
RESA Evaluation Report

FINALREPORT

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List of Acronyms

CAB	Consumer Association of Bangladesh
CART	Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training
CESC	Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation
CFL	Compact Fluorescent Lamp
CRC	Calcutta Resource Centre
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CUTS	Consumer Unity & Trust Society
CUTS-CCIER	CUTS Centre for Competition, Investment & Economic Regulation
DFID	Department For International Development
DoED	Department of Electricity Development
ELI	Efficient Lighting Initiative
ETFC	Electricity Tariff Fixation Commission
FES	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
GIM	Grassroot Interface Meeting
GRANIRCA	Grassroots Reach out & Networking in Rajasthan through Consumer Action
GRM	Grievance Redressal Mechanism
IPP	Independent Power Producer
MERC	Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission's
MOAs	Memorandum of Agreements
MW	Mega Watt
NACEUN	National Association of Community Users of Electricity in Nepal
NAS	National Advocacy Seminar
NEA	Nepal Electricity Authority
NERC	National Electricity Regulatory Commission
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NPR	Nepali Rupees
PAC	Project Advisory Committee
REB	Rural Electrification Board
RERC	Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission
RESA	Regulatory Reforms in Electricity sector in South Asia
RG	Reference Group
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SAWTEE	South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment
SEB	State Electricity Board
SERC	State Electricity Regulatory Commission
T&D	Transmission And Distribution
TBPs	Territorial Base Papers
TLOs	Tole Lane Organisations
TTMs	Territorial Training Manuals
WB	West Bengal
WBERC	West Bengal Electricity Regulatory Commission
WBPDCL	West Bengal Power Development Corporation Limited
WBSEB	West Bengal State Electricity Board
WBSEDCL	West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Ltd.
WBSEDCL	West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Limited
WBSETCL	West Bengal State Electricity Transmission Company Limited

1 Executive Summary

Project Background

- CUTS Centre for Competition, Investment & Economic Regulation (CUTS-CCIER) with the support of the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) has implemented a pilot project titled 'A pilot project on capacity building on electricity reforms in Nepal, Bangladesh and India (RESA Project), on capacity development of consumers/civil societies on electricity reforms.
- The project spanning for over two years (Jan 2008 – Aug 2010) was implemented in the select districts of Nepal, Bangladesh, India (West Bengal and Rajasthan), in coordination with selected project partners and local Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), with CUTS-C-CIER acting as the project team
- The project aimed to increase the effectiveness of regulatory regimes in the electricity sector by means of increasing long term capacity of CSOs to facilitate and enhance consumer representation in policy formulation process and regulatory bodies.
- The project entailed a budget of ₹18,694,500 and was accepted for funding by Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD).

Review of Project and Activities

- Project Administration:
 - The project team comprising of project manager along with two project assistants at **CUTS C-CIER** was responsible for overall coordination of project activities.
 - **Project Advisory Committee (PAC)** consisting of seventeen persons was constituted to provide guidance at the project level.
 - A separate **Reference Group (RG)** had been constituted for each of the project territory that ensured quality in project execution as per stipulated plan.
 - Project Management & Coordination at the territorial level was the responsibility of respective **project partners** who nominated a nodal person who was responsible for the coordination of the project related activities with CUTS C-CIER and the respective **second tier partner organizations** (i.e. the CSOs which provided the support at the grassroots level).
- Project Review: One of the main review instruments under this project was the mid-term review meeting which was carried out in April 2009. Besides, all the project partners had adhered to the project timeline and submitted quarterly progress and financial reports on time. Additionally, it was observed that CUTS C-CIER personnel visited project partners regularly to take stock of the project activities and actively participated in all the events as observers and/or resource persons.
- Project Activities

- **Launch Meeting and Inception Workshop:** Launch meeting held in Kolkata, West Bengal was the first activity organized under this project with the objective of discussing electricity reforms undertaken in the project territories. The local inception workshops, one in each territory, were held in April 2008, with a twofold purpose: to disseminate the project implementation details among the second tier partner organizations and; to gauge their level of understanding on electricity-related issues through a questionnaire survey.
- **Field Research/ Base Line Survey:** field research comprising of literature research and baseline survey was undertaken in each of the territories and outcomes of the research were collated to develop a 'Territorial Base Paper' for each territory.
- **Reference Group Meetings I and II:** 8 RG meetings were organized in two phases i.e. 4 in each phase per territory to acquaint the members with the project activities and take their guidance on the future course. In the case of West Bengal where the differentiated quality of the territorial training manual and additional support granted by WBSEDCL to CUTS CRC towards establishment of consumer assistance cell in 9 districts of West Bengal, stand out as direct evidences of deeper involvement of West Bengal's RG members.
- **Territorial Trainings:** The territorial training sessions which constituted an important component of the RESA project were organized in two rounds in each territory, each round spanning for two days. The evaluation observes that participation of a number of regulators and policy makers, which was vital for the project, was ensured in all the territories. Overall the territorial trainings have been useful and were beneficial to the target audience.
- **Grassroots Interface Meetings (GIMS) - Phase I and II:** The activity was carried out across two phases; the first phase focused on dissemination of information to relevant consumers and the second phase focused on providing possible solutions to the problems in the presence of local legislators. The GIMs received an overwhelming response, with average participation ranging from 60 in Nepal in GIM I to 79.5 in Rajasthan during GIM II. Additionally, Sub-GIMs albeit were not envisaged in the project proposal, were conducted in Rajasthan and West Bengal which translated into far greater outreach and dissemination. At a broader level, the activity provided an effective two way communication platform which not only helped the utilities and the regulators understand the issues at the grassroots but also made the consumers aware about their responsibilities towards the sector
- **National Advocacy Seminar (NAS):** One national advocacy seminar was organized in each project country, in order to take the project findings to policy community and regulators. The seminar in Bangladesh was not attended by any of the policy makers, which can be deemed as a lost opportunity but overall the activity was immensely effective in other territories.
- **Regional Conference:** The event provided a platform for engagement with stakeholder groups which are key to implementing pro-consumer reforms in electricity sector. The dialogue forum enabled experience sharing between nations and showcased the relevance of consumer's involvement given the current state of reforms in Asia.
- **Media Workshops:** Three workshops were organized under the project, one each in West Bengal, Nepal and Bangladesh. The objective was to acquaint the media with outcomes of the RESA project and sensitize them on the role that the medium can play in regulatory reform in the electricity sector. The workshops received a prolific response with Nepal and Bangladesh workshop receiving 120 and 92 participants respectively.

- Outputs

- **Territorial Base Papers (TBPs)** prepared by the project partners are a repository of key information and are capable of becoming useful dissemination material. Some findings of the baselines survey were found to be interesting and insightful which can serve as a useful reading material.
- **Final Consumer Survey Reports** contains the findings on the final consumer survey (that was undertaken to gauge the level of impact of project activities on the grassroots consumers) and a section on case studies (which highlights concrete outcomes achieved under the project).
- **Territorial Training Manuals (TTMs)** were used during territorial training sessions for capacity building of grassroots' CSOs and evaluators consider this output to be the most useful and popular among beneficiaries and consider it important to highlight and disseminate this document more extensively.
- **Vernacular Handouts:** The handouts contained information on grievance redressal mechanism, common electricity related problems and their associated solutions and role of consumers in energy conservation and power theft curtailment. Barring Bangladesh, where consumers have expressed discontent on the overall quality of the material as adequate solutions to problems have not been identified, the consumers elsewhere have appreciated the coverage of the material and its timeliness.
- **Website:** A separate webpage has been created under the RESA project which can be accessed through the CUTS website. The webpage carries archives of all the materials produced and distributed which enhances the outreach and dissemination of the project considerably.
- **Media Articles:** Prolific media coverage has given a high local visibility to the project which can be taken as an important result obtained out of this project.
- **Policy Briefing papers:** Four briefing papers were produced, three of them written by CUTS CCIER with the assistance of CUTS CART and CUTS CRC, and the fourth, prepared by SAWTEE. The papers have been produced on following themes: (a) Consumer participation in Electricity Regulation, Rajasthan experience; (b) Promoting Competition through open access in the Power sector and (c) Rationalizing electricity subsidy in the farm sector.
- **RESA Documentary – 'Powered to Grow':** A video documentary (produced in two languages – Hindi and English) featuring the interactions between the service providers and consumers of Rajasthan was prepared and disseminated to a vast array of stakeholders both within and outside India.

- Budgets and Fund Management

- A funding of Rs. 18,694,500 was approved for the RESA project for a two year period, of which Rs 12,100,000 was for the first year and Rs.6,594,500 for the second year.
- The major chunk of expenditures in the project has been on Seminars and Training representing 38% of the expenditures. Personnel costs, at Rs 3,840,000 represented over 19% of the project budgets, while project administration overheads were

budgeted at 10%. As a result, project activities (including monitoring and evaluation) accounted for almost 70% of the expenditure.

- Project partners in all the locations mentioned timely and swift disbursement of funds by CUTS, and cited this to be a consistent trend in all CUTS projects.

Analysis of Results

• Relevance

- The relative importance of unmet/ undermet needs of electricity consumers differs across locations. Electricity coverage and availability, particularly in rural areas, is higher in Rajasthan and West Bengal, compared to Nepal and Bangladesh. As a result, consumer related issues are of a higher order in locations having greater coverage than in locations where electricity access itself is the challenge.
- **Nepal and Bangladesh** confront several supply side constraints in the electricity sector and hence merely activating consumers and building CSOs' capacity is not enough to bring about changes in responsiveness, where the structural reform of the sector is a fundamental constraint.
- Whereas, in **West Bengal**, the status of the electricity sector is relatively better owing to the institutional reforms within the utilities among other reasons, this project is found to be highly relevant.
- The issue of additionality is important in **Rajasthan**, given the fact that CUTS Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) had jointly launched project titled-'**Involvement of Consumer in Power sector Reforms**' in August 2001 under the same theme in the six districts of Rajasthan. The evaluation notes no major differences in the outcomes intended by the FES project to that of RESA but can be seen as a follow on initiative building on the efforts of FES.

• Efficiency

- Activities were completed within the allotted budget; however delays at the outset of the project owing to contract finalization and approval of funds, resulted in the commencement of the project three months behind schedule.
- In terms of utilization of resources, project activities accounted for over 66% of funds-of which knowledge creation and capacity development accounted for close to 50%, staffing and personnel costs of 20% and overheads of 8%, which is considered reasonable, given the grassroots focus of the project

• Effectiveness – Results from the project

- **Outcome 1: Enhanced awareness and understanding among consumers/civil society on how to engage in policy processes aimed at electricity reforms:** In each of the locations, the project has increased the understanding among consumers and CSOs of consumer-facing issues in the electricity sector, particularly dealing with access, affordability and service quality aspects of electricity distribution. However, it would be incorrect to suggest that the project has strengthened consumers and CSOs to engage in the larger process of electricity reforms at a macro level. The thrust of the project in terms of the reforms agenda has been purely at the local grievance redressal level and not the macro issues of electricity capacity, competitiveness and legal/ regulatory changes as such.

- **Outcome 2: Civil society organizations better comprehend policy issues pertaining to electricity reforms and make efforts to continue engagement with research and advocacy initiatives on this subject, subsequently:** This outcome was analysed in its two components: the ability to comprehend policy issues and the engagement in further research and advocacy. The first, whether the CSOs comprehended the policy issues, has been attained satisfactorily. CSOs participating in the project have all stated as having acquired more confidence in representing consumer concerns before the service providers and regulators, as a result of their participation in the project. As for the second, whether they made efforts to engage with research and other initiatives- the results vary across the territories. However, it would be unreasonable to expect CSOs to engage in further research on their own, except under follow-on projects from CUTS or other development partners.
- **Outcome 3: Improve policymakers' and regulators understanding of consumer's needs and demands:** The project's events such as the GIMs and the National Advocacy Seminar saw the presence and participation of policy makers and regulators in the deliberations based on the surveys conducted by the project. The project and its various outputs provided an excellent opportunity to sensitize parliamentarians on the major challenges facing the electricity sector reforms in India. However, isolated and sporadic interactions under a project like RESA alone cannot be expected to have the necessary effect on regulators, and only a continued and sustained engagement by CSOs can adequately sensitize the service providers and regulators to resolve the key issues faced by consumers.
- **Outcome 4: Mechanism of communication is established between consumers, CSOs, policy makers/government representatives, regulators and distribution companies to discuss electricity reforms:** The project provided an opportunity for meaningful interaction between the service providers and consumers) through GIMs, National Advocacy Seminar (NAS). The inclusion and eventually presence of representatives of utility companies and regulators, in the RG Team has been a very useful contribution of the project, considering the initial averseness of official bodies to participate in the project.
- **Outcome 5: Formation of a regional civil society network on electricity reforms that acts as a platform for opinion exchange and learning through information sharing:** The implementation partners at RESA by themselves represent a regional group of CSOs with some knowledge and capacity to engage with service providers and regulators on electricity issues. However, this does not necessarily constitute a regional dimension for the project, given that the issues covered by the project tend to be local in nature. The usefulness of a regional CSO network can only be perceived in terms of a sharing of best practices and exchange of knowledge and awareness of comparable situations across countries/ regions. However, the evaluation found efforts by local partners (although not the national partners) to pro actively seek such exchanges to be inadequate. CSOs will need to explore opportunities to network with one another on a number of issues, at every networking opportunity provided to them under other projects as well.
- Meanwhile, regional electricity grids and a regional market for electricity are important discussion subjects under the SAARC framework, and official mechanisms already exist for discussions and regional studies on the subject (including World Bank and ADB funded projects). Therefore, the potential contribution of regional CSO networks would seem somewhat limited.
- Funding support shall remain an important prerequisite for the sustenance of national or regional networks, given the need for budgets to travel and attend events. This cannot be a part of any single project, and CSOs will need to explore opportunities to network with one another on a number of issues, at every networking opportunity provided to them under other projects as well.

- Impact
 - In all three countries covered by the project, the electricity sector is fraught with multiple challenges. The scale and scope of RESA is very small in comparison with the overall magnitude of the problem. Therefore, it would be unrealistic to expect large scale impact at the sector level, from the interventions undertaken.
 - The main and noticeable impact of the project is the Empowerment of Consumer Organizations, as evidenced from a number of anecdotes in the project locations, as well as in the evaluators' interactions with CSOs

- Sustainability
 - The evaluators consider that the CSOs and their beneficiary consumers directly exposed to the project should now have the necessary basic knowledge and awareness of the consumer facing aspects of electricity distribution, and the structure and mechanism for grievance redressal, at the local level.
 - Thus, RESA beneficiaries should be able to exert consumer pressure in their localities through a rights-based approach in all future situations, without further support from the project. Whether they shall do so or not depends considerably on external factors, particularly the extent of opacity in the distribution of electricity and the presence of a nexus between distribution companies and some end users.

Lessons Learned

- From a consumer's perspective, electricity reforms must address basic issues of access, affordability and service quality standards, which face the consumer at the grass roots level. Therefore, consumer awareness and empowerment to seek a rights-based reforms agenda are likely to find popular appeal.
- While the demand for action can emerge from a consumer rights approach, solutions need to emerge from a perspective of institutional reforms, which may be beyond the scope of consumer organizations as such.
- Despite the availability of clearly laid out procedures, the administrative machinery is absent or weak in state owned electricity companies, or remains unresponsive at the local level, unless there is supervision from above.
- Engagement and buy in from government is critical for any intervention in the sector to make a lasting impact.
- Networking among local organizations has a more profound impact on the society
- RESA experience suggests that project scope, focus and duration are an important combination and require the right balance. The two-year duration of the project seems right, and enabled continuity of engagement with the same stakeholders throughout the project.

Recommendations

- Project has been implemented successfully and has delivered against a number of its objectives. There is a strong case for rolling out the initiative to cover a larger footprint, and also adapt future initiatives to focus on the larger, unaddressed issues such as universal access, institutional reforms and governance.
- The follow up phase of RESA should have four dimensions:

- **Strengthening dissemination** at the grassroots by inventorying, standardizing and rolling out the information and knowledge in other districts
- **Advocacy on institutional reforms** to bring about greater accountability for service quality standards
- **Induction of energy conservation** and enhancement of individual awareness on energy saving should be done in the follow-on phase
- **Formation of a regional virtual network** on electricity that would provide opportunities to consider system-wide reforms based on the positive experiences of other countries and interact and benefit from best practices

2 Introduction and Methodology

2.1 Project Background

1. CUTS Centre for Competition, Investment & Economic Regulation (CUTS-CCIER) with the support of the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) has implemented a pilot project titled 'A pilot project on capacity building on electricity reforms in Nepal, Bangladesh and India (RESA Project), on capacity development of consumers/civil societies on electricity reforms'. The project spanning for over two years (Jan 2008 – Aug 2010) was implemented in the select districts of Nepal, Bangladesh, India (West Bengal and Rajasthan), in coordination with selected project partners and local Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), with CUTS-C-CCIER acting as the project team.
2. The project aimed to increase the effectiveness of regulatory regimes in the electricity sector by means of increasing long term capacity of CSOs to facilitate and enhance consumer representation in policy formulation process and regulatory bodies.

Table 1: A Snapshot of the Project

Project Snapshot	
Title	A PILOT PROJECT ON CAPACITY BUILDING ON ELECTRICITY REFORMS IN NEPAL, BANGLADESH AND INDIA (RESA PROJECT)
Funded by	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD)
Duration	32 months (January 2008- August 2010)
Implementing Agency	CUTS Centre for Competition, Investment & Economic Regulation (CUTS-CCIER)
Focus territories	Select districts of Nepal, Bangladesh, India (West Bengal and Rajasthan)
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate effective representation of consumers'/civil society's views in policy formulation and regulatory processes in electricity sector in Bangladesh, India and Nepal. • Strengthen capacity of civil society to take up action research and advocacy on regulatory/policy issues in the electricity sector • Encourage regional co-operation and experience sharing on the subject through networking • Create a vertical mechanism to take the concerns and views from the grassroots to the policy level and vice-versa, along with having horizontal linkages between different players at the same level.
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch meeting and training of nodal persons/project staff • Local inception workshops • Field research and establishment of consumer base line survey • National stakeholders' dialogues (Reference Group (RG) Meetings) • Training of CSOs at Territorial levels

Project Snapshot	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grassroots interface meetings • National Advocacy Seminars for policy-influencing • Regional Conference
Expected Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhanced awareness and understanding among consumers/civil society on how to engage in policy processes aimed at electricity reforms. • CSOs better comprehend policy issues pertaining to electricity reforms and make efforts to continue engagement with research and advocacy initiatives on this subject, subsequently. • Improve policymakers' and regulators understanding of consumer's needs and demands. • Mechanism of communication is established between consumers, CSOs, policy makers/government representatives, regulators and distribution companies to discuss electricity reforms. • Formation of a regional civil society network on electricity reforms that acts as a platform for opinion exchange and learning through information sharing.
Total Budget	₹ 18,694,500 (Total Received: ₹ 19,862,207)

2.1.1 Financial Envelope

3. The project entailed a budget of ₹ 18,694,500 and was accepted for funding by Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD). The year-wise allocations budgeted by activity and time periods were as follows:

Table 2: Budgeted Costs versus Actual Expenditures (in ₹)

Activities	Year 1- Jan to Dec'08		Year 2- Jan to Dec'09		Total	
	Budgeted	Actual	Budgeted	Actual	Budgeted	Actual
1. Personnel Cost	1,920,000	1,920,000	1,920,000	1,920,000	3,840,000	3,840,000
2. Cost of Project Activities	9,080,000	8,062,150	4,075,000	4,150,270	13,155,000	12,212,420
2.1 Seminar & Training Cost	5,350,000	4,949,160	1,750,000	1,819,220	7,100,000	6,768,380
2.2 Research Cost	2,240,000	2,240,940	640,000	542,000	2,880,000	2,782,940
2.3 Publication and Outreach Cost	720,000	571,700	250,000	384,118	970,000	955,818
2.4 Advocacy and Networking Cost	300,000	300,350	1,200,000	1,202,432	1,500,000	1,502,782
2.5 Project Review	470,000	0	235,000	202,500	705,000	202,500
Total Direct Cost:	11,000,000	9,982,150	5,995,000	6,070,270	16,995,000	16,052,420
Add: Overheads @10%	1,100,000	998,215	599,500	607,026	1,699,500	1,605,241
Total Budgeted	12,100,000	10,980,365	6,594,500	6,677,296	18,694,500	17,657,661

Activities	Year 1- Jan to Dec'08		Year 2- Jan to Dec'09		Total	
	Budgeted	Actual	Budgeted	Actual	Budgeted	Actual
Cost						
INR Received	12,182,051		7,680,156		19,862,207	

2.1.2 Project Countries and Partners

4. The project was implemented in association with partner organizations and local CSOs¹ in three countries, details are as follows:

Table 3: Project Partners and CSOs in the RESA Project

Country/ Territory		Project Partners	Local CSOs
India	Rajasthan (ten districts)	CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CART), Jaipur	10
	West Bengal (ten districts)	CUTS Calcutta Resource Centre (CRC), Calcutta	10
Nepal – (ten districts)		South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment (SAWTEE)	11
Bangladesh – (thirteen districts under five divisions viz., Barisal, Chittagong, Dhaka Khulna and Rajshahi)		Unnayan Shamannay	Consumer Association of Bangladesh (CAB) along with 13 CSOs

5. All the partner organisations have the necessary grassroots level experience and convening power to handle the project's activities, with all of them having a long experience in partnering with CUTS on consumer issues. For implementation of the activities in Calcutta and Rajasthan, CUTS roped in two of its resource centres- CUTS Calcutta Resource Centre (CRC) and CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CART), respectively.

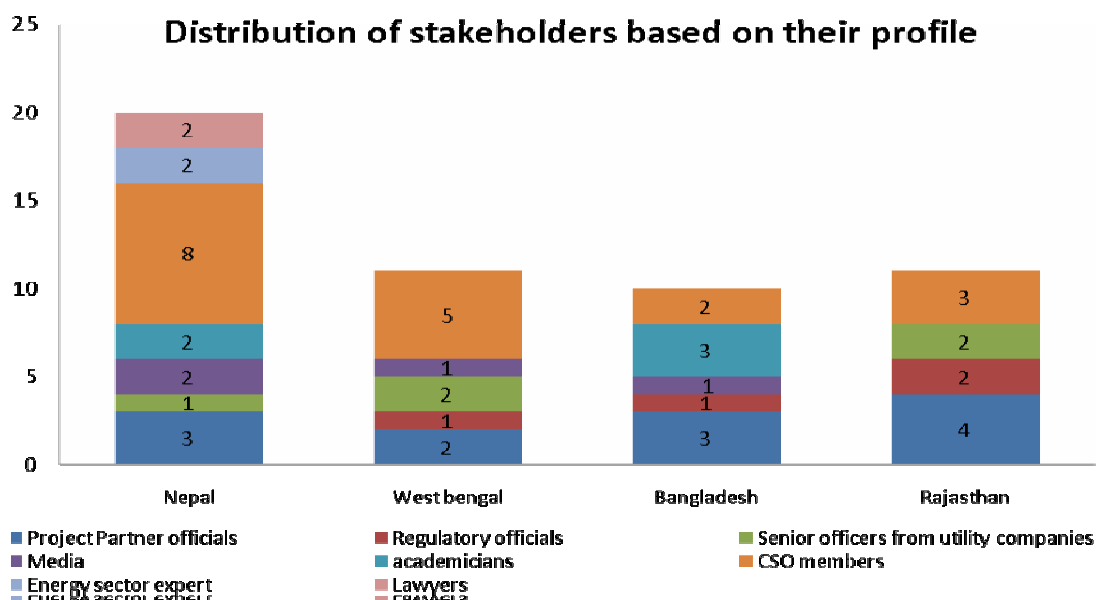
6. The project partners collaborated with local CSOs for implementation of grassroots meetings and other local activities. In Bangladesh, the Consumer Association of Bangladesh (CAB) played a more active role in assisting the partner Unnayan Shamannay in identifying partners and in also organizing the events.

¹ Local CSOs are the second tier partner organisations that were selected by the project partners to carry out the activities of the project at the grassroots. Refer Annex 1 for the list containing the names of CSOs involved in the project.

2.2 Evaluation Methodology

7. This evaluation aims to assess the overall results and impact of the RESA project in the four territories, and to conclude on the need for and to provide inputs for possible next phase of the project. The evaluation covered the five classical analyses: relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impacts and sustainability. Information and insights to assist the evaluation were collected through the following methods:

- **Desk reviews:**
 - Project documents as available on project website (<http://www.cuts-ccier.org/RESA/>) and copies made available by CUTS C-CIER were perused; and
 - other relevant documents were accessed on the search engines
- **Discussions with key personnel** at CUTS C-CIER in Jaipur, Rajasthan during the inception meeting and telephonic/email-based conversations.
- **Questionnaire survey** of project partners, local CSOs and grassroots consumers. A set of questionnaires were sent to all the partners (through CUTS) who summarized the feedback of the respondents and made it readily available to the evaluators during the field missions.
- **Field missions:** Given the time and budget constraints, it was decided in consultation with CUTS CCIER, the field visits to only four locations namely, Jaipur (Rajasthan), Kolkata (west Bengal), Kathmandu (Nepal) and Dhaka (Bangladesh), were to be undertaken. Detailed discussions were held with key staff (Nodal person and Project Coordinator) of the respective project partners, some local CSOs representatives, state government officials, RG members, etc. The total stakeholders met during field missions were 52, which have been classified based on their profile in the chart below:



A list of stakeholders met during the evaluation can be referred from Annex II.

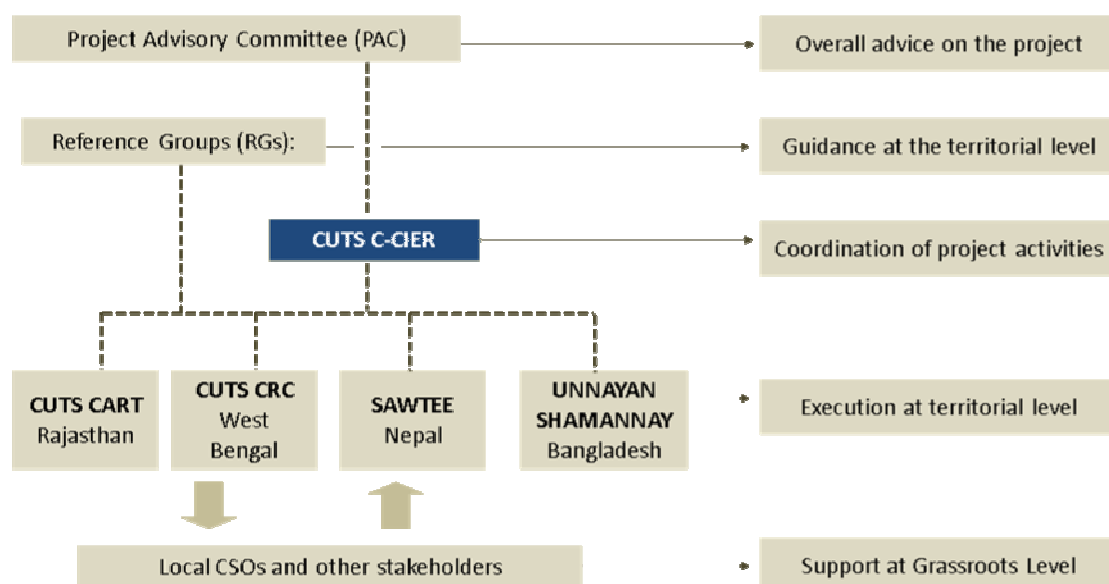
3 Review of Project and Activities

3.1 Project Implementation: Administrative and Monitoring Arrangements

3.1.1 Project Administration

8. The project team at CUTS C-CIER was responsible for overall coordination of project activities. The team comprised of a project manager along with two project assistants who had sound understanding of the subject. The overall project administration arrangement can be seen from the diagram, with the roles and responsibilities of each actor discussed below:

Figure 1: Project Administration Arrangement



Project Advisory Committee

9. A Project Advisory Committee (PAC) consisting of seventeen persons was constituted to provide guidance during the project. The list includes several power sector experts, academicians, and other eminent persons belonging to research institutions, policy making etc. (refer Annex III). Of the seventeen members, twelve are resident in India (including the CUTS nominee - Secretary General, CUTS International) one is a representative from the donor agency– NORAD; and the remaining are energy sector experts from Nepal, UK and Australia.

10. The project documents do not contain any references to formal terms of reference or mandate for the Advisory Committee, or any details pertaining to the conduct of meetings of the board. However, the perusal of the event reports, reveal active participation of

some of these members during the launch meeting, mid-term review meeting, national advocacy seminar and Regional Conference.

11. Relevant steps were taken by CCIER to keep the PAC members involved in the project right from its inception. E-mail group was created and from time to time, relevant outputs, outcomes, activities, etc were shared with the PAC members, which ensured their active involvement in the project.

Reference Group (RG)

12. Given the distinct nature of electricity reforms in each territory, a separate Reference Group (RG) had been constituted for each of the project territory that ensured quality in project execution as per stipulated plan. The group represented a cross section of subject experts, media, academicians and practitioners, government and regulatory officials and civil society representatives. As per the design of the project proposal, two RG meetings in each project territory were organized to take stock/review progress of the project and provide guidance to ensure effective implementation of the project at the National Level.
13. The terms of reference of the RG members clearly delineate their role of providing strategic guidance for the project implementation and work planning at the territorial level. By virtue of the RG composition, the RG meetings in each phase served as an important discussion platform for the project partners and policymakers, regulators, utility officials, media. These RG members have found to have actively participated in the events in all the territories which can be attributed as a major success factor for the project.

Project Partners and CSOs

14. Project Management & Coordination at the territorial level was the responsibility of respective project partners. According to the project design, each partner was required to designate a nodal person who was responsible for the coordination of the project related activities with CUTS C-CIER and the respective second tier partner organizations (i.e. the CSOs which provided the support at the grassroots level). The terms of reference of these four partners are outlined in detail in the Memorandum of Agreements (MOAs) signed with CUTS.
15. The project partners found it challenging to identify local CSOs suitable for this kind of an intervention as most of them had almost no experience of working in the electricity sector related issues (refer table below); indeed, this project has been the first major exposure on electricity issues for the majority of the CSOs involved eventually. The sole exception was Rajasthan where 70% of the CSOs had worked earlier on electricity related issues, with some of the CSOs being involved in the CUTS-FES² project as well. The enlistment of the CSOs was based primarily on three factors:
 - organizations' credibility, work experience and track record on consumer issues
 - networks and familiarity at the grassroots; and

² In August 2001, CUTS in partnership with Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) implemented a three year programme - 'Involvement of consumers in power sector reforms in Rajasthan' in six districts of Rajasthan. The major objective of the programme was to facilitate active involvement of consumers in power sector reforms. The details have been covered in the subsequent chapter.

- past experience with project partners.

Table 4: Past Experience of CSOs in consumer and electricity related issues

Territory	% of partners worked on electricity related issues	% of partners worked on consumer related issues
Rajasthan	70%	80%
West Bengal	30%	50%
Nepal	30%	80%
Bangladesh	23%	77%

16. **Staff Changes:** In two locations- Kolkata and Dhaka, the project nodal person did not stay for the entire duration of the project. In Kolkata, this happened toward the end of the project- after nearly all activities had been completed, and was caused by an international career opportunity for the person concerned. In Dhaka, the departure of the resource person in mid 2009 was less fortunate, given that a number of activities were still incomplete. However, the absence was quickly made up by the appointment of another senior member in Unnayan Shamannay to oversee the project. Moreover, the CSOs also faced challenges in retaining quality staff in an increasingly competitive job market, as a number of their staff was volunteers. On the whole, the evaluation did not find any shortcomings as a result of these staffing challenges and risks, and sees this as the capacity of CUTS C-CIER and its partners to be able to handle such exigencies without adversely affecting the project objectives.

3.1.2 Project Review Mechanism

17. One of the main review instruments under this project was the **mid-term review meeting** which was carried out in April 2009³. This event served as an information-exchange platform between the donor, nodal persons and the project team who held qualitative discussions on the progress and results obtained and reviewed their implementation and adherence to the agreed intervention logic. One of the major highlights of the event was the release of the RESA video documentary, titled 'Powered to Grow' by the donor. The video documentary captures the grassroots interface meetings organised in Rajasthan.

18. All partners had adhered to the project timeline and submitted quarterly progress and financial reports on time. . Additionally, it was observed that CUTS C-CIER personnel visited project partners to take stock of the project activities from time to time and actively participated in all the events as observers and/or resource persons. Also, nearly all the project partners cited CUTS C-CIER having undertaken regular e-mail based stock-taking reviews throughout the project. The questionnaire survey revealed that project partners were extremely satisfied with the responsiveness and backstopping assistance provided by CUTS C-CIER on project implementation issues.

19. **Partner and RG Feedback:** A set of questionnaires for three stakeholder groups *viz.*, *project partners, local CSOs and grassroots consumers*, were sent to all the partners

³ The meeting according to the project proposal was supposed to take place in the eleventh month, but owing to the disorder in Nepal , natural calamity in West Bengal and initial delays during project approval stage, the meeting was postponed to the fourteenth month.

through CUTS, to collate their experiences and project results in each territory. The project partners translated these questionnaires in local language and disseminated to the CSOs and consumers; and also synthesized their responses which were timely available to the evaluators.

The review team also interacted with select RG members in the respective project territories to evaluate their experience, understanding of the project and its outcomes and involvement in the project.

3.2 Project Activities

20. The project involved the following specific activities, most of which were undertaken by project partners, and others, such as the launch meeting, midterm review meeting and regional conference, were undertaken by CUTS C-CIER, Jaipur:

By project partners:

- Organized local inception workshop
- Undertook literature review and a consumer perception survey to develop ‘territorial base paper’
- Constituted a Reference Group (RG) consisting of subject experts, media, academicians and practitioners, CSO representatives etc.
- Organized 2 territorial trainings per territory
- Organized 76 Grassroots Interface Meetings (GIMs) in two phases i.e. 38 in each phase (approximately 10 per territory) and 49 sub level GIMs in Rajasthan additionally within the budget
- Organized 1 policy advocacy seminar in each project country
- Organized 1 Media workshop in each territory

By CUTS C-CIER, Jaipur

- Constituted a Project Advisory Committee
- Organized a Launch Meeting
- Conducted Training of Nodal Persons
- Hold Midterm and final review Meeting
- Organized a Regional Conference
- Prepared the RESA Video documentary, ‘Powered to Grow’

21. In this section, an assessment of the contents of these activities/ outputs has been made held in the chronological order, based on information provided either by CUTS C-CIER or accessed from the project’s website <http://www.cuts-ccier.org/RESA/>.

Table 5: Project Activities at Various Levels

Levels	Activities
REGIONAL	Launch Meeting
	Training of Nodal Persons and project staff
	Mid Term and final Review Meeting
	Regional Conference

NATIONAL	National Advocacy Seminar
TERRITORIAL	Local Inception Workshop
	Baseline and Final Consumer Survey
	Reference Group Meeting I & II
	Territorial Trainings
	Media Workshop
GRASSROOTS	Grassroots Interface Meetings

3.2.1 *Launch Meetings*

22. Launch meeting held in Kolkata, West Bengal was the first activity organized under this project. The activity extended over 2 days and received 50 participants from all the three project countries, viz. Bangladesh, India and Nepal, and included policy makers, regulators, subject experts, practitioners, CSOs, project partners and media persons. The objective was to discuss electricity reforms undertaken in the project territories and the need for proactive role of consumers in the new regulatory regime. One of the key highlights of the event was participation of representatives from World Bank, TERI, Prayas energy group, a Pune-based non-government organization (NGO) actively working in the energy segment since 1990 which had played an instrumental role in swaying Maharashtra Electricity Regulatory Commission's (MERC) decision towards involvement of consumers in the regulatory process. Evaluators are of the opinion that networking through experience sharing with organizations like Prayas, is very important given that project cannot remain isolated and bereft of knowledge that other organizations have attained through a similar intervention.

3.2.2 *Inception Workshops*

23. The local inception workshops, one in each territory, were held in April 2008, with a twofold purpose: to disseminate the project implementation details among the second tier partner organisations and; to gauge their level of understanding on electricity-related issues through a questionnaire survey.

24. The workshops in Nepal and Bangladesh received 73 and 70 participants respectively whereas attendance in Rajasthan and West Bengal was slightly lower, with 49 and 41 responses respectively. The composition of the attendees on the other hand remained more or less uniform across all the territories with participants representing a cross section of representatives of partner CSOs, members of the Reference Group (RG), academia, media persons and policy makers.

25. There was enthusiastic participation of CSO groups in various sessions, and the workshop was able to elicit proactive involvement of the CSO groups which was crucial at the inception stage.

3.2.3 *Field Research/ Base Line Survey*

26. As a part of the project, field research was undertaken in each of the territories. It consisted of literature research on the scenario of electricity sector in the four territories

along with a consumer baseline survey (based on responses to a structured questionnaire) to gauge the level of understanding and awareness of consumers on the scope for their engagement in the process of electricity reforms. Outcomes of the literature research and baseline survey were collated to develop a 'Territorial Base Paper' for each territory. The activity was carried out by project partners with the assistance of the partner CSOs, under overall supervision of CCIER.

27. The questionnaires for the base line survey were prepared in English and for use at the territorial level, they were translated in local language by project partners and a stratified sampling approach was adopted for the baseline survey. According to the original project design, 500 respondents from each territory were to be surveyed which was later increased to 700 due to the felt need for roping in more consumers so that at least 500 could participate in the project activities. The survey purposely targeted only those willing to participate in the grassroots activities and who would also be available for the final consumer survey.
28. It was pointed out during the field visits that the lack of prior experience with electricity issues, among consumers and CSOs, posed an uphill task in persuading consumers to participate in the project. Apart from that there were no significant challenges; the activity was completed within three months, ahead of the stipulated duration of four months, in all the territories.

3.2.4 Reference Group Meetings I and II

29. As per the project design, 8 RG meetings were supposed to be held, in two phases i.e. 4 in each phase per territory. The objective of the first meeting was to acquaint the members with the project activities, goals and outcomes and to seek comments and suggestions on two important outputs; Territorial Base Papers (TBPs) and Territorial Training Manuals (TTMs). The second meeting was focused on discussing implementation strategy for future course of activities.

Table 6: No. of members and participation in RG meetings

Territory	No. of members in Phase 1	Participation in phase 1 meeting	No. of members in Phase 2	Participation in phase 2 meeting
Rajasthan	14	10	14	06
West Bengal	17	12	17	10
Nepal	17	12	24	18
Bangladesh	16	12	16	12

30. The TBPs and TTMs were circulated to the RG members well in advance in all the territories. The outcome report of the RG meeting in Rajasthan reveals that few of the RG members had not gone through the draft TBP and TTM before coming for the meeting as a result of which only four out of fourteen RG members had submitted written comments on the draft TBP. This was also seen during the second phase where in the same territory the members had come unprepared despite the documents and agenda being shared well in time by the project partners. These shortcomings raise uncertainty on whether all the RG

members had clarity on their roles and responsibilities vis-à-vis the project⁴; given that several members contributed during the meetings.

31. It was up to the project partners to keep the RG members abreast with activities and hold reviews from time to time. Alongside, the project team also confirmed on having the newsletters electronically sent out to the RG members to keep them regularly updated. Despite these, the field visit interviews revealed that some of the RG members were completely unaware of the status on progress in the implementation phase. In one of the territories, the RG member was found to be completely unaware of the fact that solutions to systemic problems raised during GIM I were given during GIM II.
32. An assessment of the discussions as shown in the outcome reports, divulges that contributions of such a vital arrangement has been limited to providing only comments and suggestion on the outputs except in the case of West Bengal where the differentiated quality of the territorial training manual owing to creation of a specialized team of energy sector experts and support granted by WBSEDCL to CUTS CRC, towards establishment of consumer assistance cell in 9 districts of West Bengal, both upon recommendation of RG members, stand out as direct evidences of deeper involvement of West Bengal's RG members.

3.2.5 Territorial Trainings

33. The territorial training sessions constituted an important component of the RESA project solely owing to the platform that it creates for building capacity and awareness among the CSOs which the project envisages. According to the project design, two rounds of territorial trainings were supposed to be held in each territory, each round spanning for two days. The 1st round was focused on the general issues relevant to the electricity sector, whereas the second round was more focused on technical issues. Each round of trainings was divided into six sessions covering twelve topics; a specimen format of the training session conducted in Bangladesh (similar format was followed in other project territories) has been shown below:

Table 7: Agenda of the territorial training session in Bangladesh

Round	Day	Session	Topic	Duration of the session (in hours)
Round 1	(August 20, 2008)	1 st	Electricity Reforms & Regulation	2
		2 nd	Complaint redressal Mechanism	1.5
		3 rd	Reduction of Power theft: Role of consumers	1.5
	(August 21, 2008)	4 th	Current status of electricity sector in Bangladesh	1.5
		5 th	Understanding Electricity Consumption and Bill	1.5
		6 th	Energy Conservation: Role of consumers	1.5
Round 2	(September 10,	7 th	Competition issue in Electricity Power Industry	1.5
		8 th	Regulatory Decision making process in Electricity sector	1.5

⁴ Reference has been drawn from the outcome report of phase 1 of RG meeting held in Rajasthan

Round	Day	Session	Topic	Duration of the session (in hours)
	2008)	9 th	Tariff Determination Process	2
	(Septem	10 th	Electricity tariff Regulation: Issues and Challenges	1.5
	ber 11,	11 th	Quality of Services	1.5
	2008)	12 th	Energy Efficiency and Electrical Equipment Rating	1.5

34. All the sessions were facilitated by the nodal person and were conducted by resource persons who were chosen by the project partners on the basis of their experience and proficiency in the relevant topic. The project partners had revised the formats of the sessions to prioritize themes based on needs at the local level. The list of invitees as per the project concept note featured local civil society groups, service providers, policy makers and regulators, media and peoples' representatives. Apart from enhancing the knowledge of the CSOs, another important objective of the territorial trainings was to facilitate a network formation between the participants.

35. Besides the creation of customized training manuals in each territory, the sessions were also designed using various interactive methods and simulation exercises to facilitate an effective grasp on the subject.

36. Due to political turmoil and floods in Nepal, the overall activity got extended by a month in spite of completion of the training sessions in all the other territories within the stipulated time of two months. As a consequence, while in other territories where the training sessions were conducted over the weekends with a gap of two weeks between each round, the sessions in Nepal took place at a continuous stretch of four days.

37. For the attainment of the objectives in the long term it was crucial that the CSOs chosen were those who have stout presence in their districts so that dissemination of knowledge can occur at a wider scale at the grassroots. For the same reason it was important to ensure that lessons from the training session gets passed on to other members of the CSO so that not one representative in a CSO is lent with the responsibility for sustaining future activities. Thus, it was up to the project partners to ensure that at least two representatives from each CSO participate in the training session. In Rajasthan, it was observed that two representatives each from three CSOs participated interchangeably in two rounds. However in Nepal, although there is no clear evidence to confirm repeat participation in the second round, but due to huge difficulties faced in mobilizing human resources amidst the turmoil and the fact that trainings took place at a continuous stretch, it can be safely assumed that participants were the same .

Table 8: Territory-wise summary of participants

Territory	No. of Participants	Regulators/policy makers	Evidence of repeat participants in second round
Rajasthan	28 participants from 10 districts	Present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 representatives each from 3 CSOs participated interchangeably in two rounds. • A representative from one of the CSOs did not participate in the second round.

West Bengal	20 participants (2 from each CSO)	Present	No evidence
Nepal	22 participants (2 from each CSO and 2 media officials)	Present	Participants in both the rounds were the same
Bangladesh	28 participants (2 from each CSO)	Present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 26 participants from the 13 local NGOs attended both the rounds. • 4 representatives (Divisional Programme Officers) of Consumer Association of Bangladesh (CAB) participated interchangeably in two rounds

38. The evaluation observes that participation of a number of regulators and policy makers, which was vital for the project, was ensured in all the territories and is indeed, a creditable achievement. Even though the activity was purposively focussed at the CSOs, absence of media officials in three out of four territories indicates the possibility of the project not having envisaged any activity focussing towards capacity building of media officials. Based on the field visits, the evaluators observed that capacity building of media should also have been given due focus given its inherent potential for dissemination. At least their presence during territorial trainings could have been ensured by project partners.

39. A few participants in West Bengal training sessions expressed difficulties in participating effectively as most of the floor discussions took place in English. The questionnaire sent to the local partners by the evaluation team revealed that not all CSO representatives received the TTMs, which were the most important dissemination material of the session. However, local language handouts supplementing the TTMs were reportedly received by all the participants across all territories and have also been found to be quite useful.

40. Overall the territorial trainings have been useful and were beneficial to the target audience and the same can also be confirmed from the participants' feedback presented in the outcome reports. Furthermore, these events also served as a vehicle for network formation among the participants, and interactions among the CSOs have continued even after the activities.

3.2.6 Grassroots Interface Meetings (GIMS) - Phase I and II

41. The project provided an excellent platform to grassroots consumers to have a direct interface with representatives from regulatory bodies and local utility officials. The activity was carried out across two phases; the first phase focused on dissemination of information to relevant consumers such as farmers, domestic consumers, distribution companies etc on present scenario of electricity sector reforms and registration of their problems, needs and challenges; the second phase focused on providing possible solutions to the problems in the presence of local legislators. As per the project proposal, 40 GIMs across 2 phases i.e. 20 GIMs in each phase (5 in each territory) were to be organized but due to felt need of improving the outreach at the local level, the activities were up scaled to 1 per district (i.e. approximately 10 per territory) in each phase. Additionally, Sub-GIMs albeit were not envisaged in the project proposal, were conducted in Rajasthan and West Bengal which translated into far greater outreach and dissemination.

42. The sessions during the first phase broadly touched upon the following topics:

- Electricity reform process and role of consumers
- Complaint redressal mechanism
- Role of consumers in energy conservation and reduction of power theft.

Table 9: GIM participation across territories

Territories (no. of districts; total GIMs conducted in two phases)	Total Participants in Phase I	Total Participants in Phase II
Rajasthan (districts:10, GIMs:20, sub level GIMs:49)	1,859	1212
West Bengal (districts:10, GIMs:20)	1,200	638
Nepal (districts:10, GIMs:18)	540	658
Bangladesh (districts:13, GIMs:16)	539	596
Total	4,138	3,104

43. The GIMs received an overwhelming response, with average participation ranging from 60 in Nepal in GIM I to 79.5 in Rajasthan during GIM II. With the exception of Bangladesh, where project partners had organized 16 GIMs for 13 districts, all the project territories organized 20 GIMs (one per district in each phase). In Rajasthan and West Bengal, project partners had also organized sub district level GIMs, within the same allocated budgets and timeframe. The outcome reports of the GIMs do not confirm the number of sub GIMs organized in West Bengal, but Rajasthan CSOs were able to hold 49 sub GIMs across two phases. To a large extent, such an efficient arrangement can also be credited to the project partners' previous experience of organizing similar outreach events during the CUTS-FES project. The second phase, with the exception of Rajasthan did not have any Sub-GIMs across any of the territories. As a result, the total outreach during the second phase was lower in comparison to the outreach achieved during the first phase.

44. The resource persons for the GIMs were either representatives of the respective CSO of the district who had attended the territorial training session, and in some cases even local officers & ex-officers of the distribution companies. One of the highlight of the GIMs, West Bengal in particular, were the use of popular arts such as skits, musical shows which were staged during GIM II and used as a tool for dissemination of solutions to systemic problems captured at the GIM-I. However, it can be argued that applicability of similar ideas could also have been relevant, at least in Bangladesh which has the same dialect as that of West Bengal, which unfortunately highlights that adequate information and experience sharing amongst the project territories have not taken place during the project.

45. Among the major lowlights, absence of representatives from Regulatory Commission of Rajasthan and Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) Distribution Chief of Nepal in some of the GIMs weakened the purpose of the activity in some districts.

46. The topics chosen were found to be relevant for grassroots discussions. However, evaluators' assessment shows that due to rigidities imposed by the project design, some issues which were found to be more relevant to the grassroots consumers in certain territories, could not be touched upon during the GIMs. To elucidate, the issue of load shedding, which is was very much relevant given the 16 hour power outages witnessed in

Nepal, could not be discussed even after being voiced by the RG members and also by the project partners during the midterm review meeting.

47. Overall, the GIMs were well attended at all levels barring a few in which regulatory officials were absent. The events also received participation from media officials, and published materials across all territories confirm the coverage received by the activity. At a broader level, the activity provided an effective two way communication platform which not only helped the utilities and the regulators understand the issues at the grassroots but also made the consumers aware about their responsibilities towards the sector. The activity in the context of educating the consumer, has achieved far wider institutional changes at the consumer's end which has been its most important achievement.

3.2.7 *National Advocacy Seminar (NAS)*

48. The seminar was designed as the principal advocacy platform for the project in each of the participating countries. The project countries were supposed to organize one national advocacy seminar each, in order to take the project findings to policy community and regulators. The seminar was also designed to serve as a platform for network formation between and amongst the policy community, regulators, civil society representatives and media officials.

49. A combined seminar on findings from Rajasthan and West Bengal was held in Jaipur, Rajasthan and received around 40 participants. National Seminars in Bangladesh and Nepal had 65 and 85 attendees respectively. While the seminars focused on top level policy makers and regulatory officials as the target stakeholder group, other participants included: power sector experts, consumer rights' activists, academicians, media persons, civil society representatives and representatives of multilateral and inter-governmental agencies.

50. The seminar in Bangladesh was not attended by any of the policy makers, which can be deemed as a lost opportunity, considering that the seminar was the main advocacy event under the project. The evaluators were informed during the field visits that senior level policy makers, after confirming to the invitation, had switched off their cell phones and did not turn up for the event. Such behavior at the end of the policymakers undermines the project's purpose in engendering an evidence based dialogue with the service providers. On the other hand, project partners in Nepal observed the focus of the national seminar as being too generic, which posed major challenges in convening senior policymakers and regulatory officials for the event.

51. However, the seminars in West Bengal have been found very effective, and the decision of Calcutta Electric Supply Company (CESC) to support CUTS CRC to organise 50 camps aimed at capacity building of consumers and grievance redressal & the support of West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Ltd. (WBSEDCL) to implement the project, "Consumer Assistance Cell (CONASC) for electricity Consumers at the grassroots level" has been a direct result of the project.

3.2.8 *Regional Conference*

52. The project concept note mentions one regional conference to be organized towards the end of the project to share key messages from the project experience in front of a wider audience. The audience featured CSOs, media persons, regulators, representatives of distribution companies and select stakeholders from neighboring countries including

project partners. The conference was a two day event organized in April 2010 and received 63 participants.

53. The event provided a platform for engagement with stakeholder groups which are key to implementing pro-consumer reforms in electricity sector. The dialogue forum enabled experience sharing between nations and showcased the relevance of consumer's involvement given the current state of reforms in Asia. In contrast to other activities which followed a demonstrative approach, the dialogue approach adopted during regional conference as evidenced by panel discussions was one of significant observations from the activity. Relevant case studies were brought out by the participants showcasing regional and international best practices. On the whole, the event witnessed an overwhelming participation from different stakeholders.

3.2.9 Media Workshops

54. Media workshops were not included in the project design. The funds allocated for supporting CSOs' participation in events/training programs remained unspent which were utilized towards organizing media workshops. Three workshops were organized under the project, one each in West Bengal, Nepal and Bangladesh. The objective was to acquaint the media with outcomes of the RESA project and sensitize them on the role that the medium can play in regulatory reform in the electricity sector.

55. The workshops received a prolific response with Nepal and Bangladesh workshop receiving 120 and 92 participants respectively. Attendees comprised of government officials, chiefs of utilities, media and different CSOs.

56. The West Bengal project partners demonstrated innovativeness by bringing stakeholders from villages, particularly the individuals who have procured concrete benefits out of this project, which enabled a firsthand display of knowledge. The evaluators are of the opinion that the workshops facilitated a more active interface between the media, regulators and service providers which needs to be augmented further in order to achieve pro-consumer reforms.

3.3 Outputs

The following outputs were produced during the project:

- Territorial Base Papers (TBPs)
- Final Consumer Survey Reports
- Territorial Training Manuals (TTMs)
- Vernacular Handouts
- Website
- Media Articles
- Policy Briefing Papers
- Newsletters
- RESA Video Documentary – 'Powered to Grow'
- Synthesis Report
- RESA Brochure

3.3.1 Territorial Base Papers (TBPs);

57. One of the first tasks in the project was the preparation of Territorial Base Papers (TBPs), which were commissioned to the project partners. The reports were to provide a comprehensive review of the status of reforms and consumer participation in the project territories. Preparation of the base papers involved literature research and a baseline survey. The survey was designed to yield awareness to the following questions with respect to electricity sector:

- What are the major consumer problems?
- How are consumer complaints redressed?
- Are consumers aware of the ongoing reform process?
- Are they aware of the regulatory decision making process?
- Do the consumers possess the capacity required for effective participation?
- How should consumers/CSOs be engaged to ensure effective consumer participation?

58. The TBPs were reviewed internally by CUTS, PAC/RG members and the project partners, and formalized into a document titled 'Consumer Empowerment in Electricity Reforms – A Review from South Asia' after due modifications based on the feedback received during the phase I RG meeting. The TBPs were also summarized and distributed in the form of vernacular handouts during the GIMs.

59. Some findings of the baselines survey were found to be interesting and insightful which can serve as a useful reading material. Overall, the TBP from the standpoint of a repository of key information is capable of becoming a useful dissemination material.

60. The evaluators, after having perused the TBPs, have the following key observations:

- The first chapter which has been prepared by the project team presents an overview of the individual TBPs and provides inter-territorial comparisons from the base line survey. It draws from the experience of the developed countries and concludes with the need of such kind of an intervention for effective enforcement of regulatory reforms. The texts present a well rounded off overview synthesizing the findings from the country chapters which if supplemented with texts on provisions available for consumers' participation in the current regulatory process, can be considered as a powerful dissemination material in itself.
- The country chapters following the overview were prepared based on common framework outlined by CUTS to its project partners. Some important elements have not been adequately reflected in two country chapters, Bangladesh and Nepal.
- To validate; the text on Rural Electrification Board (REB) in Bangladesh country chapter does not cover sufficient grounds given that it was the most important and perhaps the biggest achievement of the Bangladesh electricity sector reforms and consumer involvement was one of its' key highlights. Secondly, the country chapter of Nepal clearly reflects that there has been a major oversight from the project partner's end. National Association of Community Users of Electricity in Nepal (NACEUN) has featured among the biggest success stories in the South Asian Region for its effort towards rural electrification and capacity building of consumers. The association has a significant presence in Nepal spanning over 46 out of 72 districts, and has played an instrumental role in reducing power losses in districts under its purview. Given

that such pinnacle of an achievement of community involvement in Nepal hasn't been featured, reflects a major shortcoming in the TBP.

- Certain questions were found to be irrelevant in the context of distinct nature of development of power sector reforms in different territories. As noted by the evaluators, probing a question on awareness about the existence of electricity regulatory commission in Nepal does not hold any relevance given that such a commission essentially does not exist. It can be argued that efforts towards engendering a customized questionnaire survey for each territory have not been deliberated upon.
- Apart from major inadequacies there have also been factual errors. To cite an example, in Bangladesh TBP, answer to particular question has been wrongly represented in a pie diagram which reads that 97% of the consumers would not be interested in attending a training program on electricity issues when the methodology of the survey itself confirms participation of only those consumers who were interested and willing to join the project activities.

3.3.2 *Final Consumer Survey Reports*

61. A final consumer survey was undertaken to gauge the level of impact of project activities on the grassroots consumers. The project partners were tasked with the preparation of final consumer survey reports for their respective territories. Unlike the base paper, a comparative analysis of the final survey has not been undertaken. Besides the survey findings, a section on case studies has been prepared which highlights concrete outcomes achieved under the project.

3.3.3 *Territorial Training Manuals (TTMs)*

62. The evaluators consider this output to be the most useful and popular among beneficiaries and consider it important to highlight and disseminate this document more extensively.

63. The Territorial Training Manuals (TTMs) were used during territorial training sessions for capacity building of grassroots' CSOs, to enable them effectively take up action oriented research and advocacy on regulatory/policy issues pertaining to the electricity sector. A broad outline/framework for preparation of these manuals was provided by the project team, which was customized by the project partners depending on the local needs. The manuals were further worked upon after discussions on the (territory-specific) base paper during the RG-I meetings..

64. The manual has been presented as a self explanatory document which features and explains the key themes adequately. The texts have been supplemented by simulation exercises. The topics featured are found to be relevant. The evaluation overviewed the manuals and observed a considerable difference in terms of architecture of the texts laid out in TTM used in WB vis-à-vis other territories'. The former's outlay is based on a Q&A structure which makes the text more lucid and reader-friendly. To a large extent, this can be attributed to the involvement of subject experts who were specifically empanelled for the purpose of designing of this training manual, upon recommendations made by the RG members of WB. Moreover, considering that some of the illustrious names in the field of

WB power sector have made contributions towards producing the output, the TTM of WB is a classic prototype for similar documents proposed to be prepared in the near future.

3.3.4 *Vernacular Handouts*

65. As per the project contract agreements each of the project partners were supposed to prepare one vernacular handout which was to be disseminated to the representatives of CSOs during the TTs and the grassroots consumers during GIMs phase 1. This has been adhered to by all the partners.
66. The handouts contained information on grievance redressal mechanism, common electricity related problems and their associated solutions and role of consumers in energy conservation and power theft curtailment. These were also supplemented by the findings from TBPs.
67. The documents after having cursorily overviewed have been found to be quite an important dissemination from the point of view of a layman. Barring Bangladesh, where consumers have expressed discontent on the overall quality of the material as adequate solutions to problems have not been identified, the consumers elsewhere have appreciated the coverage of the material and its timeliness.

3.3.5 *Website*

68. A separate webpage has been created under the RESA project which can be accessed through the CUTS website. The webpage carries archives of all the materials produced and distributed which enhances the outreach and dissemination of the project considerably. The project website provides a ready reference to the event reports of all the territories organized by the year of their occurrence. Evaluators observed that TBPs, which has been one of the most important outputs under this project, are also visible on the home page of CUTS website.
69. The ubiquity and the low cost of communications on the Internet needs to be harnessed by the project at every opportunity. Although coverage on the RESA project through CUTS CCIER webpage has been adequate, the same cannot be said regarding its overseas project partners. SAWTEE's webpage was repeatedly showing errors and couldn't be accessed during the evaluation, Unnayan Shammanay's website, albeit carries a link- 'Consumer Empowerment in Electricity Reforms' under publication section but was found to be non-functional. The continuance of the RESA website after the project is also an issue that will determine the long term utility of its research and publication materials.

3.3.6 *Media Articles*

70. The RESA website shows two links under the news section - one being the 'press release' and other being 'media articles'. Six press releases are featured on the webpage, with 4 released in 2008 and 1 each in 2009 and 2010. The project website lists 35 media articles in all, of which 25 were produced in 2008, 7 in 2009 and 3 in 2010. The project team had confirmed that number of articles uploaded on the website do not represent an exhaustive figure as there have been several articles which could not be shared through the website. Above all, the dissemination of the project has been considerable, even though they have been mostly confined to territorial activities organized under the project.

Prolific media coverage has given a high local visibility to the project which can be taken as an important result obtained out of this project

3.3.7 Policy Briefing papers

71. Over its 32-month duration, the project has produced four briefing papers, three of them written by CUTS CCIER with the assistance CUTS CART and CUTS CRC, and the fourth, prepared by the SAWTEE team. The evaluator only had access to briefing papers produced by CUTS CCIER as the one brought out by SAWTEE was produced in vernacular language and translations to English were not made. Additionally, no briefing papers have been brought out by Unnayan Shammanay.
72. Briefing papers have been produced on following themes: (a) Consumer participation in Electricity Regulation, Rajasthan experience; (b) Promoting Competition through open access in the Power sector and (c) Rationalizing electricity subsidy in the farm sector.
73. The briefing paper on Consumer participation in Electricity Regulation, Rajasthan experience : The paper discusses key reform that have been undertaken in Rajasthan and highlights public participation as envisaged under the Electricity Act, 2003 as one of the most important components for improving regulatory decision making process.
74. The paper reveals that in spite of opportunities provided by the Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission (RERC), the electricity regulatory commission of Rajasthan, consumer interventions have only been restricted towards addressing service delivery problems such as poor quality of service, poor meeting and billing etc. It discusses the threats to effective consumer participation and divulges lack of training and capacity building activities as one of the hurdles.
75. The topic of the briefing paper, although relevant to the project, does not seem to have involved any original research given that theme of the literature or desk review undertaken for the TBPs was also the same.
76. The briefing paper on Promoting Competition through open access in the Power sector: Prepared by Rajesh Kumar, at the CUTS C-CIER, the paper focuses on unbarred open access to the transmission and distribution network as one of the key drivers of competition in wholesale and retail markets and improved quality of service to the consumers.
77. Despite key initiatives towards enforcement of open access regulations and constitution on power exchanges on part of the CERC (Central Electricity Regulatory Commission), the status on open access remains poor across various states and competition is seen lacking. Twenty one State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERCs) have formally enforced open access regulations in order to facilitate intra-state trading of power as of May 2009. These regulations mainly require transmission as well as distribution companies to allow open access by generating companies as well as consumers with a connected load in excess of a megawatt. However, in actual practice, open access is almost absent due to various barriers such as poor response from distribution companies to enforced regulations, shortage of energy, and transmission capacity shortages.
78. The paper discusses barriers to open access and showcases Mumbai as an exception, where due regards to Supreme court's judgement in 2008, even households have the option of switching to a different electricity supplier, if they are not satisfied with existing quality of service or tariff.

79. The paper holds great relevance given that it is targeted towards promoting competition which has been long been argued as one of the potent factors responsible for ensuring quality electricity supply to consumers. The briefing paper has a rather powerful and unifying theme and overall has been presented convincingly which deserves to be subsumed at advocacy level consultative platforms.
80. The briefing paper on Rationalizing electricity subsidy in the farm sector: The paper puts forward that ensuring sound financial health of distribution companies was one of the core objectives of reforms as it invariably leads to improved quality of service and plays a major role in attracting potential investment into the sector. However, skewed tariff structures and inadequate subventions given by the respective state governments, not only hamper the financial viability of the distribution companies but also dilute the fundamental purpose of reforms.
81. The paper is themed on farm sector which remains highly subsidised by the government and cross subsidised by the commercial and industrial consumers. It brings to light a key argument that distorted tariffs ironically do not even benefit the recipients of the subsidy as they receive considerably low quality of service, provided by the inadequately motivated distribution companies.
82. The arguments have been realistically presented and duly supported with key analysis. The paper presents analysis, conducted for select states where subsidised tariff has been imposed. It shows that among all the states, Rajasthan distribution companies paid the highest subsidy during 2004-07 and were not adequately compensated by the state government. Also, West Bengal state government did not pay subsidy during the same duration and yet forced utilities to supply power at low prices to agricultural consumers.
83. There is an overall relevance of the briefing paper to the project, in the sense that it cuts to the issues of tariff subsidy and quality of service which affects the target stakeholders of the project. From the evaluators' perspective, looking from an advocacy point of view, the paper is faced with a bigger challenge which unfortunately hasn't been given reflected adequately in the texts. Above all, the issue of tariff subsidisation is largely a political challenge because of immense pressure from electorally motivated state governments. Indian states vested with political interests, maintain a price structure with large and unjustifiable subsidies which continues to impede utilities from collecting revenue and on the whole limits the advocacy influence of the briefing paper.

3.3.8 Newsletters

84. Six newsletters were produced during the 32 month span of the project; three of them issued during the first 12 months. These newsletters provide coverage on quarter wise progress of the activities along with press articles related to updates in power sector from all the project territories. The last issue having dated 'July September 09' shows that newsletters covering updates from September 2009 to April 2010 have not been prepared.
85. Dissemination of these newsletters has been considerable, given that they were distributed electronically to the all the PAC and RG members and also to the members of electronic discussion groups created by CUTS International which comprise of over 4000 members, and include representatives from government, regulators, CSOs, academia, media, experts and practitioners.

3.3.9 RESA Documentary – ‘Powered to Grow’

86. A video documentary (produced in two languages – Hindi and English) featuring the interactions between the service providers and consumers of Rajasthan was prepared and disseminated to a vast array of stakeholders both within and outside India. This exercise was taken up voluntarily by project team and managed from CUTS' own funds. The output has been uploaded on the RESA Webpage and was also shared with NORAD, World Bank, Department for International Development (DFID), etc. It was showcased at the RG meeting – Phase II, Policy Advocacy meeting, Regional Conference, several CUTS events which involved several eminent persons from power sector.

3.4 Budgets and Fund Management

87. A funding of Rs. 18,694,500 was approved for the RESA project for a two year period, of which Rs 12,100,000 was for the first year and Rs.6,594,500 for the second year. However, actual receipt of funds was somewhat higher (ostensibly due to a favourable exchange rate) by Rs 82,051 in Year 1 and by Rs 1,085,656 in year 2, providing a total funding of Rs 19,862,207 for the project, i.e. an excess of 6.2%.

88. According to the audited financial statements for 2008 and 2009, an amount of Rs. 2,204,546 remained unspent, as of 31 Dec 2009, and was proposed to be used in remnant activities until the close of the project in March 2010. Important among these were the final consumer survey (Jan 2010) and regional conference (April 2010), which have been completed, as found by the evaluation.

89. The major chunk of expenditures in the project has been on Seminars and Training representing 38% of the expenditures. Personnel costs, at Rs 3,840,000 represented over 19% of the project budgets, while project administration overheads were budgeted at 10%. As a result, project activities (including monitoring and evaluation) accounted for almost 70% of the expenditure.

Table 10: Budgets versus Actual Expenditures (year and activity wise)

Activities	Total			
	Budgeted	% of total	Actual	% of total
1. Personnel Cost	3,840,000	19.3%	3,840,000	21.7%
2. Cost of Project Activities	13,155,000	66.2%	12,212,420	69.2%
2.1 Seminar & Training Cost	7,100,000	35.7%	6,768,380	38.3%
2.2 Research Cost	2,880,000	14.5%	2,782,940	15.8%
2.3 Publication and Outreach Cost	970,000	4.9%	955,818	5.4%
2.4 Advocacy and Networking Cost	1,500,000	7.6%	1,502,782	8.5%
2.5 Project Review	705,000	3.5%	202,500	1.1%
Total Direct Cost:	16,995,000	85.6%	16,052,420	90.9%
Add: Overheads @10%	1,699,500	8.6%	1,605,241	9.1%
Total Budgeted Cost	18,694,500	94.1%	17,657,661	100.0%

Activities	Total			
	Budgeted	% of total	Actual	% of total
INR Received	19,862,207	100.0%		

90. The evaluation notes unspent funds of Rs 2,204,546 (which includes an Rs 1,167,707 due to exchange rate appreciation) as at Dec 2009. Of this, Rs 502,000 was earmarked for project reviews/evaluations (*refer 2.5 in the table below*) which will get spent on the current evaluation. However, one head: the participation of select CSO representatives on specialized training (*refer 2.1.6 in the table below*) had an unspent amount of Rs 334,000 from the total budget of Rs 400,000, which was utilised to organise three media workshops in West Bengal (May 2010); Bangladesh & Nepal (March 2010) to share outcomes of the RESA project with representatives of media, local CSOs, etc. These variations apart, project funds were consumed in accordance with agreed allocations under various headings.

Table 11: Activity-Wise Actual Expenditure as a Percentage of the Budgeted Costs

	Budgeted	Actual Expenditure	
	Total	Total	% of Budgeted
	(a)	(b)	(c)=c/a
1. Personnel Cost	3,840,000	3,840,000	100%
1.1 Project Manager	960,000	960,000	100%
1.2 Project Assistant	960,000	960,000	100%
1.3 Nodal person	1,920,000	1,920,000	100%
2. Cost of Project Activities	13,155,000	12,212,420	93%
2.1 Seminar & Training Cost	7,100,000	6,768,380	95%
2.1.1 Launch Meeting & Training of Nodal persons & Project Staff	1,100,000	1,097,360	100%
2.1.2 Local inception workshop	500,000	500,300	100%
2.1.3 Reference Group Meeting	1,500,000	1,499,188	100%
2.1.4 Territorial Trainings	1,600,000	1,600,250	100%
2.1.5 Grassroots Interface Meeting	2,000,000	2,005,102	100%
2.1.6 Participation of Select CSO representative to specialized training on the subject	400,000	66,180	17%
2.2 Research Cost	2,880,000	2,782,940	97%
2.2.1 Research Cost	480,000	480,000	100%
2.2.2 Field Research	1,600,000	1,600,000	100%
2.2.3 Base line Survey	400,000	400,940	100%
2.2.4 Final Survey	400,000	302,000	76%
2.3 Publication and Outreach Cost	970,000	955,818	99%
2.3.1 Base Paper in 3 countries	70,000	70,000	100%
2.3.2 Training Manual	100,000	99,600	100%

	Budgeted	Actual Expenditure	
	Total	Total	% of Budgeted
2.3.3 Policy Briefs	300,000	300,000	100%
2.3.4 News Paper Articles	100,000	100,000	100%
2.3.5 Webpage (Infrastructure, etc)	400,000	386,218	97%
2.4 Advocacy and Networking Cost	1,500,000	1,502,782	100%
2.4.1 National Advocacy Seminar	900,000	902,782	100%
2.4.2 Networking Cost	600,000	600,000	100%
2.5 Project Review	705,000	202,500	29%
2.5.1 Review Meeting	300,000	202,500	68%
2.5.2 Project Review	405,000	-	0%
Total Direct Cost:	16,995,000	16,052,420	94%
Add: Overheads @ 10%	1,699,500	1,605,241	94%
Total Cost	18,694,500	17,657,661	94%
Additional amount received (exchange rate gains)	1,167,707	-	
Total Receipts of Funds	19,862,207		

91. Project partners in all the locations mentioned timely and swift disbursement of funds by CUTS, and cited this to be a consistent trend in all CUTS projects.

Table 12: Disbursements to partners as % of budget heads

Activities	Total Disbursements to Partners	Total Budget	Disbursement as a % of Budget
Personnel Cost			
Nodal person (Remuneration)	2,000,000	1,920,000	104%
Seminars & Training Cost			
Local Inception Workshop	450,000	500,000	90%
Reference Group Meeting	1,340,000	1,500,000	89%
Territorial Trainings	1,600,000	1,600,000	100%
Grassroots Interface Meeting	1,800,000	2,000,000	90%
Advocacy & Networking Cost			
Advocacy Seminar	850,000	900,000	94%
Research Cost			
Field Research/ Base line Survey/ Base Paper	1,770,000	2,240,000	79%
Final consumer Survey	400,000	400,000	100%
Total	10,210,000	10,890,000	92%

4 Analysis of Results

4.1 Results targeted by the project

92. The Project Summary contains a table titled 'Measuring the impact of Project Activities' which is almost like a logical framework, but the evaluator feels the indicators mentioned there-in are not sufficiently specific. There is no clear bifurcation of indicators and modes of verification against each objective.
93. Discussion with the project implementation team (CUTS CCIER) on the creation of the results matrix (which was also requested by the donor during the mid-term review meeting), revealed that this would be formulated post the end review meeting, during the analysis of the results with the donor on a one-to-one basis. The evaluators feel that the revision of the log frame indicating the outputs, outcomes and measurable indicators should have been done during the end of the first phase of the project in order to assess the progress of the project after the first year and accordingly undertake actions for the next phase.
94. The project proposal describes the intervention in general, given the differences in specific contexts among the project territories. The status of power sector varies in the regions and calls for a tailor-made intervention.

4.2 Relevance

95. Analysis of the baseline survey and the compilation of event outcome reports, and discussions with stakeholders in all four locations, established the relevance of an intervention like RESA based on the following unmet/ undermet needs of consumers:
- inadequate availability of electricity, particularly in rural and hinterland areas
 - low service quality marked by outages, down time, and voltage fluctuations
 - non-transparency and unscrupulous practices (theft, overbilling, collusion)
 - lack of knowledge and awareness of consumer rights to electricity as a public utility
 - lack of expertise and conversancy on policy and procedural issues in electricity distribution among CSOs
96. However, the relative importance of each of these differed across locations, expectably. Electricity coverage and availability, particularly in rural areas, is higher in Rajasthan and West Bengal, compared to Nepal and Bangladesh. As a result, consumer related issues are of a higher order in locations having greater coverage than in locations where electricity access itself is the challenge.
97. The objectives of the project have been designed to address these issues and challenges from the perspectives of: awareness generation; capacity building on electricity reforms; and creating mechanisms for due representation of consumer concerns before the regulators and distribution agencies. Given that the thrust of the project is to increase consumer empowerment, these objectives are well designed. However, the title of the

project "A pilot project on capacity building on electricity reforms in Nepal, Bangladesh and India' can be somewhat misleading, as it connotes engagement in reforming the policies, regulations and structural aspects of the sector. Discussions with the project team did clarify that the focus of the project was more downstream; on the consumer facing aspects- service quality issues, grievance redressal mechanisms, and participation in stakeholder consultations on tariff setting, under the extant policies and structures. The project did neither have an objective nor the capacity to seek or influence existing policies and regulatory mechanisms as such. It only enabled CSOs a better understanding of these aspects in order to effectively articulate consumer concerns and seek redress under the already existing frameworks. Specific observations on the relevance of the project in individual locations appear below.

98. **Nepal:** In spite of the huge generation potential, only 45 percent of households have access to electricity and the ongoing power outages ranging from 11-16 hours per day is a severe problem faced by the electrified households. There is still no independent electricity regulatory commission in place, as a result of which the Department of Electricity Development (DoED) under the Ministry of Water Resources regulates the country's electricity sector. The Electricity Tariff Fixation Commission (ETFC) constituted as six-member commission (including one representative from the consumer organization) is responsible for reviewing and approving retail electricity tariff structures. Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) is the government owned and controlled utility which has a monopoly in transmission and distribution. Huge and persistent system losses, overstaffing, over-the-roof generation costs and towering overheads are some of the current problems faced by NEA.
99. Despite the reforms in place since 1992, no real competition exists in the generation or supply of power in the country due to a low level of private sector participation. Although, market entry has lately eased with generation access granted to the Independent Power Producers (IPPs), their real impact and influence in creating a competitive market is marginal and questionable. Factors such as lack of a favorable environment, prolonged political instability, inconsistencies in legal and regulatory frameworks, lack of transparency and accountability in the licensing process inhibit the participation of private players. By default, the sector also suffers from frequent undesired government interventions with various stop-go policies.
100. Electricity is a little talked-about issue among CSOs, academia and the general public and consumer rights related to the electricity sector are almost unrecognized in Nepal. The only issue in the electricity sector that draws public attention is that of persistent load shedding. Hence, merely activating consumers and building CSOs' capacity is not enough to bring about changes in responsiveness and the structural reform of the sector is a fundamental constraint. Key elements such as the unbundling of the utility, establishment of a regulatory body have not been implemented in Nepal.
101. **Bangladesh:** Electricity coverage in Bangladesh is less than 43% at present, and even lower in many of its 64 districts. Shortages are experienced in all over the country, including in the capital Dhaka, which has a 25% peak shortage (5000 MW against 6600 MW demand). Tariff policies in the country are presently skewed in favour of large consumers, which can be seen as imposing a tax on marginal consumers, and incentivizing higher draw downs by industrial and commercial consumers. Bangladesh has unbundled generation, distribution and transmission and has a sector regulator in place since 2003 (opinions differ as to the extent of independence of the regulator), and has a policy for universal access by 2020. Additionally, a REB operates a network of cooperatives, providing electricity to rural homes. Bangladesh has a policy for small

private power plants, but the over dependence on gas (88% of generation) and absence of asset-pricing have resulted in an artificially low price of electricity, which inhibits adequate replenishment of generation assets. There is also a perceived lack of transparency in the allotment of electricity connections and resolution of billing disputes, and consumers feel that the systems are biased in favor of the government owned supply companies.

102. **West Bengal** is one of the pioneer states in India where reform process was initiated at the state level. West Bengal State Electricity Board (WBSEB) was unbundled into separate entities viz., West Bengal Power Development Corporation Limited (WBPDCL), West Bengal State Electricity Transmission Company Limited (WBSETCL) and West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Limited (WBSEDCL). WBSEDCL is a classic example of institutional reforms within a utility that has led to higher service standards in this territory. The West Bengal Electricity Regulatory Commission (WBERC) undertakes important functions, such as licensing, framing regulations, tariff fixation, promoting competition and discharging consumer protection. The WBERC Regulations, 2006 incorporates a provision for redressal of grievances regarding supply of electricity and related matters (such as excess billing, security deposit, incorrect disconnection, non receipt of meter).

103. Also, as a result of 100 percent feeder metering; computerization of all commercial activities; and strong anti-theft legislations being enforced at the State-level, the problem of power theft is reportedly found to be lower when compared to the other regions. Energy losses have come down over the last five years, principally as a result of improvements in recovery of dues and reduction in the T&D losses. In spite of the consumer-friendly provisions, efficient functioning of the utilities, opening up of private participation, reduced power theft and lower energy losses, there is a poor consumer participation in the reform processes. Thus, the RESA project is highly relevant in the context of West Bengal, owing to a relatively better status of the electricity sector vis-à-vis the others.

104. **Rajasthan** – Access is not a major issue in the state unlike other territories covered by the project. With the enactment of power sector reforms in 1999, establishment of an independent regulatory commission - RERC and unbundling of the State Electricity Board (SEB) into five separate companies had taken place. Despite these reforms, prevalence of skewed tariff structure in favor of consumer categories, increased political interference, huge T&D losses and massive power theft characterize the poor financial health of the state utilities and currently act as a major stumbling block to the development of the sector.

105. The issue of additionality is important in Rajasthan, given the fact that CUTS had already implemented another project in August 2001 under the same theme in the territory. The project titled - '**Involvement of Consumer in Power sector Reforms**' was jointly launched by CUTS and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) in six districts of Rajasthan with a budget of approximately ₹2 crores and duration of three years. Of the six districts covered by the FES project in Rajasthan, three have been also covered under the RESA project (viz., Sawai Madhopur, Sirohi, Chittorgarh). The table below analyses as to what extent the outcomes of the RESA project are also catered by the FES project:

Table 13: Aligning RESA's expected outcomes with FES results

Outcomes of RESA	Whether intended by the FES Project
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Outcomes of RESA	Whether intended by the FES Project
<p>Enhanced awareness and understanding among consumers/civil society on how to engage in policy processes aimed at electricity reforms</p>	<p>The CUTS FES model proactively educated consumers about the grievance redressal mechanism, power theft, conservation of energy, monitoring service delivery. Undeniably, all these themes were also taught to the consumers under the RESA project. Further, this can also be seen in the context of the title of the FES project– ‘<i>Involvement of Consumer in Power Sector Reforms</i>’, which shows that this particular outcome of RESA was the rationale behind the FES project as well.</p>
<p>Civil society organizations better comprehend policy issues pertaining to electricity reforms and make efforts to continue engagement with research and advocacy initiatives on this subject, subsequently</p>	<p>In the second phase of the FES project (May 2005-2006), specific emphasis was given on providing training to CSOs to facilitate their effective participation in the regulatory processes by enhancing their capacity. To that effect, twelve circle-level workshops were organized where senior officials of the Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission and Utilities participated as resource persons.</p> <p>Under the RESA, this outcome was catered mainly by the TT sessions provided to the CSOs by the experts.</p>
<p>Improve policymakers’ and regulators understanding of consumer’s needs and demands</p>	<p>The efforts made by CUTS and CSOs towards lobbying policy change or governmental action are more explicit as a result of the FES project, when compared to the RESA project. To elucidate , following are the key evidences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nomination of CUTS to the RERC Advisory Committee to represent the consumer concerns to the regulators • Recognition of ‘Sensitising the Consumers’ as one of the strategic action-point into its six-point blueprint to reform the electricity distribution by the Ministry of Power, Government of India • Pressurizing the distribution companies into widely publicizing their Charter of Consumer Rights throughout the state
<p>Mechanism of communication is established between consumers, CSOs, policy makers/government representatives, regulators and distribution companies to discuss electricity reforms</p>	<p>While in RESA, the was done through GIMs and Territorial Training Sessions, in the FES project the mechanisms adopted were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organising three-phase workshops in six districts comprising of consumers, CSOs, politicians, panchayats, utility officials, regulators and media. • Forming of consumer organisations/activists network at the grassroots level by creating informal organisation called Vidhyut Sudhar Samities at village level, in the select target districts • Holding Jan-Sunvais (public-hearings) at selected villages of Sawai Madhopur, Alwar and Chittorgarh districts • Organizing Chaupal Baithaks (meetings at panchayat places) to pressurise the discoms to understand public concerns and improve the quality of service.
<p>Formation of a regional civil society network on electricity reforms that acts as a platform for opinion exchange and learning through information sharing</p>	<p>This outcome was not intended by the FES project because it covered only 1 territory – Rajasthan and the question of formation of a regional network is irrelevant in this context.</p>

Source: Evaluator’s observations and CART FES website

106. The evaluation notes no major differences in the outcomes intended by the FES project to that of RESA. The major deviation in the two projects is the methodology followed, with RESA's approach being more structured and mechanistic. In this respect, the RESA project can be seen as a follow on initiative building on the efforts of FES, and focusing more on strengthening CSO's abilities to effectively engage with regulators and service providers.. The representative CSOs of three common districts were also the same in the RESA Project which had a positive spill off during the implementation phase. Owing to their prior experience of organizing ground level activities in the FES project, these CSOs were able to start upfront with the GIM I during RESA which served as an immediate learning platform for territory partners who were inexperienced in such activities.

4.3 Efficiency

4.3.1 Completion of Activities

107. Perusal of project documents as well as discussions with the project partners clearly indicated the completion of all enlisted activities in the project, in all the four locations. Activities were completed within the allotted budget; however **delays at the outset of the project owing to contract finalization and approval of funds**, resulted in the commencement of the project three months behind schedule. Later, during the execution of the activities of the project, Nepal faced several political and economic tensions such as increasing frequency of general strikes, rising inflation. In West Bengal, heavy downpour and consequently massive floods hindered timely completion of project activities (2008). There were no cost overruns in any of the project locations.

4.3.2 Amendments to Design

108. The project design remained broadly unchanged during implementation, and activities were in line with the proposals, with minor alterations, such as an increase in baseline survey samples from 500 to 700 and an increase in GIMs from 40 across the four territories to 112 (including sub-GIMs). The project doubled the number of GIMs per territory from 5 to 10, within the given budget, in order to cover a larger base of consumers and also in response to growing interest of consumers in the project activities. This was possible due to the adoption of cost-effective and innovative approaches, for instance, holding events in crowded public places, and the planning the GIMs in the vicinity of electricity offices, particularly on bill payment dates.

4.3.3 Incomplete Outputs

- The project proposal refers to an **advocacy document** which would have highlighted the impediments to ensuring consumer participation in the electricity reforms process, and the ways of addressing them in each territory. Discussions with CUTS indicated that given the paucity of time, these were not finalized while the team plans to prepare the same post the project review.
- A **briefing paper** which was slated to be prepared by all the project partners could not be produced in Bangladesh as the nodal person had left in between.

4.3.4 Cost Deviations

109. There were no major deviations in expenditure against budgets, for most line items. However, the evaluation noticed unspent budgets of Rs 333,820 (1.7 % of allocated budgets) under the head of specialized training of CSO representatives, which is considered an important activity toward capacity development. Discussions with CUTS indicated that a number of practical difficulties prevented the completion of this activity. However, one project manager from CUTS CRC participated in the 10th Regulators & Policymakers Retreat organized by Independent Power Producers Association of India and the remaining funds were utilised to organise three media workshops in West Bengal (May 2010); Bangladesh & Nepal (March 2010) to share outcomes of the RESA project with representatives of media, local CSOs and identify the role to be played by them in the process of regulatory reform in the electricity sector. These amendments were made in consultation with the donor and other stakeholders.

110. Overall, disbursements to partners were made in line with budgets, with minor variations. In terms of utilization of resources, project activities accounted for over 66% of funds- of which knowledge creation and capacity development accounted for close to 50%, staffing and personnel costs of 20% and overheads of 8%, which is considered reasonable, given the grassroots focus of the project.

4.3.5 Reporting

111. The project has submitted six monthly and annual reports, duly audited, in a timely manner, and the auditors reports made no remarks or qualifications in respect of the financial management of the project.

4.4 Effectiveness – Results from the project

Effectiveness is a measure of the extent to which the intervention's intended outcomes, i.e. its specific objectives – intermediate results –have been achieved. Explicitly, effectiveness is the relationship between the intervention's outputs, i.e. its products or services – its immediate results – and its outcomes, meaning usually the intended benefits for a particular target group of beneficiaries.

4.4.1 Assessment of Outcomes

Outcome 1: Enhanced awareness and understanding among consumers/civil society on how to engage in policy processes aimed at electricity reforms:

112. In each of the locations, the project has increased the understanding among consumers and CSOs of consumer-facing issues in the electricity sector, particularly dealing with access, affordability and service quality aspects of electricity distribution. For CSOs, a number of issues dealing with tariff mechanisms, billing, consumer rights, and grievance redressal channels have been explained or de-mystified through the training provided under the project. Additionally, it has created greater awareness of electricity conservation through the use of energy efficient devices. For lay consumers, basic issues such as reading electricity bills, understanding the basis of billing and noticing discrepancies, load categories, unauthorized connections, etc. were taught as well, to deal with local issues

like incorrect meter readings, power theft and errant/ inflated bills. Overall, the project has sensitized the consumers about their rights and also about their responsibilities to a certain extent (refer table below).

113. The GIMs and Territorial Trainings created useful outputs such as vernacular handouts and pamphlets (for consumers) and TTMs (for CSOs) which represent an institutionalization of knowledge disseminated in the project. Prior to the project, CSOs had poor knowledge of the policies and structures of their electricity sectors, and more important, their potential influence as consumers, which prevented them from effectively engaging with regulators and service providers. Clearly, the project enabled them with knowledge and capacities to appreciate the consumer-facing aspects of the sector, and as to their opportunities to seek grievance redressal under the available mechanisms. The case studies documented in the outcome reports highlight increased awareness as one of the major benefits achieved through project activities (refer Box 1).

Table 14: Increased Awareness among consumers as a result of the RESA Project

Consumer Perception	Awareness level during the Base Line Survey	Awareness level at the Final Consumer Survey	Enhancement in Awareness level
Bangladesh			
(Percentage of respondents of final consumer survey that participated in baseline survey – 92%)			
Awareness on Regulatory Reform Process	2%	73.1%	71.1%
Awareness on available GRM	28%	95.1%	67.1%
Aware of Regulatory Commission	03%	95.6%	92.6%
Nepal			
(Percentage of respondents of final consumer survey that participated in baseline survey – 94%)			
Awareness on Regulatory Reform Process	11%	91%	80%
Awareness on available GRM	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Rajasthan			
(Percentage of respondents of final consumer survey that participated in baseline survey – 65%)			
Awareness on Regulatory Reform	26%	82%	56%

Process			
Awareness on available GRM	20%	76%	56%
Aware of Regulatory Commission	4%	82%	78%
West Bengal			
(Percentage of respondents of final consumer survey that participated in baseline survey – 57%; The remaining 43% were participants who attended either one or both of the GIMs.			
Awareness on Regulatory Reform Process	9%	37%	28%
Awareness on available GRM	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.
Aware of Regulatory Commission	2%	42%	40%

Source: Territorial Base Paper and Final Consumer Survey Reports

Box 1: Case Studies on enhanced awareness among consumers

Consumers have filed complaints related to service delivery issues at the appropriate Grievance Redressal Department or have even approached the ombudsman office. In the Malda district of West Bengal, a consumer who had attended the GIMI was denied a new connection for his mill. He followed the Grievance Redressal Mechanism (GRM), approached the ombudsman and was awarded a compensation of Rs. 77,000.

A consumer from Nepal was involved in electricity theft before knowing that it is an illegal act. He came to know during the GIMs that **electricity theft** is regarded as a serious crime and is considered a punishable act. Consequently, he had stopped this illegal practice and had also advised his family members and friends to deter from such an offense.

The message on **energy conservation** was clearly deliberated through the meetings on increasing the use of Compact Fluorescent Lamps (CFLs), star rated electrical appliances and also on the Efficient Lighting Initiative (ELI). Several cases regarding using CFLs by the consumers have been documented in the GIMII synthesis reports and also in the final consumer survey.

114. However, it would be incorrect to suggest that the project has strengthened consumers and CSOs to engage in the larger process of electricity reforms at a macro level. The thrust of the project in terms of the reforms agenda has been purely at the local grievance redressal level and not the macro issues of electricity capacity, competitiveness and legal/regulatory changes as such. All the project activities were confined within the existing regulatory and institutional provisions only and only sought to develop a rights-based

approach by consumers within these existing provisions. The evaluation feels that the larger system wide issues are important and need to be addressed, but are perhaps beyond the capacity and scope of projects like RESA. However, it is important for CSOs to be conversant with other policy level initiatives being implemented in their countries, and become aware of their implications for consumers. For instance, the rationale behind Bangladesh's tariff policy in which industrial and commercial tariffs are cheaper than domestic tariffs, seems against the public interest in a situation where electricity availability is less than 43% nationwide.

Outcome 2: Civil society organizations better comprehend policy issues pertaining to electricity reforms and make efforts to continue engagement with research and advocacy initiatives on this subject, subsequently:

115. This outcome comprises of two things, first whether the CSOs comprehended the policy issues and second, if they made efforts to engage with research and other initiatives. The former has been very well catered by the project. Absence of technical knowledge and advocacy skills among CSOs was one of the biggest impediments to their influence in the power sector. With the knowledge imparted to them during the territorial trainings, they felt greatly empowered to participate in discussions with utility companies and with regulators. They now have a basic understanding about the structure of the sector; roles and responsibilities of various stakeholders, regulatory bodies and government; and the various consultative mechanisms and grievance redressal channels available to consumers. Some CSOs also claimed a better understanding of the tariff setting mechanism to enable them to participate meaningfully in public hearings. Apparently, with regards to the latter, the results vary across the territories. However, it would be unreasonable to expect CSOs to engage in further research on their own and particularly perform the role of thought leaders in electricity reforms and other structural issues pertaining to the subject. As per the GIMII Synthesis reports of Nepal and West Bengal, it was found that prior to the project, none of the organizations had participated in any consultation process organized by the government, regulatory commission or distribution companies. The partner organizations pointed out that news/ intimation regarding any such consultation meetings never reached them and that they were of the opinion that no such activities were organized in their locality. However, CSOs have been organizing and actively participating in the programmes to pressurize the government to supply adequate power amid the rampant outage in **Nepal**.

116. In **West Bengal**, CUTS CRC also plans on building energy as a key practice area, and to take on more projects in the sector. In this direction, it has already received some proposals from WBSEDCL and Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation (CESC) to partner them in their capacity building/ awareness generation programmes and grassroots projects. In these projects special thrust would be given to energy conservation, demand side management and renewable/alternate energy sources.

117. Some **Rajasthan** based CSOs have participated in government sponsored activities and consultations, while some had taken part in consultations with the local authorities on issues such as power cut, billing etc. Also, the TTMs are being used as reference material for another project Grassroots Reach out & Networking in Rajasthan through Consumer Action (GRANIRCA) being executed by CART. A case study highlighting CSO's raising voice for the farmers can be referred from the box below.

Box 2: Case Study on issue of a booklet containing the provisions for farmers

Under the Electricity Act 2003, well-laid out provisions for farmers were found to be missing as per the CSOs. This was highlighted by them in a national meeting which was even attended by the service providers. As a result of continuous lobbying, an agricultural policy booklet was issued consisting of provisions for the farmers with regards to electricity. Certain laws have been amended as a result of which farmers now have to pay less as compared to what they used to pay earlier.

118. Given the low availability of electricity in all the project locations, energy conservation and alternative energy were included as subjects to sensitize consumers. The grassroots meetings in all locations included energy conservation as one of the themes, and this is seen as an important feature in the advocacy thrust of the project. The project also enabled consumers to connect to state-sponsored schemes for energy conservation, for instance the replacement of incandescent bulbs with low-energy consumption CFLs, in West Bengal and Bangladesh. Similarly, the project facilitated linkages in Bangladesh for induction of renewable energy, particularly solar energy panels; drawing on development grants (Graeme Bank funded rooftop installations).

Outcome 3: Improve policymakers' and regulators understanding of consumer's needs and demands:

119. The evaluators consider this outcome to be an overlap with Outcome 4, perhaps even a result of Outcome 4, which deals with the mechanisms through which such understanding is sought to be improved. However, many of the project's documents, particularly the baseline surveys, are useful materials that can be referred by policy makers and regulators to appreciate the major problems encountered by electricity consumers in their jurisdictions. Furthermore, the project's events such as the Territorial Training Sessions, GIMs and the National Advocacy Seminar received active participation by policy makers and regulators in all the territories with the exception of grassroots events in Rajasthan and Nepal (refer table below). In terms of qualitative participation, the policymakers and regulators actively participated in all the deliberations and served s resource persons in the capacity building exercises, which has been one of the highlights of this project.

Table 15: Presence of policymakers and regulators during the project activities

Project Activities	Rajasthan	West Bengal	Bangladesh	Nepal
Territorial training sessions	✓	✓	✓	✓
Grassroots Interface Meetings	Absence of representatives from RERC in certain GIMs	✓	✓	Absence of NEA Chiefs in some GIMs
National Advocacy	✓		After committing their presence,	✓

seminar		the policymakers did not attend the event	
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Source: Outcome Reports of project activities

120. The project provided an excellent opportunity to sensitize parliamentarians on the major challenges facing the electricity sector reforms in India. This was conducted under the 8th meeting of the PAR-FORE⁵ (held in New Delhi), which was attended by the parliamentarians representing both *Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha*, regulatory bodies and academia. A major highlight of this event was to convene the Minister of State for Power, Government of India who even presented certain action points to be taken in the power sector of India. However, isolated and sporadic interactions cannot be expected to have the necessary effect on regulators, and only a continued and sustained engagement by CSOs can adequately sensitize the service providers and regulators to resolve the key issues faced by consumers.

121. There are two fundamental challenges to be addressed in the sector: i) to improve the accountability of the service providers before consumers; and ii) to improve the overall access and availability of electricity to consumers. Clearly the project has focused on the first challenge, but not the second, which is the larger challenge of the two. Unless the overall availability of electricity improves, the issues of quality of service remain secondary. From a consumer's view point, some issues that need to be highlighted further are:

- augmentation of electricity supply overall and in each sub region
- prioritization in resource allocations for electricity distribution to ensure universal access
- equitable access to electricity and transparency in allocations

122. Consumer involvement needs to extend into understanding the basis and processes involved in the allocation of budget resources to reach electricity to all categories of consumers in remote locations. This would be the most effective way to influence decision makers. So far, the project has not delved into these macro issues, which hold the key to resolving the larger challenge. A subsequent phase of RESA should focus more on these planning and institutional aspects given that CSOs have a reasonable understanding of their rights as well as a basic knowledge of the issues in the sector. One of the best practice case study shared with the evaluators was that of the **NACEUN** (National Association of Community Electricity Users Nepal) which manages the country's electricity distribution system in the remote areas of Nepal. The community has been influential in curbing power theft and providing electricity access in many regions. The chairman of NACEUN was represented as one of the RG members and served as a resource person in the TT sessions in Nepal.

⁵ PARFORE is a non-partisan forum to encourage discussion across the party lines on key economic policy issues.

Box 3: Community involvement in Rural Electrification - Best Practice Case NACEUN

NACEUN, formally established in 2006, is the overarching body responsible for the development of the CBOs involved in the grid-extension projects. NACEUN with over 400 members is lobbying to amend the Electricity Act to decentralize power generation and distribution and make the country more self-reliant in hydropower.

NACEUN's *aims and responsibilities* include: (1) national level policy advocacy, (2) capacity-building, technical training, administrative and management support for its member organizations, (3) institutional development, and (4) research and promotion of some renewable technologies (for example, biogas and improved cooking stoves).

The association works on a 20-80 scheme where communities fund 20 per cent of the total cost while the remaining 80 per cent is funded by the government (NEA).

To date, it has assisted the rural electrification process for 116,000 households and plans to electrify additional 86,000 households by 2011. Such a model has not only helped in rural electrification but has also reduced *pilferage* and system losses from 35% to 9% in some districts.

123. Traditionally, consumers and CSOs have been timid to tackle state owned utility companies, and have remained reconciled to issues like preferential allotments, power theft by influential citizens, and so forth. However, the creation of independent regulators has brought in differing degrees of balance in accountability and influence in the sector. While concerns may exist as to the level of independence regulators actually enjoy, the role of ensuring service quality standards is clearly on the regulator, which gives consumers a channel to independently raise their concerns on service issues. Therefore, it is more important for projects like RESA to engage effectively with regulators than with service providers, to ensure that their rightful demands are answered satisfactorily. The evaluators find that the project has created the necessary confidence among CSOs to interact with the regulators
124. However, on one hand where India and Bangladesh have constituted independent electricity regulatory commissions; Nepal still does not have a regulatory commission in place. In 2008, Ministry of Energy had proposed the institution of **NERC** (National Electricity Regulatory Commission) under the NERC Act, 2065 however the same is found to be in the draft stage.
125. Another aspect of electricity reforms is the institutional reforms within the state owned utility companies, which the project has not addressed in the initial phase, but could do so in any subsequent phases. This aspect is critical, because eventually, the key to improved service quality lies in stemming distribution losses, arresting revenue leakage and having an efficiently run distribution company with sufficient revenues to maintain a good quality of supply. The case of WBSUEDCL's turnaround and current performance is exemplary in this direction (see box below), and can be used as a model to initiate similar actions in other distribution utilities.

Box 4: Institutional Reforms - Best Practice Case of WBSEDCL

The reforms in the West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Ltd. (WBSEDCL) has been an eye-opener in real aspect which reflects that how change of mindsets of the influential people at the top, non-interference of the government, top-driven political support and accountability; and vigor of outperforming can lead to tremendous change both within and outside the institution. WBSEDCL is the only state owned distribution company which has been operating without government subsidies and is profitable. Due to effective monitoring mechanism implemented by the company, certain districts witnessed a dramatic reduction in the T&D losses from 24% to a mere 12%. This case simply parades that unless the utility is proactive, consumer service cannot be attained.

Outcome 4: Mechanism of communication is established between consumers, CSOs, policy makers/government representatives, regulators and distribution companies to discuss electricity reforms

126. The project has enabled its participant CSOs to form or join existing structures to engage in the public hearings or other consultative mechanisms existing in the locations. The thrust of this engagement has been on service quality issues and grievance redressal mechanisms, and not the policy level regulatory reforms, understandably so. However, in Bangladesh, where a system of public hearings exists for tariff fixation, the CAB was able to better appreciate the basis and the principles of tariff setting as a result of its exposure to the project's training manuals, which enabled a more qualitative participation in the hearings themselves.
127. The project provided an opportunity for meaningful interaction between the service providers and consumers) through GIMs, National Advocacy Seminar (NAS). During GIMI systemic problems were collected and the same were solved during GIMII. While creating opportunities of interface between the utilities and the consumers, the project has helped authorities understand the ground realities and consumers to understand various limitations/problems faced by utility companies. Also during the NAS, the same systemic problems were taken to the regulators and policy makers by a set of consumers.
128. The inclusion and eventually presence of representatives of utility companies and regulators, in the RG Team has been a very useful contribution of the project, considering the initial averseness of official bodies to participate in the project. The project also enrolled sector experts including a number of retired senior officials from regulatory commissions and the utility companies. The evaluators' own interactions with the regulators from West Bengal and Bangladesh, which were members of the respective RGs, attest to the important contribution that people from the system can make toward a more consumer friendly service orientation by electricity utilities. Their knowledge, experience and networks were important contributions that helped CSOs in effectively representing the consumer interest before service providers, at times using the opportunity of name dropping, as one member pointed out in Bangladesh.
129. The consultative mechanisms instituted by the government vary from country to country, but in all the three countries, some involvement of the public is provided for, in respect of discussions on tariff setting and even major policy or regulatory changes. However, it is up

to the CSOs to ensure that their representations are carried forward to these consultative mechanisms, through the various networks that exist in the sector. The project has provided the necessary basic knowledge and awareness of the regulatory processes and mechanisms to support CSOs in better articulating their issues, and also provided some exposure to interact with the officials involved in these consultative mechanisms.

130. **Representation and formation:** Such an involvement implies direct interaction with the regulators.

- **Representation of CSOs in commission, committees etc.:** There is a vital need for CSOs' sustained 'engagement' with policymakers, in the form of a continuous commitment to relationship-building at all levels – through both formal and informal networks, inside and outside of government (see Box 5).

Box 5: Representation of consumers/CSOs in policymaking processes

Nepal: One of the representatives of the partner organizations in Nepal was nominated in the Electricity tariff fixation commission (ETFC) and has been actively participating in the proceedings of the commission; however it has been two years since he has been involved in this commission and thus attributability to this project remains dubious.

Bangladesh: Presence of CAB in tariff setting commission

Rajasthan: CUTS is a member of the Advisory Committee of CERC. But CUTS has been since 2005 and hence this cannot be attributed as an outcome of the RESA project.

Box 6 : Formation of Local Interest Groups in West Bengal and Bangladesh

The informal Redressal Mechanism proposed by CUTS CRC

Consumers are apprehensive of complaining, as individuals, to the authorities fearing that it might backfire and the local utility office might take action that might prove detrimental to their interests. To address this concern, CSOs have setup help-desks at various places, and the consumers have started taking their concerns to the CSO who take up further to the respective officer for the redressal.

Realizing this need, CUTS CRC also proposes a parallel and informal 3-tier redressal mechanism at the districts and further down the level by building Consumer Assistance Cells. This will help CUTS CRC to monitor whether the complaints have been redressed or not.

Informal Three-Tier Redressal Mechanism Proposed By Cuts CRC

Consumer Assistance Cell at the District Level

Consumer Assistance Cell at CUTS-CRC



Complaint redressal of short listed cases at the utility every alternate month



Formation of Committees in Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, electricity consumer committees have been formed in 13 localities which is the main result of this project. The committees serve the following objectives:

- To prevent power theft -
- To encourage consumers to conserve electricity -
- To register complaints

- **Formation of local groups:** At another level, where networks did not exist, the exposure to the project has enabled consumers to form local interest groups, to represent their problems before service providers. Notably, there have been some committees functioning at the local level but attributability to the project cannot be ascertained. However, in Bangladesh there is a clear evidence of formation of electricity consumer committees in 13 localities as an outcome of the project. (refer Box 6 above).

Box 7 : Various Methods adopted that led to Effective Redressal of Consumers' Complaints

Electricity Choupals in Rajasthan

The system of Electricity Choupals (a public consultation mechanism) was present even before this project but was unfortunately, was only seen on paper and not organized in the practical sense due to the lack of will on part of the authority and also the ignorance of the consumers. As a result of the pressure made by the CSOs on the utility officers and also awareness generated to the consumers, these Choupals are now conducted in Rajasthan with active participation both from utilities and consumers and ultimately serves as an easy and accessible platform for the consumers to keep their issues in the front.

User-friendly complaint mechanisms

Another case cited by the Rajasthan CSO during the evaluation was these CSOs started representing the rural uneducated consumers and farmers and took their complaints to the Settlement Committee. Initially, it was mandatory for the complainant to go himself at the Redressal Office, but his lack of understanding and capacity about the same inhibited his participation and consequently his problem remained unaddressed. Realizing this need, the CUTS approached the RERC Advisory Committee and modified the practice of compulsive participation of the complainant. As a result of which a rural complainant now can rely on a CSO or a companion to present the case on her or his behalf.

The visiting card that worked

A RESA participant had the opportunity of interacting with the Bangladesh Electricity Regulatory Commission member under the project, and also took his visiting card. Shortly after, when an official from the local distribution company resisted efforts to lodge a complaint, the visiting card of the BERC official was waved at him, and matters were resolved promptly. This illustrates the point that the possibility of consumer access to the higher echelons in the system automatically improves service delivery at the lower levels.

Box 8: Case Studies on Consumers taking initiatives on a voluntary basis

In the case of **Rajasthan** where the consumers after attending the sub-GIMs, gathered a group of influential people in their vicinity and shared their learnings and even distributed the handouts given to them during the GIMs. The same group submitted a memorandum before the Assistant Engineer of Sardarshahar (a town in the Churu district of Rajasthan) and immediate steps were taken to rectify the problems.

Similar is a case of Howrah, **West Bengal** where a Panchayat Pradhan had participated at one of the block level GIMs in phase I and he had called for a Gram Sabha Meeting to share his knowledge with other people of the village.

In **Bangladesh**, 28 consumers who attended the GIMI in Khulna, formed a samiti to raise awareness among the consumers about the importance of electricity reforms and regulatory process such as curbing of power theft, complaints redressal mechanism, energy conservation, etc. They have been also involved identification of consumers indulged in power theft in their localities.

Outcome 5: Formation of a regional civil society network on electricity reforms that acts as a platform for opinion exchange and learning through information sharing

131. The implementation partners at RESA by themselves represent a regional group of CSOs with some knowledge and capacity to engage with service providers and regulators on electricity issues. However, this does not necessarily constitute a regional dimension for the project, given that the issues covered by the project tend to be local in nature. As a result, networks formed within a country offer more relevant contexts for interactions among CSOs. For instance, the 13 districts in Bangladesh that were part of the project can bring more useful contributions to other districts in Bangladesh, which have similar baseline situations, and face the same problems as these districts. On the other hand, CSO networks across countries may not offer ready opportunities for applying the project knowledge without any contextual changes. Some RG members met by the evaluation team observed that several CSO networks exist in the three countries (e.g. Prayas, Teri and Mumbai Grahak Panchayat who were even invited in the project activities) and some of these were invited to the project events too. Therefore, the creation of a new network through RESA would seem superfluous.
132. The usefulness of a regional CSO network can only be perceived in terms of a sharing of best practices and exchange of knowledge and awareness of comparable situations across countries/ regions. However, the evaluation found efforts by some local partners (although not national partners) to pro actively seek such exchanges to be inadequate. There were also instances of some missed opportunities, for instance, the sharing of the useful video materials and local dissemination kits used in West Bengal, which could be applied with slight revision in Bangladesh, which shares the same language. The project partners in Bangladesh were not aware of the existence of these materials in the project, despite the numerous interactions among project partners, and with CUTS.
133. However, a regional network on electricity makes immense sense if the regulators and service providers get opportunities to interact and benefit from best practices of one another; as such forums enable an opportunity to consider system-wide reforms based on the positive experiences of other countries. The RESA project enabled regulators from Bangladesh and Nepal to participate in the Regional Conference held in Kolkata, and participants felt this to be a very positive experience. It must be noted that, at a higher level, regional electricity grids and a regional market for electricity are important discussion subjects under the SAARC framework, and official mechanisms already exist for discussions and regional studies on the subject (including World Bank and ADB funded projects). Therefore, the potential contribution of regional CSO networks would seem somewhat limited.
134. Funding support shall remain an important prerequisite for the sustenance of national or regional networks, given the need for budgets to travel and attend events. This cannot be a part of any single project, and CSOs will need to explore opportunities to network with one another on a number of issues, at every networking opportunity provided to them under other projects as well.

4.5 Impact

Whereas effectiveness focuses on the intended outcomes of an intervention, impact is a measure of the broader consequences of the intervention such as economic, social, political, technical or environmental effects; locally, regionally, or at the national level; on the target group and other directly or indirectly affected parties

135. In all three countries covered by the project, the electricity sector is fraught with multiple challenges- overall capacity; financial health of institutions, governance and effectiveness of regulatory framework. The scale and scope of RESA is very small in comparison with the overall magnitude of the problem. Therefore, it would be unrealistic to expect large scale impact at the sector level, from the interventions undertaken. Even within the local settings of the project, it is too early to determine or attribute any impact of the project in terms of economic benefits. However, the evaluators believe that the beneficiaries have the necessary basic awareness of their rights to redressal and the guidance to represent their grievances before the sector regulators and service providers, which can eventually lead to an improvement in the availability and quality of electricity in the region, which will have tangible economic and social impact.
136. The main and noticeable impact of the project is the **Empowerment of Consumer Organizations**, as evidenced from a number of anecdotes in the project locations, as well as in the evaluators' interactions with CSOs. This is an important impact, given the sense of resignation that prevailed among consumers as to their ability to influence electricity service delivery and improve service quality standards. The positive experiences of consumers in representing their demands before the appropriate redressing authorities has increased their confidence in themselves, and generates new hopes toward an improved and more equitable availability of electricity.
137. An interesting illustration of the project's impact was presented in field visit to Nepal. The price of electricity is fixed in Nepal by the ETFC that reviews and approves retail electricity tariff structures and the tariff system lacks transparency. The tariff has remained constant for the last eight years which is the reason why NEA, is suffering a per unit loss of 2.4 NPR/unit amounting to the cumulative losses of NPR 19.5 billion. Recently, NEA filed an application for tariff hike which got approval at the ETFC but the same was met with strong resistance by the consumers who as a result of the GIMs had become more aware of their rights and responsibilities. As a result of the furore, the tariff hike has been put on hold. This is not to defend the argument for a continued regime of losses, but to enable discussions into the actual causes of the loss, whether due to actual cost increases, or due to inefficiencies, revenue loss and theft. The fact that consumers have begun questioning the basis of tariff hikes augurs for a more accountable electricity sector.
138. The evaluation however **cautions against over activism on part of consumer organizations**, and considers it important **to be factually aware of the rationale** and the background of tariff setting, and not merely present an antagonist position on any tariff raises. In Bangladesh, the entire basis of tariff setting is erroneous, as the notional cost of the generation assets (acquired free at independence) have not been valued, which results in an artificially low base tariff. Therefore, it is also important for all stakeholders to understand the fact that the entire gas based power sector in Bangladesh has benefited from a major capital subsidy, which will not be the case for future expansions. On the other hand, an aspect that should concern consumers and development research bodies in Bangladesh is the inverse- tariff model, where in the domestic user and smaller consumer pays more than the larger user, which is not the case in any market, given that electricity is a fundamental need for all people.
139. Electricity is a politically sensitive subject in the region. Political interests manifest in the allocation of subsidies for specific sectors (irrigation agriculture in some states of India); free power to some areas; lack of action on distribution companies for revenue leakage and losses; and leniency toward enforcement against power thefts; and prioritization in resource allocation for electricity supply. The project discovered a number of stumbling blocks where a solution to some problems could only come about through political

influence and resolve, something which the lay consumer is ill-equipped to deal with. Also, the presence and extent of political influence and interference over the functioning of regulators and judiciary (electricity courts) can skew the entire sector to favour some sections to the disadvantage of others. Projects like RESA have limited potential to affect or impact these political realities, and can only contribute to a groundswell in form of a strong, reasoned and unified consumer voice.

4.6 Sustainability

140. Sustainability of initiatives like RESA need to be assessed at two levels: I) the ability of the project's beneficiaries and consumers in general to use the knowledge and experience gained from the project and put them into practice while engaging with electricity regulators and service providers; and ii) the ability of project partners to use the various training tools and disseminate the knowledge and capacities acquired to other CSOs. While the first calls for only commitment and initiative, the second demands continued financial support as the capacity development process is interaction intensive and involves field costs.
141. The evaluators consider that the CSOs and their beneficiary consumers directly exposed to the project should now have the necessary basic knowledge and awareness of the consumer facing aspects of electricity distribution, and the structure and mechanism for grievance redressal, at the local level. As consumer organizations, the project participants can now deal with distribution companies, government departments and independent regulators with greater confidence than before, and the project has enabled live opportunities for such engagement. Thus, RESA beneficiaries should be able to exert consumer pressure in their localities through a rights-based approach in all future situations, without further support from the project. Whether they shall do so or not depends considerably on external factors, particularly the extent of opacity in the distribution of electricity and the presence of a nexus between distribution companies and some end users. The project has already experienced that despite an improved knowledge to identify the causes, power theft, a key issue in the equitable access to electricity, cannot be adequately solved by the CSOs without persistent legal intervention, which can entail huge risks for the individual, given that theft is often a result of collusions among the most influential members of society.
142. The practical knowledge gained on energy conservation measures such as the substitution of incandescent lighting with CFL, can be easily applied and even further disseminated without much further support. A number of government-led programmes already exist in the project locations in these respects. However, large scale conservation measures may also require some capital support, for instance in the installation of renewable energy devices in rural areas, to mitigate the inadequacy of conventional energy.
143. The CSOs participating in the project also have opportunities, based on their direct exposure to RESA, to engage in other donor-assisted programmes in the sector, and also to participate in any policy level debates on sector reforms (the evaluators consider the CSOs' technical knowledge of issues as inadequate, but some RG members are experts and leading authorities in the sector) based on their own interest. The RGs, created as a structure under RESA will not continue after the project. However, members of these groups can continue to interact in the absence of such a structure, and such opportunities will exist in all the locations.

144. Meanwhile, CUTS and its partners should build on the results of the project by developing further projects, ideally broad basing their alliances with other donors and stakeholders, to strengthen their technical expertise in the energy sector, which is an important factor in the overall economic development of the entire region as a whole. In this regard, CUTS CRC already considers Energy as a key theme for the Centre and has already been involved by the state government in a few projects. It is worthwhile noting that RESA itself built on the experience gained under the FES project in Rajasthan. All such endeavours by project partners would assist in sustaining the results attained under RESA.

5 Lessons, Recommendations & Next Steps

5.1 Lessons learned

145. The most important lesson in the project is that from a consumer's perspective, electricity reforms must address basic issues of access, affordability and service quality standards, which face the consumer at the grass roots level. Therefore, consumer awareness and empowerment to seek a rights-based reforms agenda are likely to find popular appeal. The high enthusiasm shown by consumers for RESA is on account of its ready appeal, as it addresses these basic issues. However, not all solutions can be obtained from a consumer perspective. Therefore, **while the demand for action can emerge from a consumer rights approach, solutions need to emerge from a perspective of institutional reforms, which may be beyond the scope of consumer organizations** as such. However, consumer awareness of the best in class practices can lead to more informed discussions on systemic reforms as well.
146. Substantial improvements can result from the enforcement of customer service standards under existing regulations for electricity supply, provided the channels and processes to be used for such redress are available to consumers. Quite often, despite the availability of clearly laid out procedures, **the administrative machinery is absent or weak in state owned electricity companies, or remains unresponsive at the local level, unless there is supervision from above**. Increasing accountability of service providers can bring about major improvements in efficiencies in the sector. However, the boundaries of such improvements depend on the overall demand-supply imbalance and the system-wide issues in the sector.
147. **Engagement and buy in from government is critical for any intervention in the sector to make a lasting impact**. As a fundamental infrastructure service, electricity commands substantial planned resources and the overall national or regional policy toward universal and affordable access eventually determines the prioritization of resources for augmentation of capacities, the distribution of such generation capacities based on the energy gaps and the development state of various provinces/regions in the country. CSOs need to get into the larger debate of resource allocations in the energy sector, and the overall strategy of the country to meet and sustain its energy needs. Conservation, demand management and diversification of energy sources (renewable) are also emerging as important themes that call for greater attention on part of consumers. At the same time, government and other stakeholders need to create a non-adversarial approach in resolving issues, and discuss challenges based on factual evidence, given their common interests in a competitive and sustainable electricity sector that ensures equitable access and affordable electricity, leading to the higher level result: economic and human development. The judicious selection of RG members, particularly the induction of energy experts and former regulators is a good practice to ensure a greater level of buy in on part of government utilities in such initiatives; and at the least, credibility of the results attained and lessons learnt.
148. From a project implementation perspective, the **RESA experience suggests that project scope, focus and duration are an important combination and require the right balance**. The two-year duration of the project seems right, and enabled continuity of

engagement with the same stakeholders throughout the project. This has not been the case in other CUTS projects of longer duration, in which a number of important stakeholders had changed. Also, the scope of the project was well defined, and within the domain knowledge, core capabilities (as a consumer interest organization) and management bandwidth of CUTS, which enabled timely completion despite some internal challenges. Even if larger and more complex programmes are to be undertaken, it would make sense to parcel individual components into self-contained projects or sub programmes with well defined activities and end points, all feeding into the overall results. This project presents a useful illustration of the same, as a consumer-side intervention within the larger electricity reforms agenda.

149. Networking among local organizations has a more profound impact on the society: It is important for the CSOs in one territory to work together and form a 'united voice' on policy or addressing the issue. Collaboration enables CSOs to combine knowledge with resources, minimize costs, extend reach, learn from successes and failures which ultimately has a more profound impact on the results intended by them. Like in Nepal, the CSOs collaborated with the Tole Lane Organisations (TLOs)⁶ whose members had attended the GIMs, and had actively worked on spreading the awareness on power theft as a social crime and energy conservation. The impact was more profound given the level of trust between TLOs and their members which reduced power theft to minimal levels in areas covered by the TLOs.

5.2 Recommendations

150. Overall, the project has been implemented successfully and has delivered against a number of its objectives. However, the scale of the problem is much larger, and beyond the scope of a single phase of a project like RESA. Based on the consumer experiences from the project, there is a strong case for rolling out the initiative to cover a larger footprint, and also adapt future initiatives to focus on the larger, unaddressed issues such as universal access, institutional reforms and governance. In case a follow up phase of RESA is to be considered, it should have four dimensions:

(i) Strengthening dissemination at the grassroots

151. The *first dimension* should be focused on massive dissemination of the project's learning and information kits to a larger territory. This can be attained by:

- *Inventorying and standardizing the knowledge gained in the project* (i.e. TTMs, handouts, survey reports etc)
- *Rolling-out information to CSOs and networks in other districts:* The dissemination can be done by adopting cost effective methodologies and organizing more activities at the grassroots such as GIMs, popular arts - plays, skits, or competitions which could be used as the means of generating public interest.

⁶ TLOs operate at the grassroots level in Biratnagar Sub-Metropolitan City of Nepal. Such organisations were created to institutionalise the participation of local people in the Rural Urban Partnership Programme (RUPP) jointly implemented by the Government of Nepal, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and United Nations Centres for Human Settlements (UNCHS now UNHABITAT).

(ii) Advocacy on Institutional Reforms

152. The *second dimension* should center on advocacy on institutional reforms to bring about greater accountability for service quality standards. The project has revealed the limits of a purely consumer rights based intervention, in addressing the challenges in the region, given the overall state of the electricity sector. Merely putting in an effective grievance redressal mechanism can only result in expeditious restoration of short term problems, but the rectification of larger, system-wide issues calls for a multipronged approach, with the active involvement of CSOs. For instance, despite the will to regulate, the resource constraints may hinder sector regulators to implement the intent of policies and to ensure service quality standards. In Bangladesh, the BERC has only 80 employees against a requirement of over 150. In Nepal there is no formal grievance redressal mechanism in place, and its relevance is questioned in the absence of electrification in large parts of the country.
153. The next phase of the project should analyze supply side institutional issues such as utility service standards, generation related issues and should also disseminate the best practices in institutional reforms and provide opportunities for exchanges among utility companies in the region that would result in better service standards and increased overall transparency and accountability to electricity consumers.

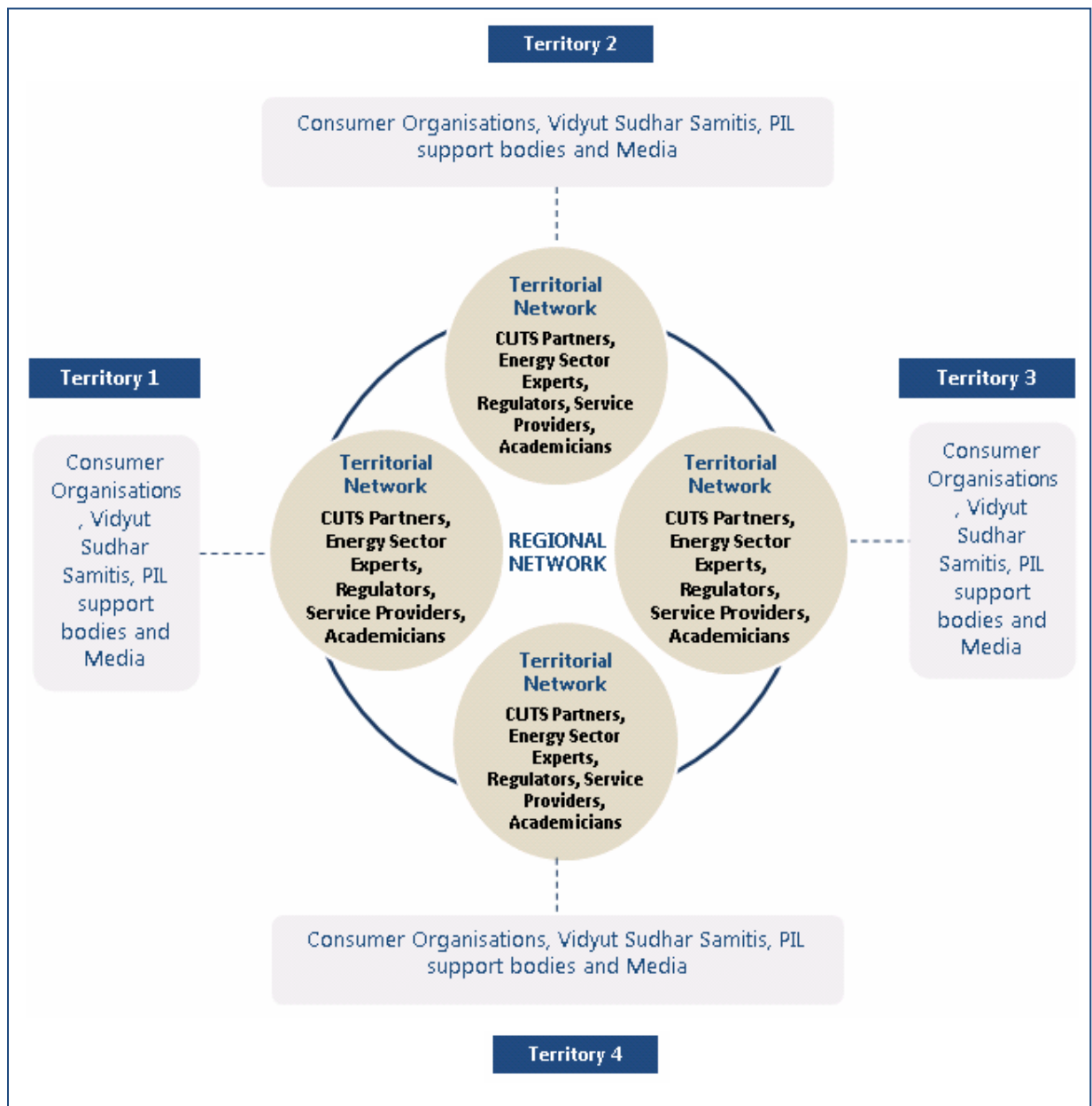
(iii) Awareness on energy conservation

154. Intervention in renewable energy needs to be viewed from the macroeconomic perspective as the results to this intervention can only be attained in the long run. The willingness however has been evidently showcased by project territories particularly Bangladesh, West Bengal and Nepal where projects aimed at mass distribution of CFL bulbs at a significantly lower price have been taken up amongst others. The alternate energy development, regarded as a priority sector by the government of Bangladesh, includes fiscal provisions like tax and financial incentives to which investors have reacted positively and investment in solar panels and solar home systems has been on an upswing. Given the high priority attached with energy saving programmes, induction of energy conservation and enhancement of individual awareness on energy saving should be done in the follow-on phase.

(iv) Regional Virtual Network on Electricity Reforms/ Regional Consumer Network Electricity Reforms

155. Formation of a regional virtual network on electricity is vital and makes immense sense for a follow-on project. The role envisaged for CUTS, project partners, experts is to become the territorial nodes of the network with the CSOs, local interest groups and media at *one level* and, with other territory partners and subject experts at the second level, all of which collectively form the *regional network*. Such an arrangement would facilitate a regional level mentoring and networking among regulators and service providers that would provide opportunities to consider system-wide reforms based on the positive experiences of other countries and interact and benefit from best practices.

Figure 2: Regional Virtual Network on Electricity Reforms



This would enable rolling out activities similar to the current phase of RESA in other territories, using the network's current membership and knowledge, which would make the next phases more cost-effective.

Also, the network enables lateral and vertical exchange of ideas and practices across territories and countries, and given that regional cooperation in energy is one of the major themes in SAARC, these networks can also find opportunities to interface with the official dialogue among SAARC countries in energy cooperation.

6 Annexures

Annex 1: List of CSOs involved in the RESA project

Territory	CSOs
Rajasthan	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Upbhokta Sanrankshan Samiti, Bikaner 2. Vagad Vikas Sansthan, Banswara 3. CHD, Chittorgarh 4. Samajik Vikas Sansthan, , Attarsuma, Post Dholpur 5. Arawali Sewa Samiti, Sirohi 6. Manav Parghti Sansthan, Churu 7. Saarthi Sansthan, Jhunjhunu 8. Maruti Sewa Samiti, Udaipur. 9. Consumer Legal Help Society, Sawaimadhopur 10. Oxford Shikshan Parshikshan Vikas Sansthan, Kota
West Bengal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Environment Governed Integrated Organisation Kolkata 2. Kharda Kreta Swartha Surakasha Samiti, 24 Parganas North 3. The Residents & Consumer Association, Hooghly 4. Birsingha Vidyasagar Society for Social Service, Medinipore 5. Agragati, Howrah 6. Sreema Mahila Samiti, Nadia 7. Palsa Pally Unnayan Samiti, Murshidabad 8. Purulia Agrogami Mahila O Sishu Mangal Samiti, Purulia 9. Chanchal Jana Kalyan Samiti, Malda 10. Islampur Ramkrishnapally Rural Welfare Society, Uttar Dinajpur
Nepal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forum for Protection of Consumer Interest, Kathmandu 2. Forum for Protection of Consumer Interest, Birgunj, Parsa 3. Forum for Protection of Consumer Interest, Butwal, Rupandehi 4. Forum for Protection of Consumer Interest, Biratnagar, Morang 5. Consumer Forum, Dharan, Sunsari 6. Consumer Forum, Lalitpur 7. Community Radio Madan Pokhara, Madan Pokhara, Palpa 8. Banke United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization 9. (UNESCO) Club, Nepalgunj, Banke 10. Forum for Community Sector Support Programme, Dailekh 11. Ilam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Ilam
Bangladesh	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SWC, Sirajgonj 2. Susamaj Foundation, Jassor 3. Desh, Khulna 4. Thikana Manob Kalyan Sangstha, Meherpur 5. United People's Trust, Comilla 6. Wait N C, Cox Bazar 7. Ujjibok, Khagrachari 8. Shepa, Rajshahi 9. Beel Chalan Unnayan Sangstha, Chapinawabgonj 10. Singijani Manab Unnayan Sangstha, Sundargonj, Gaibandha 11. People's Development Organization, Barisal 12. CAB Bhola, Bhola 13. AREED, Gazipur 14. Consumers Association of Bangladesh (CAB), Dhaka

Annex 2: People Met during the Evaluation

S.No	Name	Designation	Name of the Organisation
Calcutta			
1	Prithviraj Nath	Programme Officer	CUTS Calcutta Resource Centre (CUTS CRC)
2	Keya Ghosh	Centre Head	CUTS Calcutta Resource Centre (CUTS CRC)
3	Prititosh Ray	Member (Retd.),	West Bengal Electricity Regulatory Commission (WBERC)
4	Malay De	Power Secretary, Govt. of W. Bengal & Chairman and Managing Director	West Bengal State Electricity Distribution Company Ltd. (WBSEDCL)
5	Dilip Samajpati	Sr. Manager, Customer Relations	Calcutta Electric Supply Corporation (CESC) Limited
6	Jayanta Basu	Director, Faculty & Correspondent	EnGIO, Department of Environmental Science The Telegraph
7	Dipak Chakraborty	Secretary	Chanchal Jana Kalyan Samity
8	Goutam Mandal	Programme Director	Purulia Agrogami Mahila O Sishu Mangal Samiti
9	Pradip	Coordinator	Purulia Agrogami Mahila O Sishu Mangal Samiti
10	Khairul Anam Meerza	Secretary	Palsa Pally Unnayan Samity
11	Zamal Hussain Dewan	Member	Palsa Pally Unnayan Samity
Bangladesh			
12.	Md. Ali Hazari	Founder & CEO	United People's Trust (UPT)
13	Shaheen Ul Alam	Project Coordinator	Unnayam Shamannay
14	Md. Waliul Islam	Project Coordinator	Unnayam Shamannay
15	Uday Chatterjee	Project Coordinator	Consumer Association of Bangladesh (CAB)
16	A.K. Enamul Haque	Professor of Economics	United International University (UIU)
17	Quazi Faruque	President	Consumer Association of Bangladesh (CAB)
18	Salahud Din Ahmed	Member, Technical	BERC
19	Professor Shamsul Alam	Professor	Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology (CUET)
20	Chinmoy Mutsuddi	Consultant	Unnayam Shamannay
21	Dr. Mahfuz Kabir	Consultant	Bangladesh institute of International and Strategic Studies (BISS)
22	Mollah Amzad Hossain	Editor	Energy & Power
Rajasthan			
23	Deepak Saxena	Programme Officer	CUTS International CUTS Center for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CART)
24	Rajesh Kumar	Assistant Policy Analyst	CUTS International Center for Competition, investment &

S.No	Name	Designation	Name of the Organisation
			Economic Regulation (CUTS C-CIER)
25	Udai S Mehta	Policy Analyst	CUTS International Center for Competition, investment & Economic Regulation (CUTS C-CIER)
26	Amarjeet singh	Asst. Project Co-ordinator	CUTS International CUTS Center for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CART)
27	Shanti Parsad	Ex- Chairman/RERC, Ex-Member/ RSEB & RERC Consultant on Technical & Regulatory Matters	
28	R.G. Gupta	Ex- Chairman & Managing Director	Jaipur Vidyut Vitran Nigam Ltd.
29	K.L. Vyas	Ex-Member (tech.)	Rajasthan Electricity Regulatory Commission
30	Rakesh Kumar Pramar	VPO	Samajik Vikas Samiti
31	Hari Parsad Yogi	Secretary	Consumer Legal Help Society
32	Madan Giri		CUTS CHD
Nepal			
33	Dilli Ghimire	Chairman	National Association of Community Electricity Users' Nepal (NACEUN)
34	Rama Kant Gauro	Project Manager	Bhairabkhunda Hydropower Pvt. Ltd. (BKHP)
35	L.R. Tamang	Director (Engineering & Development)	Hyonjan Electrical Engineering Fabricator (Pvt.)Ltd.
36	Sher Singh Bhat	Director	Nepal Electricity Authority System Operation Department
37	Pradeep Chapagain	President-FNJ NTV Chapter News editor	Nepal Television
38	Bikas Thapa	Sr. Reporter	Kantipur Publications (P.) Ltd.
39	Dhurbesh C. Regmi	Programme Director	SAWTEE
40	Ranjan Krishna Aryal	Joint Secretary	Ministry of Tourism & Civil Aviation and Former Member, Law Reform Commission of Nepal
41	Netra Prasad Dhital	Campus Chief Associate Professor	Tribhuvan University Mahendra Ratna Campus
42	Ramesh Chandra Paudel	Coordinator	Madan Bhandari Technological University Promotional Committee
43	Ramchandra Simkhada	Advocate	RS Law Firm & Corporate Consultant
44	Jagannath Mishra	Advocate	High Touch Legal Consultant
45	Roshani Swestha	Member	Forum for Consumer protection Right, Khatmandu
46	Jagannath Mishra	Secretary	Forum for Consumer protection Right, Khatmandu

S.No	Name	Designation	Name of the Organisation
47	Dr. Gopal Dahal	Member	Forum for Consumer protection Right Center office Nepal
48	Dhananjaya Khanal	Member	Forum for Consumer protection Right Center office Nepal
49	Ramachandra Simkhadak	Secretary	Forum for Consumer protection Right Center office Nepal
50	Nohra Prasad Dhitel		
51	Gaj Bhadur Airi		

Annex 3: Members of the Project Advisory Committee (PAC), RESA

S.No.	Member	Institution
1.	A K Basu	Former Chairman, CERC, New Delhi, India
2.	Allan Asher	Ombudsman, Commonwealth Ombudsman, Australia
3.	Anish Dey	Chief Executive Officer, MERCADOS EMI ASIA, Gurgaon (Haryana), India
4.	Bhavana Bhatia	Energy Economist, The World Bank, New Delhi, India
5.	Dag Larsson	Senior PSD- Advisor, PSD dept., Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, Oslo, Norway
6.	Dr. Surinder Kumar	Professor of Economics, Maharshi Dayanand University Rohtak (Haryana), India
7.	H.D. Charan	Vill. & Post Mathania Jodhpur (Raj.), India
8.	J.L. Bajaj	Distinguished Fellow, The Energy and Resource institute (TERI) New Delhi, India
9.	P. N. Bhandari	Paras Kuhad & Associates Jaipur (Raj.), India
10.	Payal Malik	Consultant, Center for Infrastructure and Regulation National Council for Applied Economic Research (NCAER), New Delhi, India
11.	Pradeep S. Mehta	Secretary General, CUTS International Jaipur (Raj.), India
12.	Ramanathan K	Distinguished Fellow, The Energy and Resource institute (TERI) New Delhi, India
13.	Ranjan Lacoul	Director General, Department of Electricity Development Kathmandu, Nepal
14.	Rajendra Kishore Chhetri	Legal Expert, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, Nepal
15.	Rajeev Koul	Senior Advisor-Innovation Norway, Royal Norwegian Embassy, India
16.	S L Rao	Chairman, ISEC, India
17.	Steve Thomas	Senior Research Fellow-PSIRU, The University of Greenwich, UK