

CUTS Annual Report-2022

Inputs from CUTS CART

1. PROJECT and IMPACT

1. **Project:** Developing a Culture of Sustainable Consumption and Lifestyle Through Promoting Organic Consumption and Production and Adopting Sustainable Consumption Practices by Engaging Consumers in the State of Rajasthan, India (ProScop)

Period: January, 2021-December, 2026

Support: SSNC (Swedish Society for Nature Conservation)

Objective:

Looking at the success and in order to further consolidate its work on the issues, CUTS in partnership with Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) has designed an ambitious five years' project clubbing sustainable production, consumption and practices together in its intervention. The so-called project 'Developing a Culture of Sustainable Consumption and Lifestyle Through Promoting Organic Consumption and Production and Adopting Sustainable Consumption Practices by Engaging Consumers in the State of Rajasthan, India' (ProScop)' will be implemented in twelve targeted districts & all seven divisions of Rajasthan for five years.

Impact:

The purpose of carrying our work in the present ten districts is to not only consolidate the already set base, which was created more than eight years back and has started yielding results at ground, but also to strengthen it by further working on it continuously and more passionately with an innovative approach keeping all the stakeholders in loop as this is a better time, when the state governments and the Government of India has also started showing its inclination towards organic culture work throughout the country in its way. CUTS has documented SCP practices in India and studied sustainable consumption from a consumer perspective at National level. One step ahead, CUTS is implementing SCP intervention in the selected cities of Rajasthan by conducting research to understand the perception, practices and pattern of consumption. Also, a sustainable consumption index will be prepared for the cities. Through the intervention, local consumers and stakeholders will be sensitised towards sustainable lifestyle. This approach will push for more dedicated efforts to support SCP from the consumer perspective.

So, working on the two-fold approach has enabled us to title this phase of 2022-26 as Developing a Culture of Sustainable Consumption and Lifestyle Through Promoting Organic Consumption and Production and Adopting Sustainable Consumption Practices by engaging consumers in the State of Rajasthan, India (ProScop).

<p>1.1 Green Action Week-Rajasthan Campaign, 2022 Period: September, 2022-November, 2022 Support: SSNC (Swedish Society for Nature Conservation)</p>	<p>Theme: 'Sharing Community' Objective: Campaign focuses on encouraging cultures of sharing and collaboration by discussing and implementing ways that can bring more equal and sustainable access to goods and services for the benefit of the people and the planet, through sharing and collaboration. Impact: The campaign of short duration has been able to generate a feeling of community sharing and the new approach of 'Best Out of Waste' has been a successful in terms of creating interest among community leaders.</p>
<p>2. Project: Global Green Action Week, India Period: June, 2022-December, 2022 Support: SSNC (Swedish Society for Nature Conservation)</p>	<p>Theme: 'Sharing Community' Objective: To strengthen the role of CSOs for raising awareness on environmental issues and contribute to sustainable patterns of consumption amongst consumers, policy makers and other key stakeholders. Impact: Campaign at various states increased the awareness about sustainable consumption among common consumers of targeted places. It also contributed to enhance demand of organic food, which is more environmentally friendly and has health benefits for consumers.</p>
<p>3. Project: Advocacy for Scientific and Consumer Friendly FoPL for HFSS in All Foods in India. Period: March, 2022-March, 2023 Support: Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHAI)</p>	<p>Objective: To advocate for scientific and consumer friendly FoPLs in all packaged foods with food manufacturers/industry associations for soliciting support for the best practices for FoPL publicly. Impact: Government officials have been sensitised about the seriousness of the FoPLs from consumers' perspective.</p>
<p>4. Project: (ROSA III) & (ROSA IV) Period: March, 2021-August, 2022 September, 2022-February, 2024 Support: Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP)</p>	<p>Objective: To support Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH), Govt. of India, State Governments and other concerned agencies for effective rulemaking to ensure smooth implementation of MVAA, 2019. Impact: Effective Motor Vehicle Act is in place. Effective rules are in place with increased effective enforcement of laws.</p>
<p>5. Project: APCO Worldwide India: Fire Safety and Prevention Period: June, 2022-October, 2022 Support: APCO Worldwide India: Fire Safety and Prevention</p>	<p>Objective: Developing a knowledge paper for a "Fire Safe India" to understand the gaps in current fire safety scenario in the country and advocate for better and more stringent norms. Impact: Better and stringent norms will lead to avoid fire incidents in India in much more effective manner.</p>

<p>6. <u>Project:</u> SANS Study on SDG 11 (October, 2022-January, 2023)</p> <p><u>Period:</u> October, 2022-January, 2023</p> <p><u>Support:</u> ESCAP SOSSWA</p>	<p><u>Objective:</u> South Asia Network on the Sustainable Development Goals (SANS) is a network of government agencies, think tanks, and other organisations from South Asian countries. CUTS has been engaged in drafting a sub-regional study on SDG 11 on the basis of: What are the most challenging issues for the sub region; How are they linked with SDGs; What are the most strategic interventions ESCAP and SANS can make collectively to bring the SDG progress back on track?</p> <p><u>Impact:</u> The study was presented online in the sixth South and South-West Asia SDG Forum held on 5-7 December 2022 at Islamabad, Pakistan.</p>
<p>7. <u>Project:</u> Improving City Governance Through Enhancing Knowledge of Urban Local Bodies in Rajasthan</p> <p><u>Period:</u> April, 2022-March, 2023</p> <p><u>Support:</u> Australian High Commission under Direct Aid Programme.</p>	<p><u>Objective:</u> Foster knowledge, information and capacity building about issues like solid waste management, public transportation system, water supply and financial instruments within ULBs in Rajasthan.</p> <p><u>Impact:</u> Enhanced communication, awareness and understanding among ULBs of Rajasthan on the importance of close coordination among departments, financials instruments to effectively use such tools for meeting infrastructure financing needs.</p>
<p>8. <u>Project:</u> VOAC (Voice of Aggrieved Consumers)</p> <p><u>Period:</u> November, 2022-May, 2023</p> <p><u>Support:</u> DVARA Research</p>	<p><u>Objective:</u> This project aims to understand lived experiences of diverse consumer groups with respect to frauds in DFS, including their responses to such incidents, through qualitative non-technical interviews, household level focus group discussions, scenario building exercises, and observational techniques. The objective will be to understand if modus operandi of fraudsters, including their entry point, the trap, and the nudge for consumers, differ with consumer groups, and DFS. It will also be examined if experience of consumers with respect to grievance redress mechanism differs, while acknowledging the possibility of frauds during grievance redress.</p> <p><u>Impact:</u> The study would become part of wider study at the national level by DVARA and would help in controlling the menace.</p>

2. HIGHLIGHTS/SPECIAL ENDEVOUR/EVENTS

2.1 Road Safety Advocacy

2.1.1 CUTS Nominated to the Chief Secretary's Traffic Management Committee of Rajasthan

In Rajasthan, traffic management is becoming complex and difficult since the traffic volume is increasing and space on roads for traffic and vulnerable road users is shrinking year by year. As a result, in the year 2020, total 9667 people had died and 16798 people were injured in road accidents as per NCRB report.

To address the menace of traffic mismanagement and to ensure road safety, Government of Rajasthan is taking appropriate measures on time to time. Recently the name of Transport Department is being changed as Transport and Road Safety Department and in the state budget 2022-23, a public transport authority has been announced and hopefully this authority would also prove to be good for road safety and effective traffic management.

2.1.2 Generating Demand for Effective Implementation of MVA Act, 2019

In partnership with Public Affairs Foundation, CUTS organised two road safety events in Karnataka in March 2022. The first one at Kalaburgi, Karnataka on March 10, 2022 attended by Satyapal Singh, where Yeshwanth V Gururkar, District Collector was the chief guest and NV Prasad, Regional Commissioner, Kalaburagi and C Mallikarjuna, Joint Commissioner, Transport, were special guests. Officials such as medical, transport and law students etc. attended the meeting. Then Madhu Sudan Sharma participated in the second one in Belagavi, Karnataka, organised on March 25, 2022. Divisional Commissioner, Police Commissioner of Belagavi, Deputy Commissioner of Police (DCP) Traffic, Regional Transport Offices (RTOs), District Transport Offices (DTOs), Transport Inspectors, District Trauma Care in charge of Belagavi district hospital, officials from the Public Works Department (PWD), Karnataka Roadways, practicing lawyers on Motor Vehicle Act, 2019 and related issues and around 40 other officials and representatives participated in the consultation.

Similarly, the 'District Level Consultation was organised at Chittorgarh, Rajasthan on April 25, 2022. Shri C P Joshi, MP, Chittorgarh was the chief guest along with Rajeev Joshi, Additional SP; Jagdish Prasad, RTO and Manish, DTO were the other guests attended the consultation. More than 85 participants participated in the consultation, which consist of various social groups, civil society organization and government officials. The consultation was well covered by the print media.

In the series, one more state level state level at Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala was organised by CED in partnership with CUTS on April 26, 2022. Antony Raju, Hon'ble Minister for Transport, Govt. of Kerala was the chief guest in inaugural session and Anup Kuruvila John, IPS, IG of Police (Social Policing & Traffic) was the special guest. More than 80 participants participated in the meeting and various govt. department officials such as medical, transport and police etc. attended the meeting.

2.1.3 Strict Directions by NGT to Govt. of Rajasthan on Honking

CUTS vs. State Govt. of Rajasthan

National Green Tribunal issued strict directions to the Government of Rajasthan on Honking and Noise Pollution in response to a petition filed by CUTS International, which has been active throughout environment protection-related work. The direction is from NGT, Bhopal, in response to a petition filed on November 2021 against various concerned departments of the Rajasthan Government on controlling the menace of honking in the state and banning the use of 'illegal horns' by private and roadways buses along with several other noise pollution issues.

Under the intervention, CUTS has been campaigning for the last few years on the control of unnecessary vehicle honking. The organisation has also advocated for this through various awareness activities and representations before the government.

In the judgement by NGT, The Hon'ble Court comprised of Justice Sheo Kumar Singh, Judicial Member and Arun Kumar Verma, Expert Member directed the State of Rajasthan to compulsorily abide and implement the existing legislative framework on the subject matter, the crux of the judgment is the following:

Referring to the case of *Balwant Singh vs. Commissioner of Police*, (2015) 4 SCC 801 amongst various other judgments, while dealing with the issue of rampant and unchecked noise pollution in the State of Rajasthan, the Hon'ble Court directed States to, among other things ensure that:

- No noise source shall exceed 10 dB(A) limit above the ambient noise standards for the area or 75 dB(A), whichever is lower;
- No horn should be allowed to be used at night (between 10 p.m. and 6 a.m.) in residential areas except in exceptional circumstances; and
- The States shall make provision for seizure and confiscation of any noise source that creates noise beyond the permissible limits.

Tarun Agrawal and Bhaskar Agrawal, Advocates in Rajasthan High Court, worked hard to plead the matter in NGT on behalf of CUTS. <https://www.deccanherald.com/amp/national/north-and-central/no-honking-in-residential-areas-between-10-pm-and-6am-ngt-directs-rajasthan-government-1146194.html>

2.1.4 Petition in ASCI

A petition to ban the IPL advertisement of M S Dhoni with immediate effect was put before the Advertising Standard Council of India (ASCI). The Consumer Complaints Committee of the ASCI took a serious note of the petition and instructed TATA-BCCI to withdraw the ad, which was seriously flouting the Road Safety norms of India and also contravened Chapter III, 3.3 of the ASCI Code, and Clause (a) of the ASCI Guidelines for advertisements depicting automotive vehicles.

2.2 Developing a Culture of Sustainable Consumption and Lifestyle Through Promoting Organic Consumption and Production and Adopting Sustainable Consumption Practices by Engaging Consumers in the State of Rajasthan, India (ProScop)

ProOrganic

2.2.1 Slow and Gradual Transition to Organic Farming Will Ensure Chemical-Free Farming in Rajasthan

Sustained growth is key to India's future, for which, a reduction in chemical farming and a move from chemical to organic farming are challenging. To this end, we all need to become champions of reform and reduce the amount of chemical farming by moving towards organic farming. This was pointed out by Padma Shri Award winning farmer Jagdish Pareek on the occasion of launch of CUTS new project ProScop on April 12, 2022. Pareek was speaking as chief guest at the launch of a project named "Developing a Culture of Sustainable Consumption and Lifestyle Through Promoting Organic Consumption and Production and Adopting Sustainable Consumption Practices by Engaging Consumers in the State of Rajasthan, India" (ProScop). This project is being implemented in twelve targeted districts and all seven divisions of Rajasthan for five years (2022-2026).

'We should not think of shifting from conventional farming into organic farming overnight. We need to go slow and gradually', said George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS International in his opening remarks. George reminded to learn from present Sri Lankan crisis, which shifted to organic farming without any preparations. He said, this project phase (2022-2026) envisages converting selected gram panchayats to 100% organic farming.

On the occasion, Hanuman Mal Dhaka, Additional Commissioner, Dept. of Agriculture, highlighted the adverse effects of chemicals that are used by farmers in their farming. Dhaka spoke explicitly about product demand and supply, stating that we need to raise public awareness about the hazardous effects of chemical products so that people recognise the value of organic items. Dr. A.S. Baloda, Director, Rajasthan Agriculture Research Institute (RARI). On a similar note, he emphasised the need for farmers to perform honestly in organic farming. Surendra Awana, a progressive farmer, talked about innovative ways of farming and divergent practical methods that are helping farmers to take new initiatives to move towards organic farming.

2.2.2 Women Must Come Forward to Play a Pivotal Role in Generating Awareness in Spirit of Sharing - Munesh Gurjar Mayor Jaipur Municipal Corporation Heritage (Green Action Week Campaign, Rajasthan)

To re-establish the spirit of sharing in our society, along with bringing awareness in the society, women have to come forward because only women can bring change in the society. The above views were expressed by Jaipur Municipal Corporation Heritage Mayor Munesh Gurjar in the State Level Workshop organized by CUTS International under 'Green Action Week Rajasthan on November 23, 2022. On this occasion, Director of CUTS, George Cheriyan said that in order to promote sustainable consumption, CUTS is running this campaign in 14 different states of India apart from Rajasthan. Cheriyan said that the main focus of this year's campaign was single-use plastic pollution, which has also been completely banned by the Government of India from July 2022. There are three billion metric tons of plastic pollution in India, of which only 9 percent is recycled. KC Meena, Member Secretary, Rajasthan State Biodiversity Board said that consumerism is increasing, we need to reduce it. Meena emphasized on adopting the culture of cycling. He said that by adopting a lifestyle of simple living and high thinking, we can limit the use of natural resources. Regional Officer of Rajasthan State Pollution Control Board, Vijay Sharma said that in 2011, an Act was brought to ban plastic. Common people have to be aware not to use plastic. Dr. Nimali Singh, Syndicate member and Professor in the Department of Home Science, University of Rajasthan, said that even today, there is a tendency to share goods and services in villages. She explained about the activities through which this feeling can be increased in the urban area. Green Action Week Campaign Program Coordinator Nimisha Sharma initially presented the activities done under the campaign. She told that women from four communities participated enthusiastically in the training for 'Wealth Out of Waste', developing kitchen garden etc. In the program, an exhibition of the products made during the training by women was also organized. Prizes were given to the best performing participants.

Sustainable Consumption Practices(SCP)

2.2.3 Stakeholders Sensitisation Programmes (SSP)

The first Stakeholders Sensitization Programme (SSP) was organised at Jodhpur under ProScop SCP Project on September 29, 2022. Jagdish Sharma, A.En., Rajasthan Pollution Control Board; Prof. Kamlesh, Jodhpur Engineering College; Pranita Sanwariya, A.En., Jodhpur Municipal Corporation; Dr. Seema Sisodia, Naturopathy Practitioner were the main speakers. More than 45 participants including consumers and CSOs were present. Similarly, the second was organized at Kota District on November 18, 2022. Yudhistar Chansi, Secretary, Ramkrishan Sansthan was the local partners and welcomed the participants. Raj Kumar Gurjar, J. En. Pollution Control Board; Hemlata Gandhi, Kota Municipal Corporation; Yagyadutta Hada, Vice President, Kota Scout Camp were the speakers. Around 40 representatives from local self- government, CSO, academics, SHGs and media attended the programme. The third programme in the series was organised at Bharatpur on December 1, 2022. Abhijeet Kumar, Mayor Bharatpur; Amit Kumar, Engineer, Pollution Control Board; Laxman Pathak, Rtd. Environmental Engineer; Anurag Tripathi, Engineer, PHED were the main speakers. Dr. Harish Kumar welcomed the participants. Meeting was attended by more than 40 participants including representatives of CSOs, ward councilors, consumer organization and media. Mayor Bharatpur appreciated CUTS work in the area of sustainable consumption. In all the three programmes, Amar Deep Singh delivered opening remarks and talked in detail about SCP, whereas Amit Babu presented key findings of consumer perception survey (CPS).

2.3. Green Action Week India, 2022

Launch

Marking the launch of GAW India 2022, a one-day meeting was organized by Anmol Foundation, the local partner of Chhattisgarh in Raipur on September 8, 2022. Around 54 participants comprising of government officials, NGOs and community representatives participated in the workshop. Harbans Singh Miri, Social President of Chhag Pradesh Kanwar Samaj was the chief guest of the program. Other speakers include Sanjeev Jain, Chief Engineer, CREDA Chhattisgarh as technical expert and Dr. G K Das, Head of Department of Agro-Metrology from Indira Gandhi Agricultural University; Ajay Malu, Superintendent Engineer, Chhattisgarh State Environmental Protection Board; Director of Prerak Sansthan, Ram Gulam Sinha and Kuntal Mukherjee from Pradaan as speakers. George Cheriyan, Director made an opening remark, whereas Deepak Saxena, Associate Director, CUTS moderated a technical session.

National Campaign and Partners Meet

Similarly, marking the culmination of this national level campaign, GAW India Partners Meet was organised on December 15, 2022 at Jaipur. Representatives of 13 partner organisations participated and presented their activities under the campaign. Nils, Programme Manager, SSNC also attended it and interacted with the participants. While, George Cheriyan made an opening remarks of the meeting, Amar Deep Singh, Senior Programme Coordinator welcomed all and made a presentation on overall GAW India campaign. In the meeting, all the 14 participants made presentations of their work during the campaign in their respective states.

2.4 Advocacy for Scientific and Consumer Friendly FoPL for HFSS in All Foods in India.

2.4.1 A Plan of Action to Support Strong FoPL in India: GHAI Partners Meet

George Cheriyan, Simi TB and Satyapal Singh participated in the Global Health Advocacy of India (GHAI) partners meeting on front-of-package labeling in New Delhi on February 24-25, 2022. During the meeting, Cheriyan made a brief presentation on 'Industry Mapping Report' on February 24, 2022. He was also part of the panel discussion about the strategies to counter industry opposition, which Vandana Shah South Asia Regional Director, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids facilitated. Simi TB made a presentation on 'SWOT analysis on advocacy for strong FoPL' on February 25, 2022. More than 20 participants from various organisations participated in the meeting and developed a plan of action to support the strong FoPL in India.

2.4.2 Consumer Advocacy Groups Question Media Reports on India to Have Health Star Ratings

Consumer Organisations are questioning the media reports stating-India soon to have Health Star Label on packaged foods as regulated by FSSAI. The major consumer organisations in the country are appalled by the recent news reports that Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) is introducing a star rating system for packaged foods in India. This is especially, when the group of stakeholders identified and headed by the regulator itself on Front of Package Labelling are yet to come to any final conclusion and the discussions are still on-going with disagreements still remain to be addressed. George Cheriyan, a member of Food Authority (FSSAI) as a special invitee, and Director, CUTS International, has reacted sharply to an advice by the FSSAI to food businesses to get 'trans-fat free logo' in case their product contains no more than 0.2% per 100 mg trans-fat. He stated that there were already regulations limiting the trans-fats in food products and the food authority needed to focus on enforcement. He also asked the Food Authority to publish its enforcement data related to compliance by the food businesses, of the various regulations related to trans-fats.

(*The Hindu, Business Line, March 12, 2022*). This news can also be viewed at: <https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/>

2.4.3 Experts Hail Warning Labels as the Most Effective FoPL

Experts unanimously hail that warning labels are the most effective FoPL to help Indian consumers identify and avoid unhealthy foods. They also expressed their strong disagreement with the FSSAI for introducing a Health Star Rating (HSR) label in the Indian market relying upon a limited study carried out by a business school by ignoring the global best practices and evidence.

To help consumers make healthier choices, Australia and New Zealand introduced the voluntary HSR system in 2014. But studies show that the system is highly flawed as unhealthy products can still get a high score. This is because, the rating is based on the overall nutritional value, and the inclusion of healthy ingredients (i.e. fibre, protein and vitamins) cancel out the unhealthy ingredients (i.e. sugar, saturated fats and salt). More importantly, the system does not effectively assist the vulnerable consumers, who need it the most. These views emerged from a webinar on “Why Health Star Rating (HSR) is not suitable for India?” organised by CUTS on May 11, 2022.

2.4.4 Effective Front of Package Labelling to Ensure Children’s Right to Nutrition

A state-level consultation on ‘Significance of FoPL in Addressing NCDs’ was organised jointly by National Resource Centre on NCDs and CUTS in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, in collaboration with the Directorate of Health Services, Government of Kerala, on August 26, 2022.

Sreejith N. Kumar, Public Health Activist & Leader, Indian Medical Association, was the Chief Guest. Lt. Col. L. John, Regional Director, FSSAI, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India, delivered a keynote address. V. Meenakshi, Additional Director of Health Services–Public Health, Kerala and Saju V. Itty, Executive Director, Kerala Voluntary Health Services, Kottayam, delivered special addresses. Similarly, the same event in Jaipur was organised on August 30, 2022. Sunil Sharma, IAS, Food Safety Commissioner, Government of Rajasthan, was the Chief Guest who delivered the keynote address. Sanjay Pandey (GHA) and Dr. Ashok Gupta (JK Lone Hospital) delivered special addresses. Seema Mehta (IIHMR); R N Meena (State Nodal Officer, NCDs, Government of Rajasthan); Vandana Vyas (RSCPCR); and Kanika Verma (Professor Raj University) were key speakers in the technical session

2.4.5 Experts Demanded an Effective Mandatory Warning Label

Public health and consumer experts in Rajasthan unanimously demanded mandatory simplified front-of-the-pack labelling (FoPL) regulation to be notified by the food regulator at the earliest to address the rising Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) in the country. Experts unanimously proposed this in a state-level consultation on ‘Status of NCDs and Role of Front of the Pack Labelling’ organised in Jaipur by CUTS International on August 30, 2022, to generate awareness of FoPL and the role it could play in curbing NCDs among wider stakeholders. In his opening address, Cheriyan said that FoPL is a cost-effective messaging strategy that would help consumers in making informed and healthy food choices. Sunil Sharma, IAS, Food Safety Commissioner, Directorate of Food Safety and Drug Control, Government of Rajasthan, stated that the government officials and health department employees are still unaware of this critical issue of NCDs and FoPL. Ashok Gupta, Professor and Head, J.K. Lone Hospital, Jaipur, highlighted that Rajasthan is in the red zone in NCD cases. Hence, there is a need to understand the real cause of diseases that occur due to unhealthy diets.

2.4.6 Why India Needs Front of the Pack Warning Labels-An Interactive Session of CUTS

CUTS in collaboration with Maharani College, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur organised an interactive session on “Why India Needs Front of the Pack Warning Labels”, on November 4, 2022. George Cheriyan spoke on the importance of FOPL to curb the NCDs and why warning labels are needed. He also appealed to the students and faculty members to submit their comments and suggestions to the FSSAI on the draft notification. Prof. Mukta Agarwal, Principal, Maharani College, Jaipur chaired the session. Prof. Nimali Singh, Syndicate Member & CUTS team drafted the questions for the parliamentarians on FoPL that are directly related to CUTS concerns and recommendations.

2.4.7 Cheriyan Nominated in FSSAI

George Cheriyan, Director of Jaipur based consumer advocacy group Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) is re-nominated to the Central Advisory Committee (CAC) of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) for a period of 3 years, as a member from the consumer segment. This is the 3rd time that CUTS is getting nominated to CAC of FSSAI. George represented CUTS in the CAC during 2014-19. (<https://indiaeducationdiary.in/george-cheriyan-director-cuts-international-nominated-to-the-central-advisory-committee-cac-of-indian-food-authority-fssai/>)

2.5 Improving City Governance Through Enhancing Knowledge of Urban Local Bodies in Rajasthan

2.5.1 Establishing a Municipal Regulatory Authority in Rajasthan

“The need for establishing the office of a regulatory authority with statutory power for all local self-government institutions is vital to keep an eye on the functioning of all municipal bodies. Such a body with independent powers to probe and penalise could be used to check misuse of office and unsatisfactory working. It should also shed light on needed change at the local level”, said Vasudevan Suresh, Former Chairman and Managing Director, Housing and Urban Development Corporation & President, Good Governance India Foundation. He was speaking at the inception of a project entitled ‘Improving City Governance Through Enhancing Knowledge of Urban Local Bodies in Rajasthan’ on June 1, 2022 implemented by CUTS in partnership with the Australian High Commission under its Direct Aid Programme. George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS, mentioned that Rajasthan’s urban population is around 1.70 crore, 24.9 percent of the total population. In contrast, the rural population stands at 5.15 crore, 75.1 per cent of the total population. Such a rise in urban population implies increased demand for goods and services and the requirement of efficient systems for urban planning, management and governance. Barry O’Farrell AO, Australian High Commissioner to India, congratulated CUTS for the urban governance project and highlighted that urban governance is one of the critical areas where India and Australia have a formal strategic partnership. Abhijeet Kumar, Mayor, Bharatpur Municipal Corporation, reiterated that there is a need to set up municipal regulatory authority in Rajasthan. Responsibilities are entrusted to local self-governments (LSGs), but there is neither power to fulfil those responsibilities nor any administrative setup. Mahendra Soni, IAS, Commissioner, Jaipur Municipal Corporation (Greater) highlighted India’s problem could be solved in 180 days if we humans correct ourselves. We as a society expect a lot of entitlements and keep blaming the system. S N Singh, Chairman, Swachh Nagar Sanstha, said government functionaries should be more accessible to the common citizen. There is a need for separation of power at the LSG level and strengthening municipal ward level committees. Himani Tiwari, City Managers’ Association Rajasthan, Department of Local Self Government, Government of Rajasthan, highlighted the government’s initiative and programme related to urban governance.

Amar Deep Singh, Senior Programme Officer CUTS, presented the organisation’s previous work on urban governance and explained the objectives and activities of the project.

2.5.2 Improving City Governance Through Enhancing Knowledge of Urban Local Bodies in Rajasthan-An Expert Consultation at DLB Department

Marking the launch of CUTS new project on ‘Improving City Governance’, supported by the Australian High Commission under its Direct Aid Programme, an expert consultation was organised on September 2, 2022 at LSG Department of Govt. of Rajasthan under the project titled ‘Improving City Governance Through Enhancing Knowledge of Urban Local Bodies in Rajasthan’ Hridesh Kumar Sharma, IAS, Director cum Joint Secretary, Dept. of Local Self Governance (LSG), Govt. of Rajasthan was the Chief Guest. George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS delivered the opening address. Dr. Dacheppally Sudhakar, Former Executive Engineer, Hyderabad Municipal Corporation highlighted the best practices of GHMC. Amar Deep Singh, Sr. Programme Officer CUTS presented the CUTS previous work on urban governance and explained Improving City Governance Project’s objective and activities. Delegates actively participated in the discussions. During the meeting, Dr. Himani Tiwari, CMAR, Dept.

of Local Self Government highlighted the government's initiative. Amit Babu, Programme Associate, CUTS proposed the vote of thanks. The meeting saw participation of more than 35 senior officials of LSG Department, experts of urban governance and RWAs.

2.5.3 Improving City Governance-Workshops on Urban Governance for ULB Officials

The first workshop in the series on urban governance for ULB officials on urban governance under IDC project was conducted at Jodhpur on November 10, 2022. Amar Deep Singh welcomed the participants and delivered opening remarks of the workshop. Dr. D. Sudhakar, Lead Resource Person from Hyderabad delivered the main four topics in the workshop. His sessions were mainly interactive and he discussed the local issues with the participants. Total 32 officials from urban local bodies comes under Jodhpur division participated in the workshop. Similarly, the second training workshop was conducted at Kota on December 22, 2022. Vasudev Malawat, Commissioner, Kota Municipal Corporation (North) and Dipti Ramchandran, Divisional Deputy Director, LSG Dept attended the workshop in valedictory session as special guest. Both interacted with participants and appreciated training programme. Dr. D. Sudhakar, Lead Resource Person from Hyderabad delivered the main four topics in the workshop. Total 32 officials from urban local bodies comes under Jodhpur division participated in the workshop.

2.6 Other Activities

2.6.1 World Consumer Rights Day, 2022

The United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection (UNGCP) were adopted by the United Nations (UN) in 1985. The guidelines were revised in 1999 and again in 2015 to ensure that they are up-to-date and address the real challenges people worldwide face. The revised guidelines included a new section on sustainable consumption and e-commerce, financial services, other issues and implementation. "Consumers from everywhere will benefit from digital financial services. Hence, digital financial services must be accessible, secure, confidential, and sustainable," said Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS in his opening address of the event organised on the occasion of World Consumer Rights Day (WCRD) on the theme: 'Fair Digital Finance'. Mehta suggested WCRD should be one of the UN Days and the Department of Consumer Affairs should be strengthened at the National, State, and District levels. In the event, Munish P Kothari, former Regional Director of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), as a key speaker, agreed that consumers should be aware of their rights. Kothari mentioned that non-governmental organisations (NGOs) play a critical role in raising consumer awareness. Abhishek Kumar, Indicc Associate, spoke about Fair Digital Finance from a gender perspective, focusing on self-help groups. He stated that 60 percent of the population in India does not have access to the Internet and there is a need for more capacity building. Manoj Meena, Assistant Professor, University of Rajasthan, spoke about fraudsters targeting developing countries. Rakesh Krishna Sharma, RBI, Regional Office, Jaipur, spoke about activities that the RBI and several banks are involved in. He said India is the number one country globally regarding digital transactions. We must be aware of fraud and take steps to stop it.

2.6.2 There is an Urgent Need for National Water Framework Law

There is a need for an overarching regulatory framework for efficient water management in India, noted Gopal Krishna Agarwal, National Spokesperson, BJP, and co-author of the book, 'Water an Element of Life: Price Sensitivity and Consumption by the Marginalised.' He was speaking at a webinar organised by CUTS to observe the World Water Day 2022, which falls on 22nd March every year. The theme this year was 'Groundwater: Making the Invisible Visible.' In his opening remarks, Bipul Chatterjee, Executive Director, CUTS, talked about the gravity of groundwater situation in our country. He said that as a consumer we have right to water but we need to exercise this right while simultaneously ensuring our responsibility to manage and conserve water. Mathew Cherian, Chair, CARE India, spoke about how traditional knowledge is absolutely essential to recharge water. Shubha Ramachandran, Head, Water Team, Biome Environmental Trust, reminded how people living in cities are largely not aware from where the water comes, and to where it goes. Joydeep Gupta, South Asia

Director, The Third Pole, claimed that India is the largest user of groundwater in the world for irrigation, which is certainly not moving in a sustainable direction. Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS, in his concluding remarks pointed out that CUTS has been dealing with these issues for a long time now. He called for a whole of government approach as most of the issues related to water cover various ministries rather than just the Water Resource Ministry. Mehta also pointed out that local governments play an essential role in this regard, but there is a need to empower local institutions.

2.6.3 CUTS Demanded Effective Implementation of Eco mark Scheme in India

CUTS observed Earth Day 2022 at Mother Earth sculpture site at Jaipur today on April 22, 2022 to demand for an effective Eco mark in India. Eco marks are important for promotion of sustainable consumption and production policy, which aims at reducing the negative impact of consumption and production on the environment, health, climate and natural resources. The scheme has not been able to take off as expected due to a number of reasons, including the absence of support through government procurement. Government and concern agencies need to implement scheme in effective manner and should create awareness to increase consumer demands. Neither producers nor consumers are either aware of its existence or willing to go for this label.

2.6.4 Combating Child Labour in Rajasthan

CUTS, in partnership with World Vision Germany and supported by Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development, Government of Germany) launched the project, entitled 'Strengthening Formal and Informal Systems and Structures as well as the Capacities of Vulnerable Children and Households to Reduce Child Labour in Banswara and Pratapgarh, Rajasthan' at Pratapgarh on March 22, 2022. World Vision India (WVI) and Vaagdhara are two other implementing partners. The project's objective is to reduce the incidences of harmful child labour by 50 percent by 2025 in Suhagpura block of Pratapgarh district and Ghatol block of Banswara district of Rajasthan. Sangeeta Beniwal, Chairperson of Rajasthan State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (RSCPCR), was the Chief Guest. She delivered the inaugural address and formally launched the project. Prakash Chandra Sharma, District Collector, was the Guest of Honour. Charanjit Lal Meena, Additional Superintendent of Police, Pratapgarh, was a special guest. Around 70 participants attended, including Pradhans, Sarpanches, other elected representatives, officials from various government departments and representatives from NGOs and CBOs of Pratapgarh district. George Cheriyan and Nimisha Sharma from Jaipur; Gauhar Mehmood from Chittorgarh; Kamlesh Kumar Jangid and Mohan Meghwal from Pratapgarh attended the event.

2.6.5 CUTS International on UNESCAP-SANS Panel

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) office has included CUTS as a member of the South Asia Network on Sustainable Development Goals (SANS) as a civil society member. SANS is a network of government agencies, think tanks, and other organisations from South Asian countries: Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. SANS has been developed to foster sub regional cooperation by sharing good practices towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) amongst the government agencies, think tanks, CSOs and other stakeholders in South Asia to build back better. This network is expected to accelerate action on SDGs implementation in the region.

2.6.6 The Age of E-Consumer Protection

A webinar on 'The Age of E-Consumer Protection' was organised on August 25, 2022, which aimed to reorient consumer organisations in India to protect online consumers actively. The webinar imparted a better understanding of the new regime to the participants and discussed consumer organisations' roles in its implementation. Sushila, Associate Professor, National Law University, New Delhi; Saroja

Sundaram, Executive Director, Citizen consumer and civic Action Group; Ujjwal Kumar, Associate Director, CUTS and George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS, were key speakers.

2.6.7 CCC National Convention and AGM

The convention cum AGM was held at Shahid Smarak Bhawan, Raipur, in Chattisgarh on September 9, 2022. Among the participants were CCC members. Besides, a few non-CCC members, VCOs, volunteers and college and school students were also present. George Cheriyan and Deepak Saxena from CUTS participated. Amarjeet Bhagat, Minister for Food and Consumer Affairs, Chattisgarh, was the Chief Guest. Naveen Srivastava, President, Upbhokta Shiksha evam Suraksha Foundation, welcomed all the participants and P Ramarao, Chairperson, CCC, delivered the inaugural speech. Then it was followed by Ramji Bhai Mawani, Amrat Lal Sah, Abhishek Srivastava, George Cheriyan, Liyakat Ali, P K Panda, Packialaxmi and Sharmila Ranade. They were also called to share the seat with Amarjeet Bhagat. Besides the participants, Deepak Saxena, G S Panda, Rama Ben Mawani, Pramod Jhanwar, Sanjay Arya and a few other members also share their thoughts. In the convention, there were felicitations and welcome of all CCC members. In the start, the local cultural programmes were organized.

2.6.8 George Cheriyan Elected as Vice-Chairperson of Consumer Coordination Council

George Cheriyan, Director of Jaipur based CUTS International, got elected to the position of Vice Chairperson of Consumer Coordination Council (CCC) of India, during the election held in Raipur, Chhattisgarh on September 9, 2022. As per the CCC constitution, the election is held once in two years, and after becoming the Vice Chairperson, after two years automatically will become the Chairperson of CCC. Delegates from 22 different states in India attended the National Consumer Convention and the Annual General Body meeting of CCC, and took part in the elections. Consumer organisations from across the country are members of CCC.

2.6.9 Consumers Awareness to Telecom Consumers

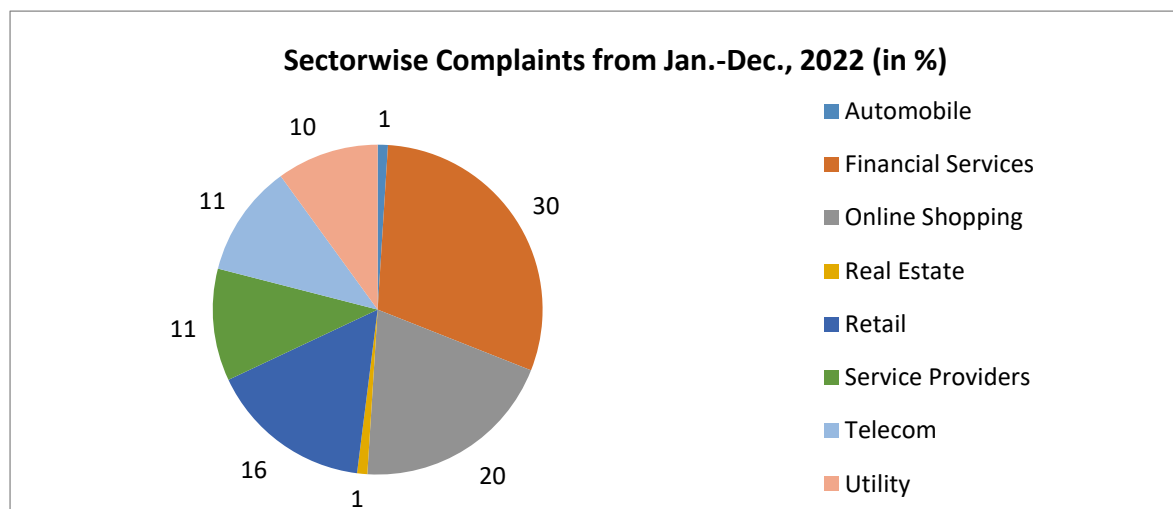
CUTS organized a Consumer Awareness Programme (CAP) at Sri Krishna Vidyalaya, Devthala in Govindgarh block of Jaipur district on November 15, 2022 with around 100 students mainly of class XII. CUTS organized a Consumer Awareness Programme (CAP) at Lal Bahadur Shastri School in Sargoth village of Reengus Panchayat Samiti of Sikar district on December 28, 2022 with around 46 students mainly of class X-XII. In continuation, another CAP was also organized on December 30, 2022 at Nawan City of Nagour district with the presence of around 52 local telecom customers and few students. Deepak Saxena was the main presenter. Dharmendra Chaturvedi supported in conducting the programmes.

2.6.10 Commemoration of the World Day of Remembrance on November 20, 2022

As every year CUTS team commemorated the WDoR, 2022 as per its given theme and organised several off line and online activities to commemorate the people, who have lost their precious lives in road crashes. CUTS organised two street plays on November 18, 2022 in Bhawani Niketan School in which a huge number of people participated.

3. GRAHAK SAHAYTA KENDRA

In the year 2022, GSK entertained a good number of complaints, the details of which are explained through graph and below, the sector wise figures.



4. PUBLICATIONS/OUTREACH

- Catalyst (*three issues of quarterly e-newsletter*) _Fourth will be out in January 2023.
- Gram Gadar (*Twelve issues of wall newspaper*)
- Paanchvan Stambh (*three issues of quarterly newsletter in Hindi*) _ Fourth will be out in January 2023.
- City Matters (*three issues of quarterly newsletter*) _ Fourth will be out in January 2023
- Consumer Dialogue (*two issues of tri-annual e-newsletter in English*) _ Third will be out in January 2023.
- GSK Alert (*three issues of quarterly e-newsletter*) _Fourth will be out in January 2023.
- ONW (Occasional News Wrap) _7 issues of ONW (Covid Vaccination) and 3 issues of ONW (Health Regulations)_Fourth issue on Health Regulation will be out in January 2023.
- IEC material published and printed under ProOrganic and Green Action Week.
- A Position Paper ‘Transforming Urban Governance in Rajasthan-Through Capacity Building and Better Financial Management’ (<https://cuts-cart.org/pdf/bp-transforming-urban-govt-in-raj.pdf>)
- A Documentation ‘Transition from Chemical to Organic Farming-A Real Case Studies’ (<https://cuts-cart.org/pdf/the-transition-from-chemical-to-organic-farming-real-case-studies.pdf>)
- A Training Manual for Organic Farmers (<https://cuts-cart.org/pdf/training-manual-on-organic-farming.pdf>)
- A User Manual-Municipal Services for City Governments (<https://cuts-cart.org/pdf/user-manual-on-municipal-services-for-city-governments.pdf>)

5. OPEDS/ARTICLES

5.1 Sustainable Consumption from a Consumer Perspective

Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC)-sponsored study, carried out by CUTS seeking to analyse the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No 12, Responsible Consumption and Production (RCP), has observed, it is “very unlikely” India will achieve any of the targets of SDG 12 by 2030 “unless some serious measures are taken by the government to reverse the present trend.” Carrying out the study from the

“consumer’s perspective”, it seeks to analyse the current scenario at the national level, including the role of ecolabels, impact of the pandemic etc., with in-depth study in five States-Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, Kerala and Himachal Pradesh through one-to-one interviews, focus group discussions, qualitative analysis, documentation of successful case studies etc. (*Counterview, January 23, 2022*). This news can also be viewed at: <https://www.counterview.net/>

5.2 Why Food Industries Must Promote Healthy and Sustainable Diets:

By George Cheriyan and Simi T.B,

Even well before the onset of the pandemic, food systems within a huge developing country like India faced enormous challenges in achieving equitable access to healthy, nutritious, sustainable and balanced diets for all. Now, COVID-19 has further pushed the country behind in reaching the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and has caused widespread loss of livelihoods and incomes, threatening the food security, health, and nutrition of poor and marginalized people. This news can also be viewed at: <https://cuts-cart.org/why-food-industries-must-promote-healthy-and-sustainable-diets/>.

5.3 Food Processing Industries Ignore Consumer’s Health Due to Fear of Economic Loss: CUTS Industry Mapping Study

Front of package labeling (FoPL) is one of the effective policy tools that can partially rebalance unhealthy retail packaged food environment and aid consumers to make informed healthier food choices. While several nations have implemented stronger regulations through introduction of FoPL in food products and subsequently witnessed lower rates of non-communicable diseases (NCDs), no such restrictions are still in place in India. CUTS industry mapping study have revealed that food processing industries are ignoring consumer’s health due to unwanted fear of economic loss. As a part of its advocacy efforts, CUTS recently mapped and analysed the present position of the food industry regarding the Front of Package Labeling (FoPL) regulation in the light of ‘India spotlight index 2020’ for fifteen leading companies with major market share. (*The Financial Express, February 25, 2022*) This news can also be viewed at: <http://www.fnbnews.com/>

5.4 Ecolabelling, Public Procurement Support Key to Achieving SDG 12

By George Cheriyan and Simi TB

Ecolabelling and sustainability: The world took note of India’s call to ditch consumerism and shift to a circular economy at the WEF Davos Agenda Summit. This was in line with the country’s climate action initiatives such as energy transition, green bonds, and sustainable urban planning which would provide for equitable economic growth and sustainable use of the planet’s resources. Such initiatives by the government could accelerate the shift towards sustainable consumption and production (SCP), especially at a time, when pressure is mounting on the country to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly responsible consumption and production (SDG 12). (*Policy Circle, April 4, 2022*). For more details, please access at:

- [Role of Small and Medium travel business key in road safety](#)
KNN India, December 24, 2022
- [FoPL regulation needs wider consultation](#)
The Bureaucrat, December 16, 2022
- [Pharmaceutical industry: Tight regulation key to curbing unethical practices](#)
Policy Circle, September 28, 2022
- [Consumer protection: India’s redressal mechanisms being destroyed by apathy](#)
Policy Circle, July 13, 2022

- [Defining moment for earth: South Asia faces grave environmental concerns](#)
South Asia Monitor, June 04, 2022
- [FSSAI sides with industry, puts consumers at risk](#)
Policy Circle, May 09, 2022
- [India must invest in effective enforcement of environment laws](#)
Policy Circle, April 22, 2022
- [Ecolabelling, public procurement support key to achieving SDG 12](#)
Policy Circle, April 04, 2022

5.5 George Cheriyan was interviewed by the journalist of The Hindu, Fortune India, The Straits Times Asia, Kungumam-Tamil weekly from Chennai on FoPL, which got published on May 9, 12 and 14, 2022, with different titles. The story also appeared on May 22, 2022 titled “Eat Packet Food ... These 8 Pages Are for You”.

5.6 George was also interviewed by the journalist of British Medical Journal on May 11, 2022. He also wrote an op-ed on FoPL, which got published in Policy Circle, titled “FSSAI Sides with Industry on FoPL Format, Puts Consumers at Risk” on May 9, 2022.

5.7 ‘Defining Moment for Earth: South Asia Faces Grave Environmental Concerns’
An article by George Cheriyan and Simi T.B. in South Asia Monitor on June 4, 2022. For more details, please access at: <https://www.southasiamonitor.org/spotlight/defining-moment-earth-south-asia-faces-grave-environmental-concerns>

6 STAFF REPRESENTATION/ORIENTATION

- Pratibha Jain attended a webinar on ‘India’s target of eradicating tuberculosis by 2025 by Testing and Treating the Missing Millions with Tuberculosis’ on January 11, 2022.
- Simi TB attended a UN System Response to Marine Litter and Plastic Pollution webinar organised in partnership with the United Nations Environment Management Group (UN-EMG) and GRID-Arendal on January 13, 2022.
- Amar Deep Singh, Amit Babu and Simi TB attended an online stakeholder consultation workshop organised by UN Environment Programme (UNEP) & World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) on January 25, 2022.
- Amit Babu attended Consumers International call on World Consumer Rights Day 2022 on January 26, 2022 about CI’s Digital Finance Summit 2022.
- Satyapal Singh & Amit attended World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) organised by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) on February 16-18, 2022 under the umbrella theme: ‘Towards a Resilient Planet: Ensuring a Sustainable and Equitable Future’. Attended a session titled “*Plastics and Circular Economy: Making EPR workable*”.
- George met with Smt Rehana Rayaz Chisti, newly appointed Chairperson of Rajasthan State Women's Commission, on February 22, 2022. He congratulated and extended good wishes, updated about CUTS work at the grassroots for the empowerment of women and presented a set of publications.
- Simi, Amit and Pratibha attended ‘Warning Labels or Health Star Rating (HSR) on Unhealthy Food Products: What Should India Choose?’ organised by Breastfeeding Promotion Network of India (BPNI) on March 9, 2022. Cheriyan was one of the panelists.
- Cheriyan attended a National Level Colloquium on State Action Plans on Anti Microbial Resistance (AMR) in India 2022, organised by WHO (India), ReAct (Asia Pacific) and World Animal Protection (India), in Delhi on March 14, 2022. He was one of the panelists in a session on ‘Behavioural Change and Local Action Plans on AMR’.

- Madhu Sudan Sharma participated in the webinar organised by Accountability Initiative on 'Making Governance in India Simpler to Understand' on March 15, 2022.
- George, Deepak, Madhu Sudan, Amar, Dharmendra Chaturvedi, Rajdeep Pareek, Nimisha, Amit & PratibhaA attended CCC Convention on 'Consumer Empowerment' on April 30, 2022 organised at Jaipur.
- Simi TB attended a webinar on "The Circular Economy & Sustainable Infrastructure" organised by The United Nations Environment Programme and the Asian Institute of Technology on May 05, 2022.
- Madhu Sudan Sharma participated in a national-level webinar organised by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Ministry of Road, Transport & Highways (MoRTH) on the state-supported programme for road safety on May 16, 2022
- Madhu Sudan, Satyapal Singh, Amit Babu and Pratibha Jain participated in World Hypertension Day organised by CUTS on May 17, 2022. The theme was "Measure Your Blood Pressure Accurately, Control It, Live Longer", which aimed at raising awareness of high blood pressure.
- Deepak Saxena and Dharmendra Chaturvedi participated in the first programme under the 'Manak Manthan' series organised by BIS on June 29, 2022. This programme series is being launched to discuss newly published standards, wide circulation drafts etc., which may impact the industrial dynamics in the state.
- Rajdeep Pareek and Nimisha Sharma attended two virtual meetings on July 08 and 15, 2022, respectively, with the National Coalition of Natural Farming member organisations. The discussion focussed on the role of *gram panchayats* and the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) in promoting organic farming in Rajasthan.
- Amit Babu attended the second 'Manak Manthan programme on Code of Practice for Repair of Distribution Transformers' on July 26, 2022.
- Deepak attended a workshop organised by the 'Think Nudge and Move Department' (TNMD) of BIS, HQ, New Delhi, with national-level governmental organisations and voluntary consumer organisations at Manak Bhawan in New Delhi on August 05, 2022.
- Cheriyan, Madhu Sudan, Amit and Satyapal Singh attended a meeting under the advocacy and capacity building under the project, Global Road Safety Partnership, in association with the Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur, West Bengal, organised its India partners meet from May 25-27, 2022.
- Cheriyan attended a National Multi-stakeholder dialogue on "Effective front of package labelling to ensure children's right to nutrition" organised by People's Vigilance Committee on Human Rights at Gandhi Peace Foundation, New Delhi, on May 16, 2022. He also participated in the GHAI partners meet cum strategy planning meeting facilitated by South Asia Regional Director, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids Vandana Shah.
- Cheriyan attended the meeting of the Central Advisory Committee of FSSAI held in Kochi, Kerala, on August 23-24, 2022.
- Dharmendra Chaturvedi attended fourth Manak Manthan Programme on IS 17505(Part 1): 2021 Fire Survival Cables on September 6, 2022 at BIS office, Jaipur

- Madhu Sudan Sharma participated in a national dialogue on road safety of children in Delhi on September 15, 2022 organised jointly by CEE Ahmedabad and Synergy Mumbai in which all the GRSP partner representatives took part.
- George, Simi and Satyapal Singh attended a meeting 'Sharing Findings of a New Study Published from India and Updates on the FOPL Policy' organized by Nutrition Advocacy in Public Interest (NAPi) on September 16, 2022.
- CUTS ECM was held on September 20, 2022 at CUTS conference hall, which was the first in physical mode after a period of over two and half years. The other attendees were George Cheriyan & Deepak Saxena from CART; Veena Vidhyadharan from CITEE; Ujjwal Kumar and Amol Kulkarni from C-CIER; Preeti Vats from HRD; GC Jain and Bipul Chatterjee from HO besides ECM members. Deepak Saxena presented in brief on CART activities with highlights. Later AGM also took place, George along with Deepak, Badri Narayan Sharma and Madhu Sudan attended the same.
- Virtual Roundtable on Lifestyles and Sustainable Consumption in the Context of SDG 12 was organised by TERI on September 23, 2022. George Cheriyan was one of the panelists of the consultation, and spoke on the theme from a consumer perspective.
- Nimisha Sharma attended an online course from September 25-October 1, 2022 as the Center for Science and Environment has conceptualized a one-week certificate course on 'E- Waste Management in India'.
- Simi TB attended World Environmental Health Day Celebrations and National Symposium on Life Cycle Assessment on September 26, 2022 organised by Department of Chemical Engineering, MS Ramaiah Institute of Technology, MSR Nagar, Bangalore in collaboration with Institute Innovation Council, MS Ramaiah Institute of Technology.
- Gauhar Mahmood has attended a special COP organized by TRAI, Jaipur office in Bhilwara on October 11, 2022 marking the silver jubilee celebration of TRAI.
- Deepak attended an event on October 15, 2022 organised by BIS, Jaipur at Jaipur to celebrate World Standards Day.
- Simi attended a National Conference on COP27 Compass- Road to Sharm el-Sheikh: Towards Equitable and Collective Climate Action and focused on COP27 climate negotiations on October 12, 2022.
- George and Satyapal attended and participated in the GHAI partners meet held at Delhi on October 17 & 18, 2022 to discuss the future strategies and how to take advocacy forward. On October 18, 2022, George visited Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh and met with five consumer organizations, who are CCC members and discussed the issue of FoPL. On October 19-20, 2022, George visited Guwahati and met with office bearers of Consumer Legal Protection Forum (CLPF) and discussed about the FoPL.
- George participated in the 14th TMC meeting headed by Mrs. Usha Sharma, Chief Secretary, Government of Rajasthan which was convened by the Transport and Road Safety Department, virtually on November 9, 2022.
- Amar Deep participated in the national consultation organised by Praja Foundation and National Institute of Urban Affairs at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi on November 25, 2022.
- George represented CUTS in the 14th World Conference on 'Injury Prevention and Safety Promotion' held in Adelaide, Australia from November 27-30, 2022 organised by GRSP.
- On December 10, 2022 on the occasion of Human Rights Day, CART team organized manifestation at CUTS conference hall by lighting candles and holding placards to honor hundreds of '**Environmental Defenders**', who are killed every year.

- Nimisha attended an event organised by Navdanya on GM Mustard, Diversity, Integrity & Purity of our Seeds & Food on December 19, 2022 at Jaipur.
- Deepak and Dharmendra along with intern Varsha Yadav attended an event organized by Directorate of Marketing and Inspection of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer Welfare jointly with Bhawani Niketan PG College to commemorate National Consumers Day on December 24, 2022. Satyapal attended an event on the same occasion organized by Department of Food and Consumers Affairs, Govt. of Rajasthan at HCM-RIPA, Jaipur.
- George was a panelist, of the 5th E-dialogue series under "Lets fix our food " organised by ICMR & NIN under a project supported by UNICEF on "Taxation on HFSS to discourage consumption" held on Dec. 16, 2022.
- Madhu Sudan and Satyapal represented CUTS in the partners meeting held in Delhi from December 19-20, 2022. The meeting was hosted by Synergy's Delhi office which is one of the GRSP partners in India.
- Simi & Amit Babu attended third FSSAI-Consumer Forum meeting for discussion on issues of consumers, consumer organization on December 29, 2022.

7 CART at SOCIAL NETWORK

- CART is managing four FB pages, one each for MyCity, Insight into Indian States (I3S), ProOb, ProOrganic & CoPSA (Community of Practice on Social Accountability), GSK and three dedicated web portals for (ProOb), COPSA and I3S.
- CART has Twitter account with link: <https://twitter.com/CUTSCART> and Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/cutsintcart>
- Besides, CART is also responsible for moderating three google groups:
CUTSConsumersUp: for Consumer Empowerment in India to take the issues of consumer protection forward.
CUTSGovForum: to discuss news and views on governance issues and challenges in India.
CUTSRoadSafety: to discuss and disseminate relevant issues on road safety.

8 INTERNSHIP AT CART

Three interns namely Mahima Periwal from Institute of Law, Nirma University, Ahmedabad from January 3-31, 2022 and Justine Shibu and Varsha Yadav, both from Symbiosis Law School, Nagpur, from November 28-December 28, 2022 completed their internship successfully in the year 2022 with CART.

9 VISITS

- Dr. Devendra Kumar Dhodawat, IAS, Principal Secretary to Governor of Kerala, who hails from Rajasthan made a courtesy visit to CUTS on September 7, 2022 and discussed issues of mutual interest with the CART team.
- To discuss the progress of the ICG project, Mish Khan, Chair, Director Aid Programme (DAP) and Pallavi Nayak, Senior Research Officer from Australian High Commission, New Delhi visited CUTS on Tuesday, September 27, 2022.
- Nils Viklund, Programme Manager, Chemicals, SSNC, Sweden visited CUTS from December 12-15, 2022 to review the progress and get the updates on the ProScop project.
- Taifur and Nalin of GRSP visited CUTS office on December 21, 2022 and met with the RoSA team.
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10 GRAM GADAR AWARD FOR RURAL JOURNALISM

The award for the year 2021 was given to Dr. Jai Kumar Bhati, Incharge of Grameen Desk of Rajasthan Patrika, Jodhpur Edition for his write ups, articles, news coverage and photo journalism from the rural areas on the selected theme “Increasing Involvement of Women in Development”. The award was given to him by Jaipur Greater Mayor, Munesh Gurjar on the occasion of Stakeholder’s Consultation on November 23, 2022 in Jaipur.

11 AFFILIATIONS

- Central Consumer Protection Council, Government of India (CCPC).
 - Advocacy Forum for Tobacco Control, India.
 - Telecom Regulatory Authority of India as Customer Advocacy Group (TRAI-CAG).
 - Bureau of Indian Standards as recognised consumer organisation.
 - Global Partner of Global Partnership for Social Accountability (GPSA).
 - Member of Roster of Experts and Roster of Practitioners of GPSA.
 - Member of Global Think Tank on Sustainable Consumption of Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC).
 - Reserve Bank of India as affiliated NGO.
 - Central Advisory Committee (CAC) of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)
 - Member of Chief Secretary’s Traffic Management Committee, Government of Rajasthan.
-