

India-Bangladesh Border Haats *Poised for a Growing Role*

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BIPUL CHATTERJEE
Executive Director
CUTS International



SREERADHA DATTA
Centre Head, Neighbourhood
Studies and Senior Fellow
Vivekananda International Foundation



MUSTAFIZUR RAHMAN
Distinguished Fellow
Centre for Policy Dialogue, Bangladesh



PRITAM BANERJEE
Logistics Specialist Consultant
Asian Development Bank



MAHBUBA NASREEN
Professor & Director
Institute of Disaster Management and
Vulnerability Studies, Dhaka University, Bangladesh



SWAPNA DEBNATH
Additional Director
Department of Industries & Commerce
Government of Tripura

Recognising the years of symbiosis that characterised the lives of these people who have inhabited geographically contiguous areas across generations, the Governments of India and Bangladesh decided to create for them an institutional space where they would be able meet from time to time and freely trade their goods without having to go through official documentation procedures that are usually required when people cross borders between countries.

The result was Border Haats. No local taxes are imposed on trading, and both Indian Rupee and Bangladeshi Taka are accepted in these markets. Four such Haats have been in operation at the Indo-Bangladesh border. On the basis of sustained empirical investigation, CUTS International along with its project partners has affirmed the manifold benefits that Border Haats have yielded.

Not only that, there are instances to suggest that Border Haats can function as vital links in value chains in respect of several products and services which can benefit both countries. Border Haats seem poised to play a growing role in the lives of the people in the region.

Keeping this in mind, CUTS International has published a [Discussion Paper](#) on the prospects of up scaling Border Haats into retail trade zones. Based on that, this webinar will draw attention to the complementarities that cross-border trade facilitate between people living on the two sides of a border and will dwell on the possibility of utilising such complementarities to elevate the India-Bangladesh Border Haats to wider institutional spaces for local area development.