

# CUTS CRC Activity Report

July-September 2011

ONGOING  
PROJECTS

## Raising Stakeholders' Demand for Renewable Energy in India

CUTS with the support of Climate Works Foundation, USA through Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation (SSEF), India is undertaking an initiative over two years (2011-2012) in two states of India (Gujarat and West Bengal).

The overall objective of the project is to increase long-term capacity/awareness of consumer groups to demand for demand supply management (DSM) and renewable energy (RE) initiatives, and also to understand, document and communicate their specific needs to relevant policy makers.

The project is being implemented in partnership with grassroots civil society organisations (CSOs). In this direction ten CSOs have been identified from four districts in West Bengal, whose capacity will be built through various activities of the project.

Under the project, a Baseline Survey was undertaken in all 10 territories in four districts to gauge the perception and level of understanding among different stakeholder groups on issues like climate change, RE & DSM. More than 500 respondents from different stakeholder categories, viz. domestic households, agriculture, small commercial establishments, SMEs, etc. were covered under the survey. Prior to that pre-survey training programmes were organised for surveyors from all 10 territories (four districts).

The next major activities under this project will include entry, consolidation and analysis of all data collected from the Baseline Survey and coming out with the Territorial Base Paper for West Bengal.

### **Surveyor Orientation & Training for Baseline Survey**

This was a formal training programme organised in CUTS CRC's own premises on August 13, 2011. This was aimed at equipping members of district partner organisations to effectively conduct the Baseline Survey in their respective territories.

### **Baseline Survey and Focus Group Discussion**

During July-August 2011, the field research component under the project was completed which included the baseline survey and focus group discussions in all four district viz. South 24 Parganas (Sunderbans), Nadia, East Midnapore, and Cooch Behar.

[www.cuts-international.org/crc/DREC](http://www.cuts-international.org/crc/DREC)



Arnab Ganguly and Gaurav Shukla conducting a Focus Group Discussion in Cooch Behar district in West Bengal

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## Consumer Assistance Cell at Grassroots

CUTS Calcutta Resource Centre (CUTS CRC), with the support of West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Limited (WBSEDCL) is working on a pilot project entitled, 'Consumer Assistance Cell (CONASC) at Grassroots'. Under the project, assistance cells will be run for electricity consumers in nine districts of West Bengal, viz., North Dinajpur, Malda, Murshidabad, Purulia, West Midnapore, Howrah, North 24 Parganas and Nadia.

The main objective of the project is to form CONASCs 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 & temporary connections, billing & 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 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.

During this quarter 20 Regional Office meetings involving utility officials, consumers & CONASC staff were organised in the nine districts. These meetings aimed at solving those consumer issues which have not been redressed in local Customer Care Office level.

Upcoming activities include continuing with the Regional Office Meetings in all the 45 selected territories in nine districts of the state.

### **Regional Level Workshop**

18 Regional Level meetings were organised during July-September 2011. In total 172 short listed consumer issues were discussed in these meetings. 128 Informal Pocket meetings were organised by district partners in remote and interior villages reaching out to roughly 3600 consumers.

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



B Talapatra, HR & A Manager, WBSEDCL, addressing consumers during a Capacity Building Workshop in Tehatta, Nadia in West Bengal

## 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 the consumers and the utility. In total, 50 camps are planned under this initiative.

During July-September 2011, 17 camps were organised reaching out to roughly 280 consumers. 20 more such consumers' camp will be held during December 2011.



A Consumer Camp in a local club in Baguihati, Kolkata being conducted as part of the "Grahoker Mukho-Mukhi" project

## REPRESENTATIONS



- Keya Ghosh attended the fourth meeting of the Working Group on Education related to Road Safety Council in New Delhi on July 16, 2011.