



**Workshop
on
Power Sector Reforms and Public Participation**

24th-25th August 2001, Indian Social Institute, Bangalore

Objective:

In recent years, several changes that have been taking place in the Power Sector. In Karnataka, we have had the entry of private firms into generation, the corporatisation of the Karnataka Electricity Board (KEB) to form the Karnataka Power Transmission Corporation Ltd. (KPTCL), and the planned separation of KPTCL into transmission and distribution companies while privatisation of distribution is now being considered. These are far-reaching and fundamental changes. During this process, many key decisions are being taken and legal precedence is being set. Hence, this period of transition is of critical importance for all concerned.

The Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission (KEREC) was formed with a view to balance the interests and expectations of different actors in the power sector. In response to this, some actors -- power corporations, independent power producers (IPPs), consultants, etc.-- have been strengthening their capabilities as well as information and analytical bases to protect their interests. However, public-interest organisations need to sharpen their ability to take up the challenges thrown up by the regulatory process. Many individuals and organisations working for the protection of public interest have been engaged in analysis, political as well as legal actions, and regulatory interventions. However, these individuals and organisations sometimes suffer from a lack of adequate information, analytical tools, and human and financial resources. Hence, it was felt that consumer groups should improve their understanding, share their experiences and pool in their expertise.

The International Energy Initiative (IEI) - Bangalore and Prayas (Energy Group) – Pune therefore organised a workshop in Bangalore for Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and consumer groups. The objectives of the Workshop were:

- (1) to discuss the new regulatory régime in the power sector,
- (2) to explain the need for regulation and the role that the public can/should play,
- (3) to give the participants an overview of the work that has been done (or needs to be done) when attempting to intervene in the regulatory process,
- (4) to describe some of the methods/analytical tools required,
- (5) to discuss areas where public intervention can take place in the regulatory process.