

Quarterly Progress Report

Quarterly Progress Report-October 2014 to December 2014

Project Title: ‘Sustainable Development Investment Portfolio in South Asia’ (SDIP)

Name of the Organisation: CUTS International

Supported by: Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), Government of Australia

Duration: 1st October 2013- 30th September 2016

1. Activities carried out by CUTS in the month of October-November 2014

1.1 In continuation of activities under CUTS Work plan, policy mapping exercise in the domains of agriculture, water and energy was conducted in the month of October-November. For the initial snapshot, the team looked into various policies and acts under each of the three domains in the five project countries-Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Pakistan. Country specific policies at national and state level are included in the preliminary snapshots. In India, apart from Central government policies, the team also looked into the policies of various states-where CUTS SDIP activity is planned to be carried out. The draft version of this activity is ready and is at the final stage of reviewing. The output of this activity will be an open online database of relevant policies. The database will also include a brief introduction to the policies. It will additionally look at the key issues and hence contribute to the gap analysis. The database will be accessible through the SDIP webpage. It will be updated quarterly and, as and when policy changes are seen in the relevant SDIP domains.

The main objective of the activity is to provide a database of existing policies relevant to SDIP, to coin advocacy messages through gap analysis and track changes over time.

1.2 CUTS drafted and submitted a project proposal on “*Linkages of Cross-border Agricultural Inputs Trade with Farm and Non-farm incomes and Resource Use Efficiency*” to Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR).

This proposal is still under discussion.

2. Activities carried out by CUTS in the month of December, 2014

2.1 The Diagnostic study report has been prepared and is under review. The report will be shared with all the SDIP partners by the month of January 2015.

Brief information about the study:

With the assistance from our partners, CUTS conducted a quick diagnostic study across the basins including all the five project countries. The objective of this study is to validate the findings of desk research with local perspectives, coin initial advocacy messages and to identify the entry points and prioritise CUTS interventions. The diagnostic study helped CUTS in identifying the broad entry points to streamline its interventions in the SDIP focus areas. In light of the preliminary findings of the study, it was decided that CUTS will undertake some focused studies on the issues of Groundwater Regulation, Sustainable Agricultural practices, Value Added Market Chains in Agriculture and Small and Micro Renewable Energy Deployment.

2.2 Sustainable Development Policy Institute’s (SDPI) Seventeenth Sustainable Development Conference (SDC) 2014 was held in collaboration with various partners, CUTS being one of them. This conference was held in Islamabad, Pakistan on 9-11 December 2014. Apart from organising a panel in Competition Policy and Sustainable Development in South Asia, Prithviraj Nath made a presentation on “**Water-Energy-Food Security Nexus: Mainstreaming Sustainable Development**”

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for Food Security in South Asia” in the food security session. This presentation was based on the preliminary findings of the SDIP Diagnostic Study focusing on the importance of water-food-energy nexus in relation to regional food security. *This conference was used as a platform to advocate the initial advocacy message from CUTS Diagnostic Study.*

Overall, the following panels in SDC were related to SDIP theme (food, water and energy):

- I. Water and Food Security in South Asia in the Era of Climate Change
- II. Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL)
- III. Food Security Session I: Food Security in Pakistan: Issues and Way Forward
- IV. Food Security Session II: Title: International Experience and Cooperation
- V. Food Security Session III: Integrated Phase Classification (IPC) and Food Security Monitoring
- VI. Managing Waters Beyond Borders

The detailed reports of these panels are under finalization and will be shared soon.

SDC Media coverage can be accessed by clicking on the following link:
http://www.sdpi.org/sdc/news.php?event_id=394

http://www.sdpi.org/sdc/videos.php?event_id=394

More information about the conference, including the lists of speakers and abstracts of each panel, can be accessed by clicking on the following link: http://www.sdpi.org/sdc/index.php?event_id=394

2.3 CUTS is in the process of updating the Media and CSO Mapping exercise. The report on media mapping has been completed and includes updated media channels that have been reporting news/articels on SDIP specific themes from December’13 to December’14. For the present mapping exercise, only print media has been thoroughly looked into. Apart from English newspapers and magazines, local print media has also been included in the present report.

With regards to gender concerns, during CUTS Media Mapping exercise it was noted that very few information was available on women oriented news in SDIP focus domains while plenty of general news is available in issues related to food, water and energy, regional cooperation. It was also noted that newspapers in the North-Eastern region of India like The Assam Tribune, The Sentinel etc. have been writing news reports on gender and social issues more as compared to other Indian dailies. This is quite evident from the fact that women in NE Indian States of Brahmputra are more empowered than in other parts of India and Bangladesh.

Considering the pertinence of media sensitisation on gender and social inclusion issue, CUTS plan to conduct local, national and regional media sensitisation workshops in all the five project countries during 2015 and 2016.

Full Media Mapping Report can be accessed by clicking on the following link:

http://www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/Report-SDIP_Media_Mapping.pdf

The CSO mapping report is currently being updated and will be shared soon.

2.4 CUTS also prepared the Communication Strategy note for its strategic partners mentioning the guidelines related to communication under SDIP project. The elements of this document have been prepared keeping in tandem with the Communication Strategy received from DFAT.

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3. CUTS Strategic Partners' Activity Progress Updates

S. No.	Partner Name	Progress and activity snapshots with links to reports
1.	NEFORD, Lucknow	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keeping in view that promoting bio-diversity is one of the major approaches to mitigate climate change effects, NEFORD planned an activity called 'diversification of gene pool on-farm'. In this activity, large number of rice varieties was planted on farmers' fields in 'mother-baby' trial mode. In all 475 Baby Trials and 10 Mother Trials were laid out, thus involving in total 485 farmers in this activity.• A number of field visits and farmers goshti were organised at the demonstration plots in which the farmers shared their experiences with each other and the scientists guided them on the plant diseases, soil health and drought management.• NEFORD organised two trainings, one in Ghazipur district and another in Mau district. In Ghazipur, 135 farmers (with 35 women) were given training on 'Importance of Water Management in crop production. The trainers were the experts from BHU Varanasi, KVK Ghazipur, NDUAT Faizabad and NEFORD. The second training held at Mau was attended by 169 farmers (with 47 women) and the topic was 'Role of Improved Technology in Agriculture in the Context of Changing Climate '. The experts were drawn from KVK Mau, NDUAT Faizabad, department of agriculture, Directorate of Seed Research and NEFORD. <p>For detailed activity and training reports please click on the following link:</p> <p>http://www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/NEFORD_Activity01.pdf</p> <p>http://www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/NEFORD_Activity02.pdf</p> <p>Publications:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Training manual on “Importance of water management in agricultural production”. It can be accessed by clicking on the followin link: http://www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/Importance_of_Water_Management_in_the_wake_of_Climate_Change.pdf2. Training manual on “Role of modern technologies for agricultural production in context of climate change”. It can be accessed by clicking on the followin link: http://www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/Contribution_for_Improved_Technologies_in_increasing_Farm_Productivity_in_the_wake_of_Climate_Change.pdf3. Report on “Assesment of Farmers Percpetion of Climate Change and its impact on Flood-prone Ecosystem of Eastern UP”. It can be accessed by clicking on the followin link: http://www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/NEFORD-CUTS-Flood_Report.pdf

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2. RGVN, Assam

RGVN has completed a study on Agriculture Water Management (AWM) of small and marginal farmers in Morigaon district of Assam:

- Morigaon is comparatively a smaller district of Assam with slow in economic progress. Out of the total population of the focal group discussion (180) under study, 60 (33.33 per cent) are male and 120 (66.66 per cent) are female. As the survey reveals, most of the population in each of the communities are engaged in farming activities.
- A study was done by RGVN under CUTS SDIP project in Morigaon district of Assam. The study covered 500 small and marginal farmers, specially women. The study was carried out by questionnaire, interview and PRA methods. The study focused mainly on water availability and Irrigational techniques used, agriculture and land holding. The study was done in four different villages of Morigaon district **Konwargaon, Khulagaon-Nizarapar, Bankukurajan, Monoha, Monoha-kacharigaon and Monoha-nasatra**. The outcomes of the study are that the farmers of the villages have sufficient land for cultivation but due to bad climatic conditions there is crop loss every year. Drought and flood both are the major causes for crop destruction. Many of the farmers use more chemical fertilizers to organic.
- Personal Interviews (PI) with the various personals during the study period was done. The PI includes Village heads, Office personals of the RGVN Morigaon branch, LSP's and BMC's.
- 66% of the respondents in the study on AWM were women and the study showed that they contribute substantially to farming, yet their contributions are not taken in to view. Secondly women fall into the "more vulnerable" sections, and policies on ground water should take this into account.
- The study has been completed and shared with CUTS. It will be published soon.

Development of leaflets on AWM and System of Rice Intensification (SRI)

- Two leaflets have been developed on AWM and SRI. Translation in local language are under process.

Pilot with Flood resistant water resistant seeds from IRRI

Though this was not to be taken up in the quarter this activity has been conducted due to availability of seeds from IRRI and floods in Assam.

National Food Security Mission (FSM)-International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) demonstrations (100 ha each) in stress prone areas of India (2014-15)

Introduction:

- The demonstrations are a part of IRRI and NFSM (Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Ministry of Agriculture, Govt of India) collaborative project.
- The main objective of the demonstration is to create awareness about stress tolerant rice varieties (Swarna Sub-1 and Ciherang Sub-1 variety in case of RGVN) to improve and stabilize the rice

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	<p>productivity in stress prone environments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The selected site includes Barpeta district and Dhemaji district which are conducive to floods and drought.• The demonstrations were conducted in a contiguous block to compare with farmer's practices and existing varieties. The blocks of Barpeta district are Chenga and Barpeta and Dhemaji block of Dhemaji district.• 4 villages were covered under Chenga block, 8 villages under Barpeta block of Barpeta district.• 4 villages were covered under Dhemaji block of Dhemaji district.• 3.51 tonnes of Swarna Sub-1 seed variety were distributed among 595 women farmers (348 in Barpeta district and 247 in Dhemaji district)• 1 tonne of Ciherang Sub-1 variety were distributed among 200 women farmers in Barpeta district.• Selection of beneficiaries were done in a participatory manner by holding meetings in the village by explaining the objectives of the demonstrations and role and responsibilities including expectations from the participating farmer.• 100% women farmers were covered under the demonstration and seeds were distributed.• The outcome of the pilots are yet to be studied.
<p>3. IGS-BASIX, Bihar</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• With regards to the diagnostic study in the Bihar region, different meetings with stakeholders were conducted. Discussions on the SDIP issues were made with some CSOs followed by separate meetings with local people to get a grassroots level perspective.• Local entrepreneurs have also been interviewed and issues were discussed in detail for the purpose of preparation of suggested report. IGS team have also gone through some special studies/reports to have a better understanding on the subject matter to make the report more effective to serve the further purpose going ahead.• Regarding the detail perception survey, policy research and desk research – some of the experts of the relevant field of water, agriculture and energy have been interviewed to understand the issues in broader sense and also the steps involved towards solution to the problem as per their long term involvement with the issues. On the whole, the project activities are on the right track.
<p>4. SAWTEE, Nepal</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>Literature review</u> SAWTEE is currently undertaking literature review for both vegetable and fruits trade and chure destruction and water resources. Based on the literature review They have identified potential field sites for both the research and are in the process of preparing questionnaires.• <u>Potential field site</u> <i>Vegetables and fruits trade</i> Two major corridors along the Nepal-India border in Kakadvitta

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and Biratnagar.

Chure destruction and water resources

Districts in Eastern part of the country mainly Sunsari, Dhanusa, Mahottari, Rautahat.

- **Research instruments**

Questionnaire for vegetable and fruits trade shall be designed to carry out a perception survey to understand the problems and prospects associated with vegetables and fruits trade. The aim would be to gather qualitative information. However, some quantitative tools may also be used depending on the scope of the survey which will be decided on completion of literature review. Questionnaire will also be developed to interview key experts/institutions.

Based on literature review the questionnaire for Chure will mostly be a perception survey to collect qualitative data on understanding how the mining and export of sand, gravel and stone impacts the water resources of the region.

In addition, SAWTEE in the process of identifying key informants for interviews, mainly Government officials (mostly from the Ministry of Agriculture Development and Ministry of Forest and Soil Conservation) and non-governmental organizations and activists working on Chure's environmental issues at the fields and central levels.

5. US,
Bangladesh

- Literature review on policies and institutions regarding sustainable agriculture is presently being pursued. Unnayan Shamannay is also planning to do a few interviews of the subject experts. At the end of the second quarter of the project timeframe, a research note will be produced on the issue "**Policies and institutions on sustainable agriculture**".
- Methodology to quantify water usage in agriculture is being developed. This is critical to complete quantification of water usage mentioned in the work plan which is scheduled at the second quarter.
- MoU has been signed with GBUS (Ganges basin) & OVA (Kurigram basin) as partner of Unnayan Shamannay for SDIP project.

6. SDPI,
Pakistan

- **In the concerned project period, following articles have been published by SDPI covering SDIP thematic areas:**
 - Plan for Thar: Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri
The News on Sunday, Islamabad/Rawalpindi, November 23, 2014
<http://tns.thenews.com.pk/plan-for-thar/#.VHHpltKUd9s>
 - The 'Women factor' in food insecurity
Pakistan Today Islamabad, November 16, 2014

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<http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2014/11/15/comment/the-woman-factor-in-food-insecurity/>

- Doubts over benefits of wheat support price hike: Khawar Ghuman
Dawn Islamabad, November 4, 2014
<http://www.dawn.com/news/1142308/doubts-over-benefits-of-wheat-support-price-hike>
- Dealing with food insecurity: Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri
The Express Tribune Islamabad, October 27, 2014
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/781498/dealing-with-food-insecurity/>
- Alarm bells: Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri
http://tns.thenews.com.pk/alarm-bells-of-malnutrition-in-pakistan/#.VE3HNBbV_1U
- Five lessons from the floods 2014: Dr Abid Qaiyum Suleri
The News on Sunday, Islamabad/ Rawalpindi, October 5, 2014
http://tns.thenews.com.pk/five-lessons-from-floods-2014/#.VDYT5RbV_1U
- What needs to be done to manage floods better: Shakeel Ahmad Ramay
<http://tribune.com.pk/story/762723/what-needs-to-be-done-to-manage-floods-better/>
- **Following papers have been published under SDIP theme:**
 - The Indus Waters Treaty: Negotiation, Implementation, New Challenges, and Future Prospects Shafqat Kakakhel
Quarterly CRITERION, Vol. 9, Issue 2, Issue April/June 2014.
<http://www.criterion-quarterly.com/the-indus-waters-treaty-negotiation-implementation-new-challenges-and-future-prospects/>
 - Energy Future: Maha Kamal: Monthly South Asia, Vol. 18, No 8, August 2014.
<http://www.southasia.com.pk/cs-2.html>
- **Following events were organised:**

World Food Day 2014 Feeding the World, Caring for the Earth (Seminar) 16 Oct 2014
http://www.sdpi.org/policy_outreach/event_details448-2014.html
- Dr Abid also provided an interview in Business Care on “Food Security challenges in Pakistan”. It can be accessed at:
<http://businesscare.com.pk/food-security-challenges-in-pakistan/>

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7. SNV, Bhutan
- **SNV has completed the report on Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) Support Activities**
Review of CC awareness and CSA strategies, sustainability and upscaling plan

Activity status: Developed procedures for formation of the CSA farmers group (CFMG) in all the CSA pilot sites focused to upscaling and sustainability of CSA activities.

Purpose: Climate-smart practices in the subsistence farming set up at the face of challenges for water in agriculture besides other adverse impacts of climate change on food security and rural income source warrants adaptation to climate change for stable climate friendly production approach. In light of the agro-ecological variance, it is important to have farming system tuned to climate change with potential options and coping strategies. One of the ongoing efforts of the CSA project is to mobilize and form CSA interest groups and strengthen WUAs in all the CSA pilot sites where appropriate by creating a local CSA action group called CFMG. This is conceivable through advocacy, awareness, training and demonstrations of CSA technologies which however have been active in all the existing CSA pilot sites. The CSA ongoing activities and their benefits have thus motivated the beneficiaries to come together as CFMG for pioneering CSA at the local level for agriculture sustainability.

The full report can be accessed by clicking on the following link:
http://www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/Climate_Smart_Agriculture_Support_Activities.pdf

- **Report on Establishing a Payment for Environmental Services (PES) Scheme on the Protection of Drinking Water Source in Chukha Dzongkhag**

Introduction

The main objective of the project is to establish a PES scheme on protecting the drinking water source for 4 companies and other water users in Pasakha area under Sampheling geog of Chukha Dzongkhag in Bhutan.

The following activities were implemented for establishing the PES scheme:

- i) Mapping work to demarcate the catchment, identify land designations for the catchment, identify land uses at the date of the satellite image.
- ii) Field Visit to evaluate catchment, identify and demarcate land uses via GPS, initial technical design of the PES activities.
- iii) Overlay field visit data on digitized map. Finalize map for presentation at ES buyer and provider engagements.
- iv) Workshop with all ES providers (CFMG and GRF) on PES concept; identification of issues, wants & needs; identification of solutions (activities related to field visit); evaluation of willingness to participate; and discussion of opportunity cost.

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- v) Institutional needs analysis: CFMG and communities engaging in the GRF area.
- vi) Workshop with all ES providers and buyers to build capacity and shape commitments of each party to participate in PES agreement, finalize PES activities.
- vii) Conduct socio-economic survey
- viii) Evaluate results of the socio-economic survey and generate baseline report. Integrate follow-up surveys into the M&E protocol.
- ix) Establish water quality and quantity (flow) baselines with relevant agency (report required). Generate endorsement for future testing and integrate into M&E protocol.
- x) Opportunity cost evaluation and report generation.
- xi) ES provider capacity building on negotiation skills and institutional deficiencies identified in the needs analysis.
- xii) Negotiation workshop where the payment level for each activity is set/agreed; payment procedures laid out; terms & conditions clarified and agreed; M&E and verification process presented; and agreement drafted with support from all ES buyers, providers and relevant government agencies.
- xiii) Translation of the PES agreement into Dzongkha and Nepali.
- xiv) Signing of the PES agreement with all relevant stakeholders present.

The full report can be accessed by clicking on the following link: [http://www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/Establishing_a_Payment_for_Environmental_Services_\(PES\)_Scheme.pdf](http://www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/Establishing_a_Payment_for_Environmental_Services_(PES)_Scheme.pdf)

- **Report on SNV Market Exploration Tour to North East India**

Introduction

RAMCO being the nodal agency for agricultural marketing in eastern Bhutan, it has been constantly exploring new market and opportunities for agricultural produce to be marketed outside the country. Located at close proximity and huge market (large population) North East India is seen as a potential area for market exploration.

Accordingly a visit to North Eastern India was planned for exploring agricultural business opportunities. A team comprising of officials from RAMCO, SNV and FCBL visited the North Eastern state of Meghalaya and Assam from 13 to 20th October 2014. Consequently the team spent three days in Shillong (Meghalaya) and five days in Guwahati (Assam).

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Objectives

- To explore market for Bhutanese agricultural products in India with the aim of linking producers with the market
- To explore opportunities in agricultural marketing
- To understand Agricultural marketing process/practices in North East India
- To understand the role played by traders and various agencies supporting agricultural marketing

The full report can be accessed by clicking on the following link:
[http://www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/SNV Market Exploration Tour to North East India.pdf](http://www.cuts-citee.org/SDIP/pdf/SNV_Market_Exploration_Tour_to_North_East_India.pdf)

8. CRRID,
Chandigarh

CRRID has completed the Literature Review on understanding food-water-energy issues in the Indus basin: Punjab

The synopsis of the research are as following:

- The relevant literature ensued from the academic, policy planners, and empirical field studies has been collected, scrutinized and highlighted prominent contours and dimensions with actionable interventions ascertained in order to make strategic and realizable policy impacts. The existing literature points towards many serious gaps in the intended objectives and their actualization at the ground/roots level. Selective field visits, discussions with experts, state officials and other knowledgeable persons bring to fore plethora of constraints and impediments in the proper implementation of various policy programmes especially designed from above. The dysfunctional institutional structure with scant involvement of populace could not generate the necessary and critical minimum dynamism in the form of proper articulation of incentives and activities in these selected sectors. It also comes out that the weak and subdued civil society structures along with unhealthy political process impinges upon the issues so vital for sustaining the already attained level of development with negative repercussions for optimal resource use. There is dire need to adopt inclusive strategies to mitigate the brewing up of various social, economic and political conflicts in the Indus Basin.
- **Observed/Expected change in the specific domains that they are working in:**
From the hitherto understanding and perspective, it emerges that in the domain of water resources, ground water resources are depleting at a faster rate and this process is likely to continue in the given policy-mix. The inefficient use and non-formulation of recharging structures would further aggravate the situation. In the case of energy, current production pattern based upon fossil fuels is likely to remain dominant form of energy production with adverse implications for environment and related input imports. It came to the notice that providing clean, cheap and reliable energy to the poor rural households who presently relied upon dung cakes, wood, kerosene, cotton sticks and other agricultural waste to burn their

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hearth is a really a challenging task at policy making. Biogas, solar energy (solar cookers, lanterns, heating, etc.) and LPG for should be provided at the subsidized rates to these households. In agriculture, mono-cropping pattern will likely to stay in the foreseeable future. Being a more lucrative option, this cropping pattern will further ruin the environment and decrease fertility of soil, thus, putting the future food security of the respective nations in danger zone along with problems for livelihood of smallholders in particular. The interlocking of price policy, subsidy structures, cropping patterns, procurement policy and energy use have been entrenched deeply requiring major change in public policy.

- **Gender Dimensions**

Studies indicate that deteriorated quality of drinking water resources effect more severely the health of women particularly in reproductive age group along with infants and children. The rising cost of treated/filtered water effects family budgets which compromise human capital formation. The continuous exposure to smoke in kitchen arising from traditional methods of fire effects health of women seriously. The intensification of mono-cropping pattern resulted in decline of common lands, pastures, water bodies, etc., has affected the rearing of domestic cattle by poor for livelihood generally the activity undertaken by women folk.

- **Three policy briefs** on respective domains (agriculture, water and energy) centring the Indus basin will be published by the month of February 2015.