**SESSION 1: YES, WE CAN**

_This was time spent in trying to better understand how PEC works and how it can be readily integrated into researchers’ own agenda. Researchers were then asked to return to their case studies but reverse their thinking cap – to first think about a policy change they wanted and then what research findings they would work towards._

PAC is already well-recognised in policy making circles and has a reputed PEC profile. So this session focused on simple tools that could add to these strengths while making PEC more strategic to the research design. The focus was on viewing researchers as change-makers, using PEC tools to further their research impact.

For instance, as _policy entrepreneurs_, researchers set the agenda, not just follow it. As _process connectors_, researchers follow the policy making/implementing process to know where, when and how their research can have the most impact. As _effective networkers_, researchers achieve bigger impacts by ensuring that their agenda finds a place in the larger change agenda set by other players. And as _PEC investors_, researchers know what PEC strategy they should adopt, what resources they require for it and are able to address these needs in their research design.

A new thinking was emerging. Perhaps, a better way of working is to integrate PEC into the research design at the very start - from the planning stage upwards. To include PEC deliverables and a PEC exit strategy as part of the overall research design. But is that possible? How can this be done?

In the next part of the session, the same groups were asked to work with their research case studies and the working matrix. However, this time around, the matrix was flipped so that PEC was more prominent than research findings. The column on policy change became the entry point into the research agenda.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy change envisaged</th>
<th>Research findings (2 years)</th>
<th>Target audience</th>
<th>PEC tools used as part of deliverables</th>
<th>Policy shift/ Evidence for change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Researchers were asked to treat their case studies afresh. To start these from the drawing board and re-plan the same study. How would they now draft the policy agenda? And the required research findings?

**SESSION 2: THE POWER OF CONVICTION**
This session and the next collectively assessed how far the exercise had gone in achieving policy impact.

The role of a government officer. Participants saw how PAC researchers presented their findings and the response of the government officer. The role play did not rock the boat. People stayed in their comfort zone of high acceptability of PAC research by those in decision-making positions. Yet, there was an appreciation that better advocacy skills and more result-oriented action are required by researchers to make an impact. Even in their ‘comfort zone’ authorities would often say, ‘leave the file, we’ll consider it’...and the wait could be endless or the nature of the result unknown.

Some researchers found it difficult to identify a concrete policy change and a direct link to research findings. Here, PEC activities did not seem to help research findings achieve a change action or move towards an impact.

Discussion flagged the need for a well thought out PEC strategy as part of a research design; and a monitoring and evaluation process for mid-course correction, if needed. The need to ‘think big’ was explored so that researchers could work towards high-impact achievements in the field of public governance and accountability, not just within cities or States but nation-wide and internationally.

There was some discussion around media and policy advocacy. How media is a tool to achieve impacts, not an outcome in itself. How it is important to be a process connector to know who to engage with, when and how, at the start of our project. There was a reference to having a ‘team objective of change’ for each research team and which would be part of the larger organizational objective for change. And why planning for research meant planning for PEC too.

 SESSION 3: OUR SCORECARDS

Assessments on how well research findings had a policy impact were done using a PAC-style ‘PEC Report Card’ where participants were asked to respond to a common questionnaire for each group. Overall, all the groups scored well. Where they scored low was on the range of PEC tools used and clarity on links between specific policy changes and research findings.

The question this session ended with was: Is the organization ready for making a change in its PEC profile?

 SESSION 4: BUILDING A FUTURE

A corollary to the earlier sessions, researchers now began to explore what PEC means at the organisational level.

This session explored the role of the organization in enabling PEC and the role of researchers in taking it forward and contributing to it.
The session laid out a framework to explore PEC as a strategic component of research plans. The model of strategic planning cycle, introduced at the IDS Kathmandu capacity building workshop, was refined and adapted so that researchers could identify with the different stages and the nomenclature. The cycle was also integrated with the research planning cycle so that PEC could be an integral part of research plans.

At the end of this last session for the day, each researcher was given a piece of homework – to write up four aspects in the given PEC template for institutional PEC strategy. Researchers took home the guiding slides shared earlier in the day. The last day was going to be spent in building the first few blocks of the organizational PEC strategy to achieve the organizational mandate of helping citizens, especially poor and socially marginalised people, benefit from better governance.

**Session 1 & 2: making PEC work**

*These two sessions were about using PEC effectively with policy makers. The external resource person, a senior information officer from the Government of Karnataka was highly experienced having worked in the office of three Chief Ministers and with several senior bureaucrats.*

This session was perhaps the highlight of the 3-day workshop. The articulate resource person explained how the government monitored media reports very closely so any advocacy using media would surely reach the right authorities.

The resource person also gave a first-hand account of how media can be an ally and some of the key ‘do’s and don’ts’ to remember when working with the media.

She explained the way government’s information system worked and how it is possible to collaborate with the information department for effective PEC initiatives.

Two ongoing research-based advocacy initiatives were shared by researchers. The resource person illustrated how some good homework on the target authority/policy maker(s) and innovative messaging could help them move the system in these two instances.

**Session 3: making an impact**
Researchers began building the first few blocks of an organisational PEC strategy in this session.

The last working session saw researchers taking the first few steps towards building a PEC strategy for the institution itself. Researchers had done their homework around (a) why a PEC strategy was needed at the organizational level and how it fitted with the overall organizational strategy; (b) what could be the goal of an organisational PEC strategy; (c) how to achieve an impact with an organizational PEC strategy; and (d) where was the fit between PEC strategy of a research project and the organizational PEC strategy. A mix of theoretical and practical discussions followed, undertaken as group work. Individual thoughts, gathered as part of last evening’s homework, were dovetailed into the group work.

The final presentations brought to the fore several critical aspects though a lot of work was still to be done to get the structure and the flow right. Some of these decisive elements pointed to the need for a PEC strategy to strengthen the organizational mandate of ‘good governance’ and ‘citizens’ quality of life; and because it would be ‘complementary’ to PAC’s research work.

Researchers flagged the need for ‘behavioural change’ within the organization towards ‘effective communication’ and ‘constructive engagement with policy makers’ to achieve higher impact of their research findings. Illustrating this through research case studies, researchers flagged the need for more advocacy, ‘lobbying’ and use of citizen-centric PEC tools (eg. Citizens’ Report Card, PAC’s signature PEC tool). In sum, researchers said PEC would help bridge the gap between policy and people, the twin targets for PAC’s research work.

The floor for the wrap-up was given to the institutional head to sum up gains and gaps; and help improve subsequent workshops.

“The idea is to change and bring about a change,” said Director R. Suresh.

Suresh highlighted the fact that PAC is already adept at PEC but echoed the participants that PEC has been undertaken less strategically and more in an ad hoc manner. This needs to change, he said, and usage of PEC has to start from the planning stage, be formalized in our work and help make an impact. It needs an attitudinal shift.

PEC’s link to achieve PAC’s values is important, said Suresh. For PAC, the bottom-line is being ‘citizen-centric’ and transformative in its impact. Researchers must be ‘transformative’ in their activities over the next 5 years so that PAC can move towards their mandate of ‘betterment of citizens.’ The PEC strategy template will be appropriately used henceforth to design research programmes. And PEC will be part of researchers’ work objectives and performance appraisal from the current year onwards.

Suresh summed it up well: “We really do tremendously good research but we need to

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make that change happen.”