

Publications Digest 2019

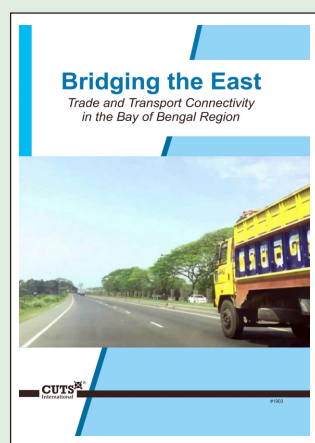
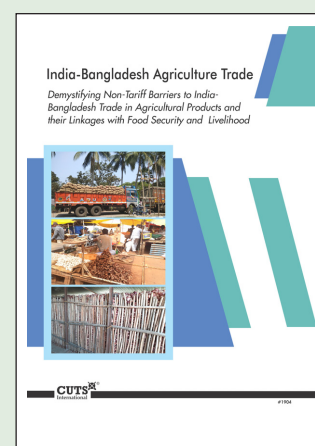
CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment (CUTS CITEE) produces this document for informing the relevant stakeholders its major publications in 2019.

REPORTS

India-Bangladesh Agriculture Trade *Demystifying Non-Tariff Barriers to India-Bangladesh Trade in Agricultural Products and their Linkages with Food Security and Livelihood*

This Report attempts to identify existing non-tariff barriers (NTBs) that are restricting agriculture trade between India and Bangladesh and provides feasible recommendations to address them. It focussed on seven land ports in West Bengal and Tripura, and examined 15 agricultural commodities that are traded through these ports. It highlighted some key NTBs that must be addressed and proposes recommendations on short, medium and long term basis to improve the volume of bilateral trade.

www.cuts-citee.org/ntbagr/pdf/project_report-ntbagr.pdf



Bridging the East *Trade and Transport Connectivity in the Bay of Bengal Region*

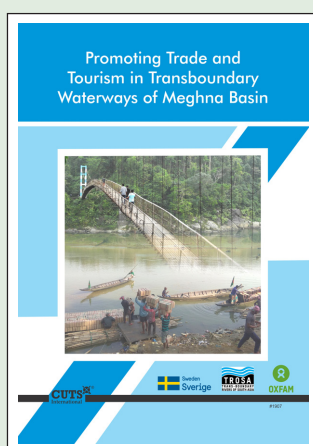
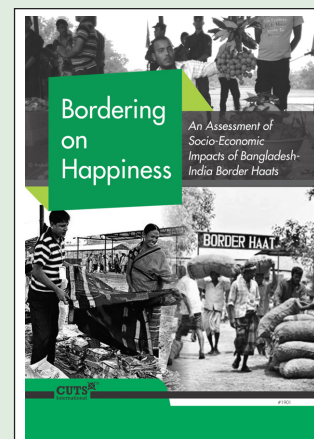
The Report aims to assess the impact of cross-border trade, transit and their related protocols on local economic parameters, particularly relating to the livelihoods of direct stakeholders of such cross-border trade and transit with the sub-region. The study is largely based on data and evidence collected through primary work in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar and Nepal, and presents analysis of the views taken from differentiated group of stakeholders involved in and having deep interest on issues of Trade, Transport and Transit Facilitation within these countries.

www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/Project_Report_on_Bridging_the_EastTrade_and_Transport_Connectivity_in_the_Bay_of_Bengal_Region.pdf

Bordering on Happiness *An Assessment of Socio-Economic Impacts of Bangladesh-India Border Haats*

CUTS, together with Unnayan Shamannay, our partner in Bangladesh, and with the support of the World Bank, has undertaken a study of border haats in order to understand and examine their effects on poverty alleviation through income and employment generation and other multiplier effects including the formalisation of informal trade. The study also seeks to comprehend the gender implications of border haats. A comprehensive questionnaire survey was done, covering approximately 400 respondents to gather data and information on the economic, social and political impact of haats.

<https://cuts-crc.org/pdf/bordering-on-happiness-an-assessment-of-socio-economic-impacts-of-bangladesh-india-border-haats.pdf>



Promoting Trade and Tourism in Transboundary Waterways of Meghna Basin

The study has been successful in creating evidence of cross-border trade using mechanised boats along the short trans-boundary stretches in Barak, Gumti and Haora rivers of the Meghna basin. It has highlighted the prospects of community-based tourism in supplementing the income of tribal communities in Chabimura (Tripura) and Dawki (Meghalaya). The findings of this study clearly indicate the prospects of cross-border navigation from Sonamura to Daudkandi and linking it to the Protocol Route 3 (Kolkata-Karimganj) in the Meghna basin by providing transshipment facilities at Daudkandi. Also, the current mode of bank-to-bank trade in

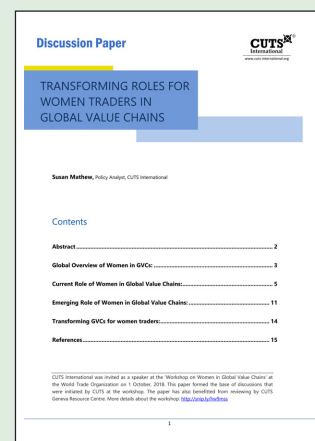
Karimganj-Zakiganj can be extended up to Ashuganj, Bangladesh once the navigability is improved in this stretch.

<https://cuts-citee.org/pdf/promoting-trade-and-tourism-in-transboundary-waterways-of-meghna-basin.pdf>

Transforming Roles for Women Traders in Global Value Chains

This Discussion Paper attempts to present the data trends regarding the current role of women in global value chains. The paper goes ahead to highlight specific case studies from around the world to highlight the emerging avenues in global value chains, which women traders are creating for themselves as well as their counterparts.

www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Transforming_roles_for_women_traders_in_global_value_chains.pdf



Role of Multi-modal Connectivity in Fostering Value Chains in the BBIN Sub-region

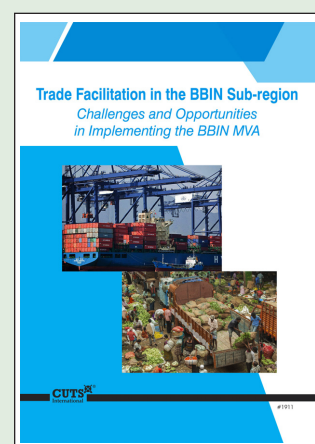
The paper aims to underline how multi-modal connectivity can facilitate and strengthen the existing Regional Value Chains (RVCs) with respect to specific commodities, and/or enable the creation of new RVCs in this sub-region. Our study concludes that except for the Kolkata-Dhaka corridor, which experiences time and resultant cost barriers primarily due to traffic congestion at the Petrapole-Benapole border, multi-modal connectivity is a cost-efficient mode for moving goods among the BBIN countries through various other existing corridors.

<http://cuts-citee.org/pdf/dp-role-multi-modal-connectivity-in-fostering-value-chains-bbin-sub-region.pdf>

Trade Facilitation in the BBIN Sub-region Challenges and Opportunities in Implementing the BBIN MVA

Trade facilitation has emerged as one of most important issues in the regional integration agenda of Bangladesh Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) sub-region of South Asia. Cross-border trade through land routes encounters challenges in respect to soft and hard infrastructure. In order to address these challenges, the BBIN countries signed a Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA) to facilitate seamless movements of cargo and passenger vehicles. This paper analyses the challenges in the implementation of the BBIN MVA and TFA commitments of the BBIN countries and put forward recommendations to address them.

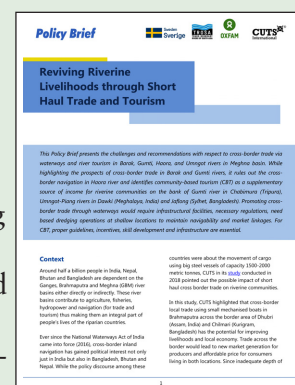
<http://cuts-citee.org/pdf/dp-trade-facilitation-in-the-bbin-sub-region.pdf>



Reviving Riverine Livelihoods through Short Haul Trade and Tourism

This Policy Brief presents the challenges and recommendations with respect to cross-border trade via waterways and river tourism in Barak, Gumti, Haora, and Umngot rivers in the Meghna basin. While highlighting the prospects of cross-border trade in Barak and Gumti rivers, it rules out the cross-border navigation in Haora river and identifies community-based tourism (CBT) as a supplementary source of income for riverine communities on the bank of Gumti river in Chabimura (Tripura), Umngot-Piang rivers in Dawki (Meghalaya, India) and Jaflong (Sylhet, Bangladesh). Promoting cross-border trade through waterways would require infrastructural facilities, necessary regulations, need based dredging operations at shallow locations to maintain navigability and market linkages.

<https://cuts-citee.org/pdf/reviving-riverine-livelihoods-through-short-haul-trade-and-tourism.pdf>



Global Discourse on E-Commerce Way Forward for India

This Briefing Paper discusses India's positions vis-à-vis the key issues involved in the on-going plurilateral negotiation by a group of developed, developing and least developed country members of the WTO on global e-commerce rules and provide policy suggestions.

https://www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Briefing_Paper14-Global-Discourse-on-E-Commerce.pdf

Non-Tariff Barriers to India-Bangladesh Agriculture Trade

This Policy Brief provides new insights to NTBs between India-Bangladesh that hamper their bilateral trade in agricultural products. As per our extensive fieldwork conducted in seven selected land ports in West Bengal and Tripura states of India, they can be clubbed under four broad categories. It concludes with issue- and time-specific recommendations to address them.



www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Policy_Brief-Non-Tariff_Barriers_to_India-Bangladesh_Agriculture_Trade.pdf

India-Bangladesh Trade in Agriculture and their Linkages with Food Security and Farmers' Livelihood

This Policy Brief exhibits linkages between India-Bangladesh trade in agricultural products with food security and farmers' livelihood. It argues that enhanced bilateral trade in agricultural products can have positive impact on their food security. However, its impact on farmers' livelihood will depend on how effectively they are engaged in supply chains. It highlights issues faced by Indian farmers who are producing tradable products and provides suggestions to address them.

www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Policy_Brief-India-Bangladesh_Trade_in_Agriculture_and_their_Linkages_with_Food_Security_and_Farmers_Livelihood.pdf



United we stand, divided we fall Infrastructural Impediments to Better Connectivity in South Asia

The Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal Motor Vehicles Agreement (BBIN MVA) is an initiative to integrate the BBIN region by facilitating smooth movement of passenger and commercial vehicles across countries in the region. CUTS International carried out a series of rigorous field surveys to get a first-hand perspective on the infrastructure in the region and major impediments to smooth trade. This Policy Brief presents these issues and also proposes the way forward to create an enabling environment for the successful implementation of MVA.

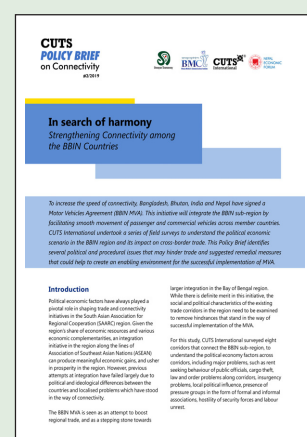
www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/United_we_stand_divided_we_fall_Infrastructural_Impediments_to_Better_Connectivity_in_South_Asia.pdf



In search of harmony Strengthening Connectivity among the BBIN Countries

To increase the speed of connectivity, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal have signed a BBIN MVA. This initiative will integrate the BBIN sub-region by facilitating smooth movement of passenger and commercial vehicles across member countries. CUTS International undertook a series of field surveys to understand the political economic scenario in the BBIN region and its impact on cross-border trade. This Policy Brief identifies several political and procedural issues that may hinder trade and suggested remedial measures that could help to create an enabling environment for the successful implementation of MVA.

www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/In_search_of_harmony_Strengthening_Connectivity_among_the_BBIN_Countries.pdf



A bridge across forever

Bridging Infrastructural Gaps in Bangladesh for Improved Regional Connectivity

The BBIN MVA is a step towards sub-regional economic cooperation. If implemented correctly, it is expected to increase the volume of trade in South Asia, leading to more employment opportunities and also, lower prices of products for consumers. Infrastructural impediments stand in the way of smooth movement throughout the sub-region. A field survey of CUTS International and Unnayan Shamannay in Bangladesh has studied key transport corridors and identified hurdles that are limiting the flow of goods in and out of Bangladesh. This Policy Brief offers recommendations to bridge the gap between the current status of infrastructure for the effective execution of the BBIN MVA.

[www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/](http://www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/A_bridge_across_for_ever_Bridging_Infrastructural_Gaps_in_Bangladesh_for_Improved_Regional_Connectivity.pdf)

[A_bridge_across_for_ever_Bridging_Infrastructural_Gaps_in_Bangladesh_for_Improved_Regional_Connectivity.pdf](http://www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/A_bridge_across_for_ever_Bridging_Infrastructural_Gaps_in_Bangladesh_for_Improved_Regional_Connectivity.pdf)

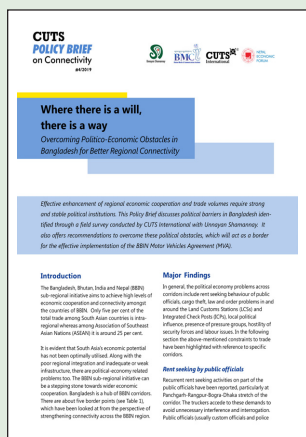


Where there is a will, there is a way

Overcoming Politico-Economic Obstacles in Bangladesh for Better Regional Connectivity

Effective enhancement of regional economic cooperation and trade volumes require strong and stable political institutions. This Policy Brief discusses political barriers in Bangladesh identified through a field survey conducted by CUTS International with Unnayan Shamannay. It also offers recommendations to overcome these political obstacles, which will act as a border for the effective implementation of the BBIN MVA.

www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/Where_there_is_a_will_there_is_a_way_Overcoming_Politico-Economic_Obstacles_in_Bangladesh_for_Better_Regional_Connectivity.pdf



The good earth

Landlocked Bhutan Identifies Infrastructural Obstacles to Improved Regional Connectivity

Road connectivity and infrastructure are the backbone of all the needed development in a landlocked country. Bhutan, being a landlocked nation, needs to develop its infrastructure urgently because the present state of infrastructure in Bhutan is at sub-optimal level. This infrastructural development will be helpful for Bhutan in ideally utilising its economic potential. Further, this development will impact the livelihood of the local economy, women and ultimately resulting in reduction of poverty. Therefore, this Policy Brief brings out issues related to hard infrastructure in Bhutan affecting connectivity, and offers suggestions to overcome them.

www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/

[The_good_earth_Landlocked_Bhutan_Identifies_Infrastructural_Obstacles_to_Improved_Regional_Connectivity.pdf](http://www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/The_good_earth_Landlocked_Bhutan_Identifies_Infrastructural_Obstacles_to_Improved_Regional_Connectivity.pdf)

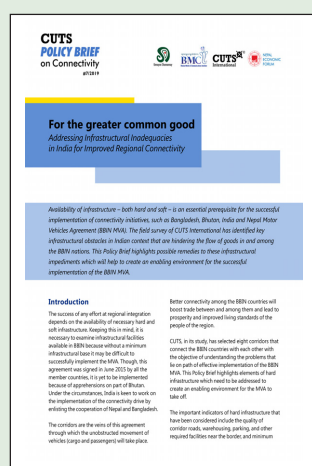


To be or not to be – that is the question Bhutan's Concerns with Political Economy Pertaining to Regional Connectivity

The effectiveness of a regional connectivity initiative lies in the strength of individual country's political efficacy and institutions. The member countries of the BBIN MVA must trust each other and also win the trust of their citizens in order to successfully implement it. This Policy Brief identifies issues relating to political economy that are existent in Bhutan and suggests necessary interventions by the government to successfully implement the BBIN MVA.

[www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/](http://www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/To_be_or_not_to_be_that_is_the_question_Bhutan_Concerns_with_Political_Economy_Pertaining_to_Regional_Connectivity.pdf)

[To_be_or_not_to_be_that_is_the_question_Bhutan_Concerns_with_Political_Economy_Pertaining_to_Regional_Connectivity.pdf](http://www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/To_be_or_not_to_be_that_is_the_question_Bhutan_Concerns_with_Political_Economy_Pertaining_to_Regional_Connectivity.pdf)



For the greater common good Addressing Infrastructural Inadequacies in India for Improved Regional Connectivity

Availability of infrastructure – both hard and soft – is an essential prerequisite for the successful implementation of connectivity initiatives, such as BBIN MVA. The field survey of CUTS International has identified key infrastructural obstacles in Indian context that are hindering the flow of goods in and among the BBIN nations. This Policy Brief highlights possible remedies to these infrastructural impediments which will help to create an enabling environment for the successful implementation of the BBIN MVA.

[www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/](http://www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/For_the_greater_common_good_Addressing_Infrastructural_Inadequacies_in_India_for_Improved_Regional_Connectivity.pdf)

[For_the_greater_common_good_Addressing_Infrastructural_Inadequacies_in_India_for_Improved_Regional_Connectivity.pdf](http://www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/For_the_greater_common_good_Addressing_Infrastructural_Inadequacies_in_India_for_Improved_Regional_Connectivity.pdf)

Love thy neighbour as thy self India's Politico-Economic Dilemmas with Regional Connectivity

The BBIN MVA is an initiative to integrate the BBIN region by facilitating smooth movement of passenger and commercial vehicles across the countries in the region. Once implemented, its implications will help India to realise its policies of 'Neighbourhood First' and 'Act East'. With an objective to create an enabling and inclusive environment for trade, transport and transit facilitation, CUTS International undertook field surveys to understand the political economic scenario in the BBIN sub-region and its impact on cross-border trade. This Policy Brief identifies several political and procedural issues that may hinder trade and highlighted possible remedies to these impediments to stimulate smoother and successful implementation of the MVA.

www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/Love_thy_neighbor_as_thy_self_India_Politico-Economic_Dilemmas_with_Regional_Connectivity.pdf

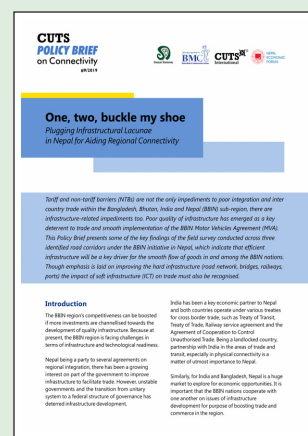


One, two, buckle my shoe Plugging Infrastructural Lacunae in Nepal for Aiding Regional Connectivity

Tariff and NTBs are not the only impediments to poor integration and inter country trade within the BBIN sub-region, there are infrastructure-related impediments too. Poor quality of infrastructure has emerged as a key deterrent to trade and smooth implementation of the BBIN MVA. This Policy Brief presents some of the key findings of the field survey conducted across three identified road corridors under the BBIN initiative in Nepal, which indicate that efficient infrastructure will be a key driver for the smooth flow of goods in and among the BBIN nations. Though emphasis is laid on improving the hard infrastructure (road network, bridges, railways, ports) the impact of soft infrastructure (ICT) on trade must also be recognised.

[www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/](http://www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/One_two_buckle_my_shoe_Plugging_Infrastructural_Lacunae_in_Nepal_for_Aiding_Regional_Connectivity.pdf)

[One_two_buckle_my_shoe_Plugging_Infrastructural_Lacunae_in_Nepal_for_Aiding_Regional_Connectivity.pdf](http://www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/One_two_buckle_my_shoe_Plugging_Infrastructural_Lacunae_in_Nepal_for_Aiding_Regional_Connectivity.pdf)



Charity begins at home Nepal's Politico-Economic Concerns Regarding Improved Regional Connectivity

South Asia has deprived itself from the gains of connectivity and integration regardless of the formation of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in 1985. Despite various challenges and differences, countries in this region are looking beyond SAARC by establishing its own sub-regional grouping having various facets to it. Implementation of BBIN MVA is one such initiative that is projected to benefit all, until and unless conflicting issues are resolved bilaterally and/or multilaterally. This Policy Brief brings out several political and procedural issues that may hinder trade and restrict Nepal's

participation in BBIN MVA and pinpoints possible remedies to these impediments to stimulate smoother and successful implementation of MVA.

www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/Charity_begins_at_home_Nepal_Politico-Economic_Concerns_Regarding_Improved_Regional_Connectivity.pdf

A bridge not too far Exploring Opportunities for Strengthening Regional Connectivity through Infrastructural Improvements in Myanmar

This Policy Brief identifies several key infrastructure gaps along the studied corridors in Myanmar that hinder the effective implementation of regional road connectivity initiatives.

These gaps are not only limited to hard infrastructure, but also related to soft infrastructure. It highlights possible measures to develop infrastructure in Myanmar for its successful integration with Bangladesh and India.

www.cuts-international.org/bbinmva/pdf/A_bridge_not_too_far.pdf



Seek and you shall find Dealing with Politico-Economic Hindrances in Myanmar for buttressing Trade Connectivity

Enhancing connectivity is largely concerned with effective political interventions. Peace and stability at the borders, harmonious and stable policies and government-to-government connections are ingredients for creating an integrated regional community. This Policy Brief identifies a number of issues relating to political economy on the basis of collection of ground realities in Myanmar.

www.cuts-international.org/bbimmva/pdf/Seek_and_you_shall_find.pdf



Ensuring Consumer Well-being through Better Standards and Regulations

Under the realm of consumer protection, the ‘right to safety’ ensures protection against the marketing of goods and services that are hazardous to life and property. To realise this, safety standards are designed and implemented by authorities to ensure the safety of products, activities or processes. Being a consumer organisation, CUTS has undertaken several projects on standards of goods, food items, and services. CUTS interventions in the domain of standards, include policy research, advocacy, networking and awareness generation. Other than educating consumers on the significance of standards and quality

products, CUTS supports policy reforms through multi-stakeholder engagement and evidence generation at ground level.

Dossier on Preferential Trade Agreements

One of the most interesting trends in today's global trade is the emergence of bilateral and regional trade arrangements, collectively known as preferential trade agreements. This Quarterly Dossier does shallow analysis of potential impacts (on the Indian economy) of those preferential trade agreements of which India is not a party.

www.cuts-citee.org/PTADossier.htm

CUTS Dossier on Preferential Trade Agreements	
October-December 2019	
(Volume XIII, No. 4)	
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South, Beijing, Tokyo agree to accelerate bilateral FTA talks	
Top trade officials from South Korea, China and Japan agreed to accelerate their bilateral free trade talks and every effort to conclude a single Asia-Pacific trade deal. South's trade ministry said.	
South Korea's Trade, Industry and Energy Minister Kang Ye-eun met China's Commerce Minister Zheng Shou and Japan's Economy and Trade Minister Hiroshi Kagiwada in talks in Beijing on how to accelerate regional free trade negotiations, according to the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy.	
The bilateral meeting of trade ministers from the neighbouring countries came as economic ties between Seoul and Tokyo have been facing an unprecedented deadlock since Japan imposed restrictions on exports to Seoul of rare earth materials critical for South Korea's ship and display industries. Japan later reversed ban on its list of banned trading partners.	
http://www.koreaherald.com/view.php?cat=20191222080523	
CUTS Comments	
In order to analyse the impact on India of bilateral FTA between South Korea, China, and Japan, experts from India in each of these countries have been individually contacted and compared with experts from other two countries.	
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CUTS CITEE in Action

This quarterly report summarises major activities undertaken by the Centre during the period. It provides a quick overview of various operations of the Centre and corresponding outputs.

www.cuts-citee.org/CUTS_CITEE_in_Action.htm

CUTS Trade Forum

‘CUTS-TradeForum’ is an e-platform to exchange views and opinions on contemporary issues of international trade, trade-related regulations and economic development. It helps its stakeholders to share information and participate in regular discussions and debates.

www.groups.google.com/forum/?fromgroups#!forum/cuts-tradeforum

CUTS South Asia E-Group

‘CUTS South Asia E-Group’ provides an e-platform to discuss, share views and opinions on trade and economics among relevant stakeholders from the South.

www.groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/CUTS-SouthAsia/info