

**India National Reference Group (NRG) Meeting**

**Expanding Tradable Benefits of Trans-boundary Water: Promoting Navigational Usage of Inland Waterways in Ganga and Brahmaputra Basins**

Bhabha Chamber, SCOPE Complex, Lodhi Road, New Delhi  
Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> March, 2017

**Background Note**

**Objectives**

1. Presentation of the country diagnostic study from India
2. Discussion among experts on findings in the diagnostic study

**Expected Outputs**

1. Input on the findings from the diagnostic study and proposed policy discourse for enabling reform measures
2. Deliberations on the regulatory environment and institutional analysis with input from NRG members

**Background and Context**

As part of the Civil Society Fund by The Asia Foundation, CUTS International has conducted a field study in four states (Assam, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal) of India for the project titled 'Expanding Tradable Benefits of Trans-boundary Water: Promoting Navigational Usage of Inland Waterways in Ganga and Brahmaputra Basins'.

The goal of the project is to contribute to improving policies, laws and regulations for inland waterways governance with particular emphasis on transport connectivity and livelihood in the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal (BBIN) region.

We envision achieving this goal by promoting an alternative policy discourse for enabling reform measures between policy-makers, civil society, and communities. More details about the project is available here: <http://www.cuts-citee.org/IW/>

Based on the field insights as part of the diagnostic study, CUTS international has derived key findings from Ganga and Brahmaputra basins from the states of Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, West Bengal and Assam.

In this meeting, deliberations among experts formed in the National Reference Groups (NRGs) will give even greater clarity and direction on the diagnostic study's findings and, importantly, provide advice on an alternative policy discourse, which CUTS will take forward in its targeted dialogues. NRG members are expected to take the identified policy reform measures forward in their own capacities and through an E-forum, to advocate for national reform measures and investments.

Taking the direction from the NRG forward, CUTS and its partners will present its findings and promote an alternative policy discourse to relevant policy-makers, government bodies, CSOs and other stakeholders in targeted discussions and basin-level meetings, ensuring participation of women and/or CSOs working on gender issues in each.

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