



Annual Report 2011-2012

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ABOUT CENTRE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

Launched on 15 August 1997, Centre for Civil Society (CCS) is an independent, non-profit research and educational think tank based in Delhi committed to increasing opportunity, prosperity, and quality of life for every Indian by reinvigorating civil society and readjusting political society. Our mission is to promote social change through public policy by being a resource for innovative community and market based ideas for critical policy issues particularly in the areas of education, livelihoods, and governance. Our unique focus on public policy and longer-term solutions makes our research outputs crucial feeders into policy making and opinion formulation.



We try to change people's ideas, opinions, and mindsets through research, seminars, and publications. The issues that CCS is moving to the front burner of public discussion includes licensing of street entrepreneurs, educational choice, good governance through duty to publish and ward level management, community stewardship and property rights approach to the environment. CCS conducts educational programs for various target audiences including the youth, opinion makers, and policy makers to provide a systematic understanding of liberal ideas. CCS also conducts its own research and advocates non-state policy solutions in the areas of livelihood, governance, education, environment, globalisation, and rule of law.

I. HIGHLIGHTS

Since its inception in 1997, CCS has carved a niche space in the policy arena for liberal ideas and innovative market based solutions. Over the years we have evolved and kept pace with the changing political, social and economic climate by adapting our focus, approach and efforts. In the past year, instead of being reactive, CCS has undertaken transformational efforts to create a roadmap to guide its long-term focus and activities for maximum effectiveness. This report outlines some of these efforts and achievements.

- Organisational Developments
 - * Team strength at 24 currently, with 5 incoming researchers, 1 communications specialist, and 1 marketing specialist.
 - * Grant and award funding raised from Earhart foundation, Templeton foundation, LEAP members, and individual HNIs.
- School Choice Campaign
 - * Actively engaged on the policy debate around the right to education in India.
 - * Written briefs on the issue, organised conferences bringing key contentions to fore, and implemented an advocacy campaign on how the Right to Education Act should be framed and executed.
 - * School Voucher for Girls (SVG) pilot now in its third year of operation.
 - * Piloting the use of community scorecards in monitoring implementation of RTE.
- Jeevika: Law, Liberty, and Livelihoods Campaign
 - * Running a mass mobilisation and advocacy campaign in two cities towards reforming the national street vendor policy.
- Academy Programs
 - * Conducted three public policy seminars in two cities in the reporting period with 80 participants in attendance.
 - * Managed 20 interns in the summer to help us with our research and program agenda.
 - * Organised public policy workshops for journalists in Delhi, to help them understand how policy is formulated and what makes for sound evaluation of a policy.
 - * Organised a colloquium on property rights, where 20 liberals across the spectrum discussed the challenges and prospects of the property rights debate.

II. ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

A. Human Resources

Recruitment

In the early part of 2011-12, several team members transitioned out of CCS, bringing the team strength down to 16. A steady recruitment effort now sees CCS staff size at 24. In addition, we have four new researchers joining the team in June. We are also in the process of finalizing the recruitment of a communications specialist, a marketing specialist and a research coordinator. The team has also recruited a senior researcher to manage the summer research internship program.

Institutional growth exercise

One of the reasons for the high turnover has been a gap in leadership capacity in the organisation. CCS engaged the services of an organisational development consultant to assist with a diagnostic intervention followed by detailed discussions within the team on building a caring organisation with systems that are geared towards growth. A report on the summary of this exercise is attached with this report.

Picture 1: The Growing CCS Team



III. SCHOOL CHOICE CAMPAIGN

The School Choice Campaign (SCC), launched in 2007, is our flagship policy initiative to bring reform to the education sector and provide innovative solutions like school vouchers based on the principles of choice and competition. In the last year, the campaign has been active across various thrusts.

A. Research

Analysis of education budgets

The aim of this project is to collate and standardise a time series data for the last two plan periods on Government Expenditure on Education (at all levels). This will assist in the computation of per child expenditure in public schools. The study is collating data on expenditure incurred by state and central education departments, expenditure incurred by departments other than the education department (at the centre and state level), and expenditure by the Centre and states under both capital and revenue expenditure divided by scheme. Currently the team is processing data for Delhi, to be followed by Gujarat.

Cost of Compliance with RTE

The study aims to estimate the cost of complying with the RTE norms for budget private schools in one urban, peri-urban and rural areas of Delhi. The study employs primary research to collect data from fifteen budget private schools to find out what improvements are needed by schools if they are to be RTE compliant. It focuses on recognised budget private schools charging less than or equal to 500 INR monthly as the maximum fee for standard 5. The research focuses on two major input components of the RTE namely, infrastructure norms which comprise of having playgrounds of a specific size, library and toilets among others, and the quality of teaching determined by the number of teachers, their qualifications and training. Using an exhaustive list of these indicators, the study evaluates the cost of undertaking these improvements and also assesses the additional cost burden for parents in the event the school owners pass on the cost to parents over time in order to break even on their investment. This research can provide evidence of the huge financial burden of RTE on budget private schools, which may erode their ability to provide quality education to the poor at an affordable cost.

PERI

The study aims to highlight and review challenges in the implementation of Clause 12 of the Right to Education Act through a perception study of the various stakeholders (parents, students, teachers, schools and government officials) in four districts of North Delhi. The study's main findings were that there is a lack of clarity and transparency on the process of implementation, issues of integration were yet to be worked out, and targeting and sourcing of beneficiaries needs to be streamlined. Based on these findings, the campaign has recommended that the definition of beneficiaries be made clearer, awareness levels about the eligibility criteria and admission process under Clause 12 be raised, and the reimbursement process (amount and frequency) for schools under the Clause be streamlined.

B. Proofs of Concept***School Voucher for Girls***

SVG, the voucher pilot project run by SCC in northeast Delhi has completed its third year distribution of vouchers. A concurrent research evaluation, a study of parents and children, to look into perceptions and learning level changes after a year of treatment to vouchers are currently underway. In addition to learning achievements and parental perceptions, this year we are also undertaking a survey of schools to ascertain the impact of these vouchers by studying the difference in infrastructure in these schools, and tracking dropouts to understand why they left the program. The research conducted thus far suggests:

- Increase in English, Hindi and math scores for voucher students;
- Increased parental engagement in the entire schooling process right from school selection to the monitoring of every day school activities and homework; and
- Increased aspirations for both parents and students.

ANSA-Community Scorecard

In August 2011, CCS launched the 'Auditing the Right to Education Act' pilot (ATRTE) to support citizens' ability to understand the Right to Education Act. By focusing on the School Management Committee, as mandated in Clause 17 of the RTE Act, the project aims build stakeholder capacity to

monitor and advocate for their fundamental right to education. In the ATRTE pilot we use a well-established social accountability tool, the community scorecard to measure extent of the gap between the ideals of the Right to Education Act and the reality of elementary education in India. The use of the tool will facilitate a constructive dialogue between citizens and service providers to ensure that the RTE Act is implemented effectively and equitably.

The primary beneficiaries of the project are children and their parents of the children enrolled in state schools. Subsequent beneficiaries include local and district level education officials and departments of the state government. The project is currently underway in Kota, Rajasthan. Three districts with varied demographics were chosen for the pilot, Simliya (non tribal village), Bamori (tribal village) and Ward 48 of Kota (peri-urban area).

Picture 2: Community Mobilisation Using Kala Jathas



Two rounds of community scorecards are to be administered and two convergence meetings to be held during the course of the pilot. CCS has administered the first round of community scorecards and completed the first convergence meeting on 16 December 2011. 57 participants attended the meeting including district level government officials, concerned schools headmasters, members of self help group, school management committee members, anganwadi workers and parents. The pilot was evaluated by OneWorld in March 2012, and CCS is in talks of scaling

the project up in Baran by the end of this year.

ANSA, our donors have initiated The Communities of Practice in Social Accountability supported by WB and DFID. Based on SCC's participation in the country consultation, we have been invited to be a core member of COPSA in India. We were invited to the regional meeting of COPSA in Colombo where we presented our perspectives on mobilizing offline communities through online engagement. Going forward, this platform will help consolidate our work on social accountability to help build benchmarks and indicators for best practices.

School Rating

CCS helped Grey Matters Capital (GMC) and Micro-Credit Rating International Limited (M-Cril) pilot a rating system to help school managers, parents, regulators, and investors better assess the quality of education that low cost budget private schools offer. As part of this project, CCS enrolled the schools empanelled in our first two voucher pilots to sign up. The rating consisted of key indicators of quality education ranging from input data such as infrastructure, facilities, and teachers, to outcome data such as student performance. Under such a new accreditation system, stakeholders, especially parents, would have a better understanding of each school and the services they provide to drive student achievement. 21 schools from our voucher pilot in Delhi were assessed as part of the rating.

Subsequently, CCS and Grey Matters Capital organised a conference on the Impact of the RTE Act on Budget Private Schools for 100 school leaders from across Delhi. The goal of the conference was to make school leaders familiar with various trends in the budget school space and to provide networking opportunities for them to connect, share insights and learn with an active group of participants comprising school leaders, education service providers and other participants from the sector.

C. Policy Engagement & Advocacy

The Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE Act) is set to change the educational landscape in India. Education being a concurrent subject under the Constitution, implementation of the Act is largely at the state-level. The RTE Act is framed as umbrella legislation and each state has drafted its own Rules.

State-level advocacy

The campaign team has been meeting with state level education officials in Himachal Pradesh, Chandigarh, Uttarakhand and Gujarat to discuss various facets of RTE implementation and school choice concepts. Based on these meetings:

- * The team submitted a proposal to the government of Gujarat to design a voucher project targeting scheduled tribes for secondary education.
- * The team submitted a proposal to the government of Uttarakhand to use vouchers for 25% reservations under RTE.
- * The team is following up with Himachal Pradesh to design a blueprint for SMCs, propose a design for private participation in DIETs and rationalise their schemes for secondary education.
- * The Delhi government has requested a field visit to voucher schools followed by a discussion with voucher beneficiaries.
- * The Chandigarh government has requested help with best practices for effective SMCs.

Legal Campaign

CCS has filed a Public Interest Litigation before the Supreme Court challenging the provision in the RTE Act that requires all schools except government schools to meet set norms and standards for recognition. Our challenge is that the exclusion of government schools from this requirement is arbitrary and discriminatory. The PIL has been referred to a Constitution Bench along with various other challenges to the RTE Act. We hope that through this PIL we will be able to ensure that government schools follow the same standards imposed on private edupreneurs. Currently, the court has stayed the judgment until the 3G case has been resolved.

LEAP – Leaders in Education Advocacy and Policy

CCS has put together a consortium of public and private education institutes, leaders in education delivery, finance, operations and management, and training and skill development service providers to advocate for systemic reform in the education sector. LEAP aims to reform the education sector by increasing transparency and accountability across public and private institutions, and augmenting choice, competition, and community participation in the sector.

LEAP will advocate for policy change through research, advocacy, and networking initiatives such as high-level policy dialogues with Central and State authorities, public opinion campaigns and legal interventions. LEAP will provide a forum to share experiences in education service delivery, finance, operations, and administration by creating a pool of best practices and cutting-edge innovations. LEAP will also track rules and regulations that apply to education provision in the country, and update members on issues that apply to them. Finally, LEAP will provide an opportunity to inform and impact the discourse on education.

D. Communications & Public Opinion

Media Engagement

The School Choice Campaign has been directly involved in analyzing and giving recommendations to improve the RTE Act and is now providing workable implementation models. In the past year we have had two great television appearances, first by Sujatha Muthayya in Russia Today speaking on vouchers and school choice, and the second by Parth Shah on a CNBC Awaaz special on education 'Kala Akshar'. In addition, six news articles have been published on various facets of our work including in the Wall Street Journal, Global Post (India Education: The Chain School), Business India (Paradigm of Choice), Business Standard (The smart coupons), Business and Economy (Would you send your child to a government school?) and The Times of India (Ways to implement RTE). The launch of NISA also garnered media attention through write-ups on five online forums and in the India Express.

Portals and social media

CCS has created the RTE Coalition, a collaborative effort to nurture a democratic space where each coalition partner will be able to strategise and contribute to make universal elementary education a reality in India. CCS also manages the website of the RTE Coalition, righttoeducation.in, which is a one-stop online resource for information on the right to education. In the past year, the portal has seen a steady flow of queries on RTE, cementing our position as a lead knowledge portal and helping improving transparency in the implementation of RTE.

Overton fellows: The campaign also launched the Joseph P Overton Fellowship for Education Policy this year. We received 53 applications from candidates across India, of which seven Fellows were selected from states across India. Working independently at the state-level as part of the yearlong fellowship, Overton Fellows focus their research and analyses on the implementation of RTE Act. The Fellows track state-level developments, scan media and news coverage of RTE in local publications and sources, and write blogs on RTE compliance, teacher accountability and budget private schools in the state.

Student First Dialogue, News, and Magazine

Since the start of the Student First Dialogue Series, the campaign has organised 16 dialogues on various facets of Quality Education for All. In 2011, the team organised three such dialogues on

Picture 3: Dialogue on Teacher Accountability



'Public Private Partnerships for Quality in School Education', 'Strengthening Teacher Accountability through Right to Education Act', and '25% reservation under the RTE Act: Are we getting it right?'

The Student First! Magazine is a quarterly publication of articles and columns on the education sector. The team produced a very well received issue of the magazine on Access to Finance in education in April 2011. In addition, the team has continued to produce Student First! Newsletter, a weekly digest of news reports on the education sector in India. It tracks research and developments in the K-12, higher education and vocational education sector.

School Choice National Conference

The Campaign team organised the third annual School Choice National Conference titled Catalyzing Education for All: Intention, Innovation and Implementation on 21 December 2011 at the India Habitat Centre. The participation of several top-level academicians, policy makers, government officials, education specialists and the media helped make the conference a grand success.

Picture 4: SCNC 2011



Professor Geeta Gandhi Kingdon's opened the conference with a discussion on 'Defining priorities for Quality Education'. The conference saw four powerful sessions with celebrated panelists, each a leader in his field. The first panel discussion looked at Implementation of RTE with specific emphasis on making State rules more effective, the role of budget private schools in aiding access and using School Management Committees to drive quality. The second session on public-private-partnerships focused on the lessons for primary education from programs like Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna, District Institute of Educational Training (DIET) and experiments with vouchers in Andra Pradesh. The third panel was centered on secondary education, specifically on Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan and the vocationalisation of secondary education. The final session explored technology and disruptive innovation in education, examining self-organised learning environments and blended learning.

E. Institutional Support for Budget Performing schools (BPS)

NISA

CCS has recently helped incubate the National Independent Schools Alliance (NISA), which represents over 5000 schools from 11 states. NISA was launched in December 2011 as a national platform for both private school owners and existing school association leaders to present a unified voice to address concerns about government regulations and laws and to continue to improve quality. The alliance aims to improve learning outcomes in budget private schools by working alongside the government to address concerns arising from current education policy, specifically the RTE Act. While the long-term vision is for members to manage the alliance, CCS is currently the secretariat for NISA. Currently, NISA has 45 Core-group members including association heads from different states, school owners, principals and school managers who have been assigned to five working groups: finance, advocacy, public relations, school improvement, and governance. NISA holds the following opportunities for member schools and associations:

National Independent Schools Alliance (NISA), which represents over 5000 schools from 11 states. NISA was launched in December 2011 as a

Picture 5: Press Conference at NISA Launch



- A unified, powerful voice for regulatory reforms and better support for budget private schools to the government, media, academics and international organisations;
- Workshops and trainings on leadership management, classroom teaching techniques and other quality education modules;
- School improvement through scientific learning assessments;
- Legal aid via a network of lawyers across the country; and
- Better access to credit and other services at affordable rates.

IV. JEEVIKA CAMPAIGN

Jeevika is part of an attempt to bring to focus policies that have liberalised the sectors from which the middle classes earn their livelihood, but still restrict entry-level professions with the license raj, keeping India under imposed poverty. In the past year, CCS has intensified its efforts towards mass awareness, mobilisation, and advocacy for policy reforms governing street entrepreneurs like vendors and hawkers in Jaipur and Patna. The Campaign has scored several wins in advocating successfully on behalf of street vendors to ensure their right to livelihoods. Some of our wins include Rajasthan state assembly passing the bill on street vending, Bihar government drafting the bill and implementation rules for street vending, and expanding the campaign work to redress the hardships faced by cycle rickshaw pullers in Jaipur & artisans in Patna.

A. Research, and Documentation

Expanding our campaign work beyond street vending, the team studied other occupations in great detail evaluating the scale of impact of policy advocacy, regulatory hurdles of the occupation and the scope of policy intervention. The team has completed a comprehensive study of cycle rickshaw pulling in Rajasthan and artisanship in Bihar, and is currently in the process of drafting a plan of action to pursue policy advocacy in both these areas.

Picture 6: Mobilizing street vendors in Rajasthan



B. Community Mobilisation, Capacity Building and Mass Campaigning

In Rajasthan, using RTI as a tool to build pressure on government, we have filed more than 100 RTI applications and been following up continuously to monitor their progress. The campaign team organised 27 workshops for street vendor leaders, 25 large group meetings and 100 small group meetings over the period of six months. Similarly in Bihar, the campaign team has organised several workshops of street vendors and continued mobilisation of vendor groups to demand for their rights.

C. Advocacy among Stakeholders

In Rajasthan, the campaign offered a workshop to the state government on the street vendor bill and challenges in execution attended by all the municipal corporation heads. Before the bill was introduced in the state assembly, we organised a policy roundtable with members of legislative

assembly, and highlighted the issue in popular print and electronic media. In Bihar, organised a workshop with street vendors and other stakeholders on the 'Role of Urban Bodies and Civil Society for Betterment of Street vendors'.

Our advocacy has also paid off at the national level, where the Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation, Government of India has also agreed to introduce a central act on street vending and have started working on draft.

D. Jeevika Asia Livelihood Documentary Festival

**Picture 7: Photography Competition
Winning Entry: The Cobbler by Joy Acharya**



The 8th Annual Jeevika Documentary Film Festival was held with much fanfare on 26-28 August 2011 at the India Habitat Centre, with over 500 people attending the 3-day event. 14 documentaries (10 professional and 4 amateur) showcasing various aspects of livelihood were short listed for screening from a total of 73 films that were submitted for the Festival this year. Leaving behind 13 other short listed entries, 'Jharu Katha', a poignant story on the livelihood struggles of broom makers in rural Rajasthan won the top honours at the festival. The documentaries touched upon sensitive subjects such as forced/child labour, surrogate mothers, tribal land issues and migrant musicians. National Award winning filmmaker and Padma Vibhushan, Adoor Gopalakrishnan inaugurated the festival, and acclaimed lawyer and MP Ram Jethmalani delivered

the keynote address.

V. ACADEMY AND PROGRAMS

A. Researching Reality Internship 2011

Twenty interns and five externs successfully completed their summer engagements with CCS. Research topics this year included a study on how dispersed knowledge translates into an effective pricing mechanism in the second hand book market in Delhi, calculation of per child expenditure in schools for the visually impaired, economics of justice delivery in India, and measuring the impact of Value Added Tax.



Picture 8: Summer Interns 2011

Picture 9: Ipolicy for Journalists June 2011



B. ipolicy (formerly known as I, Society & Public Policy)

- As many as 22 journalists drawn from various Hindi newspapers, news agencies, TV channels, magazines and websites successfully attended an ipolicy in June in Delhi. The Course, supported by the Atlas Economic Research Foundation, was designed and delivered in Hindi, as the Hindi media commands a much larger readership and suffers from a lack of training opportunities as compared to

its English counterpart.

- 46 students and young professionals attended the policy for Young Leaders in July in Delhi. The seminar brought top finalists of the C Rajagopalachari Essay Competition on 'How Free Are You?' supported by International Policy Network, London.
- CCS organised an policy for Young Leaders in September for the first time at Gokhale Institute with 35 participants. Featured speakers included Sharad Joshi, Anu Aga, and Vikas Mathkari.
- CCS organised an policy for Development (NGO) leaders in November to help them understand the larger policy perspective in order to effectively address the challenges of poverty, exclusion and social unrest. 25 NGO leaders from around the country attended the program.

C. Colloquium on Property Rights

CCS, in partnership with the Friedrich Naumann-Stiftung fur die Freiheit, hosted a three-day Colloquium on Property Rights: Law, Liberty & Livelihoods in Mumbai between 15-17 July 2011. Seventeen professionals from India, France and Nepal who are actively engaged with these issues from civil society, law, academics and government came together to share their experiences and seek alternative perspectives.

D. Freedom Caravan

CCS, in partnership with the Friedrich Naumann-Stiftung fur die Freiheit, hosted Freedom Caravan, a educational program held over 13 days reaching out to over 1,500 youths from various colleges of

Picture 10: Freedom Caravan Banner



Delhi and Pune. The caravan celebrated "capitalist acts among consenting adults", with guest talks by internationally renowned speakers, theatre and music performances, and a visual art competition. The program aimed to expose young people to the philosophy of liberty and current liberal policy issues, to create a positive perception of liberal ideas among young people in India, especially regarding the ways in which liberal policies can advance the dignity and prosperity of India's poor and to identify students and local leaders

interested in liberal ideas to develop a support network of liberally minded young people to advance liberal ideas in India.

VI. COMING UP IN 2012

CCS has a full calendar for 2012, focusing heavily on building its research portfolio, expanding state level advocacy in education, and scaling up programs under the Academy. Highlights for 2012:

Organisational Development

- Recruitment of 2 senior staff for research and advocacy, operations & HR manager, and communications manager;
- Revision of HR processes, review of salary bands and benefits package, review of performance management system; and
- Leadership development exercise.

School Choice Campaign

- Research: building a platform to host all information related to K 12 like all government education expenditures, private expenditures, learning outcome data, PPP projects, promising pilots, accountability mechanisms like SMCs, questions in the Parliament and assemblies, and scale of private education;
- Policy Engagement & Advocacy: Pushing for a change in education policy to stop closure of unrecognised private schools and transparent implementation of 25% reservation; and
- Institutional Support for BPS: Expanding NISA and handing over management to members.

Jeevika

- Expanding the campaign's policy advocacy to cycle rickshaw pulling and artisanship;
- Creating a blueprint for street vendor policy that can be adopted across states.

Academy

- Organizing policy seminars for young leaders, development leaders and journalists;
- Holding annual colloquium and freedom caravan.

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