

***Inception Workshop***  
**Grassroot Reachout and Networking in India on Trade and Economics**  
***Calcutta, India, 9 - 10 August 2007***

**Objective**

To have a thorough discussion on the various issues and methodology of the project Grassroots Reachout & Networking in India on Trade & Economics, Phase 2, with specific objectives to look into:

- Familiarization and understanding the issues related to National Foreign trade Policy of India
- Discussion on research methodology to be adopted in the first year of the project and finalization of terms of reference
- Milestones to be achieved and risk to be faced during project implementation

**Background**

Consistent with the process of economic reforms, the thrust of the National Foreign Trade Policy of India, 2004-09 is on export promotion by increasing the competitiveness of Indian products in the global market through various means. Given this overall thrust, the chosen areas to promote employment-intensive exports in National Foreign Trade Policy are: agriculture, handloom & handicrafts, marine products, leather & footwear, and gems & jewellery.

These products form a major portion of India's exports. They are labour-intensive and provide huge employment, particularly for women and marginalised section of the society. In recent times some of these products are facing different types of tariff and non-tariff barriers, which adversely affecting the growth of these sectors. Several steps have been taken in National Foreign Trade Policy of India, 2004-09, to enhance Indian exports in major markets but many Indian producers (especially small producers) are mostly unaware of these issues.

Besides this, the Policy was adopted without much consultation with the larger set of stakeholders in international trade. Similarly, no systematic attempts have been done to conduct social impact analysis of various schemes undertaken as a part of this Policy.

Given this background, CUTS has undertaken a three-year project titled GRANITE, Phase 2 after a very successful GRANITE 1 project. The GRANITE Phase 2 will further the positive effects of GRANITE Phase 1.

The overall goal of this project is to foster equality and accountability in system of economic governance in India and ensuring better economic literacy to generate a more coherent civil society voice on economic governance in India in the context of effect of globalisation on livelihood of the poor, particularly marginalized and women.

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**Context**

The National Foreign Trade Policy of India, 2004-09 is built around two major objectives and they are to:

- Double India's percentage share of global merchandise trade by the year 2009; and
- Act as an effective instrument of economic growth by giving a thrust to employment generation, especially in semi-urban and rural areas.

The project will carry out research, advocacy and networking with various actors of economic governance at local, state and national level in India, in the context of National Foreign Trade Policy of India.

It will study some of the thrust area of NFTP. In that regard, four major sectors has been identified for analyzing how the NFTP have helped to shape these sectors, their export growth and the challenges they face in an increasingly globalised world. It will also focus on the employment and export intensity of these sectors.

The project will do research, networking and advocacy through scientific consolidation, skill building and knowledge enhancement on policies related to agriculture, handloom & handicrafts, and marine products.

**Format**

For realization of its objectives, a two-day Inception Workshop will be conducted for a core group of about thirty participants, who will be directly involved in this project. The workshop is scheduled from 9<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> August 2007 at Calcutta.

Discussions will be facilitated by the presentation of experts to be drawn from different fields. Through Presentation and discussion the following issues will be looked at:

- National Foreign Trade Policy
  - ✓ National Foreign Trade of India: An overview
  - ✓ National Foreign Trade of India: Exploring the objectives and implementation
- Terms of Reference for GRANITE, Phase 2
  - ✓ What is to be discussed, why and how
- Milestones to be Achieved
  - ✓ What are the milestones, why they are to be achieved
  - ✓ Principal Risks and milestones
- Deliverables in Year 1
  - ✓ What are the deliverables, by when and how will they be used
  - ✓ MEALS Framework for monitoring and evaluation