

CUTS CITEE in Action

January-March 2011

Recent Event

Climate Change and Food Insecurity on Poverty in South Asia

CUTS has undertaken a research-based advocacy project entitled “A Scoping Study on the Impact of Climate Change and Food Insecurity on Poverty in South Asia”. In partnership with local organisations, it is being implemented in four South Asian countries, viz. Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. The project is supported by Oxfam Novib, The Netherlands.

A Regional Conference was held in New Delhi, on January 11, 2011. The objective of this conference was to gather feedback from the project partners, experts and other stakeholders on the findings of the report including deliberating on learning from the four South Asian countries on the issues surrounding climate change, food insecurity and associated poverty.



Forthcoming Events

Assessing Consumer Behaviour on Energy Efficient Products in India

There is a growing realisation in India among policy makers, businesses, civil society organisations, and the public at large that the country would find it increasingly difficult to sustain its economic growth by using non-renewable sources of energy at the prevailing levels of energy efficiency. India’s energy strategy, therefore, needs to have two basic ingredients:

- increasing reliance on renewable energy, and
- initiatives for enhancing energy efficiency at various levels.

The project will also provide a basis for designing future strategies by the relevant departments and ministries of the Government of India for enhancing the use of energy efficient products in India. The project is supported by The Asia Foundation.

The launch meeting of the project would be held in New Delhi, on April 12, 2011. The objective of the event is to promote energy conservation in India through greater use of energy efficient products.

Cost of Economic Non Cooperation to Consumers in South Asia

The COENCOSA project is conceived on the premise that economic non-cooperation among the South Asian countries has resulted in high costs to consumers, as can be gauged from formal trade between India and Pakistan which could have been 70 percent more than what it is today.

It aims to do rigorous political-economic analyses to understand the bottlenecks of regional trade integration in South Asia and its impact on consumer welfare. It will be done through a comprehensive meta-analysis of existing literature and a scientifically designed perception survey of key informants and stakeholders on intra-regional trade.

The project will help to generate better awareness amongst the trade policy-makers and other relevant stakeholders of the region on loss of consumer welfare as a result of regional economic non-cooperation. It is expected to generate some concrete policy actions for improving trade and investment relations in the region with an ultimate objective of enhancing consumer welfare.

Inception Meeting

The inception meeting would be organised in Jaipur, on April 16, 2011. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss and refine the theoretical foundations and methodology of meta-analysis, existing literature that need to be looked at, and also to discuss the questionnaire and methodology of the perception survey. Participants would include partner organisations, technical experts, CUTS representatives who will be involved in this project, and representatives of The Asia Foundation.

Project Review Meeting

A Project Review Meeting would be held in Dhaka, Bangladesh, on June 28, 2011. The objective of the meeting is to discuss the preliminary findings of literature review and data analyses as well as the methodology and questionnaire for primary survey of the project which is being implemented by CUTS International with support from The Asia Foundation.

Climate Change and Food Security in South Asia

The Scoping Study on Climate Change and Food Security in South Asia is focused on farmers' perception toward climate change and its imminent impact on their livelihoods in general and food security in particular. As per the Climate Change Vulnerability Index of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, four South Asian countries are among the top ten in the world facing extreme vulnerability from climate change. They are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India and Nepal.

This study covered four countries – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. CUTS International undertook this work in partnership with Afghan Development Agency, Practical Action-Bangladesh, Centre for Community Economics and Development Consultants Society, India, and Sustainable Development Policy Institute, Pakistan. It was supported by Oxfam Novib, The Netherlands. This project is being implemented by CUTS International, India with support from Oxfam Novib, The Netherlands.

A Regional Meeting would be held in Dhaka, Bangladesh on June 27, 2011. The objective of this meeting is to present the results of our study on Climate Change and Food Security in South Asia and to discuss a future work programme on climate change-food security-trade linkages in South Asia.

A Study of Environmental Standards and their Trade Impacts

CUTS is implementing the project 'A Study of Environmental Standards and their Trade Impact: on Indian Textiles and Clothing Sector' (SESTI) which is supported by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) through Royal Norwegian Embassy, New Delhi, India. The objective of the project is to promote dialogue on environmental standards and labels between producers in the South and consumers in the North.

The launch meeting of the project will be held on May 20, 2011 in Oslo, Norway in collaboration with the project partner National Institute of Consumer Interests (SIFO). The meeting aims at developing an understanding of the issues that should be taken into consideration in the process of the project implementation.

Environmental Sustainability Impact Assessment of Cotton Value Chain in India (ESIACOV)

The study entitled 'Environmental Sustainability Impact Assessment of Cotton Value Chain in India' is being implemented by CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment (CITEE). It is a part of an ongoing project entitled 'Regulations, Markets and Consumer Self-regulation in Global Sustainable Development : A comparison of three European countries' coordinated by the National Institute for Consumer Research (SIFO) in collaboration with the Centre for International Climate and Environmental Research (CICERO). The research will analyse cotton production practices, sustainable production alternatives and their usefulness and availability in India. It will further delve into regulatory framework for cotton production in India along with regulatory demands from European importers.

The principal objective of this study is to assess and promote environmental sustainability practices in the entire cotton value chain. It aims to provide recommendations to policymakers for enhancing environmental sustainability practices in the cotton value chain. This study will be completed over a period of two-and-a-half years.

Cost of Economic Non-Cooperation to Consumers in South Asia

This project will conduct a rigorous meta-analysis of past studies on economic integration in South Asia by keeping in mind the hypothesis that ineffective and insufficient trade liberalisation in South Asia is resulting in a significant cost to consumer welfare in the region. Other than looking at the results of existing studies and critically analysing them in the light of this hypothesis, the meta-analysis will also include a qualitative analysis of the possible positive impact on consumer welfare if the identified shortcomings of regional trade integration are addressed.

Besides conducting the above-stated meta-analysis, CUTS will conduct a scientifically designed perception survey of key informants and stakeholders on regional trade integration in South Asia. Government officials (dealing with issues of regional trade integration), politicians, trade and industry representatives, and consumer representatives will be interviewed in order to obtain a rigorous political-economic understanding about the bottlenecks of regional trade integration in South Asia.

Assessing Consumer Behaviour on Energy Efficient Products in India

The project will help to generate awareness amongst South Asian policy makers regarding loss of consumer welfare on account of regional economic non-cooperation and will subsequently lead to policy actions for enhancement of trade and investment relations in the region. The project is being funded by The Asia Foundation.

CUTS CITEE is implementing a project on Assessing Consumer Behaviour on Energy Efficiency Products in India with the objective to promote energy conservation through greater use of energy efficient products. This one-year project is supported by the Climate Works Foundation, US through Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation (SSEF), New Delhi. The project is a major step towards measuring consumer awareness about energy efficient products in India. It is expected to generate a comprehensive benchmark, against which future initiatives on awareness generation for energy conservation and use of energy efficient products can be evaluated. It may also provide a basis for designing future strategies by the relevant departments and ministries of the Government of India and the state governments for enhancing the use of energy efficient products in India.

New Project

Climate Change and Food Security in South Asia

The Scoping Study on Climate Change and Food Security in South Asia is focused on farmers' perception toward climate change and its imminent impact on their livelihoods, in general and food security, in particular. As per the Climate Change Vulnerability Index of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation, four South Asian countries are among the top ten in the world facing extreme vulnerability from climate change. They are Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India and Nepal.

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Participation

- **Archana Jatkar** participated in a meeting entitled 'Developing Tool to Facilitate the Use of Competition Law to Increase Access to Essential Medicines in Low and Middle Income Countries', held on March 10-11, 2011, by the Bureau of Development Policy, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), New York.
- **Bipul Chatterjee** and **Archana Jatkar** participated in a meeting in Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI) on Government Procurement (GP) on March 22, 2011 in New Delhi.
- **Manbar Khadka** and **Archana Jatkar** participated in the launch meeting of Trade, Climate Change and Food Insecurity Programme in South Asia and Second Civil Society Forum on 'Responding to Food Insecurity in South Asia' on February 23-25, 2011 in Nepal, Kathmandu.
- **Anutosh Biswas** participated in a state level conference on 'The Impact of National Foreign Trade Policy on Handloom and Hadicraft' on February 26-27 in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.
- **Archana Jatkar** participated in the workshop organised by Department of Science and Technology (DST), Government of India, for finalisation of training programmes for financial year 2011-2012 on 28-29, 2011 in Dehradun.