



C. DESIGNING, IMPLEMENTING AND MONITORING PPD - ISSUES TO CONSIDER

The diagnostic mapping tool assesses the status and potential of public-private dialogue. Now it comes to designing and implementing dialogue, what issues should a task manager consider?

This section of the handbook is based around the Charter of Good Practice in using Public-Private Dialogue for Private Sector Development (see section A. 4. above)

C.4. FACILITATOR

The issue: Dialogue processes need to be facilitated to ensure progress. Meetings need to be arranged, participants invited and persuaded of the value of attending, and momentum maintained through the inevitable difficulties and changes.

*Charter of Good Practice in
Using Public-Private Dialogue
for Private Sector Development*

PRINCIPLE IV: FACILITATOR

A facilitator who commands the respect of stakeholders can greatly improve the prospects of PPD.

- Important qualifications include negotiation skills, understanding of technical issues and an ability to converse easily with everyone from ministers to micro-entrepreneurs.
- An innovative and entrepreneurial approach is often helpful.
- A difficult question is whether the facilitator should be local or external - Local knowledge is an advantage, but so is a lack of any personal baggage with participants.

C.4.1. Key functions of a facilitator

As mentioned in Chapter II above, the facilitator will often be the head of the dialogue secretariat. The facilitator is one of the most important determinants of PPD's success. He or she needs to be neutral, trusted, and have the other attributes mentioned in this section.

The role of the facilitator is to keep track of all ongoing PPD activities and in particular in the technical working-groups. The facilitator or staff of the secretariat can be appointed to chair technical sub-groups in some cases. In any event, the facilitator should be the driving force behind the elaboration of the PPD and its action plan. He or she is responsible for calling and organizing meetings and technical working-groups; mediating the meetings and discussions between the private and public sector representatives; recording the minutes of meetings; keeping the work focused on the goal of producing viable proposals for reform to be included in the action plan; researching the issues; preparing written proposals for discussion; and formulating the various implementation activities.

Experience shows that during PPD meetings, the public and private sector representatives will come up with interesting and workable suggestions. But it will be very rare that any of them will put it down in writing and formulate it coherently, which means that in order to achieve the goal – preparing a viable action plan and leading its implementation – the facilitator and the staff of the secretariat or associated consultants might have to further research these suggestions, analyze legislation, and formulate acceptable proposals, sometime with assistance or guidance from development partners (see section C.12.). These proposals can then be discussed in the working groups and altered as necessary. People are much more likely to react and comment on a drafted proposal than to provide the initial input themselves.

In summary, the most important functions of a dialogue facilitator are to:

- consult with stakeholders to determine their interest, willingness and ability to participate, and find ways of reaching out to foster broad representation from the private sector;
- work publicly and behind the scenes to lead the dialogue between government and private sector counterparts – spotting opportunities, negotiating compromises and developing a shared agenda – and encourage government to allow dialogue to play a role in new policy initiatives related to the private sector;
- liaise with the development partners on the provision of necessary inputs, such as expert policy advice, independent evidence-based research, and specialized technical assistance to build the dialogue capacity of all participants; and
- develop the agenda and vision for the dialogue, injecting energy while paying close attention to detail through keeping accurate and transparent records and providing impartial and timely summaries of meetings.

See Annex C6 for fuller sample ToRs for a facilitator.



C.4.2. Practical tips from experienced dialogue facilitators

The following practical tips illustrate lessons learned from successful dialogue facilitators.

☑ Preparatory work between meetings is important to maintain momentum

The facilitator should take care of preparatory work between meetings. This minimizes the risk of those meetings coming to be seen as an energy-sapping waste of time.

☑ Define the timetable well in advance and stick to it

The facilitator should make sure participants agree on a timetable – when each working group should deliver its input, when plenary meetings will take place, and when other events such as press conferences will take place.

Clear timetables not only enable the participants to plan their time in advance; when communicated publicly, they also help to create internal pressure on the participants to meet their own deadlines.

☑ Pay close attention to logistical details

PPDs can be undone by a lack of attention to logistics. The facilitator should make sure the agendas and supporting papers are sent out in good time and meetings are arranged at times convenient to participants – something as minor as arranging meetings over meals can make all the difference.

☑ Facilitators hired by donors should be seen to stay at arms length

Often donor money is necessary to hire a facilitator. When this is the case, the facilitator should work to avoid being seen as narrowly driving the donor's agenda. The role of a facilitator is process-oriented, rather than to have substantive input into policy decisions. In general, it can be helpful for facilitators to adopt a low-profile approach.

☑ Focus on process and “leading from behind”

The facilitator's role is not to lead the dialogue but to encourage it. This can be difficult in instances when the facilitator can see a straighter path to a solution. But as the objective of PPD is to get the participants solve issues themselves through dialogue, the temptation to lead from the front should be resisted. Patience is a great virtue.

☑ Full and transparent documentation should be promptly available

Facilitators need to foster an atmosphere of transparency and efficiency by ensuring that all meetings and activities are fully documented and that minutes and reports are sent to all stakeholders in a timely manner.

☑ Privately resolve disputes between participants when mediation is needed

A lot can be done by a good facilitator in managing expectations in private conversations before meetings. What has been called the “divorced parents” strategy involves intimating privately to each of two parties who are in a state of potential conflict that the other is prepared to take a conciliatory stance.

Facilitators need to work hard, be transparent and responsive

“It took me at least six months to build trust amongst the private sector when I arrived! Some of them would not invite me to meetings that were designed to discuss the proposed Working Group agendas. The best way to mitigate this has been to work hard, work with all parties, listen and be transparent. I also believe that being contactable and responsive is important.”

- James Brew, IFC, on the
Cambodian Government-Private Sector Forum

Another winning strategy is to discuss with participants in advance when a disruptive contribution is expected and seek a general agreement to move on swiftly, heading off the chance of a reaction which would then lead to a time-consuming detour from the agenda.

☑ A high degree of professionalism is required

The facilitator must set a standard that can be followed, understanding how to conduct a meeting and carry the process forward in between meetings by building capacity and ensuring that participants understand the issues.

Facilitators have to bring impartiality and transparency to the dialogue, and must be trusted by all participants to be effective.

☑ The role of the honest broker – defusing potentially contentious issues

Facilitators should be able to take the sting out of potentially difficult issues by airing them in private first – where the issue is significantly difficult for either party, the first rush of anxiety can be absorbed by the messenger.

As many issues arise as a consequence of personality clashes, the facilitator needs constantly to be on hand to focus people on the agenda at hand and broker meeting dates and times to find a resolution.

☑ Facilitators should have industry experience but be politically savvy

Facilitators need to be able to explain to government officials why their results-focused private sector counterparts may find it stultifying to deal with bureaucracy, while at the same time also building an awareness among businesspeople of the political realities involved in getting results through the dialogue mechanism.

☑ Choosing the right chairs for meetings

Often a facilitator makes the best meeting chairperson – but local protocol may not allow an outsider to take a role that is perceived more as a matter of prestige than procedure. In such cases the facilitator needs to ensure that the person who is chairing each meeting is well briefed and supported with a focused agenda.

Awareness of local protocols is vital

“Facilitators should know how to handle the necessary local protocols and be sensitive to the underlying and often hidden issues, both technical and political, that might be impeding the dialogue.”

- Jason Agar of Malawi's National Action Group

C.4.3. Invest in the training of facilitators

Facilitators can benefit greatly from training, including exposure to international best practice – it is recommended that facilitators should visit successful dialogue mechanisms in other countries.

Depending on their existing competencies, facilitators can benefit from training in project management skills, mediation skills and media skills. As facilitators will often become the public face of PPD, there may be a need to learn how to deal with the press and speak effectively on camera.

Facilitators should not hesitate to request training and technical assistance from the international donor community.

C.4.4. Facilitator profiles - Short biographies of seven PPD facilitators

Pascale Rouzies – Lao Business Forum

Pascale Rouzies joined IFC-Mekong Project Development Facility (MPDF) in May 2005 to coordinate the newly established Lao Business Forum. Her career includes more than 10 years as a hotel General Manager with ACCOR Group, including three years as the General Manager of Novotel Vientiane. Prior to joining ACCOR, she managed her own business in Paris, France. She has also established “Konata Asia,” a Lao tourism consulting company, and helped start “La Renovateur,” a French language newspaper in Lao PDR.



Mansur Ahmed – Nigerian Economic Summit Group (NESG)

Mansur Ahmed was involved in the activities of the NESG as one of its public sector collaborators since the start of the Nigerian Economic Summit in 1993. He became its Chief Executive and Director General in 2004 following his retirement from the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation. Trained as an engineer, his career in industry and commerce involved various manufacturing industries before he joined the New Nigerian Development Company Limited, a development finance company, then the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation.

James Brew – Cambodia Private Sector Forum

James Brew is an IFC Project Manager based in Cambodia. Since 2002 he has been working on the development of the Government - Private Sector Forum. He was educated at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Kings College, London, and the University of New South Wales. Previous to working with the IFC, he worked for the United Nations in East Timor and in logistics management for the mining, airline and engineering sectors.



Jason Agar – Malawi National Action Group (NAG)

Jason Agar is Managing Director of a leading Malawi-based socio-economic consulting firm (Kadale Consultants Ltd.) that specializes in private sector development. He manages the NAG Secretariat. His academic background involved a BA (Oxon) in Law, an MBA and an MA in Development Studies. He had a successful career in marketing for UK blue chip companies before working in Kenya as an advisor to an informal sector micro-finance project, before working at the Small Business Centre of Durham University Business School then starting his own consulting firm.

Farooq Sobhan - Bangladesh Private Sector Representative Group, PSD Task Force

As Founder President of the Bangladesh Enterprise Institute (BEI), a non-profit non-government research think tank dedicated to private sector development in Bangladesh, Farooq Sobhan has served a crucial role in advocacy on private sector development issues. Having been both a diplomat and an entrepreneur, he used his close ties with both the Government of Bangladesh and the private sector to form the Private Sector Representative Group, and the Private Sector Task Force, a platform for mutual interaction and consultation.



Beatriz Boza - Intermesa

Beatriz Boza is the Executive Director of Ciudadanos al Dia (CAD), a Peruvian NGO that serves as the coordinating secretariat of Intermesa, a public-private working group with 24 institutional members. CAD works to create demand for reform, and hence to create political will. Also a weekly columnist at El Comercio, Peru's leading daily newspaper, and Professor of Legal Ethics at the Catholic University of Peru Law School, she is the former head of INDECOPI, the Peruvian agency that regulates intellectual property, competition policy, consumer protection, market access, anti-dumping, bankruptcy and technical standards.

Beverley Morgan, Jamaica Cluster Competitiveness Project

Beverley Morgan is a director of the Jamaica Exporters' Association (JEA). She was Project Coordinator for the Jamaica Cluster Competitiveness Project and she manages the Competitiveness Company of the JEA that was formed to institutionalize and expand competitiveness and dialogue initiatives. Beverley Morgan chaired the Advisory Committee to the Minister of Technology on Electronic Commerce from 1999 to 2001, and was a Director of the Bank of Jamaica between 1992 and 2000. She is also a director of Area Youth Foundation, a not-for-profit, foundation that works with urban at-risk youth.

