

Project Summary

I. Title:

‘Combating Corruption in Rajasthan State, India, by Applying RTI Act as a Tool’

II. Objectives:

- Awareness generation, 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 (CSOs) and the vulnerable sections at the grassroots in curbing the corrupt practices by improving functioning of the existing accountability mechanisms and legal measures.
- Advocate with the policy makers to sharpen further specific tools i.e. The RTI Act, The Citizen Charters and The *Lokayukta* (Ombudsmen) Act ensuring 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 department i.e. *Panchayati Raj & Rural Development*.

III. Activities:

Organisation of state level launch meeting; critical analysis of the RTI Act, Citizen Charters (Five), *Rajasthan Lokayukta* Act and Anti Corruption Code; development of a comprehensive questionnaire with focus on the RTI Act; orientation workshop for surveyors and field survey; consolidation and analysis of perceptions of field survey; formation of the Consortium of Groups Combating Corruption (CGCC); two divisional level workshops; development of an action agenda for the CGCCs with a target of ensuring 500 applications under the RTI Act; block level consultations; dissemination meetings; preparation and distribution of final document; publication of bi-lingual quarterly newsletter; intensive advocacy with policy/decision makers to support intensively the application of the RTI Act, Citizen Charters, *Rajasthan Lokayukta* Act, Anti Corruption Code and evaluation.

IV. Expected Impact/Outcome:

- Towards completion of the project, a vibrant informal structure in the form of CGCC will take place in Ajmer and Jaipur divisional head quarters of the state.
- These CGCC will be enough empowered with resources in terms of knowledge, information, active support from functional network of CSOs/CBOs, constant cooperation from the vigilant citizens, support from the proactive and committed government officials and access to corruption defeating agencies/mechanism.
- The CGCC will be able to support corruption-combating attempts by the common citizens especially the poor rural citizens. Hence, the CGCC will perform the role of a “watchdog” as well as local resource centre for application of RTI.
- Each CGCC will be assigned with achieving a minimum target of submission of two hundred fifty applications under the RTI Act by the public. Thus, a total of five hundred RTI applications in the Ajmer and Jaipur divisions will be filed by the public, asking for specific information, related to their grievances and in public interest in entire duration of the project. These numbers of submitted applications in the PR & RD department will substantially reduce the corrupt practices and discourage the belonging corrupt officials.
- The CA of “corruption handling mechanism” will put pressure on the government to take timely and effective punitive measures discouraging the corrupt practices. The entire process will ultimately help in facilitating the development growth of the state and reducing the poverty.

- In long term, an enabling and conducive environment would be created at the grassroots making the governance more transparent and accountable. The legal provisions of Right to Information Act, Citizen Charter and certain other codes and manuals will no longer remain merely on papers rather the common citizens by effectively exercising such provisions in accessing information and get their legitimate entitlement.
- The project will also create a synergy in various actions/movements combating corruption at national and sub-national level. The production of the quarterly newsletter and final document will be an effective tool of advocacy for the CGCC and generating awareness in the society at large on corruption issues.

V. Budget:

- Grant Requested From PTF: **Rs. 11,22,500**
- CUTS Contribution Towards Overheads (10%): **Rs. 1,12,250**
- Total Project Cost: **Rs. 12,34,750**