

## Monthly Progress Report- January 2014

Project Title: ‘Addressing Barriers to Rice Seeds Trade between India and Bangladesh’ (RISTE)

Name of the Organisation: CUTS International

Supported by: Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation

Duration: 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2013- 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2014

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### Activities carried out by CUTS in the month of January, 2014

- 1.1 January 2014, marked the completion of the first phase of the RISTE project and commencement of the second phase of the project. The findings from the desk and field research carried out in the first phase of the project have been disseminated in the International conference held in Dhaka, along with the second project advisory committee meeting. The meetings were widely covered in the popular newspapers in both India and Bangladesh, links of all the media coverage is updated in the Media section of the project web-page. And reports of these meetings have been finalised and reviewed focusing on the key messages and discussions held during the meeting, and will be uploaded soon on the project web-page.
- 1.2 These meetings were focused on dissemination of the project findings and gathering inputs for the second phase of the project along with developing a set of recommendations based on the desk and field research so far. CUTS in consultation with Project Advisors, consultants and Bangladesh Project partner finalised a Recommendatory Paper and a Joint Communiqué. A list of key stakeholders has been finalised to which the recommendatory paper will be sent for peer reviewing.
- 1.3 A consolidated report, based on the desk and field research carried out by four Indian State Partners and a Bangladesh Project Partner has been prepared and reviewed. It will be published soon on the project web-page. Along with other research papers like; a discussion paper entitled ‘*Harmonisation of Seed Certification Process in Bangladesh and India*’ and a briefing paper ‘*Rice Seed Production and Use in Bangladesh and India- Need for Bilateral Cooperation*’ have been layout and will soon be uploaded on the project web-page and will be disseminated through other channels like; RISTE project web-forum.
- 1.4 Various meetings were held in New Delhi so as to further the project recommendations and goal towards harmonising the rice seeds trade policy between India and Bangladesh, including meeting with Mr Atanu Purkayastha, Joint Secretary (Seeds), Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India, who shown his keen interest on the subject and assured his support.
- 1.5 CUTS RISTE project team visited Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi and Trust for Advancement of Agricultural Sciences (TAAS). Team had a discussion with Dr. Sanjay Singh (Sr. Scientist, IARI) and Dr. N. N. Singh (former Vice Chancellor, Birsa Agriculture University, Ranchi and Present Secretary TAAS). The discussion was focused on the seeds regulations in India and obstacles in the way of rice seeds trade between India and Bangladesh. Another objective of the meeting was to engage Dr. R. S. Paroda (a pioneer in Indian agriculture and currently Chairman of TAAS) in to the project. Team also had a detailed discussion in New Delhi with Dr.

Mahfuz Kabir (lead researcher, Unnayan Shamannay, Bangladesh) on the future course of action in the project and forthcoming role of project partners in the current stage.

- 1.6 A meeting was held with Mr Dipankar De Sarkar, Media Outreach Consultant for RISTE Project (India), to devise the media outreach strategy for the second phase of the project. The meeting was successful in terms of the well-defined media outreach activities that were discussed and will be included in the project activities from Jan 2014- Sept 2014.
- 1.7 Based on the inputs from the international conference and second project advisory committee meeting that was held in Dhaka, and Media Outreach strategy that was prepared by CUTS and Media Outreach Consultant- Work Plans, for all the project partners in India and in Bangladesh and for CUTS have been revised to carefully intertwine the research activities and the media outreach and advocacy initiatives to form an effective medium to attain the intended objectives and thus, the project goal '*to develop an enabling environment to promote seeds trade and knowledge-sharing on HYV rice seeds between India and Bangladesh.*'

#### Outline of the activities to be carried out in the month of February, 2014

- 2.1 A review meeting is schedule in Jaipur, with Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation's representative where the plan for the second phase of the project will be reviewed and discussed.
- 2.2 A recommendatory paper will be forwarded to the key stakeholders, as identified in the project Results Framework, for peer reviewing and to generate consensus on the demand scenarios and potential trade between India and Bangladesh in HYV rice seeds.
- 2.3 The Joint communiqué will be released jointly by CUTS and Bangladesh project partner.
- 2.4 The revised work plans will be shared with all the project partners and the implementation plan will be discussed with each of the project partner.
- 2.5 The media outreach activities will start on identifying the key stakeholders and media personnel in New Delhi, in each of the States and in Bangladesh.
- 2.6 After finalising the six key policy and practice issue, literature review will be carried out by CUTS and Bangladesh Project with support from State partners.
- 2.7 Various meeting are scheduled with key stakeholders and media personnel regarding the activities to be carried out in the second phase of the RISTE Project..