

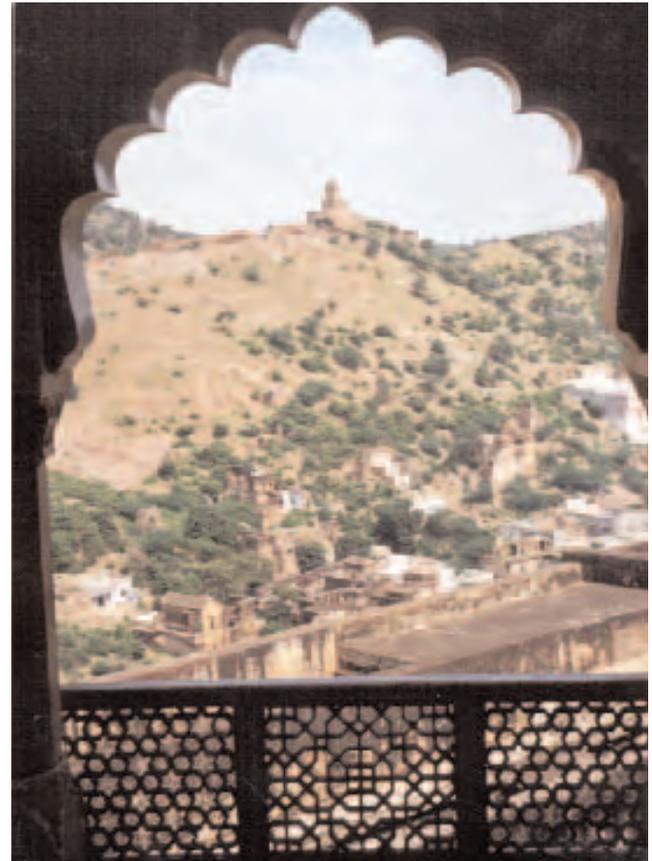


India

Communicating Climate Change

In 2000, USAID/India asked GreenCOM to recommend strategies for communicating climate change issues to government officials, the business community, and the news media. India has one of the world's lowest per capita emissions of greenhouse gases, but its huge population and fast growing economy make it a major player in negotiations to slow global climate change.

GreenCOM's work was connected with USAID/India's Greenhouse Gas Pollution Prevention Project (GEP). One objective of GEP was to encourage India's industries to take part in a carbon emissions trading program and other market incentives for emissions abatement. The mission asked GreenCOM for assistance in two particular aspects of the overall GEP program, message development and media engagement.



Building Effective Outreach to Indian Businesses

GreenCOM carried out formative research through a series of in-depth interviews with representatives of power companies and other energy-intensive industries, officials from the Ministry of Environment and Forestry, and environmental NGOs. The interviews focused on respondents' knowledge and attitudes on global climate change, their views on options such as the Clean Development Mechanism that were introduced in the Kyoto Protocol, their opinions on foreign direct investment, and the incentives and obstacles they perceived to new capital investment.

By examining what stakeholders knew and what they wanted to know about the topic, as well as what they were actually doing to reduce emissions, researchers were able to identify the information needs of each group and to develop appropriate messages. The initial research also compared the relationship between knowledge and attitudes about energy efficiency with company size, energy-efficiency practices, and type of ownership (public or private).

GreenCOM developed 25 possible messages and information items and presented them to three focus groups of Indian business leaders. Based on the focus group response, GreenCOM found several distinct audiences within the business community, each of which needed different information and would respond to different incentives. Some key findings were:

- Businessmen from smaller cash-strapped industries were interested in energy conservation but needed access both to capital (to invest in more efficient equipment) and to information (about low-cost process changes that could save energy).
- Industrialists from larger private companies, such as aluminum, steel, and power firms, were more interested in preparing themselves for future carbon emissions trading schemes that were being developed around the world.

- Regardless of business size, the focus groups responded only to messages about the profit potential of energy conservation (not its environmental benefits).
- Leaders from publicly owned companies were more likely to respond to messages about environmental stewardship or social responsibility.
- Plant managers needed different, more technical information than did executives, who needed more general financial information.

The project produced a report, *Proposed Messages for Indian Business Groups on CO₂ Emissions Mitigation*, on recommended messages and information for small private firms, large private firms, and large public firms. The messages addressed climate change, energy efficiency, and carbon emissions trading.

Informing Journalists on Climate Change Issues

In addition to research conducted in the business community, GreenCOM contracted with the Center for Environment Education (CEE), an NGO located in Ahmedabad, to interview 26 business journalists on their knowledge of and interest in emissions trading. Although the journalists had little knowledge about the subject, they were very interested in learning more and covering emissions trading in their reporting.

Based on the findings of the formative research, GreenCOM developed a communication strategy that primarily focused on media coverage of issues related to carbon emissions trading. Outreach targeted to business reporters included:

- Creation of press kits for journalists that would be distributed and also made available on a Web site.



The journalists were very interested in covering emissions trading in their reporting.

- Development of an e-mail Listserv for journalists covering carbon emissions-related issues.
- Media briefings in New Delhi, Mumbai, and Chennai in conjunction with CEE. The briefings featured business leaders, Indian government officials, USAID, and representatives from firms involved in emissions trading. Media briefings conveyed information about USAID's Greenhouse Gas Pollution Prevention Project; introduction to market opportunities; market opportunities for carbon reduction; India's preparedness for emissions trading and

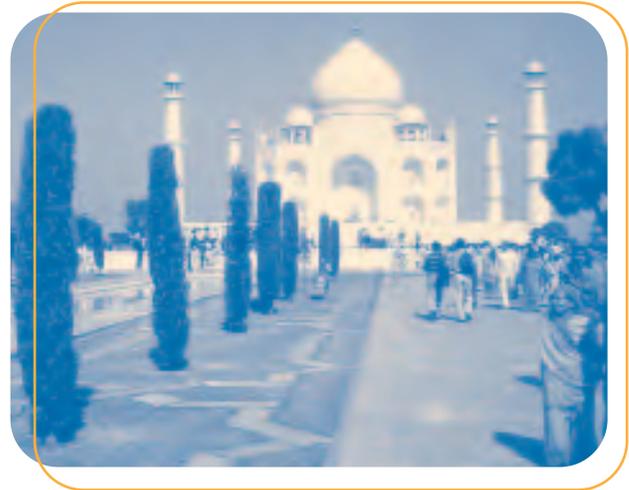
emissions trading concerns; and opportunities for using the Clean Development Mechanism.

Publications represented at the briefings included *The Times of India*, *The Hindu*, *Business Standard*, *Business India*, and the *Maharashtra Times*. Several of the journalists who participated in the briefings wrote stories shortly afterward on climate change and emissions. Some articles are included in an evaluation report on the briefings (*Market Opportunities Through Climate Change Mitigation: Press Briefings*) available on GreenCOM's Web site.

Outcomes

Although GreenCOM provided only short-term technical assistance to USAID/India, the groundwork was laid for additional media outreach on climate change mitigation. Careful research by GreenCOM led to the development of messages tailored to the specific interests of several segments of the Indian business community.

Likewise, media briefings helped to build a cadre of business reporters who became more knowledgeable about climate change issues. After the project ended, CEE held additional media briefings and continued to maintain the e-mail list for journalists as well as a section of its Web site with information for media: <http://www.ceeindia.org/greenhousegases>.



Selected Publications and Products

Center for Environment Education (CEE) and GreenCOM Project. *Market Opportunities Through Climate Change Mitigation: Press Briefings*. Ahmedabad, India: CEE, 2000.

Hernandez, Orlando, and Richard Breitenstein. *Study of Indian Stakeholders on CO₂ Emissions Mitigation: Executive Summary*. Washington, DC: Academy for Educational Development (AED), 2000.

Hernandez, Orlando, and Mary Paden. *Proposed Messages for Indian Business Groups on CO₂ Emissions Mitigation*. Washington, DC: AED, 2000.

Kumar, Rathina, and Mohan Krishnan. *Pre-Testing Messages to the Indian Business Community on CO₂ Emissions Mitigation*. New Delhi: Indian Market Research Bureau, 2000.

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Paden, Mary, and Orlando Hernandez. *Communicating Climate Change in India: Final Report*. Washington, DC: AED, 2000.



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