NATIONAL CENTRE FOR ADVOCACY STUDIES
ANNUAL REPORT

2021-22
VISION OF NCAS

At the crucial juncture of the completion of 26 meaningful years of people-centered advocacy in South East Asia, NCAS takes a moment to look back at the interventions and legacy it has built and to look around at the new and dynamic social environment in which we are called to engage. The nature of the Indian State has evolved over the years and at this point in the history of India, new models of advocacy initiatives need to be developed around the challenges that are currently faced by Indian democracy, and institutions upholding the values of Indian Constitution.

NCAS plans to shift gears to continue to offer evidence-based advocacy but through a social entrepreneurship model of functioning.

This will be achieved through –

Mainstreaming Public Policy Advocacy Education
Enhancing the skills of professionals to develop creative innovations in the social sector
Creating a market for social sector change makers.

Consequently, we look forward to focusing on-

Promoting and strengthening Sustainable Development Goals particularly in relation to improving the quality of public services;

Strengthening accountability in governance, through enhanced participation and capacity of civil society and local governance bodies;

Nurturing professional knowledge leadership among young people in the area of public policy advocacy, SDGs and governance

Training and capacity building of communities and people from grassroot organizations.

Getting involved in training, capacity building and documentation needs of diverse networks and national campaigns.

In the years to come, NCAS envisions interventions through evidence based research, people-centered policy advocacy towards addressing accountable governance, networking and capacity building around the quality of public services (primarily: education, health and food security, natural resource dependent communities) and around the themes of labour and migration, disaster response, issues of natural resource governance. We shall be engaging with these areas through the cross cutting lenses of gender including the third gender, tribal, dalits, and disabled and other marginalities.
Executive Committee

Mr. Jagadananda (President)
Mr. Josantony Joseph (Secretary)
Ms. Keerti (Treasurer)
Ms. Aasha Ramesh
Mr. Amitabh Behar
Mr. Bhanwar Singh Chadana
Mr. Sampat Kale
Ms. Manjula Pradeep
Mr. Yogesh Kumar
Foreword

2021 – 2022 was also another challenging year where we saw the initial stage of people trying to address the post-pandemic situation. NCAS too had a challenging year of learning and engaging with various grassroot level organizations, national level networks and exploring new avenues of collaboration. The advice of, and collaboration with, senior well-wishers of NCAS has been heart-warming even as these interactions played the role of catalysing NCAS further to explore different avenues of engagement. Trying to materialise the vision and vision of NCAS has been a learning curve to take NCAS forward as a social change resource centre to create younger people as leaders for the development sector by training young professionals on public policy practice and governance. Furthermore it was felt important to take public policy advocacy back to the grassroots and to amplify dialogues across sections of society on public policy engagement.

The annual report is a reflection of our meaningful engagements which would not have been possible without the solidarity and support of all. We look forward to have closer associations with all of you.

We welcome your feedback and suggestions

In Solidarity

Anil Tharayath Varghese,
Executive Director
National Centre for Advocacy Studies have been engaging with the communities in promoting and nurturing responsive governance at different levels of societies situated in a national context.

As part of the Oak Foundation intervention in the Sundarbans, “Amplifying Community Voices”-is being implemented in Patharprathima Block of Sundarbans along with 5 partner organizations. NCAS has been associated with the project and partners as a resource agency. NCAS has been engaging to support the organizations working with the marginalized communities in Sundarbans to understand/ diagnose specific vulnerabilities of the communities and assist them in developing a strategic avenue of intervention along with specific action and roles. The intervention has been largely from the basis of the ‘Community Learning Movement’ initiated by NCAS.

As part of the project NCAS has conducted both online and offline sessions on understanding the rights-based approach, tools of advocacy and different stages of advocacy. Since it was immediately in the context of the post pandemic time, the sessions were largely offline in nature. Five offline sessions were held with the partners of the project as well as the communities. Two offline sessions were conducted at Diamond Harbour, West Bengal in the respected year.
A four-month training initiative for supporting village level committees in 20 villages of Pune and Palghar district was initiated by NCAS.

The objective of the initiative included

1. Empower communities to understand their entitlements under the various schemes.
2. Training of members of the Vigilance Committees to be mandated under the Public Distribution system to understand their roles and responsibilities.
3. To enable communities to raise their grievances about these schemes in the prescribed manner and seek accountability from the authorities.
A total of 20 villages of Ambegaon and Maswan blocks in Pune and Palghar respectively were covered. Issues pertaining to Public Distribution System, Integrated Child Development Services and Mid-Day Meal Scheme were mainly discussed. Apart from trainings, information booklets and posters have also been generated and distributed within the communities.

CAPACITY BUILDING INTIATIVES IN COLLABORATION WITH OTHER CIVIL SOCIETY ORGNIZATIONS

*National Centre for Advocacy Studies* has been engaging in capacity building initiatives on various components of advocacy and its praxis. In the current year there have been more than 15 collaborative meetings looking at the strengthening of the organizations, communities on the various issues in the domain of Governance, Policy and Research. NCAS has played its role in being a facilitator and joining hands with various civil society actors to reach out effectively as well as build an environment to create learning spaces in this regard.

a. In order to facilitate public involvement in the budgetary process and looking at generating evidence on the gaps in transparency and accountability mechanisms in budgets, along with *Centre for Budget and Governance Accountability*, NCAS was engaged in creating popular discourse on policies and budgets for agriculture. Five web-based discussions have been organized in four districts of Maharashtra, Solapur, Dhule, Sindhudurg with farmers, civil society groups and experts. These discussions revolved around understanding the budgets in relation to the issues of agriculture with specific reference to Maharashtra.

b. A three-week training course on *Understanding the individual and Constitution* was conducted with 37 participants in collaboration with *Constitution and Responsible Citizenship Initiative* and Eklavya Academy Yavatmal. The objective of the training program was to help participants understand their constitutional responsibility and also look at the framework adopted in the constitution.

c. A one-day online workshop on Understanding Municipal Budgets was conducted for Community members in collaboration with Centre for Advocacy and Research Pune.

d. A seven-day course on understanding Democracy and governance was initiated with the Faculty and PhD Students of the *Sociology Department of Savitribhai Phule, Pune University*. NCAS co-ordinated the program by bringing in experts to discuss various topics on governance with these faculty members, apart from designing the course. The course looked at Democracy- Foundation and Dimensions; Decentralization and Governance.
e. The second batch of the online **Public policy and Advocacy** course was conducted for the youth and other professionals. Compared to the earlier batches there were international students too. This course focuses on Public Policy Advocacy as a practical tool and skillset necessary for policy studies and advocacy. A meticulously formulated curriculum to understand the complexities of the Indian condition – its social fabric, economics and politics – both academically and in the context of socio-cultural realities, will guide this programme for preparing youth in the praxis of people-centered advocacy.

f. A One-day training workshop on Understanding Advocacy was conducted for the staff of **Door steps school**.

g. A course on research methodology in collaboration with **Vikas Anvesh Foundation** was developed for professionals from the development sector who are interested in further pursuing research in their own organisations- in this 3-month course that covered the details of research methodology and how NGOs could use research for enabling social change.

h. Online session on understanding child budgeting for the young participants of **YUVA** was organized.

i. **12 Space to Grow**, a Delhi Based group that works on cyber crime and human trafficking organized a session on cyber bullying, NCAS conducted a session on the social vulnerability of the survivors. This session was organized for child rights organizations based in Jharkhand.

j. Along with **Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan** that works with women in the rural areas of Kutch, NCAS conducted a workshop on how to use advocacy as a tool, the participants of this workshop were elected women representatives and young aspiring women who wanted to contest panchayat election. Nearly 30 women participated in the 2-day training.

k. A One-day workshop was conducted for youth at the **Yuva Center** in Navi Mumbai, this session was on advocacy. 25 young people from various parts of
Maharashtra participated in the workshop, the idea of the workshop was to enable young people to raise their voices on the issues that they felt strongly about.

1. A civil society discussion on Wealth Inequality was organized in collaboration with Oxfam India, sector experts from Maharashtra were invited as panelists, Oxfam shared its finding on wealth inequality. Nearly 40 civil society members joined this online discussion.

m. NCAS along with Working Peoples Charter organized the workshop, to deliberate on the components to address social security of workers in the Maharashtra State Rules on. This workshop was conducted in the wake of the change in labour laws and the discussions around labour codes. Nearly 30 people who participated in the discussion from different parts of Maharashtra.
RESEARCH INITIATIVES

Two important strands of research were initiated during this period

1. Research on loss of learning due to the pandemic in the Urban slums of Pune. The interviews were held with 200 children, 40 parents and 5 organizations staff trying to understand the situation on the ground.

2. The Panchayat Extension to Schedule Areas Act (PESA) completes 25 years, however this promising Act fails in its implementation, this has been a concern for a long time now, with an intention to understand the current status of the implementation of the Act, NCAS along with Adim Sanskruti Aani Manav Vikas Kendra conducted a field research in 84 villages of Ambegaon and Junnar blocks of Pune District. This study was done to further intervene to make the system accountable and ensure that PESA is implemented in these schedule areas.

INTERNSHIP

Eight interns from various university successfully completed their internship at NCAS. Students from Tata Institute of social Science, Azim Premji University and St Xavier College Mumbai. The interns were part of NCAS as part of their field work. They were mentored in various aspects of research and documentation.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROCESS

As part of strategy and visioning exercise, NCAS organised 4 online zonal meetings with the general body members of NCAS to gather their suggestions and seek their support in further shaping up NCAS. The discussion threw up suggestions on fund raising, institutional partnership, collaboration with GB members organisations for training and capacity building, building and academic profile of NCAS by enhancing research and capacity building activities. 23 members participated from across the country, and it was an reassurance for the team to take forward its activities.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

INCOME

| GRANTS [National/ International] | 12,36924.94 |

DONATIONS

<p>| INCOME FROM DEPOSIT            | 5,77,942.63 |
| INCOME FROM OTHER SOURCES     | 2,77,631.00 |</p>
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<td><strong>TRANSFER FROM RESERVES</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL INCOME</strong></td>
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<td><strong>PROGRAMME EXPENSES</strong></td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</strong></td>
<td><strong>3277891.22</strong></td>
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**NCAS Team [2021-22]**

- Johanna Lokhande
- Saptami Dutta
- Shilpa Kulkarni
- Kshitija Gosavi
- Venkat Balsure

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

National Centre for Advocacy Studies is at a stage where new ideas are being germinated and efforts are being taken to slowly develop and harness them in collaboration with various actors. Without these actors, NCAS would not be able to remain relevant in today’s world filled with challenges. We hope to become more proactive, creative and build with others as a collective to walk together hand in hand in these challenging times to build a responsive civil society. We thank all our donors and well-wishers who have contributed to the vision and mission of NCAS.