



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE



Global Expertise. Local Solutions.  
Sustainable Democracy.



# SUCCESS STORY

## A successful pilot of People Against Violence in Elections (PAVE) Training Program

### PAVE Approach to Peace and Conflict:

*Peace is an ongoing process that requires the active participation and support of all citizens. Conflict in a pluralistic society is inevitable due to the different opinions, grievances, and needs of citizens. Elections and democratic governance, as articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, serve as tools that citizens can utilize to manage competition and conflict by making their voices heard in non-violent ways, thus strengthening the broader peace process.*

### Applying the Lessons

*The PAVE training encourages participants to become active in the movement against violence in elections. Following IFES' training, numerous participants have returned to their communities and spread what they learned. To increase their capacity to facilitate dialogue within their own spheres of influence, IFES designed and implemented a follow-on training that taught the skills of facilitation and moderation. It is hoped these workshops will equip the participants with the skills and knowledge to successfully work towards the goal of a peaceful, democratic nation.*

### Expanding the PAVE Training Program

*Following the success of the pilot, IFES is expanding its PAVE training program. IFES plans to identify partners throughout the country to assist in enlarging the reach of the training with the goal of having trainings across Bangladesh. These partners would participate in Training of Trainers sessions to enable them to assist in the delivery of the PAVE training and advocate for peaceful elections in their communities.*



Photo: Md. Azizur Rahman

*Reviewing participant brainstorming on the characteristics of a good representative.*

In response to the electoral violence experienced in Bangladesh during the 2014 parliamentary election, the International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) developed the People Against Violence in Elections (PAVE) training program. PAVE is designed to help a broad range of citizens of Bangladesh identify the root causes of violence, learn how to deal with conflict in society through the electoral process, foster dialogue between opposing groups and link these efforts with tangible initiatives to mitigate electoral violence.

To test the program's effectiveness, IFES has been implementing a pilot program which has to-date implemented six successful sessions for a diverse group of participants, including: women's advocates, political party members, CSO members, and community leaders from ethnic and religious minority groups. In total, IFES has trained 185 participants, with 26 receiving an additional follow-on training to provide PAVE graduates with the skills to facilitate dialogue on peaceful elections in their own communities.

### Impact of PAVE

After the PAVE training with a group of all women political party members, 22 out of 25 participants agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I have confidence in my level of knowledge of elections" compared with only 7 people before the training. Similarly, 11 out of 16 PAVE participants in the Chittagong Hill Tracts reported that they strongly agreed with the statements "I plan to work (or continue to work) on issues related to peaceful elections" as opposed to 3 out of 16 participants before the training. A focus group discussion with political party members and former participants similarly showed some significant impact with follow-on activities in various districts.