

## Grassroots Reachout and Networking in Rajasthan through Consumer Action (GRANIRCA)



# District Level Media Consultation

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*Submitted by*

**Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS)**

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## 1. Background

CUTS International is a registered Indian NGO established in 1984, pursuing social justice and economic equity within and across borders. It is working through six resource centres in India and four overseas resource centres at Lusaka (Zambia), Nairobi (Kenya), Hanoi (Vietnam) and Geneva. CUTS also works with several national, regional and international organisations.

CUTS was one of the organisations responsible for the enactment and strengthening of the dynamic Consumer Protection Act (CPA), 1986. In 1998, as part of advocacy for a National Consumer Policy, CUTS prepared a draft through a consultative process and submitted the same to the Department of Consumer Affairs, Government of India.

On January 08, 2010 CUTS signed a MoU for partnering with the Ministry of Consumer Affairs on a project entitled 'Grassroots Reachout and Networking in Rajasthan through Consumer Action (GRANIRCA)'. GRANIRCA is being implemented in Rajasthan by CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CUTS CART) (<http://www.cuts-international.org/CART/index.htm>) in partnership with the Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution, Government of India and in active collaboration with Department of Consumer Affairs, Food & Civil Supplies, Government of Rajasthan. The objective of the project is to strengthen the consumer movement at the grassroots level in 12 districts of Rajasthan.

*For more information, please visit: <http://www.cuts-international.org/CART/GRANIRCA/index.htm>*

## 2. Objectives

Consultations and involvement of media has been on the forefront of all activities implemented under the project and to give it more focus in the second year of the project, district-level consultation workshops for media were organised in the project districts. The main objectives of the workshop were not only to sensitise the state and district level media representatives, both from print and electronic on consumer protection issues and discuss the possible intervention to strengthen and take the consumer movement effectively to common masses, but also to showcase the past, present and future activities being implemented by CUTS under GRANIRCA and enlighten them with the key findings that emerged from this year's research work done through a survey among consumers. The survey was carried out amongst all categories of consumers in the 12 districts, which was done with the purpose to gauge the level of awareness of consumers with regard to several issues of consumer protection.

Under this project, as an essential part to strengthen the consumer movement, there is strong feeling that the media has to be sensitised in order to promote awareness amongst the common masses through informed reporting.

### 3. Participation

On an average, about 40 media people attended the District Level Media Workshops (DLMWs) during the month of August 2011. District level project partners and representatives from concerned government departments and the project team were also part of this consultation.

Schedule of the workshop along with number of participants was as under:

S. No	Date	District	Participant's Number
1.	August 05, 2011	Kota	60
2.	August 05, 2011	Dausa	45
3.	August 06, 2011	Bundi	31
4.	August 06, 2011	Alwar	45
5.	August 09, 2011	Dholpur	31
6.	August 11, 2011	Jalore	40
7.	August 12, 2011	Jodhpur	40
8.	August 17, 2011	Tonk	40
9.	August 17, 2011	Churu	30
10.	August 18, 2011	Sikar	30
11.	August 23, 2011	Chittorgarh	34
12.	August 24, 2011	Banswara	40

### 4. Proceedings

The workshop commenced with welcome remarks by district partner at respective districts. *(Please see the agenda as annexure-1)*

#### 4.1 Opening Remarks

In the opening remarks CUTS representative briefed participants about the history of CUTS and the consumer movement. Further, a brief introduction of GRANIRCA



project was also made to show case the activities conducted under the project in the district. Citing achievements emanating out of the GRANIRCA project, mention was made to the appointment of President/Members at District Forum, initiatives being taken by the State Secretary for Food and Consumer Affairs in conducting monthly meetings of VCOs etc. This helped to brief the media on the outreach and impact of project as its outcome. Besides, major issues pertaining to consumer protection such as non-existence or non-functioning of consumer protection councils in the state, delay in redressal in consumer fora, non-existence of Consumer Directorate despite of its announcements by the earlier government and ineffective Consumer Helpline etc. were also flagged. CUTS has joined the international campaign run by Consumer International to demand establishment of an expert group by G20 countries on financial consumer protection and its partnership/association with national agencies like TRAI, RERC, CERC, CCPC etc. The improper utilisation of consumer welfare funds at the state level, which has emerged as a major concern was also shared with the media in the districts.

#### 4.2 Brief Introduction of Consumer Protection Regime:



Beginning the session, it was informed that consumer protection regime does not merely consist of laws and legislations, it is in fact a constant interaction between laws, acts, courts, businesses, government, regulators, systems, media, civil society organisations (CSOs) and most importantly, consumers. CUTS representative briefly conveyed the role and responsibilities of consumers under Consumer Protection Act 1986, which includes its objectives, activities, area, design and governance etc. Further, enactments of CPA 1986 completed its 25 years, still at grassroots level consumer are not benefited as envisaged and, at the bottom of the pyramid millions of common consumers, are deprived of basic needs of life, as they lack awareness. However, it has also been widely recognised that fate of the consumers cannot be left to sheer market forces, which emphasises the need for consumer awareness at grassroots to enable and empower them to fully and freely stand against the market forces by using their rights provided under CPA, 1986.

On the issue of consumer's responsibilities, besides lack of awareness, hesitation in demanding receipt or proper vouchers etc after buying goods, ignorance towards weights and measures, standardisation and bargaining etc. are few other problems, which often act as hurdles to consumers.

#### 4.3 Survey Presentation:

The project team presented the findings of recently conducted survey under project through a power point presentation. Key findings emerged out from the overall targeted 2349 consumers belonging to different educational status and socio-economic background from 12



districts responded, out of which seven percent of the respondents were illiterate, whereas 62 percent of the total respondents belonged to rural areas of Rajasthan. The responses are as under:

- i. 35 percent respondents said they are unaware of their rights as a consumer and 26 percent knew these partially.
- ii. A sorry figure of almost 42 percent expressed their ignorance about their responsibilities as a consumer and only 21 percent said that they know these partially.
- iii. 86 percent of the total respondents expressed their awareness on the general definition of consumer, 37 percent had heard about the Act, and the rest either did not know about it or had very little knowledge.
- iv. Only 10 percent of respondents went to consumer fora for seeking redressal.
- v. 53 percent respondents showed their awareness on demanding bills and 55 percent said that they knew about MRP and its importance.
- vi. 77 percent affirmed their awareness that they watch manufacturing and expiry dates before purchasing goods and 85 percent out of this 77 percent said that they simply avoid buying these.
- vii. As many as 69 percent check packed items, its expiry and manufacturing dates etc. and normally hesitate in purchasing such items

- viii. With regard to Food and Drug Inspectors also, respondents had heard and knew them but were not aware as to under which department they fall.
- ix. Only 36 percent respondents were satisfied with government efforts and the rest felt that government's efforts are not reaching down the line.
- x. The awareness on the available present laws on food security is meagre. 67 percent of the respondents were unaware about the availability of laws as such.
- xi. Respondents often hesitated in taking action against adulterators simply because they did not know as to where they should approach.
- xii. *Shudh ke liye yudh* was known to 51 percent but 50 percent of the respondent have termed it as only partially successful government-run campaign.
- xiii. Respondents were not satisfied with the role of government in curbing adulteration despite its recent initiatives such as mobile labs and *Shudh ke liye yudh abhiyan* and often sudden raids on adulterators.
- xiv. 70 percent of the respondents reported that, after "Ghee", Edible Oil and Spices, basic commodity like Aata (Wheat flour), Milk, Pulses and Petroleum products are the most adulterated.

## 5. Open Discussion: Role of Media in Consumer Protection and Media Expectations from NGOs:

Under open discussion, under mentioned are the issues, which were dealt with:

1. Instead of informing the media about the activities, consumers can jointly make efforts to highlight various common issues like trade, derivative and forward trading, healthcare, out-dated education system, food adulteration fast urbanisation etc. with an object to raise awareness on these issues and build pressure on government for preventive steps.
2. Media to capture and publish stories related with corruption, consumer abuses, various malpractices, issues related to piracy, non-standard consumer goods and services etc. CSOs to support in forwarding the same to media, so that together they could fight the evils and benefit large sections of the common consumers.
3. It was also suggested that a platform could be created to bring consumers and media at a stage to jointly fight against evils and malpractices.
4. Despite all constraints media would continue to highlight the issues of common man, which are backed with proper evidence and issue of misleading of consumers should also be taken on priority.

## 6. Outcome and Recommendations

1. Active participation by media persons in all the workshops and getting acclimatised with the issues pertaining to consumer protection and the actual status of consumers in the state at large, which ultimately motivated them for agreeing to work jointly on all such issues was the main outcome of the workshops.
2. As part of recommendations derived from workshops, establishing a joint network of media and voluntary consumer organisations to enhance consumer protection in state, media helping in highlighting the lowlights of all consumer-linked departments through prominent reporting in order to help improving the whole system, media cautioning consumers against misleading advertisements, media helping in conducting similar programmes at regular intervals and media publishing consumer education related material to the extent possible for wider circulation and outreach to the beneficiaries were the other main outcomes.

## 8. Vote of thanks

District partners of respective districts thanked media participants and assured that they will remain in contact with them to fight market forces working against consumers.

**Grassroots Reachout and Networking in Rajasthan through Consumer Action  
(GRANIRCA)**

**District Level Media Consultation**

10:30	Registration	
11:00	Welcome and Project Introduction	DP & GRANIRCA Team
11:05	Brief introduction of Consumer's 1. Rights & Responsibility 2. Redressal Mechanism at district 3. Do's and Dont's	GRANIRCA team
11:25	Survey Presentation	GRANIRCA team
12:30	Questions and Queries	Media
12:45	Role of media in consumer protection	Local Media Person & team
01:00 onwards	Vote of thanks and Lunch	DP

### जागरूक हों उपभोक्ता

नैने रिपोर्टर जोधपुर उपभोक्ताओं के लिए देश में शक्तिशाली कानून है। पूंजीवादी औद्योगिकवादी प्रतियोगिता स्पर्धा उपभोक्ता शोषण का शिकार न

### उपभोक्ताओं का जागरूक होना जरूरी: कोली

धौलपुर | कट्स संस्था की ओर से उपभोक्ता प्रशिक्षण कार्यशाला का आयोजन किया गया। इस अवसर पर विधायक सुखराम कोली ने कहा कि मौजूदा दौर में उपभोक्ताओं को अपने हितों के प्रति जागृत रहना चाहिए अन्यथा वे कभी भी तगै का लाभ उठाने में असमर्थ रहेंगे। उन्होंने बताया कि डीलरों पर नमक, चाय एवं अन्य उपभोक्ता वस्तुएं उचित रेट पर उपलब्ध कराई जाती हैं। साथ ही जल्द ही फोर्टीफाइड डाटा उपलब्ध कराया जाएगा।

### 'Consumers unaware of rights in Raj'

Bundi: A majority of consumers in Rajasthan are not aware of their rights as a consumer and have not availed the legal provisions for the protection of their interests, a survey has found.

The survey, carried out by Consumer Unity Trust Society (CUTS International) under its central government funded three year pilot project 'Grass Root Reach Out & Networking in Rajasthan Through Consumer Action', which is running in 12 district of Rajasthan, revealed that 64 per cent consumers are not aware of their rights and 58 per cent do not know their duties as consumer.

At district level, 61 per cent of the consumers noted their ignorance about the Consumer Protection Committee, where as only 10 per cent have filed

### उपभोक्ता जागरूकता पर मीडिया कार्यशाला आयोजित

बून्दी, (निस): उपभोक्ता पद से संबोधित करते हुए वरिष्ठ कन्स्यूमर यूनिटी ट्रस्ट सोसिटी (कट्स) के तत्वार्थ ग्रेनिका परियोजना यहां निजी रिसें मीडिया कार्य सूचना एवं उ घनश्याम वर्मा मदन मंदिर कार्यशाला कार्यक्रम उ पावर पाइ के उद्देश्य डाला। संरक्षण मौजूद दी। परि के अपने बिने



### उपभोक्ता अधिकारों के लिए जागृति का आह्वान

कट्स की ओर से मीडिया कार्यशाला आयोजित

आम आदमी में उपभोक्ता के अधिकार एवं कानून के प्रति जागृति जरूरी है। इसके बिना उपभोक्ता को इसका लाभ मिलना संभव नहीं है।

उपभोक्ता मामलों की शिकायतें करती है। वहीं 42 प्रतिशत लोग उपभोक्ता मंच की प्रक्रिया से संतुष्ट हैं। 68 फीसदी

भी सजा मिलेगी तो निश्चि इस प्रकार के अपराधों आएंगी। ग्रेनिका परियोजना जिला समन्वयक राजीव स्वागत उद्बोधन में व उद्देश्यों तथा बीते वर्ष की पर प्रकाश डाला। अंत वटी सोसायटी की अध्यक्ष यहां सक्सेना ने आभार व्य

### उपभोक्ता हितों की दी जानकारी

जिला स्तरीय मीडिया कार्यशाला

कार्यालय संवादबता @ कोटा

कला दीर्घा में आयोजित कार्यशाला के प्रथम सत्र में कट्स के दीपक संस्कृति ने उपभोक्ता आंदोलन का इतिहास, उपभोक्ता संरक्षण के तहत किए गए शोध सहित अन्य जानकारी दी। दूसरे सत्र में कट्स के अनुंन कानूनी कोटा जिले में किए गए सर्वे की जानकारी एलसीडी प्रोजेक्टर के माध्यम दी। उन्होंने कहा कि उपभोक्ता मंच के बारे में 63 प्रतिशत लोग नहीं जानते। वहीं 91 प्रतिशत उपभोक्ता कानूनी जानकारी

रखते हैं, लेकिन इनमें से 86 प्रतिशत लोग शिकायतों को लेकर सामने नहीं आते। उपभोक्ता हितों के लिए धरतल स्तर पर क्षमतावर्धन ज्ञान व कौशल के माध्यम से उपभोक्ताओं को सक्षम और सशक्त बनाने पर संवाद स्थापित किया गया। कार्यशाला के प्रारंभ में संस्था के अनवर अहमद खान ने ग्रेनिका एवं कट्स का परिचय करते हुए जिले में उद्घृ वष से संचालित सर्वे एवं अन्य गतिविधियों के बारे में बताया।



कला दीर्घा में शुक्रवार को आयोजित जिला स्तरीय मीडिया कार्यशाला में उपस्थित लोग।



### किसी भी धारा का हिस्सा बनने की भूल ना करें

कट्स एवं वागड विकास संस्थान की मीडिया कार्यशाला

न्यूज रॉलिंग 24 अंतर। उपभोक्ता का दायित्व है 5 वीं पूर्ण सर्वेदेनशील होकर अपना कार्य करें और 10 वीं पत्रकार किसी प्रवाह में बहने को पूरा ना करें। 15 वीं समाज को और कुछ नहीं देखना पड़ेगा। 20 वीं पत्रकार परियोजना के अंतर्गत कट्स गुरु विकास संस्थान के संयुक्त तत्वार्थ ग्रेनिका मीडिया कार्यशाला में उपभोक्ता सामने

देते हुए बताया कि अब हर स्तर पर उपभोक्ता को राहत देने के प्रयास किये जा रहे हैं। उपभोक्ता विवाद पर कानूनन कोई कार्यवाही नहीं की जा सकती। उन्होंने बीपीएल और एपीएल परिवारों को भी बताया कि ग्रामीण स्तर पर उपभोक्ता जागृति के प्रयासों का प्रचलन है। इस जनजाति ब्यूल क्षेत्र में चंडी प्रयास करने को जरूरत है। और पत्रकार हरि दोस श्रीमाल ने कहा कि आज जरूरत सच तक पहुंचने की है। मीडिया जगत जागरूकता या कार्य पहुंचने है लेकिन यह कभी उसका हिस्सा नहीं बनना। उन्होंने कहा कि देश की समस्याओं को लेकर जनता ने सारास पर संस्थानों के प्रयास में नहीं बढ़ना है। इस अवसर पर संस्थानों के परिसंस्थान निदेशक ने सारास सल्लोत ने अतिथियों का स्वागत करते हुए संस्थान की गतिविधियों पर प्रकाश डाला। इस अवसर पर कट्स जयपुर के धर्मेन्द्र चतुर्वेदी ने उपभोक्ता आंदोलन के इतिहास पर प्रकाश डालते हुए उपभोक्ता संरक्षण अधिनियम के मुख्य प्रावधानों को अर्थकारी दी। कट्स के अमरजीत सिंह ने कहा कि उपभोक्ता

संरक्षण में मीडिया के योगदान की जरूरत है। यदि मीडिया फालत करे तो उपभोक्ता को शोषण से मुक्ति मिलने में मजबूत आधार मिलेगा। इस अवसर पर आकाशवाणी के पूर्व कार्यक्रम अधिकारी लक्ष्मण डामरे ने ग्रामीणों एवं किसानों को शोषण को जानकरी देते हुए उनके लिये भी जागरूकता कार्यक्रमों की पूर्ण सहाय्य अजीत भाई ने उपभोक्ता मंच के विभिन्न फसलों का हवाला देते हुए बताया कि जागरूक उपभोक्ता न फैलत शोषण से मुक्ति पा सकता है पर जिला उपभोक्ता मंच के सदस्य जैतेन्द्र भट्ट ने मिशन के रूप में कार्य करने को जरूरत बताया। इस अवसर पर किशोर शोमल, हेमन्त पण्डरा, दिलीप पटेल, प्रोफेसर के अंबक पाण्डे, डॉ. पारगी अयंस पर जयंत ध्यात्र, भूपेन्द्र सिंह राठी, नवीन मंचल, जयदीप चावडा, संतोष भट्ट, भगवतीप्रसाद भट्ट, सुधाप कलावत, अशोक शोनी, सुनील शर्मा, ललित मोलेण, अशोक शोनी, दीपावली कलावत, सहितकार सतीश आचार्य सहित अनेक प्रवृत्त मौजूद थे। संघालन अर्थात् सत्र में किया जबकि आभार मधु बाघवानी ने किया।