



National Conference

Sustainable Energy in India - Way Forward for Energy Security

BACKGROUND

Consumer Unity & Trust Society (CUTS International) www.cuts-international.org is an economic policy research organisation involved in research and advocacy on various issues of public policy including competition and regulatory policy. We have been actively engaged on these issues within & outside India for over thirty years now.

CUTS International implemented a project on capacity building of CSOs in RE/DSM issues over a span of two years (2011-2012) in two states of India i.e. Gujarat and West Bengal with support from Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation (<http://www.cuts-ccier.org/DREC/>).

The overall objective of the project is to increase long-term capacity/awareness of consumer groups to demand for DSM and RE initiatives to better prepare them to carry out need based advocacy and participate in associated policy and regulatory processes. This would help in creating demand from the consumer end, which would potentially result in appropriate actions being implemented by policy makers at the top level. Further, it also aims to understand, document and communicate their specific needs to relevant policy makers.

During the implementation of the project, we have received strong support of the relevant institutions at the State level i.e. West Bengal (Power Ministry, WBREDA and WBERC) and Gujarat (GERC and GEDA). Relevant representatives from the mentioned institutions including Mr. Malay De, Principal Secretary, Department of Power and NES, Government of West Bengal actively participated in various meetings and provided their support in organising dissemination meetings in both the States.

PURPOSE OF THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The purpose of the National Conference is to showcase the impact of the project to a larger audience comprising of policymakers, consumer groups, media persons, regulators, representatives of distribution companies, partner organisations, etc. from the state of West Bengal, Gujarat and few other relevant states. The aim is to initiate a multi-stakeholder dialogue on the need and importance of demand side management and renewable energy in India and to facilitate discussion between policy makers and stakeholders to draw a forward looking agenda focused on policy reforms in the electricity sector with focus on clean energy.

ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED AS PART OF THE PROJECT

- Local Inception Workshops: A day long Inception workshop was held in Ahmedabad, Gujarat and Kolkata, West Bengal wherein there was representation of diverse stakeholders like consumer groups, government agencies for energy development and regulatory body, civil society organizations (CSOs) and media.
- Baseline Consumer Survey: A survey was implemented to understand the level of awareness amongst the different cross-sections of consumer groups, such as CSOs, commercial establishments, agriculture and individual consumers (urban and rural) were surveyed and data analysed. In total, 1000 respondents were covered in the survey.
- State-Level Training Workshops: A 5-day long state level training workshop was organized in both the states wherein 70 NGOs had participated and resource persons were drawn

from the relevant institutions. Intensive discussions and case study presentations along with exposure visit to relevant organisations.

- Consumer Interface Meetings: 40 consumer interface meetings were carried out (to reach out to consumer groups in raising awareness about RE/DSM issues across 10 districts in each state. The platform also helped in understanding the ground level problems faced by the different cross sections of consumers.
- Final Consumer Survey: A final consumer survey was carried out covering 700 respondents to determine the level of awareness and change in practice (if any), as an outcome of the project activities. Efforts were made to cover atleast 50% of the consumers that were covered in the baseline consumer survey for the purpose of comparison.

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