

**Report on Strategic Partners Workshop  
CUTS-SDIP Project  
1<sup>st</sup> May 2015, New Delhi, India**

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**Venue:** Hotel Metropolitan, New Delhi, India

**Participating organizations:** CRRID, CUTS, DFAT, NEFORD, RGVN, SDPI, SNV, US

**Objectives of the Workshop:**

- To update the partners about the recent developments in SDIP portfolio and share CUTS work under SDIP
  - To determine the progress of partners activities in respective basin and further streamline them as per the recent developments in the project
  - To share CUTS result framework and discuss the M&E framework of SDIP
  - To discuss the methodology of perception survey and expectations from partners
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**1. Introduction**

1.1 CUTS International organized a day long workshop with its strategic partners under Sustainable Development Investment Portfolio (SDIP) on May 1<sup>st</sup> 2015 at New Delhi. The workshop was attended by all the partners except South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE), Nepal and BASIX, Bihar and successfully accomplished the objectives listed above. This report attempts to capture the major highlights and outcomes of the workshop.

**2. SDIP Portfolio Updates**

2.1 The first annual dialogue of SDIP was held at Kathmandu during 15-16 May 2014, in which DFAT and other portfolio partners reflected on what has changed in the broader political economy of the countries in respective river basins of Indus, Ganges and Brahmaputra and whether and where the portfolio is well positioned to contribute to this change.

2.2 International Finance Corporation (IFC) has become a portfolio partner of SDIP and will be contributing in the energy domain by increasing access to and cooperation on energy.

2.3 A Monitoring and Evaluation Focal point has been created under SDIP to provide an ongoing overview of the portfolio level M&E. The focal point also served as a platform for sharing and learning within the portfolio about partner M&E systems and how they, both in their form and practice, relate to the portfolio level M&E.

2.4 The first M&E focal point meeting was organized at Bangkok which was mostly about DFAT corporate reporting processes and how information provided by partners will feed into the portfolio level M&E.

### 3. CUTS Activity Plan

- 3.1 The major activity that was undertaken by CUTS during last year was the **diagnostic study** across the three river basins covering five countries viz, Pakistan, India, Nepal, Bhutan and Bangladesh.
- 3.2 The broader trends across the three river basins from the study show that water is the most stressed resource and there is greater dependence on groundwater for irrigation. There is an increased frequency of water related extreme weather events (flood/drought). With regard to energy, there is a gradual improvement in household access to energy but much more effort is required towards easy access and efficient utilization. The agricultural access to energy (particularly electricity) was shown to be deteriorating, while demand has increased. Farming is still major source of livelihood, yet less attention has been given to the sustainability component. The lack of agricultural modernisation (especially in Ganges and Brahmaputra basins), rising input intensity & input costs, decline in agricultural income and fragile value chain were recorded as some of the main reasons for the decline in agricultural activity across the basins.
- 3.3 Based on the findings of the diagnostic study a **perception study** involving beneficiary households, farmers and other stakeholders has been proposed to be carried out from May 2015. The objective of the perception study is to record the perceptions of various stakeholders on the issues identified and what the ideal conditions should be.
- 3.4 CUTS will be documenting **Case studies** on good practices in **Sustainable Agriculture** and successful **business models on renewable energy**. In the domain of water, a study on **irrigation water management** in the Indus basin will be undertaken. Apart from this CUTS will be organizing **Stakeholder consultation** in the Brahmaputra basin to identify the constraints which restrict collaborative structures between farmers, service providers and market players.
- 3.5 CUTS is conducting three on-going mapping exercises on
- The activities of Civil Society Organizations to understand their nature of engagement on SDIP issues
  - Mapping of policies on Water Energy and Agriculture in all the five countries to serve as an open online database of relevant policies
  - Media mapping to understand the engagement of media on SDIP issues

### 4. Partner Activities

The progress in partner's activities was discussed by a brief presentation from each partner organisation which is furnished below in a table.

Partner	Domain of change	Activities	Implications for Gender & social inclusion
NEFORD	Technology development: new productivity enhancing and risk reducing techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Diversification of gene-pool: using broader genetic diversity on farm</li> <li>➤ Mother and Baby trials using multiple varieties to reach out to large number of farmers</li> <li>➤ Seed distribution-cum-orientation trainings</li> <li>➤ Field visits and <i>Gosthies</i></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ 17% of the total participants in trainings, field trials etc. were women.</li> <li>➤ Participation of people from all castes and communities, rich and poor was ensured in all the field level activities</li> </ul>
	Enabling national and subnational policy and regulatory environment for sustainable agricultural knowledge and extension service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ District Agricultural Development Forum Meeting</li> <li>➤ Research and policy studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Status, Problems and Prospects of Groundwater in Uttar Pradesh</li> <li>○ Problem, potential and prospectus for processing of fruits and vegetables in U.P</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
RGVN	Technology development: new productivity enhancing and risk reducing techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Study on agri water management</li> <li>➤ Sandy soil cultivation</li> <li>➤ Dissemination material</li> <li>➤ Potentiality assessment of flood resistant crops</li> <li>➤ Pilot with flood resistant seeds from IRRI</li> </ul>	<p>The study on water management involved 300 women and 200 men from scheduled caste, scheduled tribe and general community. Sandy soil cultivation with 20 women from minority community</p> <p>20 women and 25 men all from scheduled tribe community</p>
	Civil Society Voice for change, reform and standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Provision of solar plates to SHGs and awareness generation</li> </ul>	
SNV	Technology development: new productivity enhancing and risk reducing techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Under the Climate-Smart Agriculture (CSA) project, CSA farmers group (CFMG) were formed in all the CSA pilot sites focused to up scaling and sustainability of CSA activities</li> <li>➤</li> </ul>	<p>The activities on CSA is designed to cater to the Bhutanese farmers–youths, women and men, in areas of water resource protection, water use management, vulnerability assessments, water harvesting, soil moisture conservation, crops diversification, and promotion of climate resilient varieties.</p>

	Market Supply chain inputs and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Market Exploration Tour to North East India</li> </ul>	
	Civil Society voice for change reform and standards for basin wide management	Training of Water Users' Association committee (WUAC) and general awareness on water use to the Water Users Association (WUA)	
	Technical partnerships between local and regional agencies and authorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Establishing a Payment for Environmental Services (PES) Scheme on the Protection of Drinking Water Source in Chukha Dzongkhag</li> <li>➤</li> </ul>	
<b>SDPI</b>	Enabling national and subnational policy and regulatory environment for sustainable agricultural knowledge and extension service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ held a talk show on the nexus of water, food and energy crisis, through SDTV</li> <li>➤ worked to research on the matters of agricultural loans, cost of irrigation structures and its recovery at the Federal level and in the province of Punjab</li> <li>➤ carried out CSO and media mapping exercise</li> <li>➤ Published articles, papers and organised events on the topic of climate change</li> </ul>	
<b>CRRID</b>	Enabling national and subnational policy and regulatory environment for sustainable agricultural knowledge and extension service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Published three policy briefs - Remodelling Water Use in Indian Punjab for Efficiency and Sustainability</li> <li>➤ Agriculture Development in Punjab: Problems and Prospects,</li> <li>➤ Energy Sector in Indian Punjab: Current Issues, Problems and Future Vision (Sub-National Perspective)</li> </ul>	<p>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.</p> <p>The continuous exposure to smoke in kitchen arising from traditional methods of fire effects health of women seriously.</p> <p>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</p>

			livelihood generally the activity undertaken by women folk
<b>US</b>	Enabling (National and Subnational) policy and regulatory environment for IWRM	➤ Research note on "Water management policy and regulation in Bangladesh	
	Knowledge base quantification of water needs in agriculture	➤ Data collection for "Quantifying water needs (usage) in agriculture"	

## 5. SDIP Snapshot Exercise

5.1 Portfolio M&E seeks to build understanding and learning around development and organisational outcomes resulting from the SDIP in the short, medium and longer term. **Developmental outcomes** refers to the contribution to change across the three impact areas in the major river basin **and organizational Outcome** is the contribution to strengthening of the capacity of portfolio partner organization (organizational improvement). In addition, the contribution to DFAT as a participating partner in SDIP working differently and more efficiently through an explicit partnering approach will also be looked into.

5.2 The snapshot exercise is conducted to capture the ‘big picture’ state of play regarding trans boundary cooperation in water security, agriculture productivity improvement and energy security in a way that is ‘good enough’ for the purposes of the SDIP. . It will reflect the status, trends and dynamic [*pace and extent*] of change across the three basins in which the portfolio operates.

5.3 Annual Snapshots will enable (a) an annual assessment of the conditions for change in which SDIP is operating in conjunction with the SDIP Annual Dialogue, and (b) an assessment of portfolio contribution to a wider dynamic of change in conjunction with SDIP Change Pathways. Other M&E processes (including partner reports, annual dialogue, and change pathways) will enable us to make an assessment of SDIP contribution to that wider change.

## **6. Basin wise Result Framework Document Discussion**

6.1 The strategic partners were arranged into groups based on their location to undertake a basin wise result framework discussion. The objective of this activity was to understand the level of activity and momentum of change in transboundary cooperation in agriculture, water and energy, whether or not there is some engagement by SDIP strategic partners and if there is engagement, what is the expected outcome. The discussion yielded the hot happenings at political economy with respect to agriculture, water and energy in three basins. The key outcomes of the discussion are:

6.2 In the Brahmaputra basin, the major happenings observed by the group were MoU on seed trade between signed between National Seed Association, India and Bangladesh Seed Association, tripartite protocol of cooperation on release of varieties, energy and solar energy business models is one area in which partners can intervene. With regard to water domain, there is a strong CSO voice against big hydropower projects whereas micro and mini hydels are in demand. Payment for environmental service and transboundary water sharing is another area where bilateral cooperation can be explored.

6.3 Across the Indus basin, the potential areas of cooperation observed in the agricultural domain were related to knowledge sharing of sustainable agricultural practices and tradable commodities between India and Pakistan. Transboundary water resource management and technologies to increase water use efficiency were the areas of intervention identified in the water domain. Issues related to subsidised electricity in agriculture and transboundary energy sharing were identified in the energy domain. Subsequently, as a solution, knowledge sharing on successful business models on micro hydels and other renewables were proposed.

6.4 The MoU on seed trade between signed between National Seed Association, India and Bangladesh Seed Association, tripartite protocol of cooperation on release of varieties were among the hot happenings in the Ganges basin as well. The policy of Indian government to include 30% stress tolerant varieties through various schemes and the initiative to give subsidies to private companies to develop seeds will attract more private players in seed industry. Enactment of ground water policy in Uttar Pradesh and the initiative of Nepal and Indian government to share information on flood water have been the major developments in water domain. With regard to energy, the 500 MW grid connections between India and Bangladesh, solar and micro hydel business models were the other two areas where a lot of attention has been driven.

### **7.0 Key takeaways**

- The partnership and project must put greater emphasis on transboundary cooperation, not only among the countries, but also among the SDIP partners.
- Any possibility of duplication of activities may be avoided and possibilities of collaboration must be explored and fostered.

- Transboundary cooperation should be seen in the widest sense. It is not just limited to trade initiatives or investments, but also includes strong components of knowledge sharing and creating joint information base.
- The partnership could play a crucial role in the knowledge sharing through collaborative initiatives across the borders.
- Case studies on sustainable agriculture practices identified by each partner at local level need to be documented and shared with partners across border.
- If the joint work of CUTS and its partners could make a small but significant contribution to at least one domain of change in each of the three pillars of agriculture, water and energy that would be substantial.
- Through our work, keeping with SDIP & DFAT's emphasis, we will factor in gender and social exclusion dimension.