

Sardar Patel Institute of Public Administration (SPIPA)

SPIPA has organized training for government and civil society since October 2005. The first training was organized on 3 September 2005 in the form of a one day seminar where 1000-1200 officers throughout the State were linked up via video conferencing to learn about the Act. SPIPA offers training for trainers as well as training for government officials and civil society (one day to three day long courses). They receive no income for training. Training encompasses three main issues: (i) What is RTI?, (ii) What are proactive disclosures, and (iii) What is the role of Public Information Officers (PIOs)? Records management is also included in training on RTI. Training is creative and engages participants so that they go through practical activities rather than just being lectured at via Power Point presentations for three days. NGOs are included in training with a representative from an NGO such as MAGP included in at least two sessions. Case studies are also used to illustrate the practical application of RTI and what role PIOs have.

It is not compulsory for officers to complete SPIPA training yet training is very wide spread and SPIPA encourages all government officials to complete RTI training. Once a person is appointed the position of PIO they then complete training through SPIPA. They also have an RTI line receiving 4-5 calls per day from government officials (60%) and civil society (40%). SPIPA is government training institute and government is mandated to train all officials on



Figure 1 Charlotte Young (SAHA) and Pankti Jog (MAGP) talk with Kecilas Patel, Deputy Director for Planning, SPIPA

all issues relating to their position including: public administration, financial management, etc. The National Review Workshop was held on 17 October 2008 as part of the United Nations Development project in 2008. The National government selected 45 representatives from throughout India, including representatives from rural districts, to attend the workshop. The workshop was held in Jaipur, Rajasthan, and considered different lessons learnt by officials from throughout India: in our experience, what can we do for RTI?

Different states learning from one another. SPIPA trained 2500 government officials in 2008-09 specifically on RTI. SPIPA has also produced a DVD on RTI in the local language using folk songs. This DVD is used in SPIPA's training and is also used by MAGP.

There is a requirement for SPIPA to include at least two lectures specifically on RTI within each training course provided to government officials, such as public administration and financial management. Deputy Director estimates that approximately 40-50,000 government officials have been made aware of RTI in this way.



SPIPA offers training for citizens once every 3-4 months, funded by government, provided free of charge. MAGP has played a strong role in pushing for citizens to be included in the training provided for citizens by SPIPA.

