

## ANNUAL REPORT 2008-2009: **CENTRE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY**

In the absence of an annual report, we are attaching last three issues of Centre for Civil Society's publication—*CCS Impact*—which documents and reports on the organization's work. The *CCS Impact* is published on the website and can be accessed by anyone.

The work carried out by CCS in 2008-2009 may be broadly classified under three themes—Education (School Choice Campaign), Youth Outreach, and Livelihood Campaign (*Jeevika*).

### **1. CCS Impact: April 2008**

#### **A. School Choice Campaign: Mass Campaigns and Policy Discussion**



#### **DEMANDING SCHOOL VOUCHERS FOR 9000 'OUT OF SCHOOL' SLUM CHILDREN**

**Orissa:** On 28th February 2008, 3 members of Orissa Alliance for School Choice headed by Ms. Lopamudra Mohanty met the Minister of School and Mass Education of Orissa, Shri Sanjeev Kumar Sahu and submitted a memorandum and proposal on behalf of the

people of Saliya Sahi demanding school vouchers for 9000 out-of-school children of the slum area. Saliya Sahi is the biggest slum of the capital and it has no school other than a single room project primary school. On the same day morning more than 200 people from Saliya Sahi Slum march in a rally to OPEPA (Orissa Primary Education Programme Authority) and submitted a memorandum demanding school vouchers as there were no schools in their area.

#### **EMPOWERING PARENTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CAMPAIGN IN JHARKHAND**

**Jharkhand:** School Chayan Abhiyan Groups identified parents who would take interest to represent others to work for school choice issues in their respective areas. Eighteen such groups at the block level and 6 such groups at district level has been formed. The enthusiastic parents are confident that they would be able to run their own school choice campaigns effectively. We have also formed four district advisory boards.

Well known personalities from the districts have joined the campaign to provide assistance to parents and partners to archive the campaign goals.

### **A STUDY ON TRIBAL AND MIGRANT CHILDREN AN ADVOCACY TOOL IN UTTAR PRADESH**

**Uttar Pradesh:** Our partner in Sonbhadra district has conducted a study on 'need for school choice for the tribal children of Sonbhadra'. In Shankar Garh of Allahabad district a partner has conducted a study on migrant child labour. These studies will be used for advocacy purposes on school choice for these children.

### **UNRECOGNISED SCHOOLS: HELP OR HURT THE POOR?**

**New Delhi:** In February 2008 the Delhi High Court ordered all private unrecognised schools to either seek recognition or shut down. There are 10,000 such schools in the capital catering to about 6 lakh children between the age group of 2 to 18 years. To understand the impact of the High Court order on school education in Delhi, CCS organised a panel discussion on 27 March 2008 at the Constitution Club, New Delhi on the theme '**Unrecognised Schools: Help or Hurt the Poor?**'

The panel constituted of Advocate Ashok Aggarwal of Social Jurist, Mr. R. M. Sinha, Advocate for the unrecognised schools, Mr. R.C. Jain, President



of Delhi State Public Schools Management Association, Mr. T.K. Mathew, Chief Executive of Deepalaya, and Dr. Jishnu Das, Visiting Scholar of Centre for Policy Research. The discussion was moderated by Dr. Parth Shah, President of CCS. The rich discussions highlighted the fact

that the High Court order, though well-intended, was anti-poor. Implementation of the order was an almost impossible task. Many of government's own schools do not meet the norms for recognition as applicable to private schools. The silver lining was that the government has been asked to survey all unrecognised schools and create a database. This will help in creating transparency and in assisting the poor parents in making an informed choice.

## **SCHOOL CHOICE CAMPAIGN AT TYCOONS 2008**

Tycoons 2008 is a nation-wide event to select future business barons of the country spearheaded by Career Launcher. After nearly 2 months and 10 grueling rounds later, 49 delegates were selected. On 12 March the final participants at the Management Development Institute in Gurgaon had an opportunity to understand the School Choice Campaign through the presentation of Parth Shah and from the information desk established in the venue. The CCS team of Sayantani Das, Amit Chandra, Praveena Lakshmanan and Manoj Mathew interacted with students and learned about the school choice campaign and programs of CCS.

## **B. Youth Outreach: Liberal Forum, Skill Workshops and Policy Seminars**

### **LIBERAL YOUTH FORUM OF INDIA LAUNCHED**

The Liberal Youth Forum of India, a bold new initiative to further the liberal movement, was launched on April 5th, at Mumbai. LYF (pronounced life) is a movement of young individuals, informal groups and formal associations collaborating to create access and choice in social, cultural, economic, political and environmental spheres for a freer and more prosperous India.

Mr. Sharad Joshi, Member of Parliament; Dr. René Klaff, Regional Director FNF South Asia; Dr. Parth J Shah, President of Centre for Civil Society spoke at the forum and distinguished members of 'India-FNF Alumni Network' (IFAN) and other eminent liberal leaders congregated to support the newly formed youth forum. ..add a couple of lines about it major goal/focus...politics of knowledge, youth becoming active citizen, applying liberal principles to campus management, A detailed planned activity was highlighted by Mr. D. Dhanuraj, the Chairman of the Preparatory committee, for the year with the objectives, centered on mobilizing the youth at colleges/universities of India.

The launch also introduced the following elected members of LYF India:



Gautam Bastin as the National Coordinator, Swati Chawla as the Program Coordinator, Rajan Kumar Singh as Finance and Administration Coordinator, Roji M. John as the Resource Generation Coordinator and Yavnika Khanna as the Communication Coordinator.

Visit the website [www.lyfindia.org](http://www.lyfindia.org) for more information.



### **SUMMER RESEARCH INTERNS FOR THE YEAR 2008 SELECTED**

For the summer research internship we received 183 applications from 89 colleges/universities from 75 cities in India and Singapore, France and USA. With much difficulty 24 students from various streams of studies from 20 colleges/universities are been selected for internship from 12 May to 12 July. Many equally good candidates have been put in touch with other organisations like CHRI, Nya Mitra.

### **35 STUDENTS IN RANCHI ATTEND SKILL TRAINING WORKSHOP**

35 students from Ranchi Friends of Freedom were trained on various skills and public policy review on March 29-30 by Swati Chawla and Mr. Rajan Kumar Singh. Different sessions helped participants to think about the role freedom plays in their lives. Open-house discussion on dimensions of freedom-personal, economic, political helped the participants to understand the importance of reform and public policies. The students also made plan of action for the year focused on School Choice Campaign and advocacy of livelihood freedom issues through film festivals.



### **ADVANCED LIBERTY FOR CHANGE SEMINAR (ALCS) IN MUMBAI**

Advanced Liberty for Change Seminar (ALCS) took place in Navi Mumbai from 7-10 February.

Participants came prepared with concrete research proposals and were

given inputs on writing and publishing research papers by experts like Parth Shah, Sachin Rao, Ajay Shaw, Gautam Bastian and Niranjana Rajadhyaksha. Each day started with a guided tutorial and was followed by lecture, thematic workshop and one-on-one with facilitators. The participants presented their research timeline and plan of action on the final day. CCS graduates Dipayan Baishya, Pravesh Saha and Swati Chawla acted as guides for research projects.

### **Liberty and Society Seminar in Cochin**



Thirty three participants from India and Sri Lanka came together for the Liberty & Society Seminar in Cochin, January 24 to 27. The various sessions enriched the participants, they were 'New Architecture of International Order' by Dr. Mohan Varghese, lecturer from Mar Thoma College, 'Environment: The Tragedy of the

Collective' by Dr. Parth Shah, 'Is Socialism Dead' by the prominent journalist Mr. K M Roy, Liberalism in Context of Kerala by Prof. Babu Joseph, President Liberal group Kerala, 'Special Economic Zones: Good, Bad & Ugly' by Prof. Alex Thomas, lecturer in Govt. Arts College Trivandrum, 'Freedom & Security' by Mr. Jacob Punnoose, the Additional Director General of Police, Kerala. The participants also had a field research afternoon experience when they went out to different corners of the city to understand what real life is and participated in documentary screenings and group dynamics to break stereotype viewpoints.

### **CONTRACTING OUT SCHOOLS: A GLOBAL EXPERIENCE**

Praveena Lakshmanan, an intern with the Centre for Civil Society has just completed a paper which provides international examples where governments contract with the private sector for the delivery of educational services including the provision of school infrastructure. These are the new ways of developing PPP model of education delivery.

## 2. CCS Impact: Sept 2008

### A. School Choice Campaign: Policy Workshop, Partnership, Legal Campaign

#### WORKSHOP ON EDUCATION VOUCHERS FOR GYANODAYA AND SHIKSHAK KA APNA SCHOOL FOR THE RAJASTHAN EDUCATION DEPARTMENT



CCS conducted a one day interactive workshop on 30 July 2008 for the Rajasthan Education Department on Education Vouchers in the context of the Gyanodaya and Shikshak Ka Apna School schemes launched by the Government of Rajasthan in its 2008-2009

Budget. Amongst the participants were Shri Sudhir Bhargava, Principal Secretary-School Education, Srimati Veenu Gupta, Secretary, School Education, Government of Rajasthan, various District Education Officers (DEOs) and heads of key NGOs working on education like UNICEF.

#### PARTNERING WITH RAJASTHAN IN THEIR FIRST VOUCHER INITIATIVE

Centre for Civil Society (CCS), soon to become the Knowledge Partner of the Rajasthan Government in its voucher initiative, will share its research findings with the government and offer technical expertise in the implementation of these two new schemes.

#### PROGRESSIVE GOVERNMENTS IN INDIA ADOPT SCHOOL CHOICE IDEAS

The Government of Rajasthan has devised two schemes—Gyanodaya and Shikshak ka Apna Vidyalaya—to tackle the problems of trained teacher unemployment, lack of access to schools for children in tribal and mining belts and increased need for secondary schools. Uttarakhand devised a scheme called Pahal to successfully bring ragpicker children of Dehradun into mainstream education. The Uttar Pradesh government has decided to provide poor children from standards 1-8 with educational vouchers that will cover the cost of their entire schooling. The project will be implemented in those areas where the total population is 300 with no primary schools within a kilometer.

## **ART VENTURE PROJECT IN RAJASTHAN AND ORISSA**

CCS has started the Art Venture Projects in Orissa and Rajasthan. Street theatre groups will perform in 8 districts in Orissa and 13 districts in Rajasthan propagating school choice ideas creating awareness through the medium of street theatre amongst the general masses.

## **PIL FILED IN THE DELHI HIGH COURT**

CCS filed a PIL in the Delhi High Court on March 7, 2008 bringing the court's attention to the inequitable funding in the schools of the Delhi government. CCS' counsel argued that there was huge variation across schools when it came to government expenditure on a per pupil basis. The per pupil expenditure in some schools was as low as Rs. 830 per year while in other schools it went up to Rs. 40,000 for the same year. The PIL was backed by data obtained through the Right to Information Act, 2005 from the Education Department of the Delhi government. The court admitted the PIL and issued notices to the Delhi government.

## **CALL FOR SCHOOL VOUCHERS IN NIGERIA**

Dr Parth Shah, President, CCS urged the Nigerian government to de-emphasise the current system of funding education and embrace the voucher system of funding at a roundtable organised by Initiative for Public Policy Analysis (IPPA) in Lagos, themed: Qualitative Education: Lessons from India on 25 June 2008. IPPA Executive Director, Thompson Ayodele, while suggesting critical analyses of challenges facing education and exploration of ideas on how to solve them, urged the government to try the new innovation in education funding, as suggested by Dr Shah.

## **B. Youth Outreach: Summer Internships**

### **YOUTH EMPOWERMENT SEMINAR ABOUT CHOICE AND LIVELIHOOD**

On 17 July, 40 participants composed of Senior Friends of Freedom (FOF) members and newly joined members gathered at the Public Library Hall in Malvinagar, Jaipur to understand about youth, choices and livelihood. Apart from young and enthusiastic students there were other NGO and media people present. Most of the sessions were informative, interactive and appreciated by the participants. The focus of NGOs and Media was more on School Choice Campaign. The program had many resource people which include Dr R. S. Bareth from Rajasthan University, Mr B. L. Bajaj a former civil servant, Mr Baladevan from Centre for Civil Society

(CCS) and Dr. Benugopal Mukhopadhyay of National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD). Manoj Mathew and Raunak Ahmad from CCS conducted various sessions to identify the key concerns of the students.

### **TRAINING OF YOUTH VOLUNTEERS**

A group of 14 Australian Volunteers from Oaktree Foundation on 13th July attended a day program organised by CCS. The major attraction was School Choice Campaign and educational policy and its impact on primary education in India. Screening of Jeevika Documentary 'Bagar Baccha' followed by a discussion was highly appreciated by the participants. One-on-one interaction of participants with beneficiaries of school voucher provided them with a clear picture and valuable information.



### **SUMMER RESEARCH INTERNSHIP**



The Research Internship Program Researching Reality from 12 May - 12 July 2008 provided 17 interns greatly valued and needed learning experience in real-life application of social and economic principles and in teaching college students the skills of research, analysis, writing and above all critical thinking. 16 interns completed their research papers on various governance and education issues.

This year we received 183 applications from India and abroad!

### **CCS INTERN IN NATIONAL MEDIA**

Shahana Sheikh, final year economics student of Lady Sri Ram College was recently in the news for her internship paper for the Centre for Civil Society on "Public toilets in Delhi-with emphasis on facilities for women in slum and resettlement areas". Her paper will now have to be read word for word by the MCD as per a Delhi High Court directive. Shahana was present in court in August 2008 along with the petitioner advocate, Mr. Ashok Agarwal, who filed a Public Interest Litigation (PIL).



## C. Livelihood Campaign: Jeevika festival

### JEEVIKA 2008 FESTIVAL



The four-day South Asia Documentary Film Festival – Jeevika 2008 was held at the India Habitat Centre from 28-31 August. The opening ceremony on 28 August was dedicated to a land popularly known as

Shangri-La (paradise on earth) – TIBET and was graced by Mr Tempa Tsering, Official representative of His Holiness the Dalai Lama as the Chief Guest. Tribute to Life, a CCS produced documentary by filmmaker Neil Kartik was screened during the event which also showcased an enthralling dance performance by Tibetan school students. This year we received 101 documentaries from over five countries. 17 films were short listed by a screening committee and jury members, comprising of reputed names from various sectors. The 17 short listed films were screened at IHC on 29 and 30 August followed by panel discussions wherein the audience addressed several queries to the filmmakers. The premier event of the festival was the awards ceremony on 31 August 2008. Mr. Tarun J Tejpal Editor-in-Chief and Publisher of Tehelka was the Chief Guest at the event. The keynote address was delivered by Padma Shree 2008 Recipient Dr. Amit Mitra, Secretary General, Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FICCI). A musical performance by 'EkamSatyam' and a theatre play by Asmita Theatre Group were also showcased during the event.

### JEEVIKA WINNERS 2008

- 1st prize: Chilika Bank\$ by Akansha Joshi, Prize Money: Rs 50,000
- 2nd prize: Laxmi and Me by Nishtha Jain, Prize Money: Rs 35,000
- 3rd prize: Hollow Cylinder by Nandan Saxena and Kavita Bahl, Prize Money: Rs 25,000
- Jeevika Rotary Students Award: What is the point of Stories if they aren't even true? By Aditi Banerjee, Prize Money: Rs 10,000
- Special Jury Award: Hearts Suspended by Meghna Damani

## **CCS PRODUCTION 'JATRA JEEVAN JEEVAN YATRA' BAGS NATIONAL AWARD 2008**

A CCS production documentary by filmmaker Kapilas Bhuyan 'Jatra Jeevan Jeevan Yatra' bagged the National Award for best non-fiction film in art/culture category on 2 September 2008.

## **BOOK LAUNCH OF THE BEST OF SWAMINOMICS: 'ESCAPE FROM THE BENEVOLENT ZOOKEEPERS'**

CCS and Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) co-organised the book launch on 31 July for the release of consulting editor of The Economic Times Swaminathan S. Anklesaria Aiyar's book 'Escape from the Benevolent Zookeepers - The Best of Swaminomics. Indian Finance Minister P. Chidambaram and former Indian Finance Minister Jaswant Singh were the key speakers present. The function was also addressed by Mr. Gurcharan Das, former MD, Procter & Gamble Worldwide & Management Consultant; Dr. Amit Mitra, Secretary General, FICCI and Dr. Parth J Shah, President, Centre for Civil Society.

### **3. CCS Impact: April 2009**

#### **CCS: ONE OF TOP THINK TANKS IN ASIA**

CCS's work in the past eleven years has manifested in several recognitions and awards. It gives us great pleasure to share with you that CCS ranks No 8 in the Top 25 Think Tanks in Asia in 2008, according to a report released by the International Relations Program, University of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia, U.S.A).

#### **A. School Choice Campaign: Admission Reforms, Street Theatre**

##### **ACTION FOR SCHOOL ADMISSION REFORMS (ASAR) LAUNCHED**

The School Choice Campaign and [www.nurseryadmissions.com](http://www.nurseryadmissions.com) launched a new initiative, Action for School Admission Reforms (ASAR) to help parents and concerned others tackle the undue stress imposed upon them during the admission season by schools with myopic viewpoints. ASAR is a helpdesk for parents to lodge complaints, even anonymously, against unscrupulous schools through dedicated helpline numbers, email and websites [www.schoolchoice.in](http://www.schoolchoice.in) and [www.nurseryadmissions.com](http://www.nurseryadmissions.com). All complaints are forwarded to the DoE at regular intervals to build pressure upon it to take necessary action against the schools.

For details on ASAR log on to:  
<http://www.schoolchoice.in/nurseryadmission/>

## **CCS WINS PIL ON SCHOOL ADMISSION IN DELHI HIGH COURT**

The government of Delhi issued a circular to the schools, giving guidelines for carrying out the admissions. In the matter of the Public Interest Litigation (PIL) filed by the Centre for Civil Society seeking the Court's intervention to ensure compliance by schools of the government regulations for nursery admissions, the Hon'ble High Court of Delhi has passed an order agreeing with the contentions of the petitioner.

## **STREET THEATRE ADVOCACY FOR SCHOOL CHOICE**

School Choice Campaign and Art Venture have jointly organized street plays advocating School Choice philosophy to the people in eight districts of Orissa and 13 districts of Rajasthan. Each district has witnessed 15 street theatre performances. These performances have drawn large audiences, thereby taking School Choice ideas closer to the people and local government leaders.



## **PRESENTATION ON SCC IN BHUBANESWAR**

Baladevan R, Associate Director made a presentation on the School Choice Campaign on the occasion of the 5th Odiya Prabasi Diwas on 21 December 08 in the presence of several ministers and experts from the health, education, environment and tourism sectors. School Choice ideas on various ways to develop Orissa's social infrastructure were presented before the government and the non resident Odiyas.

## **B. Youth Outreach: Public Policy Seminars**

### **I, SOCIETY & PUBLIC POLICY (ISPP) SEMINARS, BANGALORE, PUNE AND DELHI**



**ISPP in Bangalore** was organised at Fireflies from 27-30 November 2008. 32 participants from 14 colleges and 13 cities attended the seminar. We had five guest speakers in the seminar besides CCS faculties Dr Parth J. Shah, Mr Manoj Mathew and local coordinator Ms Meghna Singh. The various topics discussed during interactive lectures included 'Governance Reforms in India in the context of Globalisation' by Prof

Chiranjib Sen, IIM Bangalore, 'Urban Reforms: Need of the progressive India' by Mr Kersi Wadia, Janaagraha, 'Youth and Politics' by Mr Jasmine Shah, Jaagore Campaign, 'Current Financial Crisis' by Mr M R Venkatesh,

Commentator on International Trade and Economic Affairs and 'Access to Justice for the Poor and the Disadvantaged' by Prof Anil Suraj-IIM-Bangalore. The participants also had a chance to watch several top documentaries on livelihood and spent an afternoon interacting with villagers during our research reality visit.

**ISPP in Pune** was organized in J.P Naik Institute of Education from 18-27 December, 2008. We had 25 participants from 14 colleges and 15 cities representing 10 states. Five guest speakers at the seminar were Retd. Col D V R Rao who spoke on 'National Security', Ms Neema Pathak from an NGO Kalpvriksha who shared her ideas on 'Forest Rights Bill', Mr Vikas Mathkari, the leader of opposition in Pune Municipal Corporation who conducted a session on 'Municipal Reform', Mr. Ranjit Gadgil, Program Director, Janwani and Lead India finalist who spoke on 'Youth & Politics', and Mr Kaushik Shekhar, Jaago Re: One Billion Campaign who talked about youth participation in democracy besides CCS faculties Dr Parth J. Shah, Ms Swati Chawla and Mr Amit Chandra.



### **C. Livelihood Campaign: Livelihood Study, Documentary Screenings**

#### **LIVELIHOOD REGULATIONS STUDY RELEASED**

Press conferences were organised to release a study on Livelihood regulations and entry-level barriers in the informal sector in Pune on 22 December 2008, Cochin and Bhubaneswar on 29 December 08 and in Delhi on 24 February 2009. The study was conducted by CCS in partnership with Centre for Public Policy Research and Sir Dorabji Tata Trust in 63 cities, including Delhi. The purpose of the study aimed at unveiling laws applicable to entry-level professions like cycle-rickshaw pullers, mobile and stationery street vendors, butchers, vegetable-sellers, and to document them with the effort to create public attention to issues faced by common poor citizen of India.

*For complete data log on to [www.livelihoodfreedom.in](http://www.livelihoodfreedom.in).*

#### **JEEVIKA AT AMERICAN CENTRE**

On 13 December 2008, Saturday Cinema Film Focus: Sustainable Livelihood at American Center showcased the best of the Jeevika South Asia Livelihood Documentaries along with American films on livelihood freedom. Jeevika films screened at the Centre included 'Hollow Cylinder', 'Hearts Suspended', 'Lakshmi and Me' and 'Rainmakers: Victor Gotti Cherry in New York.'