NATIONAL HIGHER EDUCATION EQUITY POLICY

Myanmar

Policy Frameworks

Does equity with regard to supporting students from low-income or marginalized populations to enter or succeed in higher education feature in any government produced policy documents? If so, which government policy document(s) are these and can you provide website link(s) to them?

"Promote student support programmes" is one of the two key components of "Expand Equitable Access to Higher Education" strategy (Chapter 12 of National Education Strategic Plan - NESP 2016-2020). The NESP refers to increasing access for students from disadvantaged background (primarily referring to cost of education).

Please refer to the following links for more information:

➔ https://www.britishcouncil.org/sites/default/files/myanmar_national_education_strategic_plan_2016-21.pdf (National Education Strategic Plan 2016-21)

➔ http://www.moe-st.gov.mm/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/NESP_20Summary_20-_20English_20-_20Final_20-_20Feb_2023.pdf (NESP 2016-21 Summary)

What policies and actions are described in these government policy documents in terms of supporting students from low-income or marginalized populations to enter or succeed in higher education?

Again, the "Promote student support programmes" of the "Expand Equitable Access to Higher Education" strategy.

Is there a standalone policy document dedicated to equity promotion in higher education? If so, which document(s) is/are these? Can you provide a link(s)?

There is no standalone policy document as of yet.

Which equity target groups are identified in the policy documents? (Please choose as many groups as apply in your own country)

➔ Low-income or lower socio-economic background students
➔ Students with disability
➔ Refugees of all kinds (internally and externally displaced; deported)

Does the country have concrete targets for the participation of specific equity groups in higher education?

Yes. Students from ethnic areas have been provided to have access to medical institutes with special preference on matriculation exam score, to teacher education degree colleges for ethnic residents and to stipends for weak socio-economic background. Since 2019, the Ministry provided additional stipend to 26 PWDs students.

Which agency has responsibility for policies related to equity in student participation/success in higher education?

The Department of Higher Education is responsible for policies related to equity in students' participation.

Which stakeholder groups are consulted during the equity policy formulation? (Please choose all the stakeholders that are invited to the consultation process in your own country)

➔ Higher Education Institutions' Associations
➔ Rectors' Committee
➔ Private sector organisations
➔ International Organisations
➔ Student Organisations/Association
➔ Teachers Union

Achieving Policy Targets

Are there any non-monetary instruments such as outreach work between schools and universities, reforms to university admission etc. used to promote access/success for students from specific equity groups in higher education? If so, can you describe what they are?

Selection of University admission is based on the catchment area of the states and regions to promote equity measures.

Are there any financial instruments such as bursaries, scholarships and loans used to promote access/success for students from specific equity groups in higher education? If so, can you describe what they are?

Certainly, Government Budget is the main financial resources to fulfil the above strategy and to meet the equity promotion measures. And the Budget is earmarked and allocated annually, according to NESP 2016-2021.

Who is responsible for monitoring the impact of measures used to promote access/success for students from specific equity groups in higher education?

The Ministry of Education.

What instruments, methods and data are in place to carry out the monitoring and evaluation?

The amount of budget allocated for that equity strategy as the main indicator.

What kind of autonomy do higher education institutions enjoy in reaching the policy targets set by government?

Partial Autonomy because financial procedures have to obey the GOM rules and regulations.

How do you see the role of inter-governmental/international organisations in supporting higher education equity policies? In which areas would be their contribution the most valuable? (1= most valuable contribution 4=least valuable contribution)

2. Financial assistance (grants, loan financing, scholarships)
3. Policy setting
3. Technical assistance and capacity building
3. Facilitating peer learning, exchange of experience among countries
3. Other: International agencies to carry out ASEAN Actions Plans

COVID-19 and Equitable Access and Success in Higher Education

How, if at all, has Covid-19 affected the existence and implementation of policies designed to encourage greater access and success on higher education of those from low-income/marginalized groups?

There are significant impacts on low-income and marginalized groups due to outbreak of COVID 19. Those students have lost their learning access as long as the universities closed. Online teaching as one of the access to continue the learning process, but for students with low-income background and difficult access of internet and IT devices became huge burden from online or remote learning. Moreover, students who did not have quality education entered to the low pay jobs which had profound effect on their socioeconomic life individually and on national production too.

Sources

This country brief was prepared as part of the *"ASEM National Equity Policies in Higher Education"* report, a collaboration between the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) and the National Education Opportunities Network (NEON). The report was launched at the 8th ASEF Regional Conference on Higher Education (ARC8) on *"Inclusive and Diverse Higher Education in Asia and Europe"* on 10 September 2021.

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