ANNUAL REPORT
2007-08

CENTRE FOR LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY
160, SOUTH AVENUE, NEW DELHI-110011

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Executive Director's Note

On behalf CLRA, It is my pleasure to present the Annual Report 2007-2008. The Annual report outlines the work done by CLRA in the period between 2006 and 2007. CLRA began its work in 2004 by engaging with the Members of Parliament, and it was registered as a Trust in 2006.

Within a short span of time since its inception, the centre has gained reputation as an organisation with expertise on legislative research and legislative advocacy. CLRA has been collaborating and networking with different CSOs, experts and academia connecting them with the MPs on overall socio-economic development agenda. CLRA occupies a unique position when it comes to securing access to policy spaces and parliamentarians, and developing strategies to generate increased policy awareness and legislative intervention through our advocacy efforts.

CLRA understands that communication between Parliament and civil society organizations remains a key challenge. To strengthen meaningful participation between Parliament and civil society, parliamentary institutions will have to re-define their attitude and create more space to enable civil society to participate in development efforts. Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) have a major role in raising the effectiveness and integrity of the institution of governance. Civil society has a remarkable place in the 'ecology of governance'. Parliament has to initiate constructive dialogue with civil society. They can also be an effective agent of change. CSOs also have to be more responsive and proactive in their efforts to find new avenues, by which they may constructively participate in the policy decision making processes.

Since its inception in 2004, CLRA has been taking initiative to form several informal groups of Parliamentarians such as Indian Medical Parliamentarians' Forum (IMPF) and Parliamentarians' Group on MDGs (PG-MDGs).These forums have provided many civil society groups a successful platform to project their arguments and demands. These informal groups of Parliamentarians meet during Parliament sessions to discuss Millennium Development Goals, rights based approach towards poverty reduction, the public health challenges, climate change and other issues of socio-economic importance.

Our strength is based on unique and highly specialized nature of work with a full knowledge of the functioning of parliament and better understanding of strategic entry points to these policy spaces. The key activities – legislative advocacy, legislative research and networking – are combined in mutually consistent manner along our vision and mission.

I am grateful to the all CLRA Trustees and team members for the support they have extended to the success of our programmes and activities. On behalf of CLRA, I would like to express thanks to all partners, supporters and other well wishers without whose support it would have been hard to set the path which it has taken.

Vinod Bhanu
Executive Director, CLRA

Organisation Profile/Introduction

The Centre for Legislative Research and Advocacy (CLRA) is an independent, not-for-profit, non-partisan initiative, which works to support and strengthen Parliament and legislatures so as to realise the values of democratic governance. Through research, advocacy, networking and other allied activities CLRA seeks to promote and reinforce the constitutionally assigned roles and functions of parliamentary institutions. This includes supporting institutional development and capacity building aimed at cultivating a well-functioning, sustainable and pluralistic system of democratic polity. CLRA is the pioneer organization in this comprehensive area of work in India. CLRA works closely with civil society groups, parliamentary institutions, legislators, political parties, civil servants and media to create participatory and collective wisdom and praxis in the policy and decision-making processes.

CLRA occupies a unique position when it comes to securing access to policy spaces and parliamentarians, and developing strategies to generate increased policy awareness and policy advocacy. Within a short span of time since its inception, the centre has been identified as an expertise organisation in areas such as legislative advocacy, parliamentary development and parliamentary studies.

Vision:

CLRA envisions true and vibrant representative parliamentary democratic institutions, thereby creating an answerable and responsive culture of governance.

Mission:

CLRA aims at strengthening the parliamentary democratic institutions and processes of governance to achieve transparent and responsible democratic governance.

CLRA's Overall Objectives

1. To increase the access of civil society organisations to the legislative and political spaces thereby harnessing Civil Society influence over the legislative processes on matters of developmental importance.

2. To provide support and assistance to Parliamentarians and leaders for promoting and enhancing representative, responsive and informed engagement with the policy making process and to this end provide the Parliamentarian's access to the latest, up-to-date research on a variety of issues.

3. To work towards promoting and enhancing the credibility and integrity of the electoral processes of the country and to this end provide support and assistance to political parties for promoting and enhancing representative, accountable, transparent and effective functioning.

4. To initiate and undertake legislative advocacy and research on issues related to various developmental themes affecting the social, political and economic transformations of our polity.

5. To work towards making budgetary processes more responsive to the needs of the people as well as transparent and accountable to the public.

6. To work towards empowering people to participate in the policy making and implementation at different levels of governance.

7. To enable pre-legislative scrutiny of Bills for the public and the interest groups and to develop strategies to better the practice of public submission on Bills and policies.

Organisational Structure

CLRA follows a participatory approach to develop an organisational behaviour and transparency to address organisational issues. Over the years, it has developed an institutionalised decision making process based on common understanding of all staff members. CLRA follows standard practices of administration, auditing and accounts procedures based on its Administration and Accounts Manuals. It has successfully implemented the human resource and finance policy, and continued efforts are on to improve upon it.

The current structure has two broad based units – Research and Advocacy, and has a supporting unit of Administration and Accounts. CLRA has from time to time built the capacities of research and advocacy programme team members working in the organisation and helped them to participate in the workshops / seminars. CLRA team members are encouraged to learn and adapt other organisations' areas of work to understand about the ongoing grassroots and developmental issues.

CLRA team members regularly interacts with the UN and other international organisations, National and State Governments, Civil Society Organisations, Academic bodies, and media to gain and build a shared understanding.

CLRA's Initiatives

Since its inception in 2004, CLRA has taken the initiative to form several informal groups of Parliamentarians that have provided many civil society organisations successful forums to project their arguments and demands. These informal groups of Parliamentarians meet during Parliament sessions to discuss Millennium Development Goals, public health and other issues of public importance. These groups have been hailed as crucial for building consensus in the differing politics of the country and have gone a long way in busting myths about Parliamentarians from different political parties not being able to work in a cohesive manner.

These informal groups were put together by CLRA after a thorough exercise in political mapping of the interests of Parliamentarians and matched them to the mandate of different groups. The groups are made up of some of the most proactive and vocal Parliamentarians of today; most of them have been at the forefront of raising important questions in parliament in an effort to hold the government accountable and to ensure that it doesn't deviate from its promises of working for the common people.

Indian Medical Parliamentarians' Forum

In 2006, CLRA took the initiative to form the Indian Medical Parliamentarians' Forum (IMPF) and currently acts as the hosting and implementing organisation. CLRA performs a facilitative role in ensuring sustained work parameters, day to day functioning, and other responsibilities of the IMPF. The IMPF consists of 30 MPs from both

Houses of Parliament who are medical practitioners belonging to both modern and indigenous systems of medicine.

CLRA uses this forum to raise public health issues in the Parliament. CLRA also helps members of the group make strategic interventions on behalf of various public health civil society organisations.

IMPF newsletter

CLRA also brings out the (Parliament) Session-wise IMPF Newsletter. Each Newsletter is four page long and consists of approximately eight short policy related articles on various aspects of public health. The articles act as an issue articulation tool and provide a base level of knowledge for parliamentarians on pressing public health issues.

Engaging with Parliamentary Standing Committees

Acknowledging the important role that Parliamentary Standing Committees play in the policy processes of the country, CLRA has been engaging with different Parliamentary Standing Committees in different capacities over the last couple of years. It has lent support to these Committees in the form of submitting reports on Bills forwarded to these Committees for their recommendations as well as background research if any Parliamentarian of any development related Committee

has required. CLRA has also linked up experts in different fields with members of these Committees on the basis of the professed interests of the latter.

CLRA also facilitates and supports individual experts and civil society organisations to submit memoranda / representations before various parliamentary committees.

Overview of Our Programmes

Indo-British Parliamentarians' meeting on TB

In 2007, there was a delegation of six British MPs of the UK All Parliamentary Party Group on TB to India to persuade their Indian Counterparts to take a call to stop TB in India. On 27 March, Indian Medical Parliamentarians' Forum (IMPF) hosted the meeting between the delegation of six British MPs and Members of IMPF, at the Rajiv Gandhi Foundation, New Delhi. The meeting of Indo-British Parliamentarians took place in the context of World TB Day on 24th March.

India has the world's largest TB burden with about 1.6 million new cases every year and an annual death casualty of 4.17 lakh patients. The Government of India has been implementing the Revised National TB Control Programme (RNTCP) since 1992. Since 1997, the programme has treated just over 6 million people, averting at least 1 million deaths.

“As people's representatives, it is our duty to press for action which will save 14 million lives worldwide”, said Nick Herbert, MP, Co-Chair of the UK All Parliamentary Party Group on TB. Speaking at the meeting with his Indian Parliamentary colleagues, he continued: “As British MPs, we are keen to work with our colleagues from other countries to help persuade our governments to step up the fight against TB. This is a global disease that does not respect borders”.

The meeting between the parliamentary groups has ended up with both groups signing the international Call to Stop TB, urging more action on the part of all stakeholders to renew and continue the fight against TB.

Speaking after the signing of the Call to Stop TB, Dr. R. Senthil, MP and convenor of the IMPF said: "we have to work on making TB control a priority in our constituencies. As leaders, it will be our responsibility to raise visibility for TB control within parliament and to keep track of the programme to ensure that lives are saved".

The British MPs consisted of Mr. Nick Herbert, Mr. Tom Clarke, Ms. Ann Cryer, Mr. Jermy Hunt, Dr. Ashok Kumar and Ms. Baroness Lindsay Northover. The Indian MPs were Dr. M. Jagannath, Dr. Shakeel Ahmed, Dr. Laxminarayn Pandey, Mr. Robert Kharshiing, Dr. R. Senthil, Dr. K.S. Manoj, Dr. Vallabhbhai Kathiria, Dr. P.P. Koya. Besides the parliamentarians, the meeting was attended by the media and persons from RGF, CLRA, MSF, Lawyers Collective, etc.

World AIDS Vaccine Day Parliamentarians' meeting

In the context of Worlds AIDS Vaccine Day on 18th May 2007, CLRA in collaboration with IAVI organized a parliamentarians meeting to discuss the challenges of latest developments in the field of HIV / AIDS Vaccine. The Meeting was hosted by the IMPF at the Park Hotel, New Delhi. The meeting was attended by 22 MPs and other people from HIV / AIDS organizations, NACO, ICMR, media. etc. The presentation to MPs focused the

issues of the development of safe, effective, accessible, preventive AIDS vaccines for use throughout the world.

Responding to the HIV/AIDS challenge was recognized as crucial, and MDG 6 expressly called on the global community to halt and begin to reverse the HIV epidemic by 2015. It is critical that the world realizes its commitment to generate universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support. The meeting deliberated the importance of the development of better tools and technologies to prevent HIV transmission, especially a safe, effective and affordable preventive vaccine, building support for the development of an effective AIDS vaccine and preparing the ground for it to be accessible to those who need it most.

The meeting was concluded by adopting the future action points to address the challenges and to ensure a congenial environment for the efforts of developing an effective vaccine for humanity.

Releasing of Access to Medicines, Policy Notes for MPs

During the Monsoon Session 2007, on 12 September CLRA-IMPF organised a formal Release and dissemination function of the publication titled *IMPF Policy Notes for Parliamentarians on Access to Medicines* as an initiative to inform and help the MPs and policy makers understand the issues and address those issues in the Parliament. The publication was developed with the support of CENTAD. The function was held in Room No. 63, Parliament House. IMPF Policy Notes on Access to Medicines was released by the Hon'ble Vice President of India, Dr. Mohammad Hamid Ansari. The function was attended by the Hon'ble Union Minister, Dr. Anbumani Ramadoss, MoHFW and other Members of Parliament, delegates from CENTAD, Lawyers Collective, MSF etc.

This is a unique publication which consists of 15 articles very briefly discussing issues related to access to medicines. Access to medicines is one of the primary components of the right to health. However, realization of this right is increasingly affected by national and international trade and economic policies.

This publication deserves command where a group of experts in the access issues have contributed very precise and readable articles which will help the Members of Parliament understand the

issues and also address these issues inside the Parliament. Each one of the articles has captured the essential and core issues related to the access to medicines. All the authors are experts as well as front runners in addressing these issues. Persons like Shri B. K. Keayla need not have any introduction.

The publication also carried three articles of our Hon' ble MPs as well – Shri Suresh Kurup, Dr. R. Senthil and Dr. Karan Singh Yadav. Hon'ble Vice President congratulated them for their precise acumen showed in the articles. Shri Suresh Kurup's article on Drug prices shows the tax angle aspects of drug pricing. The article shows the need to chalk out a solution by the policy makers.

Dr. R. Senthil's article on spurious drugs shows the need to put an end to the spurious drug menace and describes some actual problems behind the issues that need to be addressed by effective measures like regulations and legislations.

Dr. Karan Singh Yadav's article discusses the problems in the clinical trial industry in India. It has pointed out the irregularities in this respect and showed the regulatory mechanisms, policy guidelines, rules, etc. in this regard.

Policy Dialogue on NRHM & Right to Health

The policy dialogue on the 'National Rural Health Mission & the Right to Health' was held on April 4, 2008, from 6 pm to 8 pm at the India International Centre, New Delhi. The discussion was organized around the

completion of four years of the National Common Minimum Programme which put forward an ambitious plan to achieve universal access to Education, Health & Employment in India. The occasion of the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights also served as an added opportunity to bring together experts and policy makers to review outcomes and outline the future agenda.

The session on Health, aimed to bring into focus the lessons from the ground in relation to the National Rural Health Mission, outlined the future agenda for strengthening the quality, delivery and outreach of the public health system.

Dr. Anbumani Ramadoss (Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare) was the the Chair of the Panel, along with Shri. Amarjit Sinha, Joint Secretary, MoHFW, Shri. G C Chaturvedi (Mission Director, NRHM), Dr. Abhijit Das (Member, Advisory Group on Community Action - NRHM) & Dr. R. Senthil (MP & Convenor Secretary - IMPF). Members of India International Centre, academics, national and international organizations working on health and select invitees from the media attended the event.

Partnerships, Networking & Coalitions

Over a period of time, CLRA has developed a sustained way of working in collaboration with grassroots organizations, academia, think-tank research organizations, and civil society organizations including several international and national, large-scale and small-scale organisations. CLRA and its initiatives have been supported by Oxfam GB.

The following organisations are our programme based working partners on various public health and development issues:

* CENTAD
  Consortium for Trade and Development
  New Delhi

* IAVI
  International AIDS Vaccine Initiatives
  New Delhi

* Wada Na Todo Abhiyan
  Keep Your Promise Campaign, New Delhi

* International Union Against Tuberculosis and
  Lung Disease (The Union), New Delhi

* Greenpeace India

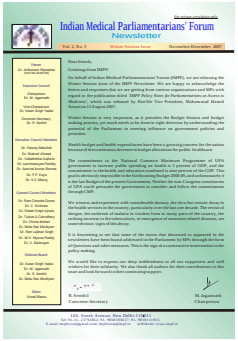
Publications

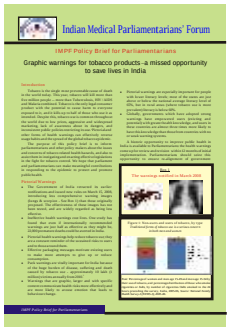
CLRA believes that the most effective means of disseminating information to parliamentarians is through personal contacts based on longstanding working relationships. Reaching a broad enough section of parliamentarians to influence policies related to development goals is best done by other parliamentarians. Consequently, the first step in the scheme laid out by CLRA was to identify MPs who could act as advocates within parliament and as information disseminators to pass on the research done by CLRA to other legislators. This political mapping was based on information culled from websites for areas of legislative interest, reviewing questions posed by MPs in parliamentary debate, extensive meetings with parliamentarians, as well as responses to a CLRA designed questionnaire. Based on attendance and interrogative propensities of the legislators, as well as their areas of interest determined by both personal interaction and background research, CLRA has identified a subset of well-placed parliamentarians, many of them members of CLRA's Parliamentary Group on Millennium Development Goals, who act as a valuable network of

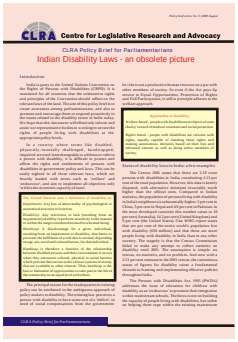
contacts for information distribution and intra-parliamentary advocacy on key development issues.

The results of this political mapping exercise is then used to specifically target publications to Parliamentarians ensuring that Parliamentarians receive publications of his / her interest, whether that interest be topical or a long-standing one. Each publication is carefully authored either by experts themselves or by CLRA staff with the help of experts.

Visit us at www.clraindia.org to have a look at our publications.







Financial Summary

Balance Sheet as at 31 March 2008

CENTRE FOR LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY
160, SOUTH AVENUE
NEW DELHI-110001
Balance Sheet
1-Apr-2007 to 31-Mar-2008

Liabilities		as at 31-Mar-2008	Assets		as at 31-Mar-2008
Capital Account			Fixed Assets		27,850.00
			Computer Account	27,850.00	
Loans (Liability)		34,375.00			
Vinod CB	34,375.00		Current Assets		1,44,469.00
			Deposit (Asset)	18,664.00	
Current Liabilities		79,700.00	Cash-in-hand	10,000.00	
Sundry Creditors	73,700.00		Bank Accounts	1,15,805.00	
P.D. Thomas & Co.	6,000.00				
Profit & Loss A/c		58,244.00			
Opening Balance	(-) 33,875.00				
Current Period	92,119.00				
Total		1,72,319.00	Total		1,72,319.00

CENTRE FOR LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY
160, SOUTH AVENUE
NEW DELHI-110001
Income & Expenditure Account
1-Apr-2007 to 31-Mar-2008

Particulars	1-Apr-2007 to 31-Mar-2008		Particulars	1-Apr-2007 to 31-Mar-2008	
Direct Expenses		1,75,881.00	Direct Incomes		2,68,000.00
Audit Fee	3,000.00		IMPF (Access to Medicines Publication)	81,000.00	
Bank Charges	925.00		IMPF Newsletter Support	22,000.00	
Co-ordination Charges	19,000.00		Legislative Advocacy on MDGs	1,65,000.00	
Courier Charges	620.00				
Editing & Proof Reading Expenses	5,000.00				
Printing and Stationery	1,936.00				
Printing Charges	1,45,400.00				
Gross Profit c/o		92,119.00			
		2,68,000.00			2,68,000.00
Excess of Income over Expenditure		92,119.00	Gross Profit b/f		92,119.00
Total		92,119.00	Total		92,119.00

CLRA Team

Mr. Vinod Bhanu
Executive Director

Dr. R. Sugathan
Senior Fellow

Ms. Laura Keenan
Programme Manager

Ms. Sameena Mir
Programme Officer

Mr. John Butler
Programme Manager

Ms. Suneha Khandpal
Programme Associate

Mr. Arpan Jolly
IT Associate

Ms. Vineeta Kapoor
Office Assistant

Centre for Legislative Research and Advocacy
160, South Avenue, New Delhi-110011
Tel: +91-11-23792862
Email: info@clraindia.org
www.clraindia.org