

CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CART)

Annual Report

Activities from April 1, 2013 to March 31, 2014

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1. A brief background of the Centre

CUTS was established in the year 1984 with the mandate of pursuing the cause of common consumers. With growth of the organisation, later the responsibility of moving forward with the inherited agenda of CUTS, i.e. consumer protection was handed over to CART, which was established in 1996. The programmes of the Centre are primarily aimed at generating awareness, creating a more responsible society and encouraging changes at the policy level by advocating with the government machinery and sensitising it to its issues of concern to the common man. The Centre has spearheaded several campaigns and pioneered consumer empowerment. It has created and trained over 1200 activists and helped establish over 300 independent groups in Rajasthan and elsewhere. Persistently, CART is having more than 1000 organizations in its network. Its mission is *'to enable people, particularly the poor and the marginalised, to achieve their rights to basic needs, sustainable development and good governance through a strong consumer movement'*.

2. Advisory Board

The Centre carries its activities under the guidance of an advisory board. The following is the list of the advisory board. This list was revised last year and now with few new members joining and some old members moving out:

Members	
	1. P N Bhandari, Chairperson of the Advisory Board IAS (Retd.) former Chairman, Rajasthan State Electricity Board (RSEB), Jaipur.
	2. Padma Bhushan V.S. Vyas, Professor Emeritus, IDS, Jaipur
	3. Justice V.S. Dave, Former Judge, Rajasthan High Court, Jaipur
	4. Sunny Sebastian, Vice-Chancellor, Harideo Joshi University of Journalism and Mass Communication, Jaipur
	5. Anita Mathur, Social Activist, Jaipur
	6. Madhavi Joshi, Centre for Environment Education (CEE), Ahmedabad
	7. Dr. Gopakumar K Thampi, Consultant, Partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF)
	8. Prof. K.B. Kothari, Managing Trustee, 'Pratham Rajasthan', Jaipur
	9. Shabnam Aziz, Regional Manager, Action Aid, Jaipur
	10. Rajendra Prasad Bora, Freelance Journalist, Jaipur

3. Programmatic Areas of the Centre

- Consumer Empowerment
- Good Governance
- Sustainable Development

4. Projects (including main activities conducted during the period) under implementation

(covering the period 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014)

- **Project: National Environmental Awareness Campaign, R. R. A for Rajasthan.**

Support: Ministry of Environment and Forest, GoI.

Project Period: April 2013-March 2014.

Theme: Biodiversity Conservation.

Objective: To create awareness on issues related to biodiversity and taking appropriate action.

Main activities conducted during the reporting period:

1. CUTS re-appointment

CUTS was re-appointed as the RRA for Rajasthan for 2013-14 as well. Received the official communication from DoEF, GoI in this regard.

2. Pre-proposal workshops

This year, the process of NEAC was initiated in the month of July on the theme 'Biodiversity Conservation'. A total of five divisional levels pre-proposal workshops were organized from 31st July to 5th August, 2013 covering all the 33 districts of Rajasthan with participation of 181 organisations.

3. Number of applications

CUTS received a total of 353 proposals this year. The scrutiny of the proposal by CoE (Centre of Excellence) appointed by the MoEF had taken place on September 12-13, 2013. Ms. Rashmi Gangwar from CEE, Uttarakhand visited CART and did the scrutiny. The Regional Committee Meeting (RCM) was held in Delhi from August 23-27, 2013. First time, CUTS was made a special invitee in the RC meeting. Out of the finalized 256 proposals both by RRA and COE, got the sanction of 250 proposals.

4. Financials

The long pending amount Rs. 1, 47,861/- (40% RRA fee and cost of pre-proposal workshop of 2009-10) and Rs. 1, 25,520/- (40% of RRA fee & cost of pre-proposal workshop of 2012-13) was received on 25th October, 2013. The disbursements grant Rs. 27, 39,000/- for 2013-14 was received on November 16, 2013.

5. Post-proposals

The post proposal workshop under NEAC 2013-14 was held on December 27, 2013. About 170 participants attended the workshop. Dr. Surendra Singh Choudhary, Chairmen, Rajasthan State Biodiversity Board was the Chief Guest. He delivered lecture on biodiversity conservation. CART team coordinated and attended the workshop. Drafts/Cheques (60%) were delivered by team to NGOs, who attended the workshop for organizing the NEAC activities.

6. Monitoring

After completion of the post-proposal workshop on December 27, 2013, a total 250 Drafts/Cheques were delivered to NGOs for conducting NEAC activities. A total of 30 monitoring visits were made by the team and the remaining monitoring visits were made by network partners and CUTS-CHD.

- **Project: Improving service delivery by urban local government in the city of Jaipur through enhanced civic engagement (My City).**

Support: The Asia Foundation (TAF)

Objective: Engaging community in the delivery of key urban services in the city of Jaipur.

Project Period: August 2012-August 2013 (phase I) and September 2013-September 2014 (phase II)

Main activities conducted during the reporting period:

1. CAG meetings:

All partner organisations conducted meetings of CAG members in their respective wards. Meetings were aimed to discuss the preparations of Interface Meetings and other project activities. In all eight meetings were organized in the month of April 2013.

2. First round of interface meeting:

First round of eight interface meetings were organised by the partner organisations in April-May 2013. Meetings were attended by the concerned councilor, officials from JMC, PHED, electricity dept., police, representatives of media, resident societies, CAG and community members.

3. Orientations of partner on PSI:

Format of PSI were discussed with partners, who were orientated about the process and were asked to finalize the schedule of field visits along with name of the CAG members in their concern ward. CAG members jointly with CUTS and partner organisations physically verified the conditions of selected JMC services and gave scores.

4. Field visits for public service index (PSI):

After orientation on PSI, field visits were conducted in all the targeted wards for the physical verifications of the selected JMC services.

5. Community meetings:

Partner organisations conducted seven community meetings in June 2013 in their respective wards. Meetings were attended by the councilors and JMC officials and interacted with the community members and responded their queries related to the local issues.

6. More community meetings:

As part of continues field activities, partner organisations conducted several round of community meetings in different areas of their respective wards in July 2013. Meetings were attended by the councilors and JMC officials and interacted with the community members and responded their queries related to the local issues.

7. Dissemination cum advocacy meeting on July 19, 2013:

Final dissemination cum advocacy meeting of MyCity project was organised on July 19, 2013 at Hotel Jaipur Palace to disseminate the key findings of MyCity project specially the CRC and PSI. Meeting was attended by the more than 80 participants including partner organisations, selected ward councilors, selected CAG members, JMC officials, and representatives of CSOs, electronic and print media. M L Mehta (President CUTS & Former Chief Secretary of Rajasthan), Dr. Shomikho Raha (Senior Advisor, The Asia foundation); Rajendra Borah (Senior Journalist) and Manish Pareek (Deputy Mayor, Jaipur Municipal Corporation) as special guest shared their views and responded to the findings.

8. Second round of interface meetings:

Seven second round of the interface meetings were organised by the partner organisations in July 2013. Councilors, officials from JMC, PHED, Electricity Dept., representatives of media, resident welfare societies, CAG and community members. Meetings were good in terms of participation of all stakeholders as well as the discussion upon ward specific issues. Ward specific data of PSI and CRS were presented in the meetings, which generated discussions among the participants. Service providers heard the issues and responded positively.

9. Partners meeting & presentation for CEO, JMC:

A partners meeting and an exclusive presentation of key findings to Mr. Jagroop Singh Yadav, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of JMC was specially organized on July 30, 2013. The purpose was to advocate with key officials of JMC for taking appropriate decisions to ameliorate the situation of services and amenities. After the presentation an evaluation of the project with the partners were done and strategies for sustaining the intervention beyond the project period was discussed in detail. The Hindu also given a very good coverage about the project interventions and findings titled 'Grey Areas in Pink City' on August 24, 2013.

10. Visit to Asia Foundation and meeting with country representative, August 13, 2013:

GC and MSS visited The Asia Foundations (TAF) office and met with Nick Langton, Country Representative and briefed him about the results achieved in the MyCity project supported by TAF. Nick was very glad to hear the outcomes of the project. GC & MSS also met with Shomikho Raha and discussed about the possible collaboration with various agencies on governance work.

11. Scoping visits and partners meet on November 27, 2013:

The 2nd phase project formally started from September 25, 2013. For the purpose of selecting new eight wards, a total eight scoping visits and consultation with various stakeholders were done. After finalization of new wards, all partner CSOs were called for a half day meeting. Objective of this meet was to meet all partners together and to discuss project strategy before moving to formal launch of project.

12. CSO consultation on December 10, 2013:

Under the project, CSO consultation was organised at the Maharani Plaza hotel on December 10, 2013 in which around 30 representatives of CSOs took part. AK Ojha of CDC, PN Mandola of LSSS, Anshu Singh of PRIA was main speakers, who talked about their work under urban governance and shared their experiences. Other participating CSOs also shared their views and experiences. Meeting was helpful in getting the feedback from different organisations for going ahead in MyCity project as well as helpful for participants to learn from the speakers and other CSOs.

13. Inception meeting on December 19, 2013:

Inception meeting of the MyCity Phase-2 was organised on December 19, 2013 at Hotel Jaipur Palace, which was attended by more than 60 participants. Jyoti Khandelwal, Mayor JMC as chief guest of the programme delivered inaugural address and appreciated CUTS efforts in MyCity intervention. Manish Pareek, Deputy Mayor; Justice VS Dave, Chairman, Supreme Court Empowered Committee also presented their views as special guest.

14. MoA signing with partner CSOs:

On December 30, 2013 formal signing of MoA took place, where partner organisations representative joined and signed MoA.

15. Community meetings:

As per time line given, partner organisations started their activities in the field. As part of first field activity, a total seventeen community meetings got conducted.

16. Councilors' consultation on February 17, 2014:

A Councilors' consultation meeting was organised on February 17 at Jaipur Palace with the objective of building rapport with JMC councilors as well as to take their feedback on MyCity intervention. Nine councilors of JMC took active part in the consultation and shared their views. Experience and issues related to poor service delivery. Manish Pareek, Deputy Mayor of JMC also took part in consultation and address the participants. All councilors assured to provide all necessary support for project activities. Other than Councilors, representative of all CSO partners participated in consultation.

17. Orientation of surveyors, March 5, 2014:

The orientation of surveyors was organised on March 5 at Maharani Plaza with the objective of providing training to the surveyors associated with the NGO partners in the selected wards to conduct the survey and get the feedback of the citizens to prepare Citizen Report Card (CRC). Twenty participants including surveyors participated in the orientation activity. They were provided with the necessary orientation regarding objective, process and expected outcomes of the survey.

- **Project: Campaign on Safer and more Sustainable Food for all under Green Action Fund 2013**

Support: CCC's project supported by Swedish Society for Nature Conservation and Consumers International.

Objective: To conduct an awareness campaign in ten selected *Gram Panchayats* of Sambhar block of Jaipur district

Project Period: September-October 2013

Main activities conducted during the reporting period:

1. Signing of MoU:

CUTS CART signed MoU on 3rd September, 2013 with Consumer Coordination Council (CCC), New Delhi to implement the Green Action Fund campaign supported by Consumers International (CI) and Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC). The proposed intervention was to conduct an awareness campaign in 10 selected *Gram Panchayats* on the subject '*Safer and More Sustainable Food for All*'

2. Scoping visit:

In this context, project team made a scoping visit to *Sambhar* block of Jaipur on August 31, 2013. Atma Ram of ATMA *Sansthan* had coordinated the visit and arranged meetings with various stakeholders. The main purpose of the visit was to visit officials of Shri Karan Narendra Agriculture University (SKN Agriculture University), Jobner for discussion about possible support to the campaign in terms of resource persons and other available resources for the workshops and to identify target *Gram Panchayats* and interacted with *Sarpanchs* and other concerned persons to discuss possibilities of organizing campaign in their *Gram Panchayats*.

3. Awareness camps:

A total nine sensitization meetings were conducted in the month of September, 2013 at various targeted gram panchayats with total participation of 550 and a very solid team of resource persons from Agriculture University and other experts.

4. Gram panchayat level workshop on October 03, 2013:

The awareness campaign at the *Gram Panchayats* on the subject '*Safer and More Sustainable Food for All*' continued in the month of October. The team attended a workshop in *Dehra Gram Panchayat, Sambhar* on Oct 03, 13. More than 50 participants attended the meeting. Dr. Shri Ram Sharma & Dr. J P Yadav of SKN Agriculture University, Jobner facilitated session on organic farming as resource persons.

5. Block level consultation workshop on October 10, 2013:

Under the campaign last event was the block level consultation, which was organised at Auditorium of SKN Agriculture University on October 10, 2013. It was attended by more than 70 participants including farmers, PRI members, students, media and other villagers. Atma Ram from ATMA *Sansthan* welcomed the participants. Dr. N.S. Rathore, Vice Chancellor of the University delivered key address, whereas Dr. Sangram Singh, Head of the Department; Dr. Shri Ram Sharma, Dr. J P Yadav, Dr. S. S. Yadav addressed the audience.

- **Project: Community Monitoring of Roads under PMGSY in partnership with PAC**

Support: PAC and supported by National Rural Roads Development Authority (NRRDA), Bangalore.

Objective: Monitoring of the 30 selected roads (completed and under construction) in Jaipur and Tonk districts constructed under '*Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY)*'

Project Period: June 2013-March 2014

Main activities conducted during the reporting period:

1. Signing of MoU:

The MoU of the project for PMGSY road monitoring project with PAC, was signed on May 22, 2013. A list of 30 roads in the category of completed and work in progress was finalized in consultation with the local NGOs and PWD officials of Jaipur and Tonk districts. A total of 90 members were identified to be part of the Community Monitoring and Audit Teams (CMATs) for 30 roads, three from each road were selected in consultation with the local partnering NGOs.

2. Training for CMATs, September 3-4 & 6-7, 2013:

Training for CMATs was organized from September 04-07, 2013 at hotel Maharani Plaza. The training was organized in two batches i.e. September 04-05, 2013 (First Batch) & September 06-07, 2013 (Second batch). The introduction to PMGSY and the status of road construction in Rajasthan was given by Akhilesh Gupta, Assistant Engineer, PMGSY and R.K Sharma, Assistant Engineer PMGSY. A team consisting of 4 members from PAC, Bangalore provided technical knowledge to the participants on different tools used for testing the quality of roads.

3. Monitoring visits:

After the training, the monitoring of all the 30 roads (15 completed and 15 ongoing) started from September 23, 2013 onwards. There were in all nine trainings for CMATs in the month of October 2013.

4. Checking of data:

After the successful completion of monitoring of all the roads, the dully filled monitoring formats were submitted by the CMATs, which were later checked by the project team. The data entry process later started and got completed. The entered data for both the roads were sent to PAC for compilation.

- **Project: Insight Into Indian States (I3S)**

Support: UNDP, New Delhi

Objective: To generate an interactive, coherent and user friendly online web portal at national level through research, documentation and highlighting the successful as well as not so successful practices, thus ensuring cross learnings from the practices to enable policymakers to identify and acquire new skills, developmental activities and effective implementation of current programmes/schemes. Also, to enable States to take inspirations and learn lessons from each other by way of intelligent discussions to enhance their growth rates.

Project Period: October 2013-September 2014

Main activities conducted during the reporting period:

1. Project formulation and finalization:

After rounds of discussions, it was agreed that the project would be approved under the Micro Capital Grant (MCG) covering 4 states, focusing only the area of rural development. As per the discussions the draft proposal was finalized and finally submitted to UNDP on Aug 23rd, 2013 for consideration. The finalised states are Assam, Odisha, Karnataka & Rajasthan.

2. Signing of grant agreement & commencement of the project:

The project formally started from Oct 01, 2013 with a period of one year and with a budget of Rs.70, 27,000. The duly signed MoA was received from UNDP on October 1 and the same was counter signed and returned on the same day. The planned activities started in the month of October.

3. Scoping and preparatory visits:

After forming the project management team, preparation of OSN, the scoping and preparatory visits started from the third week of October as per the following schedule to all the four states. Other than meeting with the identified state partner organisation, making a presentation about the project, signing of MoA, finalising the state project officer, the team also visited key stakeholders in each of the states in October 2013.

4. Meetings with key stakeholders in Rajasthan:

- GC & MSS visited the Government secretariat and had meeting with C.S. Rajan, Additional Chief Secretary, Rural Development and Kuldeep Ranka, Secretary, Rural Development on Oct. 8th, 2013 and briefed about I3S project.

- MSS & APT visited Office of SIRD & NIRD on October 9, 2013 and met with senior professors and briefed them about the I3S project. APT again visited SIRD office on October 22, 2013 and had meeting with Mr. Madhu Sudan Sharma, Additional Director SIRD.
- GC along with MSS & APT visited NABARD office on October 14, 2013, and met with Mr. Jiji Mammen, CGM briefed him about the I3S project.
- GC & MSS visited the residence of Mr. M.L. Mehta and met with him to take suggestions regarding I3S project on Oct. 15, 2013
- APT visited office of Rajasthan Skill and Livelihood Development Corporation (RSLDC), on October 23, 2013 and met with Mr. Rajesh Yadav (IAS), Managing Director and some of the senior staff members who are dealing with livelihood activities.
- On October 31, 2013, APT visited the office of *Ajeevika* and Rural Non-Farm Development Agency (RUDA) and had meeting with Mr. Subir Kumar, (IAS) Mission Director *Ajeevika* and Mrs. Nilima Jauhari (IAS), Chairman and Managing Director RUDA.

5. Signing of the MoA with Shanato Software:

The MoA with the Shanato Software was signed on October 31 for web portal designing, which is one of main components of the project. 50% advance of Rs. 1, 05,000/- also was paid to it.

6. Partners' meet in Jaipur on November 15, 2013:

The meeting of the Project Management Team (PMT) with the State Project Officers (SPOs) was held in Jaipur on November 15, 2013. In addition to PMT (GC, MSS, OPA, ADS & JSS) and Rajasthan SPO (APT), SPOs Dr. S. Sreedharan (PAC, Bangalore), Seema Gupta (CYSD, Bhubaneswar) & Monjit Borthakur (OKDISCD, Guwahati) attended the meeting. After introductory remarks by GC, MSS presented overview of the project. All Four SPOs also made presentations about their organisations as well scenario of RNF sector in the state. Guest speakers Narendra S. Sisodia, Chairman, Centre for Micro Finance and Rajesh Jain, Vice President, ACCESS Development Services, spoke about RNFS and shared same cases as well Neetu Purohit, Associate Professor, IIHMR talked about the research methodology. Discussion took place on the future strategy, research methodology and about the preparations of state inception meetings.

7. I3S: Rajasthan:

After the first round scoping visits to all the concerned stakeholders and departments, collected some information's necessary for presenting the state scenario. In the partner meet held on November 15, 2013, APT presented the Rajasthan status.

8. State Inceptions cum Launch Meetings:

The inception meetings were held in all the four states, Assam (2013.12.03), Karnataka (2013.12.05), Odisha (2013.12.10) and Rajasthan (2013.12.12).

9. I3S: Rajasthan-Inception meeting

After the first round of scoping visit for mapping out the stakeholders, the next scheduled activity was the inception workshop, which was held on December 12, 2013 at Rajasthan. For the preparations of the same, several visits were made to the departments and organisations for extending invitations. In the Inception meeting, around 60 stakeholders including Mr. Subir Kumar, IAS, Mission Director, SRLM who was the Chief guest of the event; Mrs. Jyotsana Bharadwaj, NRLM Training In-charge, SIRD; Mr. Vijay Chaudhary Director, NIRD; Mrs. T.S Raji Gain, General Manager, NABARD, representatives from Rural Development Agency, SIDBI, Indian Institute of Crafts and Design, Entrepreneurship and Development Management Institute, Jaipur, Department of Industry, prominent budget and policy research institute of the state and prominent NGO's working in the livelihood issues took part in the inception. UNDP representative Ms. Ritu Mathur, Programme Analyst from New Delhi Office briefed all about the rational of the project. The Panel discussion on Rural Non-Farm Sector (RNFS) Scenario in Rajasthan was chaired by former Chief Secretary and president, CUTS, Mr. M.L. Mehta. In the meeting electronic and print media also took part and the event was covered by both.

10. Action research:

Seven schemes were identified for the action research in each of the states in consultation with the state partners. After discussing within team, a format was developed for collecting initial data related to schemes. It is basic information about schemes which includes budget, entitlements, objectives, key activities and number of beneficiaries.

11. Quarterly newsletter of I3S:

After finalisation, 1000 copies of I3S newsletter have been printed and received. All state partners are provided hundred copies of newsletter through courier. PDF version will be uploaded on I3S website also.

12. Project Advisory Committee (PAC):

A Project Advisory Committee was formed having 11 subject experts in various disciplines from various states. M.L. Mehta would be the chairperson of the PAC. An introductory mail was sent to all the members on 1st March to introduce all the members with each other and seeking their comments on the action research methodology.

- **Project: Study to Analyse and Document the Knowledge Gaps for the Issues/Challenges Arising from Unfair and Misleading Advertising in India (consultancy work with GIZ)**

Support: GIZ, New Delhi

Objective: The purpose of this study is to objectively investigate the current context and undertake a situation analysis and document the knowledge gaps of issues resulting from unfair and misleading advertising in India and recommend a clear way forward on how to address the issue within the framework of Indian law.

Project Period: October 2013-November 2013

Main activities conducted during the reporting period:

1. Questionnaire preparations and data collections:

During the period, the desk research was mainly conducted. The team prepared questionnaires for different stakeholders and the same was sent out to various stakeholders for their response. The team comprising of AJS & DS also visited Delhi to interview few stakeholders and visited FICCI, CII, ASSOCHAM, IMAI, FSSAI, and TRAI and conducted interviews on 28-29 October, 2013.

2. Data compilation, case study preparations and report submission:

After incorporating the findings from the consumer survey and the inputs from the interviews, the study was completed, the report was prepared and the first draft of the same was submitted to GIZ on November 11, 2013. The report was forwarded to international experts for their comments. GIZ India team has accepted the report as final without any comments.

- **Project: ProOrganic (Promoting organic farming and consumption products in the state of Rajasthan)**

Support: Swedish Society for Nature Conservation, Sweden

Objective: Pilot project to promote organic consumption in the state of Rajasthan

Project Period: November 2013-October 2015

Main activities conducted during the reporting period:

1. Signing of MoU:

The MoU was formally signed on 31st October and the project came into force from 1st November 2013. In the beginning, the team was mainly involved in the preparations for the start of the projects.

2. Scoping visits and selection of partners:

To finalise the district partners and also to meet with the key stakeholders in each of the target districts, the following scoping visits were made by the project team in November 2013.

As a result of the scoping visit, the target *Gram Panchayats* were finalised and the following organisations were finalised as the District Partners.

- Dausa - *Hanuman Gram Vikas Samiti (HGVS)*
- Kota- *Ram Krishan Shikshan Sansthan*
- Udaipur- *Praytan Samiti*
- Chittorgarh & Pratapgarh: *CUTS Centre for Human Development (CHD)*
- Jaipur: *CUTS CART*

3. Partners Orientation:

The orientation for district project partners under the project was held on December 23, 2013. 8 representatives from the partner organisations and the ProOrganic project team attended the orientation. Detailed discussions were held about various activities under the project. Dr Sri Ram Sharma (Professor, SKN University, Jobner) and Mr Hari Mohan Gupta (CEO, Society for Organic Agriculture Movement, Jaipur) attended as external resource persons and presented various aspects of organic farming. The formal agreement with each of the district partners was also signed during the occasion.

4. Project Launch_ProOrganic:

The formal ProOrganic project launch was held on December 24, 2013, which is also the national consumer day in India. More than 80 representative from various stakeholder groups such as agriculture experts, farmers, members kisan clubs, officials from agriculture department, university, organic products sellers and media attended the launch meeting. Jiji Mammen, Chief General Manager, Rajasthan Regional Office of NABARD was the Chief Guest and he delivered the inaugural address and formally launched the project. George Cheriyan made the opening remarks detailing the context and relevance of organic farming in India. Amarjeet Singh, Project Coordinator, presented the project overview. Dr Sheetal Raj Sharma, Additional Director, Agriculture Dept. of Govt. of Rajasthan presented overview of organic farming covering all aspects, while Verdhaman Bapna, General Manager, Morarka Foundation; A K Gupta, Scientists and B D Yadav from Durgapura Krishi Farm delivered technical presentation stating importance of organic farming and ill effects of modern farming. On the occasion Shyam Singh Rajpurohit, Director, Food and Consumer Affairs Dept. of Govt. of Rajasthan was also present briefly.

5. Finalisation of the Bids for Field Research:

A total of 3 bids were received from various firms. After doing a comparative analysis of received 3 bids, negotiated with bidders and finalized the *Vimarsh* bid for doing the field research. The team had detailed discussions with *Vimarsh* representatives and MoU was signed on December 26, 2013. The detailed plan for the survey was also discussed.

6. Finalisation of Research Methodology and Questionnaires:

Project team provided inputs to *Vimarsh Development Solutions Pvt. Ltd* to finalize the action research methodology and questionnaires.

7. Training for Surveyors:

DS, AJS & DC attended a training programme held in Jaipur organized by *Vimarsh* for the team involved in survey in six districts of Rajasthan and attended few sessions on 4th February, 2014 as observers and provided necessary suggestions and inputs.

8. Field Testing of Survey Tools:

DS & DC visited two gram panchayats (Khora Shyamdas and Khora Bisal) of Amer Tehsil of Jaipur district for monitoring the test survey, which the team of *Vimarsh* started from 5th February 2014 along with coordinators of *Vimarsh*. Later, DS visited couple each of gram panchayats of Shahpura and Jamvaramgarh blocks to monitor ongoing survey work with coordinator Shailendra Dubey on 16-18 February and provided necessary suggestion to survey team.

9. Exposure Visit to Nawalgarh, Jhunjhunu District:

ProOrganic team visited various organic farms of Nawalgarh block of Jhunjhunu district in a trip organized by M R Morarka-GDC Rural Research Foundation, Jaipur on 20th February 2014. The team started from Jaipur at 7 am on 20th February 2014 reached at around 10.30 am as planned and met the two officials of Nawalgarh office, Mr Sanjay Vasishtha, Programme Manager and Mr Anil Saini, Programme Coordinator, who facilitated the full day visit by CUTS team. The two officials first provided all basic information/inputs about organic farming like nadep compost, NSDL compost, vermi compost, herbal spray, neem spray, dhatura spray, aak spray and vermi wash etc through live demos. Later the team showed us the basics of de-hydration system, down to earth, home farming system and drip irrigation system. After completing the ground information in the Morarka office, the team left for visits to three farms namely Beri, Kolra and Katrathal villages and experienced live organic farming demo of certified farmers.

10. Research:

The research agency completed the data collection and now in process of data analysis. Draft report is expected by April 08, 2014. District partners and team also monitored the data collection.

5. Special Endeavors & Highlights

(covering the period 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014)

- **GC's Visit to USA: BBL & Meetings with World Bank officials from 6-16 April, 2013.**

GC made a presentation on 'Social Accountability' in a BBL event in which he spoke about the history and relevance of governance work in South Asia, objectives, activities, definition and key characteristics of CoP, challenges and the way forward.

- **Participation in ACCI Annual Conference 2013**

GC was invited by American Council on Consumer Interests (ACCI) to the annual conference of ACCI 2013 held in Portland, Oregon on April 11-12. About 130 delegates from all over the US and from ten other countries, Australia, Belgium, Canada, China, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, and UK attended the conference. GC made a presentation on 'Financial Inclusion: A Key Driver for Inclusive Growth' in the concurrent session.

- **Rhoda Karpatkin Consumer Fellow Programme and International Lecture**

Rhoda Karpatkin Consumer International Award and Consumer Fellow Programme were established in 2005 to honour the pioneering work of Rhoda Karpatkin to enhance the welfare of consumers throughout the world. GC was recognised as the Rhoda Karpatkin International Consumer Fellow for 2013. GC delivered a lecture on the topic '*Consumer Protection Regimes around the World with Special Reference to the State of the Indian Consumer*'.

- **Training on Financial Consumer Protection for Group from Uzbekistan, May 13-16, 2013 at Jaipur.**

CUTS CART organized training on Financial Consumer Protection for a group of delegates from Uzbekistan, representing Central Bank of Uzbekistan, Federation of consumer protection societies of the Republic of Uzbekistan, National Association of Microfinance Institutions and German international cooperation (GIZ), Uzbekistan during May 13-16, 2013.

- **Supervision and Orientation Mission of the World Bank to ANSA Arab World**

Being part of the Supervision and Orientation Mission of the World Bank to ANSA Arab World, GC visited Cairo, Egypt from May 25-30, 2013. The purpose of the mission was to Overall supervision of program implementation entailing meeting with the ANSA Secretariat Board of Trustees and review of action plan prepared by ANSA-AW Board and CARE and to address the coordination issues and the accountability mechanisms they will have put in place.

- **CART & CUTS Retreats on June 11, 2013 at Jaipur**

CART mini retreat was held on June 11, 2013. Sunny Sebastian, Vice Chancellor, HDJ University of Mass Communication & Journalism and a Member, CART Advisory Committee participated in the retreat as a special guest and made the opening remarks. CUTS retreat was held in Jaipur in June, 2013.

- **Visit to Kampala (Uganda) under a partnership agreement with ACODE and visit to Nairobi (Kenya)**

GC and OPA visited Kampala, Uganda on 9-15 July, 2013 to facilitate a Methodology Training Course on Social Accountability Tools' with Advocate Coalition for Development and Environment (ACODE) as part of a consultancy agreement with ACODE. On completion of the training in Kampala, GC & OPA visited CUTS Nairobi office on July 13, 2013 to orient the team on SAc tools.

- **Meeting of the Advisory Committee of CUTS CART**

A meeting of the advisory committee of the CART was held on November 25, 2013 in the CUTS Conference hall chaired by P.N.Bhandari (Chairman). Members, Dr. Mrs Anita Mathur & Rajendra Bora attended the meeting. GC along with CART staff attended the meeting. GC made a presentation about the new developments (30th Anniversary lectures, 5th overseas center at Accra, New Campus etc.) at CUTS and the projects under implementation and detailed discussions also took place.

- **CUTS Seminar on 'Quality of Service and Access to Broadband Services in India' at New Delhi**

A seminar on 'Quality of service and access to broadband services in India' was organised by CUTS in partnership with Ford Foundation in Delhi on December 9, 2013. GC & AJS from CART participated in the seminar. GC made the opening remarks of the seminar and was one of the discussants in the session on 'Actions taken by Consumer Organisations and what has been the impact on the industry players'.

- **Workshop on National Consumer Policy organized by DoCA, GoI at IIPA, New Delhi**

Department of Consumer Affairs, Government of India in collaboration with the Centre for Consumer Studies, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi organised a Workshop on National Consumer Policy on December 10, 2013 in the Conference Hall, Indian Institute of Public Administration (IPA), IP Estate, Ring Road, New Delhi. Pankaj Agarawala, Chaired the meeting and made the opening address. From the Government side G Gurucharan GG (Addl Secretary, DoCA), Smt Chandralekha Malviya (Sr. Economic Adviser, DoCA), all Directors of DoCA and a large number of other staff, Sunil Soni (DG, BIS) other officials from BIS etc. attended the meeting. George Cheriyan attended the workshop and provided necessary comments on the draft NCP.

- **Rajiv Gandhi National Quality Awards for Year 2012**

Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) is operating the prestigious Rajiv Gandhi National Quality Awards. A team of four members of Regional Evaluation Committees one each from DGS&D, DGQA, STQC and BIS (as Coordinator) is constituted for fact-finding and evaluation visits of the short-listed applicants. CUTS was invited to be part of the evaluation team to look into one parameter for evaluation, namely 'Customer focused results'. Representing, CUTS AJS was part of the team on visit to Ericsson Kukas plant, which was held on December 11, 2013.

- **Distribution of Gram Gadar Award 2012**

Mr. Chandra Mouli Panchrangia of Jhunjhunu was given the award for 2012 for the best write ups on 'Violence against Women and their Safety' by the Chief Guest Mr Jiji Mammen, CGM, NABARD on the occasion of the launch of 'ProOrganic' project 24 December 2013.

- **Felicitation**

Prof. P.J. Kurian (Hon'ble Dy. Chairman, Rajya Sabha) felicitated George Cheriyan in a function held at YMCA, Tiruvalla, Kerala on January 7, 2014 for outstanding contribution to the welfare of the society, including the receipt of the Rhoda Karpatkin International Consumer Fellow Award from the American Council of Consumer Interests (ACCI) during the year 2013.

- **Knowledge for Development Partnership Conference', Sana'a, Yemen, March 4-6, 2014**

On invitation from Government of Yemen as an international speaker, GC participated in the 'Knowledge for Development Partnership Conference', Supporting Constructive Engagement between Government of Yemen and CSOs jointly organized by the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation of Yemen and the World Bank Group in Sana'a, Yemen from March 4-6, 2014. On the first day GC made a presentation on "Government-CSO Partnerships and Collaborations: Lessons from India" and facilitated a working group on 'Citizens Engagement in Service Delivery'. The Indian Ambassador also hosted a dinner for GC along with Dr. Mohammed Alhaweri, Deputy Minister for Planning and International Cooperation, Govt. of Yemen, Ms. Mariana T. Felicio & Ms. Najat Yamouri, The World Bank, Washington DC. As an outcome of the conference, it was decided to take India as model for Yemen to incorporate best practices.

- **Halaat Survey**

A Halaat Survey was conducted in the month of March 2014. A total of 427 Halaat Survey forms were received. After the data entry, survey report was prepared and press release was sent to both Hindi and English media. Both English and Hindi news dailies such as DNA, HT, *Dainik Navjyoti*, Daily news published the survey findings.

- **World Consumer Rights Day 2014: Interface Meeting with Telecom Service Provider's**

Globally World Consumer Rights Day is celebrated on 15 March, and this year theme was 'Fix Our Phone Rights'. On the occasion, CUTS organised an interface meeting in Jaipur to mark the occasion. The meeting was attended by 30 representatives of various consumer organisations and CSOs and representatives of service providers, BSNL, MTS, Tata Teleservices, Aircel, Idea Cellular and few media persons. GC chaired the meeting and DS made a presentation on the theme, which was followed by presentations by representatives of service provider's and discussions. About 30 delegates attended the interface meeting. DS along with other team members organized the meeting. In the morning an event was organized at Suraj Baal Niketan Senior Secondary School, Shastri School, Jaipur. DC & AKJ spoke in the event.

6. **Outreach** (covering the period 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014)

- Catalyst (four issue of quarterly e-newsletter)
- Gram Gadar (twelve issues of wall newspaper)
- Panchva Stambh (four issue of quarterly newsletter in Hindi)
- City Matters (four issue of quarterly newsletter)
- Consumer Dialogue (four issue of quarterly e-newsletter in English)
- My city (one issue of newsletter)
- ProOrganic leaflets (IEC material used in awareness generation)
- Top five moments of CUTS CART in the year 2013 was prepared and circulated all the three yahoo groups.
- CART brochure was updated and re-printed

7. **Staff Representations** (covering the period 1st April 2013 to 31st March 2014)

- GC & AJS attended a workshop on 'Unfair Commercial Practices and Misleading advertisements in India', on April 1-2, 2013 at New Delhi organised by GIZ.
- GC participated in the inauguration function of the International Centre for Environment Audit and Sustainable Development (iCED) under the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India in Jaipur on May 4, 2013.

- DC & ABS attended the CCC Northern Regional Consumer Convention held in Lucknow on May 5, 2013
- ABS & JSS actively participated in training programme on “Consumer Complaint Redressal and Mediation” from July 15-19, 2013 at New Delhi organized by IIPA, New Delhi and sponsored by the Consumer Coordination Council of India.
- MSS attended a lecture on August 3, 2013 on “Decline and Fall of the Civil Service in India- The role of the political Masters” organised by the SCM SPRI, Jaipur
- OPA attended a conference on ‘Innovation in Urban Governance’ co-hosted by the Ministry of Urban Development, the National Innovation Council and the World Bank held at *Vigyan Bhavan*, New Delhi during August 26-27, 2013.
- JSS attended National Workshop on Gender Responsive Budgeting in India held at Institute of Development Studies, Jaipur organized by BARC, Jaipur on August 30, 2013.
- DS and AKJ attended a workshop on e-mediation organised by CCC on September 13 and DS attended AGM of CCC on September 14, 2013.
- MSS along with OPA met with Parliamentary Standing Committee on Personnel, Public Grievances, Law and Justice, headed by Shri Shantaram Naik, MP, Rajya Sabha at Government Secretariat Jaipur and submitted CUTS memorandum on RTI amendment bill in person on October 10, 2013.
- GC & MSS visited the office of NFI on October 23, 2013 and met with the ED, Mr. Amitabh Behar and programme staff Gitanjali & Nidhi and discussed about possible collaboration.
- GC & MSS visited the World Bank, Country office in New Delhi and met with Roland Lomme on October 23, 2013 and updated him about the present governance work of CUTS and possible collaboration.
- ADS participated in a national convention on people’s expectations on budgetary priorities from the next union government organised by Centre for Budget Governance and Accountability (CBGA) under People’s Budget Initiatives (PBI) at India Islamic Cultural Centre (IICC), New Delhi on October 24-25, 2013.
- On October 25, 2013, DS attended a workshop as panelist in a session on ‘Problems of Consumers and in Consumer Protection with Emphasis in Rajasthan’ organised by R K Patni Govt. P G College, Kishangarh (Ajmer) in association with Indian Institute of Personal Administration, New Delhi.
- ADS represented CUTS in the consultation with representatives of CSOs on Urbanisation in the Rajasthan organised by the State Commission on Urbanization (SCU) on October 30, 2013 at the Office of the Chief Town Planner, Jaipur.
- OPA participated in an interaction held at North Block on October 30, 2013, which was part of the process of self-evaluation on UNCAC implementation in India where Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances and Pension sought views/comments from CSOs.
- ADS along with JSS attended a session on Global Reporting Initiative by Ms. Aditi Haldar, Director, GRI Focal Point at CUTS Conference Hall on November 7, 2013.
- GC met with the Chief Secretary of Madhya Pradesh Mr. Anthony J.C. de Sa on November 8, 2013 in his office in Bhopal and discussed about possible collaboration with DoCA.
- GC attended the first National Conference of the Non-Judicial Members of the State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission was organized at National Judicial Academy, Bhopal on November 9, 2013 and made a presentation on ‘Recent Trends in Consumer Rights and Unfair Trade Practices.
- OPA had a meeting with Simon Carl O’Meally at the World Bank on November 18, 2013 and discussed about possible collaboration.
- OPA participated in book launch event and the reception dinner, where Shashi Tharoor, MoS, GoI spoke on ‘Indian economic scenario and present challenges’ held on November 18, 2013 in New Delhi.
- OPA attended a validation workshop on ‘Status of Gender Responsive Budgeting (GRB) in India: A Study of Select states, at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on November 19, 2013 jointly

organized by UN Women and National Foundation of India (NFI) with the objective of disseminating the findings of the study and discussing on the way forward.

- On November 20, 2013, OPA attended NGO Asia Expo, which was a stakeholder connect initiative, which was an assembly of India's Strongest and Socially Responsible Foundations and NGO's.
- OPA participated in a discussion forum at the Rajasthan Patrika Office in Jaipur on November 22, 2013 on closing the feedback loop.
- OPA participated in CUTS Africa meeting on November 23, 2013 at CUTS conference hall and made a presentation on opportunities available for CUTS in African continent with regard to spreading its work in the area of social accountability and governance.
- MSS participated in the Policy Dialogue on '*Panchayati-Raj*, Political Economy & Service Delivery' organised by GDN-IRMA at Claridges hotel, New Delhi on November 28, 2013.
- GC, DS & AJS attended a workshop on low carbon polices: Formulation and Implementation Issues organised by CUTS-CCIER at Hotel Country Inn on November 29, 2013.
- AJS facilitated sessions on Consumer protection & Banking Ombudsman in 2 training organized by RICEM Jaipur for Co-operative Bank managers on November 19 & 28, 2013 respectively. AJS also facilitated a session on Essential Commodities Act in a training organized by National Institute of Agricultural Marketing (NIAM) Jaipur for Warehouse Managers on November 22.
- DS facilitated a session on Consumer Protection Scenario & Act in a training organised by NIAM for Warehouse Managers from UP, Gujarat & Rajasthan on November 25, 2013.
- On December 3, 2013, GC along with DC and ABS made a presentation at VSDC (Voluntary Sector Development Centre) before the panel consisting of (CEO (VSDC), Joint Director (VSDC), Ambuj Kishore (ED, Aravali), Joint Director (Dept of SJ &E, GoR) etc. for accreditation of specific sectors with GoR.
- OPA & ADS attended a Consultation on Citizen Centric Governance organised by Institute of Development Management, Jaipur on December 6, 2013.
- GC & AJS participated in the seminar on 'Quality of service and access to broadband services in India' was organised by CUTS in partnership with Ford Foundation in Delhi on December 9, 2013.
- GC participated in a workshop organised by Department of Consumer Affairs, Government of India in collaboration with the Centre for Consumer Studies, Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi on National Consumer Policy on December 10, 2013 in New Delhi.
- GC visited the residence of Prof. K.V. Thomas on December 11, 2013 and had detailed one-to-one meeting with him on the long pending meeting of the CCPC, ConsumerUp II and the National Consumer Policy.
- AJS was part of BIS's Rajiv Gandhi National Quality Awards evaluation team and visited Ericsson, Kukas plant on December 11, 2013.
- GC participated in CCC National Convention in Agartala, Tripura December 14-17, 2013 and a presentation by him on the occasion.
- GC & APT attended the launch function of 'Women on Wheels' in Jaipur, an initiative by Azad Foundation in collaboration with Shiv Charan Mathur Social Policy Research institute held on December 20, 2013 at SPRI campus.
- DS & AJS visited Bhopal on January 3, 2014 to meet Mr. Ashok Barnwal, Pr. Secretary, Consumer Affairs, Food & Civil Supplies of Government of Madhya Pradesh for further discussion on the GRANIMPCA project, which was submitted to be implemented in select districts of MP.
- DS, DC & BNS from CART participated in a National Conference on 'New Initiatives-Investor Protection and Investor Education' on January 6, 2014 sponsored by PHD Chamber in association with SEBI and The Institute of Company Secretaries of India at Hotel ITC Rajputana in Jaipur. AMK and PSM also participated from HO-CUTS.
- APT attended the final dissemination workshop of Sustainable Textiles for Sustainable Development Project funded by European Commission under the SWITCH ASIA Programme and implemented by Tradecraft Exchange-UK, All India Artisans and Craft workers Association

with their associate partners- Jaipur Integrated Texcraft Park Private Limited, Consortium of Textile Exporters (COTEX) and IL&FS Ltd on January 08, 2014.

- GC & MSS participated in the book release on a research study report on “Effectiveness of DPO in empowering PWDs – A Case Study from Bikaner”, organised by Sightsavers and screening of a video film on the same intervention on January 20, 2014 in Jaipur.
- OPA participated in a day’s consultation on “Citizen Participation in Local Democratic Governance” at Institute of Development Studies (IDS) organized by PRIA on January 29, 2014.
- AKJ visited Delhi on January 22, 2014 and met key persons in WHO (Dr. Amrita Kansal and Ms. Choudhary); MoRTH (Rajeev Lochan, Director and Shiv Kant (Under Secretary) and GIZ (Kartik, Junior Transport Advisor). Purpose of the visit was to explore the possibility of funding.
- 28th Meeting of the Central Consumer Protection Council was held at Kochi, Kerala on Feb. 3, 2014 at Hotel Taj Gateway. GC took part in it.
- AKJ participated in three days global consultation on 'Towards an equitable and just Internet', organised by IT for Change, Bangalore on February 14 to 16, 2014 at Delhi. The meeting was attended by over 40 people representing international and national organizations working of Governance of Internet.
- ADS along with DC attended meeting of district monitoring and steering committee under tobacco control organised by police commissioner of Jaipur at Commissionrate office on Feb. 19, 2014.
- DC & ABS attended district level Telecom public hearing in BSNL meeting hall Jaipur on February 19, 2014.
- OPA participated in a pre- budget workshop with MLAs organized by Budget Analysis Rajasthan Centre (BARC) on February 19, 2014 at *Pant Krishi Bhavan*, Jaipur.
- RDM & AKJ attended a consultation on March 01, 2014 at Delhi on subject “Strengthening Road Safety Legislation in India” supported by Save Life Foundation.
- DC attended a meeting of DRUUC March 5, 2014 at DRM, Jaipur meeting hall.
- AJS attended the "National Conference on Consumer Rights in Non Store Retail" held on March 12, 2014 in New Delhi.
- AJS attended the BIS Resource Management Sectional Committee -MSD 12 meeting on March 27, 2014 held at BIS office in Delhi.
- CBGA in collaboration with Oxfam India organized a National Consultation on “Inequality in India: Major Dimensions and Policy Challenges” at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on March 25, 2014 to facilitate a sharper and deeper understanding of some of the major dimensions of inequality in India. GC attended the seminar.
- AJS attended the National Seminar on “Protection of Consumer Rights in Digital Era” on March 30, 2014 (Sunday) Jamnalal Bajaj School of Legal Studies, Banasthali University, Rajasthan.
- PSM and AKJ visited JDA and met with Shikar Agarwal, JDC on March 20, 2014 in context with TCS project. JDC assured to look into the matter.
- GC visited the World Bank and had a meeting with Roland Lomme, Governance Advisor, The World Bank on March 26, 2014.
- GC visited the office of National Mission Management Unit, *NRLM*, MoRD located at *Hotel Samrat*, New Delhi on March 26, 2014 afternoon and met with Mrs. Santhi Kumari, IAS (Chief Operating Officer of NRLM and Shipra Bhatia (Programme Executive: Governance & Accountability).

8. Visits made at CART Office

- Nauli Wimalrathna, a fellow from Transparency International, Sri Lanka visited Jaipur during April 9-10, 2013. She visited a target village and also a ward under the MyCity project.
- Eva Eiderström (Head of Department, Shop and Act Green-Good Environmental Choice Ecolabel), Ms. Sara Nilsson, Programme officer Sustainable Consumption and Ms. Annelie Anderson, staff in-charge, Green Action Week Cooperation from Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) visited CUTS, Jaipur from June 3-5, 2013.

- Dr Amanullah Khan, Team Leader for the Evaluation team commissioned by ANSA-SAR/IGS visited CUTS on July 31, 2013 and met with GC and governance team (OPA, MSS, ADS, APT & VG).
- Three members team from **Transparency International, Nepal** arrived CUTS on October 7, 2013. GC along with governance team met them and discussed about the governance related work. Along with ADS and MSS, team visited state information commission as well Transparency International Rajasthan Chapter. On October 8 team along with ADS and APT visited Khandel Gram Panchayat to see field level work of CUTS under governance.
- Kaustuv Bandyopadhyay, Director, PRIA visited CART on January 30, 2013 along with his two colleagues Ansh and Nitin.
- Ravi Kharka, Senior Programme Manager All India Artisans and Craftworkers Welfare Association (AIACA) visited CUTS on January 30, 2014. This was mainly an introductory meeting, APT along with GC & MSS were present in this meeting.
- Philip Mathew, National Mission Manager (Social Development & Social Inclusion), National Mission Management Unit, NRLM, MoRD made a personal visit to CUTS on March 27, 2014. GC & MSS met with him and updated him about I3S and also given him a set of publications.

9. Internship with CART

This year, following persons did the internship with the centre:

- Mr. Sanket Gupta of Nirma University, Ahmedabad on Consumer Protection issues from 6th May to 6th June, 2013.
- Ms. Betsy Ponnachen of MNIT, Jaipur on Governance issues from 21st May to 12th June, 2013.
- Mr. Bheem Singh Meena (BSM) from National Law University and Judicial Academy, Guwahati, Assam from June 6 to July 2, 2013 on Consumer Protection issues.
- Ms. Bhavini Singh, NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad, India from 11th November to 10th December 2013 on organic farming issues and online advertisements and cybercrimes issues.

10. COPSA Web portal and Yahoo Group

Accountability Solution: Web-portal

CART is maintaining a web-portal created as part of Community of Practice on Social Accountability supported by ANSA SAR. CUTS is maintaining this web-portal with own resources from March 1, 2013. The web-portal is having 338 practitioners of social accountability as members and 113 active members on the Face book group. So far 6730 people visited the web-portal.

Yahoo Groups

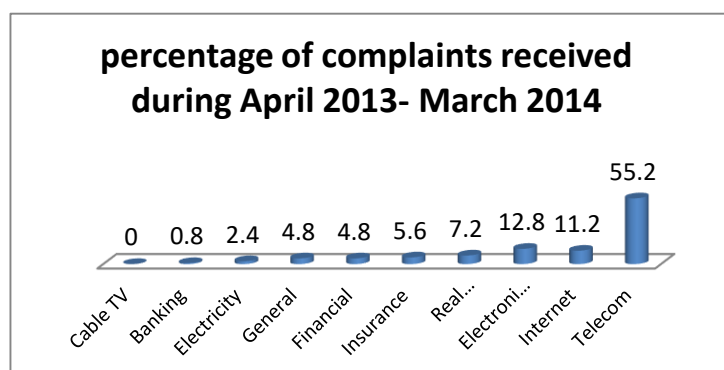
CART is responsible for moderating three yahoo groups

CUTSConsumersUp: for Consumer Empowerment in India to take the consumer movement forward

CUTSGovForum: to discuss news and views on Governance issues and challenges in India

CUTSRajGovForum: to discuss governance issues in Rajasthan.

11. Consumer Complaints Handling, Information & Advisory Services (CHIAS)



Basically, it is an “advice giving and informal complaints handling mechanism” between the common consumer and three-tier quasi-judicial complaints redressal system that is prevailing in the country. Over the period of time, this mechanism has been developed in an innovative manner similar to the European Consumer Centres (ECC), which can substantially reduce the burden of the District Consumer Forums (DCF) in

India. In addition, besides advising and counseling the consumers about their rights and various emerging problems, the Cell also takes up individual complaints directly with the opposite party. This is basically facilitating an interface (over phone, through e-mail/letter or direct) between the service provider/businesses and the consumer, where grievances are discussed. As a result of such interventions several complaints are settled directly without going to the DCFs. If complaints are not sorted out up to the satisfaction of the consumers, then the cell also provides advice for filing of complaints in the DCFs, State Commissions and National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission (NCDRC).

12. Project Concluded in this Period

1. Citizens Up (Phase III) with the support of PTF.
2. GRANIRCA and ConsumersUp with the support of Ministry of Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution under CWF of Govt. of India.
3. CoPSA in partnership with ANSA-SAR

The above projects got concluded with post project activities like final submission of project report, accounts etc. finalized and submitted to donors within this period.

13. Affiliations

- International Resource Team on Social Accountability of the World Bank Institute on Sustainable Development (WBISD), Washington DC, USA.
- Demand for Good Governance (DFGG) Learning Network of the World Bank.
- South Asia Social Accountability Network (SASANet) of the World Bank.
- State Advisory Committee of the Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission (RERC).
- Central Consumer Protection Council (CCPC), Government of India.
- Advocacy Forum for Tobacco Control (AFTC), India.