

Financial Training in Bangladesh Underscores Transparency and Accountability

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The U.S. and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria share the goals of helping to improve transparency, governance, and grant management procedures in Bangladesh.



Bangladesh

Strengthening the financial management skills of a country's civil-society organizations improves their chances of becoming Global Fund grant implementers and strengthens the partnerships between government, civil society, the private sector and affected communities. This helps extend the reach of Global Fund grants.

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Bangladesh has received 13 grants worth some \$216 million from the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. Since 2004, the country has used these grants to run programs that have benefited more than a half million tuberculosis sufferers and to distribute more than a million insecticide-treated bed nets whose use prevents malaria.

These results owe to the direct involvement of local civil-society organizations (CSOs) that deliver health services in communities. Most of these CSOs are small, with few regulations, rules, and systems in place for managing large sums of money. Helping these CSOs streamline their financial management practices and thus enhance service delivery was the goal of a three-day workshop led by a Bangladeshi-owned consulting firm, Technical Assistance Inc. (TAI), in January 2010, under the auspices of Grant Management Solutions (GMS). Since its founding in 1986, TAI, based in Bangladesh, has worked in over 20 countries in partnership with local and government organizations to improve capacity—namely efficiency and management skills.

What did CSO members learn about over the three days? Day 1 | Structure of the Global Fund; roles and relationships among principal recipients (implementers of programs the Global Fund supports), subrecipients (SRs) (other implementers, who serve under PRs), and sub-subrecipients (SSRs). Day 2 | Principles of financial management and accounting. Day 3 | Budgeting, reporting, how to use basic accounting software.

At the end of Day 3, four CSOs that were managing Global Fund Round 5 tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS grants were given copies of QuickBooks accounting software. TAI installed it on CSO computers, helped each organization develop a chart of accounts, and provided one month of follow-up support.

Participants—all CSO members—left the workshop with new skills in financial management. TAI's role as workshop leader underscored the shared goal of the U.S. and the Global Fund to improve transparency, governance, and grant management procedures in Bangladesh.



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