



CRY FACTSHEET

Education

Education is the foundation for human development. Education gives individuals the power of choice. Education empowers as it enables people to think, question and judge. It's the first step towards gaining confidence and dignity. Education is opportunity.

A quality education remains the most important tool towards the realisation of rights of all children. It has a profound impact on growth and development, nature and nurture, of children as well as societies.

World Situation

- 771 million adults in the world are illiterate.
- Women account for 64% of the world's adult illiterate population.
- 18% of the school-age children in the world i.e. 115 million children do not go to school.
- About eight million primary school-age children remain out-of-school in the Arab States and five million of them are girls.
- In one out of four African countries, half of the children enrolled at the end of primary school do not continue to the secondary level in the following year.
- In 19 African countries every second child does not complete primary school.
- 56% of children live in countries with gender disparity in primary enrolment ratios and 58% live in countries with disparity in lower secondary education.

(Sources: UNESCO/UNICEF joint report on children out of school, The UIS Global Education Digest 2005, UNESCO Institute for statistics)

India Situation

The 93rd Constitutional Amendment in 1994 made education a fundamental right that guarantees free and compulsory education to all children in the age group of 6 – 14. However, the right remains largely unrealised. The education provided by the Indian government is inequitable and largely sub-standard. Movements like the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan have failed as the impetus of the government has been on generating statistics. Quality has been ignored in order to achieve quantitative targets.

Figures & Facts

- More than half of India's children in the age group of 6 to 14 do not attend school.
- A little over one-third of all children who enroll in Class I reach Class VIII.

- 53% of the girls in the age group of 9 to 5 are illiterate.
- More than 50% of girls fail to enroll in school; those that do are likely to drop out by the age of 12.
- Government primary schools lack basic amenities such as access to safe drinking water, classrooms and even blackboards.
- Despite policy, the schools do not also have special provisions for disabled children and mentally challenged children.
- In India, only 53% of habitations have a primary school.
- Only 20% of habitations have a secondary school.
- On an average, an upper primary school is 3 km away in 22% of areas.
- In nearly 60% of the schools, there are less than two teachers to teach Classes I to V.
- On an average, there are less than three teachers per primary school. They have to manage Class I to Class V every day.
- High cost of private education, need to work to support their families and little interest in studies are the reasons given for leaving school by 75% of drop-outs.
- Only 9% of schools have separate toilets for girls.
- The lack of toilets on the school premises is one of the primary reasons why girls drop out of school.
- 1 in every 40 primary schools in India is conducted in open spaces or tents.
- The amendment is severely flawed. It ignores children in the age group of 0 - 6 and 14 – 18. Also, it does not have any financial provisions.

(Sources: 7th All India Education Survey, 2002, 5th Education Survey NCERT)

Key Issues

The government should ensure:

- Free and compulsory quality education in formal full time schools and anganwadis (for children under 6).
- An inclusive system of education that does not disregard children on the basis of class, caste, gender, disability and ethnicity. An education system where local communities determine the quality of education provided in government schools, not global market forces, communal forces or private entrepreneurs.
- A formal allocation of a minimum of 10% of the GDP for education.
- Guaranteed employment and standard minimum wages to all adult population to ensure that children do not have to work.
- No further privatisation of education. The Common School System (CSS) should be implemented. CSS ensures equal rights and an equitable education as it is based on the belief that all children are entitled to receive quality education from the state. The CSS will bridge the gap between the advantaged and the disadvantaged sections of the society.

CRY's Stance

We believe education is most important as it enables a child to realize his or her full potential; learn to love and respect fellow human beings and nature; in decision making; develop civic sense, citizenship and values of participatory democracy.

Children's rights and their violation in India must necessarily be understood in the context of the social, economic and political situation in the country. Children are naturally linked to families that are linked to communities. Thus children's rights are intrinsically linked with the realisation of human rights in general.

With the help of partner NGOs, CRY aims to mobilize the government towards this realisation by mobilizing the community; by making the community aware and articulate.