



## Highlights

- Community Study launched
- EIA's research now at R4D
- EIA nominated for ELTons 2013
- Reconnecting with Pilot Phase Teachers

## Message from the Team Leader

Dear Colleagues,

It is a pleasure to let you know that after only two months as deputy, I started as the Team Leader for English in Action on 15th of March. Kudos to my predecessors and everybody at EIA for creating and developing such an innovative and effective programme! In addition, the support and cooperation that we receive from all partners and stakeholders is really excellent!

The first quarter of this year has been really busy for us. A few highlights: we have successfully organised a workshop with senior officials from the Government of Bangladesh in collaboration with DPE and it was further supported by specific requests from the Government to mainstream EIA methodology and materials.

Our teacher training programme is in full swing with around 4,500 teachers including Head Teachers from primary and secondary. We are also expecting to take on board further 8,000 teachers more into the programme later this year.

There have been changes in the NCTB textbooks, and our Materials department is working relentlessly to ensure the EIA materials are ready for the next teachers in-take.

We were not only busy getting the message of changing learning, changing lives locally, through sponsoring and participating in the 6th BELTA International Conference, but also managed to present ourselves in the UNESCO Conference in Paris and NELTA in Nepal.

With the development of BBC Janala Amar Engreji Course Two and the second BBC Janala English Clubs book & CD, the media and adult learning component is going wider with its partnerships with different entities around the country.

Finally, political turmoil in the country poses a serious challenge to EIA's implementation and also for the good of the country's education system, security and economy. I really hope that the situation will get better.

**Johan Bentinck**  
Team Leader  
English in Action

## Potential collaboration explored with the Government of Bangladesh

On Sunday 17 February 2013, English in Action led an orientation and cooperation workshop in collaboration with the Directorate of Primary Education (DPE), Government of Bangladesh.

The aim of the workshop was to introduce current and future English in Action activities in the field to all the central level stakeholders, especially the Project Steering Committee (PSC) members.

The objectives of the workshop were:

- To introduce the English in Action project to all, including the PSC members
- To explore possibilities for potential collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh in different areas of teacher training, materials development, research monitoring and evaluation and assessment
- To agree on concrete action points as next steps

The workshop was chaired by Mr. Shyamal Kanti Ghosh, DG DPE with the honourable MoPME Secretary Mr.

M. M Neazuddin as Chief Guest and Mr. A. S. Mahmood, Joint Secretary (Secondary) MoE as special guest.

Mr. Shyamal Kanti Ghosh, DG, DPE mentioned that he was very impressed with the progress the teachers and students were making in EIA supported schools. He was convinced that those students will certainly be able to compete strongly in the national and international labour

market. He also hoped that EIA will expand in more upazilas and schools and mentioned that DPE will be ready to provide any necessary support and guidance for effective implementation of the project.

Mr. AS Mahmood, Joint Secretary (Secondary), MoE, highly appreciated EIA's work and highlighted the role and importance of English in economic development of the country. He described EIA as a very timely and appropriate project for Bangladesh.

Distinguished officials from the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME), Ministry of Education (MoE), Directorate of Primary Education, National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM), National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE), Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE), National Curriculum & Textbook Board Bangladesh (NCTB) and DFID participated in a day long workshop.



Members from DPE, DFID and EIA at the Orientation and Cooperation workshop.

[Workshop pictures at page-3]

## EIA schools programme nominated for ELTons award!

The English in Action (EIA) teaching and learning programme has been shortlisted for the Local Innovation ELTons 2013 award! The award recognises English language teaching (ELT) content developed for a specific local need and context.

The ELTons (British Council Innovation Awards) are offered to outstanding new language learning products and services, that use innovative ideas to help learners achieve their goals, or to innovative research which has clear practical benefits for English language teaching.

EIA produced a digital story board to explain how the EIA programme works, the focus of which is how teachers use the professional development videos on their mobile phones. The videos show authentic classroom practice – of actual teachers using EIA techniques with their students. The story board shows the journey teachers experience when they are part of the English in Action programme, as well as the scope of the intervention.

We eagerly await the awards ceremony, which will be held in London on 22 May.



## English in Action a proud sponsor of the 6th BELTA Conference



Honorable Education Minister Mr. Nurul Islam Nahid at the EIA stall in the 6th BELTA International Conference.

The Bangladesh English Language Teachers' Association's (BELTA) biennial international conference held on January 18-20 was a great chance for EIA to mix with the wider English Language Teaching (ELT) and educational community. One of the first visitors to our exhibition stall at the recent conference was the education minister, Mr. Nurul Islam Nahid. Both he and the secretary of the ministry of ICT, Mr. Nazrul Islam Khan, spoke to the conference about the power of new approaches to learning to change learning and change lives: a message which is at the heart of EIA's mission.

More than four hundred teachers from all over Bangladesh and other South Asian countries created quite a buzz at the conference. With

presenters from all over the world, BELTA managed to put together a packed and varied programme that really did respond to the "Multiple Realities" of the conference title: three days of insights, practical ideas and even some electrifying (though good-natured) controversy!

EIA's workshops and presentations focused on how real learning comes from fun, engagement and practical activity – both in the classroom and for adult learners. Nobody was allowed to sit still for more than a few minutes! We were especially happy to see so many tertiary teachers getting excited about our activities, too.

Thumbs up to BELTA for a truly successful and energising event: EIA was really proud to have been part of it.

[BELTA pictures at page-3]

## Reconnecting with the Pilot Teachers



As days passing by, English In Action is now in its progressive Upscaling phase after the successful completion of the pilot trial. EIA has seen many successes in the rural teaching-learning practice as a result of its massive education interventions in Upazilla areas across the country. In fact the tremendous progress and successes achieved would not have been possible without the significant impact resulted from the pilot phase.

The 700 primary and secondary school teachers from different Upazillas all over the country successfully completed the 16 month's EIA training and tailored the training to their student's level in accordance to the initial phase of the project.

However, despite the close collaboration with the teachers during the pilot phase, close and constructive contact with its pilot teachers could not be maintained after.

Realizing and acknowledging the major contribution of the pilot teachers to the project, the EIA teams visited the teachers in their respective areas in January 2013.

The main objective of the visit was to see how the EIA teaching techniques learnt were practiced and applied, and how they made use of the learning materials, without having any supervision from the EIA side. The visit and sharing sessions amongst teachers gave fruitful insights on the opportunities

as well as the challenges within the current teacher training. To be more precise, EIA arranged the revisiting meetings with 348 primary teachers and 118 secondary teachers in 24 Upazillas across Bangladesh. In these meetings, three questions guided the meeting.

### 1. How frequently are you using EIA classroom Audio and Print Materials?

Graph 1: shows that 86% primary and 96% secondary teachers use EIA materials on a regular basis. Furthermore, 57% of primary and 37% of secondary teachers have expressed that they use EIA materials every single day.

### 2. How frequently are you using Teacher professional Video and print materials?

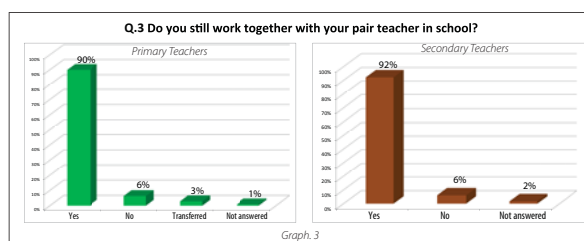
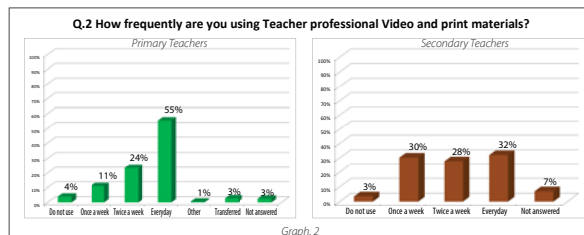
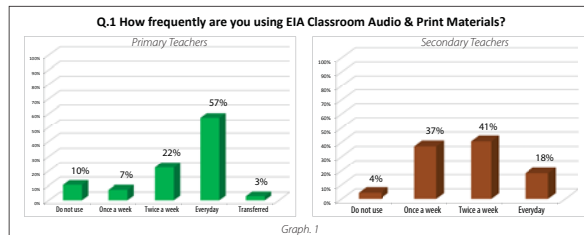
Graph 2: shows that 55% of the primary and 32% of the secondary teachers spend day in using professional development materials.

### 3. Do you still work together with your pair teacher in school?

Graph 3: Indicates that 90% of primary and 92% of secondary teachers still work together with their peers on a structural basis. This is one of the important objectives of the Teacher Training module of EIA and therefore a very positive result.

Challenges: Behind every success lies a challenge and the pilot phase is no exception to this rule. The changed EFT books form a hindrance on their way to make EIA teaching-learning environment in their everyday classrooms. It was advised to change the digital and print materials for the new more user-friendly ones. Evidently EIA will address this important matter as soon as possible and take appropriate actions accordingly.

All in all, the outcome of the teacher meetings were very useful, positive and encouraging as almost all teachers are still practicing the training methodology and materials with great satisfaction!



## EIA presence at 18th International NELTA Conference in Kathmandu

A small team of English in Action (EIA) staff attended the recent 18th International Conference of the Nepal English Language Teachers Association (NELTA) in February. During the conference, the team gave presentations to English language teaching (ELT) professionals on the EIA approach and materials. The conference was held in Kathmandu at the D.A.V. School at Lalitpur and focused on the theme: 'Transformations in ELT: Contexts, Agents and Opportunities'.

At the conference, the EIA team attended plenary sessions, presented EIA's ideas, practices and techniques, and attended the presentations of other ELT professionals. They also networked with international ELT professionals, shared experiences and received feedback on their ideas. The plenary sessions were conducted by esteemed ELT specialists such as Dr. Richard Smith, University of Warwick (UK), and Dr. JoAnn Crandall, Professor Emerita, University of Maryland (USA).

EIA team members at the conference included staff from BMB Mott MacDonald and BBC Media Action. Senior Core Trainer Sudeb Kumar Biswas

and Core Trainer Rehnema Akhter jointly presented a paper titled: 'Influence of Reflective Practices on Teachers' Teaching Learning Processes', which focused EIA teachers' reflective practice at the beginning of the intervention. Core Trainer Shahanaj Parvin presented a workshop on 'Grammar Spotlight: A new dimension to teaching grammar', which showed EIA's approach to grammar through a series of fun language activities and sharing experiences.

Further to this, Materials Development Officer, Ahmed Orko, spoke of the intricacies of audio material development, highlighting the issue of adapting materials for different contexts through his presentation, 'Audio Production for ELT in Bangladesh - Contextualization: Challenges and Practices'. Rebeka Badiozaman, Asst. ELT Materials Developer for BBC Media Action, presented two papers based on her personal research interest in learner autonomy, titled 'Learner Autonomy and ICT Tools in Under-resourced Rural Areas' and 'Technology and Media in the Classroom to Trigger Learner Autonomy'.



EIA team and Nepalese ELT practitioners pose at the NELTA Conference

## Dipto Tripura: English in Practice

Rangamati is one of the most beautiful parts in Bangladesh; it receives tourists from around the world. One day, two tourists – John and his friend – were visiting Rangamati and were trying to find the Chakra King's Palace, but no one could tell them where it was.

Dipto Tripura – a Class 5 student at Shah Government Primary School, Rangamati – was playing in the field with his friends when he noticed the tourists with some locals; they looked like they were struggling with something. Because Dipto learns English at school, when he got closer to the tourists he understood what the problem was. Using the English he had learnt at school, Dipto was able to help the tourists find their way to the palace. The foreigners were very pleased and told Dipto how grateful they were.

Dipto was proud as he was able to help the tourists and excited to tell his teachers at his school about what had happened and so was Ms. Asru Chowdhury, Dipto's English Teacher. It was the news of the year for the school. Teachers, students, parents kept on talking about it. Many came to Ms. Asru to congratulate her too.

Asru has been teaching English in this school for years. It has always been a challenging task for Asru, like many of her colleagues across Bangladesh, to teach English to the students.

Especially, in an area like Rangamati, where English is often the third or fourth language and where they are hardly exposed to English outside classrooms. But after being trained by English in Action, and by engaging students in the interactive methods and materials from English in



Action, the scenario started to change in a very positive way. It changed the total atmosphere in the classroom, removed fear of students regarding English and confidence in students like Dipto was a change she could definitely see.

Inspired by English in Action, Asru also tried other techniques to keep her students motivated. One such technique was to give them incentives. She announced that for every student who would always try to speak in English in the class will get five extra marks in their examination.

Dipto took his teacher's words very seriously! He tried his best and with EIA songs, rhymes, games, stories etc. and the way teacher taught in the class, it was not difficult at all. His class results were usually average; however his English results started getting better and better.

Yeasmin Ali  
Core Trainer, EIA  
EIA, BMB Mott MacDonald

## EIA on DFID's R4D database

English in Action (EIA) is raising its profile through making its research available to the development community. Over the last few months, English in Action (EIA) has made two exciting developments in relation to the UK Department for International Development's (DFID) Research for Development (R4D) database. Not only are the full range of EIA's research documents now available to download from the R4D



database, but as a result, EIA also features in the latest edition of the R4D newsletter (February 2013). R4D is DFID's searchable research database, which holds 5,000 records of DFID-funded projects (past and current) and 25,000 associated research records. We look forward to

increasing our presence on the database by uploading our latest research evidence as soon as it becomes available.



# Pictures

## Orientation and Cooperation Workshop [17 February 2013]



## 6th BELTA International Conference 2013 [18-20 January]



**1:** From left: Mr. Shyamal Kanti Ghosh, DG DPE, MoPME Secretary Mr. M. M Neazuddin, Mr. A. S. Mahmood, Joint Secretary (Secondary) MoE and Mr. Dirk Smits, Team Leader EIA. **2 to 8:** Distinguished officials from the Ministry of Primary and Mass Education (MoPME), Ministry of Education (MoE), Directorate of Primary Education, National Academy for Educational Management (NAEM), National Academy for Primary Education (NAPE), Directorate of Secondary and Higher Education (DSHE), National Curriculum & Textbook Board Bangladesh (NCTB), DFID and EIA participating in various activities in the day long workshop at the Jamuna Resort, Tangail.

**9, 10 & 11:** Colleagues from BMB Mott MacDonald, BBC Media Action and the Open University, UK, presenting English in Action to the national and international ELT practitioners at the conference. **12:** Hon'ble Minister of Education, Nurul Islam Nahid at the 6th BELTA International Conference inauguration ceremony with representatives from BELTA, British Council, English in Action and the US Embassy Dhaka.

# "Community Study" launches: how do we learn and use English in our communities? How does English effect lives?

To enhance the economic and social prospects of people in Bangladesh through improving their communicative English, English in Action uses both school and media based interventions. To assure the effectiveness of these interventions extensive research and evaluation programs are embedded in their activities.

But the studies conducted so far have examined each intervention in isolation. As a result, little is known about how and to what extent the outputs from both school and media based activities interact and influence English language learning. To fill this gap in our knowledge, EIA is conducting a 'Community Study' with its pilot phase teachers which will enable an investigation of learning, use and effect of English language learning at the community level.

As part of this study, English in Action team from both the schools component and the media and adult learning component recently visited two communities in Kapasia, Gazipur. Though the findings of this study are in the process of development, we however got good feedback

from the communities and schools regarding the EIA project.

The teachers were very positive regarding EIA materials in their English classes and one particularly encouraging story caught our attention during the data collection. One of the secondary teachers in our sample was a mathematics teacher teaching English in his school. He mentioned how he started using EIA materials to teach better in the class. He uses the iPod (iPod was provided for pilot teachers) and speaker so students can learn English rhymes and pronunciation of words. He also used BBC Janala (the Media and Adult learning component of EIA) materials to teach his kids at home. Other teachers also had a very positive attitude towards the EIA approaches.

We are currently looking forward to the next phase of these Community Studies to commence and are very positive that more change related stories will emerge.

**Farhan Azim**  
Senior Research officer  
EIA, BMB Mott MacDonald



Data collectors with the teachers of Bhubaner Chala High School, Kapasia, Gazipur.

## Impact of EIA: new reports available online

Three new EIA reports are now available to download through the EIA website. The reports highlight the impact of EIA on teachers and students during the pilot phase of the project. The reports are:

1. The classroom practices of primary and secondary school teachers participating in

English in Action

2. English proficiency assessments of primary and secondary teachers and students participating in English in Action

3. Students lives: A selection of cases (Report 1)

To find out more, login to [www.eiabd.com](http://www.eiabd.com)

## Launch of new website [www.eiabd.com](http://www.eiabd.com)

EIA has launched its new website. The new website is a dynamic way to reflect the project wide activities in an integrated manner and has been designed to give an ease-of-use experience to its growing visitors.

Johan Bentinck, the Team Leader of English in Action, said; "The new website is a platform

through which we speak of our success to the wider community. I believe this will take EIA to more people not only in Bangladesh but also across the globe. We hope that people around the world will use the website to learn about the changes English in Action is making across the primary and secondary education sector of Bangladesh."



## EIA Team at the UNESCO, Paris

English in Action team members swapped the humidity of Dhaka for the snows of Paris in February, as they represented the project at the second UNESCO Mobile Learning Week.

Presenting to a packed hall at the UNESCO headquarters, Robina Shaheen (Head of Research, EIA) and Richard Lace (Head of Project EIA from BBC Media Action) opened the first "mobiles for literacy" session at the symposium with an introduction to EIA's mobile phone-based innovations in classrooms, for teachers and for adult learners.

Speaking at the conference, the UNESCO Deputy Director General explained how technology was an obvious tool to help meet the educational challenges facing the world. The event set out to explore examples of how those tools were being used in reality. Presenters shared thoughts and

experiences on a wide range of topics, including:

- using mobiles to help improve reading among people with dyslexia
- using tablets for teaching entrepreneurial skills;
- and assisting mobile learning projects to work closer together.

The EIA presentation explained the project's successful use of mobile phones for teacher professional development and communicative language teaching in classrooms. The presentation also showcased the "BBC Janala" mobile learning platform, which has so far attracted over 6 million adult learners. It was well-received by delegates from NGOs, private-sector innovators, donors and governments around the world.



Sanjib Saha, Head of Research, Richard Lace, Head of Project, EIA from BBC Media Action and Dr. Robina Shaheen, Head of Research, Monitoring & Evaluation, EIA.

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