

Civil Society and Trade Negotiations

The project aims to establish linkages between CSOs and research institutions while conducting advocacy with the governments. It is being implemented in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka through partnerships and focuses on the five key elements of the July Framework Agreement – agriculture, non-agricultural market access, development dimensions, services and trade facilitation.



Negotiating positions of the South Asian countries are analysed and then juxtaposed with the concerns and perceptions of diverse stakeholders. On each issue, the position of a particular country and civil society perceptions has been placed with those of other countries, so that these countries can arrive at better negotiating positions.

Country drafts were prepared and National Consultations were organised in project partnering countries, involving trade negotiators, civil society representatives, academics, media and business representatives to discuss the respective draft research papers and to provide dialogue and discussion forum on issues relating to the Doha round:

- Pakistan: September 12, 2005
- Bangladesh: September 15, 2005
- India: September 17, 2005
- Nepal: September 19, 2005
- Sri Lanka: September 22, 2005

For more details, log on to www.cuts-citee.org/safit.htm

Exploring India-Mekong Relationship

The project explores the way forward for better economic cooperation between India and countries in the Greater Mekong sub-region (GMS), viz., Cambodia, Laos, Thailand and Vietnam. The field research came to a conclusion in all partner countries in this period and the project partners organised National Consultations involving business bodies, policy makers, media, research institutions, civil society organisations (CSOs) and representatives of international and intergovernmental organisations to discuss the findings of the project research and deliberate on issues for better economic cooperation between India and GMS countries. Four National Consultations were organised under this project:

- Cambodia: August 23, 2005
- Laos: August 25, 2005
- Vietnam: August 29, 2005
- India: September 01, 2005

The final consultation for the project is scheduled at Bangkok, Thailand on October 26-27, 2005 and shall serve the dual purpose of Thailand National Consultation and Final Consultation for the project.

For more details, log on to www.cuts-citee.org/mgr.htm

Exploring the IBSA Initiative

The project analyses trade and economic relations between India, Brazil and South Africa (IBSA). Future trade scenarios are explored by examining the present volume and composition of trade and factoring the perceptions of stakeholders. The project attempts to understand the potential for promoting trade and investment between the countries by engaging relevant stakeholders and understanding their perspectives and concerns on future scenarios.

The research component has been completed, comprising:

- a survey of businesses on future trade scenarios between IBSA countries & policy measures required for better cooperation and
- an aerospace sector study analysing capabilities and future scope for cooperation between the three countries within the sector.

National Consultations are being organised in all three project partnering countries in October, with a view to engage businesses in regional trade initiatives and promote policy responses that factor stakeholder preferences.

For more details, log on to www.cuts-citee.org/ibsa.htm

Linkages between Trade, Development & Poverty Reduction

This project attempts to facilitate cross-fertilisation of experiences and lessons learnt on linkages between trade, development and poverty reduction in developing countries to develop appropriate policy responses. The project, over a period of four years, will be implemented in 14 countries in Asia, Africa and Europe and would manifest the policy relevance of international trade on poverty reduction, thereby helping in articulating policy coherence. In each country, there are project research and advocacy partners working on diverse functions.

Between July and September, country background papers being prepared by each project partner for their respective country were completed. The preparation of a study on stakeholder feedback on TDP initiatives in Eastern and Southern Africa was undertaken, while a similar study on Asia is underway. The national dialogues were held in project partnering countries as under:

- UK: July 19, 2005
- Kenya: July 18, 2005
- Cambodia: August 23, 2005
- Zambia: August 30, 2005
- Uganda: September 01, 2005
- South Africa: September 23, 2005
- Tanzania: September 22, 2005

These seminars are key to conduct advocacy at the country level and involve CSOs, government bodies, research institutions, media persons, and other stakeholders. It provides a platform to enable identification of gaps, learn from each other and discuss ways to improve linkages between trade

Work-in-Progress

and development, as well as applying the lessons in their respective fields of activities.

The India National Seminar for the project will be held at Jaipur, Rajasthan, on November 15, 2005.

An International Symposium will be held at Geneva, Switzerland, on November 24, 2005. The symposium is intended to involve donors, providers and recipients of trade development poverty reduction initiatives (TDPIs), NGOs, government bodies, research institutions, media persons, and other relevant stakeholders engaged in the processes of trade, development and poverty initiatives. The two studies on stakeholder perceptions on trade, development and poverty initiatives in Africa and Asia would be discussed.

For more details, log on to www.cuts-citee.org/tdp.htm

Grassroot Reachout & Networking in India

The project aims to create capacities of grassroots CSOs and local media to address globalisation and the WTO and their relationship with economic development and governance in India. It is being implemented in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Orissa, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal in partnership with selected CSOs. The project lays emphasis on agriculture and textile & clothing, as they are key to livelihood of a large section of India's population.

The activities conducted in the period July-September are:

- the second issue of the GRANITE newsletter (April-June, 2005) '*Making Things Happen*' was published in July 2005;
- a stocktaking session for GRANITE was held in New Delhi, on September 17, 2005 where all the partners along with the National Coordinating Unit (NCU) participated;
- Orissa and Maharashtra conducted their state launch meetings on July 13, 2005 and July 30, 2005 respectively;
- outreach meetings were conducted by partners in various districts of their respective states; and
- West Bengal state partner held its state level workshop targeting state government officials in September 2005.

The National Seminar for the project will be held at Jaipur, Rajasthan, in November 2005. The objective is to create a better space for the Indian civil society for effective interventions at various levels. It will facilitate cross-fertilisation of experiences and lessons learnt during the implementation of the project. The event will deliberate on linkages between trade policy and development policy in India, and what stakeholders think about these linkages and related issues.

Improving Institutions for Pro-Poor Growth

This project is being implemented by London School of Economics. CUTS-CITEE is the South Asia partner.

It aims to analyse the impacts of the interactions of formal and informal political, social and cultural institutions with economic institutions on growth – particularly Pro-Poor Growth (PPG) – and to develop middle-range theory about them through structured comparative country case studies, primarily drawn from SSA but with some from South Asia and Latin America.

It also proposes complementary study of the institutional conditions for the establishment of employment intensive enterprise. Our research will be cross-disciplinary, using both quantitative and qualitative methods.

It involves academic and research community; interest groups in civil society and sphere of policy and practice to be engaged at international, national and sub-national levels.

The IPPG Programme's inaugural workshop shall be held in Nairobi from 26 to 30 September 2005 in Nairobi. The workshop will be attended by the IPPG partners and researchers from various areas across the world.

For more details, log on to www.cuts-citee.org/ippg.htm

South-South Economic Cooperation: Devising a Comprehensive IBSA Strategy for WTO Agriculture Negotiations

The project aims at conducting action research on IBSA countries' (India, Brazil and South Africa) positions on WTO negotiations on agriculture.

It will prepare an overview of agriculture in project-countries (how many farmers, how much land etc.) and some trends, including export/import statistics. This will set the scene for issues relating to trade negotiations and will identify project-countries' positions on issues such as market access, domestic support and export competition.

A country's position on these issues will be discussed with relevant officials of the trade ministry and the project will find out the views/concerns of different stakeholders in a project-country with respect to that country's position.

It involves farmer organisations, agricultural business houses, consumer groups and other CSOs (especially women groups), bodies representing agriculture labourers, government officials from other than the trade ministry, WTO experts, and other appropriate stakeholders.

For more details, log on to www.cuts-citee.org/ibsa2.htm

Regional Economic Cooperation in South Asia

Exploring avenues for enhancing the regional economic cooperation in South Asia, the project endeavours to assess the present status of this regional bloc and analyse its future prospects. An effort is being made to organise a series of meetings in South Asian countries that bring together like-minded people and gather their opinions on South-Asian Economic Trade. It aims at establishing a platform for facilitating cross-fertilisation of experiences and lessons learnt in order to develop appropriate policy responses and look for



new initiatives that could be launched to enhance economic cooperation among the South Asian countries.

The Karachi National Consultation held on 23-25 September 2005 facilitated the synergy between business, policy makers, CSOs and other stakeholders to learn from each other and strengthen their collective perspectives and positions.

The Dhaka National Consultation will be held on November 21-23, 2005 and would follow similar lines as the Karachi consultation.

For more details, log on to www.cuts-citee.org/recea.htm

CUTS Events at the 6th WTO Ministerial in Hong Kong

CUTS-International is organising various events during the 6th WTO Ministerial in Hong Kong. The objective of these events is to better reflect the voice of civil society concerns for developing countries on the way forward on these subjects.

Book Release Event at the 6th WTO Hong Kong Ministerial

Hong Kong, December 12, 2005

The book published under the project 'WTO Doha Round and South Asia: Linking Civil Society with Trade Negotiations', will be released at the 6th WTO Hong Kong Ministerial meeting on December 12, 2005, followed by a panel discussion on the issues covered in the publication.

The event, jointly organised by CUTS-CITEE and South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics & Environment (SAWTEE), will be focusing on the five key elements of July Framework Agreement on which the Doha Round of negotiations is progressing in the run-up to the 6th WTO Hong Kong Ministerial

South-South Cooperation on WTO Issues: Where Do We Stand and How to Move Forward?

Hong Kong, December 15, 2005

CUTS CITEE, in association with South African Institute of International Affairs (SAIIA), Economic Institute of Cambodia (EIC), Brazilian Institute for International Trade Negotiations (ICONE), and Southern and Eastern African Trade Information and Negotiations Initiative (SEATINI), is organising a panel discussion on 'South-South Cooperation on WTO Issues: Where Do We Stand and

How to Move Forward?' at the 6th WTO Hong Kong Ministerial meeting on December 15, 2005. The event is a part of the ICTSD's Hong Kong Trade and Development Symposium (HKTDS).

This event will highlight the need for customised policies and development alternatives for growth in the South.

Does Trade Lead to Poverty Reduction: Voices from Grassroots

Hong Kong, December 15, 2005

CUTS-CITEE, in association with EIC, the Network of Entrepreneurship and Economic Development (NEED), CUTS Africa Resource Centre (CUTS-ARC) is organising a panel discussion on 'Does Trade Lead to Poverty Reduction: Voices from Grassroots' at the 6th WTO Hong Kong Ministerial meeting on December 15, 2005. The event is a part of the ICTSD's Hong Kong Trade and Development Symposium (HKTDS).

Through this panel discussion, CUTS-CITEE will facilitate the cross fertilisation of experiences and lessons learnt on the linkages between trade, development and poverty reduction in developing countries so that appropriate policy responses can be developed.

For more information, kindly visit <http://www.cuts-international.org/forthcoming-events.htm#cuts12dec05>.

Pre Hong Kong Consultation

Pranav Kumar of CUTS-CITEE was invited by UNCTAD-India and Department of Commerce, Government of India to make a presentation on 'Export Competition Pillar of WTO Agreement on Agriculture (AoA)' in their joint stakeholder consultation workshop entitled, 'Pre WTO Hong Kong Ministerial Meeting Consultation: Agriculture Negotiations' in New Delhi, on July 19-20, 2005. He made a presentation from Indian perspective and underscored the need to prioritise phasing out of direct export subsidies with a frontloaded approach by focusing on products of export interest to developing countries.

Doha Round of Trade Negotiations

Pradeep Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International was invited to attend a workshop on 'Trade Negotiation and Developing Countries: The Doha Round' organised by Griffith University at Brisbane, on August 12-13, 2005. He delivered a presentation on 'The future of Singapore Issues: Examining the opportunities and challenges and developing countries' reservation in including the Singapore issues in a final WTO agreement'.

Costs of Doing Trade

Bipul Chatterjee, Director, CUTS-CITEE, attended an event on 'trade facilitation' organised by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Asia-Pacific

Trade and Investment Initiative (APTII) and the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) at Bangkok, Thailand, on August 16-17, 2005. The objective of the event was to develop a work programme on trade facilitation in the region. He made a presentation on 'Methodological Aspects of Costs of Doing Trade.'

Enhancing Capacity Building

Pradeep Mehta attended a workshop on 'Garnet Capacity Building Workshop: Trade, Governance & Development Spreading excellence through dialogue' organised by Evian Group, Switzerland at Budapest, Hungary, on September 21-23, 2005. He was a panel member and delivered an address in the session on 'How can Trade create Opportunities for Development?' The purpose of the event was to build the capacity of understanding and informing substantially the trade policy-making process to create networks and to support regional incentives.

Health Tourism

Chandan Mukerjee attended a seminar entitled, 'Health Tourism – The great Indian advantage', organised by The Associated Chambers of Commerce & Industry of India in New Delhi, on September 21, 2005. The seminar highlighted the booming health care and tourism industries in India and discussed techniques to promote them.

BRIEFING PAPERS

A series of briefing papers were published under the Exploring India - Mekong Economic Relationship project.

India, SAARC, ASEAN, BIMSTEC – Commonalities, Differences and Future Cooperation



Various overlapping Free Trade Agreements (FTA's) have been signed between India and her neighbours. This paper discusses the commonalities, differences on the areas of economic cooperation and investment and possible future cooperation among South Asia Free Trade Agreement (SAFTA), Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) Free Trade Agreement (AFTA), Bangladesh, India, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand-Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC) and India.

Enterprise Development in the Mekong Sub-region: Its Transformation and Impact



Enterprises in the Mekong Sub-region have experienced significant changes since the mid 1980's, including a shift in ownership structures from primarily state-owned enterprises (SOEs) towards more privately owned firms and restructuring of SOEs. The paper discusses this scenario for each of the three countries, Lao PDR, Cambodia & Vietnam and recounts the benefits resulted therein and suggests ways of enhancing them further.

India-GMS Trade and Investment Corridor: Possible Role & Responsibility of Thailand

The main reason for countries engaging in Regional Trade Agreements (RTAs) is the prospect of economic gains resulting from freer trade. However, regional integration also has indirect effects in the form of fostering greater cooperation between countries/ regions through their separate RTAs with a third party. This paper discusses the role Thailand can play by acting as a gateway between India and the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS).



Agriculture and Agro-industry in Cambodia



Cambodia's economy has opened up and steps have been taken towards a market economy since the 1980s. This has resulted in the expanding of economy but it still remains one of the poorest countries in the world. With about three quarters of the workforce engaged in the agricultural sector, the upgrading of the agriculture and agro-industry is a key component of the country's overall development strategy. This paper explores and examines the recent developments and the current state of Cambodia's agriculture sector and its agribusinesses as well as analysing and evaluating constraints, opportunities and threats.

Trade in Textiles and Clothing: *Exploring Cooperation between SAARC and ASEAN*

The elimination of global textile and apparel trade quotas on January 1, 2005 has brought about a dramatic shift in the world market for textiles and apparel products. This policy brief addresses the trade in textiles & clothing (T&C) by focusing the cooperation between ASEAN and South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). It explores the competitiveness and prospects for cooperation in ASEAN and SAARC, including business climate, infrastructure, labour costs, availability of raw material and proximity to markets, etc.



Media Corner

Humayun for Greater Regional Economic Cooperation

The News, September 25, 2005

Regional Economic Cooperation in South Asia is almost a non-starter when compared with other regional trade agreements (RTAs). The Federal Commerce Minister of Pakistan, Humayun Akhtar Khan called upon the business community, media and civil society to influence and pressurise the politicians in a CUTS seminar to take courageous steps for achieving greater regional economic cooperation in South Asia.

More on: <http://www.cuts-international.org/cutsinmedia2005.htm#wto22sep05>

US, EU Must Eliminate Subsidies to Move Forward in WTO: India

Daily News & Asia Pulse, September 22, 2005

India said that it could not open up its agriculture market further for developed nations unless the United States (US) and European Union (EU) should eliminate their trade-distorting subsidies.

More on: <http://www.cuts-international.org/cutsinmedia2005.htm#wto22sep05>

Development Issues Should Grab More Attention at WTO

The Financial Express, September 17, 2005

The concentration of World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations on market access issues has resulted in equally, if not more important issues, like development dimensions being forced into sub-secondary roles.

More on: <http://www.cuts-international.org/cutsinmedia2005.htm#wto17sep05>