



CENTRE FOR CIVIL SOCIETY

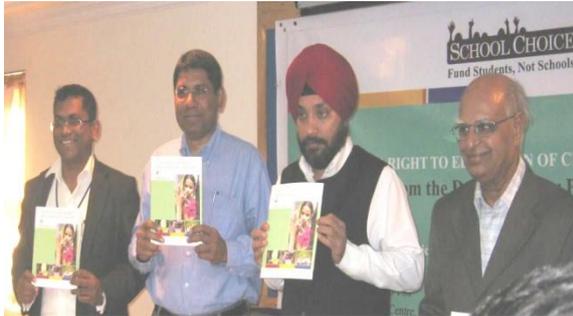
ANNUAL REPORT

2009-2010

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DELHI VOUCHER PROJECT: FIRST ASSESSMENT REPORT



SCC organized **The Case for Right to Education of Choice: Key Findings from the Delhi Voucher Project** to officially release the **Delhi Voucher Project: First Assessment Report** at the India Islamic Cultural Centre on 19 February 2009. The report was released by Hon'ble Education Minister of Delhi, Mr Arvinder Singh Lovely in the presence of the

media, voucher school principals, noted academicians, SCC supporters and relevant members of the Delhi state government.

(L-R) Baladevan R, Dr. Parth J Shah,

Arvinder Singh Lovely, Prof. PV Indiresan

"The improvement experienced by government schools is largely because of good officials, we don't know how long this will last. The Voucher idea is very good. In the future, students will have to be funded instead of schools. The Delhi government will use the voucher idea soon to help poor parents to cope with increase in fees as a result of the recommendations of the Sixth Pay Commission." said Hon'ble Minister Lovely.

Dr Parth J Shah of CCS made a presentation on the School Choice Campaign and the Delhi Voucher Project, Mr Alok Srivastava, Research Director of CMS Social at Centre for Media Studies made a presentation on the key findings of the Delhi Voucher Project and Former Director of IIT Madras and School Choice Ambassador Prof P V Indiresan spoke about the great potential of vouchers in ensuring accountability. Presenting the voucher school principals perspective on School Choice were Mr V K Puri, Principal, Shishu Mangal Public School and Mr Ramswaroop Sharma, Principal, Sharda Vidya Kendra.

As part of our Delhi campaign, SCC and Shiksha, a renowned NGO, collected 2, 80, 000 signature petitions from parents demanding school choice from 68 wards of Delhi in 2007. These petitions were also presented to the Hon'ble Minister requesting him to act upon the demand from the people.

The report is available at <http://www.schoolchoice.in/events/DVPPFirstAssessmentReport.pdf>

EDUCATION

Delhi School Voucher Principals Forums Organised

Two 'Delhi School Voucher Principals Forums' were organized on 5 and 10 February 2009 to bring school principals under the umbrella of the School Choice Alliance. The events saw participation from nearly twenty school principals across Central, West and East Delhi. All participating principals expressed a desire to come together in order to present a collective voice that will bring the concerns of private budget schools to the attention of the Delhi Government. In addition, all principals pledged support for the School Choice Campaign.



Action for School Admission Reforms (ASAR) Launched

The School Choice Campaign and 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 and 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/>

Successful meeting with the Delhi Education Minister

Parth J Shah and Baladevan R, Associate Director, SCC met with the Delhi Education Minister Arvinder Singh Lovely to discuss education reform ideas and suggestions mainly for the underprivileged and underserved sections of our society. The minister expressed the desire that School Choice should provide recommendations for reforms in nursery admissions and was supportive of other ideas discussed in the meeting. SCC is planning various projects for the State government as part of our initiative to improve quality educational opportunities for all children in Delhi.

CCS Suggestions on the RTE Bill 2008

Centre for Civil Society proposed 6 short changes in the current Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Bill 2008. The suggestions were circulated widely to the media, development organizations, and various ministries including the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Chambers of Commerce and individual activists.

CCS Joins SRCC Annual Economics Magazine

As part of our support to colleges of the Delhi University (DU), CCS sponsored the Annual Economics Magazine of Sri Ram College of Commerce (SRCC) 'Artha' this year. It is one of the top economics programs and its magazine has a great reputation. As part of the sponsorship three articles from CCS scholars, four original CCS papers and articles and a CCS youth planner highlighting our events, programs and opportunities were printed in the magazine.

LIVELIHOODS

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.'

DECEMBER 2009

School Choice National Conference



(L-R): Mr Anders Hultin, Mr Karthik Muralidharan, Prof R Govinda & Mr Amit Kaushik

The first **School Choice National Conference (SCNC) on Quality Education for All: Policy Solutions for Better Schooling** was organized by the School Choice Campaign on **16 December 2009 at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi**. The Conference had an excellent blend of top-level national and international academics, policy makers, eminent speakers and education experts and advisors as well as a very good representation of delegates comprising of development workers, corporates, academicians and school leaders, government officials, civil society,

social activists, youth and the media.

The Conference focused on the key provisions of the Right to Education Act and their potential impact on the future of Indian elementary education- implementation of the 25% in Section 12 of the RTE, Graded Recognition System: Positive Regulation and Strengthening Government Schools.

Featured session speakers included Mr Kanwal Rekhi, Mr Sam Carlson, Dr Parth J Shah, Prof R Govinda, Mr Anders Hultin, Mr Karthik Muralidharan, Mr Amit Kaushik, Mr Sridhar Rajagoplan, Ms Molly McMohan, Mr Baladevan R, Ms Anu Aga, Mr Vijay Chadda, Ms Neelima Khetan, Mr Gurcharan Das, Prof James Tooley, Mr Vijay Thadani, Ms Rashmi Krishnan and Mr Oscar Fernandes.

The Conference provided a much needed platform for educationists, policy experts, activists and government officials to sit together, identify critical issues in the education sector, review existing programs, explore strategies to face the challenges ahead and ideate on ingenious solutions to provide quality education to all children in India. **The recommendations for the implementation of RTE as a follow up of the conference will be presented to the government.**

FEBRUARY 2010

Principal's Forum: School Vouchers for Girls

School Choice Campaign organised a **Principal's Forum on 3 February 2010 at the Jain Dharamshala, Shastri Park, North Delhi** as the first in the series of a yearly meet with the principals of empanelled schools of the School Voucher for Girls pilot project.

The objective of the Principals Forum was to provide a platform for these principals to better understand the implementation process and payment transfer mechanism as well as to assist them with major issues in mainstreaming voucher children previously studying in government schools.

The event began with an introduction of all the principals followed by a brief session on the School Choice Campaign and the School Vouchers for Girls pilot by **Dr Parth J Shah**. He then opened the floor for principals to highlight the difficulties the schools encountered in the implementation of the SVG project. Most of the principals used this opportunity to raise their concerns which varied from administrative issues like parents not providing the necessary documents for admission to low attendance of the voucher students. This was followed by a presentation by **Mr Deval Seth**, Head of Strategy, ACCOR Services, on the systematic steps of "voucher payments". **Ms. Janaki Rajan**, Professor at Jamia Islami and former Director of SCERT conducted the last session on the importance of parents counseling and pertinent issues arising during the course of the project.

Photographs of Principal's Forum



Dr Parth J Shah, Centre for Civil Society



Mr Deval Seth, Head of Strategy, ACCOR Services



Principals of the empanelled schools share their experiences

MARCH 2010

Policy Roundtable for Members of Parliament organised by CCS

This Policy Roundtable was a major landmark in the history of CCS. Noted stakeholders in the field of education were present at the Roundtable. This meet was made possible by Dr. Parth J Shah. He and his team at CCS put together this meeting which included members of Parliament. A short report:

Right to Education Model Rules

8 AM - 10 AM, 11 March 2010

Deputy Chairman's Hall, Constitution Club, Rafi Marg, New Delhi

Panelists: R Govinda, *Vice Chancellor, National University of Education Planning and Administration*

Members of Parliament:

- Shri Madhu Goud Yaskhi, *Andhra Pradesh, Committee on Human Resource Development*
- Shri E.M.S. Natchiappan, *Tamil Nadu, Committee on Human Resource Development*
- Shri Suresh Angadi, *Karnataka, Committee Human Resource Development*
- Shri Prem Das Rai, *Sikkim, Committee on Information Technology*
- Shri Ninong Ering *Arunachal East, Committee on Science and Technology*
- Sharad Anantrao Joshi, *Maharashtra, Committee on Agriculture*

Objective: Platform for interaction between policy makers and civil society members to discuss and debate the Model Rules as per the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act 2009 (RTE Act). This discussion is aimed at providing timely and much needed feedback to the Union Government, which in turn will help State Governments in developing their rules on innovative ideas on

the implementation of the Act.



Parth J Shah, Centre for Civil Society and R Govinda, Vice Chancellor, NEUPA Members of Parliament at the Policy Meet

Introduction and Presentation: Parth Shah

Dr. Parth J Shah introduced R Govinda and other participants and noted that the objective of organizing such roundtables was to encourage the exchange of ideas between policy makers and civil society members. He suggested that the need for discussing Model Rules of the RTE Act arises so as to formulate proper guidelines on the basis of which this Act can then be implemented.

Presentation

Dr. Parth J Shah stated that on the whole Centre for Civil Society is in agreement with the larger philosophical ideas embodied by the RTE Act. However, he raised six concerns which can be categorized under the following heads: **school management committee, teacher accountability, school recognition, school building, legal registration and 25% reservation in private schools.**

School Management Committees (SMCs): Dr. Shah suggested that RTE stipulations were too inputs focused rather than outcomes oriented. For this he suggested that SMCs should evaluate students' learning outcomes and teacher competencies. Moreover, SMC members should be reimbursed for their services to provide incentives for active and sustained involvement.

Teacher Accountability: It was suggested that SMCs should have the power to take disciplinary action against teachers and they need not be hired on a permanent basis.

School Recognition: Dr. Shah suggested that government schools should also comply with norms and procedures for recognition to raise standards of government schools. He also raised concerns over the impact of the closure of

unrecognized budget private schools in three years once failing to gain recognition.

School building: Dr. Shah, contrary to Model Rules, recommended that schools should have the autonomy to decide how to use schools buildings after school hours as long as there is not interference with teaching activities.

Legal registration: It was suggested that schools must be registered as legal entities, not necessarily as public trust or society as stipulated by the Model Rules. Moreover, for-profit companies should be allowed to enter the education sector.

25% reservation in private schools: Reimbursements to private schools on behalf of the 25% students from weaker and disadvantaged sections should be calculated on the basis on recurring and capital expenditure as opposed to just recurring as suggested by the rules. Moreover, the model rules remain unclear on questions of identification, selection, admission, reimbursement mechanisms and monitoring of the 25% reservations in private schools. This lack of clarity according to Dr. Shah needs to be addressed.

Stakeholders discuss RTE Model Rules

School Choice Campaign (SCC) in partnership with the India International Centre (IIC) organized a RTE Model Rules Consultation with key stakeholders and policy makers to discuss the recommended rules and the implementation of the 25% reservation in private schools on the 16 March 2010 at IIC, New Delhi.

The objective of the consultation was to facilitate fruitful discussion amongst education experts to provide a timely and much needed feedback to the Union Government, which in turn will help State Governments in developing their rules on innovative ideas on the implementation of the Act.

The consultation was attended by 23 experts wherein issues of closure of unrecognized schools in three years time, reimbursement to private schools, curriculum development, learning assessment and ratings of all school by independent parties and the role and power of School Management Committees were discussed at length. School Choice Campaign presented its model on the implementation of the 25% reservation in private schools followed by a discussion on the same.

In order to continue discussion amongst stakeholders and monitor proper implementation of the Act, SCC proposed that a national Right to Education Coalition be formed. To facilitate this and to mainstream information distribution on the RTE Act, the Campaign launched www.righttoeducation.in

Presentation by Parth Shah on the 25% reservation for EWS students in private schools



Meeting started by chair Amit Kaushik



Author Gurcharan Das (right) asking pertinent questions with Parth Shah

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