

CHRI REPORT



The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative

CHRI FACTS

In terms of legal status, CHRI is registered in the UK as an educational charity (# 803239) and a non profit company (# 248240). In 1993 it was registered in India under the Societies Registration Act (#S-24565), and has a Foreign Contribution Registration Act number (#231650671) which entitles it to receive foreign support.

The present report provides an overview of the growth and activities of CHRI's family of offices from 2000-2003 and provides the financial of the Secretariat at New Delhi for the same period.

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COMMONWEALTH HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVE

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The Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI) is an independent, non-partisan, international non-governmental organisation, mandated to ensure the practical realisation of human rights across the Commonwealth. It was founded in 1987 by several Commonwealth associations as they felt that while member countries had both a common set of values and legal principles from which to work, and a forum within which to promote human rights, there was relatively little focus on human rights issues.

CHRI's objectives are to promote awareness of and adherence to the Harare Commonwealth Declaration, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and other internationally recognised human rights instruments, as well as in-country laws and policies that support human rights in member states.

Through its periodic reports to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, fact-finding missions, advocacy and research activities, CHRI continually draws attention to progress and setbacks in human rights in Commonwealth countries. In advocating for approaches and measures to prevent human rights abuses, CHRI addresses the Commonwealth Secretariat, member governments and civil society associations.



Our Sponsoring Organisations

CHRI was established by a group of Commonwealth professional associations and these - our sponsoring organisations - have been a strategic part of CHRI's evolution and growth. These organisations highlight issues, bring in expertise and insights into local situations, help to nuance responses and, acting collaboratively, can effectively catalyze public policy changes in favour of human rights. From time to time, CHRI collaborates with these sponsoring organisations on our mutual areas of focus by contributing to each others' events and developing joint publications and activities. The pan-Commonwealth nature of these organisations ensures both an international and national presence.

The sponsoring organisations are:

- The Commonwealth Lawyers Association (CLA)
- The Commonwealth Legal Education Association (CLEA)
- The Commonwealth Medical Association (CMA)
- The Commonwealth Trade Union Council (CTUC)
- The Commonwealth Journalists Association (CJA)
- The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)
- The Commonwealth Press Union (CPU)
- The Commonwealth Broadcasting Association (CBA)

Governing bodies

CHRI's policy-making and oversight bodies – International Advisory Commission, Trustee Committee and Executive Committees (India and Ghana) – represent a diversity of Commonwealth perspectives and professions, and comprise of representatives of the sponsoring organisations and co-opted members.

Our International Advisory Commission

The International Advisory Commission is CHRI's primary agenda setting body and is composed of eminent Commonwealth citizens. It expresses the position of the organisation in press releases, open letters and research reports. Its annual meetings provide broad direction, assess previous performance, highlight emerging issues and provide ongoing networking and support for policy level interventions.

The outgoing Chair of the International Advisory Commission is Margaret Reynolds. She teaches Human Rights and International Politics at the University of Queensland, Australia and previously served as a minister and senator in the Australian Parliament over a sixteen-year period. With a background in human rights advocacy and education, she is actively involved in defending the rights of Aboriginal people and women. Professor Reynolds will be resigning at the end of 2003 and we look forward to welcoming a new Commonwealth citizen of distinction to the position.



Margaret Reynolds

Members of the International Advisory Commission:

- Alfred Mudenda (CTUC)
- Eunice Brookman-Ammisah (CMA)
- Jean Corston (CPA)
- Murray Burt (CJA)
- Sam Okudzeto (CLA)
- Zohra Yusuf (Ex-officio)
- Alice Jacobs (CLEA)
- B.G. Verghese (Chair - Executive Committee)
- Annie Watson (Chair - Trustee Committee)
- Maja Daruwala (Secretary)

International Advisory Commission reports:

Every two years, immediately prior to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM), the International Advisory Commission releases a report which highlights an area of human rights concern and includes recommendations to the Commonwealth's leaders.

In 2001, CHRI's millennium report, Human Rights and Poverty Eradication: A Talisman for the Commonwealth, examined the huge extent to which poverty exists in the Commonwealth and argued that the existence of so much poverty in the midst of affluence of the few is itself a human rights abuse. The report advocated the adoption of a rights-based approach to eradicating poverty and attaining the Millennium Development Goals to which Commonwealth countries have committed themselves. The report was complemented by a pan-Commonwealth conference held in London in 2001 which focused on poverty eradication and human rights and enabled discussions among a diverse range of civil society, government and media actors.

In 2003, CHRI furthered its earlier recommendations by urging the immediate adoption, by every member state, of liberal access to information laws, developed and meaningfully implemented by government and people working in close cooperation. Without recognition and implementation of the right to access information, the quest for robust democracy and rapid development will never be realised. Open Sesame: Looking for the Right to Information in the Commonwealth, showed how the right to information plays a crucial role in democracy, development, poverty eradication and the realisation of all other human rights. The report urges Commonwealth institutions to set an example and put in place progressive disclosure and information sharing policies.



Our Headquarters

Originally based in the United Kingdom, in 1993 CHRI moved its headquarters to New Delhi, India. While South Asia alone accounts for the majority of the population of the Commonwealth, few international organisations have an international presence and influence in this largely under-developed region. CHRI's location in India provides it with opportunities and challenges, as both positive and negative developments in this very large country tend to expand or contract human rights evolution elsewhere in the region.

The New Delhi office is responsible for the overall implementation of CHRI's programmes. CHRI has steadily acquired new premises, strengthened documentation, infrastructure and communications, gained new programme staff and found support for its programme of work from diverse sources. It has a core staff of project coordinators, researchers, consultants, interns and administrative personnel.

Executive Committee

While the International Advisory Commission sets the policy guidelines for the organisation, there is also an Executive Committee in India which is responsible for translating these into specific programmes and projects. The Executive Committee oversees the day-to-day functioning of the Secretariat and is comprised of representatives of the sponsoring organisations, plus co-opted professionals.

The current Chair of the Executive Committee is George Verghese. A member of the Commonwealth Journalists Association, Mr Verghese is a former Media Advisor to the Prime Minister of India and former Editor of the Hindustan Times. He has sat on many boards and is a Senior Fellow of the Centre for Policy Research in New Delhi.



B.G. Verghese

Mr Verghese became Chair in November 2003, replacing Leila Seth. Justice Seth has been Chief Justice of Himachal Pradesh, India, and a member of the Law Commission of India. She has chaired commissions of inquiry investigating medial conditions in prisons and was a member of the Expert Committee on Laws for the National Commission for Women.



Leila Seth

Members of the Executive Committee in India are:

- PH Parekh (Treasurer, co-opted)
- T Ananthachari (co-opted)
- Dr. Vasudha Dhagamwar (co-opted)
- Dr. NR Madhava Menon (CLEA)
- Dr. Ashish Nandy (co-opted)
- Dr. JC Sobti (co-opted)
- PP Rao (co-opted)
- RV Pillai (co-opted).

Our Trustee Committee Office

Despite the diversity of the Commonwealth and that 90% of its population lives in developing countries, its institutional hub continues to be London. The Commonwealth Secretariat, many of the Commonwealth's semi-official bodies and the headquarters of almost every pan-Commonwealth NGO are all located here. This fact informs the decision to maintain a crucial presence in London through a small Trustee Committee Office.

The Trustee Committee Office liaises with key official and unofficial Commonwealth entities, lends expertise on Commonwealth concerns, and helps retain and strengthen networks built over many years of functioning. It has also organised a number of seminars and events on human rights issues in the Commonwealth and actively participated in consultations for Commonwealth civil society organisations.

Trustee Committee

The Trustee Committee complements the work of the Headquarters from its London base. It provides fiduciary support, liaison with the Commonwealth Secretariat and pan-Commonwealth bodies, and reinforces CHRI's networking, advocacy and research.

The Chair of the Trustee Committee is Annie Watson. Ms Watson has been the Director of the Commonwealth Trade Unions Council since 1997. She has also been a member of CHRI's Trustee Committee since 1997.



Annie Watson

Richard Bourne had been the Chair until October 2003. He is Head of the Commonwealth Policy Studies Unit and Vice Chair of the Royal Commonwealth Society. Mr Bourne was CHRI's first Director and has previously been Deputy Director of the Commonwealth Institute, Chair of the international executive for Survival International and spent many years as a journalist.



Richard Bourne

Members of the Trustee Committee are:

- Siraj Sait (Treasurer, Co-opted)
- Dr. Peter Slinn (CLEA)
- Elizabeth Smith (CBA)
- Paul Hunt (Co-opted)
- Claire Martin (CLA)
- Prof. John Hatchard (CLEA)
- Meenakshi Dhar (CPA)
- Derek Ingram (CJA)
- Aditi Sharma (Co-opted)
- Lindsay Ross (CPU)
- Dr. Neville Linton (Co-opted).

Our Africa Office

Committed to opening new offices in the future, CHRI planted the seed for a wider Commonwealth presence by opening a new office in Accra, Ghana in 2001. Working under CHRI's common mandate, the office in Africa builds on earlier experiences at CHRI, helps to expand present programmes and create human rights interventions particularly appropriate to that context. Over the past two years the Africa Office has developed strong networks across West Africa of civil society groups, government officials, media persons and human rights commissions.

As a priority, it works to expand public knowledge of the right to information and advocates for laws that ensure significant participation of civil society in decision-making and the greater accountability of governments. Now that this work is maturing, the office is also further extending its work in police reforms and broader access to justice issues.

Executive Committee

Like its counterpart in India, the Executive Committee in Ghana oversees the functioning of the Africa office. It ensures the projects and programmes of the Africa Office fit into the agenda set by the International Advisory Commission and assists in extending CHRI's Africa presence. To ensure cohesion across the family of offices and to provide guidance for the youngest of the offices, the Executive Committee is currently composed of the Chairs of CHRI's other governing bodies.

The Chair of the Executive Committee is Sam Okudzeto. Mr Okudzeto is a member of the Commonwealth Lawyers Association, a member of the Legal Aid Committee, treasurer of the Ghana Bar Association, member of the Prisoners Service Council and a former Chair of the Public Accounts Committee & Judicial Sub-Committee.

Members of the Executive Committee are:

- Maja Daruwala
- Leila Seth
- Margaret Reynolds
- Richard Bourne



COMMONWEALTH HUMAN RIGHTS FORUM

VENUE: Rockview Hotel, Abuja
DATE: 3rd - 4th December, 2003
TIME: 9.00 a.m.

Organised by:
LEGAL RESOURCES CONSORTIUM, NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION
COMMONWEALTH HUMAN RIGHTS INITIATIVE



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PARTICIPATING FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE

13-15 MARCH - 2003

HOTEL KALCHURI-JABALPUR



Activities

STATE LEVEL WORKSHOP ON RIGHT TO INFORMATION (RTI) ACT

18th February 2004, New Delhi

Organised by:
Ministry of Home Affairs, India

In Association with
Dolly Pollock and the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative



Seminar on "POLICING - A HUMAN RIGHTS PERSPECTIVE"

18th February 2004, New Delhi

Organised by:
Ministry of Home Affairs, India

In Association with
Dolly Pollock and the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative



CENTRAL
POINT



Follow up Meeting on
"POLICING - A HUMAN RIGHTS PERSPECTIVE"
19th February 2004, New Delhi

Organised by:
Ministry of Home Affairs, India

In Association with
Dolly Pollock and the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative

19th February 2004, New Delhi

Organised by:
Ministry of Home Affairs, India

In Association with
Dolly Pollock and the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative



CHRI believes that the promotion and protection of human rights is the responsibility of governments but that the active participation of civil society acting in concert is vital in ensuring the rule of law and the realisation of human rights. Human rights education and advocacy are at the core of all CHRI activities.

While countries across the Commonwealth have repeatedly committed to the principles of democracy and development, good governance and human rights, delivering on these has been harder to do. Most countries in the Commonwealth are developing nations, too many are agonizingly poor and too many are plagued by bad governance and endemic violation of human rights.

Despite the appearance of democracy, state actors and national elites remain largely unaccountable. Holding these powerful interests to account is difficult for most people because they lack knowledge about their rights, spaces in which to exercise these rights and opportunities to participate in their own governance and development. The Commonwealth, as an association based on consensus, gives far more weight to the sensitivities of sovereign states than it does to the aspirations of their populations and often reacts too slowly and weakly to hold nation states to the rhetoric of its many fine declarations and communiqués.

Over the years CHRI has focused on ensuring greater accountability and transparency of governments and greater participation of people in decision making as a means of redressing some of the power imbalances that perpetuate the violation of human rights. CHRI places particular emphasis on the democratic principles of accountability and participation and has developed a strong focus on Access to Justice and Access to Information.

CHRI's efforts are focused on systemic reform and human rights education. In addition to its programme activities, CHRI's approach includes acting as a catalyst for action around its priority concerns. Advocacy includes highlighting good and bad practices, educating strategic constituencies about the value of human rights, networking and supporting like-minded groups.

CHRI's programmes are implemented by our family of offices: the Headquarters in India; Africa Office in Ghana; and Trustee Committee Office in the UK.



Our Commonwealth Advocacy

As part of the "unofficial" or "people's" Commonwealth, CHRI grasps all opportunities to engage with Commonwealth governments and official agencies to ensure that human rights concerns remain at the centre of Commonwealth functioning.

CHRI makes regular submissions to the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group, which looks into serious or ongoing violations of the Harare Principles. Recent submissions have raised concerns about: Zimbabwe, Fiji Islands, Solomon Islands, Pakistan, India, Sierra Leone and The Gambia. Submissions have also highlighted thematic concerns such as the importance of economic and social rights, promotion of the Millennium Development Goals and the shrinkage of civil society space.

Other opportunities for intervention have included committees established by the Commonwealth, such as the High Level Review Group set up in 1999 to review the Commonwealth's role and activities. CHRI advocated: centralizing human rights in the Commonwealth by expanding the remit of CMAG, establishing a Commonwealth Commissioner for Human Rights and strengthening the Human Rights Unit; and by enshrining participation in Commonwealth mechanisms.

CHRI's presentations, submissions and discussions with the Expert Group on Development and Democracy in 2002 and 2003 promoted the need for civil society involvement and the right to information to ensure genuine development and participatory democracy, and the need for a mechanism to monitor the implementation of Commonwealth commitments. These points were prominent in the Expert Group's recommendations.

On invitation from civil society, CHRI takes missions into countries to investigate situations of grave human rights concern, make recommendations and suggest solutions that will help restore stability, the rule of law and human rights.

In 2000, following the coup in Fiji, CHRI's mission examined the status of human rights, democracy and the rule of law and the extent the coup had led to breaches of fundamental human rights. It recommended that any lasting constitutional democracy requires the accommodation of diversity and must include the voices of Fijian civil society if a lasting peace was to be crafted.

Also in 2000, a mission to Sierra Leone made an early examination of the state of the judiciary and its needs as the country struggled to rise out of the ashes of violent conflict and return to normalcy. Its recommendations, such as the need for training and infrastructure improvements were aimed at donors, the government and international organisations and have been influential in assisting policy makers design long term interventions and prioritise.

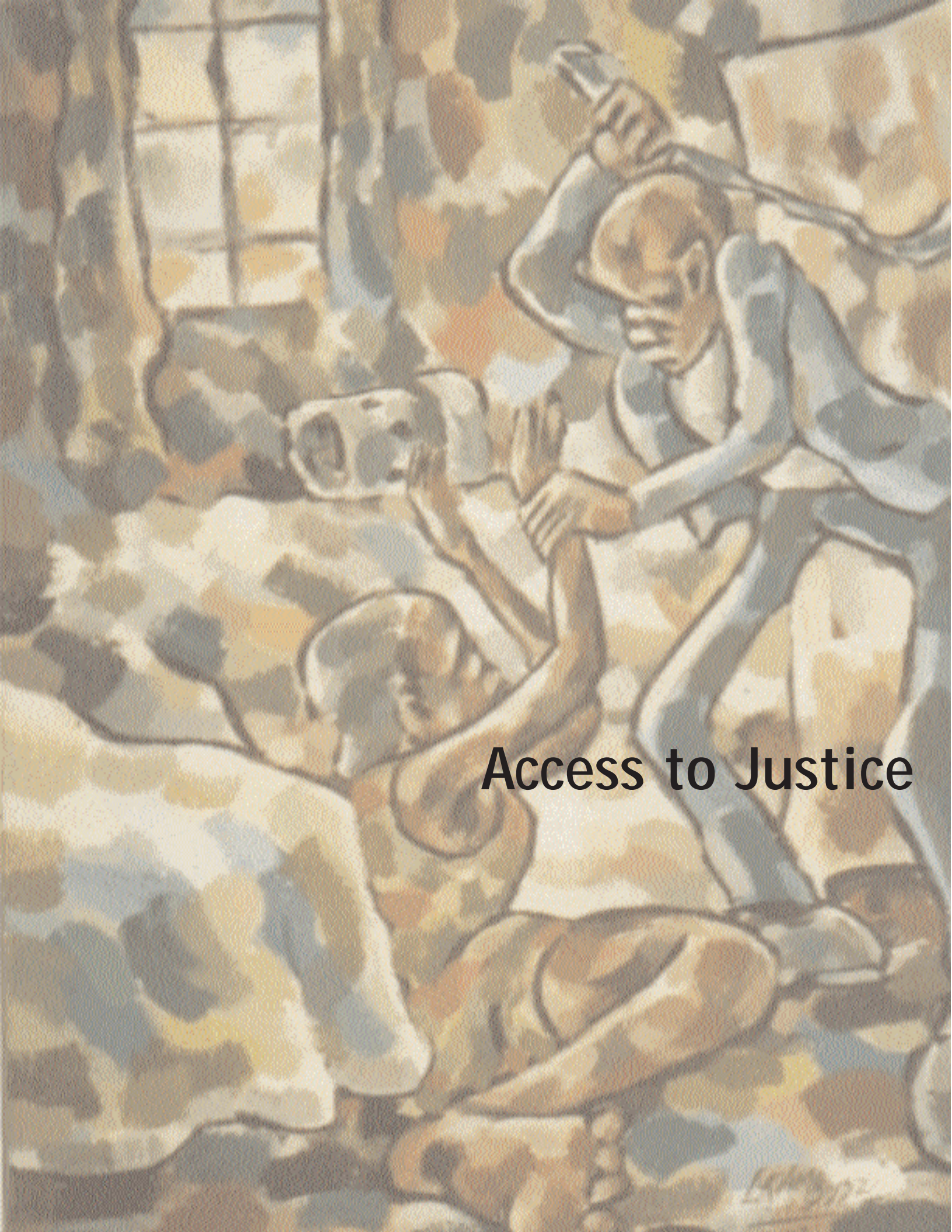
Recognising the importance of strengthening our advocacy by targeting Commonwealth members in other arenas, CHRI has used its observer status with the African Commission for Human and People's Rights to make an intervention to the 33rd session of the Commission

held in Niger in 2003. This statement advocated the inclusion of human rights perspectives and the adoption of a rights-based approach in poverty reduction.

CHRI believes in developing strong, diverse networks and enhancing the capacity of others to advocate within the Commonwealth. In June 2003, for instance, CHRI and the Commonwealth Policy Studies Unit ran a workshop for West African civil society on Commonwealth Advocacy. CHRI also embarked on a Commonwealth promotion campaign in Ghana around Commonwealth Day 2003, which included a Commonwealth Lecture on the theme of Partners in Development.

Since 2003, CHRI has been the Secretariat of the Commonwealth Human Rights Network, a new collaborative NGO initiative aimed at enhancing the human rights work of the Commonwealth. The first meeting of the Network was held at the Commonwealth Human Rights Forum in Nigeria in December 2003. Since that time CHRI has been providing the Network members with information to assist in their advocacy at the Commonwealth level.





Access to Justice

Across the Commonwealth, the justice system - including law enforcement, judiciary, prosecution services and prisons - is too often arbitrary, confusing, distant, slow and expensive. It is in urgent need of attention and repair. Victimised people are frequently unable to access the courts and where they can, they fail to procure justice because they lack knowledge of the law and its processes. The system nurtures and reinforces inefficiencies in investigation, prosecution and adjudication. Impunity is the biggest winner as victims, often at the mercy of unscrupulous state authorities or criminal elites, run from pillar to post, seeking an oft-elusive concept - justice.

CHRI believes that it is the prime responsibility of the state to assure its citizens access to justice. The system can and must work if the state is not to be completely undermined. CHRI's Access to Justice programme particularly focuses on: police reform; prison reform and judicial education.

Police Reform

In too many Commonwealth countries the police act as oppressive instruments of the state rather than serving the public. For the police to protect citizens' rights, reform is urgently needed, as summed up by our programme slogan: "Police Reform: too important to neglect, too urgent to delay."

Initial explorations, begun in 1996 in India, uncovered a complex skein of interconnected causes and effects creating police forces unable to effectively serve the needs of citizens living under the rule of law. Picked apart, the main cause of inefficient and ineffective policing is the lack of accountability, often caused by lack of proper supervision and control. Our reform agenda focuses on these root causes to attack systemic ills.

CHRI has organised over two dozen local and regional conferences, seminars and workshops to inform police, bureaucrats, politicians, media and civil society about the possibilities and mechanisms of reform. Creating a series of platforms for specialists, lay people and influential groups to discuss police reform has invigorated policy level debate about the urgency of reform and increased awareness of possible change. In October 2002, CHRI brought "big players" to the table including the Deputy Prime Minister and the Vice President of India. Regional roundtables were held in June and August 2003 and more are planned for the future. As a result of an intervention in one Indian state, a Police Performance and Accountability Commission was established to look into police performance.

To promote reform, CHRI has made submissions to expert committees, created materials in different languages, intervened in court proceedings and sought to include police reform in election manifestos. In order to build public opinion to create the necessary critical mass to bring about definitive action, CHRI has particularly targeted the media, educating it about police functioning and the reform agenda, engendering television debates and creating radio programs. Our analysis of the increasing criminality among police has received particularly wide coverage. We also work with Human Rights Commissions to upgrade skills and work with them to sensitise police to human rights. Much of this work has been in Chattisgarh, a predominantly tribal state in India.

CHRI has also used knowledge of best practice in policing to "adopt" two police stations in partnership with the State Human Rights Commission to showcase democratic policing.

Since 2002 CHRI has worked in Gujarat to assist victims of the communal violence and to provide them support in their pursuit of justice. CHRI is also conducting legal literacy and paralegal training with women, minority communities and others.

Since September 2000 CHRI has been engaged in studying accountability mechanisms of police forces in Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania. The two points of focus for analysis are: the police command structure and accountability mechanisms; and budgetary allocations and their impact. Field studies to inform the report and advocacy documents are underway.

In April 2003, CHRI in collaboration with the Kenya Police and the Kenya Human Rights Commission organized a roundtable conference on police reform which successfully brought together key academics, police, civil society and governments representatives from the region, Nigeria, South Africa and Australia. It aimed to influence debate on police reform in Kenya, immediately prior to nationwide debate on a draft constitution. Also discussed was how to change the police from being a force, as it currently operates, to being a service organisation that prioritises service to the people over service to the ruling regime. Significant recommendations and draft wording approved by the conference were forwarded to the Kenyan National Constitutional Conference, the body that will adopt a new constitution. CHRI has also been active in the media in the region and now has a regular column in one of Kenya's major newspapers.

Prison Reform

Places of incarceration are largely invisible to the outside world and as such as are largely unaccountable. Often they are overcrowded, unsanitary and violent pools of human rights violation.

Building on its 1998 study, CHRI's prison programme has focused narrowly to increase transparency and scrutiny by reviving the statutory system of prison visitors. A Board of Visitors to monitor conditions related to food, medical facilities, discipline and staff behaviour has great potential to bring change. However these Boards are largely non-existent. In 1999, CHRI conducted a detailed study of the prison visiting system comparing reality with statutory standards in seven prisons and has since trained visitors and monitored their performance. Perseverance reaped rewards in 2003 when, as a direct result of the aforementioned efforts, Divisional Commissioners passed orders creating Boards of Visitors. Our most recent publication, a Handbook for Prison Visitors, which compiled five years of intense research and review of prisons, is now being widely used in prison circles. In 2003 CHRI extended its prison work to other states in India, namely Rajasthan and Chattisgarh.

In Ghana CHRI has opened its prison work with a panel discussion organised in Accra around the theme: 'Life Behind Bars'. CHRI will continue its efforts to make the prison system more open and eventually to tackle the issue of under-trials who languish in jails for unacceptably long periods.

CHRI works in collaboration with INTERIGHTS to facilitate a series of judicial exchanges focusing on access to justice for the most vulnerable. Participating judges get a rare opportunity to step back from busy court schedules to hear from activists and experts, focus on pressing issues specific to their region and familiarise themselves with recent legal and procedural, as well as social and scientific, developments relevant to their judicial work.

A colloquium was held in November 2002 when 40 superior court judges from South Asia, together with international lawyers and academics, discussed challenges facing judiciaries in delivering access to justice, particularly to the marginalised, the need to strengthen judicial independence and integrity and the development of economic, social and cultural rights jurisprudence. CHRI facilitated the Bombay High Court to hold the second judicial exchange in November 2003 and a third is slated for Tamil Nadu in late 2004. Resulting from these interventions, CHRI has been asked to assist the state judicial academy to develop human rights materials for judges. Five further judicial exchanges are planned for the region, covering Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

As well as education of the judiciary itself, CHRI is committed to researching and analysing how the judicial system works and recommending changes to ensure better access to justice. As part of these efforts, in July 2003 CHRI released a report analysing the judicial system in Sierra Leone. It pinpoints weaknesses in the system caused by ten years of war and explains why ordinary citizens find justice through the law beyond their reach.

Other areas of concern within Access to Justice have been the impact of anti-terrorism measures on human rights, a topic explored in a seminar organised in London in June 2003. Our work on National Human Rights Commissions also continues, including a study into the use of human rights conventions by the Ghana Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice. The Africa Office has also been very active in promoting gender rights, including justice for women, through seminars, training workshops and publications.





Access to Information

Closely linked to the inability to get justice is the lack of access to information - people must have access to information to understand their human rights. CHRI promotes people's right to access information as a key measure underpinning robust democracy, rapid development, good governance and the effective realisation of human rights. Openness increases accountability and transparency, promotes consultation, allows informed choices and reduces corruption.

CHRI's Access to Information programme straddles two main initiatives - the right to information and constitutional education. Though these programs were run separately and concurrently in the past, we are in the process of merging them together. Only eleven countries have laws in place and even some of these are deficient, therefore our aim is to encourage other countries to legislate and for all to effectively implement their laws.

Our latest report, *Open Sesame: Looking for the Right to Information in the Commonwealth*, examines the status of the right to information across the Commonwealth, explores good practice and advocates that all countries adopt effective legislation guaranteeing access to information. The report is both a resource for civil society and an advocacy document, and is an oft-used resource in our right to information programme. It was launched at CHOGM 2003 where a seminar on the right was held with speakers from around the Commonwealth. In the process of developing the report, networks were developed across the Commonwealth and consultations held, starting with one in London in 2002 for participants in Europe.

The right to information had also been highlighted at the previous two CHOGMs. In South Africa in 1999 and in Australia in 2001, CHRI hosted seminars that brought together campaigners and civil society to share concerns, challenges and campaign strategies. The media has been a key partner in our right to information work across the Commonwealth and we have had articles published in all regions of the Commonwealth.

Our initial work on the right to information in South Asia focused on India. At this point, in 1998, only two states in India had passed freedom of information legislation. Now there are eight states with legislation as well as many with local-level regulations, plus an Act at the national level. CHRI has been instrumental in promoting the right in the state of Karnataka which has one of the more progressive laws. We have conducted extensive research, engaged policy-makers, analysed draft bills and created alliances with other organisations in order to advocate for legislation. Workshops have been an integral part of our access to information campaign - in the past five years, CHRI has held about four dozen workshops in different Indian states.

Getting the law on the books is one thing, but without effective implementation it will remain a paper tiger. Our programme therefore includes implementation audits to test implementation. CHRI's publications on access to information span from comparative studies, to submissions and readings for legislators, to simple primers for community level consumption.

Other activities in the South Asia region have included: a South Asia conference on right to information in Bangladesh in 1999; partnering with Article 19 (London), Human Rights Commission (Pakistan), and the Centre for Policy Alternatives (Sri Lanka) in developing a model right to information law; writing a South Asia study on the right to information; and reviewing draft laws in Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

These interventions in the Asia region have informed our programme activities in Africa. We

coordinate a diverse coalition of right to information activists in Ghana and conduct many seminars and workshops. Panel discussions have also been used to highlight and promote the right to information: one such discussion was Transparency vs. Censorship: The Role of the Media in Ghana in 2001.

More recent work in the African region has involved CHRI taking an active role in encouraging public input into the Ghanaian government's effort to keep its commitment to the World Bank to produce a right to information law. CHRI critiqued the first drafts of the Bill, built a coalition for the right to information which it convenes and conducted a series of public meetings across the country to promote awareness and to bring back community needs to inform the law making process. CHRI has also critiqued the Mozambique Bill and assisted Ugandan civil society in the drafting of their guiding principles.

CHRI's Constitutionalism work was born out of an advocacy conference in Harare in January 1999 where CHRI was mandated to develop a position paper on best practices of constitution-making. CHRI's paper: Promoting a Culture of Constitutionalism and Democracy in Commonwealth Africa was submitted to CHOGM 1999 and incorporated into a Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) initiative to provide technical assistance to constitutionalism in Southern Africa.

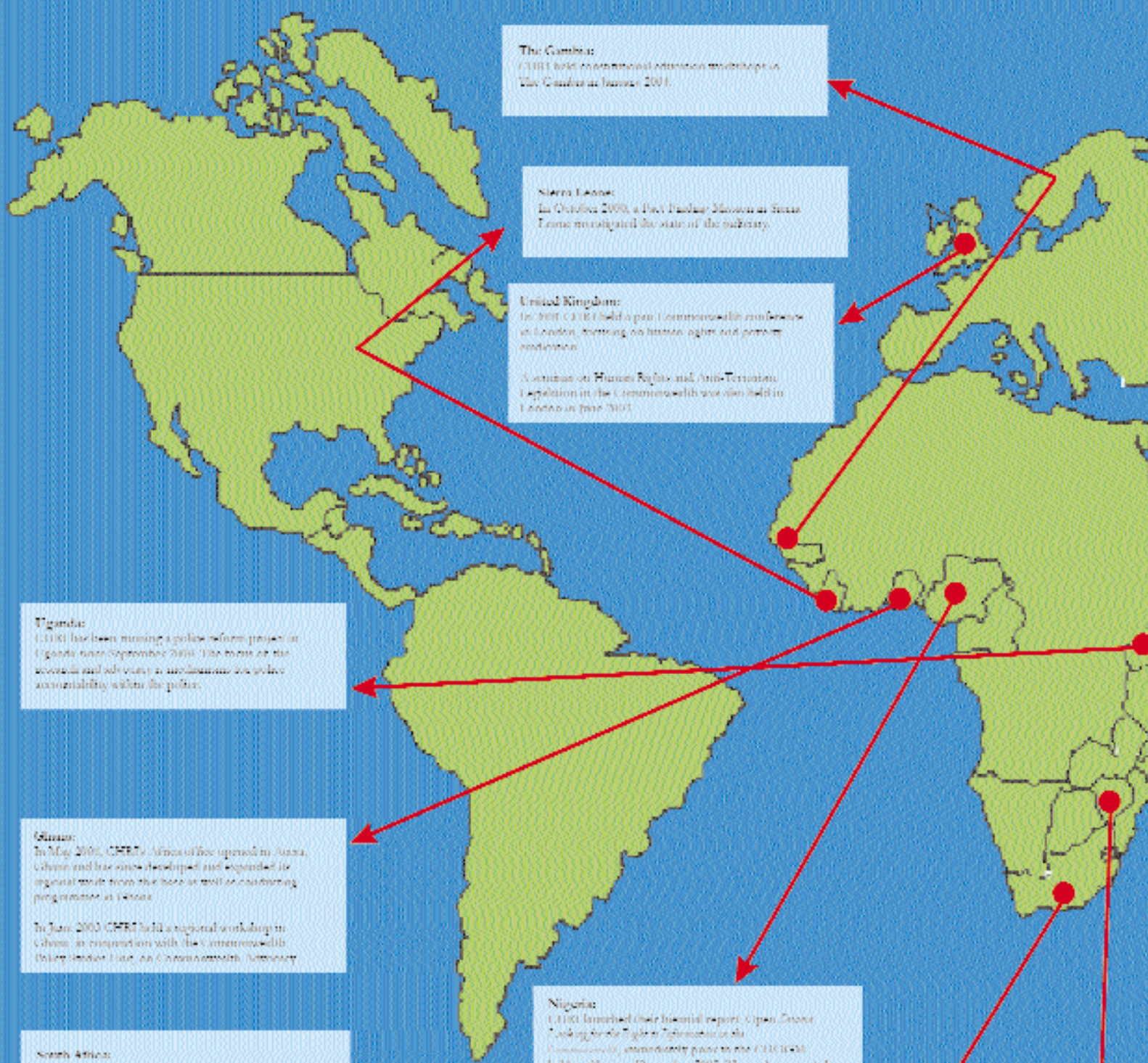
At the heart of the programme is the belief that legislation must reflect people's needs and citizens must feel they own the laws that govern them. CHRI's right to information and constitutionalism programmes are increasingly working together toward their joint objective of enabling citizens to access and participate in the governance process.

While initial Constitutionalism work was conducted in Africa, with the formation of the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution in India in 2000, the programme extended to India. Although CHRI advocated to make the review process participatory, the Commission refused to open itself to public input and worked sporadically as an expert committee collating available information.

At this time, CHRI also initiated public education about constitutional values, translated and disseminated key government documents and incorporated the information into radio programmes, and has since produced publications such as a Voters' Guide. New initiatives include advocating for electoral reforms such as requiring candidates to provide information on their backgrounds, including criminal antecedents. In March 2003, in a victory for the realisation of the right to information, the Supreme Court made disclosure at the time of filing nomination mandatory.

CHRI is committed to facilitating citizen involvement and has collaborated to create a large network of citizen's groups that monitor elections, protest the fielding of criminal candidates, conduct voter education and monitor the performance of local representatives.

The Constitutionalism programme in Ghana started with research in July 2003 into the public's knowledge of the Constitution and institutions such as the judiciary and the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice. Research was also done into whether they would use the Constitution practically by invoking it in matters affecting their rights. Academics from Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Ghana have been commissioned to prepare papers on particular issues to inform conferences in Ghana and The Gambia. Workshops recently held in Ghana and The Gambia will inform a publication to be readied by mid-2004. ◆◆



The Gambia:
CHRI held constitutional education workshops in The Gambia in January 2001.

Sierra Leone:
In October 2000, a Fact Finding Mission in Sierra Leone investigated the state of the judiciary.

United Kingdom:
In 2001 CHRI held a pan Commonwealth conference in London, focusing on human rights and poverty reduction.

A seminar on Human Rights and Anti-Terrorism Legislation in the Commonwealth was also held in London in June 2001.

Uganda:
CHRI has been running a police reform project in Uganda since September 2000. The focus of the project is to develop a mechanism to ensure accountability within the police.

Ghana:
In May 2000, CHRI's Africa office opened in Accra, Ghana, and has since developed and expanded its regional work from this base as well as conducting programmes in Ghana.

In June 2001 CHRI held a regional workshop in Ghana, in conjunction with the Commonwealth Policy Studies Unit, on Commonwealth democracy.

South Africa:
CHRI convened a workshop group in South Africa in August 2000 to develop a position paper on best practices in constitution-making, which was incorporated into a SADC initiative to provide technical assistance to constitutionalism in Southern Africa.

At the 1999 CHOGM, CHRI launched two reports: *State of the Right to Information in the Commonwealth* and *Right to Information in the Commonwealth: A Guide to the Commonwealth's Commitment to the Right to Information*. CHRI also convened three sides discussion groups on: Right to Information and their impact on Women and Children; Sierra Leone; Native Title and Indigenous Rights in Australia; and Grassroots Movements on the Right to Information.

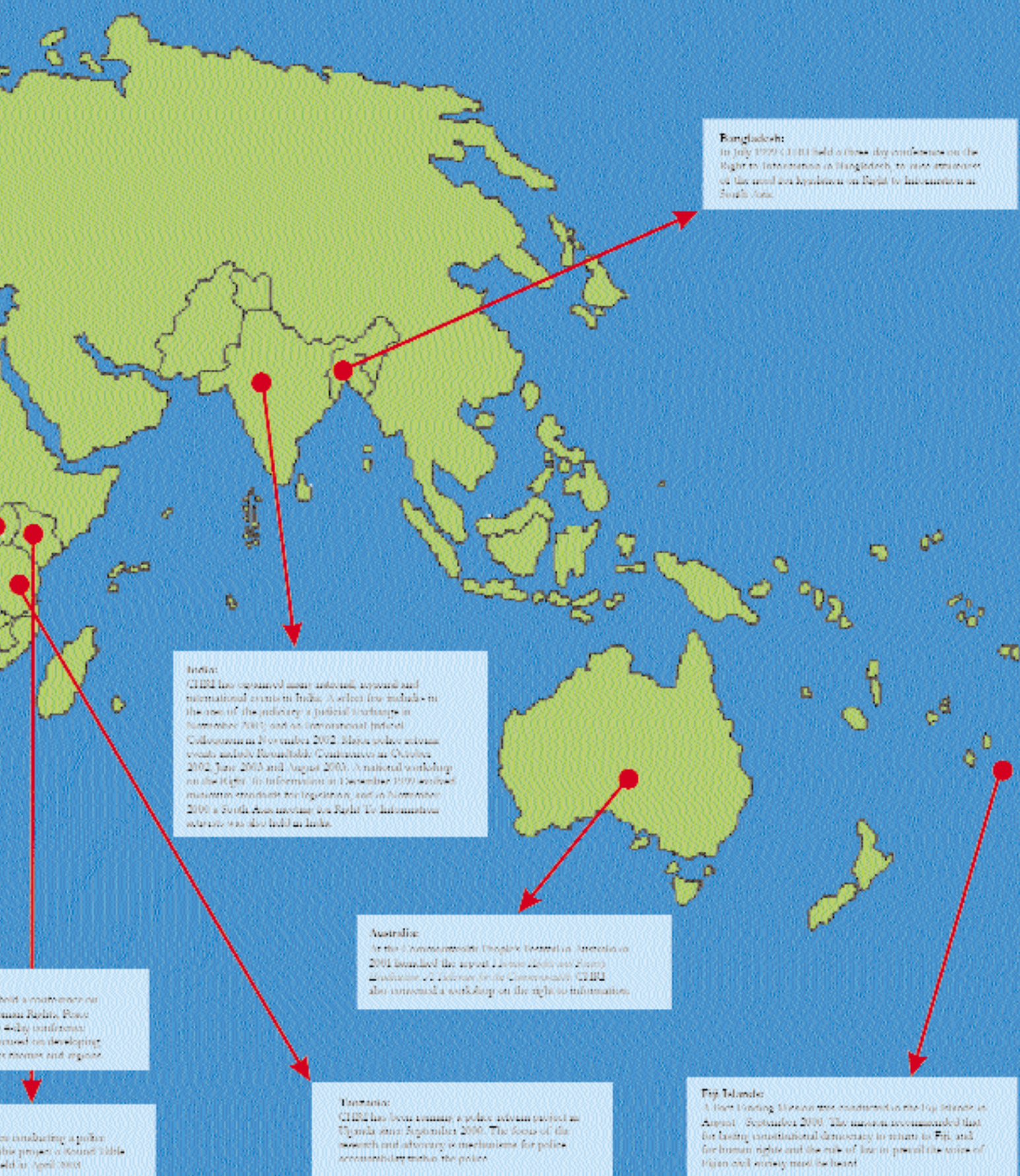
Nigeria:
CHRI launched their biennial report, *Open Society: Looking for the Right to Information in the Commonwealth*, immediately prior to the CHOGM held in Abuja in December 2001. Through concerted advocacy, the right to information was included in the Heads of State declaration.

CHRI also engaged, in collaboration with local partners, a Commonwealth Human Rights Forum for NGOs and National Human Rights Commissions in the Commonwealth. This is the first time such an event has been held at CHOGM.

Zimbabwe:
In Zimbabwe in January 2000, CHRI held a Pan Commonwealth Advocacy for 14th and Good Governance in Africa. This discussed immediate challenges and for political instability and corruption.

Kenya:
Since September 2000, CHRI has been running a project in Kenya, as part of a Commonwealth Police Reform and

GLOBAL PRESENCE



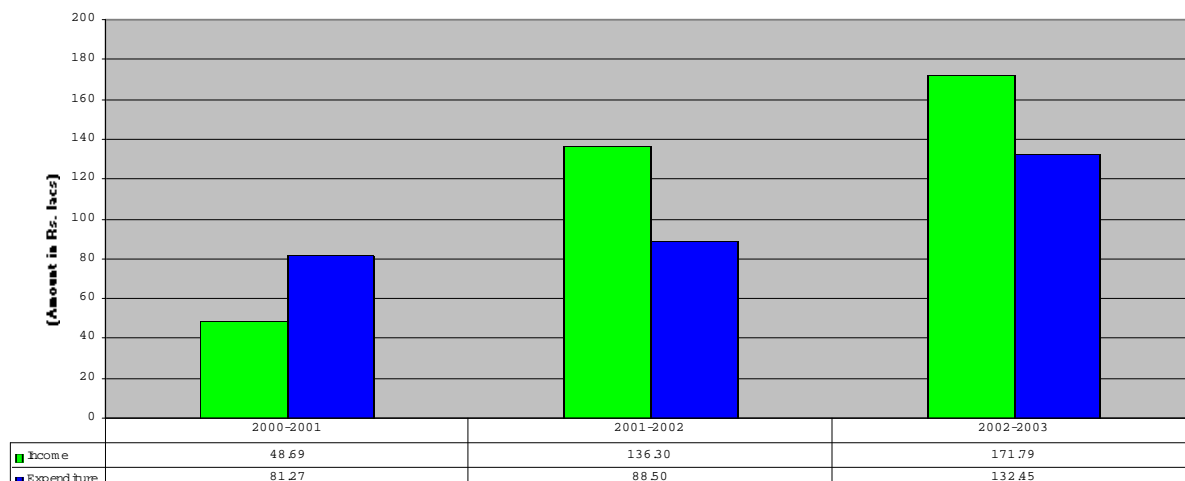
In order to indicate the growth and financial strength of the organization, we provide below an overview of three years financials.

Grants received have increased annually by---% and over three years by approx. ----%. The component of core grant is ----% whereas the project specific grants represent ----% of the total grants over this period.

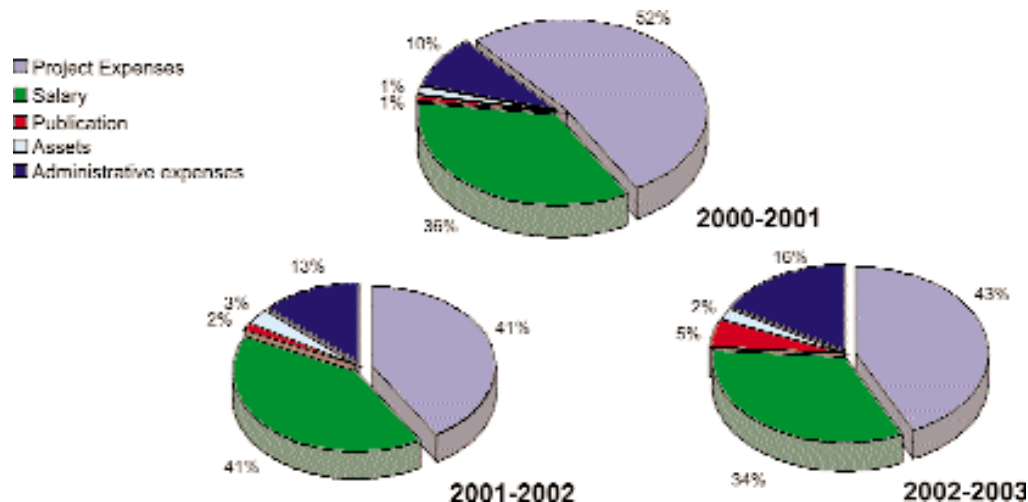
Keeping in line with the activities of the organization and the thrust of the programmes, there has been an average increase of ----% annually. The growth in programme expenditure averages ----% a year, whereas administration expenses have increased ----% every year.

Balance Sheet			
	Amount in Rs. lacs		
	Period		
ASSETS	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003
Fixed Assets	9.11	11.29	14.44
Investments	94.00	134.48	174.87
Loan and Advances	5.91	9.25	14.89
Cash & Bank Balances	4.59	11.34	6.60
Total	113.61	166.36	210.80
LIABILITIES			
General Fund	95.28	129.57	154.51
Special Project Fund	18.33	34.02	51.57
Current Liabilities	0.00	2.77	4.72
Total	113.61	166.36	210.80

Income and Expenditure for the year 2000-01 to 2002-03



Distribution of Expenses



Statement of Funds Received

Amount in Rs. lacs

Name of the Funder	Period			Total
	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	
Actionaid	1.10			1.10
Article XIX	1.35	4.69	4.05	10.09
British High Commission			16.28	16.28
Canadian High Commission		6.02		6.02
Embassy of Switzerland			11.38	11.38
Ford Foundation	20.46	77.16	73.08	170.70
FNS	11.44	8.90	7.45	27.79
FCO - Challenge Fund		14.51		14.51
Government of Netherland	1.41	11.04		12.45
India Canada Cooperation (SARGF)	1.50			1.50
INTERIGHTS		2.40	26.50	28.90
Other Receipts and Interest	8.84	10.48	22.55	41.87
REDRESS			0.97	0.97
Trustee Committee			9.53	9.53
United Nation Development Programme	2.59			2.59
Westminster Foundation		1.10		1.10
Total	48.69	136.30	171.79	356.78

Income and Expenditure Account

Amount in Rs. lacs

	Period		
	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003
Income			
By Grant Received	39.85	125.83	149.24
By Interest and Other Receipts	8.84	10.46	22.55
Total	48.69	136.29	171.79
Expenditure			
To Grant Expenses :			
Actionaid	1.10		
Article XIX	2.93	6.75	0.30
British High Commission			9.43
Canadian High Commission			
Canadian Intel. Development Agency		0.04	2.58
Commonwealth Foundation			9.43
Embassy of Switzerland			11.11
Ford Foundation	30.86	30.9	52.8
FNS	11.02	9.11	8.46
Fixed Assets	0.76	2.18	3.14
FCO-Advocacy Curriculum	5.52	2.45	0.30
FCO - Challenge Fund	11.13	15.44	0.88
General Expenses	0.01	0.32	1.39
Government of Netherland	13.15	10.12	
India Canada Cooperation (SARGF)	0.33		
Institute of International Education			
INTERIGHTS		0.65	21.08
Other Receipts and Interest			
REDRESS			0.97
Trustee Committee	3.67	7.08	12.33
United Nation Development Programme			0.75
Westminster Foundation		0.92	0.13
Refund of unspent Grant			0.69
	81.27	88.50	132.44
Less: Amount utilised out of Special			
Project Fund of earlier years	41.65	4.31	22.45
To Special Project Fund U/S 11(2)			
of the Income tax, 1961		20.00	40.00
To Excess of Income over Expenditure			
carried to Balance Sheet	9.07	32.10	21.80
Total	48.69	136.29	171.79



Publications

Publishing and disseminating reports, books, pamphlets and our regular newsletter are crucial elements of our human rights advocacy strategy. These are a selection of the seminal publications we have recently produced. A complete list is on our website, plus downloads for many of the reports and newsletters. The quarterly newsletter is mailed to thousands across the Commonwealth and provides information on CHRI activities and human rights themes, crises and trends.

CHOGM Reports

- ❖ Open Sesame: Looking for the Right to Information in the Commonwealth (2003)
- ❖ Human Rights and Poverty Eradication: A Talisman for the Commonwealth (2001)

Access to Information

- ❖ The Right to Know - A Voter's Guide (2003)
- ❖ People's Awareness of the Indian Constitution and the Review Process (2001)
- ❖ Look at FOI Bill 2000 Now!! (2000)

Access to Justice

- ❖ Report of the Roundtable Conference on Police Reform, Chennai (2003)
- ❖ Report of the Roundtable Conference on Police Reform, Trivandrum (2003)
- ❖ Report of the Roundtable Conference on Police Reform, Nairobi (2003)
- ❖ Police Reforms and You (2003)
- ❖ Human Rights and Development in Africa: Interrogating NEPAD's Missing Rights-Based Development Approach (2003)
- ❖ Handbook for Prison Visitors (2003)
- ❖ Prison Visiting System (2003)
- ❖ Report of the Roundtable Conference on Police Reform, New Delhi (2002)
- ❖ The Government, the Police and the Community: A Comparative Analysis of Police Acts (2002)
- ❖ Police Organisation in India (2002)
- ❖ Police Brutality in India: A Media Scan (2000)
- ❖ Behind Bars... A Closer Look: Prison Visiting System, Madhya Pradesh (2000)
- ❖ Balancing the Scale: Gender Composition of Commonwealth National Human Rights Institutions (2000)

Fact Finding Missions

- ❖ Fact-Finding Mission to Sierra Leone - In Pursuit of Justice: A Report on the Judiciary in Sierra Leone (2002)
- ❖ Fact-Finding Mission to Fiji - A Crisis of Constitution: The Way Ahead (2002)



Printed men

News



THIRUVANANTH

human rights

Some organisations influence in a bold way the lives of the people. They are the ones who are the most powerful in the world. They are the ones who are the most powerful in the world. They are the ones who are the most powerful in the world.

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CHRI wishes to acknowledge the support of the following organisations for its activities.

Commonwealth Foundation, UK

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Ford Foundation, New York

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Ford Foundation, New Delhi

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British High Commission and Foreign Commonwealth Offices

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Canadian High Commission

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Canadian International Development Agency

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Embassy of Switzerland

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United Nations Development Programme

*

Friedrich Nauman Stiftung, New Delhi

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Government of Netherlands

*

Artcle XIX, U.K.

*

REDRESS, U.K.

*

INTERIGHTS, U.K.

*

Westminster Foundation, U.K.

*

State Bank of India, New Delhi

Bank of India, New Delhi

HDFC Bank, New Delhi



Executive Director

CHRI's Executive Director, Maja Daruwala, is based at the Headquarters. Ms. Daruwala is a barrister actively advocating for Human Rights. She is the Chair of the Council for the Minority Rights Group International and a Trustee of the International Records Management Trust. She is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Open Society Justice Initiative and the International Women's Health Coalition.



Maja Daruwala

India Office

Programme

Sl.No.	Name	Programme	Designation
1	Mr. G.P. Joshi	Access to Justice	Programme Coordinator
2	Ms. Michelle Kagari	Access to Justice	Co-coordinator East Africa
3	Ms. Navaz Kotwal	Access to Justice	Sr. Project Officer
4	Dr. Doel Mukherjee	Access to Justice	Sr. Project Officer
5	Mr. Mandeep Tiwana	Access to Justice	Sr. Assistant (Programme)
6	Ms. Swati Mehta	Access to Justice	Sr. Assistant (Programme)
7	Mr. Rakesh Ganguli	Access to Justice	Sr. Assistant (Project)
8	Ms. Devika Prasad	Access to Justice	Sr. Research Assistant
9	Ningthi Mangsathabam	Access to Justice	Sr. Research Assistant
10	Mr. Venkatesh Nayak	Access to Information	Sr. Programme Officer
11	Ms. Clare Doube	Access to Information	Consultant
12	Ms. Charmaine Rodrigues	Access to Information	Consultant
13	Ms. Aditi Datta	Access to Information	Research Assistant
14	Ms. Anandita Pujari	Access to Information	Sr. Research Assistant
15	Ms. Navel Hamidi	Access to Information	Intern

Administration

Sl. No.	Name	Designation
1	Mr. H.G. Nadkarni	Manager, Finance and Administration
2	Mr. N.P. Ramachandran	Sr. Administrative Officer
3	Mr. K.S. Rautela	Sr. Accounts Officer
4	Ms. Jyoti Bhargava	Executive Assistant to Director
4	Mr. Prasad P. Nair	Secretary to Director
5	Mr. Swayam Mohanty	Network Administrator
6	Ms. Anshu Tejpal	Library Assistant
7	Mr. P. Ajay Babu	Office Assistant
8	Mr. Subhash Patra	Office Assistant
9	Ms. Rajeshwari	Office help

Ghana Office

Sl. No.	Name	Designation
1	Ms. Nana Oye Lithur	Programme Co-ordinator
2	Mr. Issac Owusu-Mensah	Programme Assistant

London Office

Sl. No.	Name	Designation
1	Ms. Ellen Pugh	London Liaison Officer

