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# ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012



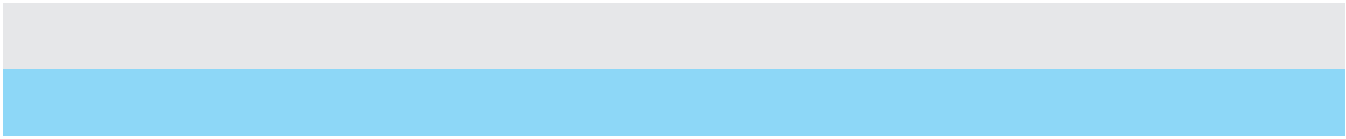
## **Centre for Social Equity and Inclusion (CSEI)**

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## I. INTRODUCTION

2011-12 has been an eventful year for Centre for Social Equity and Inclusion (CSEI). As an advocacy, research and resource support organisation promoting equity and inclusion in realising social and economic (SEC) rights, CSEI identified three critical areas of intervention, viz education, employment and governance. The strategies adopted are i) building evidence through research and field engagement; ii) collaborating with civil society organisations of the marginalised to pilot equity-inclusion measures; and iii) policy advocacy.

The Bihar state office was set up in July 2011 to deepen our collaboration with Marginalised Community-led Civil Society Organisations (MC CSOs)<sup>1</sup>. Under the leadership of Satyendra Kumar, the team has gained fair recognition in the civil society space in the state, as well as with the state government. The team has also created visibility for MC CSOs and issues of equity for Dalit and other marginalised children under the RtE Act in education. Piloting inclusion activities in school through 'khel se mel' activities and promoting the 'Ambedkar Students Forum' are highlights of the year. Being present in the state has opened up partnerships with civil society organisations and advocacy opportunities with the state government.

The year has also meant much advocacy work with the central government. Being a member of the National Advisory Council (NAC) of the RtE, Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) provided opportunities to highlight issues of discrimination and exclusion in education. It opened up opportunities to work with the governments in Andhra Pradesh and Bihar in undertaking equity assessments and developing equity-inclusion strategies in elementary education under the RtE. Work towards institutionalising the GO-NGO collaboration in Andhra Pradesh and the 'shiksha ka haq abhiyan', flagged off in November 2011 by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, are promising opportunities. It is also encouraging to see the National Advisory Council evolving mechanisms to strengthen the implementation of the RtE with a focus on the last child, non-discrimination and equity.

Being part of and contributing substantially to the Right to Education Forum and Wada Na Todo Abhiyan (WNTA) are also highlights for the year. This has provided opportunities to build in dialogues on equitable quality in education, to open up spaces for MC CSOs and to evolve advocacy strategies at the state and national levels.

Our sensitivity and convictions on critical issues have been sharpened by our collaboration and partnerships with other forums and campaigns, primary of which are the All India Dalit Mahila Adhikar Manch, National Dalit Movement for Justice, Dalit Arthik Adhikar Andolan, the Human Rights Law Network, Housing and Land Rights Network, Safai Karmachari Andolan, Social Equity Watch, and Shahari Andolan. The networking and collaboration has expanded the horizon of our engagement, particularly in terms of the rights of urban marginalised communities.

On the study-research front, we completed the study on civil society organisations led by members of marginalised communities. Following this, a national consultation was held in May 2011 to disseminate the findings and advocate for enhanced participation of these CSOs. We continue to explore collaboration and support to expand and deepen our concerns. Three years into our journey as a policy advocacy and resource support organisation has been encouraging and challenging in many ways.

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<sup>1</sup> CSEI recognizes the key role of civil society organizations that emerge from the communities themselves in developing sustainable long term strategies to address root causes and critical constraints faced by the community. We define MC CSOs as those where the chief functionaries, majority of senior leadership and board members belong to marginalized communities themselves and address key issues with an equity lens.

## II. VISION-MISSION-OBJECTIVES-STRATEGIES

CSEI is engaged in deepening democracy and development in our body politic by enhancing the stake hold of excluded and marginalised communities in socio-economic rights (SEC rights) within the ambit of wider human rights. Equity and inclusion are our watchwords, focusing on the rights of socially excluded communities in education, employment and governance. Children, young people and women from these communities are our particular constituencies. We collaborate with civil society organisations with specific focus on partnering with those organisations led by members of Adivasi, Dalit and Muslim communities. Being embedded in the experiences and efforts of the excluded communities is our strength. Three decades of rights-based development work by its members in community mobilising, networking, research and campaign is the impetus behind initiating CSEI as a policy advocacy, research and resource support organisation in 2009.

**Vision:** A just and inclusive society where every human being has equal opportunities, equitable resources, and adequate capabilities to harness their potential, realize rights and fulfill responsibilities to live in fellowship, dignity and liberty.

**Mission:** To promote inclusive policies for equitable outcomes for socially excluded communities through policy research, monitoring and advocacy in collaboration with civil society organizations, particularly those led by members of excluded communities.

**Objectives:** i) Centre stage the concerns and aspirations of socially excluded communities to secure and expand equitable quality of education; ii) promote and strengthen platforms of students and young people from socially excluded communities to access education and employment rights; iii) partner and capacity build civil society organizations led by members of the marginalized communities in developing equity audit tools, evidence building and policy advocacy.

**Strategies:** Our efforts are directed towards i) filling policy implementation gaps by facilitating marginalized communities and their civil society organizations to engage in development design and monitoring ii) filling knowledge gaps through collaborative research and advocacy, and iii) developing tools and methodology for exclusion-equity monitoring and promoting inclusion. While taking cognizance of exclusion and its negativities, we are poised to promoting inclusive strategies and mechanisms in building a just society.

The national office is located in New Delhi and a state office in Patna, Bihar.

## III. STAFF & TRUST BOARD

### CSEI Staff:

The CSEI team at the national level is led by Annie Namala and consisted of Satyendra Kumar (Senior Programme Coordinator), Varsha Bhaik (Programme Coordinator), Arti Verma (Programme Associate), Subhash Baghel (Finance and Admin officer) and Rahul Charam (office assistant). Satyendra Kumar moved to Bihar to set up Bihar CSEI (State Director) in June. The Bihar team consists of Noopur (Programme Coordinator), Pankaj Kumar (Advocacy Coordinator), Govind Kumar Paswan (Programme officer), Ashok Kumar (Finance Officer) and Ravi Kumar (Office assistant). Savita Kumari joined the Bihar team for an internship for six months.

The two teams coordinate events and programmes across and also support and expand each other's opportunities and learning. Bihar has the advantage of learning from the field and also the wider experiences of Dalit-led CSOs and networks they partner. Being connected to the national office at Delhi also augments their access to information and their advocacy and networking effects.

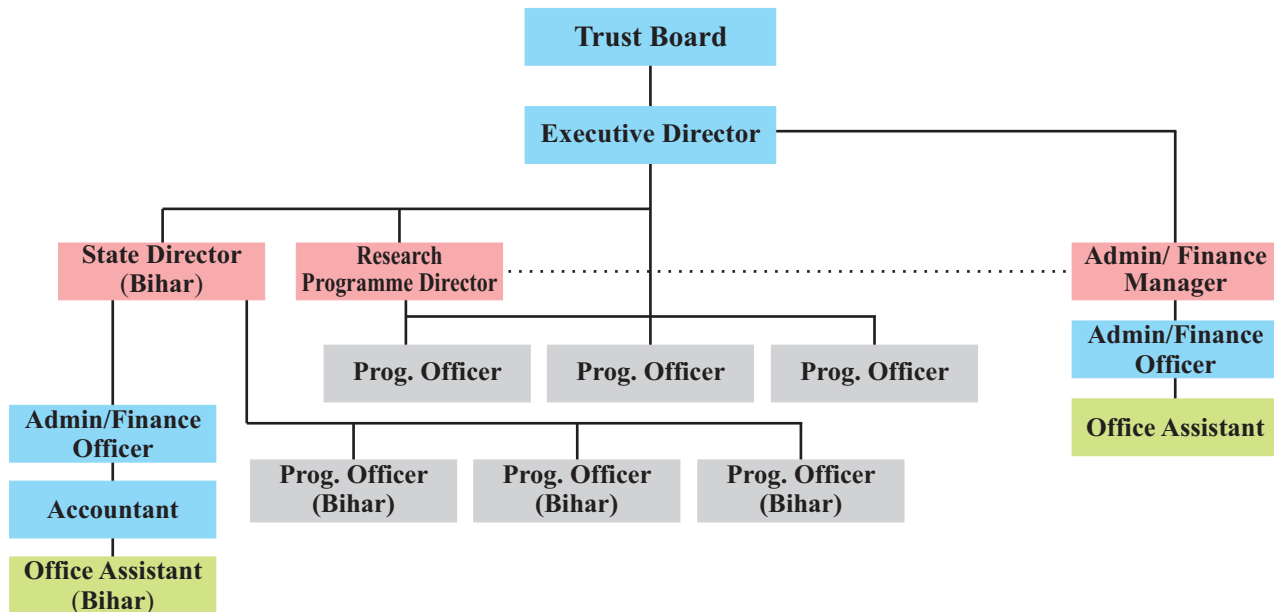
**Trust Board:**

CSEI Trust Board consists of Shri Aloysius Irudayam sj, chairperson; Ms. Annie Namala, Managing Trustee; Dr SDJM Prasad, treasurer; and Dr Sanghmitra S Acharya, member.

Two trust meetings were held during this reporting period. One was on 23 May 2011, where particular focus was placed on initiating the Bihar office, its focus, role and linkage with the national office. Finance manual, HR policy manual drafts were shared with the committee. The team also presented future plans both on the programme side and opportunities for putting up proposals.

The second meeting was held on 20 October 2011. The annual audit statement for 2010-2011 was presented and adopted. The current audit firm, S. Chawla & Associates has completed three years with CSEI, and the trust appointed M. Thomas & Co. as statutory auditors for 2011-12.

**Organogram - CSEI**



## IV. PROGRAMMES

### 1. Research

#### ***Completed Research:***

The lack of empowered voice of marginalised communities in policy decisions and development interventions, from our analysis and experience, are primary due to their chronic poverty and low human development indicators. Given the relevance of community centred and community owned development praxis, civil society organisations from these communities can play a vital role in the development of their communities especially the worst off sub-groups and the remote unreached areas. Our study 'Making Growth Just and Inclusive: Partnering Civil Society Organisations of Marginalised'<sup>2</sup> was supported by UNDP and was an in-depth study of 135



civil society organizations in seven states in North India. The study covered organizations led by women and men from Adivasi, Dalit and Muslim communities. It provided more systematic insights into the context, organization make up, leadership and programme interventions of these CSOs, and evidenced the critical need to strengthen their interventions for promoting more equitable and inclusive development for the most marginalized communities. With their own experiences as community members and continued presence in the community these CSOs have been able to evolve strategies to address the root causes of their exclusion and under-development. They address sensitive and critical issues generally neglected by general development organizations. Networking among themselves and building community based organizations are common strategies. However, the lack of sustained technical and financial support often stunt and stagnate their interventions. This makes strategies to build their organizational capacities and potential, and the larger environment of support and solidarity all the more important.

The study findings were presented at a one-day national consultation on 27<sup>th</sup> May 2011 to evolve further strategies. The consultation proved eye-opening in terms of social identities, the operation of these CSOs in the development sector, and the need for conscious equity and inclusion strategies. Strengthening these organisations through financial and organization development support presents major challenges.

A second research undertaken in 2010-11 was on Equity-Inclusion in Employment. The study on 'Educated Urban Dalit Women: Employees and Entrepreneurs' on educated urban Dalit women and their access to employment in the government, private, NGO and corporate sectors provided an opportunity to look at young Dalit women's experiences in terms of their process of accessing higher education and how they convert education into livelihood and employment opportunities. Their process of access to higher education was shared on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2012 in the MHRD Consultation on Higher Education while preparing the strategies for the 12<sup>th</sup> FYP. The experience of Dalit women in enterprises and private sector employment was also shared at a consultation between CII and NACDOR on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2012. This interface has been trying to deepen the access and engagement of Dalit communities to the private sector.

#### ***Inputs into other Research Meetings:***

It is encouraging to find that the equity and inclusion agenda of CSEI is being raised and becoming become more visible with other organizations too. During this year, UNICEF had taken up study and

<sup>2</sup> Making Growth Just and Inclusive: Partnering Civil Society Organisations led by the Marginalised was supported by UNDP and did in-depth study of 135 civil society organizations in seven states in North India. The study covered organizations led by women and men from Adivasi, Dalit and Muslim communities.

consultation on 'Strengthening marginalised communities: enhancing voice towards social accountability'. CSEI contributed to the planning of the study and the consultation with inputs from our own study and in building further strategies.

## 2. Field Partnerships

### ***Bringing in the voices of marginalised communities:***

The Ministry of Women and Child Development (MW&CD), Government of India, in its own way took the agenda forward and held national consultations on the challenges faced by i) Scheduled Caste women and children on 18-19 Jan 2011, ii) Tribal women and children on 30-31 May 2011. Civil society organizations which represented these communities were invited for these consultations. Being part of the organizing committee, CSEI encouraged many of our partners to be part of the process and voice their issues and concerns. This was again a first of its kind.



The 12<sup>th</sup> FYP process for the first time opened up opportunities for CSOs to participate in evolving the 'approach paper'. The dialogue was initiated through Wada Na Todo Abhiyan and about 900 CSOs across the country participated in wide-ranging consultations on various themes and took part in the process. Marginalized communities, equitable and inclusive growth were the prime concerns. In this regard, CSEI was able to link many of the MC CSOs into this process on both identity and thematic lines (Dalit, Tribal, Muslim, Migrants, Youth and Education) at the national and regional consultations.

### ***Working together to expand the equity-inclusion components of RTE:***

CSOs of the marginalised communities more often focus on very critical but immediate issues of the community such as discrimination and violence (Dalit led CSOs), Forest rights and livelihoods (Adivasi led CSOs), women and livelihoods (Muslim minority led CSOs). Some very good efforts and methods have developed in the process and helped promote the communities' perspectives and rights access in these spheres. There has been less thought and effort put into translating and realising socio-economic rights, however, except in small pockets. Given the growing awareness and aspirations around education among all marginalised communities, and the context of education being made fundamental and justiciable right for children aged 6-14 years, CSEI has taken the initiative to bring together CSOs led by the marginalised communities to expand the equity-inclusion components under RtE Act. CSEI has taken up various programmes towards expanding the equity-inclusion components under RtE Act:

- i) CSEI took the initiative of identifying over 30 MC CSOs from the north Indian states who currently have some education activities for a two-day consultation on 7-8 April 2011 to flesh out the Act from the equity-inclusion perspectives. The consultation was the first of its kind, bringing together MC CSOs from these three communities and identifying specific and common issues and concerns. It covered the rights of children under the Act, in particular the equity provisions for better implementation and monitoring.
- ii) In deepening this process, CSEI in Bihar<sup>3</sup> works with eight MC CSOs from the Dalit community in capacity building on RtE provisions, piloting inclusion activities in schools, engaging with School Management Committees (SMCs) and monitoring RtE. They have also begun to look at the wider

<sup>3</sup> The programme was initiated in July 2011 and covers 50 schools, 3 residential schools, 3 Ambedkar Hostels in 13 panchayats in 8 blocks in 8 districts. The pilot is proving useful to create an environment of inclusion and engagement across teachers and children and between children. Most of all the CSO team finds the process empowering.

institutional equity issues in terms of access for Dalit and other disadvantaged children to residential schools, Ambedkar Hostels, and the Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas.

- iii) Taking the process of engagement with the MC CSOs forward, a follow-up consultation was held under the aegis of Wada Na Todo Abhiyan in March 2012 to evolve strategies for the promotion of RtE for Dalit, Adivasi and Muslim children. CSEI team took critical role in organising this consultation.



- iv) To further understand and highlight cross cutting and intersectional issues of exclusion, CSEI facilitated the visits and engagement of 'Arth Astha' and organisation working on disability with CSOs from Adivasi, Dalit and Muslim communities. Field visits in Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan were held to highlight intersectional between caste/religion and disability issues. Arth Astha has decided to engage with MC CSOs in their work.

- v) CSEI along with other CSOs took the opportunity of the order given by the Chief Information Commissioner<sup>4</sup> for citizens to visit government schools on the last day of every month to verify given documents and monitor RtE provisions in Delhi. While the Delhi government schools have withdrawn this provision, the schools managed by the Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD) have kept the provision open. CSEI participated in this process by visiting schools in West Delhi and monitoring their RtE compliance. It was found that despite the RtE Act, nothing has changed on the ground and teachers and the education administration did not think the Act required any changes in the way schools are to be run. There is much work to be done to build awareness both at the demand and supply side of education to ensure that all children enjoy the right to education.



- vi) Section 12 of the RtE Act provides for 25% reservation for children from disadvantaged and economically weaker sections in private schools. CSEI took the initiative to have a discussion on the issue among CSOs, emphasising on the provision as equity. About 20 CSOs participated in this consultation and it was clear that parents from disadvantaged communities seek these opportunities. It was decided to take this discussion forward to evolve strategies on how to support parents and children and how to sensitise the schools on fulfilling this provision. More recent judgments of the Supreme Court orders all aided schools and unaided non-minority institutions to implement this provision. This will be carried forward in the coming year.



<sup>4</sup> This is a progressive and facilitating order and came in response to the RTI filed by JOSH, an NGO



### 3. Social Policy Advocacy

At both the national and Bihar state levels, CSEI has moved into different formal spaces created by the state in order to advocate for a greater equity and inclusion focus in education. These spaces include:



- i. RtE National Advisory Council:** The executive director, Annie Namala was nominated to the National Advisory Council (NAC), MHRD in July 2010. This opportunity has been used to raise the issues of Adivasi, Dalit and Muslim children and their constraints and barriers in accessing education under RtE. The SSA framework, while recognizing the specific barriers faced by these children, has yet to develop meaningful strategies and ensure their implementation.
- ii. Task Force on Equity and Inclusion:** The Task Force was constituted in June 2011 and is chaired by Annie Namala, with members from the government, academics and other CSOs. It has the explicit purpose of analyzing barriers faced by vulnerable children to access their rights under the RtE. The task force has undertaken an analysis of schools in AP to highlight the issues of exclusion and equity. Further to this, it is encouraging to see the state government moving ahead in institutionalizing government and civil society engagement and equity working group in education.
- iii. Task Force on Social Mobilization:** This Task Force is also constituted under the RtE NAC and has the objective to design a large campaign on the RtE so that there is community mobilization as well as state accountability under the Act. The executive director, Annie Namala is also a member of the Task force on social mobilization and has used the opportunity to identify almost 1000 civil society organizations led by Dalit, i. Adivasi and Muslim community women and men across 12 states and share it with the MHRD and the concerned states to take part as volunteers for the campaign.
- iv. Training of the Vikas Mitras in Bihar:** Along with Praxis, CSEI Bihar anchored the training of 250 master trainers who in turn trained 10,000 vikas mitras across all the 38 districts in the state in August 2011. Vikas mitras are volunteers primarily from the Dalit community recruited by the state to facilitate development programmes to Dalit communities. The training brought together both Dalit and general caste master trainers and provided an opportunity to discuss issues of caste discrimination, untouchability, development inequalities etc. The training had many inputs on Babasaheb Ambedkar's thoughts, Constitutional and legal provisions. The process provided opportunity for the CSEI team in Bihar to expand their network of contacts in the state.
- v. AP initiatives:** Following the initial discussions, three members of the Task force on equity and inclusion including the executive director made a three-day visit from 11-14 September 2011 to Andhra Pradesh at the invitation of the state government and did an equity analysis of the schooling process. As part of the follow up, the state initiated a GO-NGO coordination process for effectively implementing the RtE. The process continued with an RtE implementation convergence meeting in 17<sup>th</sup> March 2012 and has much potential for replication in other states too.
- vi. Building Equity into SMC norms:** The CSEI Bihar team collated and consulted various state School Management Committee (SMC) rules and submitted recommendations to the Dept of Education in building the rules for School Management Committees in Bihar. The SMCs have been constituted in the state, however serious plans on their role and functioning is yet to be thought through.
- vii. NCPCR consultations with socially excluded communities in Bihar:** CSEI anchored the consultations on education with Right to Education Protection Authority (REPA) members in Bihar. REPA has been set up by the NCPCR to review RtE implementation in the states.

**viii. Shiksha ka Haq Abhiyan:** The Social Mobilisation task force, of which the executive director is a member, has conceptualized and developed the Right to Education campaign. This has been flagged off on Education Day - 11<sup>th</sup> Nov 2011 by Shri Kapil Sibal, HRD Minister. The Abhiyan is to be promoted across the country. Our efforts are to promote young people from Adivasi, Dalit and Muslim communities in the campaign and also bring non-discrimination, equity and inclusion perspectives into the campaign.

#### 4. Innovative Initiatives

In our work in Bihar, promoting inclusion through supporting Dalit-led CSOs to engage with schools has led to some interesting and innovative interventions. In this process CSEI extensively used the concept and methodology used by 'Play for Peace'<sup>5</sup>. More appropriately termed 'Khel Se Mel' (Inclusion through Play), a seven-day training session at two levels was organized for the five Dalit led NGOs who are piloting inclusive activities in 10 schools each. This became an important investment both for the members of the CSEI state team themselves as well as the programme interventions. Khel se Mel is based on cooperation, non-competitiveness and inclusion, and helped the team members to express and articulate themselves and engage and with greater freedom with children and in the schools. There is marked change in the team members and also their engagement with schools. In most cases, teachers began to inclusion techniques and activities<sup>6</sup>.



An important concern for CSEI is to provide space and platforms for young people from socially excluded communities to come together, articulate their concerns, monitor state provisions of scholarship, additional learning support, books, uniforms and advocate for better equity and inclusion in growth and development at the state and national levels. CSEI also envisages this to be a sharing and mentoring space where the youth would mentor and support younger children in their areas and also be mentored by other inspiring persons in the community and at large. A beginning has been made in 2011 with Dalit girls and boys in Bihar, where over 400 young people across 8 blocks have come together to create the 'Ambedkar Student Forum' (ASF).



With the support of the partner CSOs, these young people have initiated platforms at the panchayat levels in 13 panchayats. They have also come together at the state level to form the Bihar Ambedkar Students Forum (BASF).

Limited exposure and limited opportunities in turn limit the vision and engagement of these youth. CSEI therefore organized a four-day needs-based leadership and personality development programme for the youth, bringing them together for the first time at the state level across panchayats and districts for a collective learning process. In turn, many of these youth also took responsibility for identifying the out-of-school children in their panchayats and enrolling them in schools. They plan to ensure that all children in their panchayats are going to school with no 'out of school children'.

The ASF and BASF have great potential to promote students and young people's forums as independent and autonomous forums in the long run. This requires careful planning in the coming year on our part along with these forums.

<sup>5</sup> Play for Peace is an international organization, with initiatives in India.

<sup>6</sup> Jan Adhikar Kendra, Rohtas, Paramount Global Welfare Society - Jamui, Gaurav Gram Shakti - Bhagalpur, Sant Kabir Sewa Samiti - Begu Sarai, Gaurav Gramin Mahila Vikas Sansthan - Patna

## 5. Training

- Arti Verma was selected for the MRG trainings in Bangkok and further in Geneva in November 2011. She undertook the human rights course designed by MRG and brought the issues of the marginalized communities into the human rights debate particularly from Dalit and Muslim perspectives. It was also learning exposure for her.
- We also had opportunities at the international level in expanding the scope of policy development and equity issues. Annie Namala was requested to be resource person at the UNICEF ROSA social policy workshop in Sri Lanka and Pakistan. In both places, the concerns of unequal development and growing inequalities were in focus. This also provided an opportunity to explore the issues of identity based social exclusion and inclusion strategies in the region.
- An opportunity was also given by the Netherlands Helsinki Committee for Annie Namala to co-facilitate a workshop on social policy for women and children held in Kyrgyzstan. This provided an opportunity to explore the issues of social protection mechanisms across socialism and capitalism. The workshop also allowed space for engaging with the CSOs working on women and children's rights and the policies of the country.

## 6. Alliances and Networking

### **The RtE (Right to Education) Forum**

The Right to Education Forum, under the leadership of Mr Ambarish Rai, is an important space and platform for bringing together civil society organizations to monitor the implementation of RtE and advocate for equitable and quality education for all children under a national system of education. CSEI continues to actively engage in the process as a core group member, while continuously highlighting the need to deepen equity and inclusion under education and promoting linkages with CSOs from the marginalized communities.

Some of the important engagements during this year were the national stocktaking in April 2011 on the completion of the first year of the Act, and the half-yearly consultation held in September 2011. In addition, the RtE forum also provided a platform for many state level consultations and national consultations on important issues pertaining to education. Consultations were held on education financing, provision of early childhood education, special concerns of children with disability. A consultation was also held on the need to focus on quality in education which is partially and peripherally touched upon by the Act. Given that education provisioning has hitherto focused on infrastructure and other provisions, CSEI is constantly bringing up that it is high time to focus on quality education that is both equitable and inclusive.

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<sup>7</sup> While the requirement for RtE implementation in 2011-12 at the union level was estimated to be Rs.46000 crores by the CBE committee, the allocation for the year was only Rs.21000 crore creating a wide gap.

<sup>8</sup> Given that a large number of children from marginalised communities do not access the provisions under 'early childhood care and education' to be provided universally, there has been consultations on how and where this service should be located in the context of the RtE Act.

<sup>9</sup> With the current Supreme Court order allowing home schooling for children with severe disability, there is concern that children with disability will once again be isolated and neglected and will not access meaningful education. The majority of such children come from disadvantaged and economically weaker sections and the families do not have the knowledge or the resources to ensure the necessary provisions for educating children with disabilities and they will certainly lose out on education. This negates the Act in their regard.

### **Nine is Mine (9ISMINE) Campaign**

The 9ISMINE campaign provides a unique space to children to demand the promise made to allocate 6% of the GDP for education and 3% on health. It also provides the opportunity to deepen their understanding of national issues. CSEI has been closely engaged in strengthening this forum at the national level and in Bihar. The 'Nau Kadam Express' travelled across the country along three routes. CSEI actively supported Brother Steve and his team in planning the Express, facilitated a one-day workshop for the child participants on child rights on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2011 in Delhi, facilitated the Express across the country and also at the national culmination in Delhi on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2012. In addition, we coordinated the preparation of the campaign advocacy materials and documents and the national advocacy. We oriented the child representatives for their visit to Geneva in the context of India's report under the Universal Periodic Review to the UN Human Rights Council. It is important to note that the four representatives included a Dalit boy, two Adivasi girls - including one with special needs - and a boy from the general community. The Bihar CSEI unit supported the campaign in terms of holding state meetings and advocacy with the state authorities.



## **7. Outreach with other organisations/networks**

- 1. Infrastructure Equity Audit:** As a core group member of Equity Watch, a forum of civil society organizations monitoring equity in development processes. Equity Watch started as Social Equity Audits during tsunami relief and rehabilitation work and is being expanded further to assess development equity across various spheres. As part of this process and assessment of infrastructure facilities and its access to marginalized communities was undertaken in July 2011. CSEI facilitated the infrastructure equity audit in Bihar. The audit covered the location, access, participation and benefits of various infrastructure facilities like roads, panchayat buildings, water tanks, electricity connections, Public distribution systems, health facilities, schools etc to marginalized communities. The study report was covered widely in the media and among development agencies as this was a first time that such disparities in public spending was highlighted. at the national level. This expanded the borders of equity.
- 2. Equity in Budget Provisions:** CSEI, both at the national level and in Bihar supported Dalit Arthik Adhikar Andolan (DAAA) in training researchers to conduct a study in Delhi slums on the allocation and utilization of SCP funds. CSEI also participated and helped organize the public rally in Delhi and Bihar demanding effective implementation of SCP/TSP budget in February - March 2012.
- 3. Engagement with OXFAM:** In March (21-22) 2012, the International board members of OXFAM visited India. As part of their visit in addition to field visits to OXFAM partners and internal meetings, a half deliberation on larger development issues and concerns was held on 21<sup>st</sup> afternoon. The executive director was part of the panel that provided this overview. The concerns of Dalit communities, Dalit civil society organizations, and the challenges of supporting and strengthening them was discussed in the process. Took part as resource person in the three day consultation of OXFAM partners on Thematic Learning Session on Education on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2012.
- 4. Child Sensitive Social Protection:** CSEI had an opportunity with Save the Children to understand and assess the social protection measures for children in Rajasthan, with a focus on Tribal children. Tribal

children in Southern Rajasthan are very vulnerable with high levels of community migration across border to Gujarat, leading to illness/death of one or even both parents. Emerging problems here are the high numbers of child-headed households, children managing themselves and fully in charge of younger siblings. CSEI analysed the various state and central social protection measures, some of them very home grown. We also facilitated a one-day session on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2011 in Jaipur with different state departments, NGOs on the child sensitive social protection measures in the state. Also contributed to preparing a status paper for the same.

5. **AP Mahila Samatha Samakya:** The AP MSSS, with its vision of empowering women through education, is extensively spread across AP. They have their mandate to work with the most marginalized women and have considerable credibility with the state and community. We facilitated a one-day orientation in October 2011 to the senior team on how to understand exclusion issues and equity and inclusion strategies.
6. **Wada Na Todo Abhiyan:** CSEI is a member of the WNTA campaign and convener of the Education thematic action group. This opportunity has been used to bring in issues of equity and focus on the Dalit, Muslim and Tribal children's right to education. WNTA is a civil society platform holding government accountable to its development and political promises. WNTA anchored the civil society dialogue with the Planning Commission for the preparation of the 12<sup>th</sup> Five Year Plan approach paper too.
7. **Strengthening the POA Act:** As the PoA Act is an important tool to strength Dalit and Adivasi communities to access and enjoyment of human rights provisions, especially their right to life and security of life, CSEI has closely worked with National Dalit Movement for Justice (NDMJ) in their advocacy efforts on bringing amendments to the Act and Rules. CSEI contributed in the various consultations held for drafting the amendments in particular those related to education.
8. **RtE Social Audit:** The National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights currently pilots social audits to understand children/community access to the RtE Act in 10 states across the country. Through NGO partners, the audit involves data collection on school provisioning and a public review of the same with the concerned authorities. We were part of the panel hearing the audit issues in Lalitpur district in UP, where the social audits were facilitated by Nirantar. While there was much conflict between the community, NGOs and state government in the initial periods of the social audits, these are gaining more acceptance.
9. **Contribution as board member:** Increasing concerns with the issue of social exclusion and equity-inclusion measures are also reflected in the organisations that are coming forward to discuss these issues with CSEI. We keenly flag non-discrimination and equity issues during internal organisation meetings and strategy building as member of their boards in Human Rights Foundation (HRF), New Education Group-Fire (NEG FIRE), National Coalition for Education (NCE), Equity Watch, Voluntary Action Network India (VANI), Wada Na Todo Abhiyan (WNTA). Though difficult, the challenge will be to promote the concerns and leadership of the marginalised communities in these various forums and support organisations to build their perspectives and strategies on equity and inclusion.
10. **Internship:** During this year, the Delhi office provided a one-month internship opportunity to Anandita Mukherjee from National Law School, Hyderabad to understand civil society organisations from the marginalised communities. We also supported Beena Pallikal from NCDHR in organising the internship of Shirley Potter from the US on understanding the commonalities and interface between Dalit issues in India and the issues of the African-American communities in her country.

The Bihar office also provided internship opportunities to Disha Batra, Manoj Kumar, Divyesh Murabiya, Smita Kanoje and Vijay Prakash from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. Valuable insights were provided to these students and CSEI helped them to connect their academic education to the concerns and constraints of Dalit and other marginalised communities.

## V. CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS: MOVING AHEAD

Since its founding in 2009, CSEI has been an organisation in the making, taking up new agendas in new perspectives. The watchwords continue to be 'non-discrimination-equity-inclusion' in social and economic rights. Going beyond our turf of working on Dalit rights, education is being used as an area to cut across and form a common cause among Adivasi, Dalit and Muslim civil society organisations.

During this year we are happy to see the Bihar office set up and effectively moving forward, thanks to Satya and his team. Our advocacy efforts with the state have also been quite fruitful. We are happy to note issues of non-discrimination and equity taking initial shape in the dialogue and debates.

As an organisation we are recognised and our expertise and solidarity are sought in the area of child rights and particularly education rights. We are happy to use these spaces to promote equitable and quality education for socially excluded children and to connect civil society of the marginalised communities to larger processes of policy and implementation.

Surely we have moved forward considerably – but many steps need to be taken in future. We thank the board that is a strength and anchor to us, the team which is the energy and fuel, CSO partners, other co-travellers and collaborators, all those who support our work with financial and other resources for making this journey possible. We are yet to find sustained support for our work in financial terms, many things are yet to be done in terms of fulfilling the statutory and legal compliances. However, we have the firm sense that we are on the way. As we like to say 'we are an organisation always in the making'.

## ANNEXURE 1

These recommendations have emerged from various consultations and meetings and came to this shape under the Education Thematic Action Group (Edu TAG) under the Wada Na Todo Abhiyan. Many of the MC CSOs identified and working with CSEI was part of this consultation.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHILDREN FROM MUSLIM COMMUNITIES:**

1. Make education and schooling under the government system truly secular without imposing any religious rituals or practices to ensure all children participate equally in schooling processes. Children from other religions feel excluded and also find it difficult to participate in rituals like Saraswathy aarti, yoga, surya namaskar, or to touch the feet of teachers which are not part of/prohibited in non-Hindu religious traditions.
2. Recognise the rich diversity of religion, culture, leadership and contribution of various communities in school curriculum and create sensitivity and respect for them among all children and teachers. Currently there is little in the curriculum that Muslim children can relate to in terms of their culture or icons. Special efforts to be made to incorporate them into curriculum content and teacher training programmes.
3. Ensure adequate trained teachers and teaching learning materials in Urdu language, being the home language of many Muslim children. This also demands teacher training institutions, teaching learning materials etc in Urdu. The three language formula or mother tongue based Multi-lingual education (MLE) may be adopted to overcome this constraint.
4. Create confidence among Muslim parents through better engagement with them and also improving school quality in diverse spheres including infrastructure, school curriculum, teaching learning processes, teacher capacity, secular education etc. Given the prevalent perception that private schooling is better, Muslim parents too wish to provide private school education to their children and feel guilty and inadequate when they are unable to do so. Government schools must be improved to become the preferred option.
5. Implement the Supreme Court directions on early childhood care and education on priority basis to cover all Muslim children and in Muslim habitations.
6. Provide residential schools for boys and girls from Muslim community in Muslim dominated areas both in urban and rural areas. These can include KGBVs for promoting better enrolment and retention of girls.
7. Relax the norms on the number of primary and upper primary schools in urban areas with high density of Muslim children population in keeping with the need in the area.
8. Regulate and monitor 25% reservation under section 12 of the RTE Act to ensure that Muslim children also access the provision. Ensure that dress codes in private schools (permission to wear hijabs or avoid dress which may not be considered appropriate) do not prevent parents from sending girls.
9. Recognise, monitor and address various forms of discrimination faced by Muslim children in schools; being considered dirty, separate seating, humiliated by name calling, religion based teasing, discouraged educational excellence, limiting children's horizons to traditional occupation etc. More information is needed on these forms of discrimination in schools.
10. Review with community leaders the current formula in which Minority funds are spent in education. The community prefers it being spent on direct support to children like transport, scholarships, additional teaching learning materials, additional coaching, support to access special schools, etc than on expenditures on infrastructure or other general mandated costs.
11. Include Muslim parents and children in the SMCs and ensure their concerns are brought into the schools development plans through active participation. Promote awareness about RTE and education opportunities among Muslim parents and community.
12. Institutionalise SCPCR committees up to Block level to ensure effective grievance redress

mechanisms under RTE and fix responsibility and accountability mechanisms from the school levels upwards.

13. Empower Gram Sabhas to monitor and evaluate the functioning of the SMCs.
14. Include and collaborate with civil society organizations led by people from Muslim (as well as Dalit and Adivasi community) with the education system for monitoring and evaluation of quality and inclusive education in the following areas:
  - Out of school children
  - IN School: PTR, Attendance rate of children, teacher training, Infrastructure, SMC/SDP, 25% EWS quota
  - Community awareness
  - Tracking of innovation funds
  - Other education related entitlements
15. Provide equal and equitable per child budget allocations to all schools run by the government and make education a means of disparity reduction and social leveller. Ensure RTE compliance in schools in Muslim habitations on priority basis.
16. Include contextual pedagogy practices that links to the experiences of the children within the overarching National Curriculum Framework of 2005
17. Recommends adequate financial provisions for periodic training and evaluation of teachers
18. Protect and promote the education rights of all children under 14 years under RTE by linking all institutions where children below 14 years are involved or taken care of be linked with MHRD.
19. Introduce periodic and enhanced trainings to SMC members and support them in building School Development Plans (SDPs) to ensure needs and aspirations of Muslim (and other marginalised children) are adequately included and addressed. Local civil society organisations and those from the Muslim community may be included in this process.
20. Ensure mandated number of days and hours of teaching in schools and limit the engagement of teachers in non-teaching tasks, fully respecting the RTE norms. Reduced teaching hours add to the challenges of children from Muslim (Dalit and Adivasi) children.
21. Institutionalise regular monitoring “Quality and Equity in Education” through district and block level bodies.
22. To set up a “Child friendly” mechanism for grievance redressal on similar lines as evolved by CHILDLINE India Foundation (CIF)
23. Better regulation by the government on the fee structure and curriculum of private schools to make it more equitable and inclusive.
24. Have special focus for girls and children with special needs and ensure gender and inclusion concerns and needs are made priority in all education plans and implementation.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHILDREN FROM ADIVASI COMMUNITIES**

1. Recognise the rights of Adivasi children within the overarching principles of the Constitution and International human rights and in particular rights of indigenous communities. ILO Conventions 169 and 182 in particular relate to education and other human rights of Adivasi children and are relevant in setting the frame.

ILO Convention No. 169 states the following:

#### **Indigenous children:**

- Shall have the opportunity to acquire education on an equal footing
- Shall be taught to read and write in their own languages
- Shall have the opportunity to attain fluency in the national language(s)



### **Education programmes and services:**

- Shall be developed and implemented in cooperation with indigenous peoples, and shall incorporate their histories, knowledge, technologies and value systems
- Shall impart general knowledge and skills that help indigenous children to participate fully and on an equal footing in their own and in the national community
- Shall contribute to eliminating prejudices against indigenous peoples

ILO Convention No. 182 calls for *"immediate and effective measures to secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour as a matter of urgency."*

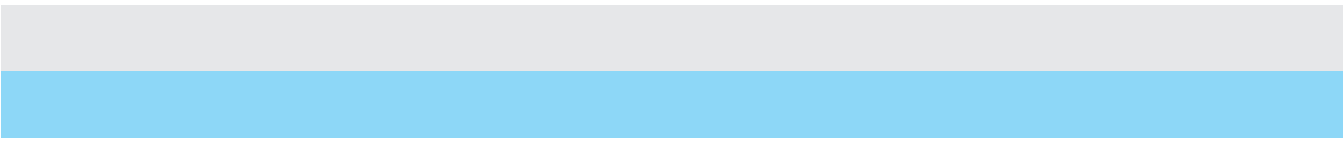
2. Recognise language as a 'right and resource' in education and adopt mother tongue based Multi-lingual Education (MLE) through its application in curriculum, teaching learning materials and adequate numbers of trained teachers. Non recognition of Adivasi children's languages in schooling is primary reason for non comprehension and high drop-out and is a rejection of their identity and culture. Some states have adopted the MLE system teaching children in mother tongue and gradually switching over to regional language and English from class V.
3. Make education and schooling under the government system inclusive without imposing any religious rituals or practices to ensure all children participate equally in schooling processes.
4. Recognise the rich diversity of religion, culture, leadership and contribution of Adivasi communities in school curriculum and create sensitivity and respect for them among all children and teachers. Currently there is little in the curriculum that Adivasi children can relate to in terms of their culture or icons. Special efforts to be made to incorporate them into curriculum and content.
5. Recognise Scheduled Tribe (ST) status of Adivasi children in non-scheduled areas and extend all provisions under education to them.
6. Implement the Supreme Court directions on early childhood care and education on priority basis to cover all Adivasi children and in Adivasi areas.
7. Expand high quality residential school facilities for Adivasi boys and girls given the poverty, geographical and social barriers leading to low attendance, low transition and high drop out among Adivasi children and given the low literacy levels at the home. These schools/hostels should ensure all child rights norms are fulfilled, be adequately provided for and special entitlements should be ensured in a smooth manner. HRD should be responsible to monitor the quality of education there.
8. Regulate and monitor 25% reservation under section 12 of the RTE Act to ensure that Adivasi children also access the provision.
9. Promote community awareness among Adivasi parents about SMC and its roles and responsibilities and ensure participation of Adivasi parents. Ensure their concerns are brought into the schools development plans through active participation.
10. Recognise, monitor and address various forms of discrimination faced by Adivasi children in schools. Undertake studies/mechanisms to build further information on these practices.
11. Institutionalise SCPCR committees up to Block level to ensure effective grievance redress mechanisms under RTE and fix responsibility and accountability mechanisms for grievance redress from the school levels upwards.
12. Empower Gram Sabhas to monitor and evaluate the functioning of the SMCs
13. Engage and collaborate with civil society organizations led by people from Adivasi (as well as Dalit and Muslim community) in the education system for monitoring and evaluation of quality and inclusive education in the following areas:
  - Out of school children
  - IN School: PTR, Attendance rate of children, teacher training, Infrastructure, SMC/SDP, 25% DA/EWS quota, inclusion of children with special needs..
  - Community awareness

- Tracking of innovation funds
  - Other education related entitlements
14. Make uniform and equitable budget allocations to all schools run by the government to reduce the disparities between various schools themselves
  15. Budget allocation under Tribal Sub Plan (TSP) in education should directly benefit Adivasi children's access and achievements in education in terms of providing for additional coaching, additional teaching-learning materials, exposure visits, motivation and personality development programmes, meeting travel costs, etc and not be used for general items already mandated as in construction, school facilities etc.
  16. Include contextual pedagogy practices that links to the experiences of the children within the overarching National Curriculum Framework of 2005
  17. Allocate adequate financial provisions for periodic training and evaluation of teachers and set the system in place.
  18. Protect and promote the Right of all children under RTE even in institutions whose primary purpose is not education, but care and protection. The institutions should be linked to Ministry/Dept of Education where children below 14 years are involved or taken care of.
  19. Introduce periodic and enhanced trainings to SMC members and support them in building School Development Plans (SDPs) to ensure needs and aspirations of Adivasi (and other marginalised children) are adequately included and addressed. Local civil society organisations and those from Adivasi community may be given priority in this process.
  20. Monitor mandated number of days and hours of teaching in schools and limit the engagement of teachers in non-teaching tasks, fully respecting the RTE norms. Reduced teaching hours add to the challenges of children from Adivasi (and other marginalised) children.
  21. Institutionalise regular monitoring “Quality and Equity in Education” through district and block level bodies.
  22. To set up a “Child friendly” mechanism for grievance redressal on similar lines as evolved by CHILDLINE India Foundation (CIF)
  23. Better regulation by the government on the fee structure and curriculum of private schools to make it more equitable and inclusive.
  24. Have special focus for girls and children with special needs and ensure gender and inclusion concerns and needs are made priority in all education plans and implementation.

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHILDREN FROM DALIT COMMUNITIES**

1. Teachers should be sensitised on the challenges faced by Dalit and other marginalised children during pre and in-service trainings, addressing their own caste bias and stereotypes that act as barriers to children's learning.
2. Include and strictly deal with any act of discrimination against Dalit children by community members, parents, other students or teachers in timely manner with transparent and clear accountability mechanisms under the grievance redress. It is often that dominant caste teachers when appointed in their native places collude with the dominant caste attitudes and negatively impact the learning and achievement of Dalit children.
3. Make uniform and equitable budget allocations across all government schools to reduce the disparities among various government schools
4. Budget allocation under Scheduled Caste Plan (SCP) in education should directly benefit Dalit children's access and achievements in education in terms of providing for additional coaching, additional teaching-learning materials, personality development programmes, meeting travel costs, etc and not be used for general items already mandated as in construction, school facilities etc.

5. Set up high quality residential schools and hostels at secondary level and upwards for Dalit children at the block/district levels and ensure that all child rights and RTE norms are met. SCP budget in education may be used towards this on priority basis.
6. Implement the Supreme Court directions on early child care and education to provide equitable school preparation process for Dalit children ensuring that ECCE centres are set up in Dalit habitations to cover all children.
7. Monitor periodically “Quality and Equity in Education” in education through block and district level committees or specialised teams.
8. Include context related pedagogy practices within the overarching National Curriculum Framework to connect to children at the local level
9. Provide enhanced and periodic trainings to SMC members and facilitate them to create School Development Plans (SDPs) to include issues and needs of Dalit (and other marginalised) children. Promote greater awareness among Dalit parents on opportunities from education. Local NGOs and those constituted by members from Dalit (and other marginalised) communities may be engaged to make this sustainable process.
10. Empower Gram Sabhas to monitor and evaluate the functioning of the SMCs
11. Monitor and ensure PTR, teaching days and hours as mandated under the RTE and limit teachers engagement in nonteaching activities which has adverse impact on the education of children studying in government schools. Such practices add to the challenges of children from Dalit (and other marginalised) children
12. Implement and monitor admission of Dalit children to private schools under 25% reservation. Regulate Private schools in terms of fee structure, curriculum and class room practices to make it more inclusive and accessible to Dalits and other marginalised children.
13. Recognise the rich diversity of religion, culture, leadership and contribution of various communities in school curriculum and create sensitivity and respect for them among all children and teachers. Currently there is little in the curriculum that Dalit children can relate to in terms of their culture or icons. Special efforts to be made to incorporate them into curriculum and content.
14. Recognise, monitor and address various forms of discrimination faced by Dalit children in schools; being considered dirty, separate seating, humiliation by name calling, caste based teasing, discourage educational excellence, limiting children's horizons to traditional occupation etc.
15. Institute grievance redress mechanisms to Block level to ensure effective grievance redress mechanisms under RTE and fix responsibility and accountability mechanisms from the school levels upwards. Decentralisation of SCPCR may be considered here.
16. Engage and collaborate with civil society organizations led by people from Dalit (as well as other marginalised communities) in the education system for monitoring and evaluation of quality and inclusive education in the following areas:
  - Out of school children
  - IN School: PTR, Attendance rate of children, teacher training, Infrastructure, SMC/SDP, 25% DA/EWS quota
  - Community awareness
  - Tracking of innovation funds
  - Other education related entitlements
17. Bring local knowledge into the pedagogy practices to link to children's experiences within the overall frame of the National Curricular Framework
18. Institutionalise and set aside adequate financial provisions for periodic training and evaluation of teachers
19. Protect and promote the rights of all Dalit children under 14 years under the RTE by linking all



institutions engaged with and providing care and protection with the Ministry/Department of education even when education may not be the primary task of these institutions.

20. Undertake research and pilot inclusion activities for improving data availability and best practices for promoting equity and inclusion in education.
21. To set up a “Child friendly” mechanism for grievance redressal on similar lines as evolved by CHILDLINE India Foundation (CIF)
22. Have special focus for girls and children with special needs and ensure gender and inclusion concerns and needs are made priority in all education plans and implementation.

