

# CUTS CRC Activity Report

January-March 2011

## ONGOING PROJECTS

### Consumer Assistance Cell at Grassroots (CONASC)

CUTS CRC, with the support of West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Limited (WBSEDCL) is working on a pilot project entitled, 'Consumer Assistance Cell at Grassroots' (CONASC). Under the project, CUTS will open a number of assistance cells for electricity consumers in nine districts of West Bengal, viz., North Dinajpur, Malda, Murshidabad, Purulia, West Midnapore, Howrah, North 24 Parganas and Nadia. In each of the districts, five group electricity supply areas were selected where such assistance cells would be formed.

The main objective of the project is to form CONASC at the grassroots level to improve and supplement the service delivery at the grassroots, with focus on improving the grievance redressal system of the utility service provider. The assistance cells will help consumers with their queries on new and temporary connections, billing and metering, complaint redressal, etc. Domestic and agricultural consumers in the rural and sub-urban areas constitute the principal target group for the project.

Under the project, nine CSOs in the nine districts were selected who are now operating the CONASC cells in their respective locality wherein they meet consumers on specific days of a week to listen to consumer complaints and guide them on how to go about a particular problem. In the next step, these CSOs will organise a number of dissemination and capacity building workshops with electricity consumers.

[www.cuts-international.org/CRC/CONASC/index.htm](http://www.cuts-international.org/CRC/CONASC/index.htm)

### Grahoker Mukho-Mukhi

Consumer Camps are being organised by the Centre in partnership with local clubs and associations in and around Kolkata. The activity being undertaken with support from Calcutta Electric Supply Company (CESC) Ltd aims to raise awareness and assist consumers with basic queries about electricity supply and services, safety issues, energy conservation, etc.; provide consumers a platform to get their grievances redressed; and function as a two-way communication platform between consumers and the utility. In total, 50 camps are planned under this initiative. Till March 2011, 13 camps were organised reaching out to 240 consumers.

## EVENTS

### Awareness Generation Workshops

Awareness generation workshops were organised in each of the selected CCCOs to generate awareness and interest about the CONASCs. The first Awareness Generation Workshop was organised at Chanchal, Malda district on October 30, 2010. Subsequently 44 workshops in total were organised, one in each of the CCCO areas selected for the project, reaching out to around 3500 consumers in eight districts.



Awareness building workshop in Purulia

25 years  
1983 2008  
CUTS International

CUTS Calcutta  
Resource Centre

3, Suren Tagore Road,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Kolkata 700019  
Ph: +91.33.24604985  
Talefax: +91.33.24604987  
E-mail: [calcutta@cuts.org](mailto:calcutta@cuts.org)  
Website: [www.cuts-international.org/CRC](http://www.cuts-international.org/CRC)

## Partner Quiz

A half day quiz contest was organised with all district level project partners under CONASC project on January 13, 2011. The Quiz was aimed at ensuring that all CONASC staff had appropriate knowledge and capacity to advice and guide consumers once the cells are actively functional in the districts and also build up capacity of all project staff on relevant electricity issues.



Partners' Quiz in progress in CRC office premises

### — Capacity Building Workshop —

## Partners' Quiz in progress in CRC office premises Capacity building workshop in Howrah district

Capacity building workshops were organised in each of the selected CCCOs to build capacities of consumers on regulations and processes for new connections, metering & billing, grievance redressal procedure, etc.

The vernacular handout "*Bidyut – Quick Guide*" which was distributed during these workshops was an instant hit, not only among the consumers but also among the West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Limited officials. The booklet talks about regulations regarding new connections, metering and billing, grievance redressal, etc. in simple language in a Q&A format. During January-March 2011, 40 capacity building programmes were organised in eight districts reaching out to 2420 consumers.



Capacity building workshop in Howrah district

## REPRESENTATION



- Keya Ghosh attended the third meeting of the Food Safety Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), Central Advisory Committee in New Delhi, on February 22, 2011.