

CUTS CRC Activity Report

January-March 2022

ONGOING PROJECTS



Pre-Feasibility Study for creating a Freight Village at Balagarh, West Bengal

CUTS International, with the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Private Sector Engagement (PSE) support, is implementing a study entitled “**Pre-feasibility study for creating multimodal Freight Village at Balagarh in West Bengal**”. The study aims to assess the feasibility of creating a Freight Village (FV) in Balagarh and develop an action plan to establish the proposed FV, encourage infrastructure investment and benefit the potential investors and policymakers.

The first Project Advisory Committee & Co-Creation Workshop was organised on February 18, 2022. The aim was to sensitise the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) members about the objectives and activities and gather their inputs to develop methodologies and strategies for effective implementation of the project.

A scoping visit was conducted in Gournagar Char, Balagarh, on March 23, 2022. The objective of the visit was to understand the existing state of infrastructure, connectivity and socio-economic profile of the proposed location.



Scoping Visit at Balagarh, West Bengal

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and Washington DC (USA).

Support for Women Journalists in Countering Mis/Disinformation in the Indo-Pacific Region

ONGOING
PROJECTS



CUTS International, with the support from US Consulate, Kolkata and in partnership with East-West Centre, Washington DC, South Asian Women in Media (SAWM), and SeeBoundless from the USA, implemented a project entitled **“Support for women journalists in countering mis/disinformation in the Indo-Pacific region”**.

The project aimed at training women journalists from the Indo Pacific Region on tools and techniques to counter any Information asymmetry, including Disinformation, Misinformation, Fake News, Deep Fakes, etc., that are posing a significant threat to the lives and careers of the women journalists in particular. The other objective is to ensure stability in the Indo-Pacific region by developing a strong collaborative network of women journalists.

In consultation with its Consortium Partners, the CUTS team identified and selected participants from across the Indo Pacific region, including India, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Singapore, and Indonesia.

Under this project, several online sessions were organised on select themes. The first webinar on “Information Literacy” was organised on February 11, 2022. The second webinar was organised on “Online trolling & workplace harassment” on February 24, 2022. The webinar held on March 24, 2022, focused on “Debunking and visual disinformation/Misinformation: Concept of responsible journalism for the project on countering disinformation” as the underlying theme.



Online session on Support for women journalists in countering mis/disinformation in the Indo-Pacific region



Role of Journalists to Curb Misinformation in Times of COVID-19

With support from the US Consulate, Kolkata, CUTS International implemented the project entitled **“Role of Journalists to Curb Health-Related Misinformation in times of COVID-19, focusing on Women Journalists”**.

In coordination with the US Consulate team, the project aimed to connect key journalists on a common virtual platform to discuss issues of infodemic - fake news, misinformation, and disinformation circulated during the COVID-19 pandemic and come up with strategies to counter this surge of false, unverified information. It focused on providing participants with a sense of connection, and training them on the required skills for curbing mis/disinformation (including presenting cases through first-person narratives of the on-ground situation) and strategies, as they endure the COVID-19 pandemic in India and neighbouring countries;

Three roundtable discussions on ‘Countering the surge of Misinformation/Disinformation during COVID-19 pandemic’ were organised in collaboration with the U.S Consulate in February-March 2022. Monideepa Banerjee (Ex-NDTV Correspondent) was the key resource person. The other resource persons were Brooke Van Dam, Director of Partnerships and Education, SeeBoundless; Steve Johnson, Founder, SeeBoundless; Smita Sharma, Photojournalist and TED Fellow.

The sessions aimed at addressing the information asymmetry related to the COVID-19 pandemic and its catastrophic consequences for public health. The discussions also covered the numerous ways in which unverified information enters digital platforms and how they propagate vaccine misinformation, fanning anti-vaccination efforts. These sessions witnessed participants from India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Indonesia. The participating journalists shared their personal experiences countering dis/misinformation in their work, making the sessions extremely relatable.

Just Transition in the Indian Power Sector: Focus on Rajasthan & West Bengal

CUTS International, supported by the SED Stitching Fund, implemented the “**Enabling Just Transition in India’s Power Generation Sector**” project. Under this project, CUTS undertook a state-wide study to assess the readiness of Rajasthan and West Bengal to embrace the much-envisioned energy transition in the power generation sector.

The objective was to learn perspectives of different stakeholders directly or indirectly impacted by this transition, i.e. communities and representatives from conventional and renewable power generation plants, coal mining industry, mine-dependent communities, academia, CSOs and government, to be able to assess the possible social, environmental and economic impacts of an energy transition in the most befitting, holistic manner.

To disseminate the findings of this project, a digital story was prepared and uploaded on YouTube.



*Stakeholders interviewed under the project
‘Enabling Just Transition in India’s Power Generation Sector’*

- Rageshree Bose participated in a webinar titled ‘Integrating BIMSTEC 2022 Relooking BIMSTEC 2021 – Facilitating Cross Border Paperless Trade’ organised by the Indian Chamber of Commerce on January 29, 2022.
- Sucharita Bhattacharjee and Subham Ghosh participated in a webinar titled ‘Regional Power Trade: Toward a Green, Clean and Energy-Secure South Asia’ organised by the World Bank on January 31, 2022.
- Baishali Lodh Chowdhury participated in a webinar titled ‘Accelerating Clean Energy Transition in South Asia’ organised by USAID’s South Asia Regional Initiative for Energy Integration (SARI/EI) on February 03, 2022.
- Baishali Lodh Chowdhury participated in a webinar titled ‘Gender and Energy: Empowering women as the key players of energy transitions’ organised by The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) on March 03, 2022.
- Bijaya Roy attended a workshop titled ‘Creating value through ESG’ organised by the Bengal Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCC&I) on March 29, 2022.

ONGOING PROJECTS



REPRESENTATIONS

