

DIALOGUE FOR CHANGE

PLATFORMS FOR DIALOGUE QUARTERLY HIGHLIGHTS



Experiential Pilot Training participants share ideas on a case study together.

Experiential Pilot Training: Changing our Approach to Government Trainings

Training for Bangladesh's Public Administration professionals usually has a particular look, feel, and objective. The structure is defined, and trainees follow a set, structured curriculum. In early-December however, Platforms for Dialogue (P4D) hosted an Experiential Pilot Training to explore a more innovative and engaging approach to training for government officials.

From August to November 2019, responsible faculty members from government training institutions worked together to analyse how local institutions could more effectively support government efforts to improve accountability and responsiveness of government officials. From this collaborative effort, the Experiential Pilot Training was designed for faculty members of Bangladesh's public administration training institutions. Rather than a standard Training of Trainers (ToT) however, the primary focus was to learn by doing and to begin to change behaviour.

Moving away from a traditional approach, Amaya Echalecu, an international training consultant, engaged trainees by adapting the training as the group progressed. Without a strict outline or schedule, the group was able to co-design the training to suit the needs of the participants as the pilot training evolved. Participants were able to voice their preferences, and by choosing what mattered most to them, they chose the most practical training methods they thought would improve their approach to their own work.

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Syed Mizanur Rahman, Member Directing Staff (Project)(Joint Secretary to the Government), stated that even though most of the participants in the trainings have 10-15 years of experience or more, they can still benefit from this sort of participatory approach to training, “For them [the participants] actually, they are following some rules and regulations on some behavioural and attitudinal issues. This sort of training will bring changes in their behaviour and way of delivering, which is why I believe these kinds of trainings are very important for trainers.”

After conducting brief interviews with some of the participants, Mr. Syed Mizanur Rahman was correct; the training was making participants reflect on how to change their behaviour. One participant, Rokeya Fahoile, Director of Public Administration at BPATC, stated that, “I learned some practical methods from this course. I will use this in my work, like the case study method. I can use this especially with gender issues.”

Another participant, Afia Rahman, Research Officer in Research and Development, emphasised how important it is to work with civil servants to build the capacity of citizens. “This training will add value,” she stated. “It is not new, but the application is different and this approach will help us.” Rector of BPATC and Secretary to the Government, Md. Rakib Hossain NDC, was optimistic about the impact of the training because it required the group to think outside the box.

“We haven’t been taught to think outside the box. But we can expand the box, or even turn it into a circle, and expand the circle. Myself, I have a changing attitude. If I speak like a government official, it doesn’t always work. I have to change my approach so the audience can understand.”

Attitudinal change is the biggest goal of this type of activity. While some participants were initially unclear about the purpose of the training, in the end, they understood the value of learning by doing and how they can apply the methods taught during the training in their own work.

Deputy Secretary of the Cabinet Division, Md. Mokhlesur Rahman, stated that the value of the course was in enriching himself with others’ views. “Here, you will learn from everyone. Not just receive training from one person. It’s not a formal way of training - everyone is participating in some way.” This idea of collaborative learning is not new, but it hasn’t been introduced into government training institutions in Bangladesh until now.

Since the pilot training, the core group of organisers finalised a collaborative manual titled “Experiential Guide for Effective Training” that the participants can use in their own future trainings. Rather than outlining explicit steps, the manual, like the course, focuses on providing models and considering various inputs to solve problems through practical exercises. It also includes an annex of useful materials which trainers can adapt for their own use. The “Experiential Guide for Effective Training” is designed to encourage trainers to reflect on how to best support the government’s objectives in their future trainings in order to deliver impactful and meaningful outcomes.



Participants shared their findings with the rest of the trainees after in depth group discussions.

IGSA in Khulna

P4D organized a workshop on Inclusive Governance and Social Accountability (IGSA) for government officials, CSO partners, and MAP members in Khulna this past December. In another step towards ensuring social accountability for better governance, P4D hosted members from the Cabinet Division and other stakeholders with an interest in ensuring accountability in public services.

The topics of discussion focused on social accountability tools, educating officials responsible for government service delivery, and good governance practices. Sultan Ahmed, Additional Secretary, Cabinet

Division & Project Director, P4D, gave the opening remarks, stating that, “the issue of governance is highly important for a country like Bangladesh. The fundamental principles of our constitution: human rights, governance, all people are equal in the eye of law... the constitution obliges us to ensure citizens’ participation in national life.” He continued by encouraging participants to collaborate during the event in order to improve the impact of social accountability tools and to ensure the successful improvement and promotion of good governance.

Sheikh Mujibur Rahman ndc, Secretary, Coordination and Reforms, Cabinet Division joined as our Chief Guest and Dr. M Anoware Hossen Hawlader, Division Commissioner, Khulna was our Honorable Special Guest. The vote of thanks was given by Mr. Mohammad Helal Hossain, Deputy Commissioner and District Magistrate, Khulna, and Mr. A.L.M. Abdur Rahman, Former Secretary to the Government, presented the keynote speech.



Panelists at the Workshop on Inclusive Governance and Social Accountability (IGSA) in Khulna, December, 2019.



Participants discussed thematic issues related to child marriage, drug addiction, and rural health service/community clinics at the PaSA workshop in Khulna, January 22-23, 2020.



Senior Research Fellow for Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), Dr. S.M. Zulfiqar Ali, speaks at PaSA in Khulna, January 22-23, 2020.

P4D Partnership for Social Accountability (PaSA)

Starting at the end of January, Platforms for Dialogue (P4D) launched a series of workshops titled Partnership for Social Accountability (PaSA). These workshops help build common understanding on local issues and generate discussion on important topics like social accountability tools, partnership modalities, and key thematic issues. At each of the workshops, participants from CSOs, Multi-Actor Partnerships (MAPs), Community Resource Centre Chairs, and local NGO members were invited to join. By incorporating voices from all sides of civil society, participants from neighboring districts were able to find common ground on issues that affect communities all over the country.

The thematic issues identified as having the most impact on communities across these four major regions included drug addiction, child marriage, quality education, participation in local government, rural health service/community clinics, and social accountability tools. PaSA workshops took place in Khulna (January 22-23) and Rangpur (January 29-30), and more PaSA workshops will take place in Mymensing and Sylhet in February.



Increasing Citizen Participation in Social Accountability: Anti-Corruption Essay Contest

To celebrate anti-corruption day on December 9th, Platforms for Dialogue invited our Facebook followers to share their opinion on the importance of anti-corruption in the form of an essay contest. We asked them to respond to the question, "what do you do to stop corruption in your community?" Our call for submissions resulted in several thoughtful essays from all over the country. Instead of leaving the judging up to project staff, we added another layer to the contest to encourage the shortlisted writers to share their essay on social media. The essay with the most engagement, won.

1st place went to Md. Zulfiqur Rahma from Rangpur for his essay, "Social Service Work of 'Platforms for Dialogue Project' to Prevent Corruption". 2nd place went to Md. Faruk Ahmad Khan from Natore for his essay titled, "Report on Anti-Corruption Measures in the Perspective of Bangladesh." 3rd place went to Fahim Sheikh, from Munshiganj and 4th place went to Nahid Sultana, from Sreemongal. Congratulations to all our winners!

WHAT DO YOU DO TO
**STOP
CORRUPTION**

IN YOUR COMMUNITY?
TELL US YOUR STORY



Share your story in honour of Anti-Corruption Day
December 9, 2019

Training of Trainers: Workshop on Strategic Communications

From January 9-13, 2020, in partnership with Bangladesh's National Institute of Mass Communication, P4D hosted a Strategic Communications Training of Trainers (ToT) with support from the UK Government Communications Service International (GCSI). After an initial visit by GCSI in July, 2019, all parties joined together to design the training programme. 30 government officials, 21 of which are District Information Officers (DIOs), joined the ToT to learn training methodologies, communications techniques, and message preparation techniques on social accountability tools intended for journalists. The training was centred around P4D's primary focal points: the National Integrity Strategy (NIS), Citizen's Charter (CC), Right to Information Act (RTI), and the Grievance Redress System (GRS), so that trainers can help journalists in their districts gain the understanding and tools to report on social accountability issues in the future.

The participants will conduct local trainings on communication techniques and message preparation for 25 journalists in each of the 21 project districts. The journalists will be selected by their district's respective DIOs with the Deputy Commissioner and Upazila Nirbahi Officer. Local level trainings are expected to begin on February 17th and will last for two days.



Participants at the Training of Trainers on Strategic Communication. These two will be leading district level Communication Trainings for Journalists in February, 2020.



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