

'Capability'

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www.cuts-international.org

Established in 1984, Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) is a non-profit, non-governmental organisation working on public interest issues. The following describes the Capabilities, which CUTS has developed over these 20+ years.

VISION

Consumer sovereignty in the framework of social justice and equality, within and across borders

PROGRAMME AREAS

- Consumer Protection
- International Trade & Development
- Competition, Investment & Economic Regulation
- Human Development
- Consumer Safety

RESOURCES

- Five dedicated programme centres and six resource centres: seven in India: three in Jaipur, one in Calcutta, and one each in Chittorgarh and Delhi, with a representative in Mumbai; two in Africa: Lusaka, Zambia and Nairobi, Kenya; one in London, UK and one in Hanoi, Vietnam.
- Approximately 20,000 sq. ft. of office space with necessary equipment for efficient functioning and timely delivery
- About 140 staff with great diversity, experience and dedication
- A well-developed and reader-friendly web site: www.cuts-international.org, and others in programme centres and resource centres.
- In-house editorial and desk top publishing
- Affiliated to important national committees and a number of international organisations
- Relevant and diverse Advisory Committees guide each programme centre

ATTRIBUTES & VALUES

- Adopting a centrist approach through research and advocacy
- Marrying the 'hot' of advocacy with the 'cold' of research
- Ensuring outcomes, rather than just outputs
- Focusing on areas where a vacuum exists
- Consistency and sustainability are the guiding principles
- Carved a niche for itself in research, advocacy and networking on several issues of public interest
- Working simultaneously at the grassroots to the international level, which helps in conducting policy advocacy in a coherent manner

OUTREACH

- Publishing a wide spectrum of material for information dissemination for semi-literates to professionals in a reader-friendly format ranging from a wall newspaper to research reports
- Each programme centre has a flagship product: a periodic newsletter covering relevant issues
- Have created sustainable networks from villages in India to the state, national, regional and international levels
- Extremely adept at organising campaigns, meetings and seminars from the village level comprising 5-6 participants to the international level with over 350 participants

*CUTS is one of the very few consumer organisations in the country working from grassroots to international level: **Bhairon Singh Shekhawat**, Vice-President of India*

Consumer Protection



CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training

www.cuts-international.org/CART.htm

MISSION

To enable people, in particular women, to achieve their right to basic needs and sustainable development through a strong consumer movement

RESOURCES

- A Centre in Jaipur with experienced staff and working in conjunction with other programme and resource centres at Calcutta, Chittorgarh, Mumbai and Delhi
- Affiliated to important national committees and to a number of international organisations
- An advisory board of 8 members having diverse background and knowledge

PROGRAMME AREAS

Consumer Action

- Advocated for the enactment and strengthening of Consumer Protection Act (COPRA) of India, 1986 and developed a draft National Consumer Policy at the request of Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Government of India

Accountability and Budget Analysis

- Worked on state accountability and citizen empowerment through budget analysis on government expenditure for children, which resulted in valuable contributions to the Rajasthan State Child Policy

Regulatory Reforms

- Have developed a special niche in the power sector reforms process, particularly in Rajasthan

Investor Education and Protection

- Educating investors (particularly small investors) through workshops

Good Governance

- Initiated capacity building of grassroots social action groups to promote good governance in Rajasthan through social audit of public expenditure and other means

OUTREACH

Publications

- *Gram Gadar* (Village Revolution): a monthly wall newspaper and rural development communication initiative being published in Hindi since 1983
- *Panchva Stambh* (5th Estate): a Hindi quarterly on accountability, reforms and governance
- *State of the Indian Consumer* and *State of Consumers in Rajasthan* analyses consumer issues
- Several occasional and bi-lingual (Hindi and English) publications, guides and training manuals for grassroot groups

Networking

- Vast networking in Rajasthan with over 500 voluntary organisations and grassroot groups
- Campaigned successfully on a wide spectrum of public interest issues

Event Management

- Organising several meetings/seminars at block, district and state levels

FUTURE PLANS

- Deepen work on good governance, particularly social audit
- Campaign on right to opportunities and right to information
- Strengthening the consumer movement

*It confirmed my view that often the simple lack of awareness lies at the root of so much misery. Furthermore, the impact and success of a relatively simple publication like this one in enriching and changing the lives of many villagers gives us new impetus to try to improve the lives of the neediest in our daily work – however remote it may seem at first sight: observed **Rubens Ricupero**, Secretary-General of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development on seeing *Gram Gadar**



MISSION

Pursuing economic equity and social justice within and across borders by persuading governments and empowering people

RESOURCES

- Headquartered at Jaipur, India with 20 experienced research and programme staff
- Affiliated to important international organisations and to a number of national committees
- An international advisory board comprising of 15 members from diverse backgrounds
- A well-developed and reader-friendly web site: www.cuts-citee.org
- In-house editorial and desk-top publishing

PROGRAMME AREAS

WTO Issues

- Conducting network-based research and advocacy for raising a range of civil society concerns, views and perspectives on the Doha Round of WTO negotiations

Regional Economic Cooperation

- Working on various aspects of South-South and South-North economic and trade cooperation

Developmental Issues

- Implementing a number of network-based and outreach-oriented projects on trade and poverty, trade and environment, and institutions and pro-poor growth

Capacity Building

Transferring experiences from South Asia to other parts of the world, especially in Africa and South East Asia by sharing the know-how and do-how of capacity building

Sustainable Production & Consumption

- Conducting a policy audit in India of Section G (guidelines for sustainable consumption) of the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection and the Johannesburg (Rio+10) Plan of Implementation
- Instrumental in launching the Indian Ecomark Scheme in 1991 and promoting awareness in India

OUTREACH

- *Economicity*: a bi-monthly e-newsletter on WTO Issues, Regional Economic Cooperation and Developmental Issues, which is sent out to more than 5,000 interested readers worldwide
- Monthly e-newsletters on the above-stated programme areas
- Research reports, briefing papers, monographs and viewpoint papers are regularly published and disseminated
- Network-based activities with more than 60 research institutions and non-governmental organisations all over the world
- Active participation in all WTO Ministerial Conferences and meetings and conferences of inter-governmental organisations like UNCTAD, OECD
- Catalysed the formation of a number of networks, such as Kathmandu-based South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics & Environment (SAWTEE), and the Geneva-based International Centre for Trade and Sustainable Development
- Only and the first NGO in the official Indian delegation to the WTO Ministerial Conference in Hong Kong

EVENT MANAGEMENT

- Organised a huge number of seminars and conferences all over the world with clearly articulated outputs and outcomes

CUTS has developed from a modest NGO, addressing mainly domestic consumer issues, to a pre-eminent position as an international NGO, dealing with issues relating to the world trading system and related issues... CUTS is now on the frontline of research and advocacy on global trade issues observed **Jagdish Bhagwati**, Professor of Economics & Political Science Columbia University, USA



CUTS Centre for Competition, Investment & Economic Regulation

www.cuts-ccier.org

MISSION

Promoting fair markets to enhance consumer welfare and economic development

RESOURCES

- A Centre in Jaipur with experienced research and programme staff.
- Affiliated to various international/national organisations
- Guided by an international advisory board comprising 14 members from diverse backgrounds

PROGRAMME AREAS

Competition Policy & Law

- Closely involved with developing the new competition regime in India, i.e, the Competition Act of India, 2002 and its amendment (which is currently in progress).
- Assisted several developing world competition authorities (Ethiopia, Kenya, Vietnam and Zambia) in enhancing their capacities on competition administration.
- Developed a unique bottom up approach '7-Up Model' to work on competition issues in the developing world (recognised by OECD DAC)

Economic Regulation

- Undertaken research to understand regulatory processes and institutions in various developing and developed countries and draw 'good practices'.
- Established a Parliamentarians Forum on Economic Policy Issues (PARFORE) in India to brief Parliamentarians on specific regulatory issues on a regular basis.

Investment Climate

- Undertaken research on FDI and development.
- UNCTAD identified CUTS as a strategic partner on Investment Issues.
- Conducted research and advocacy on UN Code of Conduct for TNCs and the OECD Guidelines for MNEs.

Consumer Policy

- Drafted a Consumer Protection Regime for Royal Government of Bhutan on request
- Advised the Government of South Africa in drafting a consumer protection law
- Undertaking Consumer Impact Assessment (CIA) to assess impact of sectoral policies on consumers in India.

OUTREACH

Publications

- *ReguLetter*: the flagship quarterly newsletter on competition and regulatory issues posted to over 2000 people across the globe.
- *PolicyWatch*: quarterly dealing with economic policy issues in India
- *FunComp Forum & Competition Online Forum*: electronic list-serves used to interact with diverse stakeholders on competition and regulatory affairs in India and around the world, respectively.

Networking

- Created a one-of-its-kind network: International Network of Civil Society Organisations on Competition (INCSOC, www.incsoc.net) with members from over 50 countries
- Working with over 70 research institutions/organisations worldwide.

Event Management

- Organised a large number of meetings and conferences in various parts of the world

FUTURE PLANS

- Develop CUTS Institute for Regulation and Competition as a dedicated training facility on competition policy; economic regulation and commercial diplomacy.
- Strengthen activities on competition and economic regulation and investment issues being undertaken by CUTS Hanoi Resource Centre.
- Develop initiatives in West Africa, MENA, Central Asia and Latin America.

*I realised that CUTS was well informed, well connected in India, influential and a formidable advocate for competition and consumer policy. It needs to get the politician's ear to move its agenda forward: **Frederic Jennv**. Judge. Cour de Cassation. Paris*

Human Development



CUTS Centre for Human Development

www.cuts-international.org/CHD.htm

MISSION

To be an innovative centre for strategic interventions to raise the living standards of people

RESOURCES

- A Centre in Chittorgarh with programme and field staff and working in over 300 villages in several districts of Rajasthan
- Affiliated to important state and national organisations and district committees
- An advisory board comprising 10 members (of which 40 percent are women) from related fields

PROGRAMME AREAS

Empowering Women and Children

- Conducted community-based action projects over a decade to improve the status of women
- Development of *Bal Panchayats* (children's assemblies) working on issues related to health, hygiene, education, etc

Natural Resource Management

- Initiated community-based biodiversity conservation practices through restoration of decrepit water bodies, revitalisation of degraded lands and protection of endangered species of trees

Good Governance

- Mobilising people to take effective part in *Panchayati Raj* (local self-governance institution)

Reproductive and Child Health

- Working to contain the high infant mortality and pre- and post-natal death

rates in rural areas of Chittorgarh and adjoining districts

OUTREACH

Publications

- *Aage Badhnon Hossi* (Women Marching Ahead): a quarterly newsletter in Hindi
- Several guides and reports in Hindi for dissemination of vital information for rural folks

Networking

- Established network comprising community leaders, traditional healers and birth attendants, social action committees, etc where 2,500 people are actively associated
- Formed a network of NGOs called Manav Vikas Sajha Manch (Joint Forum on Human Development)
- Help establish over 100 Self Help Groups (SHG) and assisting them on sustaining basis

Event Management

- Organising meetings from the grassroots levels (*Chaupal Baithaks*: Village Meetings) to block, district and state level
- Organising training programmes for multiple stakeholders

FUTURE PLANS

- Deepening the work on mobilisation of people for active participation in *Panchayati Raj*
- Strengthening the SHG movement to encompass micro-credit and consumer issues

CUTS has been generating awareness among the villagers about various developments through its literature and has been taking forward their problems to the Central and State Governments: C. P. Joshi, Former Minister for Planning and Programme Implementation, Rajasthan

Consumer Safety



CUTS Safety Watch

www.cuts-international.org/cuts-crc.htm

MISSION

To achieve for the citizens the right to be protected against unsafe goods, services and environment

RESOURCES

- A Centre in Calcutta with research and programme staff and working in association with various programme and resource centres at Jaipur and Delhi
- An advisory board comprising 7 experts from diverse fields

PROGRAMME AREAS

Road Safety

- The National Road Safety Policy in 1993 was developed on the basis of a CUTS study on road safety in 1990
- Nominated to the National Road Safety Council twice and to the Ministerial Committee on the National Road Safety Policy
- Initiated a campaign on Safe Public Transportation in Rajasthan and West Bengal
- Conducting action-oriented research on road safety and its linkage with national development

Safety-related Policy Work

- Monitoring the implementation of safety-related policies with respect to services like transportation, water

OUTREACH

Publications

- Published several books, monographs, briefing papers, guides, articles for generating awareness on consumer safety

Networking

- Established a network of Indian voluntary organisations on consumer safety

Event Management

- Organised several awareness generation workshops on consumer safety

FUTURE PLANS

- Publish a series of publications: *Caveat Emptor* (Buyers Beware). The first one entitled, *How To Survive As A Consumer* deals with consumer protection issues. The second one, *Is It Really Safe?* examines consumer safety issues. The third in the series, *Deadly Profits* will look at how businesses give precedence to profits (profiteering) before human safety, knowing that their action will cause harm.
- Conduct an audit of safety-related policies of public utilities
- Conduct a feasibility study of establishing the National Safety Commission of India, including drafting a National Consumer Safety Policy
- Generate better awareness among the consumers at large on safety-related issues

By generating awareness on consumer safety issues, CUTS is performing a very useful task of in making the consumers aware of the problems they face in certain matters, which endanger safety: H. D. Shourie, President, Common Cause, New Delhi, India