

ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT

**CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment
(CUTS CITEE)**

5 August 2006
Jerker Söderlund, SPM Consultants
www.spmconsult.se

CONTENTS

Executive Summary	1
Acronyms	2
1 Introduction	3
<i>1.1 Background and Purpose</i>	3
<i>1.2 CUTS International</i>	3
<i>1.3 CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment (CUTS CITEE)</i>	5
2 Methodology	8
<i>2.1 Data Collection/Sources</i>	9
<i>2.2 Limitations</i>	9
3 Organizational Motivation Issues Affecting CUTS CITEE Performance	10
<i>3.1 History</i>	10
<i>3.2 Mission</i>	10
4 Organizational Capacity Issues Affecting CUTS CITEE's Performance	11
<i>4.1 Strategic Planning</i>	11
<i>4.2 Human Resources</i>	11
<i>4.3 Finance</i>	13
<i>4.4 Project Management</i>	13
<i>4.5 Inter-organizational Linkages</i>	14
5 CUTS CITEE's Performance	16
<i>5.1 Relevance</i>	16
<i>5.2 Effectiveness</i>	17
<i>5.3 Efficiency</i>	17
<i>5.4 Financial Viability</i>	18
6 Conclusions & Recommendations	19
<i>6.1 Recommendations</i>	19
Appendix A Terms of Reference	20
Appendix B Stakeholder Survey	21
Appendix C Staff Survey	28

Executive Summary

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) is considering expanding its cooperation with the India-based organization “CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment” (CITEE), a Centre of the organization “Consumer Unity & Trust Society International” (CUTS International). The purpose of this study is to assess the CUTS CITEE’s capacity and performance related to its role as implementing Sida financed development projects within the area of international trade.

The assessment focuses on the organizational performance in terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and financial viability. Also the explanatory dimensions to performance such as history, mission, strategic planning, human resources, financial management, project management and inter-organizational linkages are revised. The methodology includes interviews with staff and management, a stakeholder survey, a staff survey and a review of CUTS CITEE documentation.

Conclusively it is found that the capacity of CUTS CITEE to handle Sida financed project is satisfactory. The organizational performance in terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and the financial viability are, from a general perspective, all found satisfactory. Also the dimensions of mission, history, human resources, financial management and inter-organizational linkages are found to be satisfactory. Some weaknesses were found in relation to strategic planning and project management, but the capacity gaps in these areas are being addressed.

Given that CITEE can show progress in relation to the project management issues (see below), Sida is on the basis of the assessment recommended to consider continuing using CUTS CITEE as a project-implementing agency.¹ The capacity is high in the trade related area and its strengths of being a South organization with a high credibility, high professional capacity and a wide network should be especially recognized.

CUTS CITEE is recommended to continue the development of project management, with a special focus on the planning process, the definition and monitoring of results and the reporting. Also CUTS CITEE is recommended to continue its work on developing the internal planning tools. Of importance is to find the balance between short-term and long-term instruments, but also to include the resource planning.

If CUTS and CUTS CITEE in the future aim to receive more flexible and untied modalities of support, such as core support or a more flexible short term project fund, it is recommended that the centres are transformed into profit centres and that CUTS CITEE defines what would be included in such core programme/project fund, how it would be administered and how results would be defined, monitored and reported upon. Sida is recommended to regard its cooperation with CUTS CITEE as a long-term commitment. However, Sida is presently recommended to not consider untied core support until CUTS CITEE has shown progress on project management issues, for example via two or more successful Sida financed project implementations.

¹ This recommendation only relates to CUTS CITEE as an implementing agency. The financing of any project proposal must be appraised on its specific merits.

Acronyms

CUTS CART	CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training
CUTS CHD	CUTS Centre for Human Development
CUTS C-CIER	CUTS Centre for Competition, Investment & Economic Regulation
CUTS CITEE	CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
CUTS	Consumer Unity & Trust Society
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
FES	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GOI	Government of India
INR	Indian Rupees; Exchange rates May 2006: US\$1=INR44; SEK1=INR5.90
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
Sida	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

1 Introduction

1.1 Background and Purpose

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) is considering expanding its cooperation with the India based organization “CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment” (CUTS CITEE), a Centre of the organization “Consumer Unity & Trust Society International” (CUTS International).

The purpose of this study is to assess the CUTS CITEE’s capacity and performance related to its role as implementing Sida financed development projects within the area of international trade. The terms of reference are enclosed in Appendix A.²

The study was carried out during May 2006 by Jerker Söderlund, SPM Consultants, and this report contains the central findings of the assessment. The report is organized in the following way; in this section the organization and some of its history is described. In section two the methodology is presented. In section three the organizational motivation issues related to performance are assessed. In the following section, four, the organizational capacity issues related to performance are reviewed. In section five, the organizational performance in terms of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and financial viability are assessed. Finally in section six, some conclusion and recommendations to Sida and CUTS CITEE are presented.

The author would like to express his appreciation to all the CUTS CITEE staff in Jaipur, India and the CITEE stakeholders that shared their valuable knowledge and time.

1.2 CUTS International

CUTS is a membership organization that has some 1200 individual members and 300 organizational members. It is a rights advocacy group that was started by a group of concerned citizens led by Pradeep S. Mehta in 1983, from the beginning working under very simple conditions from a garage in Jaipur, India. Some of the earliest instruments included a rural development communication initiative in the form of a wall-newspaper on consumer justice issues, ‘Gram Gadar’, which is still distributed to Rajasthan’s rural areas. The early focus of CUTS was on advocating for consumer rights, but since the early 90’s the scope was extended to also include international trade, economics and development issues.

CUTS has grown considerably over its 20 years of existence and now encompasses four programme centres in India and five resource centres; at Delhi and Calcutta, India; Lusaka, Zambia; Nairobi, Kenya; and London, UK. The overall mission is: “*Consumer sovereignty in the framework of social justice and equality, within and across borders*”. In total its permanent staff now are more than 100 persons. The different centres are briefly described below.

1.2.1 CUTS International

CUTS International is the head quarter based in Jaipur. Its organisational structure comprises a ‘General Body’ that meets once a year and receives the annual report and audited accounts. A 13-member ‘Executive Committee’ meets at least twice a year, takes policy decisions and approves budgets, etc.

² In parallel to this study was also carried out a follow up of the prior Sida financed project “Linkages between Trade and Environment”, which was implemented by CITEE 2002-2005. The results of the follow up are presented in a separate report.

The Secretary General is appointed by the Executive Committee as the chief executive officer of the organisation, receives instructions from the board, implements all programmes and oversees the administration. The Finance and Administration Department, including the Human Resource Development unit, the Finance unit, the Library and the IT is headed by a director and the staff are around 15, of which two work with HRD issues and four with finance. The premises, which include the library, are shared with CITEE. Each Centre of CUTS is guided by an eminent 'Advisory Committee.'

1.2.2 CUTS Centre for Consumer Action, Research & Training (CUTS CART)

This Centre is based in Jaipur and its programmes are primarily aimed at generating awareness, creating a more responsible society and encouraging the policy level. The Centre spearheads campaigns and pioneers consumer empowerment. The mission is: *"To enable people, particularly women, to achieve their rights to basic needs and sustainable development, through a strong consumer movement"*.

The project portfolio includes "Consumer actions in Rajasthan", "Involvement of consumers in Power sector reforms" and "Road safety". Among the funders are the Government of India (GOI) and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES).

1.2.3 CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment (CUTS CITEE)

This is the organizational unit that is the focus of this assessment. The Centre is presented more in detail under section 1.3 below.

1.2.4 CUTS Centre for Competition, Investment & Economic Regulation (CUTS C-CIER)

These issues used to belong to CITEE, but in 2003 a separate Centre was established based in Jaipur. The mission of C-CIER is *"Promoting fair markets to enhance consumer welfare and economic development"*. The Centre's work is based on research, networking and advocacy and most of the activities are project financed. One major programme model is the '7UP', which in different projects have been examining the competition regimes in different developing countries. The third project in Africa is supported by DFID (UK) and Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation.

1.2.5 CUTS Centre for Human Development (CUTS CHD)

This Centre was established in 1991 and is based Chittorgarh, Rajasthan. The aim is to work towards the improvement of the living standards of the people, especially women, and the weaker sections of the society. Its mission is: *"To be an innovative centre for strategic interventions to raise the living standards of people"*.

Among the projects are noted "Violence against women", "Rural girls empowerment" and "Land and water management leading towards biodiversity conservation". The centre also produces the monthly wall newspaper 'Gram Gadar' (Village revolution). Some of the project funders are Save the Children (UK) and UNDP.

1.2.6 The Resource Centres

The five resource centres are working on a wide range of CUTS related issues including disseminating the results from the other centres. They also typically have their own projects. The African centres in Zambia and Kenya were especially established to promote South-South civil society cooperation and are two of relatively few such examples. The London resource centre was launched in 2003 and is one of few Southern Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) in the UK.

Among its aims is to bridge the gap between the developed and developing countries and to promote a Southern society perspective on international policy-making. CUTS has a national advocacy office in New Delhi. In addition CUTS is planning to open a resource centre in Hanoi, Vietnam, to promote the cooperation with South-East Asia.

1.3 CUTS Centre for International Trade, Economics & Environment (CUTS CITEE)

CUTS CITEE was established in 1996 as a result of CUTS' gained experience in trade related issues from work done in relation to the Uruguay Round negotiations of the GATT and in 1997 CUTS CITEE moved to Jaipur from Calcutta. The Centre has the mission of: "*Pursuing economic equity and social justice within and across borders by persuading governments and empowering people*".

CUTS CITEE is implementing a Strategic plan, covering the period of 2006-2010 and is elaborating a more detailed business plan to cover the period July 2006-June 2008. (See also 4.1 below).

The main vehicle to achieve the mission is externally financed projects relevant to the Centre's mission. Typically all projects include the dimensions of advocacy, research and networking, which are the working method of the Centre. The projects are complemented with some internally financed activities, such as the newsletter *Economiquity*.

At present CUTS CITEE has 16 staff working on three programme areas:

- WTO Issues
- Regional economic cooperation
- Development issues: Trade, Environment and Pro-Poor Growth

Each programme area has a manager and a number of assigned staff that can perform work in more than one area. Half of the employed are men and half are women. CUTS CITEE has grown over the last years, but it is not in the immediate plans to increase the staff further.

The project portfolio at May 2006 is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: CUTS CITEE Project Portfolio at May 2006

Project Name	Donor/Funder	Agreement/Period	Project Budget
Linkages between Trade, Development and Poverty Reduction	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Netherlands and DFID, UK	January 2005 48 months	2,958,000 USD (i.e. 564,150 GBP +1,500,000 Euro)
Grassroots Reachout & Networking in India on Trade & Economics (GRANITE)	Royal Norwegian Embassy in New Delhi, India and Oxfam Novib, The Netherlands	January 2005 24 months	313,400 USD (i.e. 14,333,000 INR)
WTO Doha Round & South Asia (SAFIT), Phase 2	Oxfam Novib, The Netherlands	April 2006 36 months	412,900 USD (i.e. 325,000 Euro)
Exploring Regional Economic Cooperation in South Asia	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung	May 2005 12 months	(FES makes direct payment to the supplier/final recipient)

Project Name	Donor/Funder	Agreement/Period	Project Budget
South-South Economic Cooperation: Exploring Mekong-Ganga Relationship	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	January 2005 24 months	163,711 USD (i.e. 200,000 CHF)
South-South Economic Cooperation: Exploring IBSA (India-Brazil-South Africa) Relationship	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation	January 2005 21 months	163,711 USD (i.e. 200,000 CHF)
Improving Institutions for Pro- Poor growth	DFID (through London School of Economics)	September 2005 60 months	552,600 USD
Strategic Review of WTO- Provided Trade-Related Technical Assistance Activities	The WTO Secretariat	Jan 2006 6 months	240,900 USD (i.e. 294,300 CHF)
Needs Assessment for Trade Facilitation in South Asia	UNDP, Colombo	April 2006 3 months	25,970 USD

As can be noted from Table 1, seven donors are at present financing projects implemented by CUTS CITEE, mainly within the trade area.

As can be noted from Tables 2 and 3 below, CUTS CITEE has grown substantially between 04/05 and 05/06. This is explained by an increasing number of projects implemented by CUTS CITEE. The figures of CUTS International above include the income and expenditure for CITEE, and other Centres in India. The figures of CUTS CITEE also include some costs related to other centres such as support staff, premises and head quarter, since the split is difficult to make. There are no figures for global CUTS International. The centres in Lusaka, Nairobi and London prepare their own balance sheets as required in their countries and these are not merged.

Table 2: Income & Expenditure of CUTS CITEE & CUTS International Financial Year 2004/05 (INR)

Particulars	CUTS CITEE	CUTS International (including CUTS CITEE)
Income	36,390,000	57,716,000
Personnel	5,264,000	9,250,000
Research costs	10,904,000	14,659,000
Advocacy & Networking costs	12,784,000	22,640,000
Office expenses	5,678,000	7,233,000
Other	2,970,000	5,266,000
Total expenses	37,600,000	59,048,000
Balance	(1,210,000)	(1,333,000)

Table 3: Income & Expenditure of CUTS CITEE and CUTS International Financial Year 2005/06 (INR) (Preliminary Figures)

Particulars	CUTS CITEE	CUTS International (including CUTS CITEE)
Income	59,418,000	83,994,000
Personnel	9,677,000	14,592,000
Research costs	16,935,000	22,681,000
Advocacy & Networking costs	19,354,000	26,794,000
Office expenses	9,074,000	12,601,000
Other	5,444,000	7,338,000
Total expenses	60,484,000	84,006,000
Balance	(1,066,000)	(12,000)

The deficit that CUTS CITEE is running is explained by the fact that in a given financial year, it is often likely that the entire amount sanctioned is not received while activities are implemented and thus gets spilled over to the next year. The normal situation is rather that CITEE runs with a surplus. The deficit is financed partly from project funds received subsequently and also from interest from the corpus fund. The corpus fund as on March 31, 2005 is 2.7 million INR.

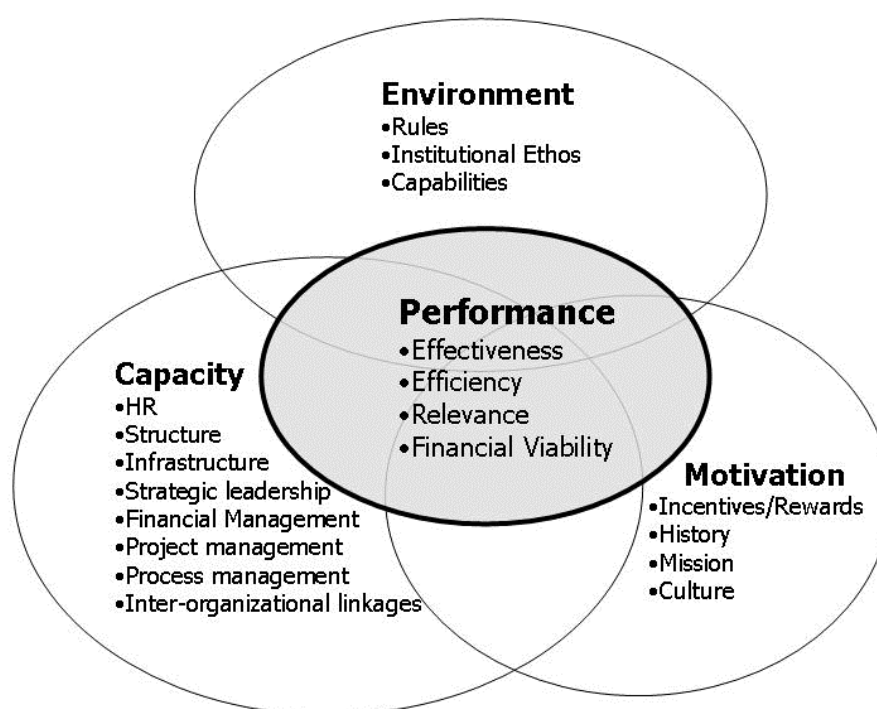
2 Methodology

Organizational assessments can be carried out in different ways. Important dimensions when designing the assessment are the purpose of the assessment, the size and type of organization/unit and what resources that is available for the assessment.

The approach used in this study is based on the methodology developed and presented in “Organizational Assessment – A Framework for Improving Performance”.³ This approach is also one of the corner stones of the Sida Manual for Capacity Development.⁴

The approach identifies the central dimension as the organizational performance, divided into relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and financial viability. The organizational performance is, in turn, seen as a result of three explanatory dimensions: the enabling environment, the organizational capacity and the organizational motivation. All these three explanatory dimensions have their set of sub-areas. An overview of the model is presented in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Organizational Performance as a Result of the Enabling Environment, Organizational Capacity and Organizational Motivation



When designing an organizational assessment, it is necessary to focus on the most relevant issues, given the central question to answer. In the case of CUTS CITEE the central question is: “Does the CUTS CITEE have the adequate capacity to implement Sida financed project within the area of international trade?”

³ “Organizational Assessment – A Framework for Improving Performance”, IDRC/IADB, Ottawa 2002

⁴ “Manual for Capacity Development”, Sida, 2005

To answer this question it was decided to focus on assessing the organizational performance (relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and financial viability) together with the explanatory sub-areas human resources, financial management, project management, inter-organizational linkages, mission and history. Since CUTS CITEE is developing its planning tools, it was also decided to include the issue of strategic planning, which is in the model is a sub-area of the broader dimension of strategic leadership. Given the resources available, this is estimated to give a relevant picture of the CUTS CITEE's capacity to handle and implement Sida financed projects. Some information on other sub-areas were also collected and analysed. In the report this is however not presented unless found relevant.

2.1 Data Collection/Sources

The assessment has used different data sources. Available documentation in the form of plans, audit report, annual reports, project documentation and various policy documents has been studied. Moreover, interviews have been held with CUTS CITEE and CUTS management as well as four of the CUTS CITEE staff and staff at the finance and HR units.

Furthermore a staff survey was conducted; the survey and the results are presented in Appendix C. Finally a stakeholder survey was carried out to cover the views of donors, networking partners and other stakeholders. The results of this survey are presented in Appendix B.

2.2 Limitations

It should be noted that limitations in time and resources have affected the depth and design of the assessment. This may imply that facts and areas have not been covered and that the reliability, in turn, may have been affected negatively.

Moreover, most involved parties have little to gain from presenting negative information, which may imply that the views and the assessment as a whole are too positive, and thus the validity and reliability limited. Measures have been taken to reduce these risks, for example via cross-checking information.

3 Organisational Motivation Issues Affecting CUTS-CITEE's Performance

The explanatory dimension of organizational motivation attempts to capture explanations to why some organizations perform better than others as a consequence of motivation. The motivation is divided into four sub-areas: history, mission, culture and incentives. Below the sub-areas of CITEE history and mission are discussed and analyzed.⁵

3.1 History

CUTS has without doubt an interesting history. It all started in a garage in Jaipur in 1983, where a voluntary group led by Pradeep S. Mehta decided to initiate work on consumer and human rights issues. Early work included a wall-newspaper (Gram Gadar) and rallies in Rajasthan. In the beginning all work was voluntary, until 1989 when the first full time employed persons joined. Until the early 90's the focus remained on consumer and human rights issues, but from 1991 an expansion and diversification phase commenced. This included covering new areas, such as trade issues.

The work on trade issues can be seen as a logical continuation of the work related to consumer issues. Experience was gained in relation to the Uruguay Round of the GATT. An early result of work on the WTO issues was the establishment of the South Asia Watch on Trade, Economics and Environment in 1994 (SAWTEE) as a partnership with FES and other NGOs. SAWTEE was subsequently moved to Nepal as an independent secretariat. In 1996 CUTS CITEE was established to further increase the focus on trade issues. From 2000 the centres in Africa, London, Delhi and CIER have been established.

The history is partly a history of a committed and successful entrepreneur, Mr. Pradeep Mehta. His values and commitment have and are influencing much of the organization. Nevertheless, the expansion has also brought the necessity to delegate powers and to build a sustainable structure. Since 1997, CUTS CITEE has its own executive director and the Centre is run independently from the rest of CUTS International when it comes to implementation. It is found that this transition is running well. It is also considered that the out of the ordinary history of CUTS is an important organizational strength that contributes to motivation and performance.

3.2 Mission

The official mission statement of CUTS CITEE is: *"Pursuing economic equity and social justice within and across borders by persuading governments and empowering people."*

The mission is found to be both highly relevant and consistent with the work of CITEE. The stakeholders also agree on that the mission of CUTS CITEE is important and relevant. To some extent "economic equity and social justice" need to be further defined, but it is nevertheless clear what dimensions they contain. Also the staff finds the mission statement relevant and important.

Another statement that is used in CUTS is "liberalization yes, but with safety nets". This statement also sends out a signal on what CUTS stands for. A further mantra is 'research, advocacy and networking', which is found in many documents and describes how CUTS CITEE works. These statements are also found relevant and important from a CUTS CITEE perspective and are well seen by the staff. All in all, it is found that CUTS CITEE has mission statements that are relevant for its work and are motivating for employees and stakeholders.

⁵ The other sub-areas – culture and incentives – were not studied explicitly, but from the material available there were no indications of problem areas related to these dimensions.

4 Organisational Capacity Issues Affecting CUTS-CITEE's Performance

4.1 Strategic Planning

Strategic planning refers to the pattern of calculated responses to the environment, including resource deployment, which enables an organization to achieve its goals. At present CUTS CITEE is using three main planning tools; one strategic plan 2006-2010, one business plan 2006-08 (under elaboration), and monthly progress reports and work planning.

The strategic plan is, as it should be, a high level plan defining capability (including mission), goals, purpose, functional areas, SLOT-analysis⁶, a logical framework analysis, risk analysis, HR development, future work programme and financial planning. A possible weakness with the strategic plan is that it is relatively complex with a high number of objectives to achieve and rather detailed when it comes to what and how to do things, issues that run the risk of becoming obsolete over time.

As a complement CUTS CITEE is now elaborating its first two-year business plan. The business plan will specify more in detail what to do and how to do it. It will also include milestones as measurements of how the objectives are fulfilled. Potential concerns are that there seems to be an overlap between the business plan and the strategic plan, and that some important areas – such as a detailed resource planning regarding staff and financial resources – so far not have been included. Also the gap between the two-year business plan and the monthly work plans might be found to be too wide, raising a need for a more mid-term planning tool such as annual or semi-annual plans.

The monthly progress reports and work plans are estimated to be appropriate tools for regular follow up, but also here more monitoring/planning of resources might be considered. The plans are elaborated jointly and the staff are involved to a high degree, which is essential for the plans to be accepted throughout the team.

To conclude, it is found that CUTS CITEE is using strategic planning tools and is developing the tools to suit the organization's needs. To link the fulfillment of objectives with the resources available, including long-term as well as short-term operational resource planning in the planning tools should be considered. Also the recent development of centre-specific performance indicators, beyond the project level, to capture general progress is positive and should be reinforced.

4.2 Human Resources

Human resource management involves the planning, implementation and monitoring of the CUTS CITEE personnel. The human resources of any organization are among its most valuable assets and given the scope of the organization this is especially true for CUTS CITEE.

The planning and recruitment of new staff is carried out by the HR unit within the CUTS International Finance and Administrative Department, together with the director of CUTS CITEE. The HR policies include a general HR policy, an equal employment opportunity policy and a safety policy. An appraisal performance is conducted annually with each employee to follow up performance on an individual level.

⁶ Strengths, Limitations, Opportunities and Threats

The CUTS CITEE team is a mix of young professionals and more experienced, and also a mix of national and international employees. Half of the employees are women. At times, CUTS CITEE experiences a relative high turn-over of staff.⁷ To some extent this is to be expected given the nature of the work and the composition of the team, including international young professionals and issues that have a global market. Nevertheless high turn-over rates imply a strain on the organization and the quality of the work, even if CITEE apparently has had little problems so far in recruiting new qualified staff.

The staff survey indicates satisfactory results in all four dimensions Belonging, Mastery, Generosity and Independence.⁸ Also the other areas surveyed concerning salary, individual capacity and career development show adequate results, even if there might be room for improvement on some areas, including internal gender issues and the acquiring of new skills. (See Appendix C)⁹

The interviews and the stakeholder survey confirm the picture of a professional staff well capable of performing high-qualified work within the area of international trade. Also the staff survey and the interviews indicate that CUTS CITEE is working well as a team. One stakeholder representative is of the opinion that the senior management not always gives sufficient room for the personnel to perform in accordance with their potential. Other respondents are mostly positive. The average score given by the stakeholders regarding the professionalism of the CUTS CITEE staff is 3.7 out of a maximum of 5. Below in table four some of the comments from the stakeholder survey are found.

Table 4: Selected Comments from Stakeholders regarding the Professional Capacity of CUTS CITEE Staff

The calibre of the professional staff naturally varies, but most are enthusiastic and competent.
CUTS CITEE professionals are capable, dedicated and take their work seriously.
Both in Jaipur and local CUTS CITEE organizations personnel is very qualified, both policy and financial/logistical staff
They have a stable core staff of committed and dedicated people.
Mid-level programmers and analysts have good potential but it is sometimes felt as if they are not encouraged (by management) to reach it (the potential).
Some is excellent, 5; some work by temporary staff members is poor. But they are very effective in using external referees to control the quality of what they publish.
Very dedicated and professional
They are in general quite professional - should be encouraged to continuously acquire updated level of know-how and skill

Conclusively, the staff survey, the stakeholder survey and the general impression all indicate that the HR issues are handled well by CUTS and CUTS CITEE and that CUTS CITEE has a capable, professional team that is appropriately composed to handle CUTS CITEE's work.

⁷ There was no available data on this at the time for the interviews, but data is being collected and this will be followed up more closely in the future.

⁸ This is a test developed by TomorrowToday. The four dimensions are all important areas for a team to perform well and high scores indicate that the working conditions are perceived well.

⁹ The Oxfam Novib, The Netherlands appraisal found CUTS CITEE to be a "gender aware" organization, scoring 4 out of 7 in Oxfam Novib's gender assessment. Further progress has to be made to become "gender responsive".

4.3 Finance

Management of an organization's financial resources is a critical capacity. Good management of budgeting, financial record keeping and reporting is essential to the overall functioning of the organization.

At CUTS, the finance for all Jaipur-based centres is managed by the Finance unit at the CUTS International. The staff are four plus the director. The financial year runs from 1st April to 31st March. A recent appraisal of CUTS financial management arrangements carried out by Oxfam Novib found the financial management satisfactory. Some of the findings of the appraisal are:¹⁰

- *Accounts: CUTS has an accounts manual; transactions are accounted on cash basis only, however (exception) depreciation on fixed assets is charged as expenditure and a depreciation fund has been created.*
- *Budgetary control: CUTS follows a monthly transfer cycle with its cost centres based upon their requests/budgets. A quarterly budgetary control meeting is held between "team members" and finance/admin.*
- *Internal Audit: CUTS gets its books of accounts audited by a firm of qualified chartered accountants. The internal audit reports are sent to the Finance unit on a quarterly basis for review and comments.*

In addition, a Statutory Audit is carried out annually by an external professional firm (Goyal Dinesh & Associates). The audit report for the year 2004/05 found the accounts "to give a true and fair view" of the balance sheet and the income and expenditure account.

In practice the budgeting and financial management of CUTS CITEE is carried out by the central Finance unit. From a financial management perspective CUTS CITEE is a cost centre. A draft annual central budget is approved, but the actual budget system is more of a rolling monthly budget system. CUTS CITEE itself does not perform any detailed financial planning, neither on centre level nor project level. CUTS CITEE does not get regular financial reports, instead CUTS CITEE is alerted if/when need arise. Requests for project disbursements are elaborated jointly, but the Finance unit keeps track of conditions set forth by project donors in agreements.

In conclusion, nothing is found that contradicts the Oxfam Novib, The Netherlands appraisal finding that the CUTS financial management arrangements as being satisfactory. Nevertheless from a planning and resource management perspective it could be positive if CUTS CITEE and the project leaders were more involved and informed about the financial status of the centre and the projects. If CUTS aims for receiving more of untied core donor support for specific centres, CUTS should consider developing the centres into profit centres, with a clear set of rules for how to share centre specific deficit/surplus. This is in the plans of CUTS, and would have to include also a better split of income and expenditure per centre.

4.4 Project Management

Projects imply different things for different organizations. For CUTS CITEE, donor funded projects are the main vehicles to achieve the CUTS CITEE's objectives and mission. Good project management includes careful planning, implementation and evaluation.

¹⁰ "Presentation of the Opportunity and Risk Appraisal", Appraisal in relation to the approval of the SAFIT II project, Oxfam Novib, The Netherlands, March 2006

CUTS CITEE has over the years worked with different project models, partly depending on what each donor has stipulated. In broad terms projects and project proposal have been elaborated by CUTS CITEE, sometimes in collaboration with networking partners and donors, and then presented to selected donors for their consideration and financing. Usually a project starts with the detection of a gap that is relevant in relation to the CUTS CITEE strategies. CUTS CITEE is aware of the risks of a too extensive diversification and at times turns down project ideas/proposals that are not in line with the CUTS CITEE mission and strategies. At the same time the difficulties of managing the donors result in a situation where it is difficult for CUTS CITEE to have an accurate long-term planning. The present project portfolio is found to be well in line with the CUTS CITEE strategies and mission.

Implementation is managed by CUTS CITEE and typically 2-3 CUTS CITEE employees work on the same project. Often CUTS CITEE projects include networking and coordinating external resources such as researchers and other organization's work. CUTS CITEE has elaborated an internal system of quality control regarding CUTS CITEE financed research papers and publications. This is believed to have been improved even further with the recent engagement of an Associate Professor in Economics from Rajasthan University.

The final monitoring, reporting and project evaluation have normally depended on the conditions put forward by the donor. Until now CUTS CITEE has not had any developed in-house system in place to monitor performance and final results of projects. Recently this has been recognised as an important area to reinforce, also because assessing project performance will also be assessing CUTS CITEE's performance. The follow up of the Sida financed project "Linkages between Trade and Environment" 2002-2005 demonstrated some critical weaknesses in the evaluation and reporting, which included a too brief and late reporting not covering final project results and an external project evaluation that did not have the appropriate scope.¹¹ These areas are now being addressed by management.

The stakeholder survey indicates that the donors in general find CUTS CITEE project management satisfactory, even if there are some concerns that CUTS CITEE are handling too many projects simultaneously. The survey scores related to project management and project results are well above 4 (out of 5) and some of the comments are found in the Table 5 below.

Table 5: Selected Comments from Stakeholders regarding the Project Management and the Project Results

CUTS CITEE has shown the ability to manage large projects effectively. In multi-country projects that involve local consultants and contractors, it has been able to resolve any problems that have arisen very well. It has kept within.
They are a gun for hire and undertook our project very well.
Very efficient in accounting; very responsive
The project is implemented more or less according to schedule, events are well-organised, reports are provided according to contract.
Reason for a 3 is that a conference organised did not entirely meet our expectations in terms of programming and attracting only a small number of participants.
Our experience has been that CUTS CITEE has effectively undertaken the projects that we have funded. With any large scale and long-term project there will inevitably be some issues of contention during the course of the project.
The results so far have been solid but perhaps a bit pedestrian but then this is probably because the staff members concerned have been working in a field that is new to them.

¹¹ See separate report: CUTS CITEE project "Linkages between Trade and Environment", Project follow-up report, Sida/SPM Consultants 2006-06-11.

In conclusion, the CUTS CITEE's capacity in relation to project management is found to be satisfactory. Nevertheless, the planning process, quality of reporting and monitoring of project performance are recommended to be reinforced in line with the work already initiated. Progress on these issues is recommended to be monitored by Sida.

4.5 Inter-organizational Linkages

Linkages to other organizations can help the organization keep up with advances in pertinent fields and give access to wide-ranging sources of up-to-date information within the area of the organization's work and thereby improve the organizational performance.

CUTS CITEE is using networking with other organizations as one of its main strategies. Some 60 organizations are included in established partnerships that include cooperation on research, projects, advocacy or information sharing. The network includes research institutes and research-based NGOs from all over the world. The network helps CITEE to be well informed and to formulate relevant activities, thereby increasing relevance and effectiveness.

Also from the stakeholder survey can be noted that the networking partners in general have a good impression of CUTS CITEE when it comes to quality and professionalism. All in all, it is found that the CUTS CITEE network is one of the organization's major strengths.

5 CUTS CITEE's Performance

The analysis of organizational performance is a crucial step in the organizational assessment. Yet there is little consensus on how to go about or on what level performance should be measured. In this context performance is measured on the organizational/unit level (and not on individual, team or project level) and the four main elements of performance, reviewed below, are defined as relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and financial viability.

5.1 Relevance

A first dimension of the organizational performance is the relevance. The relevance may be defined as: *“The ability of an organization to meet the needs and gain the support of its priority stakeholders in the past, present and the future.”*

In today's context the organizational relevance relates to the ability of an organization to keep its mission, goals, programs/projects and activities aligned with the evolving needs of its key stakeholders and constituents. There are two aspects of relevance, namely the:

- Ability to keep its key stakeholders satisfied, the key stakeholders being clients as well as donors
- Ability to create new and more effective situations as a result of insight and new knowledge

Indicators of relevance include:

- Stakeholder satisfaction (clients, IFIs, donors etc.)
- Number of new programs and services
- Changes in programs and services related to changing client system
- Change in Partner attitude
- Role changes
- Changes in funders (quality and quantity)
- Changes in reputation among peer organizations
- Changes in organizational reputation among key stakeholders
- Acceptance of programs and services by stakeholders
- Support earmarked for professional development/capacity building
- Changes in organizational innovation and adaptability

The relevance is highly important to CUTS CITEE. Since CUTS CITEE has almost no internal or long term core funding, staying relevant is the short-term key to staying (project-) financed. A relatively large number of donors and a constant development of new projects that find funding are indicators of a high degree of relevance. Also that the stakeholders agree on the CUTS CITEE mission and in general are satisfied with the work performed are strong indicators of relevance. CUTS and CUTS CITEE do follow up on these issues through their wide network, even if there is no explicit system in place for monitoring relevance.

Some stakeholders are concerned that CUTS CITEE is diversifying too much, which could imply a risk of losing relevance (and effectiveness). The fact that CUTS CITEE was represented as the first and only NGO in the Indian official WTO delegation to the Hong-Kong ministerial meetings is also a strong indicator of relevance (and effectiveness). Conclusively the relevance of CUTS CITEE is found to be high.

5.2 Effectiveness

From a performance perspective of an organization, with effectiveness is understood: *“The ability to achieve the goals of the organization.”*

CUTS CITEE is directed by the mission statement and a general definition on how the mission is to be pursued. The strategic planning and formulation of operational objectives is thereafter, however, mainly on the level of projects. This implies that there so far have been no explicit operational objectives or targets of CUTS CITEE as such. This will be changing with the business plan 2006-08 that is under elaboration.

If no set of indicators and means of verification are established by the organization, as being the case with CUTS CITEE, possible indicators of organizational effectiveness could include:

- Quality of services/products
- Service access and usage
- Knowledge generation and utilization
- Demand for services and products
- Replication of organizations programs by stakeholders
- Growth indicators for coverage of programs, services, clients and funding
- Turn-over rate of clients

Even if many of the objectives of CUTS CITEE are at a high level and much of the effectiveness is related to the project effectiveness, the general positive picture from the stakeholder survey is an indicator of effectiveness. Especially donors and networking partners seem to be of the opinion that CUTS CITEE is doing the right things and with a good quality. To this should be added the positive views on the CUTS CITEE project management.

Also a high demand from donors is an additional indicator. Nevertheless, there are also opinions that the CUTS CITEE outputs are of a varying quality and addressing quality control will be a constant success factor for CUTS CITEE. All in all, it is found that the effectiveness of CUTS CITEE in general terms is high, even if a system for systematically assessing effectiveness is lacking. The recently initiated work on developing centre specific performance indicators is an important step in this direction that should be reinforced.

5.3 Efficiency

A third dimension of the organizational performance is efficiency. The efficiency is defined as: *“A ratio that reflects a comparison of outputs accomplished to the costs incurred for producing them.”*

There are two aspects of efficiency. The first is the units of production and services and the second is how much it costs to produce them. In the case of CUTS CITEE the units of production are the project outputs, which often include research products and disseminating outputs. The CUTS CITEE has not a developed system of indicators of efficiency for its projects. In general indicators of efficiency may include:

- Cost per service or program provided
- Overhead to total service or program cost
- Outputs per staff
- Cost per client served
- Employee absenteeism and turnover rates
- Program completion rates
- Timeliness of delivery of services

Nevertheless the general impression is that CUTS CITEE is a cost effective organization. This also seems to be the feeling of the external stakeholders; the donor group even finds the efficiency to be very high, including timeliness of delivery of services. In the Sida financed project on “Linkages between Trade and Environment”, however, the finalisation was delayed by more than a year and the costs for the external evaluation stood out as relatively high. Managing donors and raising funding can be a time consuming undertaking, but CUTS CITEE does not seem to have to devote too much effort on this.

All in all, CUTS CITEE is found in general terms to be an efficient organization, even if the project efficiency will have to be assessed on a case-by-case basis. It is recommended that indicators that also reflect efficiency are developed for project and centre performance.

5.4 Financial Viability

In order to perform well, an organization also has to pay attention to its ability to generate sufficient financial resources; i.e. the financial viability, which in this context is understood as: *“The ability of an organization to raise the necessary funds to meet its functional requirements in the short, medium and long term.”*

The financial viability may be considered to consist of three dimensions:

- The ability to generate enough cash to meet its expenditures (Short and long-term cash flow)
- The sources and types of revenues on which the organization bases its costs (Reliability)
- The ability to live within its allocation (Financial management)

CUTS CITEE as a Centre within CUTS has managed well with raising necessary funds. CUTS CITEE’s deficit last year is more regarded as an exception than a rule. However, it has to be monitored and addressed.

The fact that several different donors are involved is positive from a reliability perspective. This indicates that the financial viability of CUTS CITEE is good. However, the shared finance with the rest of CUTS might be a potential risk in this regard, if the other centres were to run large deficits. Also the absence of long-term financing puts a constant pressure on CUTS CITEE, which might be a risk - especially if the preferences of the donors or the perception of CUTS CITEE would change. The ongoing work of building up a corpus fund is from this perspective positive.

6 Conclusions & Recommendations

Conclusively it is found that the capacity of CUTE CITEE to handle Sida financed project in general terms is satisfactory.

Even if it should be borne in mind that the dimensions of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and the financial viability – the central aspects of organizational performance – first and foremost in the case of CUTS CITEE have to be related to the project level, nevertheless from a general perspective they are all found to be satisfactory. A reinforced focus on performance measurement and efficiency is initiated and it is recommended that this work be given priority.

Also the dimensions of human resources, financial management, inter-organizational linkages – related to the explanatory area of capacity – are found to be satisfactory. Some weaknesses were found in relation to strategic planning and project management, but the capacity gaps in these areas are being addressed. It is recommended that this work is given priority.

Finally the dimensions of mission and history – related to the explanatory area of motivation – are also found satisfactory and contribute to organizational performance. Below some recommendations are made to CUTS CITEE and Sida.

6.1 Recommendations

Given that CUTS CITEE can show progress in relation to the project management issues (see below), Sida is on the basis of the assessment recommended to consider continuing using CUTS CITEE as a project-implementing agency.¹² The capacity is high in the trade related area and its strengths of being a South organization with a high credibility, high professional capacity and a wide network should be especially recognized.

CUTS CITEE is recommended to continue the development of its project management, with a special focus on the planning process, the definition and monitoring of results and the reporting. Also CUTS CITEE is recommended to continue its work on developing the internal planning tools. Of importance is to find the balance between short-term and long-term instruments, but also to include the resource planning.

From a Sida perspective, CUTS CITEE's progress related to improved (project) performance monitoring and reporting is recommended to be further encouraged and monitored.

If CUTS and CUTS CITEE in the future aim to receive more flexible and untied modalities of support, such as core support or a more flexible short term project fund, it is recommended that the centres are transformed into profit centres and that CUTS CITEE defines what would be included in such core programme/project fund, how it would be administered and how results would be defined, monitored and reported upon. Sida is recommended to regard its cooperation with CUTS CITEE as a long-term commitment. However, Sida is presently recommended to not consider untied core support until CUTS CITEE has shown progress on project management issues, for example via two or more successful Sida financed project implementations.

¹² This recommendation only relates to CITEE as an implementing agency. The financing of any project proposal must be appraised on its specific merits.

Appendix A

Terms of Reference: Assessment and Follow-up of CUTS CITEE

Background

CUTS is the India-based NGO Consumer Unity & Trust Society and CUTS CITEE is the CUTS Centre for International Trade Economics & Environment.

Sida has already financed one CUTS-CITEE implemented project, namely the sub-project “Trade and Environment” under the Linkages Programme 2002-2003. However, Sida has not made a thorough follow up on the results of this project.

Assignment

Sida is interested in expanding its cooperation with CUTS and CUTS-CITEE. The assignment is therefore to assist Sida/INEC with:

- An overview and organisation analysis of CUTS and, more specifically, CUTS CITEE. The analysis shall focus on the general capacity, implementation capacity and performance of CUTS CITEE.
- A follow-up of the results of the Sida supported sub-project “Trade and Environment” under the Linkages Programme 2002-2003. The follow-up shall focus on the results of the project, reasons for shortcomings (if any) and lessons learnt for the future.

Output

The main outputs will be two reports:

- An organisation analysis report of CUTS and CUTS CITEE. The report shall contain an overview of CUTS and an organisation analysis of CUTS CITEE. (The report shall be around 15 pages of length, excluding annexes.)
- A project follow-up report of the Sida supported sub-project “Trade and Environment” under the Linkages Programme 2002-2003. (The report shall be around 3-5 pages)

The consultant

The consultant shall be familiar with Sida working methods and guidelines; have experience in organisation assessment; project formulation; management and follow-up; be familiar with the Sida/INEC working areas and be included in Sida Framework agreement.

Duration

It is estimated that the work will not exceed 16 working days. The report shall be written in English.

Appendix B

Stakeholder Survey

A Stakeholder Survey was carried out in relation to the CUTS CITEE assessment. Nine questions (eleven for the donor group) were sent out to 40 representatives for stakeholder's organisations, belonging to either of the categories donors, networking partners or other stakeholders. 18 questionnaires were returned, corresponding to 45%.

In the donor group 6 questionnaires were returned out of 14 (43%). In addition one donor replied without using the questionnaire. 8 networking partners out of 15 returned the questionnaire (53%), while 4 out of 11 in the group other stakeholders returned the survey (36%). Most respondents also included valuable comments to their ranking.

For the whole group, 18 answers out of 40, the reliability is found to be reasonably satisfactory. However, on a group level, the reliability is more limited due to few answers. This is especially true for the group 'other stakeholders', where only four answers were received. This implies that where the answers among the groups coincide, the reliability is relatively strong and the answers may be considered to represent the stakeholders. Where there are differences among the groups, however, more caution in the analysis has to be taken. Below the questionnaire and the answers are presented for each category. The comments have not been split up per category.

1. Name and Organisation

2. How do you in your words perceive CUTS CITEE and its work?

CUTS CITEE succeeds in addressing difficult trade issues in a credible and qualitative way, and is capable of building networks with highstanding institutes and individuals. CUTS CITEE is a good example of South-South cooperation, by developing networks of NGOs and research institutes in developing countries. CUTS CITEE has much to offer to a Northern audience because of its close links with Southern perceptions.
I should say that my experience of CUTS CITEE so far has been limited to my quite intensive contacts with two CUTS staff members. I have found them very professional in their approach to work and through them I have a very favourable impression of CUTS CITEE as a partner organisation. I also perceive CUTS CITEE as having expertise essentially in the area of international trade and I believe that it has a justifiably high reputation for work in this field.
Aggressive in responding to donor's interests in undertaking research and advocacy on current issues of interest.
It is an organisation having grassroot presence in consumer rights area in India, that has also developed capacity to work on international trade, investment and competition issues.
Frist class, raises key pertinent questions, good powers of analysis, excellent network
In all, we are very satisfied with CUTS work. We experience CUTS CITEE to be efficient, thorough, well positioned for advocacy work and accountable to their project partners, beneficiaries and donor(s).
They worked on our project and they completed their research and workshop on time and with good quality.
AN INTERNATIONALLY IMPORTANT ORGANISATION FOR DEVELOPMENT POLICY RESEARCH, AT LEAST FROM CIVIL SOCIETY POINT OF VIEW

CUTS CITEE provide a valuable service to the developing world and should be encouraged to continue with implementing programmes and initiatives including consumer protection; promoting trade and development; competition, investment and regulatory policies; sustainable production and consumption, including consumer safety and rural consumers as well as women's empowerment. Viva - CUTS CITEE

I've only known CUTS CITEE for about 1 year, but their objectives, activities and methodologies are very relevant for development cooperation and sound. The organization is credible and reliable, with extensive network of partners.

CUTS CITEE has been consistently conducting excellent and relevant research and advocacy programme. I think CUTS CITEE deserves the credit for developing a group of experts, advocates in trade issue in South Asia.

Excellent, it was the first of its kind in South Asia.

3. The mission of CUTS CITEE is “Pursuing economic equity and social justice within and across borders by persuading government and empowering people”. On a scale from 1 to 5 (where 5 implies the best/maximum), how important do you perceive this to be today?

Answer (1-5)

All Responders	Donor Group	Networking Partners	Other Stakeholders
4.5	5.0	4.6	3.5

Comments

CUTS began its activities over 20 years ago, dealing with localised consumer problems in one state in India. It has greatly expanded the range of its activities, both in relation to the types of issues it works on, and in its geographic coverage. Over the past decade it has been increasingly active in the international dimensions of a range of subjects that directly or indirectly affect the welfare of consumers, particularly in developing countries. Its mission is therefore an expanding one, with the pace and direction of its activities being strongly influenced by international developments.

I do't think that there should be any doubt about the importance of this objective

Economic equity and social justice are key elements in achieving sustainable economic growth. Civil society has a vital role in the informed policy debate on growth strategies including the national trade policy.

CUTS DOES WORK WITH MULTIPLE COUNTRIES BOTH IN SOUTH AND NORTH SO AS TO BUILD CAPACITY IN KEY DEVELOPMENT POLICY RESEARCH ISSUE BUT ALSO TO MAXMISE SYNERGY BETWEEN THE TWO

As trade negotiations at the multilateral are being dominated by sub groups and decisions made at these levels impact number of countries it is important that, as far as possible, countries formulate regional positions. In this regard capacity building of various stakeholders including the gvoernments becomes paramount.

Skills Development and Economic Empowerment must be regarded as two of Africa's most important initiatives. Governments must be urged to recognise this!

CUTS CITEE is very active in regional networking.

4. As you perceive it, on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 5 implies the best/maximum) how effective is the CUTS CITEE in moving toward its mission?

Answer (1-5)

All Responders	Donor Group	Networking Partners	Other Stakeholders
3.6	3.8	3.6	3.3

Comments

CUTS, and particularly its Secretary General, Pradeep Mehta, is highly effective at networking. This allows CUTS both to be very well informed of the direction of international interest in particular issues, and to help influence the nature and direction on the debate on them.
As I have explained I have rather a narrow base on which to make this judgement. My assessment is based on my experience of the abilities of the CUTS staff members whose work I know. They are very serious researchers; extremely conscientious; very responsive and positive in their engagement in debate; but perhaps a little limited in terms of their grasp of theory and methodology.
CUTS is always present, but not necessarily persuasive and effective in making change happen.
CUTS is moving forward soundly and progressively in its mission through various projects and through physical presence in 4 other countries.
They have grown to a point where effectiveness may be decreasing
DOING RESEARCH IS ONE THING BUT REACHING THE STAKEHOLDERS IS ANOTHER AND ENSURING EFFECTIVE LINKAGE TO POLICY IS DIFFERENT
CUTS has established a good reputation and voice in the international trade policy debate, but it is difficult to assess which effective results have been achieved (results can be often long term)
There is always room for improvement. I think CUTS CITEE need to improve the quality of their research.
Sometime good efforts are affected due to lack of funding but on the whole CUTS is doing well.

5. On a scale from 1 to 5 (where 5 implies the best/maximum), as you perceive it, are they doing the right things (bearing their mission in mind)?

Answer (1-5)

All Responders	Donor Group	Networking Partners	Other Stakeholders
4.1	4.4	4.1	3.3

Comments

Through its wide range of international contacts, CUTS continues to remain very well informed on where it should best direct its efforts. It is by no means just a follower of issues in the news, and it is pro-active in initiating new lines of activity, such as the recently established CIRC (CUTS Institute for Regulation and Competition).
I am just a little concerned that CUTS may be over-extending itself as it attempts to broaden the fields in which it works
They address complex trade issues linked to consumer interests, and the interests of the poor. They build the capacity of Southern civil society. The instruments used to achieve effective results could perhaps be more effective
They seem to be working on a whole range of topics at the same time.

THEY SEEM OR HAVE MADE US BELIEVE THEY ARE RELIABLE GIVEN THEIR WIDE SCOPE OF OPERATIONS
Definitely
Most of the essential things are being done.

6. On a scale from 1 to 5 (where 5 implies the best/maximum), how do you perceive the quality of the CUTS CITEE's work?

Answer (1-5)

All Responders	Donor Group	Networking Partners	Other Stakeholders
3.6	3.8	4.2	3.0

Comments

The quality of CUTS work that is directed at civil society is generally very good. It is topical, and includes many practical examples of the issues discussed. However, in the case of research papers of a kind that might be considered for publication in peer-reviewed academic journals, the quality is uneven, and few would be of the highest quality.
Generally very sound
Content is very good, networking and organisation excellent, a question is whether CUTS methodology should not be more bottom-up, based on needs of target groups
Research is good to excellent quality for an NGO.
Has been unable to finish work as scheduled. This could be due to nature of work, which is different from its "core business", and other factors, beyond the control of CUTS.
The quality of their outputs are high and well appreciated among its constituents/stakeholders. Their policy briefs, newsletters etc are very useful for both awareness generation and reaching out to busy policy makers.
Produced timely and policy relevant research for Trade Knowledge Network
Excellent!
Not '5' simply because I find that objectives of certain project are not well defined enough; but general quality is very good
There is room for improvement.
Very useful - can be enriched and made more effective by involving appropriate private sector participation in its work

7. On a scale from 1 to 5 (where 5 implies the best/maximum), looking at the capacities of the persons working at CUTS CITEE that you have come in contact with, how do you rank their professional capacity?

Answer (1-5)

All Responders	Donor Group	Networking Partners	Other Stakeholders
3.7	3.8	3.9	3.2

Comments

The calibre of the professional staff naturally varies, but most are enthusiastic and competent. CUTS CITEE professionals are capable, dedicated and take their work seriously.
Both in Jaipur and local CUTS-CITEE organisations personnel is very qualified, both policy and financial/logistical staff
They have a stable core staff of committed and dedicated people.
Some is excellent, 5; some by temporary staff members is poor. But they are very effective in using external referees to control the quality of what they publish.

Bipul CHATTERJEE and his team are all assets to Africa.
Very dedicated and professional
They are in general quite professional ---should be encouraged to continuously acquire updated level of knowhow and skill

8. Do you have any suggestions that could improve the performance of CUTS CITEE even further?

An increased use of academics on sabbatical leave from universities could help to enhance the quality of the more academic studies that CUTS undertakes.
CUTS should be less ambitious in terms of building big networks; it is better to improve the work in a smaller number of national networks than focusing on expansion in a lot of countries
Have a more internally driven agenda.
CUTS-CITEE staff are in regular touch with Government officials seeking suggestions on improving their performance. They can further enhance their effectiveness by doing more empirical work in areas where they have demonstrated capacity, such as textiles trade, trade and environment, investment and competition policy
I do not really know CUTS well enough to be sure of this but as I've indicated under 5 above I think it is possible that the ambitions of the organisation may be running ahead of its capacities
Beefing up analytical capabilities, doing one project at a time rather than taking on too many and excessive deputizing.
Over centralized management, could work on greater empowerment within the organization
THEY SHOULD NOT BE TOO SPREAD IN TERMS OF SCOPE
I would like to see more interaction with government - however this requires more resources and capacitation - PPP between Civil Society and Government - NEPAD involvement
Improve research
CUTS should also look into environmental degradation issues as part of their poverty reduction programme.
It should take up regional agenda and advocacy programmes targetting governments and other stake holders
It may diversify its field of activity in regional trade policies studies relating to trade in goods and services and investment .

9. On a scale from 1 to 5 (where 5 implies the best/maximum) how cost effective do you perceive CUTS CITEE to be? (If you are a donor financing a project, please relate to the project).

Answer (1-5)

All Responders	Donor Group	Networking Partners	Other Stakeholders
4.1	4.7	4.0	3.5

Comments

CUTS makes considerable use of local researchers in the developing countries that are being studied, and this keeps consulting costs down. CUTS is also able to make highly effective use of part-time volunteers in many countries. Through its very good links with many international organisations it is able to keep well-informed, thus reducing the cost of obtaining information.
I do not know about their cost structure. But I guess they are effective.
CUTS has done very well in providing value for money in our Programme

With a relatively small budget much output is realised involving many cooperating organisations
I would say their costs are average.
CUTS had very low bid for the project, but provided good team of international consultants who are undertaking the review.
It depends on the intentions of the donor, if that is to support an organization good at promoting the networking of other South-based organizations and researchers, CUTS is effective, just as it is in facilitating basic info on current issues. But if the goals are to strengthen the capacity of Southern societies to generate analytical alternatives to the current ideas guiding development policies in the LDCs, CUTS is definitely not cost effective.
All my interactions and financial support transactions (air and accommodations expenses) were professionally managed - I had never any doubt regarding the financial management of projects I was involved in

Donors Group Only

10. On a scale from 1 to 5 (where 5 implies the best/maximum), how well manages CUTS CITEE the project (-s) that your organization finance?

Answer (1-5)

Donor Group	Networking Partners	Other Stakeholders
4.8	-	-

Comments

CUTS has shown the ability to manage large projects effectively. In multi-country projects that involve local consultants and contractors, it has been able to resolve any problems that have arisen very well. It has kept within its time frames and budgets. It communicates with donors quite well when projects are underway.
They are a gun for hire and undertook our project very well.
Very efficient in accounting; very responsive
The project is implemented more or less according to schedule, events are well-organised, reports are provided according to contract

11. On a scale from 1 to 5 (where 5 implies the best/maximum) how well have the project results matched your expectations?

Answer (1-5)

Donor Group	Networking Partners	Other Stakeholders
4.2	-	-

Comments

Reason for a 3 is that a conference organised did not entirely meet our expectations in terms of programming and attracting only a small number of participants
Our experience has been that CUTS has effectively undertaken the projects that we have funded. With any large scale and long-term project there will inevitably be some issues of contention during the course of the project, but our experience has been that such situations have been resolved satisfactorily.
The results so far have been solid but perhaps a bit pedestrian but then this is probably because the staff members concerned have been working in a field that is new to them

Concluding Remarks

The overall picture is that CUTS CITEE is well perceived by their stakeholders, especially donors and networking partners. The relevance, Question 3, is found very high by the donor and networking groups, but somewhat lower by the networking partners. None of them expresses any major concerns regarding the relevance of CUTS CITEE's mission or work.

The effectiveness, as indicated by the Questions 4-7, is also on the whole perceived well. The donor and networking partner groups are by and large pleased with the type and quality of the work and the professional capacity of CUTS CITEE staff. The 'other stakeholders' group frequently gives a lower score to the questions related to effectiveness, and among the answers is also the score 1 given by one stakeholder on question 6. It should be remembered that only four questionnaires were returned from this group and that this limits the reliability. Also it should be borne in mind that this group also includes some 'natural competitors' to CUTS CITEE, which also might affect the reliability. Nevertheless the lower scores should be noted and some clues are given in the comments.

Regarding the efficiency, or cost effectiveness in question 9, this is found to be very high by the donor group and high/satisfactory by the other groups. None of them expresses any major concerns regarding the efficiency of CUTS CITEE.

Also the project management is perceived well by the donors that submitted the questionnaire, and in general they have been satisfied with the results (Questions 10 and 11). None of them expresses any major concerns regarding the CUTS CITEE's project management. However, the comments indicate some room for improvement also on this area.

Conclusively, it is found that the Stakeholder Survey gives support to the view that CUTS CITEE is relevant, effective and efficient. Nevertheless there are indications of room for improvement regarding the quality of the work and some of the recommendations from the stakeholders may be useful for the organisation.

Appendix C

Staff Survey

In relation to the organizational assessment, a Staff Survey was carried out. 13 of the CUTS CITEE staff were asked to fill in an anonymous survey, of which 12 were returned. The questions are found in Table 1 below. With team is understood CUTS CITEE.

Table 1: Staff Survey – Questions

Nr.	Statements	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
1	I can achieve my full potential in my work within my Team	1	2	3	4	5
2	There is a very friendly atmosphere in my Team	1	2	3	4	5
3	I am encouraged to take responsibility for my work.	1	2	3	4	5
4	There is a strong atmosphere of trust within my Team	1	2	3	4	5
5	Over the last 6 months I have acquired new skills to do my work	1	2	3	4	5
6	My Team encourages me to be creative within my work	1	2	3	4	5
7	People co-operate and assist each other in fulfilling certain tasks	1	2	3	4	5
8	My work environment contributes in growing my level of confidence	1	2	3	4	5
9	I feel motivated in my work	1	2	3	4	5
10	My Team cares about who I am as a person, not just about the job I do	1	2	3	4	5
11	I feel a strong bond of companionship with the people in my Team	1	2	3	4	5
12	Leadership is widely shared throughout the Team	1	2	3	4	5
13	The Team creates opportunities to socialise with each other	1	2	3	4	5
14	I have a clear idea of what is expected of me	1	2	3	4	5
15	I feel like others in my Team take a real interest in my work	1	2	3	4	5
16	Information and knowledge are shared freely	1	2	3	4	5
17	A supportive atmosphere is encouraged within my Team	1	2	3	4	5
18	Problem-Solving is encouraged within my Team	1	2	3	4	5
19	I feel a strong sense of loyalty toward those whom I work with	1	2	3	4	5
20	There is a clear and open channel for me to communicate my opinions and thoughts	1	2	3	4	5
21	The salary and incentive system is well in level with my alternatives	1	2	3	4	5
22	CITEE handles internal gender issues adequately	1	2	3	4	5

Nr.	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
23	There is enough opportunity for individual capacity development	1	2	3	4	5
24	There is enough opportunity for career development within CUTS CITEE and CUTS	1	2	3	4	5
25	CUTS CITEE is a cost efficient organisation	1	2	3	4	5
26	The roles and internal responsibilities are clearly defined	1	2	3	4	5

The first 20 questions relate to a Team assessment test developed by the South-African company Tomorrow/Today. The test explores how the team members perceive their work in the four dimensions of:

- Belonging
- Mastery
- Generosity
- Independence

All four dimensions are important conditions to perform well for a team and high scores on all areas indicate that the working conditions are perceived well by the staff. Please note that an average below 3.0 would implicate that the group on average more disagrees than agrees with the survey statement.

Also six additional questions were added to capture dimensions of salary, gender, capacity development, cost efficiency and responsibilities. Below the results are presented.

Belonging

Table 2: Answers related to Belonging.

Question	Average Score
B1. There is a very friendly atmosphere in my Team	4.3
B2. There is a strong atmosphere of trust within my Team	4.0
B3. People co-operate and assist each other in fulfilling certain tasks	4.1
B4. My Team cares about who I am as a person, not just about the job I do	4.2
B5. I feel a strong bond of companionship with the people in my Team	4.2
Total Score Belonging	20.8 (of 25)

Comments: The average scores are high on the belonging related questions. A vast majority either agree or agree strongly with the statements. No one disagrees with the statements. The results support the view that there is a sufficient degree of belonging felt within the team.

Mastery

Table 3: Answers related to Mastery

Question	Average Score
M1. I can achieve my full potential in my work within my Team	4.2
M2. Over the last 6 months I have acquired new skills to do my work	4.1
M3. My Team encourages me to be creative within my work	4.2
M4. I feel motivated in my work	4.2
M5. Problem-Solving is encouraged within my Team	3.9
Total Score Mastery	20.6 (of 25)

Comments: The average scores are also high on the mastery related questions. A vast majority either agree or agree strongly with the statements. The results support the view that the team feels a sufficient degree of mastery in relation to their work.

However, 4 persons or 33% neither agree nor disagree in the statement on having acquired new skills during the last 6 months (M2). Also one team member disagrees with the statement that he/she feels motivated in his/her work (M4). Moreover one team member disagrees with the statement that problem solving is encouraged (M5).

Generosity

Table 4: Answers related to Generosity

Question	Average Score
G1. The Team creates opportunities to socialise with each other	3.8
G2. I feel like others in my Team take a real interest in my work	4.0
G3. Information and knowledge are shared freely	4.3
G4. A supportive atmosphere is encouraged within my Team	4.1
G5. I feel a strong sense of loyalty toward those whom I work with	4.1
Total Score Generosity	20.3 (of 25)

Comments: The average scores are also high on the generosity related questions. A vast majority either agree or agree strongly with the statements. The results support the view that a sufficient degree of generosity is felt within the team.

However, 3 persons or 25% neither agree nor disagree in the statement that the team creates opportunities to socialise with each other (G1).

Independence

Table 5: Answers related to Independence

Question	Average Score
I1. I am encouraged to take responsibility for my work.	4.5
I2. My work environment contributes in growing my level of confidence	4.2
I3. Leadership is widely shared throughout the Team	4.1
I4. I have a clear idea of what is expected of me	4.0
I5. There is a clear and open channel for me to communicate my opinions and thoughts	3.8
Total Score Independence	20.6 (of 25)

Comments: The average scores are also high on the independence related questions. A vast majority either agree or agree strongly with the statements. The results support the view that the team feels a sufficient degree of independence within the team.

However, 3 persons or 25% neither agree nor disagree in the statement that leadership is shared throughout the team (I3). Two persons either disagrees or does neither agree nor disagree with the statement that there is a clear channel for him/her to communicate his/her opinions and thoughts (I5).

Other Areas

Table 6: Answers related to Other Areas

Question	Average Score
O1. The salary and incentive system is well in level with my alternatives	3.7
O2. CITEE handles internal gender issues adequately	3.9
O3. There is enough opportunity for individual capacity development	4.3
O4. There is enough opportunity for career development within CUTS CITEE and CUTS	4.0
O5. CUTS CITEE is a cost efficient organisation	3.9
O6. The roles and internal responsibilities are clearly defined	3.8

Regarding the answers to the statements related to the other areas, they are a bit more mixed.

Three persons or 25% neither agree nor disagree in the statement that the salary and incentive system is well in level with their alternatives (O1). One disagrees with this statement, while the rest agree (7) or agree strongly (1). On the whole this supports the view that the system is adequate for most staff.

The statement on gender issues (O2) shows similar answers. Nine persons agree (6) or agree strongly (3) with this statement. However, two persons neither agree nor disagree and one person disagrees.

Regarding the statement that there is enough opportunity for individual capacity development, eight agree and four agree strongly, which supports the view that there exists enough opportunity for individual capacity development.

In relation to the next statement, that there is enough opportunity for career development (O4), six agree, four agree strongly but two persons disagree. This supports the view that most of the team is pleased with the internal career opportunities.

Concerning the statement that CUTS is a cost efficient organisation; seven agree, two agree strongly but three persons or 25% neither agree nor disagree. This supports the view that most of the team are pleased with the cost efficiency.

Lastly, in relation to the statement that the roles and responsibilities are clearly defined (O6), 11 persons agree, while one person disagree.

Concluding Remarks

For most of the statements, a clear majority agrees. This is a sign of that the staff perceive the working conditions at CUTS CITEE as favourable. Nevertheless, in some of the details lies also important information that can be used to improve conditions even further. These include acquiring new skills (M2), socialising (G1), leadership and communication (I3 and I5). Also the questions on salary (O1) and gender (O2) indicate that there may be some room for improvements.