



Social change through public policy

Parth J Shah's dream to bring about a change in the system through constant dialogue, publications, seminars and research about policy led to the foundation of centre for civil society in 1997. Shah's unstinted determination to improve the quality of life of the citizens by reviving and reinvigorating the institutions of civil society has made the centre one of its kind in the country

Leader - Parth J Shah

Organisation – Center for Civil Society (CCS)

Vision – To create a system of education where all children get access to quality education of their choice

Establishment Year - 1997

Reach - CCS supports National Independent Schools Alliance, an alliance of state school associations with 8000 member schools servicing 16,00,000 students across 19 states

Parth Shah was a revered professor of Economics at university of Michigan before starting the Centre for Civil Society (CCS) in India in 1997. Shah realized the power of economics in his college days and that it is the economic systems that would determine the kind of quality of life people would have. That is where the idea of starting a think tank germinated. Centre for Civil Society is a public policy think tank advancing personal, social,

economic and political freedoms.

CCS offers public policy solutions within the framework of the rule of law, community engagement and competitive markets. It has adopted five streams of work: research, advocacy, campaigns, pilots, and policymaking. It has worked in six sectors in the past, i.e. education, economic freedom, governance, institution of community property rights for environment conservation, and promotion of globalisation and trade. Presently, the

Centre is involved with two main campaigns, the School Choice Campaign and Jeevika Livelihoods Campaign.

The major hurdle before Shah after returning from US was to find the like-minded people in India to start with an initiative like CCS. Parth Shah was surprised not able to find even a handful of people who would see a different way of solving the country's problem and would come together for a novel idea.



Workshop in progress for ipolicy for Young Leaders, Hyderabad, November 14, 2013



CCS in Jeevika: 10th Asia Livelihood Documentary Festival 2013, New Delhi

Parth Shah has also published academic articles in the areas of development economics, welfare economics, business-cycle theory, free or laissez-faire banking, and currency-board systems. He has edited books like *Morality of Markets*, *Friedman on India*, *Profiles in Courage: Dissent on Indian Socialism*, *Do Corporations have Social Responsibility?*, and co-edited *Law, Liberty, and Livelihood*, *The Terracotta Reader*, and *Agenda for Change*. ■

(Compiled by Anushi Agrawal)