

1. PROJECT TITLE: *Right to Information*

2. PROJECT BACKGROUND: *India's Right to Information Act, 2005 is one of the more ambitious and powerful freedom of information laws in the world, providing accountability and transparency through public scrutiny. It provides an unprecedented power to the public to ask questions of their government at every level. Provisions for a monetary penal clause on public authorities for non-cooperation facilitate the implementation of the Act.*

As Gopalkrishna Gandhi once said, the problem with the hard questions of social justice, accountability, and equality is not so much that they are unanswerable, as they are unasked. In a similar vein, knowing what to ask, and even knowing that one can ask, has turned out to be the primary hurdle towards effective implementation of RTIA.



The children use this forum and work together at the grassroots to improve their communities and advocate their rights. We came up with a proposal in 2007 to train children on the law, and have them use RTI as an effective tool in all their endeavors. Another aspect of working with children (which we did not anticipate when we started out) was that children were not bogged down by either fear or greed, and brought their unbridled enthusiasm to bear down on unyielding govt. machinery. For eg. among all the NGOs MCF worked with, no adult had ever filed an RTI on any community issue. All RTIs filed by adults (such as they were) were on personal issues -- where is my passport, where is my application now, why have I not received my land title holding, etc. Children however, filed RTI applications about anything and everything they saw in the community -- how many teachers have been appointed to my school, why is this road only half-tarred, why are these pipes lying around next to the ditch, why is there no electricity, etc. Also, the children we worked with were mostly teenagers, and anywhere between 2 to 5 years from becoming voting adults. This is a great way to create an educated, empowered, responsible, and confident electorate for the future (in Keeping with the original reasoning behind the directive principle in our constitution on why free and compulsory education was necessary to have a meaningful universal adult franchise).



3. TARGET GROUPS OF THE PROJECT: *Target of the project of the project is Age 14 to 21 Years Children of the Jakholi Block of District Rudraprayag (UK).*

4. APPROVED OBJECTIVES OF THR PROJECT:

- *RTI training and workshops*

- *Seeking better Education services of the state (teacher attendance, improved instruction quality and facilities)*
- *Monitor local Governance (delivery, accountability, execution)*
- *Gender sensitization*
- *Health and Sanitation*
- *Natural Resource Management, Disaster Preparedness*
- *Advocacy on issues pertaining to Children, State Child Policy, Juvenile Justice Act*
Libraries for rural children