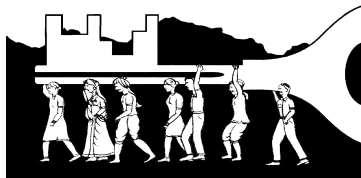


# **Divisional Level Workshop**

## **Jaipur**

**“Combating Corruption in Rajasthan State, India by Applying RTI Act as a Tool”**



**CUTS-CART**

**Organised**

**by**

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

D – 222, Vijayalaxmi Apartments, Bhaskar Marg, Bani Park,

Jaipur – 302 016, INDIA

Telephone: 91-141-513 3259/228 2821

**Email:** [cart@cuts.org](mailto:cart@cuts.org)

**Web:** [www.cuts-international.org](http://www.cuts-international.org)

## **1 Introduction**

1.1 CUTS Center for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CUTS CART) organized a two-day Divisional Level Workshop for Consortium of Groups for Combating Corruption (CGCC) under the project titled, “Combating Corruption in the Rajasthan State, India by applying RTI Act as a Tool”, on July 27-28, 2007 at Rajasthan Institute of Cooperative Education and Management (RICEM), Jaipur. The project is being implemented with the active support of the Partnership of Transparency Fund (PTF) US, through citizen’s empowerment in Tonk and Jaipur.respectively.

1.2 The project is being implemented in two administrative districts of Rajasthan state viz., Jaipur and Ajmer with a rural community based approach.

## **2 Objectives**

The objectives of the workshop include:

- generating awareness and provoking/encouraging the common citizens towards application of RTI Act, as a tool in addressing corrupt practices in the governance;
- empowering the civil society organisations/community-based organisations (CSOs/CBOs) and vulnerable sections of the community at the grassroots in curbing the corrupt practices by improving functioning of the existing accountability mechanisms and legal measures;
- advocating with the policy makers to sharpen further specific tools i.e. The RTI Act, to ensure good governance and accountability in order to address the deep-rooted corruption in the state;
- revealing the corrupt practices and officials pertaining to the selected five departments i.e. Panchayati Raj & Rural Development; Police; Revenue; and Food & Civil Supply; and PHED.
- assigning CGCC for achieving a minimum target of submission of 250 applications under the RTI Act from the people. Thus, a total of 500 RTI applications in the Ajmer and Jaipur divisions will be filed by the people, asking for specific information related to their grievances and issues of public interest in entire duration of the project.

## **3 Participants:**

3.1 A careful selection of the CGCC was done in the operational area of the project prior to the Divisional Workshop for filing the applications under the RTI Act. For that the network of CUTS CART was used as a tool and besides that the block level consultation meeting will be organized to provide guidance to CGCC members of identifying the issues creating hindrances in the life of the poor citizens.

3.2 The key criteria for selecting the members was their individual credibility in their respective area, general understanding to identify corrupt practices, so far interventions in governance related issues, basic knowledge about the functioning of various service providing departments/agencies of the government and willing to associate with CUTS CART, especially in its key programmatic area of “Good Governance”

3.3 The dignitaries participated in the event were Justice N K Jain, President, State Human Rights Commission, M K Khanna, Secretary, Rajasthan Information Commission and Dr Rakesh Ranjan Convener, *Soochna Adhikar Abhiyan* (SAA), Madhya Pradesh. Besides the Project management team and the senior colleagues from CUTS CART, 20 selected CGCC members from different districts of Jaipur Division have actively participated in the workshop.

3.4 The event witnessed an active participation of around 45 relevant stakeholders representing various CSOs, CBOs, NGOs, and representatives from funding agencies, and government officials of concerned department, media persons and other individual’s working/interested in the RTI Act.

#### **4. Proceedings of the Workshop: Day-1 (July 27, 07)**

##### **4.1 Inaugural Session**

4.2 Documentary Film was shown to the participants to display the potential of RTI Act in fighting against corruption

4.3 The workshop commenced with welcome and introductory remarks by R K Sharma, Programme Coordinator CART, who stated that RTI Act is one of the most empowering legislations passed in the post Independent India. He further added that RTI Act has a huge potential in ensuring the transparency and accountability in governance. George Cheriyan Associate Director CUTS said that RTI Act came into force on October 12, 2005, thus opening up the transparency of the governance processes of our country to the public. He highlighted that CUTS CART has been involved intensively in promoting good governance through increased people’s participation by using various tools and techniques for the last 20 years. He also pointed out that CGCC will be addressing corruption effectively using RTI Act as a tool. He further added that the ideology and strategy to combat corruption by forming public pressure groups/CGCC in Rajasthan.

4.4. Siba Prasad Dash of CUTS CART made a brief PowerPoint presentation of various aspects of the project covering the background, the objectives, major activities, expected outcomes etc.

4.5 Justice N K Jain, President “State Human Rights Commission”, while delivering the Keynotes Address, stated that awareness at every level is very important for the effective implementation of the RTI Act, because the awareness is a key instrument behind the success and failure of the Act. He pointed out the need to generate awareness among people regarding the usage of RTI Act.

4.6 M K Khanna, Secretary, Rajasthan Information Commission (RIC), opined that RTI Act is a weapon like 'sword', and who uses it for/against whom depends upon the intention of the user. He further said that positive approach is the most important element while seeking the information and information seekers should follow the procedure. There is ardent necessity to orient public as well as public servants about RTI Act so that it can be collectively used for the development of the state where resources and infrastructure are limited, he added.

4.7 Dr Rakesh Ranjan, Convener, SAA, Madhya Pradesh briefed the concept behind RTI Act. Then he made a PowerPoint presentation on RTI Act, outlining its objectives, background, major activities and expected outcomes etc. He responded to a number of questions raised by participants during the workshop.

## **5 Technical Session**

5.1 Dr Rakesh Ranjan introduced the Technical Session on 'RTI Act, 2005 and its potential as a tool to ensure transparency and accountability in the government system' to the participants.

5.2 Siba Prasad Dash and Ajnish A Bishwas of CUTSCART facilitated the Group Discussion on the role of CSOs, ensuring governance accountability through the RTI Act. Then they facilitated an open discussion; meanwhile Dr Rakesh Ranjan addressed queries from the floor.

5.3 Female participants in the session got involved in-group discussion.

5.4 Dr Rakesh Ranjan made a brief presentation on "*A Framework of Accountability Relationships*". He also presented various success as well as failure stories, loopholes and hindrances in effective implementation of RTI Act, including various aspects and clauses and its implications.

## **6. Day 2 (July 28, 07)**

6.1 Day-2 started with a recap of previous day activities. And Ajnish A Bishwas made live presentation on case studies. The invitation was extended to the citizens, who have filed the application under RTI Act, and who shared success and failure in the workshop.

6.2 Siba Prasad Dash and Ajnish A. Bishwas shared the CGCC ideology and functioning methodology with the participants, who participated to set success strategy of CGCC by group exercise. Female participants presented group exercise presentation. Dr Rakesh Ranjan made expert comments on the strategy.

6.3 During two days workshop, CGCC members took the following decisions:

- Responsibility of downloading proactive disclosure from website of five departments viz. Revenue, Police, Panchayati Raj and Rural development, Food and Civil supply, PHED assigned to Rajendra Sen and A B Paul up to August 10, 2007. CUTS CART will disseminate this information further to CGCC members up to August 15, 2007.
- It was decided that CGCC member will collect information from respective departments at the Block/Districts level and send to CUTS CART office by August 30, 2007 with the following information: Name of PIO/APIO/Appealing officer with Name/Designation and contact number.
- CGCC members were assigned the task to collect the list of below poverty line (BPL) families and different schemes of respective departments and filing the applications under RTI Act with target of 250 each division i.e. Jaipur and Ajmer by January 31, 2008.
- The presentation was followed by an interactive session. Dr Rakesh Ranjan and Shri. R K Sharma responded to various questions raised by the participants. Simultaneously, the participants also provided very useful suggestions that will help in the implementation of various activities under the project.
- At the end of the session, Ajnish A Bishwas proposed the vote of thanks and the workshop concluded with lunch.

## **7 Outcome of the two days workshop**

7.1 In the presence of the Secretary “Rajasthan Information Commission” and President of “State Human Rights commission” Rajasthan and other dignitaries in the two-day workshop helped in attracting the attention of the government, media and the general public to the project and initiated a public debate regarding the potential of the Act in combating corruption.

7.2 The event provided an adequate forum to propagate project’s aims and objectives among relevant stakeholders and also discussing related issues.

7.3 The CGCC is empowered enough with resources in terms of knowledge, information, and active support from functional network of CSOs/CBOs and from the proactive and committed government officials and access to the corruption defeating agencies.

7.4 The workshop also provided an opportunity to the representatives of CSOs, CBOs, NGOs, Government Officials of concerned departments and other individuals to get acquainted with various technical aspects and clauses of RTI Act.

7.5 The CGCC will be able to support corruption- combating attempts by the common citizens especially the poor rural citizen. The CGCC will perform the role of a watchdog as well as local resource centers for application of RTI.

7.6 The CGCC is assigned with achieving a minimum target of submission of two hundred fifty applications under the RTI Act asking for the specific information related to their grievances. These numbers of submitted application in the Ajmer and Jaipur division in the five concern departments will substantially help in reducing the corrupt practices.

7.7 In long term, an enabling and conducive environment would be created at the grass root making the governance more transparent and accountable. This entire process will ultimately help in facilitating the development growth of the state reducing the poverty.

7.8 Consortium of Group Combating Corruption (CGCC) is formulated with following members in the two days workshop:

7.6 List of the CGCC members enclosed in Annexure 1

**Annexure 1**

S.No	Name	Complete Coordination
1.	Tahreem	PRIA State Resource Center (SRC), 58 A, Nandpuri Colony, Bais Godam, Jaipur-302006, Rajasthan. Ph.+ 91-141-2216013. <a href="mailto:Jaipur@pria.org">E-mail: Jaipur@pria.org</a> .
2.	Dimpal Naruka	SAPNA Sansthan, Po; Ladana, Tehsil: Phagi, Dist: Jaipur, Mob: + 91-98296 91768
3.	Raj Shree Hemantika	
4.	Mukesh Kumar	
5.	Deepak Kumar Yogi	Shri Shyam Sanskriti Seva Samiti, Shastri Colony, Chithwari, Jaipur, Rajasthan 303805 Ph: +91-01423 236188, Mob: +91-9828376829, Email: <a href="mailto:Deepak_yogi2000@yahoo.com">Deepak_yogi2000@yahoo.com</a> .
6.	Suman Prajapat	
7.	Tarachand Tailor, Secretary	Gramin Manav Utthan Samiti, Vil.- Chatarpura, Via- Narainpur, Distt. - Alwar, Rajasthan. Mob: +91-93522 10820; Ph.: +91-1421-324158
8.	Pappu Ram	
9.	Sapana Devi Kumavat	Gramin Vikas Azad Navyuvak Mandal Samiti, Vil. Post-Sankotra, Via- Andhi, Tehsil: - Jamua Ramgarh, Distt.- Jaipur, Ph.: +91-1426-261144; Mob: +91-98299 43886
10.	Satish Sharma	Samajik Yuva Sangthan Sansthan, J.J. Ice Cream Factory, Near Telephone Exchange, VP & Tehsil: Bassi, Distt.- Jaipur, Rajasthan. Mob: +91-92141 28485
11.	Atmaram Sharma, Secretary	ATMA Sanstha, Vil.- Jagmalpura, P.- Jorpura, Via- Jobner, Distt.- Jaipur, Rajasthan. Mob: +91-94130 63961
12.	Shyodan Gurjar	PRAYATNA Sansthan, Vil.- Sholavata, P.- Shrirampura, Via- Naraina, Distt.- Jaipur Mob.: + 91-92145 24470
13.	Rajendra Sen	Sarathi Sansthan, Vill: Po Suraj Garh Mandi .Via: Chirawa, Distt.- Jhunjhune.Ph.: + 91-1596-237679, Mob.: + 91-94132 20711
14.	Ram Ratan Jangir	Gramodaya Samajik Sansthan, Vil & Po- Thali, Via- Chakshu, Jaipur, Rajasthan. Mob.093141 52497, 094142 07300. <a href="mailto:Gramoday_sansthan@rediffmail.com">Gramoday_sansthan@rediffmail.com</a>
15.	Banwari Lal Sharma	Gramin Vikash Evam Paryavaran Sansthan Vil.- Basri Baroda, P.- Udavala Via- Sainthal, Distt.- Dausa Mob: + 91-99285 38060 (BLS), + 91-93142 08779 (NCS)
16.	Nemi Chand Sharma	
17.	Bhoop Singh	V&P- Jagwas Via- Behror, Dist- Alwar. Mob.98285 59732.
18.	Bhanwar Lal Choudhary	CECOEDECON, VP- Madhorajpura, Via- Phagi, Distt.- Jaipur Mob: + 91-98299 09630
19.	Sita Ram Jat	
20.	Laxmi Narayan	RVHA, A-12-B, Bajaj Nagar Jaipur. Mob: + 91-9928322395, Email: <a href="mailto:laxmi_narayan@yahoo.com">laxmi_narayan@yahoo.com</a>