

# CUTS AT GRASSROOTS

VALUE FOR PEOPLE

Governance

Sustainable Development

Empowerment

Social Accountability



संगठन हमारी जान है,  
मिलकर हम तूफान हैं।



In 1983, CUTS began out of a rural development communication initiative, a wall newspaper entitled *Gram Gadar* (Village Revolution ). Even today it regularly reaches far-flung and remote villages of Rajasthan, the largest state of India and has been instrumental in providing a forum for the vulnerable communities and under-privileged classes to get justice. Starting with a rural empowerment programme, it has expanded its scope to include issues related to women empowerment, child health, economic and legal literacy, natural resource management etc. through activities which relate to the grassroots as well as the design of policy.



**Vasundhara Raje**  
*Chief Minister of Rajasthan*

CUTS, a leading non-governmental organisation in Jaipur, has long experience of working on economic policy issues. In this area they have also achieved considerable reputation nationally and globally.



**Ashok Gehlot**  
*Former Chief Minister of Rajasthan*

I truly believe that this organisation will be helpful in making the society more aware by publishing articles and views of experts and dynamic writers on various issues. This will help in finding solutions of various problems pertaining to the common man, eradication of poverty and corruption, good administration, etc.



**Achim Steiner**  
*Administrator, United Nations Development Programme*

CUTS has made many contributions to actively promote human development, social justice and good governance. The Vision Document is in line with the Agenda 2030 and the organisation will continue to play an important role in advocating for and achieving it. UNDP deeply values CUTS efforts to promote global development.

*CUTS filed the first complaint in regard to unfair trade practices before the Monopolies and Restrictive Trade Practices Commission in August 1984 to successfully stop the misleading sales practices of a hosiery dealer*

## Mobilising and Empowering Consumers

- Assists consumers in seeking transparency and accountability at the grassroots through awareness generation and by empowering them to use the *Right to Information Act* (2005)
- Contributed to strengthening the *Panchayati Raj* Institutions (local self-governance) and grassroots' organisations in Rajasthan
- Initiated a forum at the state level in Rajasthan called *Vidhayak Samvaad* (a non-partisan forum of state legislators) to discuss issues related to infrastructure, state of the economy and centre-state relations
- Provides consumer with information on services related to consumer welfare and also offers advisory services for consumer complaints through its *Grahak Sahayta Kendra*
- Working on enhancing financial protection of consumers, organic farming, road safety etc.

## Strategic Interventions in Rural Areas

- Successfully implemented Self-Help Group (SHG) projects and formed more than 1000 SHGs in Chittorgarh and Bhilwara districts of Rajasthan. These interventions created an enabling environment for rural women and crafted space for their engagement in domestic, social and economic affairs
- Continues to be engaged in enhancing awareness on child rights and sensitising citizens to help mitigate violence against girls

- Created awareness among the public to make environmental protection a people's movement
- Advocating for the rights of persons with disability under the socio-economic inclusion programme
- Intervened more than 2700 cases under the Childline 1098 project since 2013. It is a 24-hour free emergency phone outreach service for children in need of care and protection

## Border Haats

- A study on Border Haats (informal markets) between India and Bangladesh showed positive impact on livelihoods of local communities and cross-border trust building

## Capacity Building of Consumer Organisations

- Undertaken capacity building of consumer organisations on electricity reforms and the regulatory process; enhanced capacities of CSOs to participate in regulatory processes; evolved a channel of communication between consumers and policymakers/regulators on electricity reforms; and educated consumers about their rights and responsibilities in regard to curbing of electricity theft, conservation of electricity, etc.
- Engaging in identifying linkages between power and other sectors – for instance, the impact of rural electrification on the social, environmental

*State Award was conferred upon role models from amongst those who should resilience despite disability. National Award was also granted to District Magistrate, Chittorgarh*

*Key recommendations from the India-Bangladesh Border Haat study were included as part of the revised MoU on Border Haats signed between both the countries*

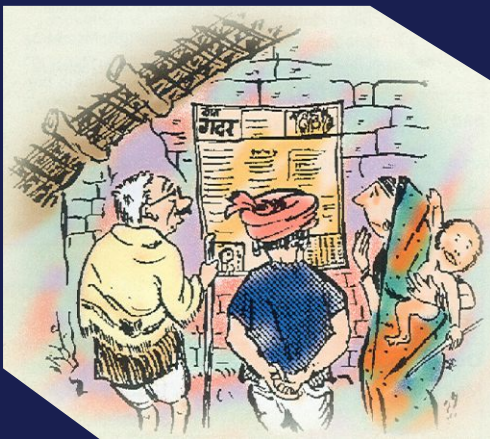
and economic fabric of villages; linkages of agriculture to water, irrigation and energy issues etc.

- Created a network of district level NGOs to address diverse grassroots issues
- Engaged in capacity building programmes on solarisation in rural and urban clusters. As a first step, the focus will be on 'Solar for Education' to facilitate deeper permeation of clean energy technologies at the grassroots.

## Grassroots Voices in International Trade

- Generating a more coherent civil society voice on economic governance and globalisation and the impact of associated initiatives on the livelihoods of the poor, particularly women and other marginalised sections of society
- Contributing to the development of conditions needed for mainstreaming trade into the national development strategy
- Looking at the differential impact of liberalisation on various stakeholders at the grassroots to get a picture of net as well as group specific impacts
- Engaged with the Ministry of Shipping, Government of India on the development of inland waterways for trade and transport which subsequently acknowledged CUTS efforts on inland waterways, which is directly linked with the Ministry's 2016 declaration of 106 additional National Waterways. Furthermore, the action plan included linking with inland waterways between Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal (BBIN).

*Based on a successful intervention made through the Grassroots Reachout and Networking in India on Trade & Economics (GRANITE) project, National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development (NABARD) has expressed its willingness to collaborate with CUTS for uplifting the weaver community engaged in producing Kota Doria sarees (a particular variety of women's textile) in the Kota district of Rajasthan*



*Upbhokta Mitra (friends of consumers) initiative proved to be a novel approach in providing consumer-friendly information on judgments on consumer issues by various courts and helped creating a healthy culture for spreading consumer movement*

*CUTS developed a draft National Consumer Policy on the request of Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Government of India which provided the basis for the final National Consumer Policy*



**Rubens Ricupero**  
*Former Secretary General of UNCTAD*

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 '*Gram Gadar*' 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.



**Jagdish Bhagwati**  
*Professor of Economics & Political Science Columbia University, USA*

CUTS has developed from a modest NGO, addressing mainly domestic consumer issues, to a pre-eminent position as an international NGO, dealing with issues relating to the world trading system and related issues.



**Kailash Meghwal**  
*Speaker, Rajasthan Legislative Assembly, India*

CUTS will continue to work on both policy issues and action locally and globally to protect the interests of poor consumers in the future. We, in Rajasthan, are proud of CUTS and convey our best wishes for many more years of evidence-based activism, so that the world becomes a better place to live in.