

Developing new partnerships and participation in other awareness initiatives:

In 2002 CHRI had interacted with The Bombay Chartered Accountants Society (BCAS) to look for ways to increase awareness on the issue. The latter also approached CHRI to produce a booklet on the right to information law at the Central and State level for mass scale dissemination. The draft for this booklet has already been submitted but due to the uncertain status of the State legislation the publication is still pending. In May this year the (BCAS), along with other professional tax and chartered accountancy bodies, organised for a public meeting on RTI for its members and the general public.

The meeting was held on May 23rd in KC College of Law, and was attended by nearly 300 people that included lawyers, tax consultants and chartered accountants and many members of GIANTS international and other NGOs. CHRI was the key resource and made a presentation on the legal regime governing right to information in India. Other speakers at the meeting included Mr Ram Jethmalani who spoke on the constitutional basis for this fundamental right and also his experiences as a minister. Mr Mahesh Bhatt (film director) also spoke on the need for citizens' action and the issues of lack of information in the context of cyclone in Orissa and drought in Rajasthan. The meeting provided CHRI access to many professional bodies and other civil society members who can spread the message of RTI further.