

Promoting Socially Inclusive and Sustainable Agricultural Intensification in West Bengal
and Bangladesh (SIAGI)

Workshop Report on Ethical Community Engagement: Perspectives and Practice May 12-17, 2017

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Australian Government

**Australian Centre for
International Agricultural Research**

ETHICAL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: PERSPECTIVE AND PRACTICES

(Reflective training workshop)

WORKSHOP REPORT

May 12-17, 2017

Organized by

Centre for the Development of Human Initiatives (CDHI)

In collaboration with

SIAGI Partners

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Report

(Compilation, collation, analysis and integration)

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**The contents of this report reflects the views and insights of those who signed a collective
commitment to uphold and pursue**

“The Ethical Community Engagement Perspective”

We were there together!

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Forward

It is with great pleasure that I write this forward. We embarked on the SIAGI project 18 months ago. While I knew that our NGO, research and private sector partners (CDHI, PRADAN, SHUSHILAN, IIT, BAU and YesBank) were all open to discovering new ways of working with each other and with the communities, I was not prepared for the changes in how we would actually implement this. In a rapidly changing world where development often fails communities, it has become increasingly obvious to me that understanding community aspirations and visions and hearing their voices is a key to empowerment, allowing each individual to create a sustainable future for themselves. Development projects are often not good at listening and come in with pre-conceived ideas of what households need to improve their livelihoods. The solutions are imposed and it is no wonder that they so often fail once projects leave.

As SIAGI we are embarking on a journey of ethical community engagement, where partners are trained to listen and work with households to create their own unique voice. It started during a workshop with ACIAR and our sister project, DSI4MTF, where CDHI presented their perspective on community engagement, which was approved by them. During my review mission of the DSI4MTF Project, I saw the value in pursuing this approach more fully in SIAGI. Through discussions with all the SIAGI partners and DSI4MTF team, we realised there was a strong need for capacity building in ethical community engagement.

Spearheaded by CDHI and PRADAN but in close collaboration with the other SIAGI partners a capacity building workshop was designed on ethical community engagement. The workshop held at Jaipalguri in West Bengal on 12-17 May, to provide the space for all SIAGI partners to discuss, learn and reflect on what is ethical engagement and how it can be done better. This report highlights the process undertaken during the workshop and the key reflections and insights of participants. While I was not able to participate in the workshop, nonetheless it allowed me to learn in my absence. I sense that the time partners spent together in May has fundamentally shifted the way the researchers and NGOs work together and with the community.

This workshop is a significant point in SIAGI's learning journey. We will continue to work, reflect and change the way we work in an ongoing iterative process. This will hopefully deliver better outcomes for the often marginalized households we work with, as they embark on identifying and developing ways to improve their livelihoods through sustainable agricultural intensification. I look forward to the voyage over the next 3 years.



Christian Roth

Project Manager - SIAGI

Preface

We are living in an era of extremes. While economic prosperity is discernible, constant erosion of social capital is a cause of constant worry. Noam Chomsky (1998) in his seminal analysis –‘Profit over people’ bemoaned a loss of connectedness, among people, under the neo-liberalism and global order. Loss of connectedness manifests itself by *communities* turning into *commodities* and *citizens* into *producers*. Liberalism appears to relate to business and economic affairs not to human freedom. Chomsky further observed that we live in an atomized society of *disengaged individuals* who feel demoralized and socially powerless (Chomsky, 1998). A simmering sense of discontent prevails. Our narratives have changed and are constantly changing. What is happening and where are we heading to? What are the trade-offs? We are unable to find easy answers to these questions. Are these questions relevant to us as researchers?

We are also in an era of extraordinary knowledge characterized by technological innovations designed to benefit humanity. These inventions and knowledge have created a sense of physical comfort and achievement. ‘Disconnectedness’ however, prevails. Knowledge seems to have lost authenticity and relevance as a large section of society continues to remain untouched. Knowledge, like any other commodity, continues to be manipulated and co-opted by an elite few and there is dismay about ‘ownership and beneficiaries of knowledge’. The question arises –‘whose knowledge and for whose benefit’?

The poor and marginalized are not typically trusted as authentic producers of knowledge. Traditional hierarchical knowledge transactions and structures can neglect to give credence to these categories of knowledge even when it has found legitimacy across generations. Researchers and experts, typically, explore knowledge using specialized methodologies which can treat people as subjects and themselves as especially endowed experts with special qualifications and credentials capable of exploring and authenticating knowledge. In Western models of ethical research practice, for example, the relationship between the researcher and the subject continues to mechanically draw from traditional Anglo-American epistemological paradigms set within biomedical contexts. This approach reveres researchers as specialists of knowledge yet is inconsistent with the broader goals of ‘**Research 4 Development (R4D)**’. (Australian National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research, 2007).

There is growing emphasis on inclusive knowledge transactions which ensure the participation of all individuals and groups who will be affected by development initiatives. This includes agency-building as an outcome of the knowledge transaction process and a respect for the autonomy of individuals and groups. Humans are self-organizing and reflective and enjoy applying self-efficacy to change their circumstances. Any research enterprise needs to ensure the full participation of people as knowledge partners rather than subjects of research. Responses from knowledge experts to this approach are mixed - some may allege participants’ unwillingness to participate, others

lament their foresight and capacities. There has been a legacy of induced deprivation unjustifiably inflicted upon and suffered by marginalized communities which has eroded and reduced their self-confidence and élan. There is a need to constantly encourage marginalized communities to come forward and assert themselves as knowledge partners. Empathetic engagement with the community, respecting and valuing the community, ensures their participation is welcomed as co-creators of knowledge.

SIAGI, as an R4D initiative, appreciates the seminal role community has as a knowledge partner and underlines the need for exploring methodological options to realize this. This exploration of community engagement has also been undertaken with another ACIAR-sponsored initiative – DSI4MTF. These combined initiatives and processes have helped to inform and support the approach SIAGI has adopted.

Community engagement does not and should not offer a Eureka moment as this has been the central consideration of the ‘persons of wisdom’, for time immemorial, engaged in inclusive knowledge production. The knowledge of local people, their wisdom and capacities have been appreciated for their contribution in creating and sustaining wholesome knowledge order. In the context of SIAGI, the swiftness and seriousness with which the need for community engagement has been appreciated and pursued is appreciable and manifested in intrinsic commitment to include these considerations in the development of the workplan. From Patna (September, 2016) to Kolkata (October 2016) to Khulna (February 2017) and then to Jalpaiguri (May 2017) community engagement, under SIAGI, has revealed achieving important milestones which have impacted our exciting trajectory.

When the responsibility to facilitate this process was proposed for CDHI it was a moment of excitement for the CDHI team, present in Khulna-we were all ecstatic! We soon, however, realized the enormity of the task and challenges ahead. Looking ahead at the synergies within the SIAGI team, we all were confident that we could accomplish this together. Our confidence came from the collective commitment of the team to the approach and our willingness to undergo an orientation program.

As a first step, a framework was developed and shared across implementing partners. Christian immediately responded with his approval followed by Erik Schmidt (DSI4MTF-the sister project) who considered the framework appropriate with the potential to develop clarity over the approach. Subsequently, Wakilur and Mahnam responded positively and shared some important literature on the subject. Arnab suggested a detailed modular schedule based on the framework and proposed a meeting. We met in Kolkata and had thorough discussions over the layout and schedule of the workshop. We left adequate scope for flexibility to accommodate changes and ideas as they came. I am extremely thankful to them for their encouraging support.

Following the Kolkata meeting, laying down a structure and milestones for the workshop, Subrata and Arnab assumed responsibilities for coordination with the participants, working on the technical elements, organizing logistics and other organizational responsibilities. But for their meticulous planning and coordination, the workshop would not have turned out so well.

The workshop was a meeting point of committed souls and creative minds. I could see sparks of ideas and insights flowing unhindered. The workshop followed the framework which assumed a participatory pedagogy, self –evolving and connecting themes, and concepts with grounded realities. Role plays, simulations, scenario analysis and field visits, including immersion with the community were used. The transactions were seamless and created a natural stimulating learning environment. Although Arnab and I had taken upon ourselves major facilitation responsibilities, participants also shared this role. Arnab added much to the transactions with his creative and stimulating inputs and facilitation making the transaction inclusive. I sincerely acknowledge the support from participants as facilitators especially the support given to CDHI and the planning of the workshop. In Arnab, I personally have found an ever-encouraging and supportive colleague and friend.

It seems important to share my impressions of individuals who left an indelible mark. Being aware of the environment of academic institutions, I was positively impressed by colleagues from the BAU who showed great comfort with the participatory pedagogy and demonstrated empathetic facilitation. Ishmail's patient listening and Mozammel's succinct analysis were great endowments for community engagement. Wakilur never appeared fazed by the enormity of questions and was always ready to explore answers. His sense of involvement has been great. MonzurMorshed as a teaching faculty and PhD scholar can be described as an evolving scholar with his feet on the ground. Sambhu Singha, perhaps the youngest member from BAU- SIAGI family, revealed himself profusely with his passion, cultural sensitivity and commitment. I feel BAU is well-endowed to carry forward the community engagement perspectives beyond SIAGI. They should be able to influence and attract younger students to pursue the perspective and also the academic fraternity at large.

Our visit to Khulna and the workshop at Jalpaiguri brought Sushilan and the Indian team close together. Mahanam's approach is strongly rooted in ground realities and has a strong research orientation in connecting theories with practice. During the workshop participants had the benefits of Mahanam's field insights and theoretical formulations. Bakul often enlightened the group with his understanding and insights. Milon has been a great resource with his practical views. His portrayal of multiple roles during the role-play sessions were superb. Sumana, perhaps the newest member, created a lasting impact with her cool demeanour even while engaging in most complex discussions. Sumana supported the workshop as a rapporteur. She has showed great interest in activities post-workshop and has been sharing her field insights regularly.

We missed Pulak but his colleagues Niladri and Kirty made a stimulating presence with their objective and honest field insights. Niladri's inquisitiveness and Kirty's quest for new knowledge and explanations often evoked constructive discussion. Two of the DSI4MTF colleagues –Ritesh and Prasun brought along their rich reflections from the field. Ritesh enjoyed his difficulties with the Benagli language where as Prasun was ever willing to support me and the workshop with field data and insights. He has developed a deep understanding of the dynamics of collectives and technology transfer. Two non-SIAGI participants Setika (Parivartan-Bihar) and Dyuti (IIH-Bihar)

brought with them perspectives from their respective work. While Setika used community engagement in her work with women in agriculture; Dyuti mobilized the community in her maternal and child health program. Their respective perspectives offered contexts for comparison.

For CDHI, hosting the workshop was both an opportunity and a challenge. Our modest team has been engaged in organizing such events but every new event has its own challenges. Subrata led and coordinated the organization of the workshop, ably supported by Joy, Benu, Mitali, Sunil and Boren. Benu is a great story teller with a vibrant disposition. His ability to connect is infectious. Mitali, as the chairperson of the Uttar Banga Terai Mahila Samittee, has worked very hard among the women in the two project villages. It is her effort that led to the organization of the photo competition with women as judges. This was a great example of how engagement is able to lead to the development of self-efficacy among women. Joy meticulously captured the workshop transactions and field activities. Boren and Sunil were the war room managers ensuring that the workshop ran smoothly. The food and house-keeping was handled by members of the self-help groups. Let me express my deepest appreciation to all of them.

If I am to present a summary of the energy and outcomes of this workshop I would say that this was an extraordinary meeting of the minds. This I consider the culmination of an important milestone. I would like to express my deepest appreciation of the great trust given to me and CDHI. I would like to thank SIAGI, more specifically Christian, Geoff, Lucy, Wendy, Lilly and Michaela for their trust and generosity in offering support whenever needed. The workshop alone does not ensure effective engagement but it has offered an opportunity for basic understanding. There is a need to constantly and consistently pursue and analyse the process and outcomes. From here on, the journey must continue. For now, we have done well –great tasks lie ahead.

Rajeshwar Mishra
CDHI

Jalpaiguri
The 24th Of June 2017.

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ACRONYMS

| | |
|---------|---|
| ACIAR | Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research |
| BAU | Bangladesh Agriculture University |
| BD | Bangladesh |
| DSI4MTF | Dry Season Irrigation for Marginal and Tenant Farmers (Sister project of SIAGI) |
| ECE | Ethical Community Engagement |
| IIT | Indian Institute of Technology |
| R4D | Research for development |
| RCC | Regional Coordination Committee |
| UC | Uttar Chakuakheta |

1 Ethical Community Engagement (ECE): Background and trajectory

SIAGI's encounter with ethical community engagement (ECE) has been inspiring with an evolving trajectory. As a R4D initiative, SIAGI's framework had all that a well-designed R4D project usually has –*research questions, hypotheses and tools* related to the study of agricultural intensification set against an 'inclusion' and 'justice' framework. These are all integral elements of a research initiative. These elements are to be examined and analysed and possible relationships or causations explored and established. As a preferred approach, survey and quantitative tools were considered appropriate with qualitative components –for example case methods, proposed. The inception workshop, at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kharagpur, elaborated on this perspective and the design and partners, responsible for specific components, assumed various responsibilities with a timeline. The inception workshop allowed adequate space for reflection about the perspective and the framework. NGO partners such as CDHI, PRADAN and Sushilan often shared participatory perspectives. Well-structured presentations on inclusion, equity and justice and value chain provoked serious discussion over the need for qualitative and participatory methods. Further discussions led to the agreement that study of concepts such as inclusion, equity and justice cannot be complete using quantitative and survey methods and tools. The need for inclusive methods and tools were realized. The team realized that the decision about methods and design needed further discussion and exploration. It was agreed that the team would move to the field and explore how the design might work and evolve. ***This freedom and flexibility proved a turning point.***

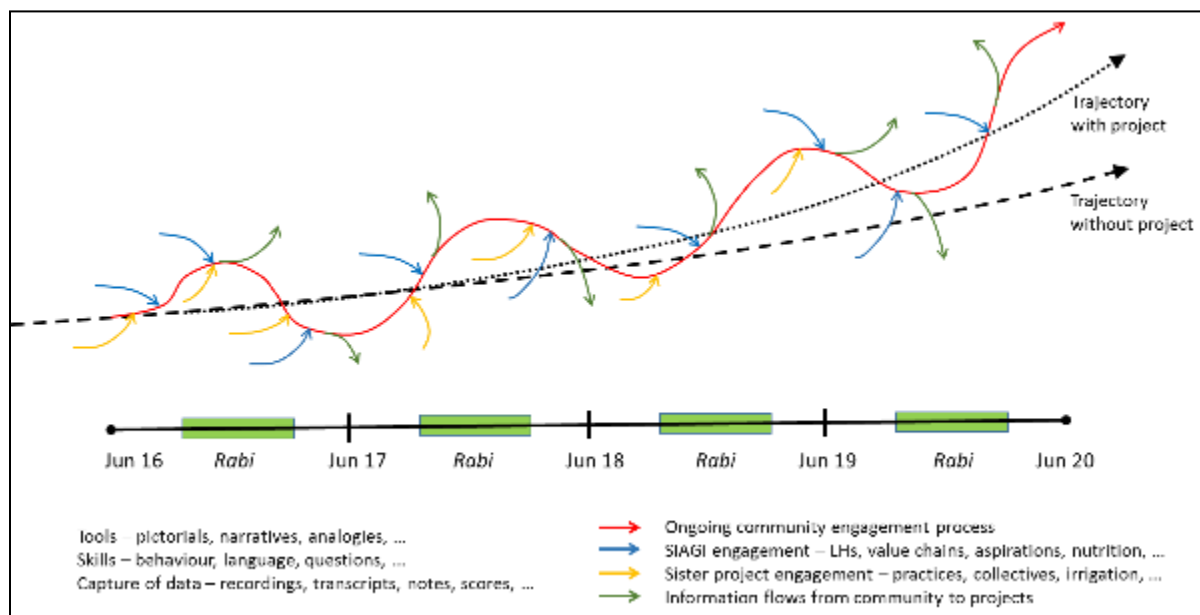
As a research design, SIAGI depends on sister projects in India and Bangladesh as far as primary data and field insights are concerned. In West Bengal, the sister project Dry Season Irrigation for Marginal and Tenant Farmers (DSI4MTF), has been exploring whether community engagement could make a significant difference to the implementation and outcome of dry season irrigation to the benefit of small and marginal farmers. CDHI, with its experience of and commitment to the community engagement perspectives, has been pivotal in driving this process. Through a series of field level interactions and cases a draft document was developed which was shared with the DSI4MTF leadership and team. It was agreed to offer adequate space for discussion at the Regional Coordination Committee (RCC) meeting in Patna –***September 2016***. An opportunity to share the document more broadly with the SIAGI team was embraced. This vision was also shared with ACIAR's program lead for his views.

1.1 Patna RCC of DSI4MTF-SIAGI takes the vision further

DSI4MTF was due for its midterm evaluation and Christian, SIAGI's lead, was also leading the review alongside ACIAR's program manager –Evan Christian. Reflections, during the RCC, further confirmed our conviction in embracing the ECE perspective which was related to a broad range of research themes and variables. Both reviewers spoke favourably of its integration in the research design and protocol. DSI4MTF leadership and the team agreed to adopt this perspective and follow the protocol in their project.

1.2 Kolkata review meeting confirms and integrates ECE

Immediately, after the DSI4MTF Patna meeting, SIAGI conducted its annual review in Kolkata (October 2016). The ECE perspective was further discussed and reflected upon and the context of DSI4MTF shared. Project partners-both Indian and Bangladesh shared their experiences of its practical field application. Following great debate, a consensus was reached in favour of ECE as the overarching approach and ECE was thus adopted. The workplan was amended accordingly. The evolving trajectory proved significant.



Partners returned home with renewed enthusiasm and began applying the perspective in their respective activities. Notes were exchanged and knowledge shared. Working on the household typologies, value chain and aspirations mapping raised enthusiasm and created a sense of dignity

among the community. Simultaneously, a review of the existing literature on research was carried out (SIAGI, 2017). An attempt was made to compare and contrast traditional research perspectives with evolving perspectives on ECE.

1.3 Research-for-Development (R4D): Understanding conflict and contradictions

The manner in which traditional research organizations organize and conduct field work can be a real source of tension. The primacy of quantitative methods and scientific knowledge, the demands of rigorous research methods and statistical tools, the constraints of academic calendars, and the pressures of generating high-quality research publications influences research approaches to engagement. Existing disciplinary biases and hierarchies can also compound multidisciplinary work. For example, assigning a hierarchy of value to knowledge types where local knowledge is assigned a lesser value than the knowledge acquired from expert sources is a common event (SIAGI, 2017). These tensions can affect the quality of R4D partnerships and how partners work together.

The extent to which participation can offer tangible returns to communities is a matter for debate. While promises of benefits, which are unlikely to be realized, should be avoided, communicating the value of longer-term advantages of collaboration and participation requires reflection and careful planning on the part of facilitators. Carefully-designed engagement processes have the potential to deliver communities capacity-enhancing opportunities, new ideas, and new connections.

SIAGI (2017) underscores two significant points of difference when comparing Western approaches to ethical engagement with those practiced by our SIAGI in-country partners. The important role that mobilization/collectivization plays in community engagement (and the building of capacity required to realize this) is one point of difference. The second point of difference is the intrinsic belief in the strength of individuals and groups to change their life course for the better- ‘be the change and change makers themselves’.

These starting points for engagement are in stark contrast to Western models of research where, marginalized and poor communities are almost always labelled as disempowered and vulnerable. Where, their participation as research subjects, rather than partners, automatically triggers a risk-averse approach compared to engagement which is empowering. This is despite those very same vulnerable individuals and groups being the intended beneficiaries of development initiatives. The Western practice of minimising research risks by ascribing vulnerability (which affects participation) can have a disempowering effect on women who might benefit from a process that creates legitimacy and ownership (SIAGI, 2017).

Finally, there are dangers in treating engagement as simply a means (data collection) to reach an end (project delivery). A key goal of ECE is to partner with farmers to help create the conditions for change. Engagement is a complex and ongoing process requiring forward planning, adaptive management, skilled facilitation and shared ownership of the process and outcome (Mishra, 2016; SIAGI partner presentations, 2016). For development practitioners this process inspires transformation. For researchers working in traditional settings, this approach creates many challenges. Despite these tensions, ethical engagement can bring multiple co-benefits to R4D partnerships and ultimately improve the conditions for impact. ***ECE, as an approach, is empowering, synergetic, self-efficacious and transformational in impact and inclusive as a value system. ECE trusts the wisdom of the community and encourages use of this wisdom in fostering and co-creating knowledge endowment. This is, inherently, integrative and sustainable.***

Reflection

Understanding the above conflict and contradictions, caused by a hierarchical social structure and dynamics, characterized by discrimination and misappropriation, is essential in appreciating the rationale and need for ECE. Viewed in this context, ECE should not be considered /misunderstood as demonstrating superficial appreciation and respect towards the community for extracting data and information to be used by researchers. It is, on the contrary, to believe and hold the conviction that the community has the potential to understand, analyse and interpret dynamics of knowledge transaction as equal partners. It is the belief that the community can become a decisive partner and co-creator of knowledge and is able to use this knowledge for transforming themselves and their situation - which is often defined by others and not by themselves. Communities need to be able to identify what makes them, who they are and how they can change themselves from where they are.

ECE is effective if and only if the above reality is appreciated and internalized by researchers and when there is a willingness and commitment to respect and value the local /native wisdom, their priorities, approaches, concerns, vocabulary and epistemology.

1.4 Key concepts underpinning ECE

For many, ECE may appear to be a participatory tool, while for others it may be a process, and for others still, a social construct.

Reflection

ECE cannot be understood separately in terms of the above –these elements are interrelated and will make sense only if understood as a whole. Understanding ECE requires understanding of social structures and dynamics. It includes considerations of discrimination, justice, equity, power dynamics and relationships, interpersonal trust and respect, psychological attributes such as attitude, attribution and behaviour, value systems, empathy, perseverance and leadership and; skill sets such as communication, being dialogic, relationship nurturing, and creating and enabling an environment for mobilization.

ECE, as an effective approach, works optimally if there is deeper understanding of these key concepts and a preparedness to use these concepts and skills holistically in a given time and space.

1.5 Entrenching and expanding the ECE perspective: Capacities, skills and networks

Committing to the perspectives and ethos of ECE may not guarantee successful adoption and accompanying impact. The ECE approach has strong ideological overtones, requires strong theoretical engagement to understand, sensitivity and skills to operationalize, practice and adaptation to the evolving context, and most importantly, identification of the impact pathways to capture and analyse the impact created. Involvement of project partners at various levels, more so at the field level, is not always stable. There are multiple role that partners play, and they may have divergent goals. For example, partners may join the project to pursue higher academic goals while others seek experience to progress to a higher level. Considering this diversity, can ECE perspective be appreciated mutually and collectively with same degree and intensity of sensitivity and commitment? How can SIAGI ensure the best from the existing configuration of partners? What appears to be a somewhat difficult terrain may offer opportunity for **‘learning from and out of diversity’!** This issue has engaged the attention of the SIAGI leadership and team ever since the ECE approach was adopted. *Entrenching and expanding this perspective and building capacities, skills and network has been next on the agenda.*

1.6 Khulna (Bangladesh) meeting articulates a strategy

The bi-annual review meeting (Khulna, Bangladesh, February 2017) was an important milestone in several ways. First, different partners had already worked with the ECE perspective at different degrees. For some, there might have been some initial hesitation but overall the response was

positive –the approach worked better and offered important insights. The Indian team had worked on the integration in a two-day interactive session as preparation for Khulna. Some new dimensions of ECE, for example *storytelling* and *qualitative analysis* presented for consideration. These were encouraging development and ***ECE found some good ground.***

Khulna also offered an opportunity for considering the *capacity gap* and the need for entrenching and expanding the perspective and building necessary capacities among partners. Field exposure at Dacope (Bangladesh) and interaction with various stakeholders revealed intricacies of the existing social and policy environment. Additional field facilitators who were to join the project also needed basic orientation and skills to follow the ECE perspective. ***ECE has to match and respond to these existing challenges.***

In light of the evolving opportunities and challenges, it was considered imperative to organize an orientation and capacity building opportunity for facilitators working at different levels within the community and across the partnerships. CDHI volunteered to design and implement such an event at Jalpaiguri with willing support from partner organizations. The event was assigned high priority in order to help further clarify the approach and also develop the necessary skills.

1.7 Reflective training workshop on ECE: A step forward

Considering its earlier community engagement initiatives, immediately in the context of DSI4MTF and subsequently with SIAGI, CDHI considered it an opportunity to host the event in collaboration with partner institutions and willing individuals. CDHI was provided with total freedom to design the program and implement it. The main workshop objectives were:

1. Testing of an inclusive and holistic approach to orientation and capacity building strategy on ECE;
2. Seeking and fostering a collaborative partnership with participating institutions, building on their existing backgrounds, experiences and knowledge endowment;
3. Further developing our earlier understanding of the ECE approach and SIAGI workplans;
4. Orienting new team members –field coordinators/ research scholars from Shushilan, BAU and IIT Kharagpur and exposing them to participatory and inclusive pedagogy which is the essence of ECE;
5. Demystifying research as higher order learning and encouraging participants to treat research as an opportunity for peer learning, thereby breaking the researcher-subject (researched) dichotomy,
6. Expanding the outreach of SIAGI learning to other like-minded initiatives in this part of the region and;
7. Building on the learning to consolidate and entrench further themes and areas in the region.

1.8 A reflective training workshop: The approach

Considering the above objectives the approach had to be different from the provision of a traditional training event which had predetermined –(1) *themes and topics*, prepared by experts, to be delivered to a –(2) *select group of persons ‘trainees’* by –(3) *specialists –Experts/Trainers* –(4) *within a given duration*. If our preferred perspective on community engagement emphasizes respecting worldviews and the knowledge of others, then the ECE event had to conform to the same in its approach.

Since most of partners have good standing with working in community engagement, and carry backgrounds and experiences, these had to be respected and given credence in the design of the workshop and its processes. The pedagogy needed to be participatory and adaptive with space provided for flexibility.

With the above in mind:

1. A program framework was initiated and a draft shared with partners/prospective participants including students and field facilitators. The framework clearly proposed an approach, suggested content, session plans and objectives and expectations from each of the sessions. Request was made to express interest and willingness to offer special inputs or facilitate specific sessions.
2. The feedback received was integrated into the framework and shared again. This process led to a finalization of the framework. It was encouraging to receive important literature related to community engagement and related topics which formed an integral part of the compendium provided to participants.
3. Based on the above a group of partners decided to form a team to develop the workshop schedule, develop strategies and finalize co-ordination issues including logistics.
4. A draft schedule (Annexure I) was prepared and again shared with prospective participants. The schedule also proposed prospective facilitators/leads for different sessions. The schedule was finalized with flexibility and scope to review prospective sessions each day and re-organize them as needed.

Pedagogically, the approach was participatory and interactive and contained the following elements:

1. Topics were introduced and elaborated using impromptu scenarios to be reflected on and followed-up by group/individual presentations. Theoretical perspectives were linked, usually at the end, to reach agreement or explain divergence. Lectures were avoided and used only to explain certain positions held by participants.
2. Sessions became lively through use of role-play and storytelling which found a preferred space. Cultural presentations from different communities helped cultural engagements.

3. Participants were also provided with literature as part of the compendium shared by participants.
4. Field exposure offered an opportunity for experiential hands-on learning. Experiences following interaction with the community was shared and discussed during plenary sessions to fully understand the nuances.
5. To offer an enabling space, informal chats and interactions before the beginning of the event allowed unhindered sharing and understanding of each other's perspectives. This broke, to a very great extent, hierarchical divides and constraints.

In the following section an attempt is made to present the process and outcome of the workshop. Processes used in sessions might appear to have been repeated. Decisions were made to use relevant materials to explain various events and conclusions. This presentation, however, follows the same order as was followed in the event schedule.

2 Creating an enabling environment: Orientation and welcome

The workshop began with the arrival of participants the evening before the scheduled event. The evening was used to create an environment for informal interaction and bonding. Participants gathered to a welcome by the host –CDHI. A shawl was offered to each of the participants by the fellow participants with a sandal paste applied onto their forehead by member from a women self-help group. The shawl was prepared by a local ethnic community- the Rabha. A special feature of the session was to introduce the ethnic community which prepared the shawl. The CDHI team recalled their long years of bonding with this group. This introduction led to participants getting to know each other and getting to know a marginalized community living on the fringe. It also revealed the impact engagement with the community had on building strong bonds and revealed how mutually beneficial the process of engagement has been. CDHI enjoys a strong relationship with the Rabha community and have collectively worked to develop agency to mobilize opportunities for themselves. Rabhas have shared the dimensions of their culture and how their development has pursued without infringing upon their cultural traditions and identities. Rabhas, today, maintain their unique cultural identity while beginning to show and register their presence in the local governance and socio-economic and employment arena. The session was followed by light music and dinner which offered further opportunity for sharing and interaction in a pleasant environment. *The evening was able to set pleasant mood of the participants and proved a great enabler for the days to come.*

2.1 Day One: Workshop opening

Participants were formally welcomed on Day One. To build on the mood of the previous evening, the day began with a session on special introductions. Participants, on such occasions tend to share their formal background –family, education, profession and experience. We tried to delve into special aspects of their personalities which are usually not shared or asked about. Individuals would let others know their special attributes and others would join in if they found familiarity with that quality or trait.

Reflection

This exercise was interesting and useful in creating a mutual bond based on personal attributes and orientation. This unique sharing helped participants share and combine their attributes and identities with each other which is a precondition for synergy and collaboration. The floor could see different formations representing various special attributes and skills. One could see ‘*a band of musicians, team of traditional dancers, voracious readers and painters*’—what a scintillating mosaic of human attributes. One could envision how significant this exercise was to be in stimulating and shaping creativity and endeavour over the coming days!

2.2 ECE is multifaceted: Understanding these facets is essential

Understanding ECE, practicing it as a tool and predicting the outcome is not a linear process. ECE perspectives underpin a number of social, cultural and psychological connotations which need to be understood before one prepares to internalize and apply these in one’s daily life. For example ECE may be influenced by structural factors like social power structures and dynamics; one’s value system –values of equity and justice and discrimination. All these interact and determine one’s attribution and actions. A poor marginal community may be ignored or undermined for the relevance of their knowledge and other intellectual endowments. This confidence in and respect for their knowledge is shaped by existing power relations, socialization and stereotypes. As has been discussed earlier, research, as a knowledge enterprise, is considered to require special abilities which are available to certain categories of people with special endowments-lineage, class, education and institutional affiliation. The knowledge created by commoners, without such endowments, may be considered to be suffering from a lack of authenticity despite having all the attributes of objectivity and a clear potential to change their lives. Implicit and explicit discrimination of the knowledge held by the poor has strong implications for ECE. Finding how to appreciate and celebrate inclusive knowledge is the main focus for ECE.

For some practitioners who have had little exposure to basic social theories and concepts, this approach may appear complex and alien. This may be true - but for those who are committed to transformational endeavour, using research as a means, these complexities require simplification and demystifying as higher order learning and knowledge abilities. Attempt was made to use pedagogy which could create interest in these concepts and invoke reflection around them. For example, asking questions of ourselves like –how have we defined life for others and how have we perpetuated the status quo? These are issues and dynamics relating to – (1) research and knowledge, (2) discrimination through knowledge and (3) methodological preference for research and knowledge that can change power relationships using ethical community engagement as a knowledge perspective.

Reflective group sessions were used to elicit views on the above. Here is an example looking at the concept of ‘research’:

What is research? The floor considered research as:

- Research is investigating something.
- Studying something in depth.
- *Search something new.*
- Systematically investigating something.
- Observing something from different perspectives.
- ‘Re’ means again and ‘search’ means looking for something-research therefore means looking for something.
- *Research is creating an expected change*
- *Research is investigation for positive and measurable change*

2.3 Exercise: What does it feel like being engaged in research?

Participants pondered and concluded being involved in research provides:

- Feeling of self-elevation or higher order of being knowledge ‘creator’.
- Satisfaction to have achieved something special
- Exalted feelings
- Feeling good and high
- Being different from common people

Reflection

The above sets of perceptions about ‘*research*’ and ‘*researcher*’ are revealing. While research as investigation is to look for realities against pre-determined directions, hypotheses dominate thinking. Research as an endeavour is to change for the positive.

The discussion around ‘**knowledge**’ and researcher as ‘**knowledge creator**’ proved constructive and provided opportunity for reflection and establishing a position of one’s own.

Participants considered R4D as:

- Research for change.
- A need to understand the community. Research should be based on certain community priorities and issues.
- Positive change.
- Change for live better.
- Research for empowering the poor and the marginalized.

The participants moved closely to attributing research for empowering the poor. An R4D agenda is therefore a research agenda designed for empowering the poor.

2.4 Discussion: Why does traditional research miss this?

If R4D is to empower the marginalized then why do we sometimes miss this? Participants provided the following reasons:

- Researchers think they know everything - that's why engagement is not possible.
- Conflict between researchers and communities.
- Researcher preoccupation is collecting data from the field primarily.
- Researchers' inability to collaborate with the community.
- Researchers need to follow a specific approach, methodology to communicate with the community which they belong.
- Researchers go to the field with fixed ideas and frameworks and ignore that the community also has important worldviews and insights to share.
- The communication gap, between researchers and the community, takes place and persists because it (R4D) advocates a relationship based on empathy, not based on sympathy.
- Researchers go to the field without understanding the situation.
- Do not agree fully that researchers do not understand the community but line departments to take more responsibility in delivering more services to the community. There is a trust deficit.

2.5 Myths and realities about research and researcher

The above discussion led to identifying important myths and realities as follows:

| Myths | Realities |
|--|--|
| 1. Research is investigating phenomena using researchers' unique intellectual endowments | 1. Research is exploration of truth using multiple sources of knowledge |
| 2. Only researchers know how to know the truth using their research skills | 2. Anybody with inquisitiveness can reach the truth |
| 3. For doing research one needs certain levels of education and professional training | 3. No special qualification is needed –one can develop the necessary skill |
| 4. The poor villagers do not understand scientific principles and methodologies | 4. Scientists can ignore communities' unique understanding and at times neglect attempting to understand community perspectives–this willingness to listen may result in wholesome knowledge |
| 5. Researchers go to field without understanding the situation | 5. It is not always true –researchers make efforts to understand the situation |
| 6. Researchers have difficulty in communicating with the poor communities | 6. It may not always be the truth. Good number of researchers have developed the capacity to communicate. |
| 7. Being a researcher offers feelings of an exalted status | 7. Differs from person to person |

It was concluded that incongruence or lack of compatibility between the community and the researchers emanate because of missing sense of empathy between the two and simmering disconnect between their respective world views and perspectives. This is an outcome of the social power structures and stereotypes resulting from this asymmetrical relationship. This is where effort needed to focus on understanding and analysing power dynamics and articulating appropriate strategies for engagement so that deeper mobilization of views and the building of consensus and solidarity is made possible. Strong partnerships between researchers and communities cannot materialize if there is sense of discrimination in the relationship. We (researchers and practitioners) require sensitivity, understanding, skill and tools.

These myths and realities need to be considered in a context. It would not be fair to suggest that researchers are completely ignorant of the realities and have poor knowledge of the community. Some have a strong commitment to community and have the necessary skills to constructively interface with them. In such cases the quality of research outcomes are exemplary, provide validity and opportunity for practical use. In other cases, a strong commitment is present yet the skills to engage effectively are lacking.

Community engagement perspectives have their own challenges which require rigour, commitment and skill to interface with empathy. Those who have immersed in this kind of research are able to turn research into instruments of transformation. Community knowledge and wisdom are proving to be game-changers. Such examples may encourage and enthuse others to join.

2.6 Understanding pervasive discriminations: Relating with knowledge

The discussion above provided an understanding of the relationships between research and researchers and their interface with common people and the community. There exists substantial disconnect between traditional research and the community, especially in regard to their perspective and wisdom as a source of knowledge. ‘Research’ and ‘researchers’ tend to portray an exalted position undermining commoners’ perspective and worldviews. This reflects entrenched discrimination between those who traditionally control the knowledge and its use, and the common people who can be victims of discrimination. This raises the question –**whose knowledge matters most? And whose knowledge determines and shapes the lives of the poor?**

Discrimination around knowledge is part of broader social discrimination. In the session that followed time was devoted to considering discrimination experienced at the individual level and participants’ perceptions of discrimination experienced by the poor. To begin, individual participants shared their own experiences of discrimination. Everybody experienced discrimination differently. The dimensions of discrimination identified included:

- Gender
- Nationality and race
- Social –caste and culture
- Linguistic proficiency, knowledge and skill
- Institutional affiliation
- Employment opportunity and career
- Personal –being the only child makes others feel bitter –‘you are the only child’ reflected through sarcasm and taunt

The impact of discrimination is painful to all. However, some participants felt discrimination offered them the opportunity into success and a source of pride. The experience of gender discrimination was expressed by a male participant –discrimination between male and female students in being granted favour by the faculty. An encouraging revelation is that discrimination can be instrumental in articulating action to deal with it.

“What are the different forms of discrimination experienced by the poor and how has this affected their lives” was a question asked of participants. The answer to this question was sought through a collective (group-based) exercise. The objective of the session was to provoke reflection around discrimination as experienced by the poor and as perceived and experienced by participants – the majority of whom were dealing with issues of discrimination in their own lives.

Participants volunteered to form three groups and reflect around these issues. Presentation of the group’s views and decisions was planned and decided by individual groups which were free to embrace any form of creative/non-traditional presentations they wished. The three groups -(1) discussed the issues, (2) decided on the liveliest form of presentation and (3) delved into deeper

questions. It was interesting to observe this intense engagement on the issues. Within 30 minutes the groups were ready with their presentations covering different facets of discrimination.

Reflection

Two of the groups chose to use theatrical forms while the third group opted for storytelling. The groups covered social, cultural and institutional discrimination. The portrayal of dynamics and the crippling impact of discrimination were vivid and lively and the pain, dismay and anger obvious. A celebration of proactively dealing with discrimination was marked on the faces of the participants. It appeared that they were experiencing roles as victims and perpetrators. This exercise allowed an opportunity to analyse the dynamics of discrimination while searching for appropriate strategies and tools to deal with such discriminations.

A post presentation discussion explained the following:

1. As a pedagogy this allowed adequate opportunity for reflection as against a specialist's lecture on the subject,
2. It took the participants back to their own situations and allowed them to relate with the issues and forms of discrimination(s) specific to their contexts,
3. It provoked proactive articulation of strategies and tools to deal with discrimination in their respective situations.

Reflection

Based on the individual and group reflections, the floor considered the bases of discrimination and agreed that discrimination of any kind reflects exclusion or rejection. Discrimination, based on knowledge, deprives the community of including their knowledge that can be beneficial to broader society in dealing with societal issues. Respecting and acknowledging others' endowments and attributes helps build inclusion. To deal with such social constructs as discrimination, existing approaches of dispensing knowledge by experts to the poor and marginalized was not compatible with the ethos of inclusion and therefore participatory pedagogy could prove an effective instrument.

2.7 Effecting change: The person– environment interface

The preceding sessions dealt with the issues of *power dynamics* and *discrimination* impinging upon knowledge and its foundations. The sessions also touched upon the *transaction of knowledge*

using research as a tool to influence the *dynamics of the status quo* and the *hierarchical considerations* around it. The sessions also enabled us to appreciate the *crippling effect* of hierarchy and discrimination and how it blocked opportunities for inclusive knowledge transactions which further blocked opportunities for developing agency among victims of hierarchy and discrimination. The question is then raised, how do we effect change? How can the victims of hierarchy and discrimination rise to change their own situation?

These questions can be addressed by two existing theories which elaborate on the criticality of the influence of ‘*environment*’ in shaping human behaviour including his/her agentic capabilities – the ability to take action and be a change agent. Kurt Lewin (1936) and other classical behaviourists underscored the influence of environment on human behaviour which they subsequently revised to conclude that human behaviour (human actions) could be regulated and controlled by their own intrinsic motivation. Human actions as products of our environment were revised to suggest that people could shape their own world. Another psychologist who has almost revolutionized the thinking, Albert Bandura (2004), in an award address observed that those people who act as agents intentionally regulate their behaviour and life circumstances. They *create, uphold, transform* and even *destroy* their environment in a socially -embedded interplay between *personal agency* and *environmental influences*. In this view, humans are *self-organizing, pro-active, self-regulating and self reflecting*.” They are producers of their life circumstances not just their products”.

Reflection

Any intervention must appreciate this view and encourage strengthening and consolidating human potential. ECE supports this view by appreciating and respecting human potential.

ECE being so crucial in consolidating communities’ agency, pro-action and self-reflection, participants were exposed to this perspective to allow them to articulate their strategy for facilitating community engagement proactively with conviction. Ethical community engagement is transformational and not just a tool to extract information.

The participants, iteratively, engaged through interesting group work, analysis and role reversal – sometimes subscribing to influence of the environment and sometimes opposing it. This was a critical session for embedding the crucial link between environment and personal agency. Participants were allowed freedom to subscribe to the views as presented above and practiced them in their fields to see for themselves what worked and how. The potential role of facilitators is not just to follow but to carve an independent pathway forward.

2.8 Capturing expectations

The first two days created an enabling environment –people learned about each other, started entering into deeper discussion with each other, and began appreciating the purpose and vision of the workshop. In such an atmosphere it was possible to understand and analyse social theories and concepts which underpinned community engagement.

Expectations from the workshop

With this understanding and background participants underlined the following expectations from the workshop:

- Good strategies to engage with the community.
- Seasons or examples of community engagement.
- Technical aspects of engagement- tools, methods etc.
- Community engagement to be translated into practice-how to achieve this
- Knowledge and understanding of community engagement.
- Approaches of ethical community engagement.
- To tune or furnish knowledge about ethical engagement through participatory approaches
- What is the difference between a research mind and community thinking?
- Theoretical aspects –basic concepts and ideologies governing community engagement.
- How is the community benefitted by community engagement?
- To understand the grass root experiences of successful community engagement.
- To understand the gaps in communication between researchers and the community.
- Ways to facilitate effective community engagement
- Principles of ethical community engagement.
- Homogeneity of understanding ethical community engagement.
- Researchers and community – can there be equal benefits?
- Major challenges and remedies.

3 Pathway towards community engagement

3.1 Day 2: Community engagement can help reflect on and challenge power asymmetries

In an earlier section we argued that humans are self-regulating and can influence their environment –they are producers of their own life circumstances and not just their products. If this be so, then there is a need to understand and analyse why some sections of society succeed in challenging and changing their life circumstances while others do not? What makes some deal with their environment proactively while others struggle and tend to tumble down? What comes their way? To understand this one needs to examine and reflect on the power dynamics that lead to perpetuating this power asymmetry – some enjoy power and agency while others suffer powerlessness – without a capacity to identify ones agency and achieve the same. In this unequal power relationship some exert their power to render others more powerless. These can be defined as ‘oppressors’. Those that are victims of unequal power relationships tend to accept their status as given. They can be termed as ‘oppressed’. The ‘oppressor –oppressed’ relationship manifests in a number of ways and acquires different forms. Oppressions are exercised, inflicted and perpetuated using positional, institutional, social, cultural and knowledge bases of power. Oppression does not always manifest in physical terms. Oppression is a denial of expression and opportunity.

Reflection

For example a teacher may not allow a student to think beyond an existing knowledge structure. A scientist may ignore and undermine the innovation of farmers as being unscientific or may take farmers questioning as an affront.

The tension and conflict between the ‘oppressor’ and ‘oppressed’ continues. Sometimes the relationship is real and at other times it is perceived. A proper understanding of this relationship, its instruments and the pedagogy to influence this relationship is essential.

3.2 Pedagogy of the oppressed

There has been much field action and research endeavour to try and understand effective instruments to change this power relationship and influence the environment. Paulo Freire advocated for a participatory pedagogy which considers that the poor and the oppressed can contribute to the knowledge and instrumentalities for change in the same way that others can. Paulo Freire emphasized learning through dialogue which is based on democratic values and respect for each other. Paul Freire's formulations are transformational in intent.

Reflection

ECE has strong roots in the above perspective. Respect for the views of the community on subjects that not only concerns them but which have implications for their households as well as wider society.

We can conclude that the poor are able to transform their environment and become co-creators of knowledge and perspectives to transform their own lives. Their self-efficacy can be enhanced using ECE and participatory and dialogic pedagogies.

3.3 Demystifying these complex dynamics: Games that participants played

The above formulation acknowledges the existence of complex dynamics underpinned by theoretical foundations. To enable workshop participants to engage with these concepts it was necessary to create a conducive learning environment. Impromptu scenarios depicting asymmetrical relationships; role plays and group based reflections were used to foster understanding of these concepts.

For example:

1. A role play showing a farmer pleading for due entitlements and an influential person having easy access to the same depicted institutional power - illustrating who is favoured and who not,

2. Another theatrical presentation showed a lower caste woman being denied access to drinking water by higher community members spoke of existing power structures in favour of the elite.
3. A village woman being refused permission, by her spouse and family, to join a self-help group as an example of social power.

The above scenarios, designed and presented by participants offered opportunity for reflection. It helped them to understand and analyse the role and nature of power dynamics and the ‘oppressor-oppressed’ dichotomy. It also set in motion a reflective process to consider strategies capable of changing existing power relationships.

Empathetic community engagement can encourage building of self-efficacy and prepare for meaningful participation in knowledge transaction.

Our understanding of these interactions suggest that the process helped participants understand complex formulations related to:

1. Power relationships,
2. Oppressors -oppressed dynamics,
3. Instrumentalities and tools,
4. Pedagogy of the oppressed, and
5. ECE

3.4 ECE: Respecting the community for their wisdom

With the above foundations, it was time to engage in the process. Prior to the event, participants were exposed to some teasers and a scenario which depicted a village with actions taking place. The teasers and the scenario (village Rashulpur) are given below:

| Consider the following | | | |
|--|-----|----|----------|
| Possibilities | Yes | No | Not sure |
| 1. Elephants cannot dance | | | |
| 2. The villagers can build a beautiful school and run it | | | |

| | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| 3. The tribal girl from Rashulpur cannot go to a medical college to study | | | |
| 4. The villagers can remove the hill to make road for themselves | | | |
| 5. The farmers cannot control pests | | | |
| 6. The self-help groups cannot run a 20 crore business | | | |
| 7. The Pradhan alone can decide who can take water from the community well | | | |
| 8. The high caste people have the first right for treatment in the village health centre | | | |
| 9. Only rich can live a happy life | | | |
| 10. Old people are a great problem and burden for the community | | | |
| 11. The metal road can ensure prosperity in the village | | | |

Rashulpur celebrates

The tribal village of Rashulpur was recently in the news. Two girls were admitted to the national medical college and the high school received a new building with a hostel. The villagers had a bumper crop and were preserving their vegetables in their own village. Last year the village reported 100% literacy among the villagers and 100% institutional delivery. During 2016 the village was a positive case in the state's HDI report! There is music and dance every Sunday and the village takes their meal together! However the money lenders and quacks have been cursing the villagers especially Shushila and Ravi –the two village youths.

1. What must have happened in the village
2. Who must catalysed the change and how?
3. Do you see some conflict and struggle before or after the change? What could they possibly be?

The teaser had 11 items to be considered by the participants. Each of the participants reflected on the questions and their response, and by and large, indicated positive possibilities even under difficult circumstances. With quick work the participants reflected on the village and responded to the questions provided. The summary of their responses are as follows:

1. Rashulpur, the village in the scenario, witnessed change because of mobilization of the community catalysed by two youths-Sushila and Ravi. The youths were able to proactively engage with the community, arousing confidence and self –efficacy, building

through their strength and solidarity resulting into collective action and the resultant change attributable to the community,

2. The participants were able to identify what the community must have faced and how they would have negotiated with them.

The summary of the reflection, analysis and action suggested – (1) potentials of engagement and (2) the resultant outcome reflected through self-efficacy of the community. They believed in their own potential and capacity to change and could see changes happening. This short exercise was able to highlight the power of engagement and its impact in light of the power dynamics discussed above. A panel discussion followed.

3.5 Learning from engagement initiatives: Sharing insights

After Kolkata and Khulna meetings, community engagement perspectives had been in practice by partners in their respective project areas. During this period, participants developed their own understanding and gained some practical experience. Even non-SIAGI partners were involved in community engagement in their respective programs. It was, therefore, considered pertinent to share their respective insights. It was considered that peer-group insights would offer ‘comprehensive’ and ‘diverse’ contexts to relate to. Representatives from different partner organizations presented their insights on the process and practice of community engagement. The presentations were suggested to capture and reflect their unique contexts and themes. Emphasis was given to:

- Themes
- Initiation of engagement –how?
- Initial response
- Strands of cooperation and conflict
- Moments of partnership and collaboration
- Convergence and synergy
- Celebration of collective accomplishments

The presentations were required to capture and underline:

- Ethical strands, and
- Other sensitivities

The learning

Through the lens of each presentation it was possible to clearly traverse the trajectories of community engagement.

For example:

Sushilan (Bangladesh -BD) was able to, gradually and systematically, mobilize and bring on board various stakeholders, with the community acquiring and assuming a convincing space. Commitment from the local self-government and other institutions built greater trust among partners. The most important manifestation has been evolution of water and silt management committee with visible representation from the community.

For CDHI (Bengal, India) community engagement helped change initial indifference by the tribal community from Uttar Chakuakhet i(UC) into active participation and collaboration. The community, over this period has been able to initiate agricultural activities with positive lessons. The community seems to be moving on the road to intensification and simultaneously demanding and claiming due entitlements from the government. Community engagement has catalysed inclusion of farmers –men and women belonging to different categories.

We are aware how community engagement by PRADAN (Bankura-Bengal) has encouraged and enhanced participation of tribal community in the dry season agriculture and how they have been able to move on to horticulture. The communities' rising aspirations can be attributed to systematic community engagement (*based on personal communication and visit of Ms. Mitali Ghosh, CDHI, to PRADAN and the tribal community*).

For the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)-Indian Council -Central Soil Salinity Research Institute (represented by Dr. Subhasis Mandal

Principal Scientist) community engagement has been an important component. Subhasis will try a community engagement approach for implementing a research project with active participation from both the community and researchers.

IIT Kharagpur's views (Niladri and Kirty) emphasized engagement of the community in R4D initiatives. Research without community engagement is not ethical and the findings may suffer authenticity. The last few months of their field work has greatly influenced their views.

'Sakhi –Bihar' - a DSI4MTF partner -felt community engagement has been able to mobilize poor farmers into viable collectives. Engagement has helped access and use of irrigation technology from the project and has added to intensification. There has been extremely vibrant inclusion of women farmers.

Privartan (represented by its executive Director Setika Singh) -a non-SIAGI participant felt that community engagement, in their case, has been able to develop ownership among the women farmers in collective vegetable cultivation. Community engagement helps to bridge the gender gap cross various parts of the organization.

Innovators in Health (IIH) –Dalsingsarai (represented by Dyuti Sen) has demonstrated great impact of community engagement strategies in the mobilization of the community and other stakeholders in the implementation of their health programs.

During the plenary discussion participants shared moments of initial hesitation and identified obstacles put forth by the community. Explanations by facilitators which moved to allay doubts, motivate persistence and patience, and build strands of trust building that led to collaboration and partnership were provided.

It was suggested that the projects were only in initial stages and nothing could be concluded. However, the indicators suggest that community engagement has the potential to turn indifference into participation and collaboration. The point of collective celebration is yet to be realized.

3.6 Trajectory of engagement

The sharing was insightful and offered an opportunity for reflection. The discussion included identifying factors that could make engagement effective and successful and the extent to which engagement could lead to a realistic and viable collaborative pursuit.

Certain protocols can make engagement successful and effective although there cannot be a fixed process to follow.

3.7 Evolving situations and strategies to contend

| Situations | Strategies |
|--|--|
| Initial hesitation and indifference | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Honest sharing - details of initiatives• Patient listening and promise to be around• Consistency |
| Initial interest | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Elaborate on the initiative• Share the short term and long term potentials• Invite suggestions to build on• Respect the suggestions and encourage for more insights |
| Willingness for collaboration | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Clearly evolve norms for collaboration• Offer more space and respect their views• Offer positive strokes –positive feedback• Offer space for shared responsibilities• Collectively define indicators for success• Evolve joint action plans and monitor jointly |
| Institutional development – institutions reflect community’s shared vision and goals | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Initiate institution building process• Help evolve norms and processes• Help strengthen them and build capacities• Acknowledge and help linkage |
| Celebration | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The above set the context of celebration• Positive strokes –all the way• Encourage the community in innovation and up-scaling• Offer ownership and credit to the community and other stakeholders |
| Policy integration | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sharing with the policy level institutions/individuals group• Organizing events• Taking the community along and in the front• Media linkage –cautious and careful |

3.8 Preparing for the field: Engagement in practice

Having engaged, for last two days, in realizing conceptual and theoretical clarity and equipped with broader insights shared by participants, it was time to immerse in the practice of engagement. Exposure in the field was planned to allow participants an opportunity to observe and experience community engagement trajectory as facilitated by CDHI under the SIAGI project. It was also an opportunity for CDHI and SIAGI to receive feedback from participants on the facilitation and the

impact created. At the end of the day a detailed view of the field and proposed activities was discussed and participants' feedback obtained. The proposed activities, during the field visit, included:

1. Engagement with the community on the project;
2. Participation in a photo competition depicting community engagement with women acting as jury members and;
3. Engagement with children and youth leaders; and
4. Interaction with the community in Buxa to understand the level of engagement and impact it created on the life of the local communities.

The two locations identified included:

1. UC where SIAGI project is operational, and
2. Buxa where CDHI has worked earlier and has examples of community engagement and impact

A brief description of the two locations is given as follows.

| Uttar Chakoakheti (UC) | Buxa |
|--|--|
| <p><i>It is a tribal village under Alipurduar District (West Bengal). The village was initially identified as DSI4MTF (the sister project) site with irrigation technology and agronomic interventions. Farmers' collectives –farmers club, SHGs- had to undertake various experiments in cropping practice and technological interventions. Subsequently SIAGI joined for its study on inclusive agricultural intensification.</i></p> <p><i>In UC community engagement began around agriculture and water management issues which did not work well. Subsequently entitlement issues dominated the engagement which worked better and attracted government attention to provide them the due entitlement. To begin with farmers received caste certificates which is the basic requirement for accessing other entitlement.</i></p> <p><i>Enthusied by this the community started taking serious interest in the project and through collective initiative has undertaken various agronomical experiments which they consider as successful. Their ownership in the projects and also their aspirations has started soaring.</i></p> | <p><i>Buxa is a village under Rajabhatkhawa Gram Panchayat of Kalchini Block under Alipurduar district. Although Buxa is a village, it signifies as centre of some 16 hill villages around it. It used to have a prison during the British rule for the freedom fighters.</i></p> <p><i>On the invitation of the district administration, then Jalpaiguri, CDHI has worked in the villages since 2002. Since the beginning of the initiative community engagement was at the core. The priorities were identified by the community, interventions evolved through community engagement, implementation strategies were worked out jointly and monitoring was done by the community. The initial activities were organized as a campaign christened as –Buxa Shiksha Jyoti Abhiyan (BSJA) which was focused around school education.</i></p> <p><i>Subsequently the community consolidated and expanded its campaign to cover general development of the area-the campaign changed to Buxa Vikash Abhiyan (BVA).</i></p> <p><i>Now even after CDHI has phased out its involvement and presence BVA continues to work as community-led</i></p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p><i>The village is moving toward formalizing a farmers' club and the SHGs have started streamlining their functioning. They have started thinking of creating a better value chain and livelihoods.</i></p> | <p><i>institution to take up various interventions and takes up advocacy activities for various entitlements of the community.</i></p> |
|---|--|

4 Field exposure

Day three

The first leg of the field exposure commenced at UC (14th May -3rd day of the workshop). Participants were ceremonially welcomed by villagers and then formal interactions began in different interest groups-(1) farmers, (2) group of youths and children and (3) women groups. Discussions, in general, covered entry of the project, initial response, institutional development and collectivization, technological innovations with process of engagement as cross-cutting subject.

A special group of women SHGs members sat together to evaluate 16 photographs depicting aspects of community engagement. The photographs, shared by different participants, were examined and analysed by them. They selected and ranked six photographs. The explanation and rationale for their ranking was offered by them and which were as follows:

1. Depicting the needs and concerns of the poor and women- they closely considered our concerns.
2. Depicting involvement of women and the poor including using and analysing technology which defied stereotypes and traditions. For example women examining irrigation pumps and collectivizing for vegetable cultivation.
3. Depicting enterprises and initiatives of the poor encouraged and appreciated by educated and high profile people.

The overall environment and mood of the community showed vitality in their aspiration, a sense of achievement, dignity and confidence to make changes possible.

Day four

The second day (May, 15; day 4th) of the exposure took participants to Buxa which involved a good amount of pleasant trekking. The visit included:

- Interaction with members of the Buxa Vikash Abhiyan (BVA);
- Informal discussion with senior volunteers; and;
- A visit to some of the important locations where CDHI worked with the community.

The overall environment within the community reflected pride and confidence in to making strong strides. The relationship between the community and CDHI showed strong bonding had developed and built around mutual trust, empathy and collective efficacy.

4.1 Engagement with cultural diversity

Arriving back at the base, at the end of the two day field exposure, participants attended a rich folk cultural performance by different cultural groups.

Reflection

The rhythmic dance performance by Rabha tribe members depicted the community's cultural endowment. The troupe's leadership is passing to a different generation and is to be recognized by the government and the civil society in equal measure.

The tribal dance performance by local tribes including Santhal and Oraon etc depicted their cultural richness. These cultural moorings offer opportunity to add hope and happiness.

The solo song performance –Bhawaiya-by an acknowledged local artist- took participants on a story of nostalgia into the remote rural corners of North Bengal and North Bangladesh. Bhawaiya portrays great emotion and melancholy of the rural community.

The above exposure to the cultural performances was aimed not only to entertain the participants but to also let them appreciate the sensitivity of culture. Community engagement must consider these sensitivities and ensure nuanced appreciation towards them. This is what creates a willingness to participate, share and strive for change.

The workshop dinner, after the cultural performance, added much cherished energy for the next day.

5 Consolidating the learning

Day 5 focused on consolidating the learning from the field as well as potential tools for community engagement.

5.1 Learning from the field

Day 5 reflected on learnings from the field. What did the field exposure offer? What were the insights that were carried back and how they could be acted upon and followed-up? Enthusiastic words were spoken but there was also a sense of ‘too much’ for the days. For some, trekking was difficult but engaging with the community proved good compensation. Participants shared the following in terms of community engagement as observed and experienced at the two locations:

1. In UC the engagement began with entitlements issues –challenging the community about their current situation and their sense of dependency – *‘somebody will do it for us’*. The community took the challenge in its stride and initiated action which helped them access their due entitlement. This offers a lesson for engagement –the theme for engagement may not be immediately related to the formal priority of an intervention. In this case the entitlement theme triggered initiatives and the on-going journey continued to cover the formal project theme –intensification of agriculture.
2. UC also demonstrated that the tool for engagement may not always be well known nor formally recognized as participatory tools – transect walk/social mapping etc. Here the education of the children was considered as important for building future leadership and accordingly the quality of education became a focus. The quality focus brought in the use of joyful pedagogy and facilitators began with a rhythmic dance sequence –**‘Lakdika Ghoda-the wooden horse’** for the community to join. The wooden horse assumes iconic presence and a reference for the beginning of an evolving journey. The lesson is that facilitators should not be static and fixed in using tools for facilitation –it has to be relevant according to the context of the community in a given time and space.
3. Participants considered community engagement in UC as vibrant observing-“ there is discernible excitement in the air”. It has helped develop and expand community leadership. However, there is still a dependency syndrome which lingers and needs to be proactively dealt with. Some of the leaders seem to continue to retain and monopolize information. There is still gender discrimination in decision making processes -some of the participants pointed out.
4. Leadership among women is improving and SHGs show potential to go beyond financial activities. The judging of the photo competition and rationale and indicators, as decided and explained by the women, point to the potential women have.

5. On the positive side engagement has helped plan cropping intensification, access various government schemes, manage collectives, capture their aspirations, and articulate ways to address them. The future seems to offer opportunity for larger initiatives.
6. The overall environment, in Buxa, and the local community reflected pride and confidence to make long strides. The relationship between the community and CDHI showed a strong bond being developed and built on mutual trust, empathy and collective efficacy. This shows that CDHI has a demonstrable example of community engagement and its impact.
7. There are geographical and other contextual differences between the community of UC and Buxa. However, learning from the two sites can help evolve context based, effective engagement strategies and tools.
8. Caution needs to be maintained to simultaneously work to facilitate backward –forward linkages so that the community does not suffer uncertainties. For example if the intensification has to grow on a large scale, in UC, then existing institutional opportunities must be explored. The community must be made aware of the opportunities and prepared to access them.

5.2 Strategies and participatory tools relevant for community engagement

Having discussed community engagement participants having been exposed to the process and outcome of engagement, it was pertinent to allow participants to *revisit participatory tools* that could be relevant and helpful in facilitating community engagement.

Participants, to some extent, were already aware of the participatory tools available to them. It was considered essential to allow participants an opportunity to revisit available tools and continue with a peer learning session to help consolidate their learning.

The participants were requested to suggest a key word related to community engagement. Each participant suggested a related word which was written in a column. They were then asked to suggest a key tool that they were aware of as relevant to facilitating community engagement. The two columns were compared. This process helped participants confirm their understanding.

At the end of this exercise participants were asked to identify three basic tools which they considered as robust and comprehensive. Participants were invited to initiate and facilitate the discussion covering three identified tools. Three tools identified included: (1) Social mapping, (2) Focused group discussion and (3) Historical transect. The session proved an important example of peer learning. The details presented in the table below provide a demonstration of the exercise:

| Key learning words-community engagement | Key participatory tools | Brief description of the three frequently referred tools. |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-efficacy - Openness - Ownership - Respect - Mutual trust - Consistency - Theory - Ethics - Leadership - Strategic - Leadership - Manner - Equity - Attitude (positive) - Value - Justice - Self-learning - Conducive environment - Sympathy - Empathy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Arts and creativity - Participatory tool-social mapping - FGD (focus group discussion) - Interview - PRA (participatory rural appraisal) - PAR (participatory action research) - Observation - Qualitative service - Sports - Drama - Story-telling - Living with community - Working with community - KII (key informant information) - Historical analysis - RRA (rapid rural appraisal) - Narratives - Venn diagram | <p>1. Social mapping: What is this? According to the participants, the perception of social mapping is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Portrait of the community. -Focuses our work -Studying about the resources -Everything in the village visualized through social mapping -To know the institutional situations -To know the settlements -This is the tool to engage the community. -Social mapping helps us to recognizing the community's own resources -Social mapping helps to create ownership and respect each other <p>2. Focus Group Discussion (FGD): The seating arrangement and eye contact is most important while we conduct the FGD. This is the tool which is good for data validation. Facilitators need to talk to all participants and also need to play a role as gate keeper.</p> <p>3. Historical transect: Used when need to know the past history of the project location for last 15 to 25 years. This is the tool to identify turning points and other historical issues.</p> |

5.3 Story telling as a tool for community engagement

Story telling is an important tool to understand a society's concerns, potentials and priorities. We have used this tool before, during the Khulna event. The preparation for the storytelling started immediately after the training workshop was proposed and planned.

Reflection

Prospective participants were sent some broken lines to build a story around them. It was argued that the broken lines would offer a context and creative stimulation to construct a story. Some of the participants responded positively with their stories which reflected their own unique context.

During the training workshop the story building and telling session was marked by the presentation of a real scenario the participants were familiar with. The wooden horse rhythmic dance and song sequence was replayed live which read as:

“Lakdika Ghoda-the wooden horse

Panipedouda-ran on water

Bandh kotoda-smashed the embankment and

Admiko Joda-United the humans”

The first part of each line (italics) is the Hindi version whereas the later part is English translation.

The participants danced and sang and immediately sat to write stories based on their understanding and perspective. The story writing was free –people could express their feelings through stories, poetries, anecdotes and narratives. After the exercise:

- There were stories,
- Poetry, and
- Anecdotes.

Presentations proved quite spontaneous and emotional. They reflected and related to various activities and scenarios as evolved during the workshop. Unanimously, it was concluded that the song dance sequence, as entry point event in UC, had influenced the community into collective action.

5.4 Making research sense of stories

Questions came up for discussion about the use of story for writing research outputs –articles, books and reports. Stories, inherently, are expressions of views, perspectives, emotions, values

and belief systems. They are rich qualitative data which can be analysed using available statistical tools. Quantitative analysis is also possible.

Reflection

For example the stories around the wooden horse (LakdikaGhoda) may have different content and may reflect different values and emotional components. If analysed, the contents of the stories can reveal categories and themes. A frequency count can offer an opportunity to examine the possible pattern of data and relationships among them.

With this basic data one can use various analytical tools. Quantitative and qualitative analyses can help make better research sense than either of the two used alone.

5.5 Developing sensitivities to deal with assumptions about the nature of the community

One may always have assumptions about the nature of community. Effectiveness of community engagement depends upon the assumptions one may have about the nature of community. Participants were offered an opportunity to indicate and share their assumptions about the nature of community. Assumptions christened 'X' and 'Y', which follow a theory of human motivation developed by Douglas McGregor (1960) in the context of human resources management, were revisited individually and in-group and arguments built around their respective positions.

The exercise offered an opportunity for participants to reflect iteratively around their own positions and test their assumptions - whether the community is intrinsically forthcoming and self-initiated or whether there is external inducement guiding their initiative. It was interesting to observe participants arguing their respective positions. A reflection on this could help understand the nature of the community in taking initiatives and may impinge upon community engagement as the prevailing beliefs.

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THE NATURE OF A COMMUNITY (X)

Indicate whether you *Agree* or *Disagree* with the statements given below by placing a tick (✓) in the appropriate column.

| S. No. | Statement | Agree | Disagree |
|--------|---|-------|----------|
| 1. | Work is inherently distasteful to most people in the community. | | |
| 2. | Most people in the community have little desire for responsibility and prefer to be directed. | | |
| 3. | Most people in the community have little capacity for creativity in solving problems. | | |
| 4. | Most people in the community must be closely controlled to put forth adequate effort to achieve objectives. | | |

ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT THE NATURE OF A COMMUNITY (Y)

Indicate whether you *Agree* or *Disagree* with the statements given below by placing a tick (✓) in the appropriate column.

| S. No. | Statement | Agree | Disagree |
|--------|--|-------|----------|
| 1. | Work is as natural as play, and most people in the community do not inherently dislike work. | | |
| 2. | Most people in the community learn, not only to accept but to seek responsibility. | | |
| 3. | The capacity for creativity in solving problems is widely distributed in the community. | | |

| | | | |
|----|--|--|--|
| 4. | Most people in the community do exercise self-control and put forth adequate effort for the achievement of objectives. | | |
|----|--|--|--|

5.6 Power of appreciation

The nature of a social environment greatly depends upon the pattern of interpersonal feedback mechanism within it. If the feedback mechanism characterizes holding of information, negative feedback and cynicism, the social environment may not be conducive to synergy and constructive collaboration. On the other hand if the environment characterises applaud, appreciation and positive feedback it is conducive to collective action and synergy. Community engagement would either benefit from this environment of positive feedback or alternatively community engagement would contribute to the creation of such environment. In this power of appreciation is great.

A session was organized where people interacted, in a group, positively with each other appreciating and celebrating individual traits and potentials for accomplishments. Sitting together, staring at each other and maintaining a positive stance about each other created an environment of empathy and mutual good will. The exercise yielded substantial human capital and influenced the participants positively.

The feedback session, after the exercise, could hear:

- Positive energy could be felt during and after the exercise
- Sense of mutual trust seemed growing
- Enhanced sense of self-efficacy was marked

This has implications and can be an important tool to generate and uphold group's net emotional and trust quotient.

6 Remaining connected post-workshop

The workshop proved a melting pot of ideas, insights, perspectives, values, skills and capacities. These can be useful if sharing and exchange continues. A network was suggested as a possible tool. However, networks do not work on their own –they need to have common ownership and leadership to galvanize continued partnership. With this limitation there was agreement on the following:

1. Immediately after the workshop participants would prepare a travelogue of their journey to the workshop. The travelogue would be collated and shared among participants. The travelogues have started trickling in and a sample by Sumana is annexed (Annexure-2)
2. The project has continuous inflow and outflow of information through different programs and activities. They automatically reach the participants. The participants would offer and share their feedback.
3. If some of the participants plan writing for publications they would be encouraged with necessary feedback. Cross-cultural perspective can be woven around such collaborative publications.
4. Young professionals merit special encouragement and support. Any evolving professional opportunity need to be shared with them and support offered.

As a first step the participants (institution wise) planted different trees at the CDHI campus to keep their memories embedded and fresh. CDHI will nurture them to grow and together nurture and strengthen the strong bonding that has grown.

6.1 Voices from the floor

One week of intense interaction and working together around a common theme had created impressions, understanding and judgment about the program, people, organization etc. At the end of the workshop there was feedback–both written (Questionnaire Annexed -4) and verbal-shared unanimously. An analysis of the personal written feedback suggested that the participants:

1. Gained significant insights
2. Found the program overwhelmingly useful both for the work and personal growth
3. Considered the involvement of the participants very high and deep
4. Considered facilitation to be very helpful

Interactive and participatory pedagogy was something the participants liked the most. There was no perceived ‘trainee-faculty’ dichotomy -the pedagogy epitomized –inclusive and learning together –everybody contributed significantly and everybody gained equally.

Two of the participants found the fieldwork to be short and felt they needed some more time in the field with opportunity for some hands on. For one of the two non-Bengali participants’ language (Bengali) proved a challenge at times.

The verbal feedback has been quite forthcoming and we would like to present them verbatim as provided by individuals and captured by the rapporteur:

- “I got the invitation to participate to this workshop two months back. This engagement is most important and I will use in my field”.
- “Thanks to CDHI. Last seven days I feel no boring and very different to express and feeling like a family. To me it is just beginning and again we will meet”.
- “From first day to last day I had good time with everyone impacting. Now there is ample clarity about community engagement as a perspective and tool”.
- “Great experience. This is totally different and covered everything. I have grown fast to my present position as Principal Scientist due to my work and luck. Feeling very much emotional and trying to get an idea and direction on what to do? I welcome you all to Kolkata”.
- “Unique experience from this workshop. It helps me a lots. Automatically we have engaged in this workshop. Learning from the field we will use in our field. This is SIAGI family and we welcome you all to Dhaka”.
- “All participants are involved in last 2/3 months which is really great and the proposal from some friends to work together is appreciable”.
- “Engagement of Buxa is an example where community members are engaged in my developmental work by themselves though there are many constraints”.

- “Thanks to CDHI. We have been working with community in BD and you are also working in UC. This great learning how CDHI is engaging the community”.
- “After participating value chain workshop in CDHI, again we are here to participate in ECE. This is rare experience and learning a lots from Dr. Mishra. The hospitality of CDHI and relationship is appreciable”
- “Involved from the beginning after Khulna meeting. Idea level cooperation from all is appreciable”.
- “I am lucky that I have participated in this workshop as I have joined Shushilan few months back”.
- “Enabling environment created in this workshop for proper learning”
- “Initially we did not know where we are going and at the end realizing what is gaining. Also satisfied with food”
- “The purpose is fulfilled”.
- “This is different kind of training and seamless learning. Within a workshop there were many mini workshops – drama, story-telling, field visit. Also learnt from other participants”.
- “I have learnt different things including engaging among ourselves for last 7 days. I am lucky to participate to this workshop that I will be able to think and do the things differently.
- “This is great workshop and I wish CDHI good luck”.
- “ I am happy -everybody contributed so well”
- “ The workshop enthused everybody to express and relate ”

7 Moving ahead: Taking the learning forward

What have we learned and where do we go from here? From Kolkata (October 2016) to Khulna (February, 2017) and then Jalpaiguri (May 2017) it has been an interesting journey. The need for orienting SIAGI's implementing partners was well received and collectively endorsed. Subsequent approval from the project leader only confirmed the authenticity of commitment. Developing a collaborative framework with participatory pedagogy at its centre worked well and was confirmed through responses of participants. The workshop confirms- *'it was an action in the right direction at the most opportune moment'*.

The learning from the workshop are multiple and significant and described in this section.

7.1 Inclusion helps participation

When it was suggested that the training workshop be organized, it was envisaged that participation of all concerned at different levels of the workshop would be ensured. The first written framework was shared and circulated among the prospective participants. Happily the participants and partners responded well with some suggestions and also offered and shared important literature. This helped in reorienting the workshop framework and resource mobilization.

The schedule that finally evolved had inputs from the participants. For example Arnab (PRADAN) and Wakilur (BAU) contributed substantially to the preparation of schedule. Their rich experience is reflected in the schedule. The schedule was kept flexible and during the workshop some of the activities would be rescheduled to adjust for the spill-over sessions.

Usually the schedule is prepared by the organizer and shared during the introduction of the event with the request to have a look and offer feedback. This really does not make significant difference. Sharing the framework from the outset, soliciting views on perspectives created stronger ownership and the mental process keeps reflecting.

7.2 Creating an enabling environment

We have underlined the need for creating enabling environment for better learning outcomes. This can be achieved in a number of ways. As has been indicated earlier, hosting welcome evenings, offering the participants opportunity to open up, and cultural events helped. Even knowledge based

sessions can have the elements of fun. These were essential elements for creating enabling environment.

7.3 Pedagogy

Dealing with issues related to community development is neither technical nor quite professionally demanding, nor requiring special educational qualification. It concerns human emotions, values and empathy. These aspects may be termed as esoteric. Our experience suggests that use of appropriate pedagogy can help catalyse reflective learning process and useful learning outcome. Storytelling, scenario analysis, role play together with some basic communication skill can help reflect around and develop understanding of the issues related to community engagement. Pedagogy would make big difference in the learning transaction and outcome.

7.4 The boundary between faculty and participants

The workshop led us to realize that when the faculty (traditional trainer) and the participants (traditional trainees) engage with each other in an enabling environment, the learning outcome is diverse and evolving. Our group consisted of participants from different backgrounds and levels. Some have agriculture as their field of specialization, others are sociologists, agriculture economists and psychologists. Some are field coordinators while another is a professor- (creating a potentially difficult hierarchical composition).

The structure of the workshop and the environment in which it was implemented allowed complete melting of these hierarchical and disciplinary silos. The language barrier did not block exchange neither did linguistic deficiency. Under such an environment empathy grew for each other as individuals equally endowed to be reflective and self-organizing. These are necessary conditions for developing self-efficacy.

Reflection

When Mozammel decided to play an arrogant village lord and Joy his tough confidant Mitali and Setika revealed their outrage in not allowing the poor woman, Kirty, to use their drinking water well. People were stunned –they look very different as arrogant individuals with Kirty being so badly oppressed. Arnab playing an oppressed wife, struggling to cross the family barriers, created pathos and pity! Arnab was the same person facilitating reflection around oppressor and oppressed.

Consider their background –Ismail is a professor, Joy an engineer, Mitali a senior gender professional, Setika a development executive with a foreign degree and Kirty a Ph.D student from the prestigious IIT. Arnab is a senior development practitioner with rich academic background. Seamless portrayal of social structures could not be explained in a better way. In this process people tended to set aside their formal personas and identities—they became unified around issues and concerns. And they all learnt from the evolving situation. This is when hierarchical boundaries invariably disappeared.

The above illustration explains the potential of an enabling pedagogy. The challenge is to allow substantial time and resources to build such facilitation structures.

7.5 Field exposure

The formal close room interactions needed to be applied to real life situations to allow participants to relate their learning to reality. The field exposure is usually a visit to observe something happening and being done. Field exposure is not only about observing and learning – it is also about immersion in the field –its people, environment and dynamics.

Reflection

When Ram Kishore (UC) led dancing with the children to the tune of the –‘Wooden horse’, participants chose to join him. And that triggered questions and evoked responses-the natural dialogue that no other tool is capable of.

Field exposure and being with the community helps one understand and analyse the dynamics of the community.

7.6 Lessons from experience

ECE as an approach and perspective has relevance and legitimacy. This has been established in a number ways. Traditional methodological formulations have demonstrated their shortcomings in unravelling the truth and being transformational. Our field experiences have led us to confirm the

value and viability of community engagement as a transformational research approach. The workshop further demonstrated –‘**we must adopt it if we wish R4D pursuits to be meaningful**’. The following is a ‘to do’ list incorporating the collective responsibility of researchers, collaborators and sponsors. Let us consider some of them:

1. Any R4D formulation must consider community engagement as an inevitable methodological option. This would imply that even before actual writing of proposals, there should be community engagement to gain insights. This, in our view, is as important as a literature review;
2. Sponsors should be sensitive to this perspective and strive to follow this path -including through monitoring and learning;
3. SIAGI seems to have demonstrated this is possible by adopting this perspective after the project was approved. ACIAR, as a sponsor, have been willing to support and encourage such shifts;
4. Community engagement protocol underscores the need for orienting the research community including those working at field levels. Their orientation is a necessary condition for the success of the project;
5. Our understanding is that adequate resources are not available for grassroots facilitation and capacity building of grassroots functions. There is a need to appreciate the critical role the Grassroots field workers play and corresponding capacity the Field workers/facilitators) need. The capacity of young professionals needs building. The profile of workshop participants (Annexure -5), shows that their median age is young and their level of understanding and commitment exemplary –this must be fully harnessed;
6. Orientation and capacity building cannot be completed at one time. It is a continuous process. Using existing technological platforms, there should be effort at constant sharing of experiences and resources with each other;
7. A community engagement perspective may create a ripple in the existing power dynamics- some of the research initiatives may be seen as disturbing the existing power relations. There are instances of disquiet and conflict. They should not appear frightening. They, inevitably, show that impact is taking place and we must be attending to them at appropriate levels through policy level dialogue and advocacy. ***R4D pursuits have the potential to transform society.***

8 References

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Annexure 1 – Workshop Schedule

Objectives

1. Enhanced awareness, appreciation, understanding and absorption of the concept of Community engagement
2. Exploration, examination and re-viewing of assumptions in the light of lived experience
3. Evolving strategy for consolidation and integration of the community engagement perspectives and practices

| Time | Content | Anchor of the session | Remarks |
|-------------------------|---|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Day 1 - 12.05.17 | | | |
| 9.30 am -11: 00 am | Welcome | Dhananjay Ray –Chief Executive | |
| | Introduction | Mitali | |
| | Background and perspectives of the workshop followed by facilitation of expectation sharing | Mishra | |
| | XY form filling up | Arnab | Draft note attached |
| 11:15 am - 11:30 am | Tea Break | | |
| 11.30 am - 1.30 pm | Individual Exercise - 10 minutes deep reflection | Wakilur/Arnab | |
| | Tasks: | | |

| | | | |
|-------------------|---|--|--|
| | Q1: Reflect on the discriminations that you may have experienced in your life? | | |
| | Q2: How have they impacted you? | | |
| | Plenary: Five volunteers share | | |
| | Theoretical understanding about discrimination and deprivation : To focus more around knowledge as source power and discrimination | R. Mishra - possible sources of knowledge and link with social and economic power and discrimination | |
| 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm | Lunch | | |
| 2:30 pm -3:15 pm | What are the different forms of discrimination that you have experienced in the life of poor villagers you have interacted with ; How does it affect their life? --- Share through a creative presentation of 10 minutes / group. | Mahanam | |
| 3:15 pm -3:45 pm | Tea Break | | |
| 3:45 pm -6:00 pm | Includes small activity...musical chair | | |
| | Preparation on a Debate: For triggering any kind of change we have to invest on 'person' or 'environment' ? | | |
| | Debate | | |
| | Task: Role reversal... | | |
| | Preparation: 15 Minutes | | |
| | Debate: 20 Minutes | | |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---|--|
| | Reflect on your experience of last two debates. Write down the questions that come to your mind. Having viewed two perspectives what is the view you are considering to subscribe to. | | |
| | Announcement of the winner and celebration plus break | | |
| | B= f(P, E)- Explaining Kurt Lewin and Bandura | | |
| | Participants place the strip either under P or E; Summing up of faculty on Self Efficacy through the graphical model of self efficacy | | |
| | Open session | | |
| | Day closes with logistical announcements by Subrata | | |
| Day 2 - 13.05.17 | | | |
| 9:30 am - 11:30 am | Sharing about yesterday's session.... In retrospect? What happened yesterday –queries, feelings, thoughts, queries, feelings & thoughts | Dhananjay | |
| | Poor can do everything to change their circumstances --- Discussion around Oppressor and Oppressed -- A concept around the learning from the 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed' | R. Mishra | |
| 11.30 am -12:00 noon | Tea Break | | |
| 12:00 noon – 1:30 pm | Enabling environment for transformation by the poor –Engaging with poor respecting their knowledge and wisdom–Community Engagement –what it is and what not? | RM/Ismail/Mahnam Das/ Prasun/ Dhananjay | |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| | | <p>There would be pre-designed questions –</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What it did to the farmers (those engaged with) – initiatives 2. Cooperation 3. Conflict 4. Synergy and collectivization 5. Celebrating ones initiatives /capability | |
| 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm | Lunch | | |
| 2.30 pm - 3.30 pm | <p>Ethical Engagement –ethics and sensitivities in engagement</p> <p>Some cases and examples</p> <p>Practical tips and examples –how and what?</p> | <p>Pulak /Bakuluzzaman /Ritesh/Subrata/Mitali /Setika /Benu</p> <p>Same format as above</p> | |
| 3:30 pm -4.00 pm | Tea Break | | |
| 4.00 pm - 6.00 pm | Participatory approach and tools relevant for community engagement | Wakilur, Mahanam, Pulak and R Mishra | |
| | Story telling | Mishra | |
| 6.00 pm | About field work | Subrata | |
| Day 3 - 14.05.17 - Field visit | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| 8.00 am - 9.00 am | Breakfast | | |
| 9.15am - 12.15pm | Travel to Uttar Chakwakheti | | Registration at Bamboo village |
| 12.30 pm - 1.30 pm | Lunch at Bamboo village | | |
| 2.00 pm - 5.00 pm | <p>The themes and what to do discussion?</p> <p>About the field –division of team</p> <p>The themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional development strengthening –SHGs/farmers clubs and other collectives etc • Technological innovation including irrigation and farming • Value chain • Inclusion and inclusive intensification <p>• Let us aim for five themes</p> | <p>Self –driven but each group to have a familiar face as coordinator to include</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Subrata 2. Mitali 3. Joy 4. Benu 5. Prasun | |
| Day 4 - 15.05.17 - local tour | | | |
| 07.15am - 08.00am | Breakfast | | |
| 08:00 am -01.00 pm | Travel to Buxa Fort , historical places and discussion with the community | | |
| 01.00 pm - 02.00 pm | Lunch | | |
| 05.30 pm | Return to base | | |
| 06.00 pm - 09.30 pm | Cultural Program and workshop dinner | | |
| Day 5 - 16.05.17 | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|--|
| 9:30 am - 11:00 am | <p>Sharing about the insights gained during the field visit. Each group will present brief documentation/photographs. Judging engagement in terms of the following indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What it did to the farmers (those engaged with) –initiatives • Cooperation –level of cooperation • Areas of disagreements • Community’s feelings • Sense of celebration • Participant’s overall feeling | Peer-group feedback Feedback by the senior practitioners and suggestions | |
| 11.00 am -11:30 am | Tea Break | | |
| 11.30 am - 1.30 pm | Sharing about the insights gained during the field visit – Continued | Dr. Mishra | |
| 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm | Lunch | | |
| 2.30 pm - 3.30 pm | SGA: Compare each other individuals inventory XY form and build group consensus around each item | Arnab | |
| | o Consensus- yes/no with reason. | | |
| | o Debate while some groups have not come to consensus | | |
| 3:30 pm -4:00 pm | Tea Break | | |
| 4.00 pm - 5.00 pm | Compilation of group data - X-Y analysis | Arnab / Wakilur / Pulak / RM / Setika / Subrata /Dyuti Sen | |
| | XY theory explained- small presentation | | |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consistency b/w behaviour and assumptions • Power of assumptions—Self-fulfilling prophecy; Concept on Pygmalion theory | | |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---|--------------------|--|
| 5.00 pm - 6.00 pm | Positive stroke -- power of appreciation | | |
| 6.00 pm | Day closes with logistical announcements by Subrata | | |
| Day 5 - 17.05.17 | | | |
| 9:30 am - 11:30 am | Sharing about yesterday's session....queries, feelings & thoughts | | |
| 11.30 am -12:00 noon | Tea Break | | |
| 12.00 noon - 1.30 pm | <p>Evolving Knowledge Network</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The workshop concludes but do we stop here –where do we go and how? 2. How to maintain this momentum 3. Knowledge network –what it can be 4. Sharing of grassroots learning –using SIAGI website 5. Publication of literature –reports/books/articles/ 6. Young professionals support initiatives (as evolved during Khulna) 7. Mentor groups 8. Cross visits and exposure 9. Responsibilities | All | |
| 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm | Lunch | | |
| 2.30 pm - 3.30 pm | Evolving a knowledge network continues | All | |
| 3:30 pm -4:00 pm | Tea Break | | |
| 4.00 pm - 4.30 pm | Debriefing | Dr. Mishra & Arnab | |
| 4.30 - 5.00 pm | Verbal Feedback | Wakilur | |

| | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|--------------|--|
| | Written Feedback | Bakuluzzaman | |
| 5.00 pm - 5.30 pm | Vote of Thanks | Dhananjay | |

Annexure 2 – A Travelogue

A travelogue on the Jalpaiguri workshop



*By Sumana Sarah Bhuiyan
Of Shushilan, Bangladesh.*

Time before the workshop

My learning may remain uncompleted if I don't participate in Jalpaiguri workshop. When I participate in this workshop I was a new comer, I have joined only one month before the workshop so it was a great opportunity for me to participate in such a workshop and I was so excited beside this I was tensed too. At first I am unaware of when the workshop actually planed but which day I became a part of SIAGI team I was told that you are lucky you have got an opportunity to participate in Jalpaiguri workshop at May so take preparation. I was very happy hearing that but preparation was not easy for me because I had only 15 day for preparation and unfortunately my Passport validity date was expired before 1 month so I apply for a Urgent Re-Issue passport ,Visa and every day I used to tension what will happen if I doesn't got my passport and visa in time besides this I took my work pressure that I am a new comer so I have to understand my working condition, community situation and most importantly I need to engage with my community intimately, beside those my supervisor told me to make some case study on my concern community. But I am fortunate that I am able do most of those task within time.

Last evening in Bangladesh before the workshop

I have to pass a busy time for the preparation of the workshop. I leave Khulna city just two days before the workshop, Khulna is my working area as well as my home town. Our journey starts from Dhaka so I live Khulna for Dhaka in 9th May and it took whole day to reach there on interesting thing was that when I was packing my bag at night before living Khulna I got an mail from Rajeshwar sir where there was some broken line and it was said to make a story with the broken line. At that moment I feel helpless I could not understand what I need to do .However I give priority to my duty I start to write till late night. Next morning I had started my journey early. At 10th May I have attend my office in Dhaka and took official preparation for participating the workshop. I have to collect official approval for the tour; we select some picture of our field activities, and print those pictures and plan to submit it for the photo competition held in Jalpaiguri. After office I went to market to buy some necessary things for travel. When I back to my residence it was late evening and I was tired too. But I put aside my tiredness and complete my preparation. I go to bed at 12 o'clock but I cannot sleep well in the night because I was so much excited about the tour.

How the workshop was

If I want to say something about Jalpaiguri workshop in a word it was incredible. I love to travel a lot and also curious of learning different people's culture, their way of living, aspiration and the history of a place. So Jalpaiguri workshop opens a new door to me where I am able to gather my knowledge not only from training room but also from traveling historical place and community. Attending Jalpaiguri workshop was really a wonderful experience for me from where I gathered lot of memories as well as so many good lessons for the rest of my life.

Purpose of the workshop

The purpose of the workshop was to enhance awareness, appreciation, understanding and absorption of the concept of community engagement .Exploration, examination and reviewing of assumptions

in the light of lived experience. Evolving strategy for consolidation and integration of community engagement perspective and practices.

Day-to Day-learning from the workshop

❖ Ideal community engagement (Day -1)

At the first day we learn how ideally we can engage with the Community, acquainted with others in different way. What is research, why research for development. The main ideology of ideal community engagement is that the feeling of a researcher that I am with the community not under the community /community is not under me. Conflict between researcher and community-communication gap, time bound perspectives.

- ✓ Sympathy or Empathy-what should be follow?
- ✓ Different forms of discrimination and engagement.
- ✓ Discrimination faced in real life-most of the cases the feelings was not so well.
- ✓ But some participant seems the incidence of discrimination as a turning point of their success.
- ✓ Four groups represented Various form of discrimination through live performance(Drama, Storytelling and song)
- ✓ Innovative engagement of all participants through playing Musical chair and Debate competition made a new trend of community engagement.
- ✓ It was the crucial learning from performance and playing game that effective engagement is not only verbal but it also possible through playing role.

❖ Ethical Community Engagement(Day-2)

- ✓ Why and when community engagement is necessary.
- ✓ Power of self efficacy.
- ✓ Pedagogy of oppressed. (Teacher vs. Student debate)
- ✓ Ethical community engagement- participants feeling foggy about ethical or not in cases. (Sharing field experience).

❖ Field visit at Uttar Chakowakhethi (Day-3)

❖ Historical Site seeing at Buxa Forth (Day -4)

❖ Learning theoretical knowledge(Day-5 to 7)

- ✓ Theory of X and Y are theories of human motivation.
- ✓ These two types of theories represent two type of management system. Where X represent – employees are inherently lazy, avoid work, dislike work, little ambitious and Y represent- employees are ambitious, self-motivated, enjoy their work, creative.
- ✓ Question was which type of management is necessary for creating participatory ownership.
- ✓ The debate was concluded without proper solution. Because both are necessary to maintain different types of management.
- ✓ Power of positive storks/ Power of appreciation is an effective weapon for any kind of engagement.
- ✓ It's a new learning that everyone appreciating each other and make good feelings.

I learn so many things from this workshop .I realize deeply that community engagement is not only verbal but it also be possible through role playing, appreciating them, playing game, telling story ,group gathering etc. so many ways. From live performance I feel in my heart that positive appreciation directly hit in peoples mind and also feel how awkward situation a person have to face when he was oppressed and humiliated. I have never seen such an amazing facilitator like Arnab Da

and Rajshwar sir .Whenever participants share their real life experience of discrimination that's really touch my heart and participants portrait various form of discrimination through their performance everyone performance was outstanding but Arnab Dada's performance give me a feeling of deep sadness and Milon's performance made me feeling uncomfortable at that moment because their performance was so lively. Not only the training session but also every moment I passed in West Bengal were memorable as a researcher I also able to identify my gap and promised myself to mitigate it.

Field visit and historical site seeing

Our learning was not limited within the four wall of training room, I gather knowledge from field visit at Uttar Chakowakheti, Boxa forth, meet community there, community culture ,their way of living, social system, self -help group has put a deep signature on my mind and I am determine to use my practical learning from workshop in my working area.

Field visit at Uttar Chakowakheti (Day-3)

Uttar Chakowakheti is a village located in west Bengal at New AlipurDuar. The village is surrounding by Duars forest. According to the schedule we start for Uttar Chakowakheti in the morning 9 o'clock. We travel from hotel Ratnadip, Jalpaiguri to Bamboo village Resort at Chilapata Forest in New Alipur Duars. On the way we passed from Duras forest we were very excited to see a wild animal like Rhino, Elephant on our way because Joy Da told us that wild animal often passed the road,we does not see any Rhino in our way but we see elephant, monkey and some birds in our way. There is also arrangement for safari the jungle from government, if anyone wish than he or she can enjoy the suffering in natural setting. We have a lunch at Bamboo Village and stay overnight there. Bamboo Village is a famous resort in west Bengal, in Bamboo village most of the accessories is made from bamboo. The resort is famous not only for its appearance, decoration, natural setting but also for Mamota Banargi, The honourable Chief Minister of west bangle. Whenever Mamota Banargi visit west bangle she took rest in Bamboo Village. There is a special room for Mamota Banarjee which is called the premium room two lucky guy of our team got the room so they were very excited and everyone visits that room and took a lot of picture there. The resort is surrounded by various types of orchid flower, fruit trees, Bamboo and tea garden, if you are fortunate than you can see some wild animal there. I am a early riser so I got up at sun rising time in the next morning and seen two peacock there before that I have never seen peacock in a natural setting when I told about that our group member feel jealous .We have passed a wonderful time in Bamboo Village everybody was happy passed busy time by playing game, gossiping, moving around, taking picture and so one, it seems to me that we are in a festival.

After lunch at Bamboo village we took a little rest and then we go out for field visit at Uttar Chakowakheti in west bangle it took nearly one hour to reach there, where Santal community people (villagers of Uttar Chakowakheti) welcome us in their traditional way. After that we sat with the villagers for a brief discussion to know about their living pattern, self -help group, agricultural condition etc.

❖ Learning from the field visit (Day-3)

- Uttar Chakowakheti tribal community welcomed all the participants through their traditional way.

- CDHI introduced with the Self Help Groups leader and the local political leader (Joyti Dong Dong- pancayetpradhan)
- Delegates divide into four groups and set with the Self-help groups for discussion
- Key insights about the community 256 HHS, Joint family in nature, Husband and wife contribute equally for family maintenance.
- Scarcity of water and open defecation exist in the locality
- Literacy rate was moderate but major portion of them can read and write.
- Nutritional condition.(take 3 time meals a day, take fish and meat once in a week)
- Elephant attract is a big challenge for cultivation.
- Community people were the judge of photo and the story about effective community engagement process. It's really a fantastic way to measure of the effectiveness of the community and a new lesson for us.
- Community people carried their product at Mathuabazar, Palashibari Bazar and Taposhikatha for selling which are 5 to 10 KM far from the community.
- Every Self Help Group forms a cooperative which is good lesson for us.
- They circulated loan among the group member.
- Last year agricultural intensification exists in this community. Some of the villagers cultivate multiple crops in this area.
- Few days ago villagers moved for collecting land tenure certificate form the govt. It's a better sign for effective community engagement
- All the member of self-help group was women it ensure women empowerment.
- Earlier there was 3 self-help group in Uttar Chakwakhati recently a new self-help group is added to the existing group it is really an good evidence of community engagement.

I can recall every moment of those days specially I can remember the warm traditional welcome off santal community, the little children of santal community their happy face, race, handshaking, setting sun at Kalchini river where we get off from car and took the fresh air of the river.

Historical site seeing at Buxa(Day-4)

The next day after breakfast we start for Buxa forth, Buxa forth is famous for the great Indian leader Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose he was prisoned in that forth, it was a hilly area once it was remote to it took nearly 2 hour to reach at the base of the buxa hill tract by car from there we have to travel by foot it is a better idea to keep a stick while climbing in the hill. Although it was quite tuff to move on hilly area but honestly every one enjoyed the journey, one interesting thing I want to mention that whenever any one of us feel tired than Benu Da told us only 5 minute left after that we will reach to the forth so we step forward .We took a tea break at a local Bazaar there. On our way we visit kalchini village, meet with the members of Buxa Bikas Avvas (BBA) and knowing their socio-economic and historical background .A jolly man named Duppa Sideji describe the story of their community through song and poetry. They also arranged a fantastic meal for visitors. Beside this we also visit the BUXA fort where Indian great leader NETAZI SHUVASH CHANDRA BASHU was prisoned. It took more

than one hour to reach the forth. I specifically want to mention the name of a jolly man Duppa Sideji. Honestly speaking I have never meet such a jolly and genius man yet, he compose song, poetry and can play multiple type of musical instrument by himself. I still remember the saying of his song, the sound of his flute is playing in my mind. Sideji narrated their present, past and future aspiration through his performance so nicely that anyone can engage into the situation easily. I also remember the aged couple I met on the hilly tract of Buxa forth, their stamina really encourage me, actually that couple passed a long hilly track every day and they enjoy the journey this thing put a signature in my curious mind.

Cultural Program

I enjoyed cultural program performed by Rava tribal communities at CDHI premises. Their performance was mind blowing. They represent their tradition and culture through their performance. Although I cannot understand the language of their song but the appeal of the song hit on my mind.

A memorable tour in Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Shiligury

Darjeeling tour was an unofficial tour but I have enjoyed the tour so much that I need to mention it here. Whenever we (Shushilan team) were in Bangladesh we have plan to visit Darjeeling, sikim, mirick and nearby other tourist spot after our workshop. So according to our plan we hung out for our Darjeeling tour. We were four member from Shushilan and Kerty from Khargpur IT also accompanied us for one day. We hangout on the following day after lunch in a car. After passing Siligury town we got the fresh air of hill as we moving upward the clouds became dense and cold became deeper. It was raining after some times and I cannot describe how much charming our way was. As we were moving fast in the hilly road so we cannot able to take still picture in our camera but we have captured it through video. On our way we enjoy the beauty of hill and traditional troy train, troy train was one of the main attraction to the tourist in Darjeeling. I was surprised to see such a planned city like Darjeeling because it was many thousand feet above from the plain ground. Driving in Darjeeling road is very risky driver needs be very expert and conscious in this road because one moments unconsciousness is enough to take many life so it is better idea don't broke the attention of our driver while traveling in hilly track like Darjeeling. Our driver was expert so we reach there safely. When we reach Darjeeling it was 8 in the evening and it started to rain so we get wet. Our Darjeeling tour was so interesting that if I describe every ins and outs of it than readers must be bore so here I have mention some key insights about our Darjeeling tour.

Hotel in Darjeeling

There are many hotels in Darjeeling but if you want to get a suitable hotel for you than it would be better idea to reserve it earlier in online. Because Darjeeling is a busy tourist city so it may be difficult to get a suitable and cost effective hotel instantly. Hotel rent is quite high in Darjeeling. When we are in Darjeeling we have some difficulties regarding hotel because we did not book it earlier and choice able hotels are not available till our time limit as a result we have to change our tour plan somehow. Some writing in Darjeeling hotel room touch my heart, it was written in every wall that 'water is scarce in Darjeeling so don't waste water' reading that I thing that every day we waste thousand litre water, water is needed here but water is scare here.

Weather of Darjeeling

Raining is the common feature of Darjeeling weather but the raining is enjoyable. Raincoat, umbrella and winter cloth are some prerequisite for Darjeeling tour. Clash between Darjeeling hill and clouds make it raining most of the time. Weather is tolerable in west bangle when we were in Jalpaiguri weather it completely suited with our body .But when we reach to Darjeeling cold became deeper and we are sheering in cold so we have to buy woollen cloth instantly. But it was 8 pm so all the market are being closed at that time we just request a fashion house owner to open his shop for us only for 5 minute and we brought some winter cloth in a high rate at that time.

Opening time

Darjeeling is a tourist city but our surprise knew on bound when we heard that market are close within 8pm and hotels are closed within 10 pm in Darjeeling. In our country tourist place are open till late night. So when ever visit Darjeeling keep the time limit in mind.

The main attraction of Darjeeling

Toy train was one of the main attractions of Darjeeling but due to limitation of time we cannot ride it this time we keep it for our next time. Some key attraction of Darjeeling are-

Tiger hill

Tiger hill in Darjeeling is famous for sun rising .People wait even for a week to see the rising sun in tiger hill but we were fortunate that we can see it at our first day .We start from our hotel at 3 am for tiger hill and we reach at the bottom of the hill at 4.30 am after that our car cannot move forward because there was long queue of tourist car so we decided to get off from the car and walk to the hill, our decision was absolutely right we reach to the top of the hill after 30 minutes and seen the beauty of rising sun in tiger hill. We also saw some part of kanchonjongha from there. There was some hawker, mobile tea seller there and tourist of tiger hill gathering to them. We stay in tiger hill for one hour and after that we go other attraction.

Ghum city, Railway station and Ghum Museum

The name Ghum is interesting. Ghum city is the door to Darjeeling and there is a railway station name Ghum is famous for toy train and Ghum Museum is also famous. Whenever we pass through Darjeeling city we visit these places.

Batasia Loop

Batasia loop is a memoriam for the martyr who had sacrifice their live for the sake of country's liberation. It was a nice place also .We have taken many pictures there.

Rock Garden

Rock garden is another tourist spot in Darjeeling .I was scared when our car moving toward Rock Garden because the road was very dangerous it seem to me as a spring and car need to turn in a zikzak motion. There was many water fall, statue, Snake cave, rock in rock garden beside this there is some attractive tourist shop in rock garden. Rock Garden is really a wonderful tourist spot in Darjeeling.

Tenjin Rock and Tea Garden

On our way to hotel we saw Tenjin rock actually it's a big rock if anyone can wish he/she can ride it by a ticket and there is also guides and safety net to help the tourist for riding in Tenjin rock. After that we visit Darjeeling tea garden it was really charming and we have brought tea

from there. There is many tea shop but one rule they have followed strictly that you have to buy tea from the shop where your car is stopped it seems interesting to me.

Beside those places we also visit two monasteries there, acquainted with the monk there, enjoy the architecture and the culture of those monastery.

People of Darjeeling

Darjeeling people themselves is an attraction for the tourist .Most of the people are Nepalese but they introduce themselves as Indian because they born in Darjeeling. They use Nepali language but fluent in Hindi also but most of them did not understand bangle. People are friendly in Darjeeling but the little children are the source of cuteness there I like those child so much.

The main attraction of Kalimpong

Next day we visited Kalimpong, Kalimpong is also a city of Darjeeling district in west bangle province. Like Darjeeling Kalimpong is also a famous for tourism. The site we have visited in Kalimpong are-

Pine view Garden

Actually it's a pine forest and tourist spot.

Cactus Garden

We have seen various kinds of exotic cactus and orchid there .We were surprise to see so many varieties of cactus at a time.

Tista river view point

Tista river view point is another tourist spot in Darjeeling. Where we have seen the origin place of mighty tista river.

Dello tourist place and paragliding

Dello tourist spot was also beautiful the main attraction in dello garden is Para gliding although its charge is too high.

Kalimpong science city

Kalimpong science city is a learning place for the young children and we enjoyed a cup of tea there.

Our tour in Siliguri

Actually we take a day break in Siligury before we back to Bangladesh. Hotel are cheap in Shiligury, food, weather etc are comfortable there. We passed our day in Siligury by shopping and taking rest there are many shopping mall in Siliguri but I like the Jalpaigury shopping mall most.

My personal feelings about the trip

When I leave Bangladesh with Shushilan team I was little bit nervous I think it's a seven day long workshop how can I cope with the situation, no one know me so how they should behave with me but all my confusion disappear within few second when I step in hotel Ratnadip at Jalpaiguri town in every room there was a Rose and welcome note from CDHI it's really made my mine stress free and happy. After check in we go for dinner at CDHI premises where Rajeshwar sir, Mitali Didi, Benu Da, Arnab Da, Joy Da and all of the member welcome us as their family member. Everyone was so friendly that I was so impressed I never feel nostalgic for my home one interesting thing was that I often forgot to call my home regularly one day one of my family member call me and asked do you have any home or family you have totally forgotten about that, it was quite right, I forgot about my home because of their hospitality.

Each and every day of Jalpaiguri workshop was designed in such a way that I never feel bore and enrich my knowledge highly beside this I enjoyed the Darjeeling trip so much.

Lastly I can say word is a narrow boundary to express my feeling about community engagement training at Jalpaiguri workshop and Darjeeling trip. I cannot expresses it through a travelogue but our group picture also speaks for us (see-Photo Gallery), every moment was meaningful, everyone was friendly, helpful and careful. So am eagerly waiting to meet those friends again.

Some of my resolutions after the workshop

Implications for future SIAGI activities

- ✓ Following the good practice from the community engagement- will apply in our study.
- ✓ Lesson from the gap of west bangle community engagement. And will try to aware about this gap during engagement process in our study area.
- ✓ Make sure all the ethical issues are consider during community engagement

Photo Gallery of Jalpaiguri Workshop and Darjeeling tour

Unforgettable moments when time remain stopped in the still picture







