

Event Report

Partners Reflection Workshop

Dhaka | 22 October 2018



Synergy for **Sustainable Development**





The Agenda



09:00-09:10 am
Welcome notes



09:30-09:45 am
Key achievements



10:45-11:15 am
Context Analysis



09:10-09:30 am
Workshop Objectives



09:45-10:45 am
Highlights of past quarter



Power

1

Workshop

11

Sessions

83

Participants

Partners Reflection Workshop

12

Partner Organisations

3

Issue Based Programs

15

Result areas



12:30-01:00 pm

Financial Management



03:30-04:00 pm

Gender and social inclusion



04:45-05:30 pm

Way Forward



11:30-12:30 pm

Parallel Sessions:
Map & Risk **Mitigation**



02:00-03:00 pm

Plenary Session:
Public-Private **Partnership**



04:00-04:45 pm

Child Safeguard

For details of the event, including photos and videos, visit:

www.iidbd.org/reflection2018



Highlights from the Plenary Session

Strengthening public-private partnership during electoral transition

Civil society and private sector leaders called for public dialogues with the political leaders to bring public aspirations into electoral commitments and to ensure smooth continuation of development works during the political transition. They also insisted on deeper synergy among the actors and policies for the sustainable development at the partners reflection workshop.

While political transition can bring challenges, there are also opportunities to get political consensus on national issues like climate change, labour migration and food safety. Partners discussed the approaches to adjust to the changes in administrative and political leadership during this transitional period. They also emphasized on positive engagement with the bureaucracy to identify and recognize the role of

public-private partnership during political transition.

Among others the plenary session was attended by Benjir Ahmed, President of Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (BAIRA), Sumiya Islam, Director of Bangladeshi Ovhibashi Mohila Sramik Association (BOMSA), Ghulam Rahman, Director of Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB), Dr Saleemul Huq, Director of International Centre for Climate Change & Development (ICCCAD), Dr Ainun Nishat, Advisor of Centre for Climate Change and Environmental Research (C3ER), Dr. Atik Rahman, Executive Director of Bangladesh Centre for Advanced Studies (BCAS), Syed Saiful Haque, Chairman of WARBE Development Foundation. Syeed Ahamed, CEO of IID moderated the session.

Dhaka, 22 October 2018



The Event

The Partners Reflection Workshop took place on 22 October 2018 in Dhaka with specific focus on Synergy for Sustainable Development. Twelve development partners, who are working in collaboration to improve the lives of Bangladeshis, are part of a consortium called Promoting Knowledge for Accountable Systems (PROKAS).

While synergy among different development goals and partnership among development actors remain overarching issues for sustainable development goals, collective action and synergy remain core approaches of PROKAS in its pursuit of bringing positive change to improve the lives of Bangladeshis.

As PROKAS moves to the new phase, the reflection workshop aimed to bring synergy for the sustainability of its issue-based programmes— climate governance, fairer labour migration and food safety. The workshop was jointly organized by the Institute of Informatics and Development (IID), Bangladeshi Ovhibashi Mohila Sramik Association (BOMSA) and BeezBistar Foundation (BBF).

The Objectives

With the aim to ensure a smooth continuation of the issue-based development programmes, the workshop aims to dig deeper and with collective effort, answer the following questions:

1 What has been done?

To reflect on the **achievements** and the challenges faced by the partners so far.

2 What's the context?

To analyse the current political **contexts**, power dynamics and risks in policy advocacy.

3 How to improve?

To critically and constructively review the ongoing **approaches** and practices and incorporate necessary refinements.

4 What's next?

To **carry forward** the partnerships and plan for sustainability of the development initiatives.



Achievements

The workshop offered the partners with a unique opportunity to reflect on the work that has been done over the past year and the past quarter.

A presentation on behalf of PROKAS highlighted the progress the partners have made and the challenges they have faced during the past years. A series of posters were also presented by the partners demonstrating their key achievements from the past quarter of the project.



Climate Governance

The highlights of the achievements by climate governance partners included—social audits conducted to increase efficiency and effectiveness of the development programmes, climate fairs and national public hearing organized to promote awareness and accountability. In addition, relationships with climate networks and community based organizations have been strengthened. Training and supports were provided to various organizations for Green

Climate Fund proposals and the Aid Information Management System (AIMS) of Bangladesh government was reviewed and redesigned. As part of global policy discourse, an international conference on climate finance in Dhaka and a side event at the Conference of Parties (COP) were also organised by the climate governance partners.



Fairer Labour Migration

A grievance management and complaint system was established to facilitate complaints at the community level that recovered around 40 Lac BDT





till date on behalf of the aspirant migrants. In addition, a digital complaint system, both in web and app versions, was developed for the government. The mobile application Bibhui, providing migration related information, received both national and international awards and a youth network was established to promote youth-led policy advocacy. The national award ceremony ‘Obhibason o Shonar Manush’ helped connecting stakeholders’ voices with the policy makers. Partners’ advocacy also facilitated the signing of a MoU with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to ensure better protection for the Bangladeshi workers, and improving Gulf Approved Medical Centres Association (GAMCA)’s

medical check-up process. Engagement with the local government bodies has also been increased, while the parliamentarian caucus on migration continued to bridge grassroots voices to the parliament and ministries.



Food Safety Governance

Major achievements of food safety governance partners included— establishment of Consumers Committees in 6 Upazilas. A baseline survey was conducted on the poultry feed sector. A multi-stakeholder engagement was created with civil society, media, consumers group, private sector and government. Department of Livestock (DLS) demonstrated their commitment to be a part of the collective action. Seven focal points have been assigned by DLS. A joint monitoring procedure was initiated by Consumers Committee and DLS. Initiatives were taken that help including the voices of small and vulnerable poultry farmers in policy discussion ensuring gender inclusion. Another initiative was taken to increase the dissemination of DLS information among the citizens.





✓ ✕ Decisions from the Session

Upon seeing all the presentations, two major decisions were proposed at the event:

A workshop on reporting techniques to be held for the staffs of partner organisations who are involved in monitoring and evaluation, and field operations.

Highlights of posters presented during reflection workshop can be added as an annexure to the quarterly report of PROKAS for an extensive and easier understanding of quarterly activities and achievements.

✓ ✕ Decisions from the Session

It was suggested that the organizations working in the advocacy area should keep in mind the election promises political parties will be making during the pre-election period. In this context, it is necessary for all the IBPs to critically study the stances of political parties on labour migration, climate financing and food security to conduct policy advocacy.

It was also highlighted that the changes in the local level government should be taken into careful consideration. Rapport building with the

[+] Contexts

As the workshop took place only months ahead of the National Election 2018, the session on context analysis primarily focused on the impact of administrative and political changes on development works during election time.





new officials at local and national level thus becomes crucial. Given the election context, certain activities like election manifesto preparation and negotiation with political parties were also discussed.

In addition to the national election, global and regional contexts were also discussed –



Climate Governance

Contexts like the Bangladesh Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, National Adaptation Plan, Cop24 and Paris agreement for the climate governance partners are relevant to PROKAS. All

IBPs were asked to keep note of the relevance of these agreements.



Fairer Labour Migration

Influx of returnee migrants from Saudi Arabia and likelihood of increased irregular migration through the sea route with the changes in weather in the coming months needs to be closely monitored. Regulation of brokers, adaption of Global Compact for Migration (GCM), and ongoing negotiation with the delegates from Qatar and Saudi Arabia may open up new areas for policy engagement. Prior to any commitment by the government, civil societies should conduct research on the labour markets and available jobs in those countries.



Food Safety Governance

For the Food Safety IBPs, a significant change in context has taken place. The Department of Livestock, Fisheries and Food Safety is signing an agreement to ensure food safety. Also, Deputy Commissioner headed the committee for implementing Food Safety Act is focusing more on election specific issues which created a scope of policy advocacy for the PROKAS partners.





Reviewing Power Maps

As examining who has the power and ability is a crucial step for building a successful strategy to accomplish any social change, one of the workshop activities included a parallel session that provided the IBPs with an opportunity to have a productive discussion on power mapping. Keeping in mind the upcoming election and its potential to change the political landscape nationwide, partners belonging to each issue-based programme sat together in individual groups and revisited the already developed power maps.

Each group examined power structures and circles of influence around the issues they are working on and then explored how these structures interact to either advance or hinder social change. This session helped the IBPs to identify whose support is likely and necessary to advance the project, where they can build allies, and where opposition may lie. Finally, to ensure a better real-world impact and move their work forward, partners collectively updated the power map by incorporating a variety of new actors from government, non-government and private

sectors and by shifting some of the actors' position.

Risk Mitigation

Subsequent to the discussion on power maps, the IBPs identified the potentials risks and proposed a number of strategies to mitigate them-



Climate Governance

Partners identified the upcoming election and transfer of government officials as the most





concerning issues. To alleviate the risks, it was proposed that the action plan is to be reviewed and adapted and institutional relationship should be developed. Also, in the case of natural disasters, project activities should be rescheduled.



Fairer Labour Migration

FLM partners also expressed their concern about the national election. Partners emphasised on increasing issue-based advocacy and rapport building. To address the issue of frequent change of officials in local and national level, collaborative approach and synergy between and beyond the IBPs were suggested.



Food Safety Governance

A number of risks were identified by the Food Safety partners: inadequate cooperation from some public agencies, lack of public education and scientific evidence for food safety and law, political unrest, among the others. To improve the situation, the partners proposed to strengthen the relationship with the Department of Livestock. Also, it was suggested to establish and develop relationships with research and academic institutes. The importance of monitoring the changes in the political landscape was also highlighted.



Approaches

A number of strategic sessions focused on improving the operational modality of PROKAS partners to promote gender inclusive, child safe guarded, transparent and accountable work ethics.





Guidelines for GESI

As mainstreaming Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) has always been one of the focus areas of PROKAS, a discussion regarding the issue was also held at the workshop. During the session, further guidelines were proposed for PROKAS and a number of decisions were made at the end:

GESI integration should not be on an ad-hoc basis; rather, it should be an integral issue.

All sorts of issues and dimensions should be considered using a practical lens to ensure women representation.

Specific GESI guideline for every activity should be outlined by every partner as they have some unique activities.

Participant feedback in different activities should also be recorded to analyse and understand gender perspectives.

GESI mainstreaming at the policy advocacy level also needs special attention. Specific interventions need to be designed by Food Safety, Migration and Climate Migration partners

in this regard.

Dialogues need to be arranged with the government for reviewing existing laws and policies by relevant partners for its gender friendliness and in ensuring social inclusion.

Gender-sensitive monitoring indicators should be considered for impact analysis.



Decisions from the Session

Staff capacity building from PROKAS planned for partner organizations.





A gender focal person from each partner organization will be assigned.

All reporting and advocacy and communication materials used by partners should have a separate focus on gender mainstreaming.

Partners can make changes to their current budget and action plan in the revision in January to accommodate GESI issues.

Child Safeguard

A discussion session on child safeguard took place, with the aim to sensitize the workshop

participants about child safeguarding. Safeguarding children from physical, emotional, mental and sexual abuses are taken very seriously by the British Council and these also imply for PROKAS partners. Two major decisions regarding the child safeguard issue proposed were:

In case any child or humiliation of child rights is observed by any of the partner organizations, they would report to PROKAS for finding rehabilitation option for the child.

British Council will provide technical support in developing Child Protection Policies for PROKAS partner organizations.

Financial Management

The session on financial management reviewed the way partner organisations manage their finances in order to achieve financial objectives. Partners also shared how learning from PROKAS over the past years has helped them strengthen their internal accounts and finance divisions, particularly in the areas of fund accountability statement, reporting variance and value for money.





PROKAS also shared the findings of an external audit that revealed a satisfactory level of performance by the partners. Based on the report, 3 major areas of financial management were discussed: financial performance, room for development and capacity building.

 **Decisions from the Session**

It was decided that a capacity building workshop will be organised for the accounts and finance staffs of the partner organisations.

session enabled the partners to underscore the experiences PROKAS has had over the past two years working with the government. A discussion also developed around the upcoming election, potential changes in the political landscape of Bangladesh and sustaining and improving the collaboration for future actions.

 **Decisions from the Session**

PROKAS partners can conduct some monitoring activities; e.g. analysing previous year's election manifesto
Identify areas and issues that need to be

Way Forward

Synergy for Sustainability

To find common grounds of collaboration and to increase collective actions and synergy, after the context analysis session, members of the consortium met with the development partners and representatives from public and private sector agencies in a plenary session. The plenary





implemented and taken into consideration by the government

Sustain the collaboration between PROKAS partners beyond each Issue Based Partner.

PROKAS II

Finally, the workshop concluded with the identification of the next step - PROKAS II. Building on the works that have been done already, each IBP partners were requested to come up with ideas for the next phase of PROKAS. The major suggestions that came out of the group activity are as follows:



Climate Governance

Enhance accountability, climate change impact and response monitoring, comprehensive risk management in agriculture, utilizing the capacity built through the IBP partnership (extension of CG), and policy advocacy for the management of climate displacement



Fairer Labour Migration

Skill development of young migrant for better employment, reintegration of the returnee migrants in Bangladesh, developing a returnee migrant database to address the existing information gap, and strengthening complaint mechanism through a public-private partnership, monitoring the implementation of GCM.



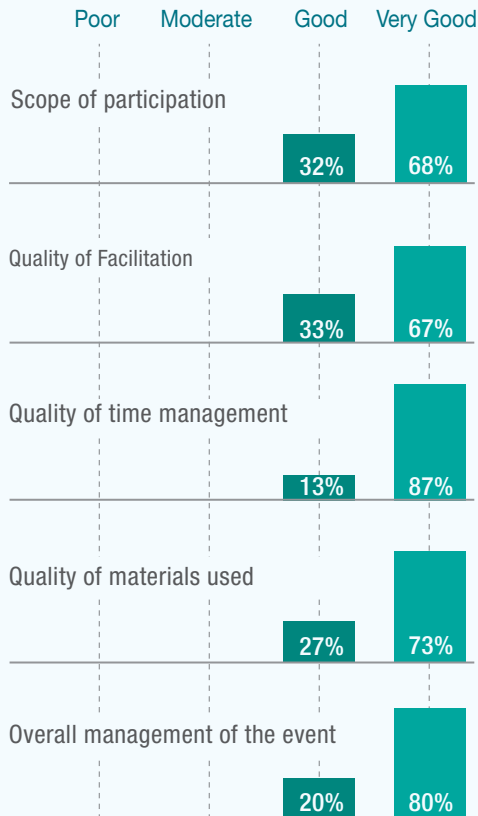
Food Safety Governance

Integration of local and national stakeholders and going beyond the poultry sector (model market).



Feedback on the workshop

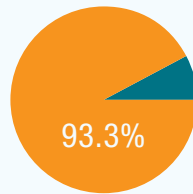
At the end of the session, an online poll was conducted among the participating organizations. These are the highlights of the findings -



Was this event useful to your work?



Were the event contents appropriate or relevant to you?



Yes Somewhat No

About PROKAS

Promoting Knowledge for Accountable Systems (PROKAS) aims to bring about changes in government and private sector policies, processes, systems and activities that will contribute to increasing transparency and accountability in selected thematic areas. The project is managed by a consortium in which the British Council is the lead partner, working in partnership with Palladium and WISE Development.

PROKAS is a component of the Transparency and Right to Information Programme (TRIP) funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) aimed at increasing transparency and accountability in Bangladesh.

PROKAS scope

- Conduct research to identify issues in which PROKAS can bring about improvements in transparency and accountability, and local partners best placed to have an impact on those issues;
- Propose sub-projects around these issues, identify likely partners and demonstrate a link to the overall programme results framework and theory of change;
- Form and manage issue-based projects (IBPs) which include partners from civil society, the private sector and government working in targeted thematic areas
- Provide technical assistance and capacity building for government and non-government partners to improve transparency and accountability in targeted thematic areas

Partners



Report by IID