

CUTS CRC Activity Report

July-September 2022

ONGOING PROJECTS



Creating a Freight Village at Balagarh, West Bengal

With the support of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Private Sector Engagement (PSE) support, CUTS International is implementing a ***'Pre-feasibility study for creating a Freight Village (multimodal hub) 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.

In July 2022, under this project, three consecutive meetings were organised with the industrial units of three districts, namely East Burdwan, Hooghly, and West Burdwan, on July 18, 19 and 20, 2022, respectively. The purpose of the meetings was to assess the existing industrial capacity and growth in the vicinity of the proposed project site and the potential for future industrial development in the districts above to gauge the market potential of the Balagarh FV. Each of these meetings represented about 20 to 25 units from large, medium, and small industries.

On August 24, 2022, the CUTS team conducted a socio-economic survey at Sahebdaanga in Nadia. The objective of this socio-economic survey was to conduct resource mapping with the local community and gauge the overall sentiment among the locals regarding the Balagarh FV project and land or livelihood transfer. Under this socio-economic survey, two FGDs were arranged at the same location with local stakeholders such as fishermen, farmers, women workers, and panchayat members. In each of these FGDs, approximately 30-35 stakeholders were interviewed.



Meeting with the Industrial Units from East Burdwan



Meeting with the Industrial Units from West Burdwan



Meeting with the Industrial Units from Hooghly



Socio-economic survey at Sahebdaanga, Nadia

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and Washington DC (USA).



Facilitating Implementation of the Bangladesh, India and Nepal Motor Vehicles Agreement

UTS International and its neighbouring country partners, Unnayan Shamannay from Bangladesh and Nepal Economic Forum from Nepal, and with support from the World Bank, are implementing a project entitled ***'Stakeholder Analysis for Regional Transport Connectivity in Eastern South Asia'***.



Stakeholder Validation workshop at Kolkata, India on August 23, 2022

The objective of the study is to evaluate the current landscape for the operationalisation of the Motor Vehicles Agreement (MVA) in Bangladesh, India, and Nepal (BIN) and identified country by country, key obstacles and potential solutions needed for the efficient implementation of the MVA, including at the province (state) level in BIN countries.

Under this project, stakeholder validation workshops were organised in Nepal, Bangladesh and India on July 26, August 11 and 23, 2022, respectively. The objectives of these workshops were to validate the study's findings and identify potential solutions to address the challenges related to the effective implementation of MVA. Stakeholders such as logistic service providers, government officials, exporters, importers, etc., participated in these workshops.



Stakeholder Validation workshop at Nepal

Stakeholder Validation workshop at Bangladesh



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

ONGOING
PROJECTS



CUTS International, with support from the US Consulate, Kolkata, and in partnership with East-West Centre (EWC), 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 aims to train women journalists in the Indo-Pacific region on tools and techniques to address information asymmetries. These include misinformation, fakes, deep fakes, etc., which pose a significant threat to the lives and careers of women journalists. Another objective is to ensure stability in the Indo-Pacific region by building a strong collaborative network of women journalists.



Workshop for mid-career women journalists and women media professionals from the Indo-Pacific Region



Under this project, CUTS and its partner organisations and US Consulate Kolkata organised a two-day training workshop in Kolkata, India, on August 11 & 12, 2022 for mid-career women journalists and media professionals from the Indo-Pacific Region.

Approximately 60 women media professionals and mid-career women journalists from various countries of the Indo-Pacific region, such as Bangladesh, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Bhutan, etc., physically participated in this two-day training workshop in Kolkata, India. Also, lots of participants joined that workshop through online platforms.

The workshop aims to promote responsible journalism among women media practitioners from the Indo-Pacific region. It also trained them on several aspects of information asymmetry, including countering disinformation, misinformation, and mal- information – all of which pose a significant threat to their lives, careers as well as overall society.



Cyber Safe East India Workshop for MSMEs and Women Entrepreneurs (Phase-II)

With support from 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.

Under this project, communication for engagement with relevant stakeholders has been initiated to organise the four Cyber Security capacity-building workshops in Darjeeling, Gangtok, Shillong, and Itanagar. A virtual meeting was held with Aditya Kumar Sinha, Director, C-DAC, Patna, and his team on September 06, 2022, to discuss the workshop strategy and their role in the workshop.

REPRESENTATIONS



- Mihir Shekhar Bhonsale attended a talk at Jadavpur University on ‘Geopolitical developments in the Indian Ocean Region: Dealing with Major Power Competition and Climate Change’ by David Brewster, Senior Research Fellow with National Security College, Australian National University, on July 27, 2022.
- Mihir Shekhar Bhonsale, Sucharita Bhattacharjee and Sumanta Biswas attended a Special Lecture on ‘Regional Connectivity and Indo-Bangladesh Economic Expansion’ at Jadavpur University on July 15, 2022.
- Sucharita Bhattacharjee and Baisali Lodh Chowdhury attended a stakeholder consultation meeting on ‘Digital Street: Digital Technologies for Street Vendors- Challenges and Opportunities,’ organised by the Centre of Excellence for Digital Transformation, IFHE Hyderabad, and FES India in Kolkata on August 29, 2022.
- Bijaya Roy participated in a meeting addressed by Arpita Mukherjee, Professor, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) on the topic ‘India’s Negotiating Strategies and How Businesses Should Prepare for it’, organised by Bharat Chambers on August 05, 2022.
- Baisali Lodh Chowdhury participated in the Behavioural Insights Workshop organised by Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation, New Delhi, along with Behavioural Insights Team and United Kingdom at Jaipur on September 13-14, 2022.
- Sucharita Bhattacharjee joined as a Panelist at the *Panel on Mobility and Transport* in the Global Just Transition Dialogue organised jointly by FES HQ, specifically, the Global Trade Union Program and International Climate Policy Department, on September 12, 2022.