to come together, share and learn from one another. Another participant who works in a private organisation stated, that NEQMAP gave their organisation an opportunity to learn and expand their skills to implement in their services in their country and also be of help with the Department of Education in many projects. Their organisation felt the capacity building workshop and training that NEQMAP was offering was really helpful for them and for other members.

### **Policy Changes**

NEQMAP's also aims to bring about policy changes in the long run. Looking at the profile of the network's members, it was found that only one organisation, whose core area is policy advocacy, had the necessary competency and leverage to work in that direction. It is evident that policy change must be a collective goal (network level) for NEQMAP rather than an individual goal for member organisations. Policy change, is a long-drawn out process requiring research evidence and establishing influence with decision-makers. A network would have more power than an individual organisation

to affect such changes (Creech & Ramji, 2007). Members may not have the mechanism needed to bring about this change although they would like to.

## FINDING 1

NEQMAP started with the vision of strengthening the quality of education in the Asia-Pacific region. Its mission was to provide a platform for exchange of expertise and experience among countries of the Asia-Pacific region in the area of learning assessment, with links to curriculum and pedagogy wherever possible. The network's vision and goals after studying other networks, surveying the needs of potential member countries and having sufficient deliberations with the SG. NEQMAP may therefore, be said to be a 'goal-directed network'. From the continued, increased participation of members in NEQMAP's activities, it is evident that members find value in it. It is evident that policy change has to be considered as a network goal rather than an individual goal for NEQMAP.

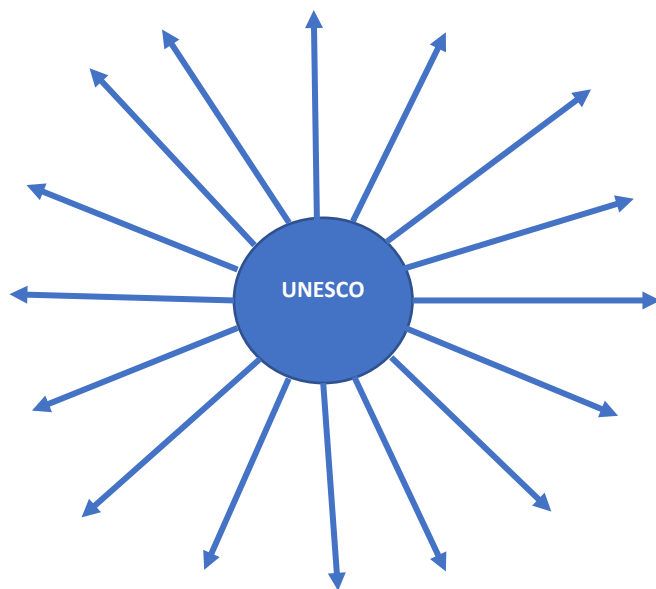
### **Evolution of the Network Structure**

In the following section, the evaluation question 1.2.5 *How have any or all of these components evolved since the programme started?* has been answered.

The core group of experts consulted at the time of formulation of the network, were eventually invited to form the SG. A brief sketch of the various members of the SG is given in Table 3 p.79. UNESCO Bangkok, instrumental in setting up the network, is the Secretariat of NEQMAP. Organisations to whom UNESCO Bangkok had administered the survey questionnaire in order to understand their context and needs, were approached to join the network as Members. These Members are organisations working in the area of learning assessment and belong to the Asia Pacific region. In Sept 2013 NEQMAP was a small network of 15 members of 14 organisations and one individual member (source: SG meeting notes, address by UNESCO

member). The governance structure of NEQMAP, as per the TOR of NEQMAP, comprises of an SG, a Secretariat and Members (Appendix I, p.94).

One approach of studying governance structure of networks is to analyze the relationship between the members of a network. This includes an analysis of ‘nodes’, that is the individual/organisation with whom most members enjoy a relationship (Plastrik & Taylor, 2006).



**Fig 3. Hub-spoke structure of NEQMAP (Plastrik & Taylor 2006)**

Fig 1. shows how NEQMAP began as spoke-hub structure with UNESCO as the central node of NEQMAP, with several dyadic relationship between itself and its members. Members did not have relations with each other then.

As NEQMAP’s work spread, organisations started seeking membership to the network. Today, there are 54 members from 29 countries who are members of NEQMAP. One of the Founders of NEQMAP had this to say about NEQMAP: “*We began with almost nothing and today NEQMAP is a flagship programme in learning assessment in the region.*” Rapid growth of the network has also created a two-way flow: *attraction and diffusion* (Plastrik & Taylor, 2006). Member organisations have been *attracted* to NEQMAP mainly due to the CDWs, increasing the network’s value. As more nodes got added, the network has been able to *diffuse knowledge*

regarding learning assessment and transversal competencies more and more widely through its links.

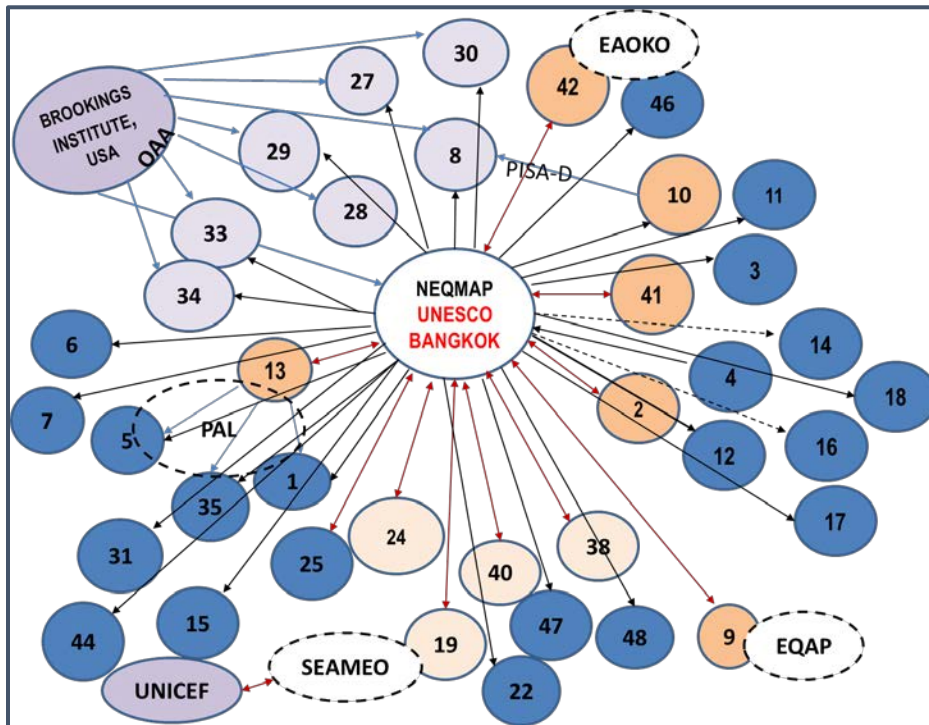
**Fig 4 NEQMAP members spread across the Asia-Pacific region**



As NEQMAP began providing members with access to expertise from all over the world, it became successful in creating short pathways between countries as remote as Australia and USA on the one hand and countries of South and South East Asia on the other. As an SG member put it, the network provided expertise in the form of inputs in CDWs, which members would normally find hard to access on their own. Moreover, the network provided this expertise at almost no cost.

After a CDW on PISA-D facilitated by Hong Kong PISA centre for NEQMAP, Cambodia approached the experts from Hong Kong directly to conduct a training for them in their country (source: Interview with SG member). Thus ‘bridges’ (Plastrik & Taylor, 2006) across distance were made in NEQMAP, and new linkages between other nodes were established in the network. The structure was no longer the hub-spokes structure, but a multi-tiered structure (Plastrik & Taylor, 2006).

**Fig 5 Current structure of NEQMAP. The members have established linkages between several key players within and without the network. All linkages have not been depicted here and the figure is for representation purpose only. Key to the members is provided in Table 4, p.80**



The limitation of this figure is that this was drawn from the literature available and members’ accounts of participation and not using software, and is by no means exhaustive. It serves the purpose of representation of the network’s growth only. It may be seen here, that although UNESCO continues to be at the node of the network, acting as a knowledge broker and network manager, several organisations have emerged as key players. These members have started serving the needs of a subset

of members. How did these linkages come about? Interview with secretariat member revealed that Members with expertise were approached by UNESCO to carry out research. Others were invited to participate in these research studies, thereby creating new hubs.

Interview statements and questionnaire responses show that a few members are also part of other common networks such as PAL and SEAMEO or part of other programs of UNESCO (For example, Mongolia, Nepal and Cambodia are part of the *Optimising Assessment for All (OAA)*<sup>2</sup> project). Secretariat members also shared that in recent times, a few members have volunteered their expertise to NEQMAP (University Sains Malaysia, Malaysia) and host events (University Sains Malaysia, Malaysia, QITEP, SEAMEO, Indonesia and GRACE, Philippines) emerging as new nodes in the network.

An alternate way to study network governance is to study the process of decision-making and network administration in the network. Provan & Kenis, 2007 classify networks into three types based on this: *Shared-governance or Participant-governed networks*, *Lead organisation networks* and *Nodal Administrative organisation governed networks*. In *Shared-governance networks*, the network may be governed completely by the organisations that comprise the network. Every organisation would interact with every other organisation to govern the network, resulting in a dense and highly decentralized form. In *Lead organisation networks*, network governance would occur by and through a single organisation, acting as a highly centralized network broker, or lead organisation, regarding issues that are critical for overall network maintenance and survival. In *Network Administrative Organisation governed networks*, the network is externally governed by a unique network administrative organisation (NAO), which may be either voluntarily established by network members or mandated as part of the network formation process. In this type of network, although network members still interact with one another, as with the lead organisation model, the network broker (the

---

<sup>2</sup> This is not a NEQMAP project, but the participants are NEQMAP members.



NAO) plays a key role in coordinating and sustaining the network. In most NAO types of networks, an advisory committee or steering group helps the network in making strategic decisions. Analysis of NEQMAP's governance shows that NEQMAP has a NAO structure.

## **Finding 2**

UNESCO Bangkok set the goals and purpose of the NEQMAP. As UNESCO Bangkok is the Secretariat of the network, it is the NAO of the network. The initial core group of experts which vetted the goals of UNESCO Bangkok, and helped in the planning of activities for the network, became the Steering Group. On the behest of UNESCO Bangkok, several organisations involved in learning assessment joined the network. The network began with 15 members in 2013 and today has 54 members from 29 countries. NEQMAP began as a network with a hub-spoke structure, with UNESCO Bangkok as the central node, but has evolved into a multi-tiered structure with relationships no longer concentrated at one node, but spread across the network.

## **Effectiveness of the Governance Structure of NEQMAP**

In this section, the evaluation question 1.1.1, '*To what extent has the management structure (SG, Secretariat) contributed to the achievement of the programme's objectives?*' has been answered.

### **Which governance structure is most effective for NEQMAP?**

One of the key questions raised in this evaluation study has been to find out whether the existing governance model is effective for achieving NEQMAP's goals. As discussed in the earlier section, NEQMAP currently enjoys a NAO type of governance structure. During interview with a member of the Secretariat, the feasibility of various alternate governance models for NEQMAP were discussed; suggested models of governance included a spider-web type of network with horizontal power structure among members (*participant-governed*) as well as a model where UNESCO could be one of the members and also share its experiences with other members (*Lead-organisation governed*

model). Issue of member autonomy versus centralised governance was raised by some SG members as well. In a large network, there needs to be a balance between managing the administration efficiently and giving members autonomy. Both SG and Secretariat members felt that currently, members perceive NEQMAP more as a program of UNESCO and that they must be more actively involved in the decision-making process. This was also evident during participation in the two NEQMAP events.

To answer whether the current governance structure is the most suited to fulfil the network's objectives, a literature review was done. Provan & Kenis, 2008 list four factors that determine network effectiveness which need to be considered while selecting the governance model for a network. These are: *Network size, Trust, Goal consensus and network level competencies*. Based on the way these factors play out in a network, the best model of governance may be selected. Table 5 (p.83) summarises the most effective governance structure vis a vis the factors above. NEQMAP was analysed keeping the above criteria in mind. The following observations were made:

- 1. Trust:** Several network members have started making in-kind contributions to NEQMAP. This shows that they enjoy sufficient trust in the network and also connect with the purpose of the network. Further, it was found during the participant observation during two NEQMAP events that the design of the workshop provided ample opportunities for members to interact with each other and learn about their country's achievements and challenges. Although members do have a better rapport with the Secretariat, members who had participated in common research projects or more NEQMAP events over the years, enjoyed a collegiality. From the above observations, we can say that *trust* is spread over amongst the members of the network and there is moderate trust density among the members.
- 2. Network Size:** NEQMAP has 54 members and is a moderately huge network.
- 3. Goal Consensus:** 60% of the respondents to questionnaire felt that NEQMAP's activities had helped them move towards SDG4 to a great extent.

**4. Network level competencies:** NEQMAP being a fairly large network spread over a large geographical area, governance demands coordinating the interdependent needs of members for running the network efficiently. NEQMAP governance requires a high level of network level competencies like grant writing, quality monitoring, lobbying, seeking out new members, acquiring funding, building external legitimacy etc. Other organisations may not have all the necessary competencies.

From the above discussion, it is concluded that a NAO type of governance is best suited for a large network like NEQMAP which has moderate *trust density* among members, high goal consensus and requires high network level competencies.

Provan & Kenis, 2008 state, *'A NAO mode of governance is likely to provide a greater balance than either of the other two forms regarding the tension between the need for efficient operation and inclusive decision making. This mechanism is not a panacea, however, since any increase in administrative efficiency may be viewed by participants as being bureaucratic and, thus, inconsistent with network goals of collaboration. Essentially, a NAO allows for structured and representative participation for key strategic issues while having a staff assume more routine administrative burdens. It is a compromise mode but with an emphasis on efficiency.'*

Provan & Kenis, 2008 also state that once a brokered form is adopted, when governance becomes established as either a lead organisation or NAO form, evolution to shared governance is unlikely. Both lead organisation and NAO forms are more stable, less flexible forms, with institutionalized leadership roles that make it difficult to shift to shared governance.

A Secretariat member, also wondered if any other organisation could take the role of NAO in NEQMAP. On analysis of member profiles in the network, the evaluator observed that compared to other organisations in the network, UNESCO Bangkok has established relationship and trust with

several members due to its wider regional presence. UNESCO Bangkok has also established legitimacy in the region because of its mandate to support countries to move towards the SDGs. Quality monitoring is also easier for UNESCO than any other organisation in the network. UNESCO is definitely better equipped with several of these network competencies which other members may not possess and is therefore most suited to play the role of NAO in NEQMAP.

### **Finding 3**

The current structure of NEQMAP, with UNESCO Bangkok as the knowledge-broker is that of NAO governance. UNESCO Bangkok has an edge over other members in playing the role of a NAO by virtue of a) its regional presence, b) having established legitimacy with several nations prior to network formulation and c) its mandate to support nations in the Asia-pacific region achieve SDGs. It is without doubt that having UNESCO Bangkok as the Secretariat of the network that has helped NEQMAP emerge as a flagship program in the area of learning assessment today. As a result, the network has not only grown from an initial membership of 15 in 2013 to 54 members in 2019, but also led to the development of several relationships between experts in the field of learning assessment and others who would find it hard to access otherwise. Members have begun volunteering their services and expertise to the network, showing trust and goal consensus. *The current NAO governance is the most effective one for a large network such as NEQMAP. In the light of the above points, changing the governance structure is not advisable for NEQMAP.*

### **Role of Steering Group (SG)**

The following section answers the evaluation question 1.2.2, ‘*What are the stated functions of the SG, and how well do these functions fit or serve the purpose of the network?*’ The TOR for SG states that there would be 5-7 members in the SG, each representative of the sub regions of the Asia-Pacific. An individual SG member, as a representative of the region is required to have an understanding of the context of the region. This aspect was evaluated in this study. Interviews with

the SG members revealed that SG members did have a general understanding of their region. However, the governance mechanism proposed in the TOR does not provide for any direct interaction to take place between the SG and the members of the region they are representing. Interviews with some of the Member focal points revealed that they were not aware of who the SG member for their region was. This raises a question whether the current mechanism for SG- member dialogue is sufficient for SG members to advise on strategic inputs for the network.

The roles of the SG described in the TOR for SG (see Appendix II, p.99) are as follows. Each of these have been reviewed and additions have been suggested.

***1. Reviewing/approving new members:***

Along with reviewing/approving new members, the TOR also specifies that the SG will also provide support to the NEQMAP Secretariat in recruiting more members from their respective sub-regions and engaging them in NEQMAP activities. However, all regions of the Asia-Pacific are not represented in the network. There is less membership from Central Asia and Pacific sub regions. As one SG member put it, the member has acted as a conduit to pass on knowledge from NEQMAP to these countries. Although organisations from these sub regions have participated in NEQMAP events and workshops, they are not members and little is known regarding their activities/actions at the national level. This raises the question, whom are the SG members representing?

***2. Support and contribution for the NEQMAP activities:***

- *Provide guidance/support in selecting relevant topics and mobilizing expert(s) for the regional/sub-regional capacity development workshops*

Both interview with SG members and Secretariat members revealed that the SG had been fulfilling this role. The initial capacity development workshops, especially, were developed by them, with the purpose of introducing the fundamentals of learning assessment to the participants. Moreover, the questionnaire responses showed that the members found the topics of the CDW highly relevant to the

needs of their countries. The members also stated that the expertise of NEQMAP SG is highly commendable.

- *Provide guidance/support in selecting research study topics, mobilizing expert(s) to undertake or supervise the research, identifying peer reviewer (s) and reviewing research framework/tools*

Interview with Secretariat shows that the guidance/support of SG for selecting and guiding research has been good.

- *Encourage the members or non-member institutions to submit contributions to the NEQMAP knowledge portal*

Only one SG member mentioned having urged members to share articles for the newsletter, make presentations and share on knowledge portal.

- *Support the organisation of the NEQMAP annual meeting by facilitating or moderating the relevant sessions.*

Review of Annual meeting Agenda, meeting notes and participant observation of the Annual meeting shows that the SG members have been fulfilling this role.

### ***3. Support and contribution for the NEQMAP communication and advocacy***

Interview statements reveal that SG members have propagated information regarding NEQMAP in other conferences and international settings. Some of them have also included links to the NEQMAP website in their own organisation's website.

### ***4. Others***

*There are other activities that the Steering Group can decide, guide and advise upon suggestion by the Secretariat, including, but not limited to, resource mobilization, public relations, partnerships with other networks and initiatives etc.*

One of the members of the SG had made a contribution to NEQMAP in cash. Several SG members have also made in kind contributions by facilitating workshops, hosting events in their country etc.

### **Aspects of the SG roles that need clarity in the TOR**

#### **Strategic Role of NEQMAP**

According to the TOR of NEQMAP, the governance structure (see Appendix I, p.97) depicts the SG performing the strategic role of NEQMAP. The network's goals were set by UNESCO, as is described in the earlier section (see pp.20-21). Review of SG meeting notes reveal that from the inception of the network till 2017, planning of activities in NEQMAP was happening in the following manner:

1. UNESCO office bearers would suggest a plan of activities for the subsequent year. Sometimes long-term plans drafted for funder proposals were also presented.
2. The SG would deliberate on the plans.
3. Plan would be implemented, almost always as per the scheduled timeline by the Secretariat.

The minutes of the meetings and interviews with SG and Secretariat members clearly show that the SG played more of an advisory role (planning/developing activities for NEQMAP) rather than a strategic role. Moreover, no strategic plan has been developed for NEQMAP till date.

Minutes of the 2018 SG meeting shows that a draft strategy was presented for the first time by the then secretariat member. In this draft strategy, the goal of the network and proposed activities seem to have been substantially different from those envisaged in the TOR of NEQMAP (Source: Interview and meeting notes). While the SG members welcomed the idea of having a strategy for NEQMAP, they were not in agreement with either the activities proposed in it nor the way their role was envisaged in it. In this meeting, although no consensus was reached regarding the direction for the network, it was agreed that a strategy should be developed for NEQMAP (Source: SG Meeting notes).

For a network such as NEQMAP, with NAO form of governance, it would be most effective if the SG addresses strategic-level network concerns, leaving operational decisions to the Secretariat (Provan & Kenis, 2007).

It is the hope of UNESCO Bangkok that the SG will take up the task of developing a strategy for NEQMAP with renewed vigour. If necessary, NEQMAP may consider appointing a chair for heading the SG for resolving conflicts and achieving consensus among members.

### **Decision-making**

The TOR for NEQMAP states, *‘Major decisions for the network would be taken during annual meetings. Outside of annual meetings, the Secretariat will consult the Steering Group for the making of decisions and update all members accordingly. If advised by the Steering Group, members may be asked to contribute inputs and suggestions to better inform the decision-making process.’* The above sentence indicates that the decision-making would be done by the SG with inputs from Secretariat and if necessary, from members. Along with where the decisions would be taken and who decides, the NEQMAP TOR needs to specify what should be decided and how should be decided by the SG as given below:

### **Decisions to be specified in TOR (USDN 2016)**

- Purpose of the network—mission, vision, operating principles
- Objectives/goals
- Values and beliefs of the network
- Membership arrangements in the network
- Responsibilities of members
- Plans of the network
- Staffing or coordination decisions
- Distribution and acquisition of network resources (budgeting and fundraising)



### Process of Decision-making

- Decisions may be made by imposition,
- by Community: participation by all members
- by Democracy: majority vote of network representatives
- by Emergence (actions of members). (Source: USDN 2016).

### Finding 4

The strategic role of the network lies with the SG. Along with the stated functions in the TOR, developing a *Strategic Plan*, from time to time would be the job of the SG (with inputs from UNESCO Bangkok). *Resource mobilization* needs be emphasized as the SG's support in this front would go a long way in stabilizing the network. The SG members representing Central Asia and Pacific region also need to focus on getting members from their respective regions to the network.

### Role of Secretariat

The following section answers the evaluation question 1.2.4, '*What is the expected role and function of the NEQMAP Secretariat hosted in UNESCO Bangkok? How well does it fit or serve the purpose of the network?*'

#### 1. Network building

Networking is the foremost role of the secretariat. Interviews with ex-secretariat members revealed that quite a lot of effort and time went into networking. Networking is also an interpersonal skill which the initial secretariat seemed to naturally possess. As one SG member put it, '*they were perfect for this role*'. As members increased, new links were established on their own as word spread regarding the network's activities and members found value in them. According to Plastrik & Taylor (2006), *Connectivity* that is, establishing links between

organisations to each other, is the first phase of network evolution and NEQMAP achieved this quickly.

## **2. Secretariat as Knowledge broker**

NEQMAP, as a network for sharing knowledge, research and developing capacity of members, the right expertise needs to be identified to cater to the needs of members. Interview with SG members showed that UNESCO Bangkok, as the Secretariat has performed this role of a knowledge broker efficiently. From interview with Secretariat member it is learnt that some of the SG members have volunteered to facilitate the workshops, making an in-kind contribution to the network. Several experts who were involved with other UNESCO projects were also contacted by the network.

Interview statements also revealed that the Secretariat is criticised for not possessing any expertise of its own. This is probably arising out of comparison with other network models. A NAO primarily takes care of the management of the network. It may or may not possess expertise of its own.

## **3. Implementation of Activities**

A Secretariat member shared the challenges in implementing capacity development: Selecting participants for a workshop is crucial to achieving the objective of capacity development. Ideally speaking, the larger the number of individuals from an organisation addressed, the better would be the capacity development. This is difficult with limited resources. If the same individual from an organisation attends different workshops, the capacity building is likely to be stronger, but that raises the question whether it is the organisation's capacity or the individual's that is being developed. An SG member noted that the CDWs had been drawing many participants and that the Secretariat had successfully managed to strike a balance to make sure the members got to attend the right program.

Interview with SG members and questionnaire responses showed that the Secretariat could be more efficient in implementing activities. SWOT analysis (see Table 10, p.89) with members also

showed that the Secretariat needs to inform participants of events much earlier. It is clear that better planning and communication would make the Secretariat's job more efficient.

An examination of meeting notes and reports show that the secretariat has almost always implemented the planned activities according to timelines (except in one case). Interviews and meeting notes show that the NEQMAP Secretariat has seen a high staff turn-over in the period since it began. In spite of that, NEQMAP has shown high *resilience* (Plastrik & Taylor, 2006) in successfully implementing all activities within stipulated timelines.

#### **4. Fund Raising**

Interviews with Secretariat members revealed that they may not be comfortable with this role. However, it is clear that secretariat members, as network managers develop these competencies if they already do not possess it since most NAO networks depend on external funding for their programs (Provan & Kenis, 2008). Tapping funding opportunities, drafting proposals, communicating action plans, showcasing the outcomes of the network are some of the key competencies required by NAOs for fund raising.

#### **5. Focus Area**

SWOT analysis by members showed that NEQMAP needs to improve its focus. Interview statements with Secretariat members (past and present) showed that the Secretariat has had different focus areas at different points of time: Large-scale assessments, classroom assessment, transversal competencies. Questionnaire responses showed that these areas continue to be of importance for the members. Interview statements of a facilitator who has been a long associate of NEQMAP also showed that the current focus is more towards social-emotional learning.

It was learnt from interview with Secretariat and SG members that there was an initiative to develop an assessment programme through NEQMAP at one point of time. This would have been outside the purview of the current goals of the network. While it is natural for a network to rework its

goals from time to time, the needs of the members need to be taken into account. Any rationale for changes in focus area need to be discussed with the SG, documented and communicated to members. It is clear that for NEQMAP to be able to successfully transition into the next phase- *production* phase (Plastrik & Taylor, 2006), a *Strategic Plan* with a clear focus area would be needed. In the absence of a *Strategic Plan* for NEQMAP it would be difficult for the network to have clarity regarding the direction it is going.

## **6.Coordinating and Monitoring**

Interview with the Secretariat members revealed that coordinating and monitoring the network has become one of most challenging tasks due to the large size, expectation from members that the Secretariat would take care of all their needs and the shortage of human resource. As NEQMAP moves to the next phase- *production network*, the secretariat would need to coordinate various members even more, to carry out their Action Plans. Monitoring would involve getting members to share about actions implemented at national level. As Plastrik & Taylor, 2006 point out, networks have advantages over organisations as help often comes from unexpected quarters when members share good relationships. Most networks find unconventional solutions to challenges.

### **Finding 5**

Strong networking capacities of the various members of the Secretariat has helped NEQMAP grow into a large network of professionals. The Secretariat has also brought expertise to the reach of many members as a knowledge-broker. The network has shown great resilience in spite of staff turnover in the Secretariat. Today NEQMAP has implemented several activities to its credit due to the Secretariat's consistent efforts. A *Strategic Plan* in place would give the necessary focus to these activities and produce better outcomes for the network. Prompt communication with members and SG would go a long way in improving the Secretariat's efficiency. Fund raising, is inevitable for the continued functioning of the network. Coordinating and monitoring roles may be even more

challenging unless network level solutions are found to address the serious human resource crunch the Secretariat is facing.

### **Membership Categories**

The following section addresses the evaluation question 1.2.3, ‘*What are the membership categories and functions? How well do they fit or serve the purpose of the network?*’

According to the TOR of NEQMAP, there are three categories of members: *Members (Institutions/individual members)*, *Associate members* and *Observers*. The definitions of these terms have been given in the TOR (see Appendix I, p.94). *Members* come from a variety of organisations involved in learning assessments: Ministry of Education/Examinations assessment boards; Universities; Research institutions; Non-governmental organisations; private/corporate organisations; and regional networks providing a wide cross-section of people who can bring about change. Members also come from various geographical regions of the Asia-pacific.

- Members have mostly been active in the network and there are a few who have been latent for some time now. This is a normal phenomenon in any network and networks are highly flexible (Plastrik & Taylor, 2006).
- There seems to be a symbiotic relationship between the members themselves. While some members have been taking the role of facilitating the research/capacity building activities, there are a subset of members who have been beneficiaries. Figure 6, p.39, shows the members who have been taking part in the capacity development workshops and Figure 7, p.40, shows the members who have been facilitating the workshops. The network needs to check whether there may be other players who would like to take on facilitating/ researcher roles. Some members have started volunteering their services in providing expertise (For example, University Sains Malaysia, QITEP, SEAMEO, Indonesia)

- It is observed that there are very few members (except Uzbekistan) from the Central Asia and Pacific regions. The members from these regions are both regional networks. While several countries of this region participate in NEQMAP's activities from time to time and also benefit from NEQMAP by virtue of their network acting as a conduit for knowledge, there seems to be limited ways to understand what these countries are doing at the national level. These organisations may be encouraged to become members so that there is a better understanding of their needs as well as impact of the network on them.
- Individual members were found to be active in learning and sharing their knowledge to the network.
- Associate Members: A few Associate members comprising of both institutions and individuals have contributed to the network greatly. More participation from the others needs to be encouraged. (see Table 4, p.81 for list)
- The Observer category: There seems to be very little participation and hence value from the observer category. These individuals/ organisations may be removed from the network communication loop.

### **Finding 6**

All the categories of membership viz. regular member (institutional/individual member), Associate member, may be retained except the *Observer* category.

### **Sustainability of the Management Structure**

The next section addresses the evaluation question, 1.3.1 '*To what extent is the management structure sustainable (e.g. SG, Secretariat mechanism, membership status, etc.) in terms of financial and human resources and resource mobilization?*'

### **SG**

From interview with the SG members it was found that the SG has not only contributed to the planning of activities, but made financial contribution to the network (KICE, Korea), and in-kind contributions (as facilitators). It was found from the interviews that most of the SG members self-finance their participation to Annual meetings/events. Sustainability of the SG has not been much of a challenge for NEQMAP. Interview statements reveal that it would be good if new members are able to join so that there could be an in-flow of new ideas to the network. Several SG members have also stated a wish to step down.

### **Secretariat**

Interviews with the secretariat and SG members revealed that the human resource needs of the Secretariat are greater than ever before. As NEQMAP's size and complexity has increased the number of tasks requires at least two full-time staff members. It is clear that, the secretariat is not currently sustainable, both in terms of human resource and financial resources. Human resource has been a major challenge for the Secretariat's smooth functioning. Several interns have been employed part-time to tackle the growing responsibilities of a bigger and more complex network. Finding ways and means to mobilise resources for the secretariat is absolutely essential for the smooth running of the network.

### **Membership**

With limited resources, it has been challenging to manage the big membership base of NEQMAP. From FGD and questionnaire responses, it is understood that members of the network are ready to pay a nominal participation fee for participating in the activities and events.

### **Finding 7**

It is clear from various sources that the current Secretariat is not sustainable unless more financial and human resources are mobilised for the network. It would be good to have other members play the role of SG as new ideas are needed from time to time for better governance. The current

Secretariat is not sustainable in terms of human and financial resources. Membership fee cannot be collected, but a small participation fee may be collected.

## **PILLAR I OF ACTIVITIES: CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOPS**

In this section, the evaluation question, 2.1.1 ‘*To what extent have the national and regional capacity development activities of Pillar 1 achieved their set objectives?*’ is answered.

Answering the effectiveness question involves asking whether the network fulfilled its set objectives. For that an understanding of capacity development is needed. UNDP (2009) defines Capacity development as ‘*the process through which individuals, organisations and societies obtain, strengthen and maintain the capabilities to set and achieve their own development objectives over time*’. In this case, as the network has several organisations as members, capacity development would imply strengthening organizational means to improve education quality. The list of CDW conducted by NEQMAP at the regional and national level are given in Table 6, p 82. Nine workshops were based on covering various aspects of large-scale assessments. The last two workshops focused on school-based, competency-based assessment and transversal competencies. Four national level workshops focused on learning assessment. Analysis shows there are two levels at which outcomes may be studied: Network level and Individual Member level.

### Network Level Outcome

In order to study the network level outcomes of the CDW, the data was analysed to see how members participated in these CDWs. The extent of participation of members was calculated thus:

$$\textit{Extent of Participation} = N \times e / E$$

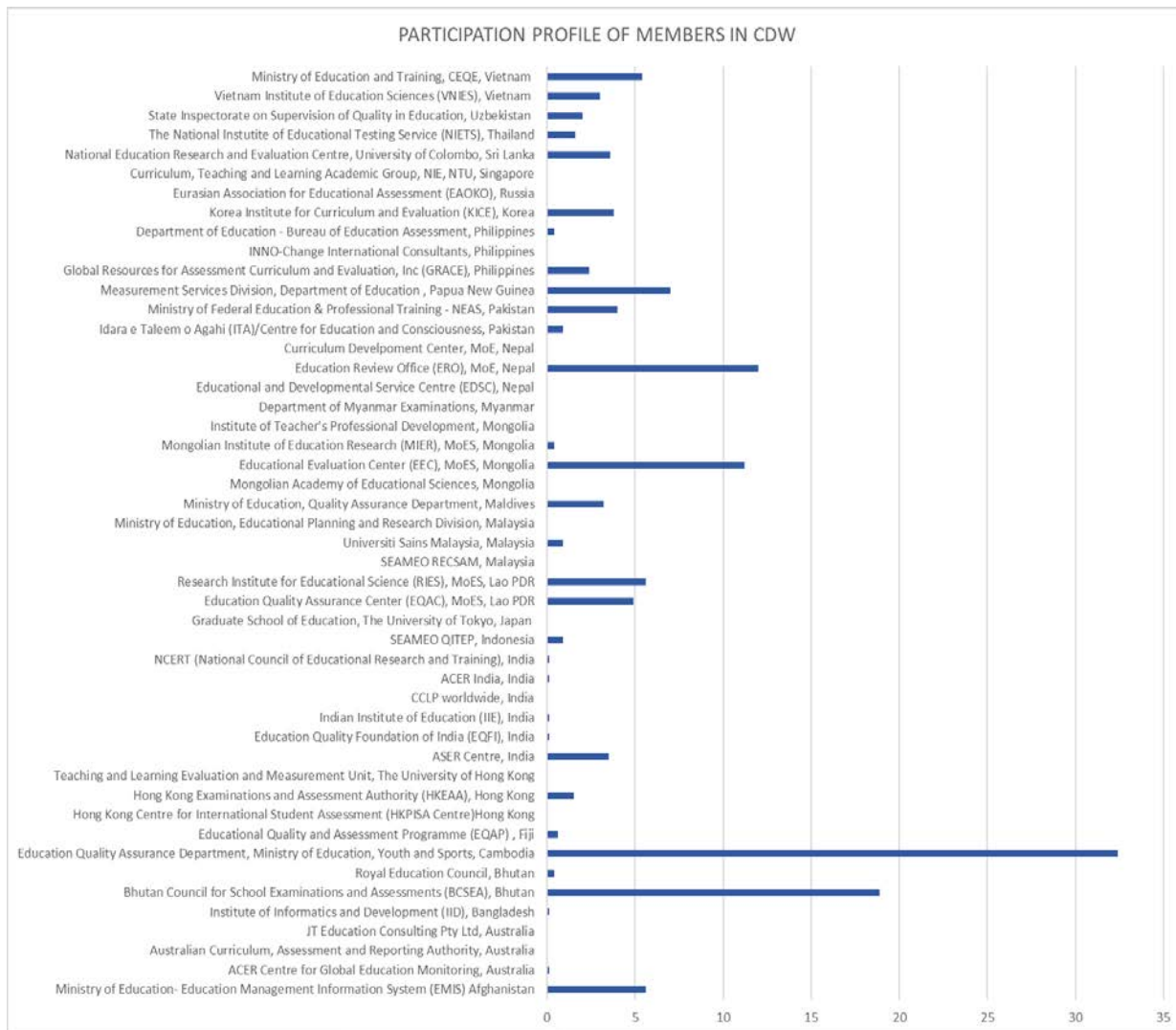
*Where, N= Number of individuals from a member organisation who participated,*

*e= Number of events the member participated in,*

*E= Total number of events (CDW)*



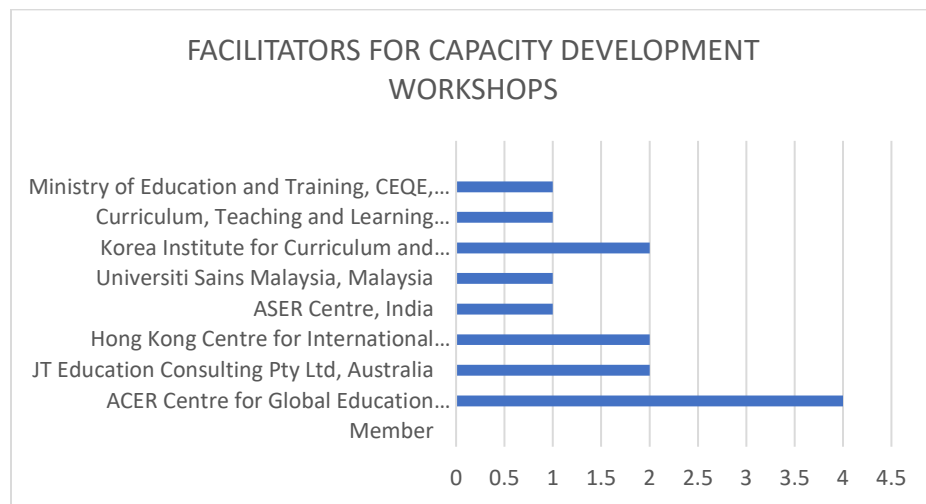
A bar chart was drawn to represent the extent of participation of each member organization. The figure below shows the extent of participation of the various members.



**Fig.6 CDW- Participation Profile of NEQMAP Members**

Figure 4 above shows that, of the organisations who have not participated in the CDWs, a few have facilitated the CDWs, thereby contributing their expertise to the network. Figure 5 below represents members of NEQMAP who have been facilitating CDWs for NEQMAP. The network level outcome therefore, is that there is a give and take among members in the network, fulfilling objective of the network.

**Fig 7 NEQMAP Members who Facilitated CDWs**



NEQMAP has been having experts from across the globe as facilitators: one from Australia another from Brookings, USA and several others from KICE, Korea, HKCISA, Hong Kong etc. providing a ‘*small world*’ reach (Plastik & Taylor, 2007) to its members. As mentioned earlier, member organisations such as University Sains Malaysia, and QITEP, SEAMEO, Indonesia also volunteered their technical expertise to these workshops. Some member organisations such as GRACE Philippines and Department of Education, Philippines have co-hosted the CDW at Manila, Philippines in Sept 2019. Once relationships were built, several members started approaching each other. An ex-secretariat member shared, ‘...*there were a lot of incidents that were kind of organic, bilateral cooperation that happened between different members institutions.*’ As a result of meeting at the NEQMAP workshops or meetings, and making connections, members followed up on their own. Malaysia, and Vietnam for example, invited experts from Hong Kong to come and give a talk. A couple of study tours were also organized based on members’ expressed interest.

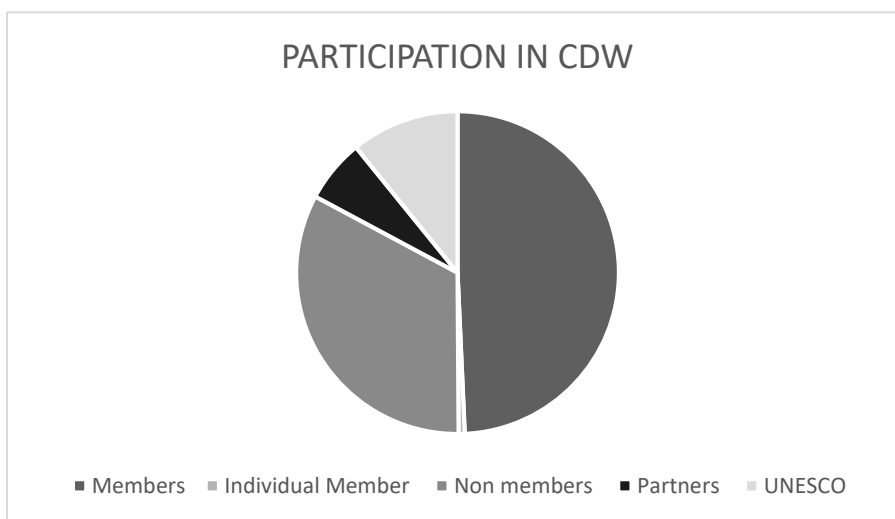
It may be noted from figure 4 that when the event is organized in member location the extent of participation increased drastically. Analysis showed that in such cases, more number of individuals from a single organisation and more organisations within the country got to participate, thereby

increasing the chances of capacity development of organisations and eventually strengthening education systems.

### Extending beyond the Network

The network has also been providing capacity development to various non-members since its inception, for example, Tajikistan, Kyrgyz Republic, Kazakhstan and Timor Leste, fulfilling another stated objective, *‘to other stakeholders beyond the network’*. Several partner organisations such as UNICEF and SEAMEO, have collaborated with NEQMAP in these workshops. Facilitators from other institutes of UNESCO, such as UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS), International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP) etc. have also facilitated the workshops on learning assessment.

**Fig.8 Extent of participation by various participants in the CDW**



This is a crucial step in furthering collaborations between members in Knowledge networks<sup>3</sup> and is a significant network level outcome for NEQMAP. Strengthening these ties would enable networks address policy changes in the future (Creech & Ramji, 2007).

<sup>3</sup> A formal knowledge network is a group of expert institutions working together on a common concern, to strengthen each other's research and communications capacity, to share knowledge bases and develop solutions that meet the needs of target decision-makers at the national and international level”(Creech, H. & T. Willard, 2001).

### Outcomes at Member level

Change is continuous, complex, non-linear, multi-directional and non-controllable (Earl, 2007). As discussed in page 13, change is best measured as intermittent *outcomes* rather than impact when members are part of an open system. However, in the absence of set *outcomes* against which effectiveness could be measured, member accounts of change (in *knowledge, attitudes, insights, activities* and *actions*) have been recorded as valid outcomes at individual member/national level. In table 7 (see p.83) outcomes of the CDW have been collated from questionnaire and FGD responses of a sample of members. The context of the country, the nature of the organisation, the target population of the organisation and specific inputs (CDWs attended) have been recorded to understand these outcomes.

Earl, 2007 classifies outcomes in a hierarchy as Changes which you would: *Expect to see - instant changes based on activities of the program; Like to see – ownership of the program and partners start doing things differently; Love to see – deep transformational changes – so that the common goal is reached.* In a knowledge network such as NEQMAP, the ‘*Expect to see*’ level changes would be changes in knowledge, changes in perspectives of how things are done, for example, how to use formative assessment in the classroom; improved understandings, for example, how to develop better tools or test items; and improved insights, for example, how to integrate transversal competencies within a curriculum. Outcomes that come under the ‘*like to see*’ category would include changes in activities or actions, for example, sharing ideas with colleagues, training teachers in the department. The ‘*love to see*’ changes would include changes which need sustained action like formulating policies to bring about changes in assessment practices/curriculum.

Interview and questionnaire responses from the sample of members who responded show that most of the outcomes achieved were at the first level. Some members have attained outcomes at the second level, ‘*like to see*’ level.

The finding implies that there is a need for documentation of these changes by members, as and when they occur, for them to be able to attribute changes to network's activities. The objectives in the TOR need to be stated as observable and measurable outcomes. These are discussed further in Outcome Mapping in p.91 for developing a *Strategic Plan*, monitoring and evaluation purposes.

#### Finding 8

NEQMAP's first pillar of activities has been successful in building relationships between members of the network as well as between various partners, experts, thereby meeting one of its objectives of facilitating sharing of expertise among members. Relations have also been successfully built with non-members and partners. The members have reported several outcomes, mostly at 'expect to see' level (knowledge, perspective level and attitudinal changes). To a certain extent, 'like to see' changes have occurred, influencing members to take actions. However, these second level changes may or may not have been affected by CDW alone. It is clear that having a *Strategic Plan* with objectives stated as outcomes stated would help monitor these changes in systems better.

#### **Effectiveness of the Research Activities**

In this section, the evaluation question '*To what extent has the Research and analytical work (and activities?) of Pillar 2 achieved its set objectives?*' has been answered.

In Table 8, p.86 the major research projects undertaken by the network are listed and the research outputs added to the knowledge base of NEQMAP.

Meeting minutes show that the topics of the research were usually decided by the SG during SG meetings and members were usually approached during Annual meetings if they would like to take part in them. The Secretariat has played a key role in designing the research framework and coordinating research activities between countries. In order to evaluate the effectiveness of this pillar of activities, the outcomes of the research were collated from questionnaire and interview responses

of a sample of members. It was found that only 10 out of 22 members who responded to the questionnaire had taken part in the research activities. Out of these, two members referred to studies undertaken by UNESCO Bangkok and not NEQMAP.

### **Methodology of Research Studies**

Two research studies on transversal competencies were conducted by an expert from Brookings, USA, who has been involved with the network since 2013. It is learnt from an interview with the researcher that, a collaborative method, where members helped develop the research framework and questions, was used in these studies. The members also collected data and interpreted it themselves, thereby increasing their understanding of transversal competencies greatly. According to the researcher, who also facilitated a CDW on transversal competencies at Manila, Philippines in Sept. 2019, much more learning occurred when members participated in the research activity than from participation in CDWs. The outcomes of these studies are in Table 9 (see p. 88). FGD with members showed that participating in research provided them an opportunity to understand how theoretical concepts play out in the field. In the FGD, a few participants, expressed that they were able to connect their research experiences with the inputs in CDW and participation in both these activities definitely gave them a deeper understanding of the topic. Is there a lesson for methodology here?

An unnatural divide has been created between practitioners and researchers. However, for effective practice, this gap needs to be bridged. As Schon, (1987, p.3) says, *‘In the varied topography of professional practice, there is a high ground overlooking a swamp. On the high ground, manageable problems lend themselves to solution through the application of research-based theory and technique. In the swampy lowland, messy, confusing problems defy technical solution. The irony of this situation is that the problems of the high ground tend to be relatively unimportant to individuals or society at large, however great their technical interest may be, while in the swamp lie the problems*

*of greatest human concern. The practitioner must choose. Shall s/he remain in the high ground where s/he can solve relatively unimportant problems according to prevailing standards of rigor, or shall s/he descend to the swamp of unimportant problems and non-rigorous inquiry?* Thus, NEQMAP provided enough opportunities for member organisations specializing in research to engage with practitioners and vice versa.

### Using the Research Findings

Participating in the research also helped in using knowledge generated from research to solve problems. UNESCO Bangkok and ACER, a member of NEQMAP, jointly organized a study titled *'Using large-scale assessments of students' learning to inform education policy'*. Interview with a representative of Center for Global Education Monitoring, (GEM) a section of ACER, which undertook this research revealed that it works in the area of policy research for the purpose of educational monitoring. This study reviewed 68 studies from 32 countries to examine the link between participation in large-scale assessment and education policy. A Policy Brief was developed based on this study which made recommendations for a) improving the design and use of assessments for policy making b) how the technical quality of assessments could be improved and capacity building of those involved in assessment design and c) implementation and ensuring sound communication and d) dissemination and stakeholder engagement (<https://bangkok.unesco.org/content/research>).

Following the above study, GEM, together with UNESCO Bangkok, organised topical case studies to promote and explain how countries use assessment data to inform policy practice. The first case study was on PILNA which was authored by members of the EQAP network. This was followed by a case study about NEPAL's National Learning Assessment. The *South East Asia Primary Learning Metrics Programme* (SEA-PLM) is the third in the series. It provides a detailed overview of the efforts and progress made by SEAMEO, UNICEF and the countries involved in the development,

capacity building and implementation of the SEA-PLM program. The researcher from ACER hopes that more members of the network would contribute and more issues published in the future.

Further to the ACER-NEQMAP study another study titled '*Analyzing and Utilizing Assessment Data for Better Learning Outcomes*' was conducted by the *Learning Enablers for Asia and Pacific* (LEAP) program, NEQMAP. The findings from these two studies were used in the workshop titled '*Analyzing and Understanding Learning Assessment for Evidence-Based Policy Making*' where members were trained to interpret data from large-scale assessments for making policy changes.

#### Where did the Network's knowledge add value?

1. This workshop targeted higher level officials, policy makers and officials with technical backgrounds as well. The program was well received and led to 14 delegates expressing interest in becoming members of the network. Among them were the following OECD countries: Cambodia, Maldives, Myanmar, Pakistan, Vietnam.
2. The workshop had an **Action Plan** which country delegates were asked to follow up with. They were given a format for preparing a country report. During SWOT analysis (see p.89), members have expressed that there needs to be a follow-up on the Action Plan.
3. **From Input to Actions** The feedback form of the participants showed that they found value in the workshop though some of the sessions were too technical and could have been given more time. The feedback (Secretariat) also collected information regarding what large-scale assessments they would like to learn about. Based on majority of the participants requesting for PISA, a workshop was on PISA-D was held. This was a step in the right direction.

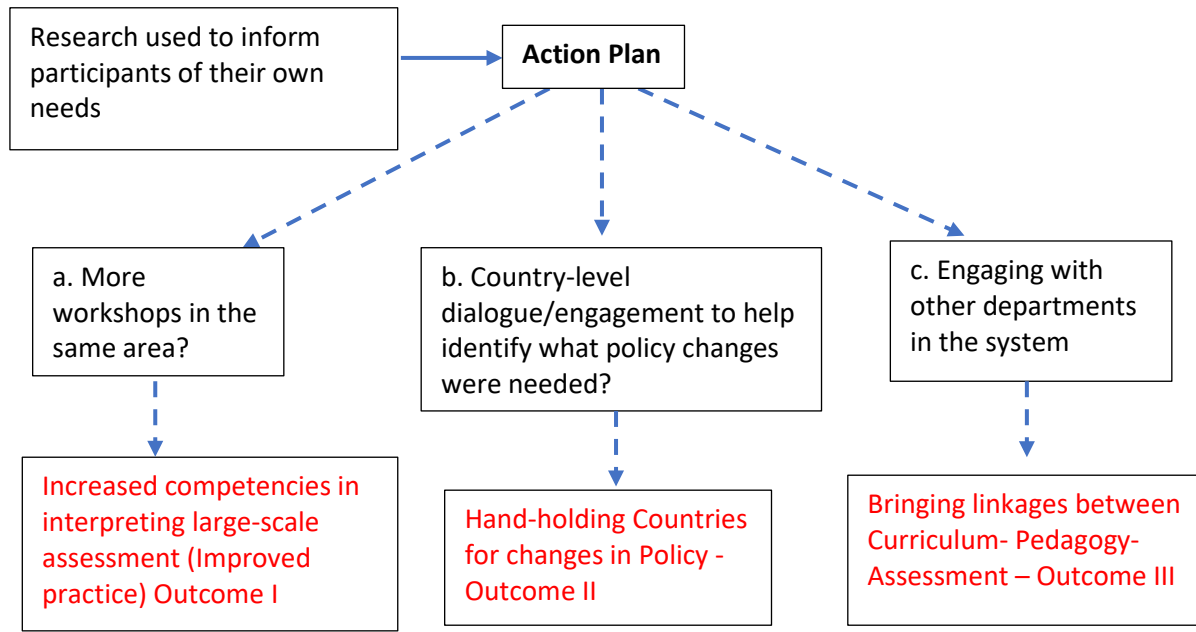
#### Lost Opportunities

Further to the research study- CDW – Action Plan, was there any evidence of a) Increased competencies in interpreting large-scale assessment b) Countries showing evidence of changes in



policy c) Engaging with other stakeholders in the system so that linkages are brought about between curriculum- pedagogy-assessment. The figure below suggests three possible ways in which national level outcomes could have been achieved. Were there some missed opportunities?

**Fig.9 Setting outcomes for Research Activities**



**Finding 9**

The researches undertaken by NEQMAP have led to several network level and individual member level outcomes. At the network level, the outcomes are: a) Rapport between members and experts b) Opportunities for members to collaborate, participate in research c) Members share their knowledge through technical writing and presentations d) Expanding of the network. At the individual member level, participating in the researches has led to a) increase in understanding of concept of transversal competencies b) better understanding of how assessment may be used for policy change c) Understanding of issues of one’s own country better d) Desire to bring about change. Although research has been able to get members interested in bringing about change, they may not be empowered to do so. This may require the support of the network as a network is in a much better position to bring about change rather than a single organisation Creech & Ramji, 2004).

### **Pillar 3 Knowledge Sharing Activities**

In this section, the evaluation question 2.1.3 ‘*To what extent have the Knowledge sharing activities (e.g. knowledge portal, newsletter, webinar, annual meeting) of Pillar 3 achieved their set objectives?*’ has been answered.

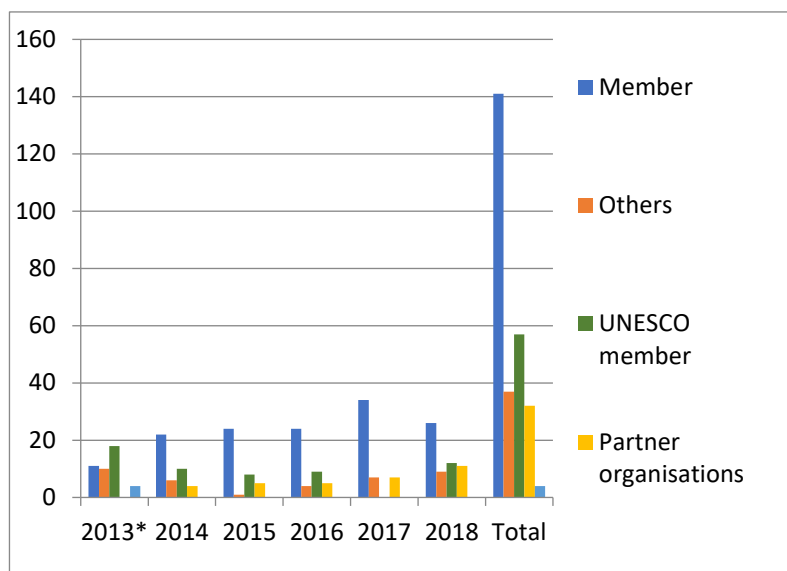
In order to answer the evaluation question above, the minutes of the Annual meetings, a sample content of the newsletters, web portal and webinars were analysed.

The third pillar of activities, Knowledge Sharing has been a rigorous and multi-dimensional activity of NEQMAP. A variety of forums such as Annual meeting presentations, website, knowledge portal, newsletter and webinar have been created for this activity providing opportunities for sharing among organisations only networks can create. One SG member opined that this pillar has been the strongest for NEQMAP where the Secretariat has been able to work independently. Most members have stated that they have had no difficulties in knowledge-sharing. The limitation of knowledge sharing, one member pointed out was shortage of time. The data shows that 66.7% members have received support from the Secretariat in knowledge sharing. FGD and questionnaire responses of members show that members value greatly the opportunities for sharing NEQMAP has provided them. They have expressed that participating in the knowledge sharing forum has been a great learning experience for them as they were able to learn about the similarities, issues and best practices of other countries.

#### **Annual Meetings**

The Annual meetings provided a forum where not only members but UNESCO officials, and members from partner and other organisations took part.

**Fig.10 Categories of participants in Annual Meetings**



The figure above shows that participation in Annual meetings has increased since March 2013, when the first meeting of NEQMAP took place, denoting the growth of the network.

An analysis of the agenda of Annual meetings showed the various purposes of the network that were served there.

### **1. Place for Decision-making**

According to the TOR, the Annual meeting was intended to be the forum for decision-making. Analysis of the agenda of these meetings showed that they provided opportunities for members to voice their needs and these were communicated to the SG by the Secretariat. Decisions were made by the SG in consultation with the Secretariat. Meeting notes did not have decisions followed with actionable points.

### **2. Access to Experts**

Panel discussions on topics and current issues in the area of education quality monitoring were held. Experts from various partner organisations also participated in this forum. As a result, the Annual

meeting served as a forum for the network to share knowledge, grow and establish its legitimacy in the international scene. The researchers also presented their individual research work.

### **3. Networking**

This was the forum for the members to meet face-to face and network. As some participants expressed, the network could arrange more informal gatherings (outings/visits) so that better rapport is built.

### **4. Alignment to SDGs**

The network members were addressed by UNESCO officials which helped them understand UNESCO's mandate to help nations fulfil the SDGs. Thus, it has fulfilled a very important role for the network coordinator to *align* the members to the goal of NEQMAP.

### **5. Reporting the Network's Activities**

The Secretariat uses the Annual meetings to update members of activities of the network. This includes new memberships, workshops conducted, research activities undertaken, funding received and activities undertaken in knowledge -sharing forum.

### **6. Presenting Members' Experiences**

The members were given opportunities to present their country's work in the Annual meetings. Some members have presented the research work /case studies they have undertaken. The presentations by members range from their experiences with large-scale assessments, citizen-led assessment to policy changes affected by assessment. The members expressed in the questionnaire that the time allotted to them could be made longer.

While participating in the 7th Annual meeting held in Nov 2019 at Bangkok, the evaluator observed that A) Compering and managing events was done solely by the Secretariat, though SG members chaired some sessions. Having members comper sessions may create a feeling that NEQMAP is a network rather than UNESCO's program. B) SWOT analysis was a good exercise enabling more horizontal and spontaneous participation between members. C) The presentation mode

did not trigger active participation of members. Field visits would have promoted more discussion and debate on issues close to the countries of the Asia-pacific region. D) Sessions may be planned for discussing members' needs by collecting the feedback before the event. This would make two-way communication possible.

## **Newsletter**

NEQMAP Secretariat at UNESCO Bangkok, launched its own biannual newsletter in August 2016 which had its second edition in December 2016. According to an SG member, the newsletter has been a simple and effective means to reach out to members and other organisations outside the network as well. An analysis of contents of the newsletter showed that it is being used successful for the following purposes:

- Articles by the members
- showcases researches at the country level.
- Informs the world of events and activities of NEQMAP.
- Contains news about significant events (workshops, conferences) that have happened in the member countries. For e.g. The PAL Network Case: Citizen-led Assessments to Improve Learning shares the experiences talks about how the movement has gained momentum in ensuring education to all in the PAL countries.
- information about future events in member countries (a conference being organized by EAOKO in Central Asia.)

Thus, the newsletter bridges distance between the members in the network and beyond. From questionnaire responses it can be inferred that the members found the newsletter is a good avenue for disseminating to others ongoing activities of their organisation and helps them in sharing its ideas/ resources. An SG member shared that members had been forthcoming in sharing articles to the

newsletter and this is encouraging. Members stated during the FGD that this could be a good place to update the network regarding what follow up activities they have undertaken after the capacity development workshops.

### **Website**

The website of NEQMAP is practically the face of the network. The new website of the network <https://bangkok.unesco.org> is an on-line access point to get all information regarding NEQMAP. The website carries information about

1. Its activities – past events Workshops were covered with detailed write up.
2. Future events with call for registration
3. Recent Publications
4. Associated topics/projects in which member countries are participating
5. Thematic papers: Connecting Quality Education, Inclusiveness and Learning Assessment

The website was found easy to use and comprehensive in show-casing the network.

### **Knowledge Portal**

The portal was established and launched in 2015. The content was enriched with the support of a project officer based at the Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation (KICE), a NEQMAP member. By February 2017, more than 260 education related resources were uploaded. As of February 2017, 1183 visitors from 25 countries accessed the knowledge portal. The portal was also accessed from the countries outside the Asia Pacific region indicates the increasing popularity, usage and benefits of this online resource. The functions of the knowledge portal were expanded, making it more user-friendly.

A communication consultant was hired to specifically work on the development and enhancement of the portal to improve its design and visibility (Source: Report to funder).

The portal is a database for literature in the areas of assessment, curriculum and pedagogy in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. The NEQMAP Knowledge Portal is a good resource comprising of all types of resources and documentation. In this platform members can access as well as upload articles to the portal, making it a dynamic resource. The user gets to browse by topic, year, author and region.

The Knowledge Portal provides various resources such as books, policy documents, journal articles, reports, blog posts and policy briefs. This has fulfilled a network level benefit to members who may not be able to access these resources otherwise. The sheer exhaustiveness of the resources and quality of the literature that is available in the portal is a commendable achievement for NEQMAP.

At the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting, held in Bangkok, in Nov 2019, a technical expert helped all participants run through the knowledge portal: browse and upload articles as well. The portal <https://neqmap.bangkok.unesco.org/forums>, has an interactive interface as well: It currently has 8 Forums: Curricula, Learning Assessments, Pedagogy, NEQMAP activities, 6 topics, 13 posts and 46 members. This has great potential in building close relationship between members. During FGD, a participant suggested that it would provide a great place to share country level activities in future.

## **Webinars**

The network shared most of the presentations that have gone into workshops as webinars. This was established in 2015. Webinars have been highly useful when the topics are highly technical, for example, design and development of assessments, including item development and analysis. In order to disseminate the proceedings of the later workshop beyond the immediate workshop participants, audio recording of the facilitator's order to produce a series of learning videos that are now accessible to all NEQMAP members via <http://www.unescobkk.org/education/quality-of-education/neqmap/activities-and-events/design-anddevelopment-of-lsla/> (Source:Report to

Funder). Webinars and free online reports have been an important source of knowledge for the members of the network.

### **Benefits to Members**

Questionnaire responses showed that members have found value in sharing of their work because

- getting feedback from experts on their work
- collecting suggestions and recommendations to improve the education system in line with the curriculum, pedagogy and assessment
- to get to know of efforts in other areas
- and getting an opportunity to learn from others
- learning about problems specific to countries as well as problems /issues common to the Asia Pacific region.

One member has stated that some of their strategies were actually similar across countries and gave them an idea how to address the issues by looking at how others have addressed it. Another member stated that some interest was created about CLA as a unique model which focuses on foundational learning. One member has stated that they now have more information about NEQMAP's initiatives in promoting student learning assessment.

### **Finding 10**

The Knowledge-sharing has been a vital activity in building the network and helping countries to get a broad perspective about learning assessment and its linkage to curriculum, pedagogy and goals of sustainable development. The interest that members show in sending articles to newsletter and their excitement in sharing experiences at the Annual meeting shows that the network has been successful in meeting one of its primary objectives- facilitating sharing of knowledge and experience. For a knowledge network like NEQMAP, this has been an achievement for NEQMAP. The knowledge



portal and newsletter may be good points for show-casing country level outcomes based on Action Plans. The opportunities provided by the interactive forum needs to be tapped further.

## OVERALL ACTIVITIES

In this section, the evaluation question, 2.2.1 *‘To what extent do Network members participate in activities and utilize the outputs from the programme in their own work/context at the country level?’*

### **Increasing Member participation**

#### **1. Content of the CDWs**

One of the key ways to getting members to participate in the events is to make the content of the CDWs relevant for them. This is a challenge not only for the Secretariat but also for facilitators, given the diversity of country contexts. The CDWs have been in great demand by the members, according to an SG member, showing that the workshops have been of relevance to them. As an SG member shared, the secretariat had done a good job of selecting the right participants for the right workshop – some workshops catered to policy makers while others catered to more technical persons.

When participants of the FGD were asked about the relevance of NEQMAP’s workshops to them, a participant said that the software that was taught during one workshop on test item development & analysis was neither applicable in their context nor affordable. When they returned to their countries, they felt that their knowledge was insufficient to use on their own and at the most they only gained an awareness of the existence of such a software. One NEQMAP member said that capacity building takes a long time and only when a huge project is taken up by the network, like an assessment program, for example, then the members could capitalize on the capacities built. Another member responded that NEQMAP had mobilized a sort of an assessment movement, that too, not in the traditional sense of the word. Though all their expectations had not been met, thinking had been stimulated so that they were able to reflect on what was said at the workshops and contextualise it. An

SG member opined that some of the countries were not yet ready for the sophisticated methods of data analysis from large scale assessments.

Content Analysis showed that the ten regional workshops put together covered the entire scheme of ‘learning assessment’, covering almost all the basic concepts. However, given that the topics were spread over 6 years from 2014-2019, it raises questions regarding the relevance and continuity between concepts (especially if different facilitators contributed to different workshops).

The topics of the ten workshops on assessment are linked to SDG 4.1.1 which addresses assessment of learning. The workshop in Sept 2019 titled ‘*Promoting transversal competencies across curriculum, pedagogy & assessment*’, in Manila Philippines, covered Transversal competencies, another prime area of interest for NEQMAP. This topic relates to the SDG 4.7. In this workshop, effort was made to establish linkages between curriculum, pedagogy & assessment, one of the objectives of NEQMAP. Four national level workshops were conducted on special request by the nations on specific topics.

## **2. Assessing the needs of the Members**

Increasing participation of members is possible only with a good understanding of needs. The Annual meeting survey has served the purpose of taking member needs to the secretariat. The evaluator assessed whether the CDW had addressed members’ needs. 67% of the member who took the survey said the CDWs addressed their needs. 70% of the members who answered the questionnaire said they were consulted for deciding topics for the workshops. 67% of the members who answered the questionnaire stated they were satisfied with the need assessment process. An SG member stated that the content of the initial workshops of NEQMAP were decided by the SG members themselves. Later on, the topics of workshops were decided based on the survey responses collected from members as well as discussion with SG members.

**Member Feedback on Need Assessment:**

- Need assessment process must be done every time there is a meeting or workshop.
- Frequency of need assessment increased.
- Use of Questionnaires
- More collaborative methods
- Provide a choice of topics and dates for selection
- Conducting a Needs Assessment Study across its member countries to get evidence informed input from these countries.

Questionnaire responses show that some found PISA-D 2017 specifically relevant. Another member expressed that the emphasis of NEQMAP on learning assessments was clearly beneficial to increase the country's assessment literacy and ensure that objectives/curriculum standards are properly measured and gauged in practice. Several members found the workshops on formative assessments and Transversal competencies fully aligned to our country specific needs. A few respondents felt that many of the models and methods being given a platform by NEQMAP were too sophisticated for the needs as well as for the available resources.

NEQMAP has been able to offer a variety of topics and alternative assessment models, to its members. For example, the participants learnt about Citizen-led Assessments as well as more sophisticated tools of assessment which are being used in some of the developed countries. Assessment techniques included highly technical Rasch model as well as classroom-based, school-based assessments. Questionnaire responses reveal that members who were using large-scale assessments in their systems, like Hong Kong, Philippines and Malaysia, found the sophisticated models relevant while some preferred the former. Vietnam found value in the transversal competency workshop as it is to be implementing a competency-based curriculum next year and the inputs were 'timely'. KICE, Republic of Korea, for example, has expertise in bringing linkages between assessment and

curriculum; while HKCISA, Hong Kong and University Sains Malaysia, Malaysia specialize in large scale assessment and interpretation of results. The diversity offers members a choice of methods and models to choose from and apply to their settings. This is another advantage for members in the network.

### Relevance of the Research Activities

In order to find out whether the knowledge generated by the network has been relevant to those outside of the network, interviews were conducted with researchers. According to one researcher, the members seemed to learn better when they were researching rather than when they were merely attending a workshop, because research provided opportunities to learn new things about their own contexts which they did not know.

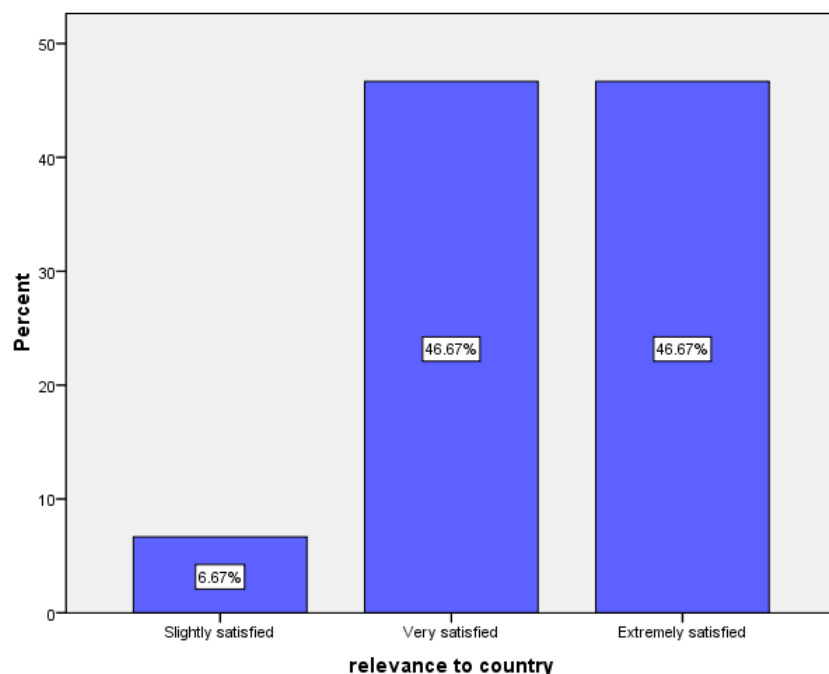
The research studies undertaken in NEQMAP till now have been aligned to the network's goal of quality education monitoring in the Asia-Pacific region. The topics were analysed keeping in mind the broad goals/mission statement of the network. A broad analysis of the researches showed that they had the following characteristics:

- All the research studies were directly or indirectly connected to learning assessment for improving the quality of education in the Asia-Pacific region
- Some of the researches fulfilled the 'collaborative efforts' criteria.
- Case Studies provided opportunities for members to study their own systems and present it.
- The studies were aligned to the SDGs – 4.1 and 4.7.

### Relevance of Knowledge-sharing Activities

Knowledge-sharing has been one activity members have participated with great enthusiasm. Most members have stated that they had no difficulties in knowledge-sharing. One member expressed that the limitation of knowledge sharing, was that the NEQMAP knowledge sharing forums usually focus on theory only and field visit experiences must be included.

**Fig.11 Member’s Response regarding relevance of NEQMAP’s Activities**



When members were asked to rate NEQMAP’s overall activities, i.e. Capacity building, Research, Knowledge Sharing with respect to its relevance to their country’s context, more than 90% of members who took part in the survey found the activities of NEQMAP relevant.

#### Finding 11

Overall activities have been extremely relevant to the participants. Most members find relevance in the knowledge sharing activities. Members’ needs are varied with respect to CDW, members have found relevance in the area of learning assessment as well as transversal competencies.

## **Sustainability of Activities**

In this section, the evaluation question *‘To what extent are the programme’s activities (capacity development, research, knowledge sharing) sustainable (e.g. financial and human resources) from regional level down to national level?’* is answered.

## **Funding**

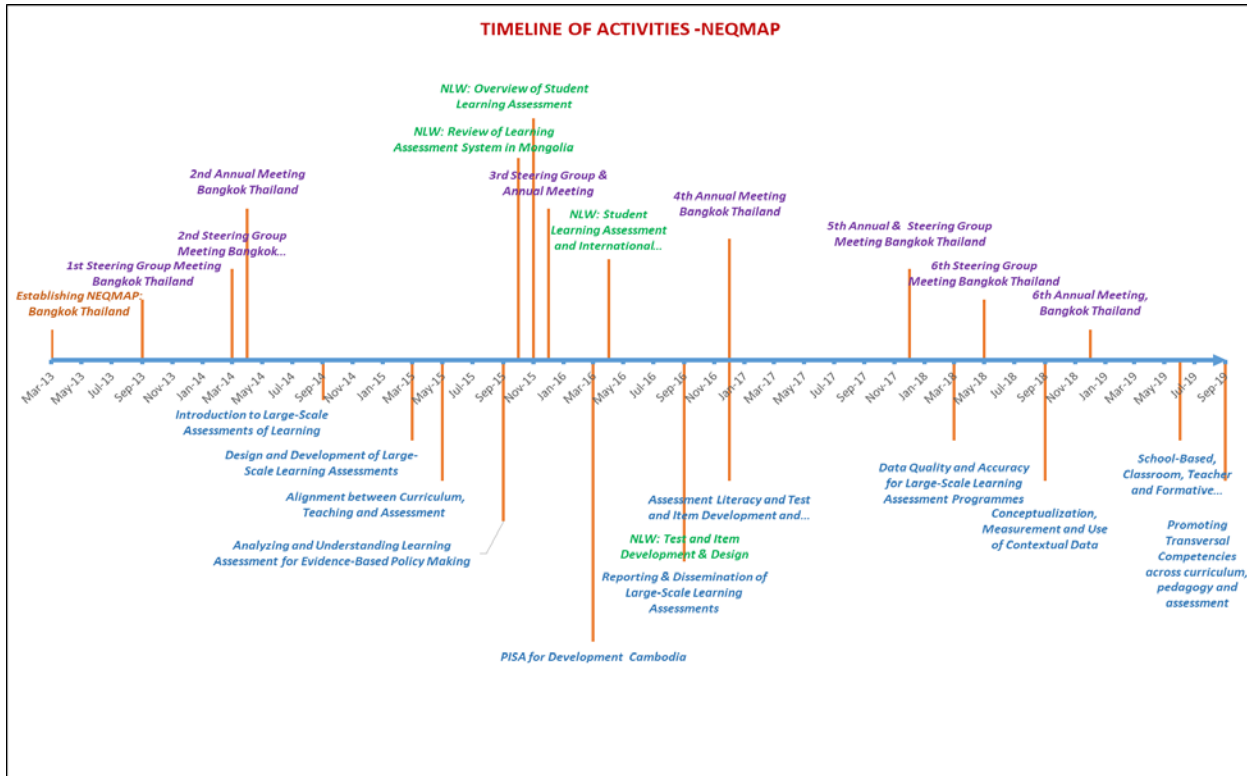
Interview with ex-secretariat member revealed how NEQMAP has been sustaining itself. Like most programmes, NEQMAP’s activities have also been dependent on the funding from other donor organisations. The major sources of funding for NEQMAP have been Global Partnership in Education and Malaysia-Funds-in-Trust. KICE, Korea has also contributed as a member.

Interview with a donor revealed that GPE’s mandate for funding was that beneficiary countries be involved in learning assessment or developing their own systems of assessments. Through this programme GPE used to fund different local regional activities. A grant of almost one million US Dollars was given for NEQMAP by GPE. There was another grant of about 220,000, US Dollars from the Malaysian government, through the Malaysia-Funds-in-Trust programme. Once these funds were mobilised, NEQMAP was able to organize different activities. The main focus area of these programmes was building regional capacity, or in some cases, also sub regional and national training workshops on different technical aspects of assessment. So, between 2014 and late 2016, there were several workshops.

The GRA grant from GPE ended in December 2016 at which point a new initiative called *Assessment for learning*, (A for L) was launched by them. The components of this initiative aimed to support regional networking around Learning Assessment issues. However, since A for L was formally launched only in July 2017, there was a period where no activities were conducted. The current grants

that NEQMAP has ongoing, started in June 2018 and continues until January of next year. The timeline below denotes how funding has affected the activities of the network.

**Fig. 12 Timeline of Activities**



## Challenges and Strengths of NEQMAP

### Challenges

#### 1. Financial Resource

Interviews with the Secretariat members and SG members revealed that sustainability of NEQMAP’s activities has become an issue of concern for NEQMAP. At the same time, there is a strong desire to find constructive solutions to this issue. Sustainability is generally a concern for most NAO led networks (Provan & Kenis 2007). Members are more or less unaware of the sustainability issues that NEQMAP is facing. When this was brought up in the FGD, they have agreed that a small fee may be collected for attending workshops as a participation fee. The SG members gave mixed responses regarding the collection of membership fee. Some members said that One member said that a

membership fee would help bring ownership to members, while another said that a membership fee would imply a greater value addition in terms of services provided. A few members felt that it would not be affordable for many countries. However, the Secretariat members were very clear that collecting a membership fee would not be permissible for UNESCO.

Interview with Secretariat member revealed that the Secretariat is not very keen on fund-raising. However, for sustainability, this becomes a key competency for a secretariat. A clear strategic plan will be useful in applying for funding, according to an SG member.

## **2. Ownership**

From interview as well as observation, it was evident that most members perceive NEQMAP as a program of UNESCO rather than as their own network. A secretariat member observed that while it was good that the members had established good relationship with them, UNESCO Bangkok would like to know what they were doing in their countries.

## **3. Human Resources**

Network management is a full-time job and it is hoped that UNESCO Bangkok will ensure sufficient human resources for the secretariat to function efficiently.

### **Strengths**

#### **1. Human Resources**

NEQMAP has been resilient in times of acute human resource. In the process of conducting the evaluation and witnessing two events, the evaluator appreciates how the secretariat members put in their best to coordinate the activities of the network. This is a great strength of NEQMAP. The trust and collegiality built among members and the relevance they find in the network has already prompted several members to volunteer national events. These contributions would go a long way in sustaining the network's activities.



## **2. Synergy**

Interviews with Secretariat members, facilitators, Members, and participant observation shows that the network has enjoyed the goodwill of several experts who have made in-kind contributions to NEQMAP. This is a sign of a good network. The synergy in the network may also help the members volunteer their services to the Secretariat, if the need is communicated to them. The level of interest among members is very high and based on their requirements, national level workshops may be organized. This may be more relevant as the country's needs may be met more adequately and participant cost for travel may be cut down drastically.

## **3. Collaboration with Partners**

The strengths that NEQMAP has are that it is a fairly large network with an established name. It has not only developed meaningful relationships with its members, but also with several partner organisations like UNICEF and SEAMEO. A member of a partner organisation stated in the interview that it would be more meaningful to collaborate with them as they operate in the same geographical areas and have common goals with UNESCO.

## **4. Timelines**

NEQMAP has also had a good track record of completing its activities on time and spreading its reach to many beneficiaries in the Asia-pacific region.

## **5. Network level Capacities**

Members as well as SG stated that the secretariat has important network competencies such as networking and communicating with members.

### **Finding 12**

The activities of the network are currently not sustainable due to financial and human resource crunch. Fund raising is an essential part of running a network. Involving member volunteers for hosting events, collecting participation fees, may help in the sustainability of activities. Since it is a mature network

with trust and connection with the purpose among its members, the network would be able to sustain itself in unforeseen ways. The potential to collaborate with partners is also high.

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

In the section below the findings of the study are summarized.

### **Finding 1**

NEQMAP started with the vision of strengthening the quality of education in the Asia-Pacific region. Its mission was to provide a platform for exchange of expertise and experience among countries of the Asia-Pacific region in the area of learning assessment, with links to curriculum and pedagogy wherever possible. The network's vision and goals after studying other networks, surveying the needs of potential member countries and having sufficient deliberations with the SG. NEQMAP may therefore, be said to be a 'goal-directed network'. From the continued, increased participation of members in NEQMAP's activities, it is evident that members find value in it.

### **Finding 2**

UNESCO Bangkok set the goals and purpose of the NEQMAP and acts as the NAO of the network. The initial core group of experts which vetted the goals of UNESCO Bangkok, and helped in the planning of activities for the network, became the Steering Group. UNESCO Bangkok is the Secretariat of the network. On its behest, several organisations involved in learning assessment joined the network. The network began with 15 members in 2013 and today has 54 members from 29 countries. NEQMAP began as a network with a hub-spoke structure, with UNESCO Bangkok as the central node, but has evolved into a multi-tiered structure with relationships no longer concentrated at one node, but spread across the network.

### **Finding 3**

The current structure of NEQMAP, with UNESCO Bangkok as the knowledge-broker is that of a NAO governance. UNESCO Bangkok has an edge over other members in playing the role of a NAO by virtue of a) its regional presence, b) having established legitimacy with several nations prior to network formulation and c) its mandate to support nations in the Asia-pacific region achieve SDGs.

It is without doubt that having UNESCO Bangkok as the Secretariat of the network that has helped NEQMAP emerge as a flagship program in the area of learning assessment today. As a result, the network has not only grown from an initial membership of 15 in 2013 to 54 members in 2019, but also led to the development of several relationships between experts in the field of learning assessment and others who would find it hard to access otherwise. Members have begun volunteering their services and expertise to the network, showing trust and goal consensus.

#### **Finding 4**

The strategic role of the network lies with the SG. Along with the stated functions in the TOR, developing a *Strategic Plan*, from time to time would be the job of the SG (with inputs from UNESCO Bangkok).

#### **Finding 5**

Strong networking capacities of the various members of the Secretariat has helped NEQMAP grow into a large network of professionals. The Secretariat has also brought expertise to the reach of many members as a knowledge-broker. The network has shown great resilience in spite of staff turnover in the Secretariat. Today NEQMAP has implemented several activities to its credit due to the Secretariat's consistent efforts. A *Strategic Plan* in place would give the necessary focus to these activities and produce better outcomes for the network. Prompt communication with members and SG would go a long way in improving the Secretariat's efficiency. Fund raising, is inevitable for the continued functioning of the network. It is evident that unless the human resource crunch in the Secretariat is addressed, coordinating and monitoring roles may become increasingly difficult.

#### **Finding 6**

All the categories of membership viz. regular member (institutional/individual member), Associate member, may be retained except the *Observer* category.

### **Finding 7**

The current Secretariat may not be sustainable unless more financial and human resources are mobilised for the network. It would be good to have other members play the role of SG as new ideas are needed from time to time for better governance. The current Secretariat is not sustainable in terms of human and financial resources. Membership fee cannot be collected, but a small participation fee may be collected.

### **Finding 8**

NEQMAP's first pillar of activities has been successful in building relationships between members of the network as well as between various partners, experts, thereby meeting one of its objectives of facilitating sharing of expertise among members. Relations have also been successfully built with non-members and partners. The members have reported several outcomes, mostly at 'expect to see' level (knowledge, perspective level and attitudinal changes). To a certain extent, 'like to see' changes have occurred, influencing members to take actions. However, these second level changes may or may not have been affected by CDW alone.

### **Finding 9**

The researches undertaken by NEQMAP have led to several network level and individual member level outcomes. At the network level, the outcomes are: a) Rapport between members and experts b) Opportunities for members to collaborate, participate in research c) Members share their knowledge through technical writing and presentations d) Expanding of the network. At the individual member level, participating in the researches has led to a) increase in understanding of concept of transversal competencies b) better understanding of how assessment may be used for policy change c) Understanding of issues of one's own country better d) Desire to bring about change. Although research has been able to get members interested in bringing about change, they may not be

empowered to do so. This may require the support of the network as a network is in a much better position to bring about change rather than a single organisation (Creech & Ramji,2004).

### **Finding 10**

The Knowledge-sharing has been a vital activity in building the network and helping countries to get a broad perspective about learning assessment and its linkage to curriculum, pedagogy and goals of sustainable development. The interest that members show in sending articles to newsletter and their excitement in sharing experiences at the Annual meeting shows that the network has been successful in meeting one of its primary objectives- facilitating sharing of knowledge and experience. For a knowledge network like NEQMAP, this has been an achievement for NEQMAP. The knowledge portal and newsletter may be good points for show-casing country level outcomes based on Action Plans. The opportunities provided by the interactive forum needs to be tapped further.

### **Finding 11**

Overall activities have been extremely relevant to the participants. Most members find relevance in the knowledge sharing activities. Members' needs are varied with respect to CDW, members have found relevance in the area of learning assessment as well as transversal competencies.

### **Finding 12**

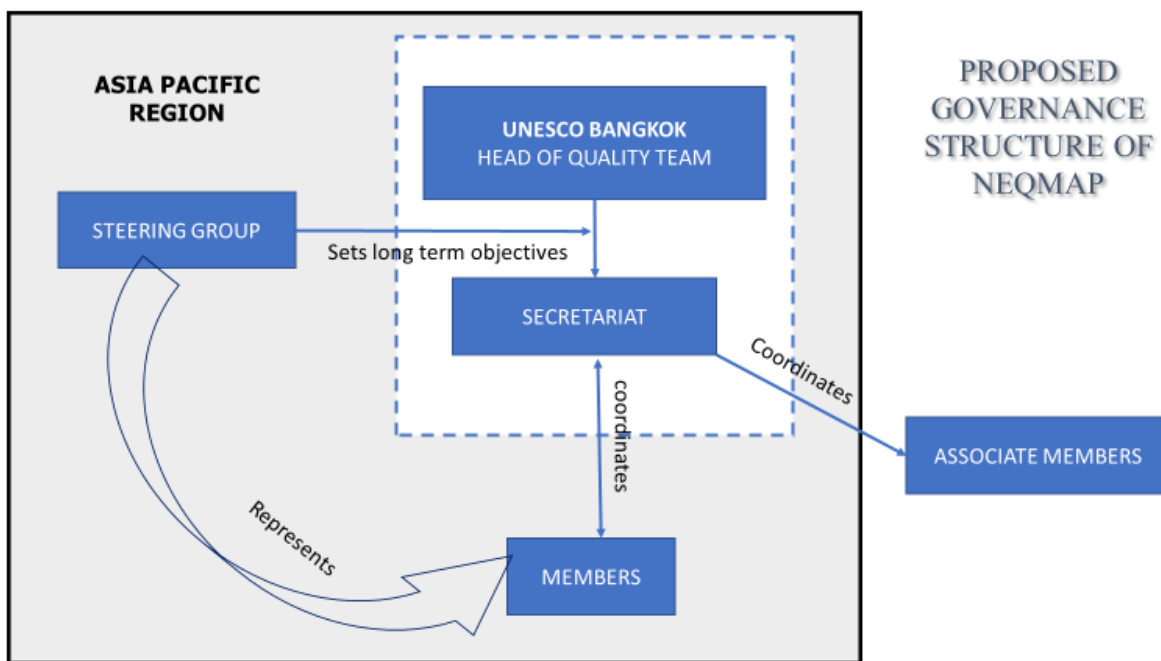
The activities of the network may not be sustainable due to financial and human resource crunch.

Based on the above findings, recommendations are given below.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. The *Vision, Mission and Goals* for NEQMAP need to be drafted clearly in a new TOR. The goals may include the focus area of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills also, as it is most relevant to the current situation. Objectives need to be comprehensive and stated in terms of measurable, observable outcomes.

2. As policy change requires political will and establishing relationships with decision-makers, this may be impossible for members to achieve on their own. Policy change would require participatory research, establishing contact with decision-makers and hand-holding from the network. These need to be deliberated upon by the SG, Secretariat along with member organisation.
3. The current governance structure is best suited for network effectiveness. The SG would make strategic decisions for NEQMAP and UNESCO Bangkok, would continue as the Secretariat of NEQMAP. The observer category may be removed. The mechanism for need assessment of members has to be strengthened such that the SG must be better able to make strategic decisions for the sub regions they represent. The structure is given below:



**Fig.13 Proposed Governance Structure of NEQMAP**

4. The SG may continue to have 5-7 members, representing the various sub-regions of the Asia-Pacific. The SG would be involved in making strategic decisions for the network. The network should also develop a suitable mechanism for SG members to interact with members of its region to enable this. Members of the SG need a deep understanding of the needs of the region, strategic

experience and resource mobilisation skills. Having a separate panel of technical experts may be considered.

5. The role of the Secretariat would be to help members achieve the next level of outcomes by chalking out *Action Plans* for their countries through a participatory approach. This would involve coordinating the members to help take the network to its next phase- *Production phase*. Fund raising would be a necessary priority for a Secretariat in a *Network Administration Organisation* - governed network.
6. *Outcome Mapping (OM)* would be a good approach for developing a *Strategic Plan* for a network like NEQMAP. NEQMAP's strategy should change from generic broad objectives for all members to stating objectives in terms of country-specific (or group of countries) outcomes. *Strategic Plans* may need to be revised as network goals change with time. These changes may be done in consultation with the SG, as representatives of members of a region. The steps of OM are discussed in Table 11 (see p.91)
7. Activities of NEQMAP more effective by having a *Strategic Plan* in place. Selecting *boundary partners* for the activities would be necessary to make them more relevant. The CDW need to be longer and more intense to be more effective. Research pillar may be strengthened to include more countries in a participatory manner. Accumulated new knowledge from research would enable the network to hand-hold countries to bring about policy-changes. The knowledge portal has a great potential for sharing outcomes (*progress markers*) of members and needs to be fully utilised.
8. UNESCO Bangkok may consider having two full-time employees for running the Secretariat effectively.



## **SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE**

1. Have members volunteer in the Secretariat office by turns.
2. Formation of sub-committees (of members) is a common practice in networks (Plastrik & Taylor, 2006), when it becomes more difficult for one individual to coordinate various tasks required in network management. The sub-committees may be formed for coordinating participants before an event, newsletter editing, maintaining web portal, developing research framework & monitoring etc. The members with relevant competencies may be chosen for these sub-committees.
3. Interns may be utilised for supporting tasks related to office administration and communications as is being currently done.
4. Collaborations within other departments/sections of UNESCO so that finances and human resources need not be duplicated for projects with similar objectives. For e.g. Teacher Education wing in UNESCO may be also involved if there is a CDW in the same area. Collaboration with SDG Nodal offices and UNESCO national offices may also be carried out for coordinating tasks
5. Volunteering, contributions in kind are recommended for sustaining the activities of NEQMAP.
6. Early planning of events would help members plan participation better and also reduce costs to a great extent.

## CONCLUSION

The evaluation of NEQMAP has shown that it is a unique network for quality monitoring in education, unlike other networks in the learning assessment area. UNESCO Bangkok has established its credibility for supporting nations in the region, and NEQMAP, as its network, has played a crucial role in building knowledge, capacities in assessment and curricular practices, research and disseminating knowledge among members. These results take time and effort. As networks evolve, there are bound to be challenges; networks either die a natural death or flourish after this point. Some of the challenges faced by NEQMAP are common to most large networks in the world today. Networks have different models and the one chosen by UNESCO Bangkok, at the time of formulation is apt for its purpose.

Recommendations have been made regarding how various entities in governance structure can perform better and what mechanisms need to be in place for making activities more effective. As countries face new challenges in the developing world today, timely solutions are needed. UNESCO Bangkok, must believe in itself and make haste to cover up for the lost time and opportunities. The Steering Group (SG) has played a remarkable advisory role and it is hoped that it will lead the network strategically to achieve greater heights. It is also hoped that the network will tap the good will that has developed all around to address matters of grave human importance collaboratively. It is hoped that this evaluation has helped answer some of the questions NEQMAP had when the idea of an evaluation was initiated. All suggestions and recommendations will come to fruit only when words are followed by actions.

## REFERENCES

1. Creech, H. and Ramji, A. (2004). *Knowledge Networks: Guidelines for Assessment*, International Institute for Sustainable Development, [www.issd.org](http://www.issd.org).
2. Earl, S. [Sara Earl]. (2008, Jun 20th) *Outcome Mapping* pt 1[Video file]. Retrieved from [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPL\\_KEUawnc&list=PLP8GGmsdKiiNfgH5fo0DFgj3YEb6dYWbV&index=2](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPL_KEUawnc&list=PLP8GGmsdKiiNfgH5fo0DFgj3YEb6dYWbV&index=2)
3. Earl, S. [Sara Earl]. (2008, Jun 20th) *Outcome Mapping* pt 2[Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a9jmD-mC2lQ&list=PLP8GGmsdKiiNfgH5fo0DFgj3YEb6dYWbV&index=1>
4. Earl, S. [Sara Earl]. (2008, Jun 20th) *Outcome Mapping* pt 3[Video file]. Retrieved from <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ulXcE455pj4&list=PLP8GGmsdKiiNfgH5fo0DFgj3YEb6dYWbV&index=3>
5. Hearn, S. (2012). *Outcome Mapping, Better evaluation*, Retrieved from [https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/outcome\\_mapping](https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/plan/approach/outcome_mapping)
6. IDRC. (2001). *Outcome Mapping*, International Development Research Centre. Retrieved from [http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-26586-201-1-DO\\_TOPIC.html](http://web.idrc.ca/en/ev-26586-201-1-DO_TOPIC.html),
7. Landscape Conservation Cooperatives. (2014). *Network Strategic Plan*. Retrieved from [https://lccnetwork.org/sites/default/files/Resources/LCC\\_Network\\_Strategic\\_Plan.pdf](https://lccnetwork.org/sites/default/files/Resources/LCC_Network_Strategic_Plan.pdf)
8. Law and Justice foundation of NSW. (n.d.) *Implementing a Project -The Role of a Steering Committee*. Retrieved from [http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/site/templates/resources/\\$file/SteeringCommittee.pdf](http://www.lawfoundation.net.au/ljf/site/templates/resources/$file/SteeringCommittee.pdf)
9. Lublinski, J. and El-Awady, N. (2007). *Mentoring and Monitoring – How to Build a Reporters’ Network Using the Outcome Mapping Framework*. Paper presented at

*Measuring Change – Planning, Monitoring, Evaluation in Media Development*, Bad Honnef, 2007.

10. Organisation Development Network. (2015). *Strategic Plan*, Retrieved from [https://c.ymcdn.com/sites/odnetwork.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/About\\_Us/OD\\_Network\\_Strategic\\_Plan\\_20.pdf](https://c.ymcdn.com/sites/odnetwork.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/About_Us/OD_Network_Strategic_Plan_20.pdf)
11. Plastrik, P. & Parzen, J. (2012). *Guidebook for Building Regional Networks for Urban Sustainability 2.0*, Urban Sustainability Directors Network, USDN. Retrieved from <https://www.usdn.org/uploads/cms/documents/usdn-regional-network-development-guidebook.pdf>
12. Plastrik, P. and Taylor, M. (2006). *Net Gains: A Handbook for Network Builders Seeking Social Change*, Version 1.0, Retrieved from [www.networkimpact.org](http://www.networkimpact.org).
13. Provan, K.G. and Kenis, P. (2008). Modes of Network Governance: Structure, Management, and Effectiveness. *University Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 18(2), 229–252. DOI: 10.1093/jopart/mum015
14. Rogers. P. (2014) *Theory of change*, UNICEF. Retrieved from: [https://www.betterevaluation.org/sites/default/files/theory of change](https://www.betterevaluation.org/sites/default/files/theory%20of%20change), 25.07.2019
15. Schon, D.A. (1983). *The Reflective Practitioner, How Professionals think in Action*, Basic Books Inc. USA.

17. UNDP, (2009). Ed. Wignaraja, K. *Capacity Development: A UNDP primer*, United Nations Development Programme, New York, NY 10017 USA
18. UNEG. (2010). UNEG Guidance Documents, *UNEG Quality Checklist for Evaluation Terms of Reference and Inception report*. Retrieved from: <https://www.iom.int/jahia/webdav/site>
19. UNESCO. (2013). *Inaugural statement. Network on Quality Monitoring in the Asia-Pacific*, NEQMAP. Retrieved from: <https://bangkok.unesco.org/sites/default/files/assets/article/>
20. UNESCO. (2015). *Education 2030. Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the Implementation of Sustainable Goals*. Retrieved from: <http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/>
21. UNESCO. Bangkok (2016) *NEQMAP Knowledge portal- UNESCO Bangkok*. Retrieved from <http://nespap.unescobkk.org/neqmap/>, 18-07-2019
22. UNESCO. Bangkok (Jun 2016). *Quality of Education. NEQMAP Members*. Retrieved from <http://www.unescobkk.org/education/quality-of-education/nemap/neqmap-members>
23. UNESCO. Bangkok (Jun 2016). *Quality of Education. NEQMAP Newsletter*. Retrieved from: <https://bangkok.unesco.org/content/neqmap-newsletter>
24. UNESCO. Bangkok (Jun 2016). *Quality of Education. NEQMAP Steering Group*. Retrieved from: <https://bangkok.unesco.org/content/neqmap-steering-group>
25. UNESCO. Bangkok (Jun 2017). *NEQMAP Activities & Events/Capacity Development Activities*. Retrieved from: <https://bangkok.unesco.org/content/capacity-development>
26. UNESCO. Bangkok. (Jun 2016). *NEQMAP Activities and events. Research*. Retrieved from: <https://bangkok.unesco.org/content/research>

27. UNESCO. Bangkok. (Jun 2017). *NEQMAP Activities and events. Knowledge-Sharing*. Retrieved from <https://bangkok.unesco.org/content/knowledge-sharing>
28. UNESCO. Bangkok. (Jun 2017). *Quality of education. NEQMAP Network on Quality Monitoring in the Asia-Pacific*. Retrieved from <https://bangkok.unesco.org/content/network-education-quality-monitoring-asia-pacific-neqmap>
29. UNESCO-UIS. (2018). *A Quick guide to Education Indicators for SDG4*, Retrieved from: <http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/quick-guide-education-indicators-sdg4-2018-en.pdf>
30. UNESCO-UIS. 2015. *Education 2030. Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 4* Retrieved from [http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/education-2030-incheon-framework-for-action-implementation-of-sdg4-2016-en\\_2.pdf](http://uis.unesco.org/sites/default/files/documents/education-2030-incheon-framework-for-action-implementation-of-sdg4-2016-en_2.pdf)
31. UNSSC. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, UNSSC Knowledge Centre for Sustainable Development, Bonn, Germany. Retrieved from [https://www.unssc.org/sites/unssc.org/files/2030\\_agenda\\_for\\_sustainable\\_development\\_kcsd\\_primer\\_en.pdf](https://www.unssc.org/sites/unssc.org/files/2030_agenda_for_sustainable_development_kcsd_primer_en.pdf)
32. USDN. (2016). Network Governance and Leadership Structure Development Worksheet, *Regional Network Workbook*, Retrieved from <https://www.usdn.org/network-building-resources.html>

**Table 1. Sampling for the Data Collection**

S.No	Respondent	Population	Sample	Tool
1.	Steering Group	7	All current members	Interview
2	Secretariat and Past Office-bearers	8	All current and sample of past members	In-depth Interview
3	Members	54	*22 Members *20% of various categories based on type of organisation	*Questionnaire * Focus Group Discussion at Manila
4	Facilitators	>10	4 members	Interview
5	Donors	3	2 Donors	Interview
6	Partner members	1	UNICEF	Interview

**Table 2 A. List of Interviewees**

NEQMAP – Secretariat and Past officials of UNESCO Bangkok interviewed		
S.NO	UNESCO MEMBERS	POSITION HELD OR CURRENTLY HOLDING
1	Gwang Chol Chang	Head of the Section, Division for Policies and Lifelong Learning Systems, UNESCO Paris Former Head of the Section of Education Policy & Reform (EPR), UNESCO Bangkok
2	Ramya Vivekanandan Rodrigues	Thematic lead for learning assessment, Global Partnership for Education, Washington DC, Former Programme Specialist, UNESCO Bangkok Head of NEQMAP Secretariat, UNESCO Bangkok
3	Tserennadmid (Nadya) Nyamkhuu	Education Specialist, UNICEF, Country office in Mongolia Former Programme Officer, EPR Unit
4	Stella Yu	Education Policy & Reform, UNESCO Bangkok
5	Moritz Bilagher	Former Quality Education Team Leader & Head of NEQMAP Secretariat, UNESCO Bangkok
6	Ms. Jun Morohashi	Head of Executive Office & Regional Programme Coordinator at UNESCO Bangkok
7	Mark Mann	Programme Officer, Section for Inclusive Quality Education UNESCO Bangkok
8	Maki Hayashikawa	Head, Inclusive Quality Education Section, UNESCO Bangkok & Head, Secretariat NEQMAP
Facilitators & Other Stakeholders		
S.No	Facilitators/Partner	Position Held or currently holding
1	James Tognolini	JT Education Consulting Pty Ltd, Australia
2	Shailendra Sigdel	(UNESCO Institute for Statistics, UNESCO Delhi)
3	Mioko Saito	International Institute for Educational Planning, IIEP, UNESCO-Paris
4	Esther Care	Brookings Institute, USA
5.	Eileen O'Mailley	Porticus (Funding partner for GPE)

6.	Roshan Bajracharya	Assessment, Information system, Monitoring & Statistics (AIMS) UIS, UNESCO Bangkok
7.	Erin Tanner	UNICEF East Asia & the Pacific Regional office (EAPRO)
<b>Participants of Focus Group Discussion</b>		
S.No	Participant /Member	Country
1	Education Review Office	Nepal
2	Individual member, Regional Institute of Education	Iran
3	Institute of Informatics and Development	Bangladesh
4	Indian Institute of Education	India
5.	Vietnam National Institute of Educational Services	Vietnam
6.	Mongolian National University of Education	Mongolia
7.	Ministry of Education, Heritage & Arts	Fiji
8.	Global Research Association of Curriculum & Evaluation	Philippines

**Table 2 B List of Documents Reviewed**

DOCUMENT REVIEWED	PURPOSE
TOR Of NEQMAP	Analyse the purpose, vision of NEQMAP, Governance structure
Tor of The Steering Group (SG)	Roles of the SG
TOR of the Members	Defines membership categories and functions
Agenda, Website	to reconstruct chronologically the events and activities carried out by NEQMAP
CDW Agenda, Website	to analyse the main content of the CDW and its relevance for the members
List of Participants In CDW/ Annual Meetings	to study who were the main players in the network (beneficiaries/facilitators/experts)
Annual Meeting Minutes + Evaluation Form	to study the main decisions taken during the Annual meetings, Needs of the members
SG Meeting Minutes	to analyse the decisions taken, contribution of individual members; to analyse consensus and conflicts within the network
CDW – Topics/ Materials/Presentations	to study the gaps between the needs of members and inputs provided
Research Reports/Case Studies/Topics/Findings	to study the Content, methodology for its relevance, effectiveness and sustainability
Website/Newsletter/Web Portal /Annual Meeting Reports	to analyse the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of the knowledge sharing activities
Annual Budget and Audited Account Statements Form 2013-2019	to understand the main expenditures incurred by NEQMAP and funding arrangements



**Table 3 Steering Group Members of NEQMAP (2013-Current)**

Steering Group Members	Experience
1. Ho Sui Chu Esther Director, Hong Kong Centre for International Student Assessment & Project Manager of HKPISA-Hong Kong SAR (China)	Consultant for PISA in Macau, China, and Shanghai for many years. Parental involvement in children’s education, home school community collaboration, school effectiveness & school reform, decentralization & school management, Research Methodology in education & multilevel analysis in educational research
2. Ivan Nikitin Executive Secretary Eurasian Association for Educational Assessment (EAOKO) - Russia	Ivan is also the Program Director of Centre for International Cooperation in Educational Development (Russia)International Comparative Analysis, Universities Management & Ranking, education Financing & learning technologies issued by Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy & Public Administration (RANEP); Policy Development – Russian Education Development Strategy until 2015
3. Jimin Cho Vice-President of the Division of Global Education at Korea Institute for Curriculum & Evaluation (KICE) Republic of Korea	Experience as Head of Dept of International Comparative Studies of Student Achievement coordinating PISA and TIMSS projects; Scoring & Reporting in-depth analysis of various major assessments in the Republic of Korea
4. Suman Bhattacharjea Research Director Director of Research at ASER Centre/Pratham – India	Extensive experience in Education, gender & women’s rights; Has worked with the government, private, non-government and international organisations in India, USA, Pakistan & Mexico. Has taught courses in Research Design, gender and education and has coauthored numerous articles & books in these areas.
5. Schwantner, Ursula Research Fellow at the Australian Council for Educational Research	Ursula leads the cooperation with the People’s Action for Learning (PAL) network which joins citizen-led assessments in fourteen countries in Africa, Asia and North America; provides tool development and guidelines to support UNESCO Institute for Statistics, 15 years’ research experience in large scale assessments; National Project Manager for OECD/PISA in Austria; research on PISA, IEA/PIRLS and TIMSS.
6. Michelle Belisle Director of the Educational Quality and Assessment Programme (EQAP) of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community	Michelle joined Educational Quality and Assessment Programme (EQAP) in April 2015, after serving as the Director of Assessment in the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education in Canada. Michelle has taught undergraduate and graduate programs at the University of Regina in the areas of classroom assessment and leadership and assessment.

Nordin Abd Razak Professor of the School of Educational Studies, Universiti Sains Malaysia	Nordin's research interests include Measurement and Scale Development, Educational Assessment and Evaluation, International Large-scale Assessment [e.g. TIMSS and PISA], and Psychological Testing. His expertise includes multivariate and multilevel analysis and Rasch Measurement Model using various statistical software. Nordin's research work includes quality of teacher work-life, positive education/positive institution, evaluation and assessment, large scale national & international Assessments and PISA Item Development & Data Analysis.
---	--

**Table 4. List of Members**

Number	COUNTRY	NAME OF INSTITUTION
1	AFGHANISTAN	Ministry of Education, Education Management Information System (EMIS)
2	AUSTRALIA	ACER Centre for Global Education Monitoring
3		Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority
4		JT Education Consulting Pty Ltd
5	BANGLADESH	Institute of Informatics and Development (IID)
6	BHUTAN	Bhutan Council for School Examinations and Assessments (BCSEA)
7		Royal Education Council
8	Cambodia	Education Quality Assurance Department, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
9	FIJI	Educational Quality and Assessment Programme (EQAP) of the Pacific Community (SPC)
10	HONG KONG SAR, China	Hong Kong Centre for International Student Assessment (HKPISA Centre)
11		Hong Kong Examinations and Assessment Authority (HKEAA)
12		Teaching and Learning Evaluation and Measurement Unit, The University of Hong Kong
13	INDIA	ASER Centre, India
14		Education Quality Foundation of India (EQFI)
15		Indian Institute of Education (IIE)
16		CCLP worldwide
17		ACER India
18		NCERT (National Council of Educational Research and Training)
19	INDONESIA	SEAMEO QITEP
20	JAPAN	Graduate School of Education, The University of Tokyo
21	LAO PDR	Education Quality Assurance Center (EQAC), Mo ES
22		Research Institute for Educational Science (RIES), Mo ES
23	MALAYSIA	SEAMEO RECSAM
24		<i>Universiti Sains Malaysia</i>
25		Ministry of Education Educational Planning and Research Division
26	MALDIVES	Ministry of Education, Quality Assurance Department
27	MONGOLIA	Mongolian Academy of Educational Sciences

28		Educational Evaluation Center (EEC), MoES
29		Mongolian Institute of Education Research (MIER), MoES
30		Institute of Teacher's Professional Development
31	MYANMAR	Department of Myanmar Examinations
32		Educational and Developmental Service Centre (EDSC), Nepal
33	NEPAL	Education Review Office (ERO), MoE
34		Curriculum Development Center, MoE
35		Idara e Taleem o Agahi (ITA)/Centre for Education and Consciousness
36	PAKISTAN	Ministry of Federal Education & Professional Training - National Education Assessment System
37	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	Department of Education
38		Global Resources for Assessment Curriculum and Evaluation, Inc (GRACE)
39	PHILIPPINES	INNO-Change International Consultants
40		Department of Education - Bureau of Education Assessment
41	REPUBLIC OF KOREA	Korea Institute for Curriculum and Evaluation (KICE)
42	RUSSIAN FEDERATION	Eurasian Association for Educational Assessment (EAOKO)
43	SINGAPORE	Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Academic Group, NIE, NTY
44	SRI-LANKA	National Education Research and Evaluation Centre, Faculty of Education, University of Colombo
45	THAILAND	The National Institute of Educational Testing Service (NIETS)
46	UZBEKISTAN	State Inspectorate on Supervision of Quality in Education
47		Vietnam Institute of Education Sciences (VNIES) Research Center for Education Outcomes Assessment
48	VIETNAM	Ministry of Education and Training Center for Education Quality Evaluation
<b>Associate Members</b>		
S.No	Country	Individual/Institution
1	INDIA	Vyjyanthi Sankar( Individual) The Brookings Institution (Consultant)
2	UK	James Neill, GL Education Group
3	SOUTH AFRICA	Randy Bennett, International Association for Educational Assessment
4	MALAYSIA	S. Kanageswari Suppiah, Shanmugam (Individual) Universiti Utara Malaysia
5	NETHERLANDS	Frans Kleintjes, Cito International
6	IRAN	Masoud Kabiri (Individual), National Coordinator Center of TIMSS, PIRLS, Research Institute for Education, MoE
7	CHINA (SHANGHAI)	Zhu Xiaohu (Individual) Shanghai Normal University

**Table 5. Key Predictors of Effectiveness of Network Governance Forms, Provan & Kenis, 2008**

<b>Governance Forms</b>	<b>Trust</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>	<b>Goal Consensus</b>	<b>Need for Network Level Competencies</b>
<i>Shared governance</i>	High density	Few	High	Low
<i>Lead organisation</i>	Low density highly centralized	Moderate number	Moderately low	Moderate
<i>Network administrative organisation</i>	Moderate density, NAO monitored by members	Moderate to many	Moderately high	High

**Table 6 Capacity Development Workshops by NEQMAP**

<b>Regional &amp; Sub-Regional Capacity Development Workshops</b>		
<b>Capacity Development Workshops</b>	<b>Date/ Place Where Held</b>	<b>Collaborators</b>
<i>Introduction to Large-scale Assessments of Learning</i>	23–26 September 2014,	NEQMAP, Global Partnership in Education (GPE)
<i>Design and Development of Large-Scale Learning Assessments</i>	16-20 March 2015, Bangkok, Thailand	NEQMAP, GPE
<i>Alignment between Curriculum, Teaching, and Assessment</i>	18-20 May, Incheon, Seoul, Republic of Korea	NEQMAP, Korea Institute for Curriculum & Evaluation, World Education Forum (WEF), Mo E, Korea, GPE
<i>Analyzing and Understanding Learning Assessment for evidence-based policy making</i>	14-8 September, 2015, Bangkok Thailand	NEQMAP, GPE
<i>PISA for Development in Cambodia</i>	29 February–1 March, 2016, Phnom Penh, Cambodia	NEQMAP, KICE, Ministry of Education, Youth & Sports, Cambodia
<i>Reporting and Dissemination of Large-scale Learning Assessments,</i>	13-16 Sept 2016, Bangkok	NEQMAP, GPE, Australian Council for Education Research (ACER)
<i>Assessment Literacy and Test and Item Development and Design</i>	5-7 December 2016, Almaty, Kazakhstan	NEQMAP, GPE, PEARSON
<i>Data Quality and Accuracy for Large-Scale Learning Assessment Programmes</i>	12-15 March 2018, Bangkok, Thailand	NEQMAP, ACER, GPE
<i>Conceptualization, Measurement and Use of Contextual Data</i>	10–13 September 2018 in Penang, Malaysia	NEQMAP, University Sains Malaysia, GPE
<i>School-based, classroom, teacher and Formative assessment</i>	24-27 Jun 2019, Bandung Indonesia	NEQMAP, SEAMEO QITEP, ACER, GPE

National-level Workshops and Technical Support		
<i>Test and Item Development and Design</i>	September 2016, Lao PDR,	NEQMAP, GPE, PEARSON, Ministry of Education & Sports, Lao PDR
<i>Student Learning Assessment and International Monitoring of Student Performance</i>	25-27 April, 2016, Paro, Bhutan	NEQMAP, Bhutan Council for School Examinations and Assessment (BCSEA)
<i>Technical Assistance to Mongolia, Mission to Ulaanbaatar</i>	5-9 October 2015, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia	NEQMAP, Ministry of Education, Mongolia
<i>Nepal: How Should We Assess Student Learning?</i>	4 to 6 November, Kathmandu, Nepal	UNESCO Bangkok, UNESCO Kathmandu

**Table 7 Outcomes of CDWs as Narrated by Members**

INPUT- CONTEXT- OUTCOME HEIRARCHY
<p><b>Nature of the member organisation:</b> Non-governmental organisation  <b>Target Group</b> Education functionaries in the government/ Youth  <b>Major Role:</b> Policy Advocacy in Education &amp; other areas  <b>Context:</b> New curriculum for primary education is being developed</p> <p><b>Input 1: CDW attended</b> CDW 10: Workshop on formative assessment covered issues of introducing self-assessments,  <b>Reported Hierarchy of Outcomes:</b> Learning routine and usage of learning rubrics- Was an addition and relevant to the assessment and policy advocacy work done so far</p> <p><b>Input 2:</b> Participation at the Annual Meeting of NEQMAP in 2017 where integration of Transversal Competencies across curriculum of some countries were widely discussed.  <b>Reported Hierarchy of Outcomes:</b> We have undertaken the promotion of this concept as one of their primary agenda – We have signed an MoU with government's Access to Information (A2i) division as part of which they are preparing a framework for Youth skills (21st century skills in particular) development through online courses We have already started making a policy brief with a brief outline of the framework. - Once this is in place, we will start preparing MOOC courses for the youth on life skills integrating TVCs.</p> <p><b>Input 3:</b> Participation at the workshop on Formative assessments in Bandung Indonesia (June 2019)  <b>Reported Hierarchy of Outcomes:</b> We have also has partnered with government's Access to Information (A2i) division for replacing summative assessments with formative assessments for grades 1-3. This work was already ongoing by A2i. Upon our interest and expertise, they have partnered and had several consultation meetings with our team till date.</p>

<p><b>Nature of the member organisation:</b> National assessment/ Examination/ curriculum authority (non-Ministry)</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> Teachers</p> <p><b>Major Role:</b> Examination agency</p> <p><b>Context:</b> The country is embarking on doing away with examinations and replacing them with formative assessment till grade 3 starting from 2020 academic session onwards. Officials working in our organisation are teachers by profession and are in critical need of capacity building in various areas.</p> <p><b>Input:</b> Participated in 10/11 workshops</p> <p><b>Reported Outcomes:</b> Attending NEQMAP workshops has always been a great source of learning. Thus, NEQMAP came in as a blessing that helped every participant to learn something or the other from every NEQMAP workshop they attended - we are able to provide capacity building workshops to our teachers - As a whole, our agency has now officials with sound knowledge on student learning assessment and examination.</p>
<p><b>Nature of the member organisation:</b> National &amp; International Assessments</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> Students</p> <p><b>Major Role:</b> Examination agency</p> <p><b>Context:</b> Bhutan is embarking on doing away with examinations and replacing them with formative assessment till grade 3 starting from 2020 academic session onwards.</p> <p><b>Input 1:</b> The workshop on <i>Alignment between Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment</i></p> <p><b>Reported Outcome:</b> This workshop brought out the connection between learning outcomes in the curriculum through various learning experiences provided to the students. The assessment part underscored how to carry out and record assessment that are evidences of learning. It provided a platform for member countries to share practices that they have in their countries</p> <p><b>Input 2:</b> The <i>School-Based, Classroom, Teacher and Formative Assessment Workshop</i></p> <p><b>Reported Outcome:</b> This was like a follow up workshop to the Incheon Workshop stressing more on the assessment aspect. The Formative assessment part was timely as it provided insights on aspects to consider while carrying out formative assessment. (see context) - Follow up Activity was the dissemination of knowledge through knowledge sharing with colleagues- Experiences from participation in NEQMAP activities as well as activities of other organisations have greatly influenced changes in Curriculum, Pedagogy and Assessment.</p>
<p><b>Nature of the member organisation:</b> National &amp; International Assessments</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> Students</p> <p><b>Major Role:</b> Assessment &amp; Examinations Agency</p> <p><b>Context:</b> Conducts Assessments</p> <p><b>Input 1:</b> The workshop on <i>Alignment between Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment</i></p> <p><b>Reported Outcome:</b> To understand the linkage in different countries which are relevant to the situation in Hong Kong</p> <p><b>Input 2:</b> <i>Reporting and Dissemination of Large-Scale Assessments</i> held in Sept 2016</p> <p><b>Reported Outcome:</b> It helped us understand different modes of reporting large-scale learning assessments</p>
<p><b>Nature of the member organisation:</b> University/ research organisation</p> <p><b>Target Group:</b> Teachers &amp; Assessment specialists</p> <p><b>Major Role:</b> Test Development, Data Analysis and Interpretation</p> <p><b>Context:</b> Conducts Assessments</p> <p><b>Input:</b> Not mentioned</p>

<p><b>Reported Outcome:</b> We have a better understanding about the large-scale assessment such as TIMSS and PISA as well as the result reporting.</p>
<p><b>Nature of the member organisation:</b> Private sector/ consulting firm  <b>Target Group:</b> consults for the education department  <b>Major Role:</b> Learning Assessment Agency  <b>Context:</b> Conducts Assessments  <b>Input:</b> Not specified  <b>Reported Outcome</b> Was able to apply in our assessment programs the approaches we have learned in the workshops- Sharing the knowledge with professionals within the organisation - Curriculum Review, Assessment Framework Review, and networking for greater collaboration of private and public sectors of education towards quality assessment.</p>
<p><b>Nature of the member organisation:</b> University or Research organisation  <b>Target Group:</b> Teacher Educators  <b>Major Role:</b> Research in Teacher Education  <b>Context:</b> Guides Research, provides inputs for teacher Education  <b>Input 1:</b> Took part in research in Transversal competencies and attended workshop on TVCs.  <b>Reported Outcome:</b> These workshops have stimulated significant orientations towards assessment of transversal competencies, especially shifting the focus from rote memory to non-scholastic abilities which are largely ignored by the mainstream systems  <b>Input 2:</b> Research (country study on the Culture of Testing)  <b>Outcome:</b> Presentation of scientific papers in conferences and conventions</p>
<p><b>Nature of the member organisation:</b> National &amp; International Assessments  <b>Target Group:</b> Students  <b>Major Role:</b> Assessment &amp; Examinations Agency  <b>Context:</b> Conducts Assessments  <b>Input:</b> Not specified  <b>Reported Outcome:</b> Item design, item analysis and varied experience on learning assessment</p>
<p><b>Nature of the member organisation:</b> Regional/ sub-regional organisation  <b>Target Group:</b> Students  <b>Major Role:</b> Quality Improvement of Teachers and Education Personnel in Science  <b>Context:</b> service-provider to teachers  <b>Input:</b> Not specified, CDW attended, in general  <b>Reported Outcome:</b> The workshops have helped them(participants) gain knowledge from other country (through country report) and understand the current trends in assessment. The workshop has also helped in internal capacity building for academic team in assessment as critical issues in learning and teaching process were discussed.</p>
<p><b>Nature of the member:</b> Individual member  <b>Target Group:</b> Students  <b>Major Role:</b> Assessment expert  <b>Context:</b> Developing a national assessment tool  <b>Input 1:</b> Workshops on Assessment  <b>Outcome:</b> Online Questionnaire developed – National Assessment  <b>Input 2:</b> Promoting Transversal competencies  <b>Outcome:</b> Learnt how to include non-cognitive competencies in assessment</p>

**Table 8 Research Studies Undertaken In NEQMAP**

S.NO	NAME OF THE STUDY	DESCRIPTION	DISSEMINATION/ PUBLICATION
1	The Impact of large-scale assessments of students' learning to inform education policy, ACER & UNESCO Bangkok	Review of impact of large scale and learning assessment on policy and practice in the Asia Pacific region	<b>Policy brief:</b> <i>'Utilising large-scale assessments of students' learning to inform education policy'</i> , 2015
2	Analyzing and Utilizing Assessment Data for Better Learning Outcomes, LEAP programme, launched by UNESCO Bangkok	Combining information from a regional mapping survey on learning assessments as well as 10 case studies that analyzed national, regional, or international assessment data with the aim to identify what conditions may significantly impact learning outcomes.	<b>Synthesis report</b> <i>Analyzing and Utilizing Assessment Data for Better Learning Outcomes</i> -
3	Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Collaboration and Innovation in Reporting and Dissemination	The efforts undertaken to reach consensus, enhanced transparency and public dissemination of results have stimulated countries in the region to investigate how data on student learning outcomes may be used and shared in a common endeavour to improve the standards of education in the Pacific Islands.	<b>Topical Case study</b> conducted by EQAP, published by ACER and NEQMAP's Secretariat
4	Integrating the findings from the National Assessment of Student Achievement into the policy process: An experience from Nepal	A detailed overview of how Nepal conceptualises its learning assessments – in terms of grades, subjects, test development and contextual questionnaires – and discusses in depth how assessment findings are integrated into the educational policy and planning cycle in Nepal.	<b>Topical Case study</b> conducted by Nepal published by ACER and NEQMAP's Secretariat
5	The Southeast Asia Primary Learning Metrics Program: Thinking Globally in a Regional Context	It provides a detailed overview of the efforts and progress made by SEAMEO, UNICEF and the countries involved in the development, capacity building and implementation of the SEA-PLM program.	<b>Topical Case study</b> between ACER and NEQMAP's Secretariat



6	Assessment of Transversal Competencies: Current Tools in the Asian Region, UNESCO Bangkok, Brookings Institution	A regional study aimed to examine components within countries' learning assessments that show how these apply to and can measure transversal competencies. This report provides valuable information on how learning assessments are already capturing TVC and is useful for a broad range of education stakeholders, not only test developers, but also curriculum developers, teacher trainers and teachers.	<b>Report:</b> Assessment of Transversal Competencies: Current Tools in the Asian Region,
7	Mapping Study: Learning Assessment in the Asia-Pacific, 2015 LEAP programme, launched by UNESCO Bangkok	To map national practices of collecting, analyzing and utilizing international and national assessment data for policy formulation and implementation.	<b>Infographics</b>
8	Mapping Study on Existing Learning Assessment and Relevant Policies/Instruments, 2016	Mapping of existing as a program + National practices of collecting and analysing and utilising international and national assessment data for policy formulation and implementation	<b>- Infographics</b> <b>- Thematic Brief</b> (Large-scale Assessment Data and Learning Outcomes: Linking Assessments to Evidence-based Policy Making and Improved Learning February 2017
9	Assessment of Transversal 21st Century Skills / Competencies: Policy and Practice in the Asia-Pacific Region, UNESCO Bangkok, 2016, Brookings Institution	A large gap remains between the goals of education systems to integrate these competencies, and how they are assessed in reality. Study explored the different approaches to assessing these competencies, the challenges encountered, and lessons learned in the process.	<b>Report:</b> Assessment of Transversal 21st Century Skills / Competencies: Policy and Practice in the Asia-Pacific;
11	Comparative Perspective in Analysing Impact of School-Based Assessment and Highlighting the Challenges in its Implications, UNESCO BKK	SBA as a tool to equip teachers and students with knowledge on the strengths and weaknesses of student learning and a wide array of countries of Jurisdiction	<b>Report in progress</b>

**Table 9 Outcomes from Research on Transversal Competencies**

<p><b>Type of Institution:</b> Ministry</p> <p><b>Research study participated in:</b> Assessment of Transversal Competencies: Policy and practice in Asia Pacific Region</p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> This research has raised awareness for teachers and education manager on the value and necessity of competency-based assessment and the way to teach competencies in their classroom. Teacher also realized that even though the new curriculum (expected to happen next year) had not yet been applied, they were already following competency-based teaching and assessment.</p> <p><b>Learning:</b> Designing questionnaire, writing reports, sharing countries' experiences</p>
<p><b>Type of Institution:</b> Research Institution</p> <p><b>Research study Participated in:</b> Assessment of Transversal Competencies: Policy and practice in Asia Pacific Region</p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> Gained experiences within country and learnt of success stories and networking with organisations working in the same areas.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> Advocacy and documentation</p>
<p>Type of Institution: Ministry</p> <p><b>Research participated in:</b> Transversal competencies (not clear which one of the two studies)</p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> Incorporated transversal competencies in the curriculum and assessment</p>
<p><b>Type of Institution:</b> Ministry of Education</p> <p><b>Research study Participated in:</b> <i>Assessment of Transversal Competencies: Current Tools in the Asian Region</i></p> <p><b>Outcome:</b> Identification of the need to integrate elements of transversal competencies and ways to assess these competencies</p>

**Table 10 Results of Strength-Weakness-Opportunity-Threats (SWOT) Analysis by Members at 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of NEQMAP, held at Bangkok, Nov 2019**

<p><b>GROUP I</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>Large-scale Assessment Classroom-based assessment 21st century skills Alignment between Curriculum-Pedagogy-Assessment Informal sharing across countries Unique focus of assessment to improve quality and equality of education Expertise from different fields</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <p>Common research on Learning Assessment (LA) Not enough time for sharing of in-depth understanding How to support impact on policies -e.g. Ministry-level meeting Linkage between national and regional level dialogues, e.g. alignment to SDGs Peer learning Action Plan should be followed up</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>Countries sharing Different stage of development of asst systems Networking Knowledge exchange Inter countries disciplinary collaboration Actual collaboration between countries with same stage of development in assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>THREATS</b></p> <p>Human resource funding Action Plan Implementation support Country learning profile on LA -past present and future Regional expert group/consultants with professional knowledge on Implementation, analysis, dissemination</p>	<p><b>GROUP II</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>Under UNESCO umbrella Technical expertise Strongly related to global education goals-SDGs Most members have strong engagement with national government Facilitates relationship and network between members Bridge between national and global interests Large coverage and wide network</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <p>Access to policy makers No direct influence on policy Funding and sustainability staffing Not enough recognition at regional/international level</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>Global community demand for better education Engagement with govts Can be a reference organisation Compiling data in partnership with others Sustainable capacity building for assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>THREATS</b></p> <p>Rapid innovations and changes in assessment Similar initiatives by others/duplication Change in GPE mandate</p>
<p><b>GROUP III</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>Connectivity between members Channel of communication Range of expertise Range of contexts</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <p>Capacity gaps Different aims and objectives Lack of focus Varied needs Limited resources</p>	<p><b>GROUP IV</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>Knowledge sharing across nations Facilitated development of assessment frameworks Access of expertise/resources through UNESCO Enhancing educational systems – quality and assessment</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <p>May involve more time Generate funds and resources Long term impact</p>

<p>Lack of follow up</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>Sharing Networking Collaboration</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>THREATS</b></p> <p>Competing Initiatives from other organisations Lack of funds Continuity of administration &amp; coordination</p>	<p>Ascertain impact due to NEQMAP</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>Expansion- scope of members across and within countries Involve more policy makers Learn and choose from other countries (best practices) Establish linkages with ministry of education and others Enhancement of capacities</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>THREATS</b></p> <p>Extent of sustainability Lack of resources especially funds Transmission loss Consistency</p>
<p><b>GROUP V</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>TOR – capacity Building/Research/knowledge sharing platform Collaboration and networking Sharing of challenges, learnings &amp; best practices Diversity of countries and organisations</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <p>Sub regional representation funding lack of commitment of members lack of predictability and advance notice for events</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>OPPORTUNITIES</b></p> <p>bi/multilateral collaborations engaging policy makers at annual meetings inclusive steering committee structured planning of annual &amp; mid- term events context- general &amp; sub regional priorities</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>THREATS</b></p> <p>sustainability funding agencies/decline in funding generic vs. specific focus (imbalance of) donors can influence differently</p>	

**Table 11. Outcome Mapping Framework for Planning and Evaluation (Adapted from Hearn. S, 2012)**

<b>12 STEPS OF OUTCOME MAPPING</b>	
INTENTIONAL DESIGN (7 STEPS)	ROLES
1. State NEQMAP's Vision statement	SG
2. The Mission statement will spell out how NEQMAP is going to contribute to the Vision.	SG
3. Identify the <i>boundary partners</i> (individuals/groups/organisations with whom NEQMAP interacts directly and with whom it anticipates opportunities for influence).	SG- Secretariat
4. Draw out ' <i>outcome challenge statement</i> ' for the boundary partner(s). An <i>outcome challenge statement</i> describes the desired changes in the behaviour, relationships, activities, actions (professional practices) of the boundary partner. It is the ideal behavioural change of each type of boundary partner to be able to contribute to the ultimate goals (vision) of the programme. Identify whether the desired change is in the area of practice or policy. Keep the end in mind. The <i>boundary partner</i> may be prompted to answer- 'What changes can I bring about to improve quality of education in my country?'	Secretariat With Member Through a Participatory Process
5. Define the <i>Progress Markers</i> . These are a set of statements describing a gradual progression of changed behavior (observable and measurable) in the boundary partner leading to the ideal outcome challenge. They represent the information which can be gathered in order to monitor partner achievements. Therefore, <i>progress markers</i> are central in the monitoring process. Progress markers can be adjusted during the implementation process, can include unintended results. These do not describe a change in state and do not contain percentages or deadlines.	Secretariat With Member Through a Participatory Process
6. What are the different types of strategies (Strategy maps) the secretariat will use to contribute to and support the achievement of the desired changes at the level of the boundary partners? Which strategies may be aimed directly at the boundary partner and which strategies would be aimed at the environment in which the boundary partner operates?	SG- Secretariat
7. How is the Secretariat going to operate and organise itself to fulfil its Mission? Supporting change in <i>boundary partners</i> requires that the programme team itself is able to change and adapt as well. How can it be more efficient and effective (operational capacities) and more relevant (adaptive capacities)?	Secretariat
<b>MONITORING STAGE</b>	
8. Monitoring priorities provides a process for establishing the areas of the project to be monitored.	Secretariat
9. <i>Outcome journals</i> are a tool for collecting data about the progress markers over time. Outcome journals are used to collect data about behavioural changes observed among boundary partners. In cases where there are many boundary partners grouped together (perhaps because they play a similar role or the outcomes hoped for are similar), being able to see the outcome journals for each of them can provide a quick overview to compare across the set.	Member
10. <i>Strategy journals</i> are a tool for collecting data about the activities of a project.	Member
11. <i>Performance journals</i> are for collecting data about organisational practices.	Member
<b>EVALUATION STAGE</b>	
12. <i>Evaluation plan</i> provides a process and a tool for designing an evaluation using OM.	Secretariat/External evaluator uses the Journals to evaluate

## APPENDIX I

### Network on Education Quality Monitoring in Asia-Pacific (NEQMAP)

#### Terms of Reference (TOR)

##### 1. Preamble

With more children enrolled in school, the issues of quality and equity, together with the subsequent question of whether and how well students are learning have become increasingly pertinent, with several global and regional initiatives focusing on this issue.

Countries are looking to improve the way education systems evaluate the performance of students in an effort to closely monitor how well students are learning.

At the same time, policymakers, researchers and practitioners are concerned with the suitability of assessment systems, to ensure that they meet the needs of learners. In some cases, this includes concerns that excessive testing may cause education provision to be skewed towards undesirable side effects including “teaching to the test”.

Monitoring of learning outcomes can facilitate changes to the education system to improve learning, and can also hold educators accountable and enable governments to justify investments in education.

Comprehensive monitoring of learning requires effective and contextualised policies, structures, practices and tools in order to produce a valid and reliable evidence base for improving the quality of learning.

In considering assessment as the key tool used in monitoring learning, it is also critical to maintain strong linkages with curriculum and pedagogy as the main enablers of learning in the classroom.

Countries/jurisdictions of the Asia-Pacific region, with diverse experiences from a wide range of perspectives, have tremendous potential to learn from each other and synergize efforts in improving the way learning is monitored and evaluated in order to improve learning across the region.

Countries have been showing increasing interest in sharing experiences and expertise, and also the desire to learn from others in issues related to assessment, especially in how to use assessment data effectively to improve education policies and learning outcomes.

Recognizing this demand, UNESCO’s Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (UNESCO Bangkok), has the mandate to facilitate a regional platform for networking and information exchange on monitoring learning to raise the quality of education in Member States. This regional platform, the Network on Education Quality Monitoring in the Asia-Pacific (NEQMAP), was established on 28 March 2013, in Bangkok, Thailand.

##### 2. Objective of the Network

The network serves to strengthen education systems to improve the quality of education in Asia-Pacific through collaborative efforts. The network will provide a forum for exchanging of expertise,

experiences and lessons to improve the quality of learning in education systems of countries in Asia-Pacific, with the eventual aim of influencing policy reforms.

While the network will primarily focus on issues relating to assessment to ensure alignment with curriculum and pedagogy, other closely related topics, including teaching will also be addressed.

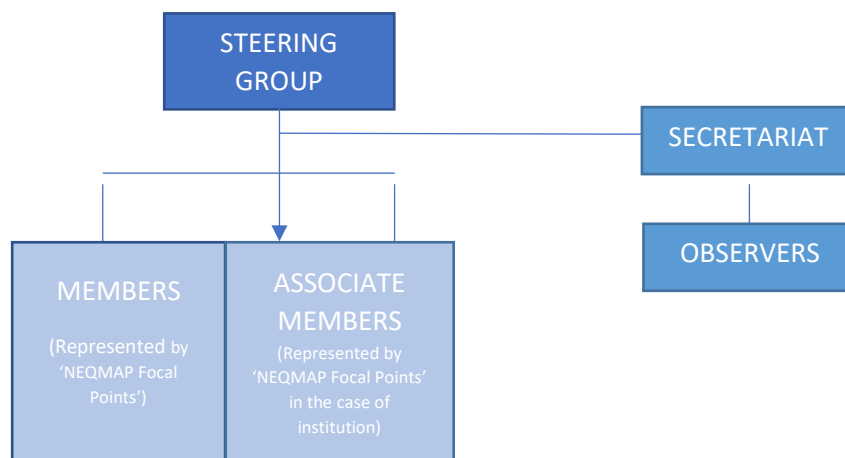
### 3. Activities of the Network

Activities of the network focus on research, knowledge sharing and capacity building among all stakeholders of the network and beyond.

### 4. Organisational Structure of the Network

The following diagram shows the organisational structure of the network:

**Figure 1: Governance Structure of NEQMAP**



Members (Represented by ‘NEQMAP Focal Points’)

Associate Members (Represented by ‘NEQMAP Focal Points’ in the case of institution)

Steering Group

Secretariat

Observers

#### 4.1 Steering Group

The Steering Group will consist of approximately five or seven (5 or 7) members representing the various sub-regions of the Asia-Pacific (including Central Asia, Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, South and West Asia and the Pacific). The Steering Group should be made up of recognized experts

in the area of educational quality with experience in leading international/regional/national assessment programmes.

The Steering Group will meet annually to provide consultation for planning of the network. The potential Steering Group member will be nominated by the NEQMAP Secretariat and endorsed by network members at the annual meeting for a term of up to two years, or up to the next network meeting if earlier, on a renewable basis. A rotational system can be applied in order to allow for new members to join the Steering Group and for others to “retire” after a certain period of time. 4.2 Secretariat

The UNESCO Bangkok Office will act as Secretariat of the network and its primary function is to facilitate and help coordinate the work of the network and managing its membership base in consultation with the Steering Group. In addition, the Secretariat will also assist in circulating related information/documents through the setting up of a network website, maintain regular contact with all network members and serve as Secretariat to the Steering Group itself.

By default, the Team Leader of the Quality of Education Team at the Section for Inclusive Quality Education (IQE), UNESCO Bangkok would serve as the head of the Secretariat.

### **4.3 Membership**

Membership to the network is free and open to all, based on the following criteria:

4.3.1 Member refers to: • An organisation/institution based in Asia-Pacific region whose mandate and activities are strongly related to quality of education, specifically policies and practices of learning assessment, curriculum and/or pedagogy

4.3.2 Associate Member refers to

- An organisation/institution based outside Asia-Pacific region whose mandate and activities are strongly related to quality of education, specifically policies and practices of learning assessment, curriculum and/or pedagogy and which has undertaken or is undertaking work in the Asia-Pacific region.
- An individual expert based either in or outside Asia-Pacific region who has extensive professional experience or expertise in the area of policies and practices of learning assessment, curriculum and/or pedagogy and who has undertaken or is undertaking work in the Asia-Pacific region.

To join NEQMAP, applicant should submit the following documents:

- Institutional applicants for “Member or Associate Member” category may submit the application form and an endorsement letter by the appropriate authority (e.g. Head of Institution/Organisation/Association) explaining the motivation for joining the Network to the Secretariat. Institutions are also expected to nominate a ‘NEQMAP Focal Point’ – this person would be the liaison between the institution/organisation and the network and may also represent the institution/organisation in meetings.



At their discretion, NEQMAP Focal Points may choose to convene national teams to coordinate the countries' involvement and participation in NEQMAP activities. NEQMAP Focal Points should keep the Secretariat informed of such arrangements.

- Individual applicants for “Associate Member” category may submit the application form, CV/Resume and a letter of interest to the Secretariat.

Membership application is considered successful with approval of a simple majority of the NEQMAP Steering Group. A letter of notification would be issued to successful applicants.

#### 4.3.3 Observers

In addition to the Members and Associate Members, all other institutions, organisations, associations and individuals can participate as observers in all activities and meetings of the network but would not be entitled to vote.

#### 4.4 Partners

NEQMAP welcomes the involvement of international and regional organisations in NEQMAP activities and meetings as partners through the provision of substantial technical and/or financial contribution to the Network. Interested parties can contact the Secretariat directly.

### **5. Operational Model of the Network**

The following operational model is suggested:

#### **5.1 Annual Meeting**

Annual meeting will be held for the following purpose(s):

- Update by the Secretariat on the network activities and institutional matters
- Update by the Members
  - Sharing and networking opportunities among members of the network
  - Election of next Steering Group
  - Finalization of network activities and selection of respective activity coordinators.

#### **5.2 Sustainability**

Though UNESCO Bangkok will endeavour to garner support for network meetings and activities, network members would be expected to fund their own participation.

At the same time, members are invited to consider making voluntary contributions to the network, or embark on joint fund-raising activities. As a network, collegiality between members by supporting each other is also highly encouraged.

#### **5.3 Decision Making**

Major decisions for the network would be taken during annual meetings. Outside of annual meetings, the Secretariat will consult the Steering Group for the making of decisions and update all

members accordingly. If advised by the Steering Group, members may be asked to contribute inputs and suggestions to better inform the decision-making process.

For matters related to activities, the Secretariat will consult both the Steering Group and the member/partner who will serve as a co-coordinator of specific network activity. Decision making through virtual meetings and/or e-discussions would be explored for minor decisions.

## APPENDIX II

### Network on Education Quality Monitoring in Asia-Pacific (NEQMAP)

#### Terms of Reference (TOR)

##### STEERING GROUP

The Steering Group will consist of approximately five or seven (5 or 7) members representing the various sub-regions of the Asia-Pacific (including Central Asia, Northeast Asia, Southeast Asia, South and West Asia and the Pacific). The Steering Group should be made up of recognized experts in the area of educational quality with experience in leading international/regional/national assessment programmes.

The Steering Group will meet annually to provide consultation for planning of the network. The potential Steering Group member will be nominated by the NEQMAP Secretariat and endorsed by network members at the annual meeting for a term of up to two years, or up to the next network meeting if earlier, on a renewable basis. A rotational system can be applied in order to allow for new members to join the Steering Group and for others to “retire” after a certain period of time.

#### **Roles and responsibilities:**

The Steering Group members will play crucial roles in making key decisions for management of NEQMAP, as per below:

a. Reviewing/approving new members The Steering Group will review application documents for new membership, as per the criteria specified in the TOR for the network membership. The Steering Group will also provide support to the NEQMAP Secretariat in recruiting more members from their respective sub-regions and engaging them in NEQMAP activities.

b. Support and contribution for the NEQMAP activities The Steering Group will provide guidance, technical advice and support in planning and implementing the network activities/events under each area; namely, capacity development, research and knowledge sharing. In particular, the Steering Group will:

- Provide guidance/support in selecting relevant topics and mobilizing expert(s) for the regional/sub-regional capacity development workshops;
- Provide guidance/support in selecting research study topics, mobilizing expert(s) to undertake or supervise the research, identifying peer reviewer (s) and reviewing research framework/tools;
- Encourage the members or non-member institutions to submit contributions to the NEQMAP knowledge portal;
- Support the organisation of the NEQMAP annual meeting by facilitating or moderating the relevant sessions.

The proposals and suggestions from the Steering Group for the network activities/events will then be discussed and endorsed by the NEQMAP members present at the annual meeting.

c. Support and contribution for the NEQMAP communication and advocacy The Steering Group will contribute to the advocacy and visibility of the network by sharing information on NEQMAP via various platforms including conferences, meetings, workshops, articles, newsletters, blog posts, etc.

d. Others There are other activities that the Steering Group can decide, guide and advise upon suggestion by the Secretariat, including, but not limited to, resource mobilization, public relations, partnerships with other networks and initiatives etc.

APPENDIX III

**Inaugural Statement  
Network on Education Quality Monitoring in the Asia-Pacific  
(NEQMAP)**

With more children enrolled in school, the issues of quality and equity, together with the subsequent question of whether and how well students are learning have become increasingly pertinent, with several global and regional initiatives focussing on this issue.

Countries are looking to improve the way education systems evaluate the performance of students in an effort to closely monitor how well students are learning.

At the same time, policymakers, researchers and practitioners are concerned with the suitability of assessment systems, to ensure that they meet the needs of learners. In some cases, this includes concerns that excessive testing may cause education provision to be skewed towards undesirable side effects including "teaching to the test".

Monitoring of learning outcomes can facilitate changes to the education system to improve learning, and is also important for accountability and for governments to justify investments in education.

Comprehensive monitoring of learning requires effective and contextualised policies, structures, practices and tools in order to produce a valid and reliable evidence base for improving the quality of learning.

In considering assessment as the key tool used in monitoring learning, it is also critical to maintain strong linkages with curriculum and pedagogy as the main enablers of learning in the classroom.

Countries/jurisdictions of the Asia-Pacific region, with diverse experiences from a wide range of perspectives, have tremendous potential to learn from each other and synergize efforts in improving the way learning is monitored and in using assessments to improve learning across the region.

Countries have been showing increasing interest in sharing of experiences and expertise, and also the desire to learn from others in issues related to assessment, including the use of assessment data to improve policy and learning.

Recognizing this demand, UNESCO's Asia-Pacific Regional Bureau for Education (UNESCO Bangkok), has the mandate to facilitate a regional platform for networking and information exchange on monitoring learning to raise the quality of education in Member States. This regional platform, NEQMAP, is hereby established on 28 March 2013, in Bangkok, Thailand.

*Handwritten signature: Singapore Education Board*

*Handwritten signature: Malaysia*

*Handwritten signature: Thailand*

*Handwritten signature: Indonesia*

*Handwritten signature: Australia*

*Handwritten signature: Sunan Bhadracharya*

*Handwritten signature: Sri Lanka*

*Handwritten signature: Korea*

*Handwritten signature: T.R. Kharita Bai*

*Handwritten signature: Nepal*

*Handwritten signature: Sri Lanka*

*Handwritten signature: Sri Lanka*

*Handwritten signature: Sri Lanka*

*Handwritten signature: Sri Lanka*

*Handwritten signature: Sri Lanka*

*Handwritten signature: Sri Lanka*

*Handwritten signature: Sri Lanka*

*Handwritten signature: Sri Lanka*

## APPENDIX IV: TOOLS

### A. Interview Questions to the Steering Group, NEQMAP

1. How long have you been associated with NEQMAP? What does the SG do? Kindly elaborate on your initiatives /contributions to NEQMAP.
2. What are some of the issues related to education quality (i.e. curriculum, pedagogy and learning assessment) across Asia-Pacific? How have the Members benefited from being in NEQMAP? How does the SG interact with NEQMAP members?
3. What are the successes, challenges and issues regarding NEQMAP's
  - Capacity Development initiatives (Pillar 1)?
  - Research and analytical work and activities (Pillar 2)?
  - Knowledge sharing activities (Pillar 3)?How effective and relevant are these activities? How can NEQMAP's activities be made more effective? Relevant? Sustainable?
4. Does NEQMAP have a strategy? What is NEQMAP going to do differently in the next 5 years?
5. How do SG members interact/engage with secretariat? Do you think the Secretariat is serving the purpose of the network effectively? Are you satisfied with the current governance mechanism of NEQMAP? Do you propose any changes in it? If yes, specify.
6. Do you think NEQMAP's activities are sustainable in terms of financial and human resources? What are your suggestions on resource mobilisation? Do you think members should provide their own financial resources rather than relying on UNESCO/Donors?
7. What are the challenges NEQMAP faces? What do you see as the future for NEQMAP?

**B. Interview Questions to Past Secretariat Members - NEQMAP**

1. How long were you involved in NEQMAP?
2. What was your role in NEQMAP?
3. How did NEQMAP secretariat start and evolve?
4. Any memorable experiences you would like to share?
5. What were the activities you built up while at NEQMAP?
6. Your current engagement with NEQMAP

Some questions were added for in-depth interview with subsequent secretariat members

1. Do you think NEQMAP has been successful in meeting the objectives it set out with?
2. What do you see some of the challenges in running a network like this effectively?
3. What are the areas of improvement for NEQMAP, in terms of governance and activities?
4. Do you think NEQMAP's activities and governance structure are sustainable? (Funding, Human Resources)

**C. FGD questions for a sample of Members**

1. You have taken part in NEQMAP activities before, what brings you to NEQMAP again?
2. How is participating in NEQMAP relevant to your institution? Country?
3. Do you feel NEQMAP is effective as a network to bring together different countries from Asia-Pacific region?  
  
In Sharing experience, Knowledge sharing, capacity building, research
4. Are there any specific areas that you feel NEQMAP should be focusing on?
5. How do you propose to use the knowledge gained at NEQMAP in your own country-policy/practice?
6. What do you feel about NEQMAP having a membership?

**D. QUESTIONNAIRE FOR MEMBERS**

To

Dear NEQMAP Members,  
Asia-Pacific Region

Dear NEQMAP Member,

Your participation in NEQMAP's activities has been invaluable. In order to find out whether NEQMAP has been meeting the needs of its members, an evaluation is being conducted of NEQMAP's governance and activities.

In this regard, it will be great if you could kindly complete this questionnaire and send it by mail on or before 8th September 2019 to the independent evaluator M.A. Jyothi; [jomirle@gmail.com](mailto:jomirle@gmail.com).

Thanking you for your kind cooperation,

Independent Evaluator

M.A. Jyothi, PhD



**SECTION I GENERAL**

1. What is the name of your organisation, Country? \*

2. How did you hear of NEQMAP? (tick the appropriate ones ✓) \*

- a) Event (i.e. meeting, conference, seminar,  etc.)
- b) Word of mouth
- c) Online announcement
- d) Heard of NEQMAP in another network
- e) Other (please specify)

3. a) Has your organisation been involved with any other UNESCO program before? \*(Tick the appropriate answer ✓)

- Yes
- No

3. b) If Yes, mention name of the program and year of joining the program. Please describe your institution/organisation's role and engagement with this program.

4.a) Has your organisation been a member of any other network involved in learning assessment, curriculum or pedagogy? \* (Tick the appropriate answer ✓)

- Yes
- No
- Other
- Not applicable

4. b) If Yes, mention name of the network and year of joining the network. Please describe your institution/organisation's role and engagement with this network. Please write 'not applicable ' if you have not done so. \*

5. What support does your country need in the areas of learning assessment, curriculum or pedagogy in order to monitor education quality? \*

6. Has your organisation provided inputs to NEQMAP regarding its needs? If so, how? \*

7. Are NEQMAP's activities aligned to your country's needs? Explain. \*

**SECTION-II CAPACITY BUILDING WORKSHOPS**

1. Details of NEQMAP Regional Workshops attended by your institution: \* (Tick the relevant column ✓)

CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOPS	Attended, relevant	Attended, not relevant	Not attended
Introduction to Large Scale Assessments of Learning, 23 – 26 September 2014, Bangkok, Thailand			
Design and Development of Large-Scale Learning Assessments 16-20 March 2015, Bangkok, Thailand			
Alignment between Curriculum, Teaching and Assessment, 18-20 May 2015, Incheon/Seoul, Rep of Korea			
Analyzing and Understanding Learning Assessment for Evidence-			

Based Policy Making, 14-18 September 2015, Bangkok, Thailand			
Capacity Development Workshop on “PISA for Development” 29 February-1 March, 2016, Phnom Penh, Cambodia			
Reporting & Dissemination of Large Scale Learning Assessments, September 2016, Bangkok, Thailand			
Assessment Literacy and Test and Item Development and Design5-7 December 2016, Almaty, Kazakhstan			
Data Quality and Accuracy for Large-Scale Learning Assessment Programmes – 12-15 Mar 2018, Bangkok, Thailand			
Conceptualization, Measurement and Use of Contextual Data, 10-13 Sep 2018, Penang, Malaysia			
School-Based, Classroom, Teacher and Formative Assessment 24-27 June 2019 Bandung, Indonesia			

2. Describe briefly your organisation's learning from the workshops participated in. \*
3. Describe briefly your organisation's nature of participation and contribution to the workshops participated in (as host/participant/resource person/presenter). \*
4. To what extent has participating in NEQMAP’s capacity building workshops helped meet your (country’s) needs in the area of learning assessment, curriculum and pedagogy (i.e. education quality)? \*
- 5                      4                      3                      2                      1  
 A great              Much              Somewhat              Little              Not at all  
 deal
5. Which need of your country has not been addressed by NEQMAP ’s capacity development workshops as yet? Please explain. \*
6. a) Has NEQMAP consulted you for your input before determining the themes/topics of Capacity Building Workshops? \*
- Yes                      No
- b) Are you satisfied with the need assessment process for selecting the area of the capacity building workshop? \*
- Yes                      No
- c) Do you have any suggestions to improve the need assessment process? \*

7. a) Apart from the Regional/National level workshops, has NEQMAP supported your organisation/ country in any other manner? \*

b) If Yes, describe briefly how. If not, please write 'not applicable'. \*

8. a) Has participating in the Capacity Development Workshops of NEQMAP motivated your organisation to bring about changes in education policy/practices in your country? \*

Yes                      No

8. b) In what area(s) have you felt a need for change in your country? \*

Curriculum

Pedagogy

Teacher training

Classroom Assessments

Transversal competencies in the curriculum

Using data from large scale assessments for informing policy

Not applicable

Other:

### SECTION III RESEARCH AND ANALYTICS

1. Has NEQMAP helped your organisation analyse data from large scale assessment in your country? \*

Yes                      No

2. a) Has your organisation participated in any NEQMAP research projects?

Yes                      No

2. b) If yes, mention the title of the study/studies it has participated in? Write 'not applicable' if your answer to 2a) is No. \*

2. c) Name of Individual(s) and Institution(s) that supported you in conducting the NEQMAP research. Write 'not applicable' if your answer to 2a) is No

2.d) How satisfied is your organisation with the support received from NEQMAP Secretariat for undertaking this research? (assuming 3 as moderately satisfied) \*

Extremely Satisfied	Very satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Not satisfied
5	4	3	2	1

3. What were your challenges in participating in NEQMAP's research activities? Write 'not applicable' if your answer to 2a) is No \*

4. In what specific manner did this research help address Quality of Education in your country?  
Write 'not applicable' if your answer to 2a) is No

5. Would you like to undertake any research in NEQMAP? If so, in what area?

6. a) What were your learnings from participating in the research activities of NEQMAP ? Write 'not applicable' if your answer to 2a) is No \*

6. b) Has NEQMAP research affected policy change in any AREA? If so, in which area(s)? \*

Curriculum

Pedagogy

Teacher training

Assessments

Transversal competencies in the curriculum

Using data from large scale assessments for informing policy

Not applicable

Other:

#### **SECTION IV KNOWLEDGE SHARING**

1. a) Has your organisation/institution shared the findings from large scale assessments undertaken in your country at NEQMAP? \*

Yes

No

1. b) How were findings from large scale assessments shared at NEQMAP?

presentation at annual meeting

shared country report

shared on website

newsletter

Other

Not applicable

2. List the areas in which your organisation has shared its knowledge in NEQMAP. Write 'not applicable' if you have not shared your knowledge in any manner. \*

3. What is your organisation's usual mode of sharing knowledge in NEQMAP? \*

web portal

Presentations in Annual meetings

webinars

newsletter

Not applicable

Other:

4. How important does your organisation think it is to share knowledge regarding its country's work with respect to Quality education (curriculum, pedagogy, assessment) ? \*

Extremely important	Very important	Moderately important	Slightly important	Not important
5	4	3	2	1

5. How has your organisation benefited from sharing its knowledge or research findings in NEQMAP?

6. Do you have any challenges in sharing knowledge in NEQMAP forum? \*

7. What were your organisation's learnings from participating in NEQMAP's knowledge-sharing exercise?\*

8. a) Has your organisation received support from any of the Steering Group members for sharing its knowledge in NEQMAP? \*

Yes No

8.b) Has your organisation received support from any of the Secretariat members for sharing its knowledge in NEQMAP? \*

Yes No

8.c) Please explain how NEQMAP members (Secretariat, Steering Group and/or Other members) supported your knowledge sharing.

## SECTION V OVERALL ACTIVITIES OF NEQMAP

1. On a 5-point scale how would you rate NEQMAP's overall activities, i.e. Capacity building, Research, Knowledge Sharing with respect to a) Relevance to your country's context \*

Extremely Satisfied	Very satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Not satisfied
5	4	3	2	1

b) Usefulness of Activities \*

Extremely Satisfied	Very satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Not satisfied
5	4	3	2	1

c) Technical Expertise \*

Extremely Satisfied	Very satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Not satisfied
5	4	3	2	1

d) Planning & Implementation of activities

Extremely Satisfied	Very satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Not satisfied
5	4	3	2	1

2.To what extent has participating in NEQMAP helped your country move towards the broader goals of Quality of Education? \*

Extremely Satisfied	Very satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Slightly satisfied	Not satisfied
5	4	3	2	1

3.Is there any specific action within your country in the areas of curriculum, pedagogy or learning assessment that may be attributed to your organisation’s participation in NEQMAP’s activities? \*

4.Has any follow up activity been undertaken by your organisation in your country after your participation in NEQMAP activities? If Yes, describe. \*

5.If given a chance, would your organisation be willing to host a NEQMAP event in your country? \*

Yes	No	May Be
-----	----	--------

6. What are your expectations from NEQMAP for the future? \*