

CUTS Project Brief

Insight into Indian States

Background and Rationale

Various studies increasingly point to the fact that some Indian States are able to achieve better public policy outcomes manifested through better concomitant quality of economic growth and governance while others continue to languish.

The Twelfth Five Year Plan expresses concerns about public expenditure outcomes. Therefore, it recommends an urgent need for reforming the implementation processes, on the one hand, and provides additional provisions for encouraging innovation, good practices and *creating inter-state synergies* to improve quality of outcomes, on the other.

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However there is no platform, where the States can engage and learn from each other on issues of common interest. Documenting successful and not so successful practices across States in India has been undertaken sporadically.

About the project and its objectives

The 'Insight into Indian States' (IIS) is a new initiative of CUTS International in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), New Delhi. The main feature of the two-year project is a coherent, user friendly, sustainable and interactive web portal, which would depict successful and not so successful practices on governance in the selected four States (Assam, Odisha, Rajasthan and Karnataka) of India

over two years (24 months) starting from October 01, 2013 and ending on September 30, 2015.

The aim of the portal is to present an *independent and dispassionate* view of policies and practices which can help other States to imbibe and improve their own policies and practices. The portal will be innovative and different from other such portals, mostly operated by government agencies, because of the very nature of the portal which will be operated by a non-governmental organisation on a dynamic basis.

The portal's first phase will mainly focus on the important challenges faced by the country in relation to the good governance practices in initiatives relating to people's livelihoods issues, which directly impact or are related to the areas for which State governments are responsible.

In the first instance, the coverage will mainly be in the areas of rural development initiatives with particular focus on employment generation in rural non-farm economy. The proposed portal will be centralised having state-specific platforms with the State-related details.

The project will document the information, collected by primary as well as secondary means, from the selected States on a dynamic basis. The learning will be facilitated by exchanges, dialogues, webinars, visits etc. The project beneficiaries will include policymakers, legislators, media persons, academicians, researchers, civil society organisations (CSOs), inter-governmental organisations, states not covered in the first phase, foreign governments etc.

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Specific Activities

National Level

In addition to setting up of a centralised web portal, other activities of the project will broadly include action research around the selected

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programmes and schemes of Rural Non-Farm Livelihoods coming under Rural Development Department, dissemination of research, good and not so successful practices and networking of key stakeholders across the states, and the country.

State Level

Each of the selected States will have a CSO partner, who will be directly responsible for all the project activities taking place at the state and ensuring the intended outputs and outcomes. Most of the action research, dissemination and networking will take place in States facilitated by the national project team. In addition, 'State Performance Score Cards' will be prepared keeping in mind the programmes of non-farm livelihood and employment implemented by the Rural Development Department of each of the target states.

Expected Outcomes

- Increased adoption of the good practices by States
- Enhanced public availability of good and not so good practices and its processes
- Increased civic review of successful and unsuccessful practices

- Increased demand for innovating good practices for adoption and replication
- Strengthened network of practitioners

Results Based Management Framework

Results-based management (RBM) is a strategic management approach. It is used to plan, cost, implement, monitor and measure changes, rather than just inputs provided or activities conducted. RBM ensures that all the inputs contribute to a logical chain of results, as the intervention progress in the chain: outputs, outcomes and impacts.

RBM depends on critical assumptions about the programme environment and risk assessments, clearly defined accountabilities and indicators for results, and performance monitoring and reporting.

I3S will follow a RBM framework, which includes some areas of results at the levels of inputs, outputs, outcome and impact at the level of project implementing organisation, CUTS, and state partner organisations. The RBM

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The hypothesis is that the effectiveness of the project depends on the scientifically, independently and dispassionately selected and documented 'Successful and Not So Successful Practices' from the selected programmes and departments of each of States.



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