

International Trade and National Development Strategy in India: *Voices from the Ground*
HCM-Rajasthan State Institute of Public Administration, 7 May 2008, Jaipur, India

Objective

This Training cum Advocacy workshop broadly organized by CUTS CITEE aims at demystifying the contents of globalisation and International Trade and its impacts on agriculture and agriculturists. This workshop also throws light on the importance of good governance at every level including efficiency of governance at the local level i.e. the Panchayati Raj Institutions. The event would provide a forum for fruitful group discussions involving stakeholders who would share views and reflect upon strategies to mainstream international trade in to national development.

Background

Under its programme area on developmental issues, CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment (www.cuts-citee.org) is implementing a project called ***Mainstreaming International Trade into National Development Strategy (MINTDEV)*** is a two-year project, funded by the Royal Norwegian Embassy, New Delhi. It is a pilot project in Bangladesh and India, and it takes a developmental approach to include and give due prominence to international trade in the national developmental strategy. This task is multi-faceted and includes facilitation of trade reforms with appropriate complementary policies.

Context

While the benefits of trade liberalisation on reducing poverty have been widely documented, there are strong suggestions that trade liberalisation can also have negative effects on national development. Trade liberalisation leads to increased international trade through lowered national barriers. It is argued that such liberalisation leads to economic growth, which implies increase in the nation's capacity for production and consumption. However, economic growth by itself does not automatically translate into overall economic prosperity and development. Development entails the well-being of citizens and an improvement in socio-economic terms, reflected by indicators such as health, nutrition, education, environment, and the level of gender equality, empowerment and participation.

Hence, the thrust of any *development strategy* amongst other things is to find methods to access and utilise social and economic resources. Conversely, the un-developed or under-developed would connote the lack of access to these resources, resulting in visible inequality with regard to opportunities and freedoms, and thereby leaving such groups behind, in both, relative and absolute poverty.

The Event

The Training cum Advocacy workshop to be held in HCM-Rajasthan State Institute of Public Administration on the 7th of May 2008, Jaipur, would comprise of three sessions:

Demystifying International Trade and Economics

- What is Economics and why is it important
- Why International Trade important in the Agricultural context?
- How to look at agricultural production practices with an Economic lens

Experiences relating to Public Administration in International trade

- A brief history of International trade in India
- Relevance of International Trade to Government Agencies
- Need for Public Administration Reforms

Training on Needs Assessment for PRI Representatives, which would include Group Exercises and Reflections on Strategies to Mainstream International trade into National Development Strategy

Expected Outcome

The expected outcome of this event is to generate awareness amongst primary stakeholders at the Grassroots level about sound practices of local governance and to demystify International Trade and Economics, so that Mainstreaming International Trade in to the National Development Strategy in India, can be enabled in the Democratic system of India in a more informed and holistic manner. The deliberations and suggestions that emerge out of this event will be carried forward to its logical end by feeding into the forth coming advocacy strategies of the project.

Participants

Participants will include Farmers, Representatives from farmer associations, PRI Representatives and local Political party leaders at the village level.

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