



CENTRE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

ANNUAL REPORT

2012-2013

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INTRODUCTION

Last year, CCS completed 15 years of work dedicated to advancing personal, social, economic and political freedoms through promotion of choice, competition and community based policy reforms. Our efforts to this end were rewarded when the University of Pennsylvania’s Think Tanks and Civil Societies Program ranked us **51st globally and among the top 15 think tanks in Asia.**



Picture 1: CCS celebrates 15 years of work, 21 October 2012

The numbers speak volumes. We received over 100 media citations and our social media outreach increased significantly as we doubled our following on Facebook and Twitter over the last 12 months, connecting with a more diverse demographic. The creation of the National Independent Schools Alliance (NISA), brought together over 6000 school owners and associations from over 12 states to advocate for the rights of budget performing schools. Our Jeevika campaign worked with vendor unions,

conducting 125 workshops, meetings and rallies to build awareness about the Street Vendor Bill, motivating them to demand their rights from their respective state governments. We set up the Asia Centre for Enterprise (ACE) in partnership with the Atlas Foundation to support intellectual entrepreneurs in the creation and successful running of liberal organisations across Asia. ACE hosted the Asia Liberty Forum this February, bringing together 200 change makers and libertarians and giving them a platform to network with, learn from and collaborate with one another.

This report highlights some of our achievements over the last 12 months.



Picture 2: Participants at the Asia Liberty Forum

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 streams.

A. Research

Scholarship Scheme for Minorities

We conducted a study of scholarships for minorities and their disbursement and have come up with recommendations that will help move to a per-child funding model. The team has completed their primary research and will publish the findings in the form of a policy review this year.

K-12 Data Portal

CCS worked with the Central Square Foundation to create a digital platform for streamlined education data in the country. Currently we have collated expenditure data, some student learning outcomes and infrastructure data.

Through the platform, CCS aims to bridge the information gap in the education sector and encourage evidence-based policy debate and formulation. It will allow for the assessment of existing trends in education and provide a clear picture of all inputs and outputs to education at the national and state level thereby increasing the accountability of the system, leading to an overall improvement in quality of education.

At a meeting called by the Secretary of Elementary Education, MHRD, they agreed to help collate the data for this portal and also expressed interest in working with us to create a teacher data portal along the same lines.

Cost of Compliance

Our research team completed a study to estimate the cost of complying with the RTE norms for budget private schools in urban, peri-urban and rural areas of Delhi, focusing on the infrastructure norms and norms regarding teachers' salary and minimum qualifications. The study found that based on the estimated costs of infrastructure and recurring outflow, there would be a four-fold increase in the monthly fees for students, which could prove to be prohibitive for the current students who can barely afford these schools. Moreover, it could lead to the closure of many of these schools, rendering a large number of students out of school. The paper will be published in the form of a policy review in the coming months.

Legislative Analyses

An RTE amendment bill was drafted for introduction in Parliament as a private member bill in coming sessions. Our recommendations focus on quality education and learning outcomes.

RTIs were also filed to all states asking for the per-child funding formula reimbursing private schools under the 25% quota and we are in the process of analysing the data that was received.

B. Proof of Concept

School Vouchers for Girls

Rigorous data collection through household and learning assessment surveys for both the control group and the test group of voucher beneficiaries under our SVG pilot was completed. Of our 400 voucher recipients, we identified 75 students who have not yet completed schooling till class V and are continuing to support them, while also raising funds for the elementary school graduates.

C. Policy Engagement & Advocacy

Central Level Advocacy

Following the cabinet reshuffle at the central level, our advocacy team met with the new HRD team including Shashi Tharoor, Minister of State for Human Resource Development, Rajarshi Bhattacharya, Secretary in the Department of School Education and Literacy, Amarjit Singh and Vrinda Sarup, Additional Secretaries of Elementary Education, Vikram Sahay, Director of Elementary Education, Abha Joshi, Directorate of Education, Delhi and Vinit Joshi, Chairman of the CBSE.



Picture 4: A parent reads our pamphlet on the RTE 25% reservation

State Level Advocacy

Our advocacy team organised an extensive campaign working with MCDs in Delhi to raise awareness among parents of students from EWS about the 25% reservation in private schools. The campaign was extremely successful, resulting in increased awareness among beneficiaries about the provisions made for them, improved dialogue among councillors and the public regarding these provisions and sensitisation of schools regarding the 25% quota. CCS and the MCD also set up a helpline to address any queries and concerns

parents might have. The helpline proved to be an extremely valuable resource for parents and we received over 1000 phone calls from them related to various aspects of the admission process. The launch of this helpline also received widespread media coverage.

CCS has been instituted as a member of **FICCI's Committee on Elementary Education**. Our extensive research in the field of education allows us to serve as valuable knowledge partners for the committee. In addition we are members of two of their sub-committees that focus on issues surrounding the RTE and Accountability. We have also been included in the **Inclusive Education Committee at CBSE**. Parth serves as a member of the Court at the **Central University of Tamil Nadu** and **Central University of Himachal Pradesh**. He has also been invited to join an **experts group on the Right to Education in Pakistan**, where the group's primary responsibilities will include the drafting of workable models and strategising in the context of implementation of the Right to Education in Pakistan.

Two high profile events were held to support our advocacy efforts.

- **Parliamentary Forum:** The advocacy team organised a Policy Forum for Members of Parliament on the idea of Alternative Service Delivery Mechanisms. Former Chief Economist of the Asian Development Bank, Advisor to the World Bank and Professor of Indian Political Economy at Columbia University, Dr. Arvind



Picture 5: Participants at the Policy Forum on Alternative Service Delivery Mechanisms, August 2012

Panagariya led the discussion with a brief presentation, which preceded an open discussion forum. 12 Members of Parliament across the spectrum of political parties attended the forum and enthusiastically engaged with Dr. Panagariya.

- Annual School Choice National Conference:** On 4 December, we organised our 4th annual School Choice National Conference, India’s largest and most dynamic gathering of academics, policy experts, NGO leaders, government officials, school leaders and journalists to discuss critical policy challenges and offer innovative solutions to India’s greatest educational challenges. With over 150 attendees, this was a tremendously successful conference that covered key issues including translating of legislation into practice, the ‘voice, choice & incentives’ of various stakeholders, issues concerning marginalised groups such as the disabled, and finally a debate on the merits of school choice versus a common school system. The biggest wins from the conference were the public statements of two respected public figures, former Chief Secretary of Delhi, Ms. Shailaja Chandra, who argued that it was “high time” education was viewed as a business and that schools should be allowed to operate under for-profit models and Jay Panda, a Lok Sabha MP from Orissa reaffirmed his support for vouchers as a mechanism to deliver public goods and called for 600 voucher pilots, one in every district in India, to develop a comprehensive voucher model to improve the quality of education available to students.

D. Institutional Support for Budget Private Schools: NISA

National Independent Schools Alliance (NISA) was set up in December 2011 and now has over 6,000 members from 12 states across the country. It has emerged as a leading representative body of budget performing schools in India.

National Level Summits

NISA held four national level meets in the last calendar year. The workshops in June and September saw NISA members come together to discuss ideas and strategies around advocacy for budget private schools and school improvement.



Picture 6: School owners, association heads and education service providers at the School Leaders Summit, December 2012

In December, NISA organised its first annual School Leaders Summit, with 175 budget private school leaders, school owners and heads of affordable school associations from across India sharing best practices from within and outside India and learning how these can be implemented within their context. The Summit had several private and non-government service providers presenting their innovations to members of the Alliance in a bid to encourage members to adopt these innovations in their schools. Dr Jane Hofmeyr, Executive Director of The Independent Schools Association of

Southern Africa (ISASA) helped NISA draft its constitution and governance structure.

State Level Summits

State level workshops were held in Uttarakhand, Andhra Pradesh and Punjab over the last 12 months. School owners, prominent local leaders, government officers, principals of affordable schools, proprietors, education service providers and association heads from these states were represented at the meetings.

E. Communications & Public Opinion

Publications

Policy Review 5: Swedish School Vouchers by Jan Sjunnesson: This latest policy review examines the Swedish Model of School Vouchers. Outlining the successes, challenges and limitations of the model, the publication highlights the political currency of this model in present day Sweden. It demonstrates the opportunities that arise as a result of the decentralisation of education and helps us gauge the merits of experimenting with these reforms in the Indian context.

Viewpoint 10.1 (English & Hindi): Through this document the Centre for Civil Society seeks to highlight the lacunae in the current framework for 25% reservation for weaker and disadvantaged groups in unaided private schools and seeks to provide inputs on effective implementation of the same.

School Choice National Conference Booklet: This booklet, a new collateral for our annual conference, provides an overview of CCS standpoint on voice, choice and incentives in education.

Media Engagement



Picture 7: Media coverage of the launch of the RTE helpline

importance of accountability in education appeared in the *Financial Express*. He also co-authored a chapter on 'Private Initiative in India's Education Miracle' in *IDFC's India Infrastructure Report 2012* with Luis Miranda.

Shantanu Gupta, the Associate Director of Advocacy was quoted in *The National* on the need for governments to let schools be; and made an appearance on *Lok Sabha TV*, talking about our ideas on the RTE.

The School Choice Campaign has attracted the attention of the media for their active advocacy and proofs of concept. SCC ideas have been published in more than 50 newspapers and online resources in the last 12 months.

The Economist cited the positive outcomes of our School Voucher for Girls and Delhi Voucher Pilots. An exclusive piece by CCS was published in *One India, One People*, on the RTE. Parth J Shah's views on 'How to fulfill the RTE promise' were published in the *Indian Express*, and an article by him on the

The launch of our RTE helpline was covered in *The Hindu*, *Sahara Samay*, *Millenium Post* and the *Rasthriya Sahara*, among others.

CCS and Central Square Foundation organised the ‘**RTE at Three: Making Learning the Priority**’ press conference to discuss the low learning outcomes observed in schools and the misguided focus of the RTE on inputs into education. A press release to this effect was endorsed by 22 organisations, 6 individuals and over 20 journalists. Ashish Dhawan from CSF and Yamini Aiyar from Accountability Initiative and Sridhar Rajagopalan from Education Initiatives served as panelists. The conference received widespread media coverage, including stories in *Mint*, *Business Standard*, *Times of India* and *Nai Dunia*.



Picture 8: RTE at 3 Press Conference, April 2013

JEEVIKA: LAW, LIBERTY AND LIVELIHOOD CAMPAIGN

The Jeevika campaign brings into focus reforms needed in the informal sector to bring economic freedom to the enterprising poor. In the past year, CCS has intensified its efforts towards mass awareness, mobilisation, and advocacy for policy changes that are needed to liberate street entrepreneurs, rickshaw pullers and artisans – through our campaign office in Jaipur, the partnership with Nidan in Patna and the advocacy efforts for central legislation in New Delhi.

A. Mass Awareness & Mobilisation

Over 125 meetings and workshops took place over the last 12 months with vendor unions, officials in the municipal commissioner’s office, media and elected representatives to increase awareness of the Rajasthan Street Vendor Bill. We submitted 35 memos to policy makers and key stakeholders highlighting the need to expedite implementation of the Rajasthan Street Vending Act and other local issues.

To increase our outreach, two conferences were held at a state level in Rajasthan, with civic bodies and street vendor groups in order to support the drafting and implementation of the Bill.

Rally

Over 2000 street vendors were mobilised and marched from Geeta Ashram Sodala to Civil Lines in Jaipur on 21 January 2013. They put forward their demands for immediate implementation of the Rajasthan Street Vendors Act. The rally was publicised by a press conference that received a great deal of media attention. 40 news articles were published on the campaign, which helped increase overall awareness of our core objectives.

Distribution of ID Cards

In order to assist the Jaipur Municipal Corporation with the implementation of the Rajasthan Urban Street Vendor Bill 2011, we conducted a survey in 23 street markets of two Municipal Zones (Vidyadhar Nagar and Civil Lines) on pilot basis to demonstrate how the Bill can be implemented.

With help from ‘Heritage City Thadi-Thela and Footpath Vyavasayi Union, Jaipur’, we collected information and also validated that only vendors who were currently active were enrolled. Based upon the results of the survey, Identity Cards were developed for around 800 street vendors.

The cards were distributed at an event in September, which also served to educate vendors about the card and its use. The programme was organised in Geeta Ashram, Jaipur and witnessed participation of around 500 street vendors from the surveyed markets.

B. Policy Engagement & Advocacy

Law, Liberty and Livelihoods Campaign has seen some big wins in the past year. The Rajasthan State Assembly passed the Street Vendors Bill, the Bihar government drafted the bill and implementation rules for street vending. The Ministry of Housing and Urban Poverty Alleviation also introduced a central act on street vending in Parliament in September 2012 and we provided our comments and recommendations to the Standing Committee on Urban Development. The report issued by the committee mentions our memo and has taken cognizance of several of our recommendations.

C. Jeevika: Asia Livelihood Documentary Festival

The 9th Annual Jeevika: Asia Livelihood Documentary Festival took place from 31 August to 2



Picture 9: Subhash Ghai presents the award for Best Feature Documentary to Bishnu Dev Halder

September 2012 at the India Habitat Centre. It captured livelihood challenges faced by the rural and urban poor, bringing light to policies and regulations that prevent the economically weaker from earning an honest living and attaining the livelihood that brings them happiness. Of 58 entries, 18 documentary films were shortlisted and screened – 5 films by student filmmakers and 13 by professional filmmakers. We were pleased to host

noted filmmaker Subhash Ghai as our chief guest.

Anjan Roy, Economic Advisor, Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry (ASSOCHAM) gave the keynote speech on the final day of the festivities, followed by a special message by one of the Centre’s oldest cause champions, Amir Ullah Khan, Economist and Deputy Director of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

D. Research

We completed a study and documentary on cycle-rickshaw pullers and a study on artisans in Bihar, to provide a picture of their socio-economic situation. Following our success in Jaipur, a Campaign Blueprint was created to document the Jeevika Campaign in detail with a view to making it a reference manual for future programs of this nature.

SKILL VOUCHERS PROJECT

The better part of last year was spent in meeting various policy makers, departmental officials and donor agencies to increase awareness on the use of vouchers in Skill Development. As a result, we now have an engagement with the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation (MSDF) who have agreed to sponsor the project management costs of the Skill Voucher project. The project proposes to cover 3000 students in Maharashtra over a two year period. We have received approval from the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) for the Research & Evaluation module of this project and are in the final stages of inking an agreement with a voucher sponsor from the Department of Social Justice, Maharashtra. A web portal will be set up to serve as an anchor in the project design and operation.

As a part of our efforts to increase awareness of the concept, we published an article on *The Case for Skill Vouchers in India*, in the April 2013 edition of Global ANALYST magazine.

CCS ACADEMY

CCS Academy aims to inspire future leaders and change agents to pursue the vision of a free society by championing a liberal approach to public policy through educational and outreach programs. The Academy consolidated its offerings and had a packed programme calendar for the year. We are also slowly working our way to a self-financing model to ensure sustainability of the programmes we offer.

A. Researching Reality Internships 2012

Our summer internships continue to attract some of the brightest young minds in the country. For six weeks, 23 student leaders, selected from 300 applicants, worked with Dr. Nimish Adhia, a Researching Reality Graduate and Assistant Professor of Economics in New York, on learning the application of social and economic principles to practical situations. We also hosted our first non-summer internship in December (15 December 2012 - 23 February 2013). The Researching Reality Winternship on Livelihoods had 13 participating interns. Topics included teacher trade unions, economics of beggary, Food Vouchers and Indian Liberal Tradition.



Picture 10: Our winterns, 2012-2013

These internships led to the publication of 333 research papers, many of which were published in online journals.

B. **ipolicy: Certificate Course in Public Policy**

The ipolicy brand is growing and we have completed the first phase of creating a **Conceptual Framework Design** for curriculum development, evaluation and documentation. Over the last 12 months, CCS conducted 12 ipolicy courses across 5 cities in India, for Young Leaders, Journalists, Development Leaders, engaging 303 individuals out of a pool of over 600 applicants from 30 Cities. We also launched a new certificate course in public policy for Young Professionals, as part of our ongoing mission to educate the decision makers of tomorrow to approach social problems using a liberal philosophy.

This year, we partnered with Teach for India and with Gujarat National Law University, Ahmedabad to conduct ipolicy courses with their own employees and students and with students from across the country. A number of partners have been identified for more courses for this financial year, including BITS Pilani.

C. **Liberty and Society Seminar**

Liberty & Society Seminar was held from 30 October–2 November 2012. This advanced course in public policy saw 28 participants come together to examine the philosophical foundations of a free society and examine questions regarding the appropriate role of government in society and the interactions between individuals and society. The seminar deepened participants understanding of the intellectual and institutional foundations of freedom and the best framework for individuals to interact in society to bring about freedom and prosperity. They also learned how to better communicate ideas of liberty through working group discussions.

D. **Colloquium**

Twenty participants from diverse sectors attended the Colloquium on the Morality of Capitalism (7-29 October 2012) in Goa. Readings included works by Henry Hazlitt on rule utilitarianism, Ayn Rand on a natural rights approach and Diedre McCloskey on the history and morality of capitalism. Discussions explored the social responsibility of businesses, crony capitalism and the implications of a welfare state.

E. **Freedom Caravan**



Picture 11: Students take the 'World's Smallest Political Quiz', Freedom Caravan 2012

The Academy team visited 13 colleges across Delhi and Pune, reaching out to over 5000 students on campus to increase their interest and awareness in liberal philosophy and our fight for social, economic and political freedom. Participants toured the monuments that bear tribute to the struggles for freedom in its various dimensions. Among our notable speakers were Swaminathan Aiyar, Bibek Debroy, Tom Palmer and Parth J Shah.

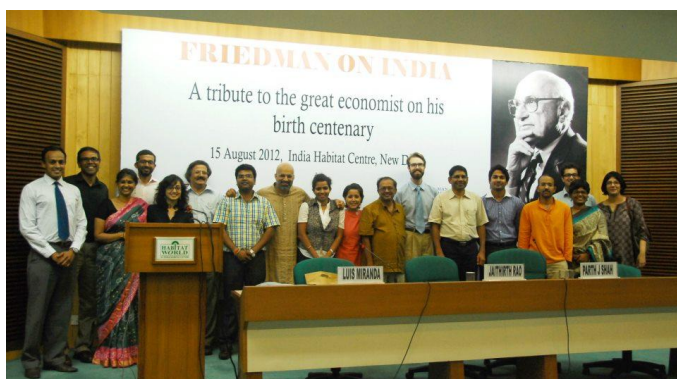
F. Publications

Liberty & Society Series: We published three monographs under the LSS series. The first, ***Social Change Through Public Policy*** argues that public policy is the most effective tool for real, lasting social change. The second, ***Environmental Challenges: Tragedy of the Collective*** is a publication that highlights and analyses some of the key environmental challenges and explains why the command-and-control approach to solving these does not work. Instead, it applies the property rights approach to environment conservation. Our third monograph, ***New Education Policy: Choice & Competition***, addresses the various problems surrounding schooling in India and suggests public policy solutions that will address issues of quality, cost, access and diversity of schooling, with a particular concern for the needs of the poor.

Public Choice: A primer by Eamonn Butler: CCS has reprinted this excellent primer originally published by the Institute of Economic Affairs, London, which provides an overview of the theoretical foundations of public choice, and helps us understand the probability of success of welfare programmes.

G. Other Initiatives

Friedman on India: Panel



Picture 12: Friedman on India Panel, 15 August 2012

Milton Friedman's call for choice and competition in education led to India's first school voucher project. To mark the centennial year of his birth, we organised a panel discussion with over 100 attendees on 15 August 2012, simultaneously celebrating his love of liberty and marking India's 65th year of political independence. Attendees got a glimpse of Milton Friedman's visit to India in 1955, his insight on how the post

1947 government's plans to eradicate poverty through central direction and control set India on a course away from growth and development, and his view that economic freedom was needed to accompany political and social freedom.

Asia Centre for Enterprise (ACE)

Atlas Foundation and CCS launched a social change partnership in March 2012 to identify and support individuals and organisations that promote liberal ideas and policies in Asia. This partnership, ACE, aims to provide encouragement to young idealists and activists who are able to take or develop projects under their leadership and execute them. Grants will be awarded to promote liberal philosophy as well as solutions to the social and economic problems, including in the fields of Education, Livelihood, Environment and Governance.

ACE hosted the first Asia Liberty Forum on 2 & 3 February 2013 in Delhi. The forum brought together 200 change makers from across 30 countries. Individuals shared incredible stories of how they struggled to achieve freedom in some of the most challenging and difficult regions of the world. Their stories inspired optimism for the achievement of greater freedom, peace and prosperity for communities and countries. The forum also brought to the fore India's own lesser known liberals like Chandra Bhan Prasad, champion of Base of Pyramid liberalisation.

We hosted two talks by Tyler Cowen for over 200 students and academics in Delhi about Marginal Revolution University, which aims to make education cheaper and easier to access, through the creation of an online education platform.

A Think Tank Management and Leadership Training was held for public policy professionals from seven countries. Participants received mentorship from leading figures in the liberty movement from around the world on how to successfully run think tanks. The workshop also gave them the chance to share best practices and identify opportunities for collaborations.



Picture 13: Participants in a session at the TTM<, February 2013

ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

CCS has seen significant growth in the last year. In our Boards, Ashish Dhawan took over as Chairman of the Board of Trustees from Gurcharan Das. Luis Miranda came on as the Chairman of our Board of Advisors, which was further strengthened by the addition of Ankur Shah, Interim India Director at Acumen Fund, Praveen Chakravarty, Eisenhower Fellow and CEO of Anand Rathi Financial Services and Reuben Abraham, professor at the Indian School of Business.

Recruitment

We have hired 8 new people, bringing our team strength up to 31 members. The team boasts qualified researchers and campaign specialists from multi-disciplinary backgrounds, with post-graduate degrees in Economics, International Relations, Development Studies, Mathematics,



Picture 14: CCS team at the corporate retreat, June 2012

Engineering, Law, History and Political Science from reputable universities like IIT-Kanpur, Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics, IIM-Ahmedabad, Institute of Development Studies in Sussex, Harvard University and the London School of Economics. They are a young team and they bring diverse talents and a fresh perspective and energy to the organisation.

This year, we are looking to further grow the CCS family by hiring a Development and Fundraising Specialist to help us take our revenue base to five million dollars and a PR Manager to strengthen

our outreach efforts, and staffing our Skills Voucher Project team in Delhi and Mumbai in order to get the project up and running.

CCS has a full calendar for 2013. As teams set their goals for the new financial year, we're looking to scale up and diversify our work – taking on new challenges and establishing new partnerships and alliances. Our new Skill Vouchers Pilot launches this year, as do the K-12 Data Portal and the RTE India Portal. This August, CCS Academy takes Freedom Caravan to 10 cities in South India. We are also looking to bring out a number of exciting publications in the form of research papers, policy reviews and journal articles, so stay tuned! We look forward to your continued support.

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