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ELBAG
Economic Literacy and Budget Accountability
for Governance

Presentation at Governance Accountability Training,

Economic Literacy and Budget Accountability for Governance (ELBAG) is a process and methodological framework that combines organizing people, developing community monitoring mechanisms, democratizing knowledge (particularly political economy and economics) and using participatory tools and methods for building public accountability and transparency to initiate people centered advocacy processes.



It creates space where people

- can discuss economics and use it as an entry point to build inclusive, democratic and just governance.
- seeks to address the disconnection between local, national and international level.

People, groups and the civil society enter the space created by ELBAG for contestation and change through their economic lives and their concern on the work of their governments at different levels. They are concerned that their governments open up spaces for neo-liberal policies.

People may enter the space constructed by the ELBAG process through various angles:

- Some enter and build up space through their concerns of livelihood needs.
- Parents and often children, enter it through issues pertaining to the education system and services.
- HIV positive persons enter it to claim right to health care demanding better services from the primary and secondary level health care systems with adequate ARV coverage.



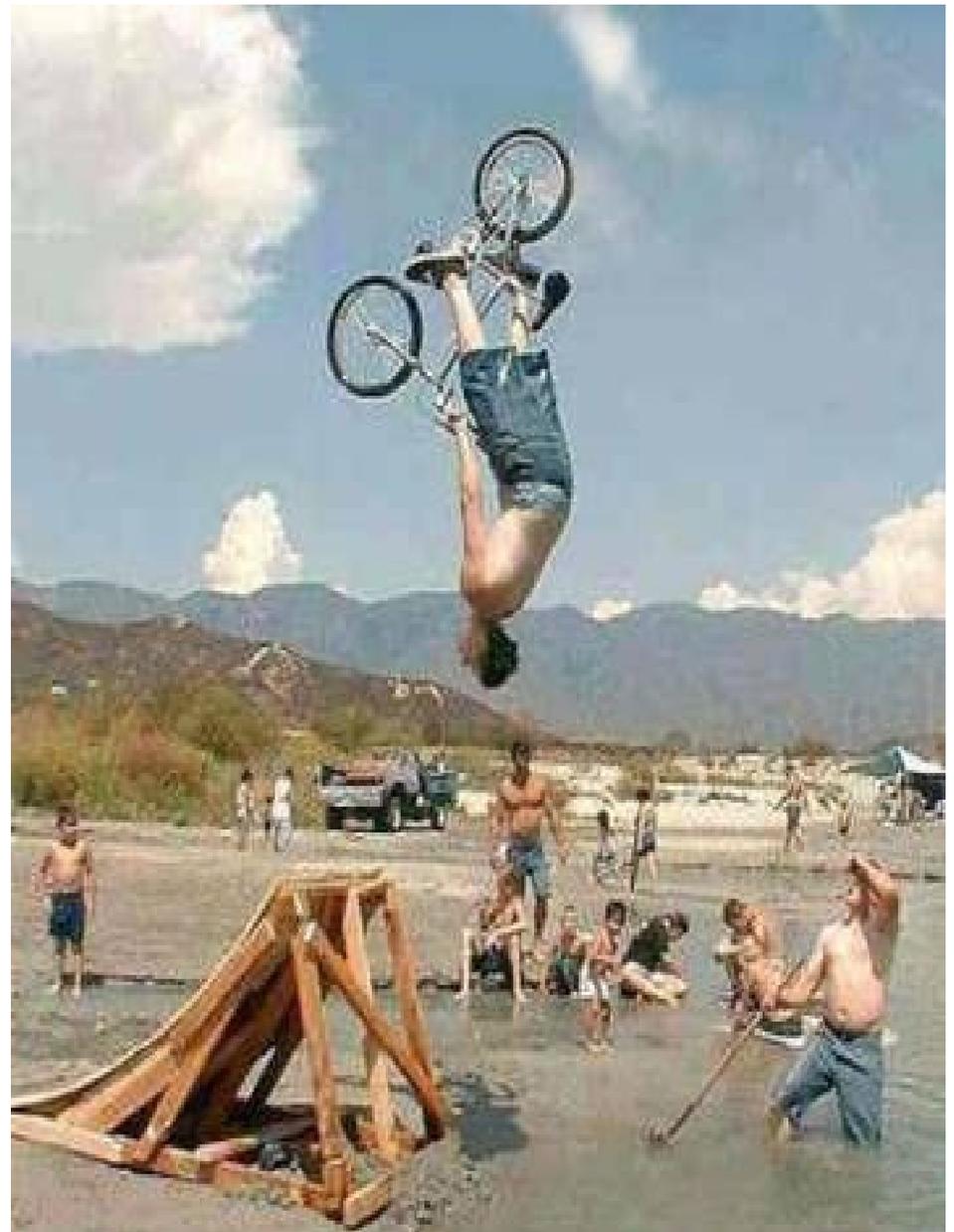
- women, who have been subjected to a long history of exploitation and inequality create space for themselves by articulating and bringing to fore discriminatory issues and unfair practices bred by patriarchy such as being over-burdened by household work, economic dependency and difficulties and nominal access to other resources.
- Indigenous people, dalits and other minorities, who face the major brunt of social discrimination, bring to this space their perspective on economic and social marginalisation perpetuated by discriminatory practices in the state's development processes along with prejudiced social norms.

In this way ELBAG aims to facilitate:

- empowerment of people, ensure participation of poor and excluded, reduce corruption, increase accountability in the processes of governance and policy making, particularly with regards to budget formulation, economic planning and government decision making that impact their lives.

The process and methodologies will lend support for the

- realization of the rights of the poor and excluded people by upholding people centric governance at different levels.
- The bottom up processes will also be instrumental in encouraging the democratization of national level policy making processes.



- People and communities deal with economics on a daily basis in their lives – in their households, communities and markets. Economic literacy is about politicisation of this knowledge.
- It is about understanding how economic processes operate, asking questions about political economy and about taking action.
- Economic literacy, thus, builds on existing knowledge of the communities.
- As economic decisions are rarely transparent and usually beyond public realm, ELBAG starts with taking appropriate action on making the economic aspect of development more democratic and people centric.

In their quest for democracy, people begin to ask many questions. Some of the most frequently asked questions are:

- *How are revenue generated?*
- *Why do these revenues, collected by the governments, not find their way to development benefits?*



These are some of the questions that largely remain unanswered.

Understanding these issues leads poor and excluded people to question about how their elected representatives make economic decisions. They would like to ask :

- how their representatives stand for their interests.
- become inquisitive about the responsiveness of the democracies and governments their societies have crafted

at the national level, they are concerned about

- the government's policies.
- economic policy making and why governments continue to shrink social development investments?



ELBAG

is more about reclaiming democracy through the process of conscientisation and knowledge.

ELBAG is a stepwise process.

Participatory methods enmeshed in it provide a link to engage rights holders.

It provides not just the tools but also a framework for understanding political economy and a process of engaging with politics and power.



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Thank you

For more information

www.elbag.org