

CUTS CITEE in Action

July-September 2016



Event

Sustainable Development in South Asia *Exploring Trans-boundary Cooperation in Agriculture, Water and Energy*

CUTS International, along with its partners in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Pakistan, implemented the Sustainable Development Investment Portfolio (SDIP) project, which is a regional programme in South Asia supported by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Government of Australia. A regional dialogue workshop was organised at New Delhi on July 29, 2016.

This workshop aimed to disseminate key advocacy messages on issues related to food, water and energy security in South Asia and discuss opportunities and challenges of regional/sub-regional cooperation for sustainable agricultural practices, agricultural value chains, water resource management, and scope for intra-regional trade and investment opportunities in the energy sector in South Asia.

www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/AgendaBackgrounder-Regional_Dialogue_on_Sustainable_Development_in_South_Asia_Stakeholders_Perceptions_on_Food_Water_and_Energy_Security.pdf





Event

Trade Policy

A Tool to Facilitate the Participation of SMEs in Global Trade

CUTS International organised a session on ‘Trade Policy: A Tool to Facilitate the Participation of SMEs in Global Trade?’ at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Public Forum at Geneva on September 27, 2016. It was moderated by Pradeep S. Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International. While opening the session, he observed that presentations and discussions would aim at brainstorming around the question “Why trade policy is an important tool to facilitate the participation of SMEs in global trade.”

With some examples from South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, the different presentations made a case for the necessity and the kind of changes required in the trade policy of low-income countries for facilitating this objective, particularly from the point of view of:

- employment generation in tradable manufacturing and services
- helping small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to become a part of global value chains
- facilitating SMEs to be a driver of innovation driven future economy including linking it to the Hangzhou G20 Summit Declaration

www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Report-Session_on_Trade_Policy.pdf



Participation

- Bipul Chatterjee attended an event entitled ‘Trade and Transport Facilitation Audit in South Asia’, organised by South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics & Environment (SAWTEE) at Kathmandu, Nepal on September 29-30, 2016.
- Bipul Chatterjee attended a meeting organised by the Central Board of Excise & Customs, Department of Revenue, Government of India and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry of India (FICCI) to speak on trade facilitation needs in India’s land customs stations at New Delhi on September 27, 2016. He also spoke on Trade Negotiations at the Foreign Service Institute of India’s Mid-Career Training Programme of Indian diplomats on September 28, 2016.
- Bipul Chatterjee attended the North East Connectivity Summit of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry at Agartala, Tripura on September 22, 2016 and spoke on people-to-people connectivity.
- Smriti Bahety participated in National Civil Society Consultation on Thematic issues of BRICS-Civil agenda organised by Voluntary Action Network India (VANI) at New Delhi on September 16-17, 2016.
- Kyle R. Cote participated in a two-day workshop organised by The India-EU Water Partnership (IEWP) on ‘India-EU Water Partnership Workshop on Water allocation, water economics and ecological flows in River Basin Management’ at New Delhi on September 14-15, 2016. This workshop was organised in cooperation with OECD and WWF, to analyse water allocation challenges in river basins in India, with special emphasis on Ganga Basin, focusing on key issues regarding related rules and procedures, as well as the consideration of socio-economic and cultural aspects and the role and implementation of environmental flows, within the planning process.
- Prashant Sharma participated in ‘Homeland Security: Smart Border Management conference’ organised by FICCI in partnership with India Foundation at New Delhi on September 06-07, 2016. The conference brought together experts from Government, Central Armed Police Forces, Indian Navy, Coast Guard, State (Marine) Police and Industry to discuss and debate issues and problems posed by various types of borders and to delineate strategies, systems and solutions to tackle such specific problems.
- Surendar Singh participated in National Single Window Forum and Best Practices organised by United States Agency for International Development (USAID) at Colombo on August 09-10, 2016.
- Bipul Chatterjee and Smriti Bahety participated at the 14th Session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in Nairobi, Kenya, during July 17-22, 2016. Other than attending various sessions, he made a presentation at the CUTS Session on ‘Non-State Actors Engagement to Mainstream Development’. He also participated at the Foreign Policy Review Conference of Namibia at Windhoek, Namibia July 25-26, 2016 and made presentation on Namibia’s trade policy and its image in the international economy.



Publications

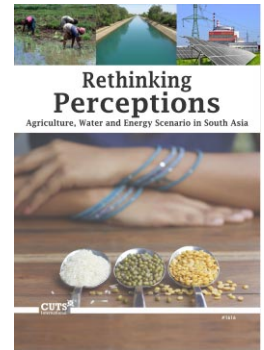
Rethinking Perceptions

Agriculture, Water, Energy Scenario in South Asia

The study points out the need for regional value chains in agriculture, resolution of upper and lower riparian conflict issues in trans-boundary water sharing and adoption of renewable energy models in South Asia. It is based on a combination of household survey, key informant interviews and stakeholder discussions of close to 1000 respondents across the Indus, Ganges and Brahmaputra river basins. It includes field insights from 24 locations in 11 sample sites across the countries, viz. Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Pakistan.

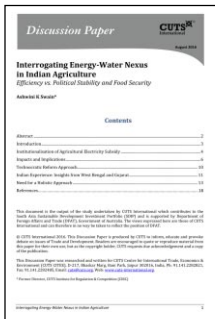
www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/Rethinking_Perceptions_Agriculture_Water_and_Energy_Scenario_in_South_Asia.pdf

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Interrogating Energy-Water Nexus in Indian Agriculture

Efficiency vs. Political Stability and Food Security



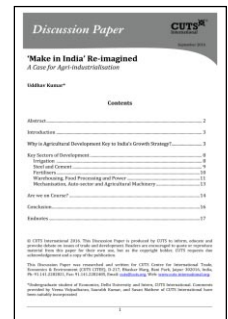
Agricultural electricity subsidy is a unique feature of the Indian electricity supply industry. This paper argues that agricultural electricity subsidy in India is closely linked with food security, poverty alleviation, state finance, water scarcity and now increasingly with climate change. Drawing on state level experience, the paper suggests a holistic approach to reform electricity subsidy and water use inefficiency in agriculture.

www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/Interrogating_Energy-Water_Nexus_in_Indian_Agriculture_Efficiency_Political_Stability_and_Food_Security.pdf

'Make in India' Re-imagined

A Case for Agri-industrialisation

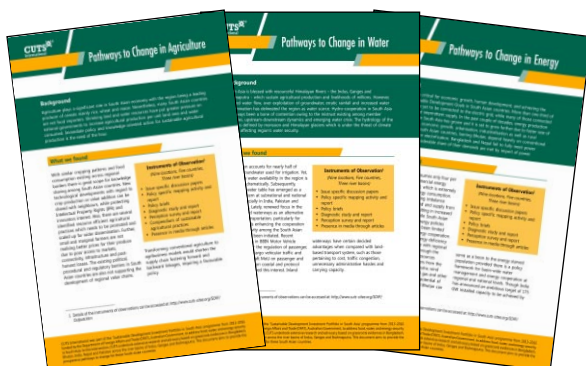
This paper views Industrialisation of India through a new approach: 'Agri-industrialisation'. It builds on the analysis that the government should get serious about agriculture-centric industrialisation and re-imagining the 'Make in India' initiative through the prism of rural India. It could help us unbind India from growth constraints and achieving high and sustainable development in both agriculture and industry. This is bound to make a significant dent on absolute poverty and agrarian distress. They say good economics does not make good politics. This paper says clever politics can make excellent economics.



www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/A_Case_for_Agri-industrialisation.pdf

Pathways to Change in Agriculture, Water and Energy

CUTS International was part of the 'Sustainable Development Investment Portfolio in South Asia' programme from 2013-2016 funded by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Australian Government, to address food, water, and energy security in South Asia. In this intervention, CUTS undertook extensive research and advocacy based on grassroots evidences in Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Pakistan across the river basins of Indus, Ganges and Brahmaputra. Based on this work, CUTS has designed numerous strategies and action points to continue its engagement in the fields of agriculture, water and energy in South Asia. These three documents aim to provide CUTS' pathways to change in South Asia.



Read these documents at:

Agriculture - www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Pathways_to_Change_in_Agriculture.pdf

Water - www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Pathways_to_Change_in_Water.pdf

Energy - www.cuts-citee.org/pdf/Pathways_to_Change_in_Energy.pdf



Bilateral investment pacts haven't worked

The Hindu Business Line, August 24, 2016

By Pradeep S Mehta

Globally, the international investment agreement (IIA) regime is undergoing a change and the developments in India are no exception. India has decided to terminate about 57 bilateral investment treaties (BITs) whose initial duration has expired, or is soon to expire, and issue joint statements for the ones in force.

www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/columns/bilateral-investment-pacts-havent-worked/article9026733.ece

UNCTAD: Investing in development

Asian Age, August 05, 2016

By Pradeep S Mehta

The world is heading towards increasingly uncertain times. Gains from liberalisation are being doubted, protectionism is becoming the rhetoric, inequality is on the rise and value offered by multilateral systems is being questioned.

www.asianage.com/international/unctad-investing-development-792

India-US trade: give some, take some

Live Mint, July 29, 2016

By Pradeep S Mehta & Smriti Bahety

India and the US have long shared democratic values, a vibrant multicultural fabric, entrepreneurial spirit and economic interests. Despite Indo-US trade being worth more than \$100 billion today, their economic relations are facing a bit of a headwind.

www.livemint.com/Opinion/APHvnLvGjUY0EedKpkGF9M/IndiaUS-trade-give-some-take-some.html