

About CART

Established in 1983 as a small voluntary group of concerned citizens, Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS) expanded its activities and CUTS CART was set up in 1996 as a programme centre to pursue the cause of common consumers, initially being undertaken by CUTS as the mandate.

The programmes of the Centre are primarily aimed at generating awareness, creating a more responsible society and encouraging changes at the policy level by advocating with the government machinery and sensitising it to the issues of concern of the common man. The Centre has spearheaded several campaigns and pioneered consumer empowerment.

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Lack of Coordination Affecting the Quality of Service Delivery

“Lack of synchronisation among various departments, such as Jaipur Municipal Corporation (JMC) Jaipur Development Authority (JDA), Public Health Engineering Department, Public Works Department etc. those are responsible for delivery of public services and amenities is a major reason for poor delivery of services in the city,” said Jyoti Khandelwal, Mayor, Jaipur city. She further stated that Jaipur is a live city and Jaipurites always provide adequate support to any intervention with good intention. She was speaking in the project inception meeting of the second phase of an innovative initiative ‘MyCity’ being implemented by CUTS in partnership with The Asia Foundation in Jaipur city of Rajasthan.

‘MyCity’ is an intervention towards improving quality of municipal services which is increasingly affecting the lives of citizens with fast pace of urbanisation. Urban local governments are unable to meet the expectations of the public as councillors have not been given adequate powers as per 74th constitutional amendment and there is low civic engagement in the urban areas.



Justice V S Dave, Chairman of the Supreme Court Empowered Committee expressed concern over the deteriorating condition of the Jaipur city due to lack of accountability of the responsible elected representatives and public officials. He emphasised on the need of educating next generation people, especially school children on the duties mentioned in Article 51 of the Constitution to develop real citizens. He said that the city is established on the pattern of Europe and it can be developed in a similar way if proper planning is done.

“Jaipur is one of the fast growing cities and it will attain the status of 10th most populated city in India by 2025,” said George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS International. He emphasised on the need of improving governance and expanding urban service delivery for citizens through civic engagement. He stated that through MyCity intervention, CUTS is making an effort to connect citizens to the local government.

Manish Pareek, Deputy Mayor, Jaipur shed light on the poor performance of JMC. He opined that the work of JMC has been transferred to the JDA and the elected representatives who are a direct connect between citizens and JMC have not been given any power.

Reecha Upadhyay, Programme Officer, The Asia Foundation, New Delhi expressed her appreciation on the successful implementation of activities of the Phase I of the project and hoped for the best for Phase II as well. Ashish Rao Ghorpade, Senior Executive Manager, International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives-Local Governments for Sustainability, New Delhi also spoke in the meeting. More than 60 participants, including JMC councillors and officials and representatives of civil society organisations, media and resident welfare societies from different areas of Jaipur city attended the meeting.

Promoting Organic Consumption in Rajasthan

“Today’s modern agriculture system and techniques have been continuously harming and adversely affecting human health and now the time has come to move backward to adopt organic farming culture in the country,” said Jiji Mammen, Chief General Manager, Rajasthan Regional Office, National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development (NABARD). He was launching the project entitled, ‘Promote Organic Consumption in the State of Rajasthan’ (ProOrganic) to commemorate National Consumer Day.



He further stated that modern farming is done with the usage of all types of harmful pesticides and chemicals have serious implications leading to health hazards and environmental degradation. He emphasised on the need to move towards sustainable agriculture and use natural resources, by adopting organic farming.

ProOrganic is a two-year pilot project to promote organic consumption in Rajasthan implemented by CUTS in partnership with Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC). The project is implemented in six districts of Rajasthan – Kota, Jaipur, Udaipur, Pratapgarh, Chittorgarh and Dausa covering 102 *gram panchayats*.

George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS said that sustainable consumption as part of the right to healthy environment is recognised by UN Guidelines for Consumer Protection (UNGCP). Consumers have right to safe food and for that we need sustainable agriculture to ensure food security.

Amarjeet Singh, Project Coordinator, CUTS made a presentation about the project. Sheetal Sharma, Additional Director, Agriculture Department, Government of Rajasthan presented an overview of organic farming covering all aspects, while Verdhman Bapna, General Manager, Morarka Foundation; A K Gupta, Scientist; and B D Yadav from Durgapura Krishi Farm delivered technical presentations stating the importance of organic farming and ill effects of modern farming. On the occasion, Shyam Singh Rajpurohit, Director, Food and Consumer Affairs Department, Government of Rajasthan was also present.

Visit of Team from Transparency International, Nepal

Three-member team from Transparency International (TI), Nepal visited CUTS on October 07-08, 2013. George Cheriyan along with governance team met them and discussed the governance related



work. The team also visited the office of State Information Commission and TI Rajasthan Chapter; and Khandel Gram Panchayat to view field level work of CUTS under governance.

ProOrganic Partners' Orientation

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



Gram Gadar Award



On the occasion of National Consumer Day on December 24, 2013, Jiji Mammen, Chief General Manager, NABARD presented the *Gram Gadar Gramin Patrakarita Award* to Chandra Mouli Pachrangia, Editor, Dainik Amber of Chirawa, Jhunjhunu. The award contain a cash prize of ₹10,000 and a citation. The award is for published stories on the theme ‘Violence against Women and their Safety’ during 2012.

I3S Partners' Meet

The meeting of the Project Management Team with State Project Officers (SPOs) was held at Jaipur on November 15, 2013. In addition to the Project Management Team members, the SPOs – S Sreedharan, Public Affairs Centre, Bangalore; Seema Gupta, Centre For Youth and Social Development, Bhubaneswar; and Monjit Borthakur, Omeo Kumar Das Institute of Social Change and Development, Guwahati attended the meeting.



All four SPOs made presentations about their organisations as well as scenario of RNFS in the state. Guest speakers – Narendra S Sisodia, Chairman, Centre for Micro Finance; and Rajesh Jain, Vice President, ACCESS Development Services spoke about RNFS and cited some cases; and Neetu Purohit, Associate Professor, Indian Institute of Health Management Research spoke about the research methodology. Discussions took place on the future strategy, research methodology and preparations of state inception meetings.

National Environment Awareness Campaign

The post proposal workshop under National Environment Awareness Campaign (NEAC) 2013-14 was held on December 27, 2013. More than 170 participants attended the workshop. Dr. Surendra Singh Choudhary, Chairman, Rajasthan State Biodiversity Board was the Chief Guest. He delivered a lecture on 'Biodiversity Conservation'.



Meeting of Advisory Committee

A meeting of the Advisory Committee of the Centre was held at CUTS Conference hall on November 25, 2013 chaired by P N Bhandari, Chairman. Anita Mathur and Rajendra Bora, Members attended the meeting. George Cheriyan along with CART staff attended the meeting. He made a presentation about new developments (30th Anniversary Lectures, 5th Overseas Centre at Accra, New Campus etc.) at CUTS and projects under implementation etc.



Enhancing Skills to Promote Livelihood Sector

"To promote the livelihood sector, there is need to focus on skill development other than education," said Subir Kumar, IAS, Mission Director, State Rural Livelihoods Mission. He appreciated the initiative of CUTS to do critical analysis of the some of the schemes under Rural Non-farm Sector (RNFS). He was delivering the inaugural address as chief guest of the formal inception meeting of the project 'Insights into Indian States' (I3S) at Jaipur on December 12, 2013.

CUTS International in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has initiated a national intervention 'I3S'. The main feature this project is a coherent, user-friendly, sustainable and interactive web portal, which would depict successful and not so successful practices on governance especially of RNFS in the selected four States, i.e. Assam, Odisha, Karnataka and Rajasthan.

George Cheriyan, Director CUTS mentioned that RNFS is fast growing. Under I3S project, the idea is to map RNFS and put an interactive web portal in place. Knowledge management will be the key component where dissemination of the knowledge will be one of the important aspects. Madhu Sudan Sharma presented an overview of the project.

Ritu Mathur, Programme Analyst, UNDP mentioned that with the economic growth, inequality is also increasing. Capacity building of the people in livelihood sector is required and monitoring of the public schemes is important.

M L Mehta, Former Chief Secretary of Rajasthan and President, CUTS mentioned that emphasis on livelihood is need of the hour. Skill development and market orientation is required for the development RNFS.

Other speakers, T S Raji Gain, NABARD; Jyotsana Bhardawaj, Institute of Rural Development; and K L Paliwal, Rural Non-farm Development Agency also shared their views. More than 60 participants participated in the event.

State Inception meetings were held at Guwahati on December 03, 2013; at Bengaluru, on December 05, 2013; and at Bhubaneswar, on December 12, 2013 respectively.



REPRESENTATION IN MEETINGS/WORKSHOPS/SEMINARS ETC.

Consumer Protection and Empowerment in India

Deepak Saxena attended a workshop on 'Consumer Protection and Empowerment in India' organised by R K Patni Government P G College, Ajmer in association with Indian Institute of Personal Administration, New Delhi on October 25, 2013. He made a panel presentation on 'Problems of Consumers and in Consumer Protection with Emphasis in Rajasthan'.

Urbanisation in Rajasthan

Amar Deep Singh participated in consultation with representatives of civil society organisations on 'Urbanisation in Rajasthan' organised by the State Commission on Urbanisation at Jaipur on October 30, 2013.

Recent Trends in Consumer Rights and UTPs

George Cheriyan attended the first National Conference of the Non-Judicial Members of the State Consumer Disputes Redressal Commission at Bhopal on November 09, 2013. He made a presentation on 'Recent Trends in Consumer Rights and Unfair Trade Practices.'

Consumer Protection and Banking Ombudsman

Amarjeet Singh facilitated sessions on Consumer Protection and Banking Ombudsman in two trainings organised by Rajasthan Institute of Cooperative Education and Management, Jaipur for Co-operative Bank Managers on November 19 & 28, 2013 respectively.

Global Reporting Initiative

Amar Deep Singh and Jai Shree Soni attended a session on 'Global Reporting Initiative' by Aditi Haldar, Director, GRI Focal Point at CUTS Conference Hall on November 07, 2013.

Indian Economic Scenario and Present Challenges

Om Prakash Arya participated in the book launch event and the reception dinner where Shashi Tharoor, Union Minister for Human Resource Development, Government of India spoke on 'Indian Economic Scenario and Present Challenges' at New Delhi on November 18, 2013.

Status of Gender Responsive Budgeting in India

Om Prakash Arya attended a validation workshop on the 'Status of Gender Responsive Budgeting in India: A Study of Select States' jointly organised by UN Women and National Foundation of India at New Delhi on November 19, 2013.

Panchayati-Raj, Political Economy & Service Delivery

Madhu Sudan Sharma participated in the Policy Dialogue on 'Panchayati-Raj, Political Economy & Service Delivery' organised by Global Development Network and the Institute of Rural Management Anand at New Delhi on November 28, 2013.

National Consumer Policy

George Cheriyan attended a workshop on 'National Consumer Policy' organised by the Department of Consumer Affairs, Government of India in collaboration with the Centre for Consumer Studies, Indian Institute of Public Administration, at New Delhi on December 10, 2013. He provided comments on the draft National Consumer Policy.

Citizen Centric Governance

Om Prakash Arya and Amar Deep Singh attended a consultation on 'Citizen Centric Governance' organised by Institute of Development Management, Jaipur on December 06, 2013.

Women on Wheels

George Cheriyan and Arti Pandey Tiwari attended the launch function of Women on Wheels in Jaipur, an initiative by Azad Foundation in collaboration with the Shiv Charan Mathur Social Policy Research Institute, Jaipur on December 20, 2013.



CART IN MEDIA

