

CUTS CRC Activity Report

April-June 2026

ONGOING PROJECTS



Cyber Security Capacity

Building Programme for MSMEs in India

CUTS International has recognised the unique challenges faced by Micro, Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (MSMEs) in the digital space and aims to provide targeted support to help them navigate the complexities of the digital economy. In response to these challenges, CUTS International has joined an initiative undertaken by The Asia Foundation (TAF) titled 'the APAC Cybersecurity Fund', with support from Google.org.

The initiative aims to increase the cybersecurity resilience of MSMEs by providing comprehensive training, raising awareness, and promoting the adoption of cyber-resilient practices. The project will be implemented in 10 states of India, including Rajasthan, West Bengal, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Sikkim, Nagaland, and Tripura, to train more than 20,000 MSMEs.

During this quarter, a total of 27 cybersecurity capacity-building programmes were successfully conducted across the states of West Bengal (Nadia, North 24 Parganas, Malda, Birbhum, and Purba Medinipur), Rajasthan (Sikar, Nagaur, Alwar, Ajmer, Jodhpur, and Bikaner), and Meghalaya (Shillong). Each workshop witnessed the participation of over 100 attendees and recorded significant representation of women participants. Collectively, these 27 workshops reached approximately 4,400 participants, contributing substantially to strengthening cybersecurity awareness and capacity among MSMEs.



Devigadh, Jodhpur on May 29, 2026



Basirhat, North 24 Parganas
on February 16, 2026



Shillong, Meghalaya on May 21, 2026



Bikaner on June 09, 2026

In addition to workshops aimed at enhancing cybersecurity capabilities, a state-level 'Entrepreneurs' Conclave' was successfully organised in Chümoukedima, Nagaland on May 27, 2026. The event was held in collaboration with 'YouthNet,' a Nagaland-based organisation. It served as a vital platform for energizing the state's entrepreneurial ecosystem, bringing together over 250 established entrepreneurs

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from various districts. The event received an overwhelmingly positive response from participants and stakeholders alike. Furthermore, it garnered significant media attention, resulting in extensive coverage and reporting across Nagaland's leading print, digital, and electronic media outlets.



Nagaland State Entrepreneur's Conclave 2026 at Chümoukedima, Nagaland

Additionally, CUTS International, with support from The Asia Foundation, APCA and Google.org under the APAC Cybersecurity Fund (ACF), organised the Policy Dialogue on Strengthening Cybersecurity for MSMEs in India in Guwahati, Assam on May 22, 2026. The convening brought together policymakers, law enforcement officials, cybersecurity experts, industry representatives, entrepreneurs, and development practitioners to discuss emerging cyber risks, share field experiences, and identify practical and policy-level Interventions to strengthen cybersecurity resilience among MSMEs.



**Policy Dialogue on Strengthening Cybersecurity for MSMEs in India
on 22 May 2026 in Guwahati, Assam**

Sustainable Financing of Deforestation-risk Commodities in India: Clean Finance and Trade, Green India

CUTS International has recognised that deforestation-risk considerations remain largely overlooked within India's financial sector. Limited awareness of nature-related financial risks, weak due diligence practices, and gaps in regulatory and institutional frameworks continue to hinder the integration of environmental concerns into financial decision-making. To address these challenges, CUTS International has partnered with Fair Finance Asia (FFA) to implement this project.

The project aims to encourage more responsible financing of deforestation-risk commodities by promoting the integration of nature-related risks into financial policies and practices. It examines how regulators and financial institutions consider deforestation risks in their lending, investment, and operational decisions, while also assessing the role of ESG frameworks and disclosure practices.



Through research, policy assessments, stakeholder engagement, awareness generation, networking, and capacity-building initiatives, the project seeks to strengthen due diligence, improve transparency, and support better financial regulations. Ultimately, it aims to foster responsible finance and trade practices that protect forests, strengthen sustainable supply chains, and contribute to India's climate, biodiversity, and sustainable development priorities.

During this quarter, the CUTS CRC team held a virtual meeting with Vidya Rangan from ISEAL on May 11, 2026 to explore potential collaboration on India-focused initiatives. Sanchita Chatterjee attended the FGMC Communicators' Meeting on April 13 and the Forest Risk Commodities Community of Practice meeting on April 16, 2026 respectively. The team also engaged with around 11 stakeholders from academia, financial institutions, and regulatory bodies through a series of consultations in Kolkata during June 12-19, 2026 and in Mumbai on June 23-24, 2026. These discussions provided valuable insights and helped to generate awareness, along with strengthening the project's engagement with a diverse range of experts and institutions.

River Rights and Resilience (RRR)

CUTS is implementing a project titled 'Rivers, Rights and Resilience' with the support of CUTS Geneva. The project aims to reduce poverty and marginalisation among vulnerable river basin communities by enhancing their access to, and control over, riverine water resources on which their livelihoods depend.

The intervention seeks to strengthen the resilience of riparian communities in the transboundary Ganges-Brahmaputra-Meghna (GBM) River basins, with a focus on water governance, climate change, gender, livelihoods, and related development concerns.

During this quarter, CUTS conducted a study under the RRR project on three selected transboundary rivers in the Meghna basin of Meghalaya, namely Myntdu, Umngot, and Umsohryngkew, which are shared between India and Bangladesh. The study aimed to develop a deeper understanding of the socio-economic and cultural significance of these rivers by examining river-dependent livelihoods, traditional social customs, historical linkages, and climate-related challenges. It also explored opportunities for sustainable tourism, trade, and transboundary cooperation.



Field survey in Meghalaya in April 2026

As part of the study, three stakeholder consultation meetings were organised during the quarter with local communities residing along the banks of the selected rivers. These meetings provided an important platform for local residents, village heads, traditional institutions, community-based organisations, fishers, farmers, tourism entrepreneurs, women representatives, and other key stakeholders whose livelihoods and daily lives are closely linked to these rivers.

The consultations enabled participants to share local knowledge, lived experiences, and perspectives on river management, climate resilience, environmental conservation, livelihood challenges, and sustainable resource management. Altogether, approximately 175 stakeholders participated in these consultation meetings.

ONGOING PROJECTS



Stakeholders' consultations in Meghalaya in May 2026

In addition, a Hybrid Regional Stakeholder Consultation Meeting was organised in Shillong, Meghalaya, on June 11, 2026. The objective of the meeting was to create a collaborative platform to share the findings of the field survey and earlier consultations, facilitate dialogue among riverine communities, and promote knowledge exchange with relevant stakeholders from Bangladesh.

The initiative seeks to strengthen cross-border cooperation, promote sustainable river management, enhance opportunities for regional trade and tourism, and contribute to inclusive social development and long-term environmental sustainability across the Meghna basin.



Regional Stakeholder Consultation in Shillong, Meghalaya, on June 11, 2026

REPRESENTATIONS



1. Sanchita Chatterjee participated in the Forest Governance, Markets & Climate (FGMC) Programme Annual Stakeholders' Forum in London on April 14-15, 2026. She participated as a panellist in Session 4, "*Investments in Commodity Production on Forest Land*", where she shared insights on the overseas investment rules and processes of the Alliance countries China, India, and Vietnam.
2. Subham Ghosh participated in the SMART Advocacy Strategy Review and Planning Workshop organised by the Indian Institute of Technology Kharagpur in partnership with the Global Road Safety Partnership (GRSP) and the Global Health Advocacy Incubator (GHA) under the Road Safety Network India (RSN) from June 23-25, 2026.
3. Pratyush Banerjee participated in the Business Conclave: "Viksit Bengal" themed as *Rejuvenating West Bengal - Towards Reducing Growth Gap Between Purba & Paschim Bharat* organised by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce & Industry (BCC&I), at Kolkata, on June 26, 2026.
4. Subham Ghosh participated in the 5th Edition of World MSME Day 2026 organised by BCC&I, Kolkata, on June 27, 2026.

Sohom Banerjee presented his paper titled "Equity Market Reactions to Blockchain-Related Corporate Announcements: An Event Study Approach" at the Second International Conference on Artificial Intelligence, Computation, Communication and Network Security (AICCONS 2026) held at University of Wollongong in Dubai. He was also conferred with the **Best Paper Award** by University of Wollongong in Dubai and [Springer Nature](#).



A Narrow Strait, A Global Shock: What Hormuz Reveals About India's Energy Security

By Sohom Banerjee and Sanchita Chatterjee

India's World, March 16, 2026

<https://indiasworld.in/a-narrow-strait-a-global-shock-what-hormuz-reveals-about-indias-energy-security/>

West Asia's unquiet hour: Hidden costs and a strategic opening for India

By Pradeep S. Mehta and Sohom Banerjee

The Economic Times, April 07, 2026

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/west-asias-unquiet-hour-hidden-costs-and-a-strategic-opening-for-india/articleshow/130076821.cms>

Anticipating the inevitable: What India must learn from prepared economies in an age of recurring crisis

By Pradeep S. Mehta and Sohom Banerjee

The Economic Times, April 17, 2026

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/opinion/et-commentary/anticipating-the-inevitable-what-india-must-learn-from-prepared-economies-in-an-age-of-recurring-crisis/articleshow/130322912.cms?utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst

The luxury of hindsight, the urgency of foresight: What India can still get right

By Pradeep S. Mehta and Sohom Banerjee

The Economic Times, April 20, 2026

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/policy/the-luxury-of-hindsight-the-urgency-of-foresight-what-india-can-still-get-right/articleshow/130396077.cms>

The price of a war far above the ground

By Sanchita Chatterjee and Sohom Banerjee

The Hindu , April 21, 2026

<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/the-price-of-a-war-far-above-the-ground/article70885356.ece>

Viksit Bharat cannot run on fossil fuels — and 2047 is the deadline

By Pradeep S. Mehta, Varidhi Singh and Sohom Banerjee

The Economic Times, April 24, 2026

https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/opinion/et-commentary/viksit-bharat-cannot-run-on-fossil-fuels-and-2047-is-the-deadline/articleshow/130485693.cms?from=mdr&utm_source=contentofinterest&utm_medium=text&utm_campaign=cppst