

CUTS Annual Report-2023

Inputs from CUTS CART

1. PROJECT and IMPACT

<p>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)</p> <p>Period: April, 2023-September, 2023</p> <p>Support: SSNC (Swedish Society for Nature Conservation)</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>
<p>2. Green Action Week-Rajasthan Campaign, 2023</p> <p>Period: September, 2023-November, 2023</p> <p>Support: CI (Consumer International)</p>	<p>Theme: 'Sharing Community'</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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>3. Project: Advocacy for Scientific and Consumer Friendly FoPL for HFSS in All Foods in India.</p> <p>Period: March, 2022-October, 2023 and November, 2023-June, 2024</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Impact: CSOs, Government Officials and Packaged Food Manufacturers have been sensitised about the seriousness of the FoPLs from consumers' perspective.</p>
<p>4. Project: (ROSA III) & (ROSA IV)</p> <p>Period: March, 2021-August, 2022 September, 2022-February, 2024</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Impact: Effective Motor Vehicle Act is in place. Effective rules are in place with increased effective enforcement of laws.</p>
<p>5. Project: SANS Study on SDG 11 (October, 2022-January, 2023)</p> <p>Period: October, 2022-January, 2023</p> <p>Support: ESCAP SOSSWA</p>	<p>Objective: 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>Impact: The report prepared by CART for UNESCAP was published last month as a working paper. Link to the study https://repository.unescap.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.12870/6497/ESCAP-2023-WP-Accelerating-Progress-SDG-11-SSWA.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y</p>
<p>6. Project: Improving City Governance Through Enhancing Knowledge of Urban Local Bodies in Rajasthan</p> <p>Period: April, 2022-March, 2023</p> <p>Support: Australian High Commission under Direct Aid Programme.</p>	<p>Objective: 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>Impact: Enhanced communication, awareness and understanding among ULBs of Rajasthan on the importance of close coordination among departments, financial instruments to effectively use such tools for meeting infrastructure financing needs.</p>

<p>7. <u>Project:</u> VOAC (Voice of Aggrieved Consumers)</p>	<p><u>Objective:</u></p>
<p><u>Period:</u> November, 2022-October, 2023</p>	<p>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>Support:</u> DVARA Research</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

Improving City Governance through Enhancing Knowledge of Urban Local Bodies

To foster knowledge, information and capacity building about issues like solid waste management, urban public transportation system, water supply and financial instruments like municipal bonds within ULBs in Rajasthan and enhance a knowledge about vital topics related to urban governance in selected cities within the state and to ensure effective functioning of these bodies, two training workshops were held for Urban Local Body (ULB) officials in Rajasthan. The third workshop in Bharatpur on January 19, 2023, addressed issues such as solid waste management, urban transportation, water supply, and financial instruments like municipal bonds. The fourth workshop in Ajmer on March 17, 2023, focused on municipal finance, solid waste management, sustainable transportation, and community participation. Notable speakers included Abhijeet Kumar, Mayor of Bharatpur, and Kamaldeep Sharma, State Nodal Officer of the 15th Finance Commission. The workshops aimed to enhance urban governance knowledge, with a total of 30 and 36 officials participating in Bharatpur and Ajmer, respectively. Certificates of participation were distributed to all attendees.

National Road Safety Week Commemorated on January 11-17, 2023

During Road Safety Week, the CUTS team was actively involved in various activities primarily conducted in Rajasthan, with participation from CUTS State partners in Kerala and Karnataka. In Rajasthan, the team attended the state inaugural function on January 11, 2023, and inaugurated the State Training Institute on the same day. Stakeholder consultations were organized in Pratapgarh on January 16, 2023, and in Banswara on January 17, 2023, in collaboration with CHD team, Banswara, and CUTS Pratapgarh teams. These consultations engaged college students, faculty members, district transport officials, PWD, health, and police officials. Shri CP Joshi, Member of Parliament, Chittorgarh-Pratapgarh, also participated. Additionally, CUTS facilitated street plays and an interactive session with school children on road safety at the state level in Jaipur. The district valedictory function in Banswara included the distribution of district-level certificates for commendable initiatives during Road Safety Week.

Sustainable Consumption and Production is a Matter of Concern with Constraint of Time and High Task

Ajitabh Sharma, Chairman & Managing Director of Jaipur City Transport Services Limited, expressed concerns about human actions, particularly commercial activities, being a major cause of environmental degradation. He emphasized the need for balanced development that considers the impact on the ecosystem. This perspective was shared during a state-level consultation organized by CUTS International in Jaipur on March 29, 2023. The meeting also featured insights from Vijay Sharma of the Rajasthan State Pollution Control Board, who stressed the importance of working towards sustainability. Vikram Raghav, State Technical Consultant SDG, Department of Panchayati Raj, discussed sustainable development goals (SDGs) and India's policies to implement them, highlighting the three pillars of social, environmental, and economic aspects. Dr. Himani Tiwari, State Nodal Person, Swachh Bharat Mission, talked about SBM initiatives, including the recruitment of environmental engineers for nature preservation. Dr. Soumana Dutta, a retired professor from the University of Rajasthan, addressed the environmental impact of illegal mining and suggested the potential of microorganisms in converting toxic waste into usable material. Amar Deep Singh, Senior Programme Officer at CUTS, focused on SDG 12 from a consumer perspective based on the United Nations Guidelines for Consumer Protection. The meeting, attended by over 50 participants from government departments, sustainable organizations, civil societies, and resident associations across Rajasthan, aimed to address environmental concerns and promote sustainable consumption.

Commemoration of World Consumer Rights Day

CUTS organized an event on March 14, 2023, to commemorate World Consumer Rights Day, aiming to raise global awareness about consumer rights, protection, and empowerment. Deepak Saxena, Associate Director at CUTS, emphasized the symbolic significance of WCRD for consumers, urging them to understand and exercise their rights and responsibilities. Saxena traced the historical concept of the seller-consumer relationship back to Kautilya's Arthashastra and highlighted John F. Kennedy's speech on March 15 as the catalyst for the modern consumer movement. He also noted that Consumer International determines the theme for WCRD each year, with the 2023 theme being 'Empowering Consumers Through Clean Energy Transition.' Akash Sharma, Policy Analyst at CUTS, emphasized the crucial role of clean energy in the contemporary world, addressing the increasing energy consumption and its environmental impact. Sharma highlighted the global energy crisis and the rise in energy prices, leading consumers to adjust their budgets to meet essential needs. More than 80 percent of consumers, according to a Consumer International survey, are reported to be modifying their budgets to accommodate rising energy bills.

Consumers Needs to Change Behaviour and Consumption Patterns: Stakeholders Sensitisation Programmes for Awareness

With an objective to sensitise local consumers and stakeholders towards sustainable lifestyle through an advocacy tool to streamline existing policies of the government and push for more dedicated efforts to support SCP from the consumer perspective, the first Stakeholders Sensitization Programme was organised at Jodhpur under ProScop SCP Project on September 29, 2022 followed by the second at Kota District on November 18, 2022. The third programme in the series was organised at Bharatpur on December 1, 2022. The fourth in the series was organised at Bhilwara on January 24, 2023 followed by the fifth at Chittorgarh on January 25, 2023 sixth at Rajgarh, Churu on February 17, 2023 and the last at Jaipur on February 24, 2023. The stakeholders in all these included reps from

CSOs, NGOs, government officials from municipal corporations, electricity departments, pollution control board and public representatives and media. The stakeholders in all these included representatives from CSOs, NGOs, government officials from municipal corporations, electricity departments, pollution control boards and public representatives and media.

Adopting a Cluster Approach for Better Results in Organic Farming

The State Level Stakeholder Consultation on March 14, 2023, in Jaipur served as a platform to evaluate past project activities before entering a crucial project stage. Rajdeep Pareek from CUTS presented the achievements of the year, focusing on the selection of four gram panchayats from each district in two designated blocks. Various activities such as awareness campaigns, organic gardens in schools, kitchen garden training, green action week, and community-managed seed cells organic fairs were successfully implemented in project districts, receiving positive responses from rural and urban consumers and producers. Professor Balraj Singh, Vice-chancellor of SKN Agricultural University, commended CUTS for its efforts in organic farming and suggested a cluster approach for improved results. Deepika Saini from the Rajasthan Organic Certification Agency explained the government's certification process for organic products. The chief guest, Padma Shree Awardee Laxman Singh Latoria, shared insights into their successful water conservation efforts over the past 20 years. The event had 65 participants, including district partners, farmers, government officials, agricultural institutions, NGOs, CSOs, and media representatives.

Experts Disapprove Proposed Regulations for FoPL Nutrition Rating

Experts at a state-level consultation organized by CUTS in Bangalore on July 28, 2023, highlighted the need for increased awareness about the health impact of ultra-processed foods and the role of Front of Pack Labelling (FoPL) in addressing this concern. The discussion emphasized the rising prevalence of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in urban and rural India, as indicated by a recent study by the Indian Council of Medical Research-India Diabetes. Simplified nutrition information on the front of food packages, particularly regarding salt, sugar, and fat content, was proposed as a cost-effective strategy to promote healthier choices. Experts argued that implementing clear warning labels would incentivize food industries to reformulate products, ultimately improving the nutritional content of available food options. A similar consultation in Bhopal on August 17, 2023, organized with the National Centre for Human Settlements & Environment, featured discussions on NCDs and FoPL, with experts presenting their views. Dr Varuna Pathak, HoD, Obstetrics Gynaecology, R K Medical College, Bhopal said that every consumer has the right to informed choices, but they must be aware about their needs. She put example of increasing cases of hypertension, obesity, diabetes, etc. among pregnant women due to lack of their knowledge about right food. Shri Devendra Dubey, Sr Food Safety Officer, Food & drugs Administration, MP and Dr Pradip Nandi, Director General, NCHSE also presented their views. Shri Pradeep Kumar Modi, Principal, IHM was also present on the occasion. The programme was conducted by Shri Avinash Shrivastava, Dy Director, NCHSE. The third consultation at Kota on October 12, 2023 was also good. Dr. Jagdish Soni, CMHO in Kota, emphasized the importance of discussions on public health and welcomed the decision by FSSAI for voluntary Health Star Labelling. Dr. Ratna Jain, a Gynecologist and Former Mayor, stressed FoPL as a consumer right, urging regulators to take necessary steps for an effective labeling system suited to Indian consumers. Dr. Sanjay Pandey presented the 'Status of NCDs in India and Rajasthan and the role of FoPL,' noting that FoPL schemes have been introduced in over 40 countries worldwide.

Delivering Democracy: Retrospect and Prospect

Democratic decentralization involves distributing power, responsibility, and decision-making authority across different levels of government, namely Central, State, and Local Self-Governments. Greater citizen participation in governance, especially at the local level, signifies more powerful decentralization. The effectiveness of addressing various issues lies in empowering, innovative, resourceful, transparent, and accountable local governments. Under C20, the working group on 'Delivering Democracy: Retrospect and Prospect' organized a regional roundtable in Jaipur on June 7, 2023, as part of multiple knowledge assimilation events. The event included diverse participants such as Member of Parliament Ram Charan Bohra as Chief Guest, Kamal Chandra Yogi, a Professor from Central Sanskrit University as keynote speaker, and Rajib Dasgupta, Head of Research at Grassroots Research and Advocacy Movement. The roundtable featured honored PRI members from different states recognized by the Prime Minister for their innovative development initiatives. Participants included Pradhans, Mayors, Deputy Mayors, representatives from urban local bodies, civil society organizations, media representatives, retired bureaucrats, development researchers, social activists, and domain experts. Facilitated by CUTS team members, the roundtable had 50 active participants discussing various aspects of democratic decentralization.

Holistic Approach to Transportation Safety Needed

Pradeep S. Mehta

Livemint, August 10, 2023

Right now we have different authorities for the safety of our rail, air, and waterways. Let's take a whole-of-government approach that would not get bogged down by turf overlaps. The need of the hour is to integrate the country's entire transport safety system under a unified national body.

<https://rb.gy/8ucwu>

Urgent Need for FoPL in Indian Processed Food

The introduction of warning labels is crucial to consumers, particularly those in rural areas, who face challenges such as limited access to nutritional and health information, language and literacy barriers, and health disparities. These warning labels enable them to quickly make informed and healthy choices

Pradeep S Mehta and Simi TB

Money Control, August 23, 2023

<https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/opinion/india-needs-to-urgently-implement-front-of-pack-labelling-system-for-processed-food-11241791.html>

The G20 Championing the Consumer Movement

CUTS International organised a webinar on 'The G20 Championing the Consumer Movement' on August 23, 2023. The G20 webinar served as a resounding call to action, underscoring the pressing need to prioritise consumer protection within the G20 framework. The speakers of the webinar were Pradeep S Mehta, Secretary General, CUTS International; Rebeca Grynspan, Secretary-General of UNCTAD; Cherish Deshpande, Chairman, Mumbai Grahak Panchayat (MGP); Vijay K. Nambiar: Principal Coordinator (Sherpa), Civil20India; Fernando Blanco: Former National Director for Consumer Defence, Argentina; Teresa Moreira, Head of Competition and Consumer Policies Branch at UNCTAD; Athayde Motta: Executive Director, Brazilian Institute for Social and Economic Analyses (IBASE); Thezi Mabuza: Acting Commissioner, National Consumer Commission, South Africa; Saroja Sundaram: Executive Director, Citizen Consumer and Civic Action Group (CAG), India and Member, General Council of the Consumers International; Igor Rodrigues Britto: Director, International Relations, Brazilian Institute for Consumer Protection (IDEC), Brazil; Dr. Nava Subramaniam: Dean, School of Business, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Coimbatore.

Commemoration of the 'World Day of Remembrance (WDoR)', 2023 On November 19, 2023

The theme of this year's WDoR, 2023 was *'Remember. Support. Act.'* CUTS commemorated the WDoR in Rajasthan and Kerala and developed several media creatives focusing on various key risk factors, road safety issues especially #over speeding, #two-wheeler safety # child safety # NRSB #speed management guidelines # two-wheeler safety guidelines etc. MSS posted road safety creatives after every three hours or so on CUTS social media handles and others. In Kerala, road safety awareness program with youths, college managements, nursing staff and students, print and electronic media reach and several activities were conducted.

State Level 'Stakeholders Policy Advocacy Consultation' on Road Safety in Bengaluru, Karnataka

CUTS, in collaboration with Public Affairs Foundation (PAF), conducted a day-long state-level Stakeholders Consultation on Road Safety Policy Advocacy in Karnataka at the IAS Club in Bengaluru on November 23, 2023. The primary goal was to advocate for effective policies and guidelines related to speed management, 2-wheeler safety, and the protection of vulnerable road users in the state. The event featured prominent figures in the inaugural session, including Yogesh A.M (I.A.S.) Transport Commissioner, J. Ghanendra Kumar (Additional Transport Commissioner), J Purushottam (Additional Commissioner and Member Secretary, Karnataka Road Safety Authority), and HD Manjunatha (RTO, Bengaluru). Technical sessions included insights from various experts, such as Ms. Anita B. Haddannavar (IPS), Prof Pradeep BS from NIMHANS, Srinivas Alavalli and Chetan Sodaye from WRI, Ms. Pratiksha Surpuriya from the Global Design of Cities Initiative (GDCI), Satya Shankaran (Bicycle Mayor), and Mr. Indira (General Secretary, Bengaluru Nav Nirman Party). Dr. Annapoorna and Ms. Sheeba Das from PAF coordinated the event, with representatives from NGOs, media, and academic institutions participating. The total number of participants was around 55, and MSS represented CUTS, delivering a detailed presentation during the inaugural session. The consultation aimed to address critical road safety issues and advocate for impactful policies in Karnataka.

Stakeholder Consultation Meetings: GAW

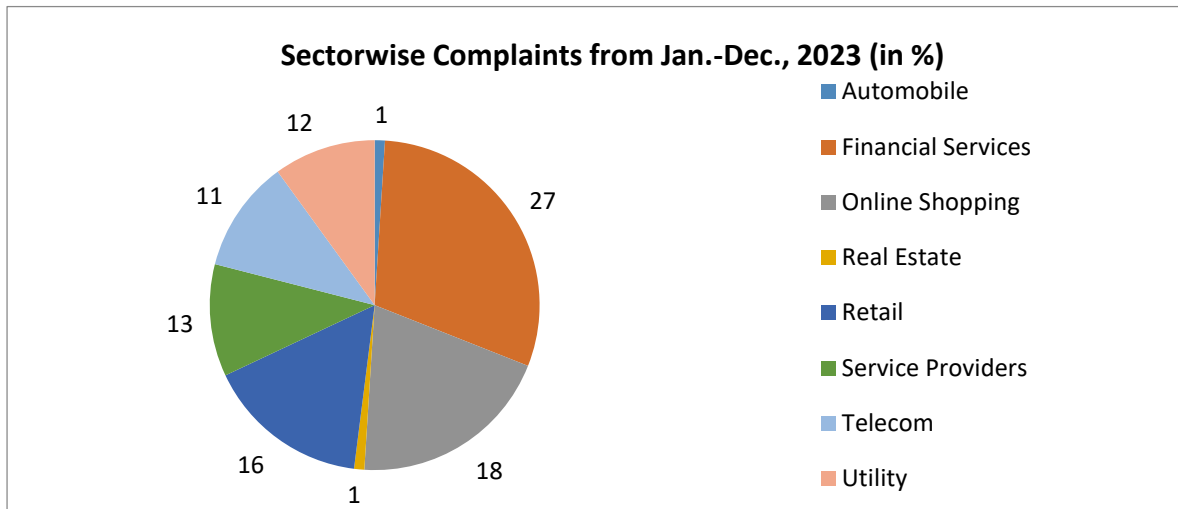
Two community level stakeholder consultations were organised by local partners Rajesh Malakar and BR Sharma in their respective areas. BR Sharma organised consultation at Karni Palace Road on Nov. 3, 2023 which was attended by more than 50 women participants. ADS attended the consultation. Rajesh Malakar organised community level consultation on Nov. 6, 2023 at Jagannath Puri area, which was attended by 30 women participants. RDP & DC attended the workshop. Artist Srajan Mishra also attended both the consultations to get the idea about community sustainable consumption

Envisioning SCP Workshop: GAW

Sustainable consumption envisioning workshop was organised under Green Action Week on Nov. 9 at Hotel Zone, Jaipur. It was attended by the 25 local resident from the targeted community of GAW partners namely BR Sharma and Rajesh Malakar. Workshop was aimed to generate the ideas from community members and create a vision for sustainable future. Participants were divided into two groups and given the task of group work. ADS facilitated the workshop and guided them to generate ideas and vision for sustainable future.

3. GRAHAK SAHAYTA KENDRA

In the year 2023, GSK entertained a good number of complaints, the details of which are explained through graph and below, the sector wise figures.



4. PUBLICATIONS/OUTREACH

Wall Newspaper <https://cuts-cart.org/gram-gadar/>

- Gram Gadar (Twelve issues of wall newspaper)

E-Newsletters (<https://cuts-cart.org/e-newsletter/>)

- Paanchvan Stambh (three issues of quarterly newsletter in Hindi) _ Fourth will be out in January 2024.
- Catalyst (three issues of quarterly e-newsletter) _ Fourth will be out in January 2024.
- City Matters (three issues of quarterly newsletter) _ Fourth will be out in January 2024
- Consumer Dialogue (two issues of tri-annual e-newsletter in English) _ Third will be out in January 2024.
- GSK Alert (three issues of quarterly e-newsletter) _ Fourth will be out in January 2024.

Occasional News Wrap (<https://cuts-cart.org/occasional-news-wraps/>)

- 6 issues of ONW (Health Regulations) _Seventh issue will be out in January, 2024 of Nov.-Dec., 2023.

5. OPEDS/ARTICLES

5.1 World Health Day 2023 is an opportunity to raise awareness about healthy food choices and policies that promote access to nutritious, and sustainable food.

The planet is choking in pollution, and human health is compromised by unsustainable consumption and production at a time when the pandemic refusing to subside. The World Health Day 2023 with the theme, Health for All, underlines the importance of raising awareness on healthcare issues. It becomes all the more relevant as countries are committed to achieving universal healthcare by 2030 which is fundamental to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal 3 – Good Health and Well Being.

For more details please access at: <http://bit.ly/3zNkx20>

Rethinking Road Safety: Integrating Safety Measures at Road Level

Policy Circle, May 19, 2023

By Madhu Sudan Sharma and Arnab Ganguly

India's road safety strategy must unlock the potential of value engineering and innovative approaches to safe travel. The world is celebrating the seventh UN Global Road Safety Week from May 15-21, 2023. This year's theme is Rethink Mobility. The issue of road safety in today's context is complex because numerous road-owning agencies and stakeholder departments are responsible for reducing the number of road crashes, injuries, and deaths.

<https://bit.ly/42RyzwH>

World Environment Day: Enhance Sustainability Efforts

Moneycontrol, June 05, 2023

By Pradeep S Mehta and Simi TB

Trade and environment debate in the World Trade Organisation is slowly coming up, an example of which is a contentious step by the European Union to apply border carbon measures on its imports. On the other hand, there is rapidly growing interest in the issue of plastic pollution, which presents a unique opportunity for action. Recent advancements made by the WTO Dialogue on Plastics Pollution and Environmentally Sustainable Plastics Trade align with this global momentum.

<https://rb.gy/69bqn>

Food Standards: Ensuring Safety and Sustainability

The Economic Times, June 07, 2023

By Pradeep S Mehta and Simi TB

Today, June 07, with the global population surpassing eight billion and projected to continue rising in the coming years, the world observes World Food Safety Day under the theme 'Food Standards Save Lives.' This significant day emphasises the crucial role of established food safety practices and standards in guaranteeing the safety and quality of food.

<https://bit.ly/4309jHt>

Holistic Approach to Transportation Safety Needed

Pradeep S. Mehta/ Livemint, August 10, 2023

Right now we have different authorities for the safety of our rail, air, and waterways. Let's take a whole-of-government approach that would not get bogged down by turf overlaps. The need of the hour is to integrate the country's entire transport safety system under a unified national body. <https://rb.gy/8ucwu>

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Money Control, August 23, 2023

<https://www.moneycontrol.com/news/opinion/india-needs-to-urgently-implement-front-of-pack-labelling-system-for-processed-food-11241791.html>

Some more articles/op-eds:

[Front of pack nutrition labelling: Star ratings may not be the right format](#)

Policy Circle, January 11, 2023

[Government must add road safety element to infrastructure push](#)

Policy Circle, February 9, 2023

[The future is renewables: Transit fast but smarter](#)

Economic Times, February 25, 2023

[Public procurement: Periodic review of preferential treatment can ensure cost effectiveness](#)

Policy Circle, March 10, 2023

[World Health Day 2023: Aware consumers key to universal healthcare](#)

Policy Circle, April 07, 2023

[Missing Piece of the Puzzle: Importance of Consumer Protection in the G-20 Agenda](#)

Modern Ghana, April 17, 2023

[Consumer protection in the G-20 agenda](#)

The News on Sunday, April 30, 2023

[For the Benefit of Consumers “Front of Pack Labelling”](#)

Rajasthan Patrika July 07, 2023

[Global Food Regulators Summit Seeks to Tackle Non-Communicable Diseases](#)

Policy Circle, July 19, 2023

[Elevating consumer protection on G20 agenda for a balanced future](#)

Livemint, September 07, 2023

[What Ails Health Claims](#)

Financial Express, December 29, 2023

5.2 STAFF REPRESENTATION/ORIENTATION

- Simi TB attended Consumers International Leadership Dialogue: Digital fairness for future generations on January 10, 2023.
- George Cheriyan participated in a seminar as panelist on “The Evolution of FOP labeling and their (Un)necessary Role – A Global Perspective” on January 10, hosted by COMPETERE, Italy.
- George and Rajdeep Pareek participated in a National Workshop & Exhibition on 'Organic Urban farming' held on January 27, 2023 organised by Kanoria PG College, Jaipur in collaboration with International Society of Life Sciences (ISLS) & University of Rajasthan.
- CUTS observed the 'World Cancer Day' on February 4, 2023 through posting relevant key messages on social media platforms.
- Madhu Sudan Sharma took part in a meeting of NGOs working in road safety in Rajasthan on February 16, 2023 organized by Road Safety Cell, Transport and Road Safety Department, GoR to discuss about the road safety initiatives taken by department and seeking cooperation of the NGOs, receiving comments and suggestions on the same.
- A discussion with Sheila Senfuma Nakanyike, Head of Programme of Fair Digital Finance Accelerator (FDFA), Consumers International) was organised, who visited CUTS on February 20, 2023. George, Deepak Saxena, Satyapal Singh were also part of the discussions.

- George participated in an invitation from Department of Home Science, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur for the 'International Conference on Future of Food: Food Safety, Sustainability, Diversity and Industry' on March 3-4, 2023 and made a presentation on 'Food Safety in India: Labelling and Display Regulations' on March 3, 2023.
- George, Deepak and Satyapal attended the 'International Conference on Future of Food: Food Safety, Sustainability, Diversity and Industry' on March 3-4, 2023.
- CUTS observed the World Obesity Day on March 4, 2023 through posting relevant key messages on social media platforms.
- Sanjay Pandey, Consultant, GHAI visited CUTS on March 13, 2023.
- Simi TB attended an online meeting on 'The Consumer Journey on the Road to Clean Energy', organised by the Consumers International on March 13, 2023.
- Simi TB attended a round table on 'Building Resilience in a Changing Climate: Strategies, Solutions, and Collaborations' organised by the C20 Working Group on Sustainable and Resilient Communities: Climate, Environment and Net Zero on March 15, 2023.
- Simi TB attended a webinar on 'Grassroots Solutions for Energy Access: How Can We Leverage the Power of Consumers' organised by the Consumers International on March 16, 2023.
- George participated in a workshop on 'Countering Ultra-Processed Foods in the Asia-Pacific and Worldwide', as a key speaker from India hosted by Deakin University on March 28, 2023.
- Simi TB attended a T20 **(TF-3)** Seminar series – 2 titled 'Sustainable Consumption and Production, Climate crisis and One Health' on March 31, 2023 organised by the C20 Working Group on Sustainable and Resilient Communities: Climate, Environment and Net Zero.
- CUTS Participation in Regional Partners Meeting of GRSP in Mumbai
- Madhu Sudan Sharma participated in the GRP regional meeting held on April 04, 2023. GRSP is working in various Asian countries and having its road safety partners in India, Vietnam, China, Malaysia, Philippines, and Bangladesh.
- Amrat Singh participated in the National Conference on Inclusive Rural Growth and Development organised by CII on April 6, 2023 in New Delhi
- C20 working group on Delivering Democracy: Representing CUTS, Amrat Singh participated in the International Conference on Delivering Democracy: Prospects and Retrospect, in Bengaluru on April 12-13, 2023 and organized by 'Grassroots Research and Action Movement (GRAM).
- Simi TB attended C20 Policy Roundtable titled "Addressing Climate and Biodiversity with local stakeholders: Strategies, Challenges & Solutions" on April 17, 2023.
- Simi TB attended a "Introducing EnfTech: a technological approach to consumer law enforcement" organised by University of Reading in collaboration with UNCTAD on April 20, 2023.
- Amrat Singh & Amardeep Singh had a meeting with CARE India on April 27, 2023 in New Delhi to explore working synergy.
- Amrat Singh & Amardeep Singh had a meeting with Hanns Seidel Foundation on April 27, 2023 in New Delhi to explore funding opportunities.
- CUTS observed World Hypertension Day on May 17, 2023, through posting relevant key messages on social media platforms.
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- Simi TB attended an event on "A Fire Side Chat on Challenges Before G20" organised by CUTS on May 28, 2023. Amitabh Kant was the key speaker at a 40th Anniversary event of CUTS International, along with Harsh Vardhan Shringla, India's G20 Chief Coordinator.
- Madhu Sudan Sharma participated in the Child Road Safety Workshop jointly organised by the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP) and Centre for Environment Education (CEE), at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Delhi on May 29-30, 2023.
- Amrat Singh with Nilanjana Sharma participated in a UN GCNI Multi-Stakeholders Workshop on Collective Action: Uniting Together – Addressing Healthcare Challenges through Ethical Business Practices and Collective Action at the State Institute of Health & Family Welfare (SIFHW), Jaipur on May 30, 2023.
- Amrat Singh and Yatika Agrawal participated in the HCL Grants Symposium organised by HCL Tech in association with IIHMR University on June 15, 2023.
- Simi TB attended a CUTS Webinar on 'Working Together to Promote Trade Multilateralism' on June 20, 2023. The speakers underlined the need and importance for India and the US to come together to promote Trade Multilateralism and work towards the need to restore the dispute settlement mechanism
- GHAI organised a Partner's Meeting in New Delhi on June 22, 2023, the purpose of which was to get the project update of the current quarter from partners. Amrat Singh and Simi TB attended the programme on behalf of CUTS.
- Simi TB attended a webinar on Fostering Educational Processes and Community Engagement: Dialogues for a Sustainable World, organised by C20 India 2023 Working Group on Sustainable and Resilient Communities in collaboration with UNESCO Chair on Experiential Learning for Sustainable Innovation & Development on June 28, 2023.
- Simi TB attended a meeting of Consumers International Food Member Connect organised by Consumers International on July 04, 2023. She also attended a G20/T20 on 'Challenges and Opportunities of Sustainable Energy Transition organised by Integrated Research and Action for Development' on July 04, 2023.
- Amardeep Singh participated in the workshop on 'Role of NGOs under Swatch Bharat Mission' organised by the Department of Local Self-Government, Government of Rajasthan at Jaipur on July 06, 2023.
- Simi TB was invited as a speaker in a webinar on 'Medical Device Regulations' organised by AiMED and Consultants Consortium of Chennai on July 26, 2023. She spoke on 'Consumer Viewpoint on Inclusion of Information on Medical Device Packages.'
- Jayesh Mathur and Madhu Sudan Sharma attended the C20 summit in Jaipur from July 29-31, 2023.
- Deepak Saxena attended a webinar on 'Limitations on Warranties, Indemnities & Claims in Sale Agreements' organised by Khaitan and Company on August 08, 2023.
- Amar Deep Singh attended the launch of the book 'Social Innovations in Urban Sanitation in India' and a discussion on urban governance organised by Participatory Research in Asia online on August 09, 2023, through online mode.
- Simi TB attended a Webinar on 'Towards Effective Implementation of Mission LiFE: From Consumer Duties to Consumer Rights' organised by the Centre for Responsible Business on August 10, 2023.
- CUTS Executive Committee Meeting was organised at CUTS Conference Hall, on August 22, 2023, which was attended by Amrat Singh and Deepak Saxena. Amrat Singh spoke on 'Governance and Consumer Protection'.

- Madhu Sudan participated in the state-level discussion organised by the Road Safety Cell, Transport Department, and Government of Rajasthan at Transport Bhawan on August 28, 2023.
- Simi TB was invited as a speaker in a webinar on 'Key role of Consumer in Materiovigilance Programme of India' organised by Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Gov of India on Sept. 22, 2023. She spoke on the topic 'Medical devices quality and safety – Encouraging public reporting of faulty devices – role of consumer organisations
- Simi TB attended on meeting on Ultra-Processed Products Webinar: Latest Evidence and Policy Implications with Professor Carlos Monteiro organised by University of Sao Paulo, and Global Health Advocacy Incubator on Oct. 5, 2023.
- Simi TB attended one meeting conducted by Cochin International Airport, represented by its officers, for CIAL's apron expansion and associated Terminal 3 works. PSM nominated STB to represent CUTS as an AUCC member on October 9, 2023.
- Madhu Sudan Sharma represented CUTS in the GRSP India Partners Annual Strategic Meeting held at Chennai from October 11-13, 2023. A. Shanmuga Sundaram IAS., the Transport Commissioner (TC) of Tamil Nadu; Ranjit Gadgil from Parisar; Taifur Rehman, representing Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP); Professor Bhargab Maitra from IIT Kharagpur; Mervyn Christian, GHAI and others talked about the goals, objectives, and advocacy achievements etc. on the work related to road safety.
- Simi TB attended one webinar on Protecting children from the harmful impact of food marketing: unpacking the evidence to guide policies to prevent harmful impacts of marketing" organised by WHO Regional Office for South-East Asia on October 11, 2023.
- Amardeep Singh attended an online national report 'Empowerment of Women Elected Representatives' launching organised by Praja Foundation on Friday, October 27, 2023.
- Amardeep Singh attended webinar on October 31, 2023 organised by IIHS Capacity Development Forum (CDF) on 'Capacity Development for Financing a Sustainable Urban Future for All'. Dr. Ravikant Joshi, Urban Financial Management Expert was the main speaker and he delivered talk on the sustainable finance of Urban Local Bodies and need of capacity building.
- Simi TB attended Intermediating Sustainable Consumption and Production - Presentation by Allison Marie Loconto | organised by Hebrew University of Jerusalem on November 1, 2023.
- Dharmendra Chaturvedi attended Consumer Outreach Program organised by TRAI, Jaipur on November 4, 2023 at Govt. Women Polytechnic College, Sanganer, Jaipur.
- Simi TB Zoom meeting with CADE representatives to discuss G20 Consumer Summit in Brazil in 2024 November 8, 2023.
- Amardeep Singh attended an online webinar on 'Sustainable Cities and Communities' organised by Manipal University on November 8, 2023 as a speaker jointly with Purushendra Singh (PRH), WDC. He talked about CUTS urban initiatives and citizen engagements.
- Madhu Sudan Sharma took part in an online road safety workshop organized by Tremmers Private Limited based in UK on November 9, 2023.
- Madhu Sudan Sharma visited office of the Supreme Court committee on Road Safety dated November 16, 2023 and met with Mr. Sanjay Mittal, Secretary of the committee. MSS shared the fact sheets which talk about the recently released road accident data of Rajasthan, Kerala, and Karnataka.

- Amrat Singh along with ADS, GCJ, VV, GAM, MGG, and GMD attended an online meeting with HCL tech grant team on November 16, 2023. It was in-depth discussions with the leadership and project teams about the organization and the project as part of the 'due diligence' process.
- N M Prusty and Namrata from HCL Grant Team visited CUTS on November 20, 2023. Amrat Singh along with Deepak, G C Jain, Amar Deep, Gauhar, Rajdeep attended the meeting with team at CUTS conference hall. A full day meeting was on to review the project proposal, organisation's profile, its achievements and the governance structure. On Nov. 21, 2023, HCL team visited CUTS CHD for evaluation of the field work. Amrat Singh and Amar Deep accompanied them. A field visit was organised at Bassi Gram Panchayat, where they interacted with the SHG members. They also reviewed various accounts and organizational documents of the SHG and also visited Gadiya Lohar community.
- Amrat Singh, Amardeep Singh along with GAM, MGG visited various CSR/Foundations based in Chittorgarh on November 22, 2023 to explore the possible collaboration and support. They met with Vijay Singh, CSR Incharge of Aditya Birla Foundation; Mahaveer Singh, CSR Head, Wonder Cement and Sudhir Kumar, CSR Manager, Nuvoco Vistas.
- Madhu Sudan represented CUTS in the Asia Regional Road Safety Conference held at Manila, Philippines from December 5-7, 2023. The conference was organized by The Asian Development Bank, the Asia-Pacific Road Safety Observatory (APRSO), the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP) and International Road Assessment Programme (iRap) jointly at ADB headquarters. This APRSO Annual Meeting and the GRSP Regional Road Safety Seminar is a high-profile combined regional event on road safety having stakeholders from 53 countries.
- Simi TB attended Airport User Consultative Committee Meeting organised by Cochin International Airport Limited on December 8, 2023 at Courtyard Marriott Airport Hotel, Nedumbassery.
- Amar Deep and Simi TB attended UNESCAP Expert Group Online Meeting on 'Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment in South Asia through Inclusive Transport' on Dec. 13, 2023.
- Simi TB attended an online workshop on Simplifying Sustainability for MSMEs: The What and Why of Sustainability organised by FICCI on December 14, 2023.
- Madhu Sudan attended the release of WHO Global Status Report of Road Safety, 2023 on December 13, 2023 in a hybrid mode.
- Amar Deep attended state level workshop on Biomedical Waste Management organised by WHO, Dept. of Health & Family Welfare and Toxics Link at Jaipur on Dec. 18, 2023.
- Madhu Sudan met Kishore Kumar, Joint Secretary, Planning, Education Department, Govt. of India on Dec. 20, 2023 and discussed issues, which could be done by CUTS with an association of department.
- Amar Deep, Amrat, Deepak and Simi attended a zoom meeting on Dec. 20, 2023 with officials of UNICEF on Child Friendly City Initiative. Devika Deshmukh of UNICEF made a presentation on Pimpri Chinchwad Municipal Corporation (PCMC), Pune's intervention on child friendly cities (CFC).
- A virtual meeting was held with Sabrina Gander, Senior Officer, Advocacy and Grants on Dec. 21, 2023. Nalin Sinha, India Coordinator, GHAI. Amrat, Rajdeep, Deepak, Gauhar and Madhu Sudan from CUTS were present in the meeting.

- Madhu Sudan attended a meeting on Dec. 28, 2023 organised by RTO, Jaipur with NGOs to discuss MORTH's report of Road Accidents, 2021 and Global Status of Road Safety Report, 2023.
- Deepak met lawyers Bhaskar and Tarun Agarwal in their chamber on Dec. 29, 2023 to discuss and explore the ways to file the review petition in NGT.

5 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> and LinkedIn (<https://www.linkedin.com/feed/>)
- 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.

6 INTERNSHIP AT CUTS CART

Tashreen Khan and Krishna Sharma from Vivekananda Global University for a month and Kashika Gupta from Symbiosis School of Liberal Arts for a month successfully completed an internship with CUTS CART at different times in 2023.

7 VISITS/Meetings/MoUs

Visits

- Indian Road Congress (IRC) Delegation in Rajasthan
A team of 3 Engineers, who are Life Members of Indian Road Congress (IRC), Kerala Chapter, Er. Reghu Kumar, Er. Hari Ramakrishnan and Er. Chandrababu, visited CUTS at Jaipur on and interacted with road safety team. The team was on All India trip for a "Study on Roads and Social Life in Indian Climatic Zones". The trip covers a total of 8261 kms in 22 Indian states in 35 days. they had covered 3284 kms when they reached the CUTS Jaipur Office and shared their experience about the road conditions and observations on the key risk factors. Mr. Sunil Kumar Bathida, Executive Engineer from Road Safety Cell also participated. Mr. Sanjay Pandey, Consultant, GHAI visited CUTS on March 13, 2023 and had a detailed discussion with the CUTS team regarding the progress of the FoPL project and he also provided some suggestions on future activities that needs to be undertaken to take advocacy forward
- Milind Mahaske, CEO, Praja Foundation along with her colleague Pooja visited the CUTS office on July 26, 2023, to discuss issues of possible collaboration.
- Basavaraju R Shreshta and Bhagavan Bidarakote, GRAAM visited the CUTS office on July 28, 2023, and discussed possible collaboration in different programme areas.
- Simi TB on behalf of CUTS, has been nominated to the Airport User Consultative Committee (AUCC) of Cochin International Airport Ltd.
- Madhu Sudan met with Arif Mohammed Khan, Governor, Kerala on August 26, 2023, in the Raj Bhawan.
- **MoU Extension with LSG Department**
Since the MoU with LSG Department got over by Sept. 2, 2023, a request letter was sent to the Director, LSG for the extension. ADS did a regress follow up with the

Department for the MoU and met with the Hridesh Kumar, Special Secretary, Dept. of LSG. He updated him about the activities organised by CUTS under MoU so far. Mainly the capacity building programme conducted by CUTS in five divisions and expert consultation at DLB were part of the one-year MoU. Director was satisfied with the progress and signed extension of MoU on Oct. 05, 2023 for next one year.

8 GRAM GADAR AWARD FOR RURAL JOURNALISM

The award for the year 2022 was given to Brij Mohan Acharya of Rajasthan Patrika, Jodhpur Edition for his write ups, articles, news coverage and photo journalism from the rural areas on the selected theme “How Beneficial Have Been the Health Schemes of Rajasthan Government to Masses”.

9 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.
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