

Capability

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CONSUMER UNITY & TRUST SOCIETY

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Established in 1984, Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation working on public interest issues. The following describes the Capabilities, which CUTS has developed over these 25+ years.

VISION

Consumer sovereignty in the framework of social justice and equality, within and across borders

PROGRAMME AREAS

- Consumer Protection
- International Trade & Development
- Competition, Investment & Economic Regulation
- Human Development
- Consumer Safety

RESOURCES

- Five dedicated programme centres and seven resource centres in India. Three in Jaipur, one each in Calcutta, Chittorgrah and Delhi. Overseas centres in Lusaka, Zambia; Nairobi, Kenya; London, UK; Hanoi, Vietnam; and Geneva, Switzerland
- About 140 staff with great diversity, experience and dedication
- A well-developed and reader-friendly web site: www.cuts-international.org, and others for respective programme/resource centres
- In-house editorial and desktop publishing and an extensive library with material collated from across the globe
- Affiliated to important national committees and a number of international organisations
- International experts (comprising Advisory Committees, Fellows, etc.) guide each programme centre and its work agenda

OUTREACH

- Publishing a wide spectrum of material for information dissemination for semi-literates to professionals in a reader-friendly format ranging from a wall newspaper to research reports
- Each programme centre has a flagship product: a periodic newsletter covering relevant issues
- Have created sustainable networks from villages in India to the state, national, regional and international levels
- Extremely adept at organising campaigns, meetings and seminars from the village level comprising five-six participants to the international level with over 500 participants

ATTRIBUTES & VALUES

- Adopting a centrist approach through research and advocacy
- Ensuring outcomes, rather than just outputs
- Focus on areas (subject and geographical areas) where a vacuum and need exists
- Carved a niche for itself in research, advocacy and networking on several issues of public interest (modeled on an evidence-based advocacy and capacity building approach)
- Providing capacity building support to various groups of stakeholders across Africa and Asia

*CUTS is one of the very few consumer organisations in the country working from grassroots to international level: **Bhairon Singh Shekhawat**, Vice President of India (2002-2007) and Chief Minister, Rajasthan (1977-80; 1990-92 & 1993-98)*

Consumer Protection

CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training

www.cuts-international.org/CART.htm



MISSION

To enable people, in particular women, to achieve their right to basic needs and sustainable development through a strong consumer movement

RESOURCES

- A Centre in Jaipur with experienced staff working in conjunction with other programme and resource centres in India and abroad
- Affiliated to important national committees and to a number of international organisations
- An advisory board of 10 members having diverse background and knowledge

PROGRAMME AREAS

Consumer Action

- Advocated for the enactment and strengthening of Consumer Protection Act (COPRA) of India, 1986 and developed a draft National Consumer Policy at the request of Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Government of India. Interventions at various levels from local to international, including tobacco control

Good Governance

- Working for transparency and accountability at all levels of governance to improve the public expenditure outcomes, through increased public participation using various social accountability tools and approaches

Utility Reforms

- Have developed a special niche in the power sector reforms process, particularly in Rajasthan, West Bengal, Bangladesh and Nepal

Investor Education and Protection

- Educating the investors (particularly small investors) through securities and market awareness campaigns and workshops

Sustainable Mobility

- Working for 'Right to Life and Safety on Roads', which includes traffic calming strategies as well as several campaigns and awareness programmes.

OUTREACH

Publications

- *Panchva Stambh* (5th Estate): a Hindi quarterly on accountability, reforms and governance
- *Catalyst*: Quarterly e-newsletter in English
- Several occasional and bi-lingual (Hindi and English) publications, guides and training manuals for grassroot groups

Networking

- Vast networking in Rajasthan with over 900 voluntary organisations and grassroot groups
- Campaigned successfully on a wide spectrum of public interest issues

Event Management

- Organising several meetings/seminars at block, district and state levels

FUTURE PLANS

- Deepen work on good governance, particularly social audit
- Campaign on right to opportunities and right to information
- Strengthening the consumer movement and creating a questioning society

It confirmed my view that often the simple lack of awareness lies at the root of so much misery. Furthermore, the impact and success of a relatively simple publication like this one in enriching and changing the lives of many villagers gives us new impetus to try to improve the lives of the neediest in our daily work – however remote it may seem at first sight. observed **Rubens Ricupero**, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (1995-2004) on seeing *Gram Gadar*

International Trade & Development

CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment

www.cuts-citee.org



MISSION

Pursuing economic equity and social justice within and across borders by persuading governments and empowering people

RESOURCES

- Headquartered at Jaipur, India with 15 experienced research and programme staff
- Affiliated to important international organisations and to a number of national committees
- An international advisory board comprising of 15 members from diverse backgrounds
- A well-developed and reader-friendly web site: www.cuts-citee.org
- In-house editorial and desktop publishing

PROGRAMME AREAS

WTO Issues

- Conducting network-based research and advocacy for raising a range of civil society concerns, views and perspectives on the Doha Round of WTO negotiations

Regional Economic Cooperation

- Working on various aspects of South-South and South-North economic and trade cooperation

Developmental Issues

- Implementing a number of network-based and outreach-oriented projects on trade and poverty, trade and environment especially climate change, and institutions and pro-poor growth

Capacity Building

- Helping developing countries gain from each other's successful experiences, in formation of institutions, generation of human capital and development of growth enabling and poverty alleviating infrastructure

Sustainable Production & Consumption

- Conducting a policy audit in India of Section G (guidelines for sustainable consumption) of the

United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection and the Johannesburg (Rio+10) Plan of Implementation

- Instrumental in launching the Indian Ecomark Scheme in 1991 and promoting awareness in India

OUTREACH

- *Economiquity*: a monthly e-newsletter on WTO Issues, Regional Economic Cooperation and Developmental Issues, which is sent out to more than 5,000 interested readers worldwide
- Research reports, briefing papers, monographs and viewpoint papers are regularly published and disseminated widely
- Network-based activities with more than 70 research institutions and non-governmental organisations all over the world
- Active participation in all WTO Ministerial Conferences and meetings and conferences of inter-governmental organisations like UNCTAD, OECD
- Catalysed the formation of a number of networks, such as Kathmandu-based South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics & Environment (SAWTEE), and the Geneva-based International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development
- The only and first NGO in the official Indian delegation to the WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong

FUTURE PLANS

- Push for a revival of multilateralism
- Strive for inclusiveness in formulation and impact of trade policy and norms at national and international levels
- Coordinate a civil society movement for better trade facilitation in South Asia and African countries
- Strive for environmental sustainability without sacrificing the developmental aspirations of developing countries

There are a few WTO related events of importance to developing countries on the international stage that do not... CUTS has done a remarkably great job of articulating the poor country's interests and concerns on the subject of a link between trade and labour and trade and environmental standards
Arvind Panagariya, Professor of Economics, Columbia University.

Competition, Investment & Economic Regulation

CUTS Centre for Competition, Investment & Economic Regulation

www.cuts-ccier.org



MISSION

Promoting fair markets to enhance consumer welfare and economic development

RESOURCES

- A Centre in Jaipur with experienced research and programme staff
- Affiliated to various international/national organisations
- Guided by an international advisory board comprising 14 members from diverse backgrounds

PROGRAMME AREAS

Competition Policy & Law

- Closely involved with developing the new competition regime in India, i.e. the Indian Competition Act, 2002 as amended in 2007 and National Competition Policy of India
- Assisted several developing world competition authorities (Ethiopia, Kenya, Ghana, Vietnam and Zambia) in enhancing their capacities on competition administration
- Developed a unique bottom-up approach '7Up Model' to work on competition issues in the developing world (recognised by OECD DAC)
- Established a Competition, Regulation and Development Research Forum (CDRF) for research from developing countries

Economic Regulation

- Undertaken research to understand regulatory processes and institutions in various developing and developed countries and draw 'good practices'
- Established a Parliamentarians Forum on Economic Policy Issues (PARFORE) in India
- Modeled an approach to ensure consumer/citizens' participation in evolving and implementing regulatory reforms (RESA)

Investment Climate

- Undertaken research on FDI and development
- UNCTAD identified CUTS as a strategic partner on Investment and Competition Issues
- Conducted research and advocacy on UN Code of Conduct for TNCs and the OECD Guidelines for

MNEs and the OECD Policy Framework for Investment

Consumer Policy

- Drafted a Consumer Protection Regime for Royal Government of Bhutan on request
- Advised the Government of South Africa in drafting a consumer protection framework
- Undertaking Consumer Impact Assessment (CIA) to assess impact of sectoral policies on Indian consumers
- Prepared 'State of Consumers' for Government of India in 1999; a sequel expected soon
- Supporting the Government of Vietnam in drafting a consumer protection law

OUTREACH

Publications

- *ReguLetter*: the flagship quarterly newsletter on competition and regulatory issues posted to over 2000 people across the globe.
- *PolicyWatch*: quarterly dealing with economic policy issues in India
- *FunComp Forum & Competition Online Forum*: electronic list-serves used to interact with diverse stakeholders on reforms, competition and regulatory affairs in India and the world

Networking

- Created a one-of-its-kind network: International Network of Civil Society Organisations on Competition (INCSOC) with members from over 50 countries
- Working with over 70 research institutions/organisations worldwide

FUTURE PLANS

- Expand activities to MENA countries and Southeast Asia, while consolidating presence in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia
- Deepen work on competition policy and economic development; regulatory failures and business regulation/private sector development
- Campaign on World Competition Day and International Competition Fund

I realised that CUTS was well informed, well connected in India, influential and a formidable advocate for competition and consumer policy. It needs to get the politician's ear to move its agenda forward. **Frederic Jenny**, Judge, Cour de Cassation, Paris

Human Development

CUTS Centre for Human Development

www.cuts-international.org/CHD.htm



MISSION

To be an innovative centre for strategic interventions to raise the living standards of people

RESOURCES

- A Centre in Chittorgarh with programme and field staff and working in over 300 villages in several districts of Rajasthan
- Affiliated to important state and national organisations and district committees
- An advisory board comprising of 10 members (of which 40 percent are women) from related fields

PROGRAMME AREAS

Empowering Women and Children

- Conducted community-based action projects over a decade to improve the status of women and enhance livelihood security in rural areas
- Development of *Bal Panchayats* (children's assemblies) and Social Justice and Development Committees working on issues related to health, hygiene, education, etc

Natural Resource Management

- Encourage and contribute to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity by the community through land and water management

Good Governance

- Creating awareness among the consumers of the district and facilitate the process of good and transparent governance

Reproductive and Child Health

- Identifying the problems and requirements in maternal and child health services

OUTREACH

Publications

- *Aage Badhnon Hossi* (Women Marching Ahead): a quarterly newsletter in Hindi
- *Participation and Action towards Community Empowerment* (Quarterly e-Newsletter)
- *Bal Darpan* (Quarterly Newsletter)
- Several guides and reports in Hindi for dissemination of vital information for rural folks

Networking

- Established network comprising community leaders, traditional healers and birth attendants, social action committees, etc where 2,500 people are actively associated
- Formed a network of NGOs called District NGO forum at Chittorgarh and *Sanjha Prayas* at Bhilwara
- Help establish over 1000 Self Help Groups (SHG) and assisting them on sustaining basis

Event Management

- Organising meetings from the grassroots levels (*Chaupal Baithaks*: Village Meetings) to block, district, state and national level
- Organising training programmes for multiple stakeholders

FUTURE PLANS

- Deepening the work on mobilisation of people for active participation in *Panchayati Raj* and promoting good governance
- Strengthening the SHG movement to encompass micro-credit and consumer issues
- Strong advocacy against child abuse
- Raising awareness of the community on conserving natural resources and protecting climate

CUTS has been generating awareness among the villagers about various developments through its literature and has been taking forward their problems to the Central and State Governments: C. P. Joshi, Former Minister for Planning and Programme Implementation, Rajasthan

Consumer Safety

CUTS Safety Watch

www.cuts-international.org/cuts-crc.htm



MISSION

To achieve for the citizens the right to be protected against unsafe goods, services and environment

RESOURCES

- A Centre in Calcutta with research and programme staff and working in association with various programme and resource centres at Jaipur and Delhi
- An advisory board comprising seven experts from diverse fields

PROGRAMME AREAS

Road Safety

- The National Road Safety Policy in 1993 was developed on the basis of a CUTS study on road safety in 1990
- Nominated to the National Road Safety Council twice and to the Ministerial Committee on the National Road Safety Policy
- Initiated a campaign on Safe Public Transportation in Rajasthan and West Bengal
- Conducting action-oriented research on road safety and its linkage with national development

Safety-related Policy Work

- Research, advocacy and promotion of the implementation of safety-related policies with respect to environment, green technology and services like transportation, water, energy, health and food

OUTREACH

Publications

- Published several books, monographs, briefing papers, guides, articles for generating awareness on consumer safety

Networking

- Established a state-level network of voluntary organisations across India to work on consumer safety
- A robust network of district-level grassroots organisations in West Bengal capable of working on different issues related to safety

Event Management

- Organised several awareness generation workshops on consumer safety

FUTURE PLANS

Safety-related Developmental Issues

- Will implement a number of network-based and outreach-oriented projects on: climate change and green technology; trade, poverty and environment; energy conservation; sustainable energy; and food and safety
- Will educate, train and generate better awareness among consumers on climate change and safety issues

By generating awareness on consumer safety issues, CUTS is performing a very useful task of making the consumers aware of the problems they face in certain matters, which endanger safety. **H. D. Shourie**, President, Common Cause, New Delhi, India



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