

**CSO-NGO Sector with Self-esteem: Campaign on Grand Bargain and Localization
Barisal Divisional Workshop
12 September 2018, BDM Auditorium, Barisal**

A day-long campaign and workshop titled “CSO-NGO Sector with Self-esteem: Campaign on Grand Bargain and Localization” was held in the Barisal BMA Auditorium on the 12th of September, 2018. The program commenced with a performance of the National Anthem. The chief guest of the program was Ram Chandra Das, Divisional Commissioner of Barisal. Also present among the guests were Kazi Jahangir Kabir, Chairman of the Barisal District Committee of ADAB, Nasir Uddin Ahmed, Divisional Coordinator of FMB, Humayun Kabir Balu from CDF and Anwar Zahid, the coordinator of the workshop convening committee in Barisal. The introductory segment was conducted by Mustafa Kamal Akanda, Assistant Director of the COAST Trust, while the workshop was conducted by Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, Executive Director of the COAST Trust.

At the beginning of the workshop, Rezaul Karim Chowdhury, Executive Director of the



Barisal: Campaign on Localization

COAST Trust, explained the motive, the goals and the background of the campaigning; a campaign that touches on NGOs, civil society, grand bargain, localization and self-esteem. He discussed the premise of the 1995 “Monterrei Convention”. On the topic of aid-effectiveness, he pointed out that ever since 2005 civil society has been held as a partner in development along with the state and the market. To facilitate the cooperation of civil society, a platform named “Global Platform for Effective Development Cooperation” (GPEDC) was created. Finance ministers of Germany, Uganda and Bangladesh are the co-chairs of this platform, whose principal aim is to convert aid-effectiveness into development-effectiveness. Moreover, in The United Nations World Humanitarian Summit held in Istanbul in 2016, a set of commitments titled “The Grand Bargain” was declared,

which put as much emphasis on localization as on the state.



Barisal: Campaign on Localization

Rezaul Karim Chowdhury stressed the objective of the program – “It is not a new kind of networking, it is a campaign on localization”. He reviewed the proceedings of the conference and the campaign for localization.

Nasir Uddin Ahmed, Divisional Coordinator of FMB, put emphasis on mutual cooperation

in his speech.

Kazi Jahangir Kabir from ADAB said, “We have had a demand for localization for a long time.” He expects this campaign to be far-reaching if local organizations are involved with the process.

Anwar Zahid, a member of the convening committee, said, “We will continue our development program by overlooking our differences and through a discussion of the local problems. Through a discussion among the hundreds of people present here, we will dispel our fears of the future.” As he pointed, there is no alternative to transparency and accountability.

Ram Chandra Das, the inaugural chief guest and the Divisional Commissioner of Barisal, elaborated, “Once all our demands, our complaints were to the government and against the government. Now the reality has changed, and the situation is more positive. There was a clash before between the government and the NGOs. Surely the enmity has disappeared. The moderator has already talked about the market and civil society. There was a time when government alone took all the decisions, now the civil society’s statements are deemed valuable. If there is no division between us, we can remain united and take any work beneficial to the people to its envisioned goal. This program of today is a sure sign of the coming days. We used to here that everything is determined from above, but now we know that local steps are also necessary. In the Bangladesh of today, let us not be opponents, let us not fight. Let us be complementary to each other in order to work together”



Divisional Commissioner Ram Chandra Das



Anwar Zahid

Rezaul Karim Chowdhury detailed the change from Aid-effectiveness to Development-effectiveness, the Grand Bargain and the Charter for Change. The discussion centered on the distributed hand-notes. He explained, “If the talks do not happen on the local scale, the demands cannot be forwarded to the government or the International NGOs. These are international covenants, but they are not strictly agreements. As such, it is not mandatory for anyone to abide by them. Yes, we know about these dealings, but that does not imply we can make outright demands based on them. The more we discuss about them, the more the words will reach the policymakers.”

Principles of Partnership:

This segment was hosted by Shawkat Ali Tutul, Assistant Director, COAST Trust.

The Basis of Partnership Policy :

1. Humanitarian actions due to ethical obligation, increase of efficiency in the workings of partner NGOs, and accountability to the harmed population.
2. Acknowledging diversity as an asset of the humanitarian community and recognizing the interdependence among humanitarian organizations.
3. Commitment to building and nurturing an effective partnership.

Principles of Partnership:

1. Equality:

Equality requires mutual respect between members of the partnership irrespective of size and power. The participants must respect each other's mandates, obligations and independence and recognize each other's constraints and commitments. Mutual respect must not preclude organizations from engaging in constructive dissent.

2. Transparency:

Transparency is achieved through dialogue (on equal footing), with an emphasis on early consultations and early sharing of information. Communications and transparency, including financial transparency, increase the level of trust among organizations.

3. Result-oriented approach:

Effective humanitarian action must be reality-based and action-oriented. This requires result-oriented coordination based on effective capabilities and concrete operational capacities.

4. Responsibility

Humanitarian organizations have an ethical obligation to each other to accomplish their tasks responsibly, with integrity and in a relevant and appropriate way. They must make sure they commit to activities only when they have the means, competencies, skills, and capacity to deliver on their commitments. Decisive and robust prevention of abuses committed by humanitarians must also be a constant effort.

5. Complementarity

The diversity of the humanitarian community is an asset if we build on our comparative advantages and complement each other's contributions. Local capacity is one of the main assets to enhance and on which to build. Whenever possible, humanitarian organizations should strive to make it an integral part in emergency response. Language and cultural barriers must be overcome.

In the post presentation discussion, Shamsuddin from Anwasha said, "We should include a point on our professionalism". Rezaul Islam Chowdhury replied, "Here professionalism is humane. It is more important here to attain responsibility than to keep a clean tab of the accounts and the treasury." He further clarified that our professionalism should not only deal

in technicality and should keep a humane side as well. In a discussion on keeping good relations with the political parties, Barkat Ullah Maruf said, “Diversity is the beauty of democracy”

Grand Bargain : Hosted by Shawkat Ali Tutul, Assistant Director, COAST Trust

In 2015 the Secretary-General of UN had been Ban Ki Mun, who appointed a high-level panel on humanitarian financing that was titled :“Too Important to Fail: Addressing the Humanitarian Financing Gap”. This panel recommended an increase in financing to prepare for disasters and to mitigate the ensuing losses. Its recommendations also included an increase in asset-based humanitarian activities to lessen humane demands worldwide, an emphasis on localization of power, and a reduction of transaction costs.

To realize these recommendations, UN, Red Cross, Red Crescent and more than 35 donor organizations and International NGOs signed a pact titled “Grand Bargain”. In the Istanbul World Humanitarian Summit this Grad Bargain was first discussed, and it was included in the WHS outcome report.

In this global pact, 52 commitments were pledged grouped into ten (10) branches. A large number of donors and aid organizations signed the pact to make the humanitarian activities more efficient.

The Ten Branches :

The signatories committed to:

1. Greater transparency
2. More support and funding for local and national responders
3. Increase the use and coordination of instant cash-based programming
4. Reduce duplication and management costs with periodic functional reviews
5. Improve joint and impartial needs assessments
6. A revolution in participation : include the affected people in making the decisions
7. Increase the number of partners in collaborative humanitarian multi-year planning and funding
8. Reduce the earmarking of donor contributions
9. Harmonise and simplify reporting requirements
10. Enhance engagement between humanitarian and development actors

These key notes were discussed in brief subsequently.

Charter for Change

This segment was hosted by BarkatUllah Maruf, Assistant Director, COAST Trust.

BarkatUllahMaruf detailed the funding parameters and strategies in his speech. The discussion quickly moved to why the local NGOs are not treated equally as the International ones when a donor organization contemplates funding. Barkat Ullah Maruf stressed that what should dictate the amount and the implementation of the fund is the need of a local organization, not the themes and the whims preset by the donor. In the Charter for Change,

150 Donor organizations from 43 countries pledged to fulfil 8 conditions. These conditions are :

1. **Increase direct funding for humanitarian action to NGOs working in the least-developed and developing countries.**
2. **Reaffirm the Principles of Partnership.**
3. **Increase transparency around resource transfers to southern-based (i.e in Asia, Africa and South America) national and local NGOs.**
4. **Stop undermining local capacity.**
5. **Emphasize the importance of national actors.**
6. **Address subcontracting.**
7. **Robust organizational support and capacity strengthening.**
8. **Communication with the media and the public about partners.**

In the open discussion, Rezaul Karim Chowdhury talked about the rights and the jurisdictions of a civil society and its impact in Bangladesh. Asif of Barisal asked what would happen to the organizations that did not sign any of the said agreements. Barkat Ullah Maruf replied that all were being approached gradually. He regretted the questionable role that the donors have played in relation to the Rohingya crisis, saying, “When they talk about development, their approach is structural or wholesale. They completely ignore the lack of social development. The deluge of Rohingyas in Bangladesh is not our sole responsibility, it is a shared responsibility. But they have constantly overlooked it.”

From Aid-Effectiveness to Development Effectiveness

Hosted by Barkat Ullah Maruf, Assistant Director, COAST Trust

In the discussion titled “AID effectiveness to Development Effectiveness” this much became clear that the so-called aid is more commercially motivated than a help. But, contrary to the approach of aid and for the benefit of NGOs of multiple tiers, the Istanbul Principles were formulated. With GPEDC by our side we have accumulated a reservoir of moral energy and now can demand for equity based redistribution.

Aid Effectiveness

- Charity
- Analysis of the symptoms of poverty
- Human needs
- Trickle down
- Short-term result
- Supervised by Donors

Development Effectiveness

- Equity
- Analysis of the roots of poverty
- Human rights
- Equal Distribution
- Long-term result
- Supervised by all partners

- Equality for women
- Employment
- Apolitical aid
- Sexual equality
- Work with respect
- Politics is power

Group Work

The participants were split into three groups, and each group was given a particular topic to discuss and analyze, so that they may express their desires and their opinions regarding the said topic.



Barisal : Group Work

Group 1: Make a list of our demands from Donors, the UN, International NGOs and our government with respect to the Grand Bargain and other similar global pacts. Make sure that everyone participates in the task.

Group 2: Make an announcement outlining the minimum that we can do to keep our self-esteem intact and to guarantee our accountability to our beneficiaries (the people), the laws of the state, and the ones who send the donations and the management facilities (i.e. donor organizations, donor countries, UN, INGOs). Develop it further with everyone's active participation.

Group 3: What can be done to unite the local NGOs and the CSOs? (CSO = Civil Society Organizations) Make a list of such tasks and develop it further with everyone's active participation.

Recommendations of Group 1:

1. Strategic Change
2. Based on Equity at local level
3. Increased fund for Capability building of local organizations
4. Development projects should be based on the local demand
5. Local language in project proposal
6. Maximizing the use of local resource (including Human Resource)
7. Priority of local organization

8. 25% equal allocation for localization according to Grand Bargain
9. Decentralization of leadership
10. Assistance in institutional development (in localization)
11. Wage framework according to ILO directives
12. Abolish the system of local organizations' contribution in projects

Recommendations of Group 2:

1. Beneficiaries and partners need to be engaged in decision making process
2. Sharing the process of transparency and accountability
3. Project/ Program should be taken according to the local demand
4. Public the activities and its results
5. Information disclosure to donor and other concerns
6. Providing the same report to all stakeholders
7. Information disclosure to local, national and international level
8. To call for evaluation by local government and international actors by visit

Recommendations of Group 3:

1. Enlist local CSO and NGO
2. Bring them all to one platform which will mobilize advocacy with government
3. Mobilize local resource by identifying local problem
4. Ensure transparency and accountability
5. One policy to run the platform
6. Increase capacity of local CSO NGO
7. Making apolitical and non-profit organizations believing in spirit of the liberation war and womepowerment

After the groupwise presentations, the women leaders from multiple Districts came up on the stage and expressed their opinions on the information and lessons gleaned from the workshop.



বরিশাল: স্থানীয়করণ বিষয়ক প্রচারণা

Mahmuda from Shuktara Mahila Samiti of Patuakhali said, “Those who attacked us cannot do so any more. We now have a clear idea of things.” Shorna from Desh Bangla Shonggothon said, “We did not about our duties, our partnership, our rights. But now we do.”

Opinion

Political figure and activist Manisha Chakraborty said, “If the civil society works for the people with a sense of when to protest, it will prove very positive for the future development of Bangladesh.”



Manisha Chakraborty

Kazi Jahangir Kabir, Divisional Chairman of ADAB, told us, “A lot International NGOs directly executed operations here after the cyclone “Sidr”. But they really have no means to assess who were harmed in the cyclone. To make the word financially efficient, they should have involved the local NGOs. In the long run, that would increase the capabilities of a lot of local organizations.”



Kazi Jahangir Kabir



Sirajul Islam

Sirajul Islam, the program coordinator of Avas, said to us, “It is vital to increase the capacities of the local organizations, so that they can respond quickly to any human crisis. The local NGOs are financially and structurally weak, they need funds to survive and increase their efficiency.”



Ziaul Ahsan



KM Faridul Islam

Ziaul Ahsan from Pirojpur Gonounnoyon Shomiti said, “The condition imposed while giving finds are hard to meet in a lot of cases. The work should last longer. Another problem is to ensure priorities. The donors often tend to overlook the parameters.”

KM Faridul Islam, Executive Director of Pirojpur's Upakul Paribar Kalyan Songstha, told us, "The donors have cut away my overhead cost. Had I been given the money, I would be more capable of execution."