

CUTS HRC Activity Report

January-March 2015

ONGOING PROJECTS

SESA Programme

Trade Promotion through Standardisation



The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) has been supporting a two-year programme (January 2013-December 2014) implemented by the Swedish Standards Institute (SIS) to build institutional capacity within the Southeast and South Asia (SESA), regions on Standard Setting and Standard Implementation. CUTS HRC is the programme's partner organisation for the Southeast Asia region. The Programme was extended by SIDA and SIS all through April 2016.

During the reporting period, the reports based on desk research on the stakeholder engagement in Vietnam and Cambodia were finalised. CUTS HRC's activities in 2015 outlined both CUTS' workplan and National workplan approved by SIS. Regarding the quarterly newsletters, the 8th issue of the newsletter on Standards and Quality is being prepared and would be submitted to SIS soon. In addition, CUTS HRC participated in a number of training sessions and meetings organised under the framework of the programme.

Competition Distortions in Vietnam



A research project supported by the Friedrich-Naumann-Foundation for Freedom (FNF-Vietnam office). FNF and CUTS HRC signed a cooperation agreement in which FNF agrees to fund the project activities for the following three years from January 01, 2015 to December 30, 2017. Accordingly, a subsidy agreement was signed between two sides for the implementation of the project during the period January 01, 2015 to November 30, 2015. The first Dossier of 2015 was prepared by CUTS HRC and submitted to the FNF.

Boosting Food Safety in Vietnam



CUTS HRC, in partnership with Vietnam Standards and Consumers Association (VINASTAS) are implementing the Project entitled 'Promoting Food Safety in Vietnam: A Case Study on the Presence of Pesticides, Chemicals and Harmful Bacteria in Vegetables and Fruits', supported by Consumers International (CI). The project period is March 2014-March 2015.

Furthermore, specific activities under the project include (i) A study on the presence of pesticides, chemicals and harmful bacteria in vegetables and fruits (ii) A survey on the consumption habit of fruits and vegetables of Vietnamese consumers (iii) Preparation of a final report of the state of food safety in Vietnam and (iii) Organising a national conference to disseminate the findings.

All project activities were successfully conducted and the final report in English was prepared and sent to CI by end of March 2015.

Case Study on the Vietnam Telecom Sector

As part of the centre's 'Support to Enhance Development of Trade in Services Negotiations' project, CUTS Resource Centre Geneva (CUTS GRC) signed a Memorandum of Agreement with CUTS HRC for undertaking a case study on 'Vietnam Telecom Sector: Best/Good Practices in Regulatory Reform as they relate to competition policy and law issues'. The specific objective of this case study is to outline the steps involved and how to undertake regulatory reforms as they relate to competition policy and law to increase trade in services benefits competitiveness. The total budget for the activity is of US\$5,000.



During the reporting period, CUTS HRC completed the first draft of the study and the second draft is being prepared, which is to be submitted to CUTS GRC in early April 2015.

REPRESENTATIONS

- Alice Pham took part in an international meeting to discuss comments of member countries on the Draft International Standard (DIS) ISO 13065 'Sustainability criteria for bioenergy' in Berlin, Germany, together with a pre-seminar (supported by the SESA Programme, 1.2) from January 16-18, 2015. The final voting on the DIS would take place later in 2015 and the publication is expected by September 2015.
- On February 09-February 13, 2015, To Tam and Huan Duyen took part in the training workshop on 'Gender Awareness in Standardisation' under SESA programme was organised in Bangkok, Thailand.
- On March 12, 2015, CUTS HRC, together with the Vietnam Standards and Consumer Associations (VINASTAS) and the Institute for Studies of Society, Economics and Environment (iSEE) organised a workshop on consumer protection issues in Vietnam in Hanoi, Vietnam. In the workshop, Alice Pham gave a presentation on international experiences regarding consumer protection.
- On March 19, 2015, a workshop on 'Partnering to enhance competitiveness: Engaging the business community in regulatory reforms' was organised in Hanoi, Vietnam by the Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VCCI). Huan Duyen participated in the workshop.
- On March 23-March 24, 2015, an extra Steering Committee meeting within the framework of the SESA programme was organised in Bangkok, Thailand. To Tam took part in the meeting.
- On March 26, 2015, a workshop on 'Strengthening Capacity of Law on Consumer Protection Enforcement Institutions in Vietnam and Germany's Experience' was organised in Hanoi, Vietnam by Hanoi Law University (HLU) and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES). Huan Duyen took part in the workshop.
- On March 27-31 March, 2015, Alice Pham paid an official visit to India and took part in a training workshop and national advocacy seminar on 'Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA)' organised by CUTS.