



# LIVE 4 SEASON

## CASE STUDY

JBIMS • NGO • CATALYSTS FOR SOCIAL ACTION



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## Introduction:

CSA is in its 10th year of operations. In its just concluded board meeting, after taking stock of the progress made, the response from all sections of stakeholders and, the immense potential to make a difference to the entire population of institutionalized children in India, it was decided that CSA would scale its operation 10 fold in next 3 years. From being a “small” NGO, with operating budgets in the region of Rs 55-65 lakhs per annum, CSA would scale up its action area to cover 5 states with an operating budget of Rs. 6 crores p.a. A marketing plan is imperative to help CSA have stable and sustainable income levels of Rs 6 crores per year.

Before drawing up the marketing strategy it's worthwhile to understand CSA's growth trajectory and the compelling reasons that will make this ambitious goal achievable.

## Growth:

CSA started very small (Annexure -1) and like many NGOs it was the outcome of a personal experience-the adoption of a baby girl by the Jain family. Overwhelmed by the life-changing experience both, for the child as also, for the family, it decided to start CSA- primarily to promote adoption in India. During the 10 years since its inception, this NGO has moved far ahead of its original goal.

Beginning with Adoption-facilitation, CSA began supporting adoption agencies in improving the care and living conditions for children in the care of these agencies as well as the work conditions and knowledge of the staff managing them. In due course, CSA extended its support initiatives to cover orphanages as well within Maharashtra, where the initiative had started.

Over the 10-year period, the numbers of adoption facilitated were more than 600. The number of supported-institutions grew from 8 to 41; from the single state of Maharashtra, CSA operations spread to Maharashtra, Orissa, Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh and Goa. The programme spends increased from Rs. 5 lakhs in 2003-04 to Rs. 65 lakhs in 2011-12. In the meantime, the CSA model too evolved (Annexure-II). Active implementation in a state with an operating budget of Rs. 1 crore spanning 2 years had already been planned.

Briefly explained, the CSA model addresses holistic care of an institutionalized child. The phased-implementation (a few identified orphanages/adoption agencies within a cluster of districts at a time) encompasses all orphanages in an identified state within a span of 5 years. The objectives are to:

- Move every adoptable child into the adoption stream and find a home for her/him.
- Ensure a high quality of childcare by way of support and capacity/capability building; effectively work around a plan for each child.
- Address the education support needs of institutionalized children
- Provide vocation training and skills-development so that the children are equipped with some employable skill when, at age 18, they leave the institution.
- Promote and create local awareness
- Involve the government- advocate policy/practice change

## The Strategic Opportunity:

The Government of India has recently introduced the Integrated Child Protection Scheme (ICPS). The notable features of the scheme are:

- A child-centred approach which addresses a child individually by working on a plan around the child.
- Focus on family based care alternatives such as adoption and foster care.

The ICPS scheme thus has the right objectives and intent. But many Government schemes have failed in implementation. CSA believes that it can work with the government to help implement ICPS to the extent that is applicable to the institutionalized child.

CSA's strategy over next 5 years will be to leverage its experience to partner with State Governments to create a replicable

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and scalable model for management of orphanages and implementation of the ICPS. In the next 3 years, CSA would like to extend its operations to cover at least 5 states and approximately 200 orphanages/ adoption agencies. This would require funding of Rs 6 crores per annum @ an average cost of Rs 3 lakhs per institution per annum.

The model could be further scaled up to cover the entire country over the next 10 years. Effective implementation of the ICPS, better monitoring of orphanages and active protection of child rights and family based alternatives could impact thousands of children in a profound, life altering way.

## Problem Statement:

Currently, CSA raises approximately Rs 70 lakhs per year from a variety of sources:

- Corporate sources that are known to CSA
- Funds received from the retail public through organizations such as Give India.
- Charity events and Marathon

Clearly to reach sustained funding of Rs 6 crores per year, CSA will need to do something quite innovative and different. Some of the challenges are:

1. CSA does not run any orphanage directly and its role as a “change catalyst” is not easy to explain.
2. CSA undertakes the holistic development of a child and does not fit into categories like “education” or “health” or “environment”, etc.; a lot of corporate and retail funding is segmented and CSA does not fit these clear segments easily.
3. As an NGO, marketing and corporate expenses have been kept very minimal. CSA does not have even a single dedicated resource for fund raising. Funds raised so far have been brought in by the Board members.
4. Though well-known amongst the adoption community as a ‘single-point source’ for all information/assistance on adoption, its larger initiatives are not yet publicly known/acclaimed. In fact CSA has moved well beyond its objective of “A Family for every child” which was its motto to ‘Optimisation of rehabilitation outcomes for institutionalized destitute children’, which is the final, compelling goal.
5. CSA does not have a PR arrangement; though it does have a Cause Ambassador, an adoptive parent.
6. CSA’s belief is that it caters to the destitute child. Therefore, though adoptive parents benefit immensely from the service, the Adoption services are not charged. Also, there are legal and ethical implications. Adoptive parents generally belong to urban and elite communities and yet funds from this group have not been forthcoming. Perhaps this is because donations are made to the adoption agency from where their child is adopted.
7. The GOI’s ICPS scheme envisages a sponsorship for each child. The subsidy is paid through the state government to the orphanage. For CSA to dovetail the ICPS to its implementation model, government intervention is obligatory. An oft-asked question is –“Why deal with an NGO from another state?”
8. Any fund raising plan would need to be on a shoe-string budget. CSA would have to carefully think about what fund raising/marketing skills and experience would be required and how the gaps could be filled.

The need is for a marketing plan that

- Re-positions CSA as an organization addressing the entire community of institutionalized children by examining
  - ~ Family-based alternatives
  - ~ A plan around the child.
- Assists CSA to achieve a resource target of 6 crores per annum (a combination of cash and kind) in a period of 3 years

Assistance in kind could include support from organizations who could undertake infrastructure (civil work), offer nutritional support, healthcare and medicines, childcare-clothes, recreation tools, appliances, vocation training and education.

Some of the questions that the CSA team is thinking about:

- Should CSA focus on retail or corporate or governmental funding or a combination of all three?

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- ~ A recent experience suggests keen interest by a reputed bank to partner CSA in the implementation of its programme in a state; over a period of 5 years, the organization may fund CSA's implementation plans in the state.
- ~ CSA has received decent retail funding (approximately Rs. 22 lakhs during 2010-11)
  - For the target groups, what would be an attractive marketing message?
  - How does one create a sustainable engagement with donors?
  - What experience and marketing expertise does one need?
  - Where do volunteers fit in? What can be outsourced? What expertise must be built within the organization?

CSA team, its Board and its stakeholders, have a very high degree of conviction in CSA's capabilities to deliver. Supported by adequate and sustained funding, CSA could bring about sustained change leading to optimization of rehabilitation outcomes not only, for the current institutionalized- child population but also, for the future children who seek care and protection.

## Annexure-1:

### CSA – beginnings ...

In 1999, the Jain family adopted a baby girl child-an event that transformed their lives. Adoption was a wonderful opportunity to be a parent and equally life altering for a little child. Wondering why adoptions were not more popular, they explored the space. They were confronted by a startling fact - less than 3500 adoptions take place in a year in India! This number could not be digested when you contrast it with millions of orphans on one hand and hundreds and thousands of couples and even singles wishing to become parents. Thus was born CSA - Catalysts for Social Action in 2002 - with a vision of catalyzing social change in the area of adoptions and child rehabilitation.

When CSA was started, the uppermost thought was to promote adoptions. It was felt that people needed to be encouraged to adopt, mindsets changed and awareness created. The dream was "a family for every child" - a world where every orphan has the love and protection of a family. Towards this objective, CSA works with over 21 adoption agencies in rural Maharashtra and Orrisa.

One innovative initiative of CSA is to refer parents from cities (where otherwise waiting periods are high) to rural adoption agencies (where children languish with no takers). This has worked extremely well, so much so that even the rural agencies have waiting lists now. CSA works to improve standards of nutrition, hygiene, healthcare and child care amongst agencies by channeling funds and expertise to these institutions ( which would otherwise have no access to these resources).

CSA runs sensitization programs for police, Child Welfare Committees, Judiciary and Social workers around adoption procedures and processes. CSA also runs an "Adoption Helpline" that disseminates information about the adoption process and procedures to prospective parents.

There has been significant impact - over last 10 years, CSA would have facilitated 600+ adoptions as well as improved nutrition/hygiene and childcare for over 200 children in the adoption agencies. Over 1000 adoptive parents would have taken advantage of the Adoption Helpline.

To CSA - every child is a precious life where a difference has been made. And this is how change is brought about - drop by drop till mighty rivers and seas are created!

### From adoption to wider issue of child rehabilitation ...

As CSA understood the ground realities, it became clear that registered adoption agencies have only a small proportion of orphaned children (maybe 5000 children in total). There are many more children with "Children's Homes/orphanages"... our estimate is close to 1,000,000 children across the country. The conditions in most Homes/orphanages (even on the basic parameters) are quite pathetic and sub-standard. Many of them are not even registered with the government and even where they are, the level of supervision and control leaves a lot to be desired.

Further, child centered rehabilitation plans are not made - opportunities for foster parenting, community based families etc. are not explored. Homes/Orphanages are not licensed to do adoption and therefore if a child enters an orphanage, the chances are that such a child would never be considered for adoption.

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CSA has been working with 20 Homes/orphanages in Maharashtra, Orissa, Goa and of late Chattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh.

## Annexure II - How CSA works-the Model:

CSA believes that its role is to catalyse social change - that true sustainable change comes from understanding the overall problem context and working with all stakeholders to address underlying issues and streamline processes.

In a given geography, CSA identifies a cluster of Adoption agencies and sets up a working arrangement with them whereby CSA

- Connects urban parents.
- Provides need-based support to enhance childcare, living and work standards.
- Assists them with registrations, licenses, exemptions and Court clearances as necessary.

CSA then looks for orphanages within the cluster. On similar lines CSA sets up a working relationship with the orphanages where CSA

- Provides need based support to improve living conditions.
- Arranges for vocational training and skills-development programmes.
- Encourages hobbies and recreational activities.
- Organizes periodic events (fun, educational tours, etc.)

CSA seeks to cover all orphanages in the State in due course by

- Initiating a mapping survey of all orphanages across the state.
- Identifying unlicensed orphanages and encouraging them to seek licenses.
- Addressing additional clusters as above.
- Seeking State-interventions as necessary.

On successful completion of a mapping survey and a pilot of a few select orphanages, we showcase the change and seek a partnership with the state Government for intervention across the state.

## Annexure III - Overall Context:

India has 25 million orphans and destitute children (source: UNICEF). These include street children, beggars, children working as labor (domestic, eateries, factories, retail outlets, etc.), children in commercial sex and children of sex workers, differently-abled children and institutionalized children including those in conflict with the law. A considered estimate would suggest that approximately 1 million children have reached a source of help and are in some form of institution (in adoption agencies (0-6 years) and in orphanages (7-17 years)).

The Indian Constitution promises care and protection to the child in need; 11 separate Acts on different aspects of childcare have been passed by the Government of India from time to time. India is signatory to the UN Convention for the Rights of the Child; in ratifying the Hague Convention, family care and family based alternatives have been promised to the child. A number of flagship schemes of the Government of India address the needs of the child and though the outlays are low nevertheless child-centered schemes have been introduced. Several NGOs have mushroomed.

All of these bear testimony to the Government's intent to stand by, and address the child's rehabilitation needs. One would therefore expect that a reasonable level of child care and protection would be available to these children. Also, that a child centered approach could optimize rehabilitation outcomes. Sadly, this is not the case. To begin with, there are very many orphanages that are not even registered with the state/central government and therefore are accountable to no one. Then basic needs - reasonable nutrition, facilities, hygiene and healthcare, education and secure environment is not available in a majority of these institutions. Most importantly, the child centered approach to rehabilitation is missing resulting in poor outcomes. The net result is that even for those children directly under the care of NGOs and Government, we are abysmally failing in our duty.