

# CUTS CITEE in Action

July-September 2013

## Event

### National Public Procurement Policy in India

CUTS International with support from British High Commission, New Delhi, is implementing a project entitled 'National Public Procurement Policy of India'. A Project Advisory Committee meeting under the project was held at New Delhi on September 17, 2013 to discuss the modalities to be followed in the project and clarify the scope of the proposed National Public Procurement Policy of India.

The meeting discussed comments and suggestions on the feasibility of evolving the National Public Procurement Policy of India and to identify cross-cutting issues, such as public private partnerships, women entrepreneurship and small and medium-sized enterprises. Comments about the feasibility of the project and suggestions pertaining to research information, data and methodology will help taking the project forward.



## New Projects

### Food Security in India

#### *The Interactions of Climate Change, Economics, Politics and Trade*

Climate change threatens the food production systems and livelihoods of a significant proportion of the population in India. The project, supported by the Research Council of Norway, is based on the premise that a broad but a concrete empirical approach is needed to understand the mechanisms of food security.

The analysis under the project will take into account differences across states given that the huge diversity across states with respect to soil, water and climate variables as well as market based and public food distribution systems. The project will involve methodological triangulation, including macro-modelling, a sociological study of the institutionalisation of food chains, field work in local communities using structured interviews, statistics, as well as text analyses of policy papers and other material on political processes.

The project will focus on two states i.e. Bihar and Karnataka, which represent contrasting cases with regard to food production and distribution systems as well as household food security. Rice and potatoes are the two products selected to be studied in detail.

### Assessment of Bangladesh-India Trade Potentially

#### *Need for Cross-Border Transport Facilitation & Mutual Recognition of Standards*

India shares cultural, linguistic and historic links with Bangladesh but economic ties between the two countries is far below potential. Enhancing bilateral trade is of high importance from the perspective of economic development of both the countries.

This project is to assess bilateral trade potentiality and measure benefits which would arise from the signing of a cross-border transport facilitation agreement and an agreement on mutual recognition of standards, particularly SPS measures. The project is supported by the State Department of USA (through US Consulate in Kolkata).

The goal of the project is to do policy research on the current situation of bilateral trade and assess its potentiality for generating welfare outcomes, particularly for small-scale manufacturing and agrarian sector and to advocate with the relevant stakeholders and government officials about the need for an agreement on cross-border transport facilitation and mutual recognition of standards, particularly SPS measures.

### Trade Consignment Mapping for better Regional Connectivity in South Asia

Trade facilitation requirements of intra-regional trade in South Asia have not been given adequate attention in the past and, to a larger extent, this explains the slow growth of trade among the South Asian countries. To make it pertinent with the latter, this study aims to contribute to the enhancement of intra-regional trade in South Asia through the achievement of the objectives of better trade facilitation measures. The project is supported by The Asia Foundation.

It will investigate three important trade corridors relating to India-Pakistan, Nepal-India and Nepal-Bangladesh cross-border trade. Trade consignment mapping will be undertaken to collect first-hand information on cross-border trade and transit conditions and measure costs therein along these three parts.

### Financial Intermediaries and Trade Facilitation in South Asia

Given that one of the main barriers in trade between South Asian countries is lack of reliable banking channels.

This project aims at addressing the “Lack of Reliable and Fast Payment Options to Facilitate Trade Transactions” in South Asia and convince relevant stakeholders to persuade their governments for a mutual recognition agreement between India and Bangladesh on trade-related financial (banking) services.

It will also facilitate trade transaction and a similar mutual recognition agreement between India and Pakistan. The project is supported by the Asia Foundation.

## In Media

### Institutions and Economic Transformation

*The Broker, July 26, 2013*

The issue is not about growth versus equity. It is about growth and equity. Is it possible to achieve both at the same time without one undermining the other? Yes it is, though the relative degree will vary depending on local dynamics, the quality of governance and the political will to address linkages that can result in more equitable outcomes of growth.

[http://cuts-citee.org/article-Institutions\\_and\\_Economic\\_Transformation.htm](http://cuts-citee.org/article-Institutions_and_Economic_Transformation.htm)

## Participation

- Bipul Chatterjee participated in two back-to-back events in Colombo, organised by South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE) and Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) during July 02-05, 2013. One was South Asian Civil Society Conference entitled ‘Road to Bali – Possible Common Positions of South Asian Countries in the Bali Ministerial Conference of the WTO Members’, held on July 02-03, 2013. The other was a ‘Regional Workshop of Economic Journalists on Trade, Climate Change and Food Security in South Asia’, jointly organised by SAWTEE and IPS in collaboration with Oxfam Novib and Commonwealth Secretariat on July 04-05, 2013.
- Pradeep S Mehta participated in the Fourth Global Review of Aid for Trade: “Connecting to value chains” at Geneva on July 08-10, 2013. The aim was to examine how to use development assistance to connect developing country and least-developed country firms to value chains.
- Archana Jatkar, Vinitha Johnson and Chenai Mukumba attended a conference on “India’s International Trade Strategy: Industry Consultation on WTO Bali Ministerial and FTA Challenges” organised by the Confederation of Indian Industry at New Delhi on July 29, 2013. This conference was organised as the first of a series of consultations with the Indian private to obtain their input for the Indian Private Sector Strategy Paper for the Bali Ministerial.
- Suresh Prasad Singh participated in the Regional Consultation organised by South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment on ‘Food-related Legislation in South Asia’ at Kathmandu during July 29-August 01, 2013 and made a presentation on *Food-Related Legislation Presentation of India*.
- Joseph George participated in a panel discussion on ‘Meeting the Food Security Challenge Facing South Asia’ at the 6<sup>th</sup> South Asia Economic Summit held at Colombo, during September 02-04, 2013. The Summit addressed four broad themes: harnessing human capital; tackling environmental challenges and climate change; managing intra-country growth disparities; and supporting the competitiveness of private-sector enterprises.