

Event Report

Partners' Meet Green Action Week (India) 2019



December 06, 2019, Jaipur, India

Background

The Green Action Week (GAW) Fund-India is a joint partnership established between the Swedish Society for Nature Conservation (SSNC) and CUTS International in 2019. The purpose of the grant is to fund short-term campaigning activities to raise consumer awareness on environmental issues. For over 20 years, SSNC has conducted an annual 'Shop and Act Green' campaign in Sweden, of which the focal point Green Action Week, has led to very good results. The campaign always takes place during the first week of October. It always promotes the consumer has an alternative choice, different ways of consuming and acting and where it is possible for the consumer to make a difference. GAW is a global campaign to promote sustainable consumption. In 2019, 52 civil society organisations (CSO's) from 30 countries participated globally.

Under the GAW 2019 campaign, 'Sharing Community' was the theme to promote the sustainable consumption. Access to goods and services are unequal and planetary boundaries are being beached. Campaign wants to ignite cultures of sharing and collaboration, as a way to create sustainable access for more people and at the same time reduce stress on the planet. It would be an attempt to challenges the norm of private ownership and consumerism through creation of strong, collaborating communities.

12 partner organisations from 12 states of India were selected by CUTS for implementing the campaign in their respective areas. Partners conducted various activities in October 2019, focusing on the theme. To evaluate activities conducted by partner organisations of GAW India, a meeting was held at Jaipur on December 06, 2019. Out of 12 partners, 12 participated in the meeting.

Proceedings

Amar Deep Singh, Senior Programme Officer, CUTS welcomed the partners of GAW India 2019. All partners briefed about their Organisations. He also briefed about campaign and highlighted the importance of the partner meet. This meet will give us national wide perspective due to its outreach. This is meeting on circular economy, sustainable consumption. He shared about past years' experience and activities under Green Action Week (GAW). This year theme for GAW 2019 is sharing community and he discussed the activities based on sharing community which had done.

The specific objective of the campaign is to strengthen the role that consumer and environmental organisations play to raise awareness on environmental and other impacts of consumption and promote sustainable consumption amongst consumers, policymakers and other key stakeholders. He mentioned highlights of the GAW and activities conducted in 12 states of India. He further stated that the theme of the campaign is very relevant in the Indian context and many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) participated in the campaign, though only 12 were selected.

George Cheriyan, Director, CUTS International welcomed all the participants and thanked CUTS Team for organising the meet. He explained the context of the theme 'Sharing Community'. As per UN Guidelines on Consumer Protection, 'Right to Healthy Environment' is one such important right. Under this right, the UN has included Sustainable Consumption in the year 1999, which pushes for the use of goods and services which use minimal natural resources and release minimum pollution and waste in turn. He highlighted how the 'circular economy' has become a popular word in the global economy as an alternative to liner economy

Green action week is global people's campaign for sustainable consumption and it is first of its kind campaign for sustainable consumption. He explained concept of sharing community, ten

fundamental principal of circular economy and summarised the Sustainable Development Goal- 12. He briefed about SSNC and further stressed upon 'why sharing community is important in India'.

Cheriyam also said that, *Daan and Seva* (Charity and Philanthropy) are ethos of Indian Culture and even Bhagwat Gita says, "If one enjoys the abundance without sharing with others, he is a thief". There are various examples from the life of people like Mahatma Gandhi and ancient kings who recognized the importance of sharing and respectful use of resources according to need rather than greed. He also highlighted, that in modern times there are three main drivers of Sharing Economy, i.e. social, economic and technology. In the present era, there are several online platforms such as Uber, Lending clubs etc. At the end, he concluded by mentioning that there is a need for serious thought on how we can share our resources instead of continuously taking from the nature and degrading the environment

Linking with the circular economy is the concept of sharing economy where assets and services are shared between two or more individuals, either free of cost or for a nominal price. He concluded by saying that how we can share our resources instead of continuously taking from the nature and degrading the environment is a matter of concern and should be given a serious thought.



Nimisha Sharma, Programme Associate, CUTS delivered a power point presentation on activities conducted in Jaipur, Rajasthan under GAW. This was not part of GAW India Campaign. She mentioned that the theme of 'Sharing Community' was targeted at urban consumers in order to expand the outreach at two localities (Triveni Nagar and Purani Basti) in the city of Jaipur. The major key activities of this year were kitchen gardening, school campaign, meetings with women groups, street plays and awareness, rallies with students, setting up compost units, community library, installed E-Waste Bins, wall of kindness (*saanjha ki deewar*), community-level and a district level stakeholder's consultation meeting. Rajasthan pollution control board and other organizations conducted the awareness generation workshops on E-waste. 50 kitchen gardens, installed six E-Waste Bins and compost units were main outcome of this year's campaign. The events witnessed maximum number of participation and the interest of participants about kitchen gardening and sustainable consumption show that the level of awareness among them has now increased as compared to previous years.

Dr. Priya Zadu, Abhivyakti Society, Uttarakhand showcased activities which were conducted in Uttarakhand. Abhivyakti Society is a grassroots organisation working for the upliftment women and children of Himalayan region with the objective to motivate them towards Environment, Solid

Waste Management, Micro finance and local self-governance. Awareness was created through regular environmental awareness programme in schools, by nukkad nataks, cleanliness drive, Rally, drawing competition & prize distribution, Community Sharing Camp and Workshop. Large group of students and SHG members participated in awareness campaign where the sharing community concept was discussed with other organizations and influential people; so that innovative and effective ideas could be shared and implemented. Women still need a lot of hand holding when it comes to making them understand their importance and role that they can play in creating a sustainable approach towards Environment Conservation.

Bibhu Sahu, Youth for Social Development (YSD), Odisha presented activities which were conducted by YSD in Orissa. The impacts of these activities were generating awareness among citizens and consumers about harmful effects of waste and to understand current practices on collaborative consumption and its benefits. Recommendations and plan for the provision and promotion of sharing community practice have been proposed to the local government in the multi-stakeholder dialogue. Current practices of 'sharing community' like wall of kindness, sharing ride, sharing books and food in Berhampur city have set examples of sharing goods and services to protect environment. Information, Education and Communication (IEC) material were prepared under this initiative. Elected and public officials of Berhampur Municipal Corporation (BeMC) and Brahmapur Development Authority (BeDa) have been agreed and assured to create more opportunities for citizen for sharing goods and services through 'wall of kindness' and 'community fridge' for sustainable consumption.

There were low level of awareness among citizens and consumers and civil society on concept, practice and benefits of 'collaborative consumption'. Therefore, there is a need to design and implement a strategic campaign to increase the demand for 'collaborative consumption' policies and provisions among citizens and consumers. There should be training and capacity building program for civil society and government officials on SDG Goal-12.

Sr. Rosy Lopez FMA, CDEW society, Karnataka shed light on GAW India activities which were implemented in Bangalore. For GAW (India) 2019, there were certain specific objectives that were to sensitise the stakeholders the art of sharing, reduce the 'use and throw culture' and conducting camp to share household items. Some activities were street play for awareness, symposium on sharing, signature campaign, exhibition, and mutual sharing. They are determined to incorporate Sharing-Caring concepts in all their undertakings and organize more awareness campaigns in collaboration with government organisations (GOs) & NGOs to influence Policy makers.

P. Chitti Babu, Rural Action for Social Service, Andhra Pradesh informed that his organisation registered in 1977 working with women, children and deprived sections of the society, especially focussing on environmental issues. They conducted awareness workshop for the general public on sustainable consumption through public meetings, rallies, competitions, *Kalajathas* reached the message effectively and one of the community i.e., V D Palem adopted the sharing concept in their community unusable things sharing to neighbours, relatives and others. Also, RUAFFSS had organised public meeting at V D Puram focused on sustainable consumption and sensitized the public to know about how to use our natural resources and how to reduce usage of natural resources without damage of our environment.

RUAFFSS organised training cum workshop on Sustainable Consumption and Life Style Sharing Community during Green Action Week India 2019 at Tirupati (Chittoor District), with the support of CUTS, on 6th November 2019. It was attended by more than 100 participants. These activities were generated awareness among the public for usage of jute bags, cloth bags etc.

Sanjay Sharma, Anmol Foundation, Chattisgarh said that the organisation raised awareness about sharing community in various school rallies by conducting workshops. Singh explained the importance of collective sharing for the purpose of sustainable development by citing the example of wall of kindness and sharing of resources within the community.

They had organised district level workshop on sustainable consumption in which 42 CSOs and NGOs were participated. They also conducted state level workshop on SDGs which highlighted importance of sustainable consumption. He also highlighted, there is need for imperishable campaign for sustainable consumption.

Ritu Tiwari, CECOEDECON, Madhya Pradesh said objectives of the campaign to strengthen culture of sharing communities. Activities carried out under the campaign were awareness generation/mass mobilization and demonstration on sharing community at school and street.

They had conducted the state level consultation on sustainable consumption and sharing community. The impact of the campaign was greater understanding among consumers about sustainable consumption practices. Community members were motivated to adopt more sustainable ways to access goods and services without stressing the environment. There is need to establishing dialogue with representatives of municipal corporations for proper management of waste especially E-waste.



Abhishek Srivastava, Consumer Guild, Uttar Pradesh said that under Green Action Week- 2019 group discussions, signature campaign, posters, IEC material distribution, stakeholders consultation were conducted. They successfully created awareness on sustainable development and demonstrated the methods of community sharing. The awareness generation activities are created among local consumers and consumer activists, NGOs and others to join the sustainable development movement and further informed consumers and public on this important issue. U.P Pollution Control Board agrees to work with Consumer Guild continually to raise consumer awareness on the issue.

Consumer Guild identified the corporate office at Rajaji Puram location in Lucknow and run the campaign on theme "Share with Friends at Green Office". Officials shared things like Books, Newspapers, Shopping Bags etc. and also less use of electricity , less printings, waste free lunch and no use of plastic were promoted in office premises, indoor plantation and use of only sustainable products in office premises promoted, reuse of waste material was also promoted . Consumer Guild would like to work on "sharing capacity and knowledge" raise awareness and mobilize ,build capacity, implement projects , monitor and review policies on SDGs with support and collaboration of CUTS International.

Danesh Kumar, Rural Agency for Social and Technological Advancement (RASTA), Kerala said that under Green Action Week- 2019, camps for school children with the theme "Sharing Community" were organised. The organised camps were for collection of reusable households items from community. These items were delivered to deprived community with collaboration with Local Groups. The other activities under GAW 2019 were organised seminar on Sharing Community for promoting awareness activities, Stakeholder consultation workshop for developing action plan for sharing community with local panchayat, transition to eco-friendly initiative and promoting alternatives - cloth bags are the activities.

The impact of the campaign is that students have pledged to share their books. Women gathered to share local seeds for summer vegetable & kitchen garden. Women have pledged to gather & share used items of new born babies to expecting and future mothers. People started household waste segregation. They said that there is need to more community participation and participation of local governance for sustainable consumption.

Sanjoy Kumar Das, Mankind Awareness Platform, Tripura said that the organisation has conducted several activities based on sharing community, such as organising signature campaign, drawing competition, state level seminar, IEC program among college students in Agartala. They have opened free *bazar* (shop) for shared articles.

Agriculture Department of Government of Tripura has shown interest about sustainable consumption. Local Government is also now aware and agree with us for collaboration on programmes relating with nature and environment. Local Clubs of Tripura also impacted and inspired to move forward to do work in this respect. Collaboration of various stockholders on sustainable consumption will reduce the production as well as environment degradation.

Ajoy Hazarika, Consumers' Legal Protection Forum (CLPF), Assam said that the basic approach towards community sharing is conducting awareness seminar in educational institutions (schools/colleges), public meetings in association with the NGO's, SHG's & Students' Union Association and conducting stakeholders' consultation. They also showed demonstration model which were made by the members of CLPF for community members of Panikheti, a village in Kamrup District where used items shared with each other. They conducted workshops and distributed IEC materials to sensitized community to preserve the natural resources for our future generation and reduce the environmental pressure on Earth.

He also stressed upon, rural area should prioritised for sharing community and sustainable consumption, as they have limited knowledge about preservation and utilisation of natural resources. They convinced the civil society organisations and educational institutions about importance of sharing community and sustainable consumption.

Ajay Vasudevrao Zarker, Vaishvik Vikas Sanshtha, Maharashtra stated that the organisation has conducted several activities based on sharing community, such as organising speech & drawing competition for awareness and workshop on importance on sharing community ,created book bank for shared books, green club. They started advocacy with higher officials about importance of sharing community.

The impact of GAW 2019 were seen as the students who participated in workshop started sharing blood and decided to start sharing the food for needy people. Under green club, people shared notebooks and educational materials. They have distributed all these educational materials to students of tribal villages. Candidates who participated in drawing and speech competition expressed unique and varies ideas about sharing community. Municipal council, Umarkhed agreed to do awareness about minimize consumption of resources and waste management. Sharing Community is one of the most unique and fruitful concept.

Devendra Sharma, Environment & Social Research Organization (ESRO), New Delhi showcased activities which were conducted organized the awareness campaign through rallies, folk play, display of banners, and distribution of pamphlets , organised workshops, organised quiz and drawing competition among schools and colleges on sharing community. They established sharing centre for collection of old material (books, toys, clothes etc.) as resource from community through volunteer and distributed among needy people at Meet Nagar.

To fill the present requirement of human being we need to produce all required goods from industries, ESRO tried to aware community regarding sharing approach to reduce the production of daily usable goods from polluting industries, and encourage them indirectly to help for reducing the pollution. There is also need to conduct more awareness program for communities, schools and other institution centers

Open House Session

In the discussion, various queries were raised which were suitably answered. George Cheriyan explained the concept of sharing community and economy. He discussed various modern day examples of sharing community and economy. Sharing economy is the activities in which two and more person are sharing assets or services either free of cost or nominal rent. Sharing economy services have exploded in popularity over recent years with many expecting this trend to continue, with the total value of the global sharing economy predicted to increase to some 335 billion U.S. dollars by 2025, from only 15 billion U.S. dollars in 2014. He also shared his view on IKEA effect and sharing economy. Participants shared their experiences and understanding of sharing community and economy.

Amar Deep Singh shared his view on sharing community through consumer perspective. There is need for sustainable consumption practices in all three economic sector (Primary, Secondary, Tertiary) One of participants highlighted importance of school student and information technology for sharing community and economy. Food waste is one of the serious concerns in India. Developed nations' understanding about sharing community is unlike than developing nations. In India, consumption level is different at rural and urban community due to different culture practices. There is need for alternative way of sustainable consumption.

In a unique initiative, Ambikapur municipality (Chhattisgarh) started garbage café. There is scope for collaboration with social enterprise with regard to sharing community and sustainable consumption. There is need to document such good practices and make plan of action for national level advocacy on sharing community. SDG Goal 12 which talks about sustainable consumption is not included in SDG Index Report 2018 released by NITI Aayog. There is need to revive old sustainable practices for sharing economy. There has to prepare the advocacy agenda for sustainable consumption and sharing community and streamline the government and private institutions with sustainable consumption and sharing community.

Vote of Thanks

Amar Deep Singh delivered vote of thanks to partners for attending the meeting. This time social media is one of the outreach tools for GAW campaign. This will help in Global Reach of the campaign. Media has effectively highlighted the campaign. Cheriyan said that the corporation and coordination is well managed in this year's campaign. There is need to regularly organize this partner meet and make plan of action for this campaign.

The meeting was beneficial in evaluating the effectiveness of each activity conducted by Partner in targeted areas. It was also helpful for organisations to learn from each other's and innovative approaches adopted for campaign. Participants and CUTS could understand the local context, while discussing the challenges faced by partner during the campaign. Meeting also provided opportunity to learn from experience of partner organisation and accordingly design better plan for future activities keeping those learning in mind.

List of Participants

S.No.	Name	Organisation's Name and Address
1.	Sanjoy Kumar Das	Mankind Awareness Platform (MAP), Agartala, Tripura
2.	Sanjay Kumar Sharma	Anmol Foundation, Raipur, Chhattisgarh
3.	Devendra Kumar	Environment & Social Research Organisation, New Delhi
4.	Ajoy Hazarika	Consumers' Legal Protection Forum, Guwahati, Assam
5.	Danesh	RASTA, Wayanad, Kerala
6.	Ritu Tiwari	CECOEDECON, Indore, MP
7.	Ajay Vasudevrao Zarker	Vaishvik Vikas Sanstha Yavatmal, Maharashtra
8.	Bibhu Prasad Sahu	Youth for Social Development (YSD) Berhampur, Odisha
9.	Abhishek Srivastava	Consumer Guild, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
10.	Sr. Rozy	Centre For Development And Empowerment Of Women (CDEW) Society, Bangalore
11.	P.ChittiBabu	Rural Action for Social Service Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh
12.	Priya Zadu	Abhivyakti Society, Dehradun, Uttarakhand
13.	George Cheriyan Director	CUTS
14.	Amar Deep Singh Senior Programme Officer	CUTS
15.	Nimisha Gaur Programme Associate	CUTS
16.	Amit Babu Programme Associate	CUTS

Glimpses of the GAW Meeting (India), 2019

