

# CUTS CRC Activity Report

January-June, 2023

## ONGOING PROJECTS



## Market Structure of Inland Vessels *Implications for India-Bangladesh Waterborne Trade Growth*

With the support of the World Bank, CUTS International implemented a study titled “Assessing the market structure of Inland vessels and its implication for the growth of regional waterborne trade between India and Bangladesh”.

The main objectives of the study are to assess the current market structure of inland vessels in the region, analyse the potential winners and losers in the vessel market in the event of the expansion of regional waterborne trade and make recommendations, especially drawing from international experience, on creating market structures to support equitable growth and opportunities in the regional vessel market to stimulate the growth of regional waterborne trade.

In this regard, CUTS International conducted in-person as well as virtual interviews with relevant stakeholders such as vessel owners, vessel operators, officials involved with vessel operations, insurance providers, etc in India and Bangladesh in January-February 2023. Based on the findings, a report was prepared.

## Emerging Green Jobs in Coal and Thermal Power Sectors during India’s Just Transition

In light of the revenue and employment loss resulting from the phasing down of coal mining in the eastern coal belt region, the project “Identifying Emerging Green Jobs in Coal and Thermal Power Sector in the Wake of Just Transition in the Eastern Part of India” supported by GIZ, seeks to develop an action plan that will serve as a blueprint or framework of actions to assist in designing industry-relevant skilling programmes and livelihood promotion interventions to facilitate the transition.

This initiative will not only help address economic vulnerabilities rising from the gradual closure of the coal mines but will also enable the affected miners/local community people/workforce associated with the supply chain who will be out of the job market as a result of this transition, to gain relevant skills and resources to diversify themselves out of the coal mining industry.

In this context, extensive field surveys were conducted in three selected locations namely West Bengal (West Burdwan & Bankura), Jharkhand (Dhanbad-Jharia) and Odisha (Angul-Talcher). Several meetings were held with the relevant government officials, private players, trade unions and community members in the mentioned locations as well as the capital cities from January to February 2023. A detailed report along with the skill matrix for each state was prepared.



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(Vietnam); Geneva (Switzerland);  
and Washington DC (USA).



## Support for Women Journalists in Countering Misinformation and Disinformation in the Indo-Pacific Region (Phase II)

CUTS International, with support from the US Consulate, Kolkata, implemented a project entitled “Support for Women Journalists in Countering Misinformation and Disinformation in the Indo-Pacific Region”. Under this project, a series of webinars and capacity-building workshops will be organised in four locations for a media literacy drive with a focus on the capacity-building of local media house representatives.

The project aims to train media practitioners and journalists from local media houses to discern and respond to deceptive, biased, or false news and to combat disinformation across borders.



*Media Literacy capacity-building workshop for empowering journalists in Guwahati, Assam on April 18, 2023*

In this context, the first capacity-building workshop was organised in Guwahati, Assam on April 18, 2023. The session, held in collaboration with the Guwahati Press Club, was well appreciated by the media professionals. A total of 35 participants including journalists, and students studying journalism participated in the workshop. The possible future collaboration with the local media houses on fact-checking and debunking false news was discussed during and post the session.

In continuation, the second capacity-building workshop was organised at Dimapur, Nagaland on June 02, 2023. The capacity-building session focused on differentiating between misinformation and disinformation, ways to debunk false news using tools and observation skills; the increased use of artificial intelligence (AI) in misinformation space, etc.



*Media Literacy capacity-building workshop for empowering journalists at Dimapur, Nagaland on June 02, 2023*



organised



## Cyber Safe East India – Workshops on Cyber Security for E-Businesses (Phase II)

With support from the U.S Consulate Kolkata, CUTS International is implementing a project entitled “Cyber Safe East India – Workshops on Cyber Security for E-Businesses (Phase – II)”. These capacity-building workshops on cyber security will be organised in four Indian cities: Darjeeling (West Bengal), Gangtok (Sikkim), Shillong (Meghalaya), and Itanagar (Arunachal Pradesh). In this project, CUTS will engage the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (C-DAC), Patna, as a cyber-security training partner and involve local organisations for maximum dissemination.

This initiative aims to directly train a cohort of 160-200 MSMEs and women entrepreneurs with an entrepreneurship background and willing to implement cyber threat mitigation procedures in protecting their businesses. CUTS will also focus on creating awareness about cyber security risks and tools available to mitigate cyber risks.

In a series of four cybersecurity capacity-building workshops, the third workshop was organised in collaboration with the Arunachal Pradesh Micro & Small Industries Development Association (APM&SIDA) at Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh on February 25, 2023. Participants, mostly women entrepreneurs from more than 40 enterprises participated/ in/ the workshop. Also, this workshop received good media coverage in Arunachal Pradesh as well as other North Eastern states.



***Cyber Security capacity building workshop for MSMEs and Women entrepreneurs in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh on February 25, 2023***

The fourth and last capacity-building workshop was organised in collaboration with the MSME-DFO, Shillong, Meghalaya, Government of India on April 19, 2023. In this workshop around 40-45 young women entrepreneurs participated from different entrepreneurship backgrounds. Also, the workshop received good media coverage in Shillong, Meghalaya.



***Cyber Security capacity building workshop for MSMEs and Women entrepreneurs in Shillong, Meghalaya on April 19, 2023***





## Stakeholder Consultations on BBIN MVA

CUTS International is implementing a project entitled ‘Support Firms for Trip Diaries and Stakeholder Consultations (SFTDC)’ with support from the World Bank Group. Under this project, CUTS engaged Unnayan Shamannay from Bangladesh and Nepal Economic Forum from Nepal as country partners.

The key objectives of the study are to assess the procedural and logistical bottleneck in cross-border trade and evaluate the current landscape for the operationalisation of the Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA) in Bangladesh, India, and Nepal.

Under this study, between May-June 2023 surveys were conducted in Nepal and India. In India, the survey was conducted along Kolkata-Petrapole and Haldia-Raxaul stretch. In Nepal, the survey was conducted along Kathmandu-Birgunj and Kathmandu-Kakarvitta stretch. Relevant stakeholders such as truck drivers, freight forwarders, transporters, customs officials, Customs House Agents (CHAs), importers, exporters, chambers and other relevant government officials were interviewed during the surveys in both countries.



- Arnab Ganguly and Bijaya Roy attended the conference organised by The World Bank in Guwahati to discuss what needs to be done by India’s Northeastern states to facilitate effective implementation of the BBIN MVA; and how the states could benefit in the process. Ganguly delivered a presentation at the conference.
- Arnab Ganguly spoke at a conference titled ‘Indo-Bhutan Relation in Present Times’ organised by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies (MAKAIAS), Kolkata on January 14, 2023. He spoke at the event titled ‘Purvodaya: An Instrument for Act East Policy’ organised by the Institute of Social and Cultural Studies, Kolkata on January 15, 2023.
- Sucharita Bhattacharjee participated in a Programme on ‘Just Energy Transition and Energy Security - Experiences from Germany, India and the EU’ organised by the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES), India office, in Saxony and Berlin (Germany) from 27 February 12-March 03, 2023.
- Mihir Shekhar Bhonsale attended the Raisina Dialogue organised by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, and Observer Research Foundation in New Delhi from March 03-04, 2023.
- Sucharita Bhattacharjee participated in the *Leaders Lead On Demand Exchange for Rising Think Tank Opinion Leaders from Quad Countries* between March 15-25, 2023 in Washington D.C. and San Francisco.





- Baisali Lodh Chowdhury attended the 'Net Zero Pathway for businesses of East and North East India' organised by The Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry, India and British Deputy High Commission, Kolkata & Electric Vehicle Ecosystem Workshop organised by the Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office (FCDO), Government of UK on March 20, 2023.
- Mihir Shekhar Bhonsale attended a talk and Book Launch, at the British Deputy High Commission in Kolkata India in association with the Department of International Relations, Jadavpur University at Kolkata on March 24, 2023. He also attended the G20 T20 Youth Engagement - Macroeconomic Policy Coherence, Global Trade, and Livelihoods organised jointly by ORF and St. Xavier's College, Kolkata on March 27, 2023.
- Deepmala Ghosh participated in a webinar on Equalising Opportunities: Women in Regional Trade in South Asia organised by The World Bank on April 27, 2023.
- Baishali Lodh Chowdhury participated in the Multi-stakeholder Dialogue on Sustainability and SDGs organised by the Centre for Responsible Business & The Bengal Chamber of Commerce & Industry on May 08, 2023.
- Arnab Ganguly and Bijaya Roy participated in a webinar titled 'Knowledge exchange on E-Suvidha Portal' organised by the World Bank on May 10, 2023.
- Mihir Shekhar Bhonsale and Pradeep S Mehta participated in the Think 20 Mid-year Conference held in Mumbai from May 10-12, 2023.
- Sohom Banerjee participated in the Civil Society Round Table on Bangladesh's Recent Indo-Pacific Outlook and its Implications organised by The Institute of Social and Cultural Studies, India at Kolkata on May 10, 2023. He also participated in a seminar on Indo-Japan Relations and the Contemporary Developments in International Politics organised by The Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Institute of Asian Studies in collaboration with The Institute of Social and Cultural Studies, India at Kolkata on May 23, 2023.
- Mihir Shekhar Bhonsale and Subham Ghosh attended the BIS programme for Awareness/Sensitisation of Consumer/Voluntary/Non-governmental Organisations on June 01, 2023.
- Mihir Shekhar Bhonsale and Rageshree Bose attended a capacity-building session on 'Emerging Prospects from Trade Agreements – Industry Perspective', organised by The Confederation of Indian Industry in collaboration with the Centre for WTO Studies, IIFT, and Engineering Export Promotion Council in Kolkata, India on June 22, 2023.