

Asia Regional Peer Learning and Knowledge Sharing Workshop

Theme

Engaging Citizens Against Corruption in Asia: Approaches, Results and Lessons

November 29 – December 2, 2011; Jaipur, India



Organizations in Asia that are being funded by PTF under Citizens Against Corruption Program were asked to meet in Jaipur, Rajasthan, India from 29th November through 2nd December 2011 for a peer learning and knowledge sharing workshop.

The main objectives were as follows:

- Maximize opportunities for peer learning by allocating big chunk of time to discussions.
- Promote knowledge sharing on international good practices through expert/keynote presentations and participant-expert/speakers interaction.
- Reinforce learning outcomes through group discussions and presentations at the plenary.



Separate country meetings were held on the 29th for India, Nepal, Philippines and Mongolia to review their country papers, develop presentations for their country sessions to be held in plenary and refine their country strategies.

The objective of the country day was to finalize country synthesis paper and action plans for presentation during the workshop plenary and for use after the workshop.

The 3 day workshop was formally opened with a reception to workshop participants at 16.00 hrs on the 29th. Mr. Fredric T. Temple, country coordinator of PTF in Thailand was the master of ceremonies. He initiated a group game to break the ice and get everyone know each other. This was followed by a welcome address by George Cherian of CUTs the local host organization. Key note address was given by Mr.P.S.Bawa, Chairman, Transparency International Indi, one of the major sponsors of the workshop.



The resource persons for the three day workshop included Mr.Pierre Landell Mills, formerly President of PTF, Dr.Vinay Bhargava, Ronald Lomme, Dr.Gopakumar Thampi, Mr. Sumir Lal, Mr.Shekhar Singh, Mr. Richard Holloway, Naimur Rahman and Mr. Shomikho Raha of DFID India.

In India, there are 15 NGOs/CSOs under the support of PTF fighting corruption in three most important programmes – Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, Public Distribution System and Health Services to the poor. More than 70% of Indians - around 750million people – are directly related to the above three programmes. Reduction in corruption, and / or improvements in effectiveness and efficiency, of these programmes will have huge impact on the quality of lives of majority of Indians.



Quality of governance, and public action, also vary across Indian States. However, there is growing concern and response of citizens against corruption in India. The approaches and strategies adopted by groups of citizens and the responses of the Governments – at the Central and State levels – vary. Challenges and constraints of the citizens fighting against corruption are many. There are also options and solutions.



Majority of the households in the project areas, who are the main victims of corruption and the primary stake holder of the projects, belong to the socially and economically weaker sections. They are often controlled and exploited by the more powerful and dominant sections. Addressing corruption in PDS and MGNREGS is more challenging with the prevailing complex structure and system of class and caste relations, and the collusion of the powerful interest groups with the corrupt sections of the public institutions.

The workshop was concluded with lunch on the 2nd December 2011.

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