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## IPA Bangladesh Hosts Seminar on Combining Research and Innovation

On July 17th, IPA, the Bangladesh Government's Access to Information Programme (a2i), and the UNDP held a joint seminar at the office of the Prime minister, 'Creating innovation does not guarantee adoption: Using Research to Design Smart Public Policy'.

The purpose of the seminar was to understand how research can enrich innovations in order to make them more adaptable by the citizens and government. The a2i Programme, UNDP Bangladesh and IPA are striving to make governments and nations more innovative and they understand that research and innovation go hand in hand. There's necessity to balance research and innovation so as to foster an environment that is conducive to designing smart public policy backed by sound research.

Mr. Kabir Bin Anwar, director general of the Prime Minister's office & a2i project director presided over the seminar while Mr. Abul Kalam Azad, the chief secretary to the Prime Minister was present as a chief guest. Professor Ahmed Mushfiq Mubarak of the Yale School of Management presented the key note whereas Dr. Shamsul Alam, senior secretary planning ministry, Mezbah Uddin, senior secretary economic relations, Mohammad Ashraful Haque, country representative, IPA, Pauline, country director, UNDP also spoke at the occasion.

Citing examples from his research, Professor Mobarak said the central puzzle in development is that effective, inexpensive technologies that can address many of the poverty problems exist, but are often not adopted or used. He said how smartly designed field experiments can help learn better marketing/dissemination strategies for large scale adoption of such low cost beneficial technologies. He also discussed how such experiments can guide governments in making smart public policies.

Mr. Abul Kalam Azad said, "It is important that quality data comes from the field level with proper analysis to inform policymakers. Many a times we make good policies which are not implemented well or are not complied with. We have to understand why this is happening".

Mezbah Uddin said, "Cabinet division is constructing a guideline for using evidence in making public policies. It is imperative to prepare and implement all forms of action research and thus the policy will play a valuable role in years to come.

Dr. Anir Chowdhury, Policy Advisor to the Prime Minister, put emphasis on developing a 'Nudge Team' within the government to do field research for identifying effective behavioral change strategies that could be part of policy implementation.

The keynote presentation was followed by an open discussion with questions, opinions and recommendations from the participants.

## **Address**

Office of the Prime Minister

## **City**

Dhaka

## **Country**

Bangladesh