Over the years, our editorials have focused on serious themes, mostly articulated from an "adult" perspective. This issue, for a change, commences with a strong plea for reform by two young friends from our dynamic Civic Clubs. A remarkable straight talk from our future citizens. Read between the lines and you will find a refreshing candour and a touching commitment to make the world a better place to live. Over to our young advocates...

"How would you react?
To this irresponsible act-
Which clearly shows the fact:
Of man and his brutal “Environmental Pact”

The pact is very much visible in a rapidly growing city like Bangalore. When we realised that this city with a population of 6 million consumes about 850 Million Litres per Day (MLD) and the amount of sewage generated is unimaginable (3 million kilograms per day), we knew that some of the terms like desertification and deforestation (which we learn in our textbooks) are just around the corner. We ourselves were ignorant of all these facts until we became active partners of the Children’s Movement for Civic Awareness (CMCA), which is a joint venture of the Public Affairs Centre and Swabhimana. Through the Civic Clubs, the main vehicle of the CMCA, we got introduced to what can be coined quite plainly as “civic sense”. At this point, you may very well ask: “What role can children play in improving the governance of our country?”

We will give a very straight and short answer. With our indefatigable energy, boundless creativity and wide-eyed curiosity, we children strongly feel that we can be an effective medium for change. A change for a better tomorrow for all of us.

From a child’s perspective on governance, perhaps the greatest problem confronting our future would be corruption. Looking around us, we could very clearly see the long arms of corruption everywhere - illegal chopping down of trees, unauthorised drilling of borewells, illegal constructions etc. But unfortunately, our views are not all taken into consideration. If the city belongs to us children tomorrow and if we are going to be the critical actors of governance in the near future, why should we allow such gross problems to persist? We now know for sure that the promises of our elected leaders are limited to the days of campaigning and once in power they turn a blind eye to the problems.

What would be our wish-list for a better future?
Through the activities of the Civic Clubs, we have seen that active citizenship can play a key role in the upkeep of good governance, including environmental protection and sustenance. What we would like to say loud here is that active citizenship also includes citizens’ duties. How many times have we witnessed with disgust the way people dump garbage on the road, violate traffic rules and degrade the environment by indiscriminately using hazardous materials like plastic bags. Corruption should be eradicated through strong participation and support from the citizens and the government should take up strict anti-corruption measures including punishment for those found guilty right from the highest levels of the administration. Nevertheless, we believe that the best way to eradicate corruption is by self-realization.

It is an old adage that a broken clock shows the right time twice a day. We children may not have fully formed views and opinions. But we do have a tremendous hope for the future and we are committed to be a part of the change today. And like the broken clock, our views and opinions once in a while should be taken on board.

G Sri Kumar Murthy & Kaushik V
Eco Comrades Civic Club
Little Flower Public School, Bangalore
RESEARCH

THE STATE OF ORISSA'S PUBLIC SERVICES – BENCHMARKS FOR THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Public Affairs Centre's Millennial Survey of Public Services in India has set in place useful benchmarks to assess the effectiveness and quality of basic services from the perspective of the users of the service. Following the release of the findings at the national level in April 2002, individual reports for states in India have been prepared. So far, reports for 15 states have been completed and in five states, the findings have been formally released in the form of public functions and workshops. On March 27, 2003 the state report for Orissa was formally released by the Development Commissioner, Government of Orissa, in Bhubaneswar at a public function jointly organized by PAC and the Centre for Youth and Social Development (CYSD). This article gives a glimpse into the major findings from that study.

As in the other states, five essential services – Drinking water, Public Distribution System, Health, Primary Education, and Public Transport were covered and public service was examined on four key aspects:

Access – proximity of the users to the service provided.
Usage – to what extent do they use it.
Reliability – how dependable is the service
Satisfaction – user's rating of the overall effectiveness of the service.

The survey covered 105 villages drawn from ten districts representing three geographical regions (Coastal Orissa, Gondwana and Orissa hills) in the state of Orissa: Baleshwar, Bhadrak, Jagpur, Kendrapara, Jagatsinghpur, Sambalpur, Bargad, Sundargarh, Mayurbhanj and Balangir. Responses were collected from 1239 households selected through multi-stage stratified sampling. Roughly a third of the sample was from urban areas comprising six towns, spread over 5 districts.

How do public services in Orissa measure up?

Assessments across the four key attributes of public services carried out by this survey reveal

1 Access, Usage, Reliability of service and Satisfaction with the service

the variations that exist among the services across different regions in the state. The state has succeeded in providing good access to its citizens with respect to government primary schools where it performs significantly better than many other states in all the districts. Access to drinking water within 100 metres (56%) and PDS outlets (58%) are both around the national average figures. Access to medical facilities and availability of public buses are below the national average.

Usage of public buses is marginal in Orissa; private operators lead in the provision of service. There is a high intensity of use for all other public services when compared to the nation as a whole. Dependence on government primary education facilities is more than in many other states in the country. Over ninety percent of the citizens use government medical facilities for major and minor ailments, which is more than the rest of the country on the whole. Ownership of ration cards is reported to be higher than the national average; also fair price shops are used by almost all the card owning households in the state but the satisfaction levels remain lower than in many other states.

On measures of reliability of public services, Orissa lags behind many states, especially in ensuring regular availability of food grains. Reliability of public water sources and doctors' presence at health centers were however higher than the national average. Where Orissa fares worse is in reliability of education, where satisfaction with behaviour of teachers in primary schools is below the national average. On the positive side awareness of midday meal schemes is much higher when compared to the nation as a whole.

Perhaps the most realistic picture of the efficacy of public services in Orissa is seen through citizen's
satisfaction levels (See Table 1 below). In this regard, across the board, the state is behind the national figures. The largest difference is on satisfaction with the quality and quantity of drinking water, which was considerably lower than that for the nation as a whole. In the case of full satisfaction with government health facilities, the state lags behind many other states in the country. Full satisfaction with the quality of school buildings and toilets is also relatively lower than in many other states. What is of significant interest while evaluating public services in Orissa is that overall, usage of services is extremely high, except for public buses, but satisfaction with these services is very low. The question is, why the uniformly poor scores for satisfaction across the state?

Table 1: Satisfaction with Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit (location)</th>
<th>Drinking Water (quantity)</th>
<th>Public Distribution System (quantity)</th>
<th>Health (doctors)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Balangir</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster I (Baleshwar and Bhadrak)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster II (Janpur, Jajpur, Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapara)</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayurbhanj</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cluster III (Sambalpur and Bargahi)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sundargarh</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural average</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban average</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State average</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How do the districts vary in performance?

Cluster I (Baleshwar and Bhadrak) does relatively better than the other districts when all services are considered. The other districts do well in some aspects and not so well in others. Certain services are extremely good in certain districts, examples of this being access to drinking water and government primary schools in Cluster III (Sambalpur and Bargahi). Cluster I (Baleshwar and Bhadrak) is the better performer in PDS. Access to government buses in the state is very low and usage minimal. In overall terms, health services in Cluster I (Baleshwar and Bhadrak) outshines the other districts. Mayurbhanj performs poorly in terms of access to public protected drinking water, PDS outlets and government healthcare facilities.

Have the services done well for the poor?

Disadvantaged sections, which comprise of SCs/STs, households from small villages and households with Income Capability Disadvantage, show higher dependence on public services than in other sections. In the case of SC/STs there is no significant variation across any of the indicators. We find that even though access to drinking water is higher among smaller villages, the penetration of public services like health care, primary schools and anganwadis is significantly lower in smaller villages. This calls for identifying more effective ways of delivering services in these locations and to these segments of the population.

Even though poorer sections have slightly lower access ratios to public services, the difference is not substantial to make a case for any discrimination. However, there is some uniformity in health, where access is lower for the poorer sections and they also report a lower frequency of doctors' presence in health care centres. This along with generally higher levels of dissatisfaction across both primary education facilities and health centres perhaps denotes a lower intensity of service to people in these areas. Rural areas are worst hit in the access parameter. They have less access to protected drinking water and health care facilities, while dissatisfaction figures for PDS is generally higher for rural areas. Hence, this area needs greater attention of the government in resource allocation for these services.

How does Orissa compare with other states?

When compared to other states, Orissa's ranking for the five services in terms of access, reliability and satisfaction is as given below in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Rank of Orissa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Drinking water</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDS</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(For more information on the study, please contact Dr. Sita Sekhar at BAC)
THEME ARTICLE

YOUTH POWER: THE INVISIBLE PART OF THE GOOD GOVERNANCE EQUATION

Dr. Gopakumar K Thampi

"There is a growing recognition that young people are a key piston in the twin engines of civic engagement and community development. There is a deepening understanding that engaging young people in civic life and community problem solving is a key ingredient of youth development."


In 1989, over 700 street children in Brazil took over the Brazilian National Congress and symbolically enacted a law protecting the rights of children and youth. The takeover was the culmination of a long process of mobilisation led by the National Movement of Street Boys and Girls (Movimento Nacional de Meninos e Meninas de Ruas—MNMMR). This campaign by the most impoverished of children forced the Brazilian congress to adopt protections for children and youth into the Constitution.

In Bangalore, civic clubs in schools are demonstrating the impacts of proactive citizenship by learning, advocating and practicing civic values.

In Ecuador, the young leaders of an organization called Cofecin use artistic expression to start new businesses, create alternatives to gang violence, educate a thousand children and rebuild impoverished communities.

Powerful examples like the ones described above are fast redefining the contours of civic activism all over the world. But these positive notes seldom hit the headlines. Public perception on “Generation X” is not very inspiring – socially inert, self-absorbed group with no or little interest in the governance processes. The role of youth in governance is akin to that of the ghost in Shakespeare’s Macbeth – “Always in the periphery of action, but never in it”. Despite the fact that communities of the future are to be built by the youth of today, there is very little space provided for the proactive engagement of the youth in any meaningful processes. This caution in engaging the youth basically stems from two misconstrued “myths” revolving around the role of youth in society:

Myth 1: Youth in general are apathetic to social problems and seldom participate in democratic processes. It is indeed true that many young people do not vote or take part in conventional political processes. But have we ever wondered why is this so? Studies from different parts of the world have repeatedly underscored the fact that youth are quite interested in the political processes and are in a constant search for different ways to express their views and opinions. However, the declining appeal of ideology, constant exposés on corruption and growing disenchantment with political structures have greatly contributed to the alienation of youth from politics. For contrast, witness the tremendous growth in youth involvement with themes like environment, race, gender and peace – social movements on these themes basically ride on the exuberance, commitment and ideas of young people all around the world. The challenge here is to harness this youth potential on issues related to governance.

Myth 2: Young people lack the skills needed to bring about significant changes through their work. Globally, youth are excluded from “adult” roles on serious themes. The popular explanation is that young people do not possess the necessary skills to deal with issues related to power and politics. But a cursory glance at some of the youth-led initiatives across the globe highlight the fact that what young people lack in experience, they make up for in creativity, energy, and fresh perspectives. Comparing youth to other disenfranchised groups like women and minorities, the Sociologist Mike Males powerfully argues in his provocative work ‘The Sea captain Generation’ that “Young people are the last group we are allowed to systematically exclude”. Adult attitudes play a major role in limiting opportunities for youth action and downplaying recognition of it when it occurs.

Perhaps a major reason for this blinkered vision is the growing disconnect between community development and youth mobilization. Given the fact that community development hinges around the rights of “residents” – adults who own or lease homes in a particular locality and who have voting rights, there is no imagined space for politically disempowered and economically dependant youth to play any engaging role. However, the key to improved civic engagement lies in the deepening of the connections between the youth and the communities.

But why engage the youth?
Since the International Youth Year in 1985, there
have been numerous international and United Nations conferences and declarations supporting the need for meaningful youth participation in decision-making. For example, the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes, adopted at the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth in August 1998 made the following commitments (among others):

- Ensuring and encouraging the active participation of young people in all spheres of society and in decision-making processes at the national, regional and international levels and ensuring that the necessary gender-sensitive measures are taken in order to attain equal access of young women and young men and by creating the conditions necessary for the fulfilment of their civic duties;
- Promoting education, training in democratic processes and the spirit of citizenship and civic responsibility of young women and young men with the view to strengthening and facilitating their commitment to, participation in and full integration into society; and
- Facilitating access by youth to legislative and policy-making bodies, through their representatives, in order to involve them closely in the formulation, execution, follow-up, monitoring and evaluation of youth activities and programmes and to ensure their participation in development.

Central to these statements is the firm belief that young people have the potential to contribute, participate and lead. There are various reasons to argue for meaningful involvement of youth in the governance arena:

**Combatting Cynicism:** There is a precariously growing mistrust in political institutions and democratic processes. Major manifestations of this cynicism are dwindling voter participation in elections, apathy and indifference to common problems, declining social capital etc. Integration of youth to community oriented governance themes and issues is a sure-shot strategy to rejuvenate the shrinking civic activism. Though politically disempowered, youth can create vital linkages between the citizens and the institutions and add a new perspective to the manner in which the demand for good governance is articulated.

**Promoting Learning:** Active citizenship is not just about protests about rights and entitlements. It's also about duties and obligations. As noted civic educationist, Robert Dahl points out, "If democracy is to work, it would seem to require a certain level of political competence on the part of its citizens".

**Developing Leadership Roles:** Youth engagement paves the way for young people to develop valuable social and leadership skills. It also provides the youth to develop social interactions by meeting a wide spectrum of citizens. From the society's point of view increased integration of youth in community issues helps to build bridges between the young people and adults and change negative perceptions and stereotypes of youth.

**Civic Activism as a starting point**

The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development has articulated a general list of competencies that we want for young people. These include academic, cognitive, civic, emotional, physical, vocational, and social and cultural competence. Beyond these expected competencies, an important set of secondary outcomes exists—those that allow young people to be not only competent, but also connected, caring, and committed. The civic arena provides an enabling environment to develop these competencies and channelise them for the larger public good. Communities are much more than physical spaces. Communities are also about associations and networks through which people interact and work towards common goals. Increasingly, communities are realizing the need to strengthen the human, social, cultural and civic aspects alongside economic and physical aspects. Communities are more than physical places. An informal survey of publications conducted by The Forum for Youth Investment has revealed ten types of community assets:

- economic;
- physical;
- basic services;
- health and human services;
- education and information;
- civic/political;
- cultural/artistic;
- spiritual/religious;
- social/associational; and
- individual development.

All these arenas are perfectly amenable to youth participation and engagement. The main challenge is to identify the modalities of engagement and frame enabling policy options to formally integrate youth into local governance structures. It is a matter
of shame that the power of young people to systematically make a difference is not understood or imagined within the institutions where they spend their time, e.g., the schools. However, as the experiences in CMCA suggest (see p.9) the creativity and commitment brought in by the young citizens are setting in place highly inspiring models of active citizenship and laying the foundation for sustained civic actions.

References
3. Youth as decision makers. The Laidlaw Foundation, Toronto.

WIDE ANGLE

THE FIRST GLOBAL CORRUPTION BAROMETER SURVEY

Three out of ten respondents singled out political parties as the institution from which they would like to eliminate corruption if they were given a magic wand, according to the Global Corruption Barometer, a new survey of the general public in 48 countries on all continents. The survey was commissioned from Gallup International by Transparency International, the world’s leading anti-corruption organisation. The Global Corruption Barometer measures attitudes towards corruption and expectations of future corruption levels. Over time, the survey will measure trends in attitudes.

A total of 40,838 people were surveyed in 47 countries in the Voice of the People survey, a general household survey conducted by Gallup International in July 2002. The survey included a series of questions on behalf of Transparency International, specifically the TI Global Corruption Barometer survey. Respondents included 19,448 males (47.6%) and 21,390 females (52.4%) from 47 countries. A large percentage of respondents were aged between 30-50 years (42.9%), had some education (71.3%), were receiving a low income (41.9%), and lived in urban communities (66.4%). Close to half of the respondents (47.4%) were employed at the time the survey was conducted.

The survey addressed three questions:

Question 1. HOW SERIOUSLY DO YOU BELIEVE CORRUPTION AFFECTS DIFFERENT SPHERES OF LIFE IN YOUR COUNTRY?

The majority of respondents believed that corruption was very significant in affecting the different spheres of their life. About half of all respondents believed that corruption was very significant in affecting the business environment (48.6%), political life (55.1%), and the culture and values in society (43.7%). In countries such as Argentina, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Colombia, Costa Rica and Turkey, nearly two out of every three respondents felt that corruption had a very significant affect on their personal and family life. By contrast, in countries such as Denmark, Finland, Germany, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, respondents believed that corruption did not significantly affect their personal and family lives. A good example of this is Finland, where 85.6% (618) of respondents believed that corruption did not have a significant influence on their personal and family lives. Overall the association between a respondent’s country and their beliefs about how corruption affects their personal and family life was strong and highly significant.

Question 2 - DO YOU EXPECT THE LEVEL OF CORRUPTION TO CHANGE IN THE NEXT THREE YEARS?

In general respondents expected the level of corruption to increase to some degree (either a little or a lot) over the next three years (40.7%). One in every five respondents (19.3%) expected the level of corruption to decrease and 26.3% of respondents expected it to stay the same over the next three years. There was a relatively high percentage (10.8%) of respondents who either did not know the answer or chose not to respond to the question. In Colombia and Indonesia, the most optimistic people in the survey, a majority expected corruption levels to decrease. A clear majority of Cameroonians, Georgians, Indians, Indians, Israeli, Dutch, Norwegians, South Africans and Turks expected corruption to increase in their countries. India was an interesting case because one in every two respondents felt that the level of corruption would increase a lot over the next three years, which was the highest percentage of all countries.
QUESTION 3 – IF YOU HAD A MAGIC WAND AND YOU COULD ELIMINATE CORRUPTION FROM ONE OF THE FOLLOWING INSTITUTIONS, WHAT WOULD YOUR FIRST CHOICE BE?

Political parties were revealed in 33 of the countries surveyed to be the institution from which citizens would most like to eliminate corruption. This preference was most acutely expressed in Argentina and Japan, where more than half of all respondents picked political parties. The courts were identified by one in seven respondents worldwide, most notably in Peru and Indonesia, where they were pinpointed by one in three. The police were singled out by one in nine respondents worldwide, and by one in three in Hong Kong, Malaysia, Mexico and Nigeria. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia and Poland, one in five selected medical services. See Table below for some interesting profiles:

If I had a Magic Wand...The Wish List for Anti Corruption!

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</table>

(Percentage of respondents reporting in the affirmative)
The complete data for the Global Corruption Barometer can be accessed at: www.transparency.org/surveys/barometer/dnld/barometer2003.pdf

CAMPAIGNS

LOK SATTA together with Federation for Empowerment of Local Governments (FELG) has embarked on an unprecedented drive to collect “One Crore” (ten million) signatures from citizens of Andhra Pradesh in support of local government empowerment. The campaign was officially launched on the 9th of August and will conclude on the 2nd of October. The campaign took off simultaneously in more than 200 towns, mandal head quarters and cities across the state. Senior leaders of LOK SATTA and FELG are campaigning throughout the state and are mobilizing public support in large numbers. A special effort is being made to reach out to the youth through various colleges and educational institutions.

A massive public education and communication campaign is underway to mobilize support for this crucial campaign. The following communication material has been prepared and distributed in all the 23 districts of the state:

+ 800,000 pamphlets
+ 260,000 signature sheets
+ 107,000 posters
+ Slides for display in movie theatres
+ CDs and video cassettes for broadcasting on local cable channels
+ 4 Radio messages being broadcast on All India Radio
+ 7 Video messages for telecast on local TV Channels

The fight for genuine local government empowerment is progressing on other fronts also. LOK SATTA and FELG have filed a writ petition in AP High Court seeking specific directives to the state government on a) measures for effective devolution of powers, b) to implement the constitutional provisions in respect of creating District Planning Committees and Metropolitan Planning Committees, and c) mandatory devolution of finances to local governments as per the State Finance Commission recommendations. LOK SATTA has implored itself in the writ petition
filed by several local government leaders. The petition is being heard by a constitutional bench headed by the Chief Justice of AP High Court. The Attorney General Sri S. Subbaiah is appearing at the request of the court in his individual capacity and the Additional Solicitor General Sri L. Nageswara Rao is representing the Union of India while the state government is represented through its Advocate General. The hearings are currently underway.

More information and updates on the campaign can be accessed at www.loksatta.org/Felg.html

WORKSHOPS

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON “CIVIL SOCIETY INITIATIVES FOR BETTER GOVERNANCE”

Recent years have witnessed an explosion of civil society initiatives to improve the quality of governance in India. These endeavours have mostly been led or inspired by individuals or small groups committed to demanding increased public accountability and improving the performance of governments at different levels. Although steadfast in their mission, their limited scale of operations and resources, as well as local focus, has resulted in low awareness of similar initiatives elsewhere in the country. It was against this backdrop that Public Affairs Centre organised a National Conference in Bangalore during May 7-9, 2003. This initiative brought together twenty civil society organisations from 11 states in India.

Dr. H. Sudarshana, Director-Vigilance, Karnataka Lok Ayukta (the state-level Ombudsman) inaugurated the Conference and delivered the Key note address on “The State, Civil Society and Governance”, in which he highlighted Lok Ayukta’s efforts to battle against the epidemic of corruption, particularly in the provision of health services. Following this, Dr. Samuel Paul, Chairman, PAC shared his thoughts and ideas on “Best practices in advocacy for governance: the issues of sustainability and replicability”, articulating that any best practice must entail replication potential that can be measured in terms of its successful application by more than one civil society organisation, in a variety of settings.

Thematic presentations and discussions were led by many pioneering personalities from civil society groups and movements in India:

Planning for the Future

The concluding session was co-chaired by Dr. Jayaprakash Narayan and Dr. Samuel Paul. Dr. Jayaprakash commenced the discussion by observing that the deliberations of the first two days had struck an optimistic note for the future. The final session focused on the following issues:

- Sustaining the process of mutual learning
  - by making the Conference an annual feature.
  The participants agreed that PAC being a professional organisation was the best suited to organise such a Conference. However, it was also felt that while the Centre should continue to lead the process, participants could bear their own travel costs in the future. Later on, the agencies could explore the feasibility of holding the conference in other locations. Responding to this, Dr. Paul stated that PAC would be able to organise the conference during the next year.

- Creating an e-group facility – as a means of sustaining mutual dialogue amongst the participants. The participants unanimously endorsed the idea of a group email facility that would enable participants to stay in touch, keep everyone updated on new developments, and facilitate mutual sharing of innovative ideas and advocacy strategies.

- Documentation and dissemination of best practices in advocacy by civil society groups
  - Dr. Paul informed that Ms. Vinodini Lulla, one of the conference participants had been entrusted with the task of compiling the advocacy practices that were presented and discussed in the National Conference. This documentation would be completed in the next three to four months. Further, Dr. Paul felt that an important consideration for documentation of this nature was that the format is reader friendly.

- Identify emerging issues for joint and collaborative action at various levels - Dr. Jayaprakash stressed the importance of collaboration within a given state and across organisations. He felt that it is crucial to arrive at a shared vision on common goals, especially on broader national issues, like transparency in the electoral process, for which nation-wide collaboration among civil society groups is vital. After much deliberations, the participants resolved to strengthen and revitalise civic engagement in following three areas:
Electoral Reforms – developing a broad framework for joint action focused on the forthcoming general elections in 2004. Lok Satta would circulate documents relating to electoral reforms and other relevant information.

Citizens’ Charters – Intensify advocacy activities to operationalise the Citizens Charters. PRAJA would serve as the nodal point to facilitate exchange of relevant information and experiences in this regard.

Right to Information – Intensify state level and initiate specific action on RTI. It was resolved that CERC and Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, New Delhi would work together and share the task of wider dissemination of information on the Right to Information.

Before concluding the session, Dr. Jayaprakash cautioned that selection of other civil society groups, as partners in the endeavour to improve the quality of governance, must be done carefully after ascertaining their understanding of issues and problems and their commitment to the goal of good governance.

A Fitting Finale!
The National Conference concluded with a “Panel Discussion on Civil Society Initiatives for Better Governance”. The main objective of the Panel discussion was to facilitate sharing of experiences from across the country with citizens groups from Bangalore and Karnataka. The Panellists were: Prof. Manubhai Shah on Public Interest Litigations; Dr. Jayaprakash Narayan on Civil Society and Electoral Reforms; Mr. Yazad Jal on Citizens Charters and Online Complaint Monitoring System and Mr. Arvind Kejriwal on Jan Sunwais. Participating in the Panel presentations were groups such as Kalpatharu in Raichur; Nagar Paripurna Grameena Abhivrudhi Mahila Seva Samste, Dharwad; TIDE, which works in Dakshin Kannada; and Ms. Judith Mascarinas, Former Deputy Mayor, Mangalore. In addition, there were several residents’ welfare associations present on the occasion.

(For a detailed report of the Conference and for further information, please contact Mr. S. Manjunath or Ms. Amrutha Rao at PAC)
neighborhood and finally across the city, with Civic Club as the epicenter of change.

**Batting for a different cause!**

Mr. Dependable of Indian cricket, Rahul Dravid, is all set for an exciting and highly commendable innings on a different turf as an "Ambassador" of CMCA. In a recent interview on Radio City, the popular FM Channel, Rahul Dravid shared his views on the CMCA.

Excerpts from the tête-à-tête

**Radio City:** Why did you feel the need to be a part of this movement?

**Rahul Dravid:** I was approached by them (members of CMCA) with certain ideas...I was impressed with the way they worked, and the amount of work they do...the dedication they have. So, it was great to be a part of CMCA. I have been involved with them for the last two years now, and they have been doing some great work, creating a huge amount of awareness among the children in Bangalore about civic awareness.

**Radio City:** On CMCA and civic club members

**Rahul Dravid:** I think the best way to create civic awareness is through children. They are going to be the future and they are going to make decisions of tomorrow. The best way is to influence them by creating awareness like this in schools. I think what the Children's Movement for Civic Awareness is doing is putting seeds of thought in their mind. Hopefully, at least some of them—as they grow older and are in a position to make decisions—should make the right decisions.

It's not sort of fashionable to join a civic club and kids get teased about it in schools. But, I think they do a great job. They do a lot of hands-on work and fantastic work.

**Key Strategies**

- Targeting children of age group 11 to 14 years
- The *methodology and curriculum* are designed to encourage interaction and participation from children. Flash cards, posters, slides, films, field trips, games, exercises and interactions with experts, policy makers and administrators are used as means to stimulate discussion and critical thinking on issues and problems. Each volunteer is provided with a kit comprising a set of teaching aids and materials.

- Separate curriculum for aided and private schools, owing to the differing socio-economic condition of students.
- Involving teachers as co-ordinators and orientation to teachers.
- *Inter-club meets* at zonal-level bringing together the Civic Club members of each zone to facilitate rapport, learning and mutual inspiration. Also private school clubs visiting aided schools & interacting with fellow civic club members.
- To create a "chain of awareness" involving citizens on civic & environmental issues & problems.
- *A Report Card* - CMCA members interact with interview households and commercial establishments to study their awareness and practices pertaining to civic and environmental issues.
- CMCA *Jaatbre*, the culmination of CMCA activities for the academic year to show case the achievements and activities of Civic Clubs to each other as well as the general public and other schools.
- Civic Clubs in residential neighbourhoods particularly in apartment complexes and townships.

**Key Milestones**

- **Endorsement and support** - by eminent persons like Rahul Dravid (see box)
- **Awareness Campaigns** - More than five thousand children have been engaged in civic and environmental activities like awareness campaigns on: ill effects of burning crackers during Diwali; immersion of painted Ganesh Idols in lakes & tanks during Ganesha festival; and increasing voter participation in elections.
- **Scaling up** — Overwhelming response of schools: From 14 schools in the year 2000 to 45 schools in 2003.
- **Driven by voluntary spirit** of forty citizens who act as facilitators of Civic Clubs in schools.
- **School Mela** - INSPIRATION, an inter school civic fest organised all the three years successfully, involving more than 50 schools across the city to contest and debate civic and environmental themes.
- **Dissemination of newsletter** - *Expressions of cmca* published quarterly.
- **Training children on Action-Research** - Civic Club members were trained on know
how of survey methodology. About 1500 children conducted a survey to assess the level of public awareness on the usage of polythene bags & water conservation in Bangalore. Findings of the survey on the usage of polythene bags prompted the Karnataka State Pollution Control Board (KSPCB) to speed up the implementation of ban on polythene bags of 20 micron and less thickness.

**Emerging Challenges**
- Internalise the CMCA process of learning in the school community.
- Sustain & expand volunteer involvement
- Create space for civic education in the school curriculum
- Scaling up the civic club membership
- Expanding the horizon of CMCA to other urban centers in the country
- Creating and sustaining a regional and national network of organizations and individuals involved in civic education.
- Emerging as a resource centre for schools and other organizations on civic and environmental education.

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**A Pat from the Chief Minister.**

Dear CMCA Volunteers,

I was very impressed by the poems you have sent me. The students of Prank Anthony School have expressed great deal of maturity in their poem about River Cauvery. The other poem is also very well written. I take this opportunity to congratulate all these young people. It seems CMCA is doing an excellent job in fostering active citizenship in children. I wish you all the best in all your future endeavors. I am also directing the Worshipful Mayor of Bangalore to meet these young people and felicitate them.

Warm regards

SM Krishna
Chief Minister of Karnataka

(For more information on CMCA, please contact Mr. Vrunda Bhaskar at PAC)

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**GLOBAL GOVERNANCE BENCHMARKS**

Researchers at the World Bank have released a newly updated set of indicators by tracking the quality of governance across the globe. The indicators, covering almost 200 countries, trace six areas of governance from 1996 to the present. These indicators, to be continually updated, create a unique source of valuable benchmarks for policy makers, donor agencies, civil society and development experts.

The researchers confirmed that governance plays a critical role in development outcomes. It is increasingly one of the key factors that determine whether a country has the capacity to use resources effectively to reduce poverty. Measuring governance has traditionally been an elusive challenge, but one that is crucial in understanding the link between governance and development, and for enabling countries to monitor their performance.

In constructing these indicators, Daniel Kaufmann and Aart Kraay of the World Bank have debunked the myth that governance is too hard to define or measure. This research initiative, started in 1998, has created six indicators to measure governance and track country performances over time. The indicators are available through the following link: http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/govdata2002/


The six measured indicators are:
1. Voice and Accountability
2. Political Stability and Lack of Violence
3. Government Effectiveness
4. Regulatory Quality
5. Rule of Law
6. Control of Corruption.

The governance indicators interactive web page allows the user to compare a single country's performance across all six governance indicators, or to compare several countries against one of the six measures, and to instantly produce any chart, table or governance map of their choosing.

The data also has major applications for research. In their work, the authors have found a significant 'good governance dividend': countries that improve
their rule of law, control corruption and promote voice and democratic accountability can expect about a four-fold increase in incomes per capita in the long term, and major improvement in literacy and in child mortality.


For research results:

CAPACITY BUILDING

WORKSHOP ON RIGHT TO INFORMATION IN UDUPI

With the objective of strengthening the implementation of the Right to Information Act in Karnataka, PAC conducted a Workshop on the Right to Information in Udupi on 5th July 2003. Partnering the Centre in this information dissemination workshop was the Balakedarara Vedike, an active consumer forum based in Udupi. Representing PAC were Mr. Manjunath Sadashiva, Chief Programme Officer; Mr. Cyril Vas, Programme Associate; Mr. Wilson Pais, Programme Assistant & Ms. Anuradha Rao, Programme Assistant.

Between them, the Centre’s Resource Persons, Mr. Manjunath & Mr. Cyril, gave a comprehensive presentation on the Right to Information (RTI) in the international and local contexts. While Mr. Cyril gave a detailed account of the global trends on RTI and the history of the RTI movement in India, Mr. Manjunath focused on the Karnataka Right to Information Act (KRIA). Detailing the various provisions of KRIA and the procedure for obtaining

Public Affairs Centre (PAC) is a non profit non-governmental organisation committed to improving the quality of Governance in India. Towards this end, PAC undertakes research studies, provides citizen action support and advisory services, and facilitates networking for the creation of sustainable fora.

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information from government departments, he stressed that filing for information under the Act was the only way to effectively test its implementation.

The day-long workshop was divided into two sessions - the morning session being attended by around twenty persons, mainly members of NGOs and residents associations in Udupi. Mr. Cyril’s “ice breakers” ensured a spirited and interactive afternoon session, attended by more than 50 persons, mostly Group Motivators of Continued Education - young women who travel through the countryside, motivating school drop-outs to embrace education.

The workshop was part of PAC’s continuing effort to empower civil society in Karnataka with knowledge of KRIA. Such information, the Centre hopes, will go a long way in enabling citizens to effectively utilise and test the Act.

(Interested groups can get in touch with Mr. Cyril Vas at PAC)

CIVIC EDUCATION

GUIDE TO ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP

Swabhima, Bangalore’s first Government-People-Private partnership has released a learning tool to reinvigorate civic participation. Aptly titled, The Guide to Active Citizenship, the resource kit addresses two key themes:

• Information about the various government agencies in Bangalore providing public services - their functions and responsibilities, the laws under which they operate, their organizational framework and whom the citizens should approach for grievance redress

• The rights and responsibilities of citizens - the right to information, the right to vote, the rights of a consumer- and how to exercise these rights. At the same time, the Guide gives useful tips on how citizens can contribute to better civic life and a healthy environment.

For copies of the Guide and for further information, please contact:

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