

**Expertise**

Accessibility and Quality  
Education Policy and Regulation  
Gender Responsive Budgeting  
Education and Trade Liberalization  
Transparency and Public Participation

Education is among the basic needs of all citizens irrespective of their economic status, race, gender, religion and political affiliations. CRCP believes that universal access to quality education is a pre-requisite for nation building, human resource development, economic growth and poverty reduction. We support a rights-based approach to education services being delivered by both public and private sectors so as to promote quality education for all.

Our work in education sector focuses on five thematic areas: accessibility and quality; education policy and regulation; gender responsive budgeting; education and trade liberalization, and transparency and public participation. Our initiatives in these areas are supported by volunteer inputs of academic experts and CRCP's core team. In addition, ActionAid, United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Commonwealth Secretariat, Maxwell/Department for International Development (DFID), and National Democratic Institute (NDI) have also provided financial support for such initiatives. CRCP has proven track record in social audit and beneficiary assessments of education services, policy advocacy, and qualitative research.

**Accessibility and Quality**

CRCP believes that accessibility and quality of education are two most important areas, which need attention of the government, private sector, civil society and donor community. In order to achieve Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and Education for All (EFA) targets, Pakistan needs to enhance technical and financial investment for promoting free education at all levels, especially for the poor; quality of teacher training, learning techniques and curriculum; and development of physical infrastructure. The role of parent-teacher associations and private educational institutions is also crucial for achieving this objective.

We undertake research on issues related to accessibility and quality of education. CRCP pursues various developments taking place in the public and private sectors and documents consumer perceptions about them. Until now, our Research and Publications Unit has developed four reports on state of consumer rights in education sector, social audit of education services in Rawalpindi/Islamabad, and a beneficiary assessment on access and quality in Gujrat and Rajanpur. The research results are being used for advocacy campaign. Besides, the Unit maintains a database of educational statistics



**Consumer Rights Commission  
of Pakistan**

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and research studies undertaken by other institutions. CRCP is a member of Pakistan Coalition for Education (PCE), which is a network of civil society organizations committed to quality education for all.

### **Education Policy and Regulation**

CRCP strives for mainstreaming of consumer interests and rights in education sector reforms. Our particular focus rests on education policy and regulation through involvement in consultation processes, advocacy for protection of consumer rights in education services at all levels, and providing research-based evidence for informed decision-making.

Education policy is the key document that provides a purposive course of action to realize national priorities for human resource development. Therefore, as a PCE member, CRCP has actively participated in the review process of White Paper on Education Policy in Pakistan and National Education Policy, 1998-2010. CRCP supports the efforts of Government of Pakistan to put in place effective laws for universal basic education and enabling regulation for private educational institutions.

### **Gender Responsive Budgeting**

In Pakistan, budget allocations and spending in education services are least responsive to differential impacts of gender-based needs and priorities. Irrational education budgeting is one the major reasons for disparities in male and female education. CRCP believes that education budgets must address these needs and priorities in an equitable manner. Therefore, we work for mainstreaming gender responsive budgeting in financial planning in the education sector. CRCP has pioneered gender-aware beneficiary assessment methodology in Pakistan.

CRCP is providing technical support to Gender Responsive Budgeting Initiative (GRBI), which is funded by UNDP along with other cost-sharing donors. Under this project, CRCP has conducted gender-aware beneficiary assessments of actual and potential beneficiaries of education services in Gujrat and Rajanpur districts. A similar assessment is currently underway in Jacobabad district. The findings of the assessments will be used to prepare, review and analyze budgets from a gender lens.

### **Education and Trade Liberalization**

In recent years, globalization and phenomenal growth of domestic private educational institutions have introduced an element of trade in this sector. As a result, transformation of education from a public service to a tradable commodity along commercial lines is taking place at a very rapid pace. This phenomenon has serious implications on equitable access and quality of education services, especially for the poor people. The concept of 'education market' is becoming increasingly relevant for Pakistani society.

CRCP monitors the trends in this phenomenon by focusing on regulation of private education sector and trade liberalization under General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). As a member of World Trade Organization, Pakistan is a signatory to GATS. The Agreement provides a multilateral framework for international trade in education services through four modes, namely cross-border supply, consumption abroad, commercial presence and the movement of natural persons. CRCP focuses on impacts of trade in education in all these modes. In March 2003, CRCP collected views of key stakeholders about the impact of trade liberalization in education sector with the support of Maxwell/DFID. Since then, CRCP has been advocating for a cautious approach to this issue.

### **Transparency and Public Participation**

The poor state of education in Pakistan is significantly linked lack of transparency and access to information in education departments, which restrict the ability of citizens, civil society groups and public representatives to effectively monitor their performance. This lack of transparency leads to non-participatory decision-making, inefficient project execution, endemic corruption, wasteful resource allocation and poor quality of education.

CRCP works for greater transparency and public participation in the educational departments and strengthening of monitoring and accountability mechanisms. Our approach for achieving this objective is based on demand articulation for transparency, awareness-raising about consumer rights in relation to education services, and capacity building of education officials to mainstream access to information and public participation in their work. CRCP has built capacities of a large number of parliamentarians, local government representatives, teachers, parents, and students for using available laws to access information from education departments.

Consumer Rights Commission of Pakistan (CRCP) is one of the leading research and advocacy civic initiatives in Pakistan. Registered as an independent non-profit organization, CRCP works in the areas of governance, market and citizen rights, with special emphasis on marginalized sections of the society. Headquartered in Islamabad, it has active liaison offices in all major cities. For more information, visit [www.crcp.org.pk](http://www.crcp.org.pk).