

## **Change Agents and Change of Norms: International Experiences on Training in UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in Schools**

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### **Abstract**

Education is usually seen as an instrument for making changes in knowledge, values and norms. Norms are action instructions or imperatives and thus direct actions and changes, which is the essence of norms. If one knows more about norms – guiding actions – one understands more about changes. It is well-known in sociology of law that there is an important, complex interplay between social norms and legal norms. The aim of this article is to reflect upon empirically based results on international training on implementation of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) - the legal norms - in schools and educational organisations. The article is ended by concrete examples and applications of changes taken from schools and educational areas in the state of Kerala in southern India. The overarching idea is to study some change processes where the *change of norms* is taking place following the new legal norms stemming from the CRC. If legal and the social norms are congruent, one of the conclusions is that the implementation of new norms will be sustainable.

Education is usually seen as an instrument for making changes in knowledge, values and norms. Norms are action instructions or imperatives and thus direct actions and changes, which is the essence of norms. If one knows more about norms - guiding actions - one understands more about changes. It is well-known in sociology of law that there is an important and complex interplay between social norms and legal norms. The aim of this article is to reflect upon some empirically based results of international training on implementation of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) – the legal norms – in schools and educational organisations. Will there be any new norms or change of old norms in schools? The article is ended by concrete examples and applications of changes taken from schools and educational areas in the state of Kerala in southern India.

The experiences here are drawn from a professional international training programme run by Lund University, Sweden, for more than 10 years by now. The main and overarching idea in this article is to study some completed change processes where the *change of norms* is taking place following the new legal norms stemming indirectly or directly from CRC, the above mentioned UN Convention. The CRC has been built on social and moral norms that could be seen as universal to the member states in UN. The

United Nations General Assembly adopted – after some 50 years of intense international work – the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) in November 1989. The CRC incorporates the full range of human rights for children – civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. It came into force in September 1990, after being ratified by the required number of nations. Since then 193 countries have ratified it, including every member of the United Nations except the United States, Somalia and South Sudan. The CRC consists of 54 articles and two Optional Protocols containing the basic human rights that children have (see [www.unicef.org/crc/](http://www.unicef.org/crc/)).<sup>1</sup>

## Background and Context

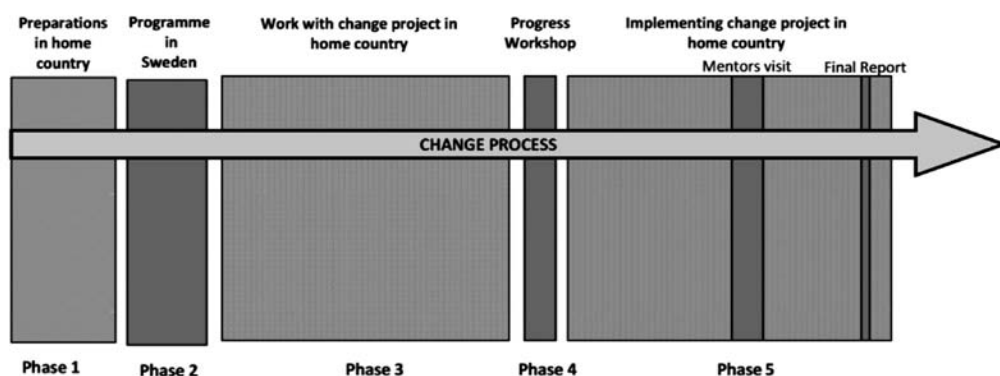
In 2003 Lund University was given the task to create and administrate an international training programme (ITP) on Child Rights, Classroom and School Management following the principles contained in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Sida's position paper "Education, Democracy and Human Rights," 2001, and other internationally ratified instruments in the areas of child rights and education. The programme was intended for persons holding a position from which they could initiate processes of change in their home countries. During the years 2003-2009 the ITP on Child Rights, Classroom and School Management was arranged 11 times (11 batches) with 330 participants completing it. Most of them are still working for child rights in their countries and have formed national or regional networks.

In a new procurement process in 2010, Lund University won the contract for arranging the programme twice a year 2010 –2014/15. The rights to, in and through education have been the guiding principles throughout the Child Rights, Classroom and School Management programme. The overall objective from a development perspective is "*to improve participating countries' capacity to offer and ensure everyone's right to relevant and qualitative education /.../ that creates opportunities for all, regardless of background, to participate in community life as active and informed citizens*". The programme objective to be achieved is "*changes will take place that contribute to the realization of the intention of the Child Rights Convention in policy as well as in practice*".

With the results and experiences from the first contract and 11 batches as a baseline, some changes were made by Lund University and Sida in order to make the programme more focused on quality assurance for sustainable results. The structure of the programme was changed from three phases to five phases and a fourth week was added to the phase in Sweden. Thus, the programme running for one-and-a-half years has the following structure:

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<sup>1</sup> Norms or legal norms in UNCRC are quite many but some core examples are: the right to nondiscrimination; the right to protection; the right to provision of food, shelter, education; the right to participation in decision making regarding the child's own life; the right to freedom of expression; the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion etc.



**Figure 1. Structure of the Child Rights, Classroom and School Management (1.5 year)**

Source: Leo, U. et al. (Eds.), (2014), p.9.

The Child Rights, Classroom and School Management programme was one of the first International training programmes funded by Sida with a clear emphasis on change. One of the key elements in the programme is to initiate and support change processes in the participants' home organisations and countries. Participants in the programme form teams of three people from each country. Moreover, they represent different levels (local, regional and national) in the education system, which anchors the change processes on a broad front and creates the prerequisites for supporting structures and sustainability of the initiated CRC-projects within education areas (This background is based on Leo et al., 2014).

So far this international training programme has soon met 20 batches (May 2014) and about 600 participants - or *change agents* as they are called here (see also below) - focusing different change processes in child rights within education in a broad sense. A batch consists of 30 participants representing 10 countries in teams of three. The training programme has initiated close to 200 change processes in the 26 participating countries. Most of the change agents are still active in the field of education, working for changes in line with the CRC and they also are continuing to be active in their networks.

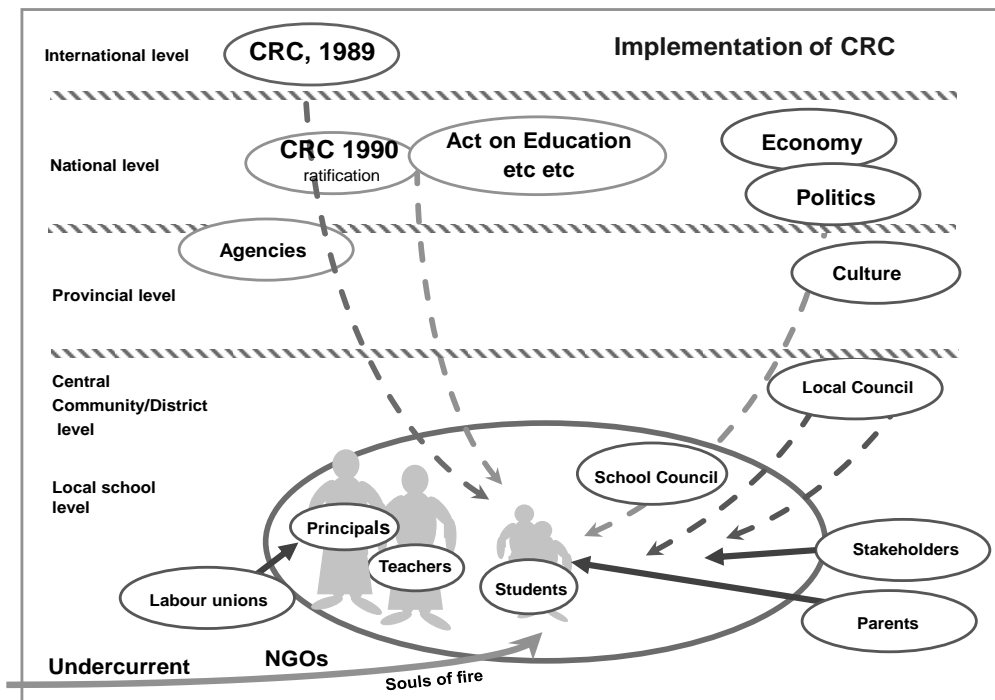
## Norms and Changes

Norms play an important role in human interaction. They reduce uncertainty about how to act in different situations, they set standards and specify appropriate behaviour, and they place different expectations on different people (e.g. students, teachers, and principals) in an organisation (Giddens, 1989). During the last few decades, theories and methods for studying norms and norm supporting structures at the individual and organisational level have been developed in the discipline of sociology of law at Lund University (Hydén, 2002; Wickenberg, 1999; Svensson, 2008; Baier & Svensson, 2009;

Leo, 2010; Svensson & Larsson, 2012; Baier, 2013). Sociology of law focuses on legal and other norms and their functions and interplay in society, and offers a different perspective in studies that seek to explore, interpret and understand changes in the education system (Wickenberg, 1999; Hallerström, 2006; Persson, 2010; Leo, 2010).

The concept “norm” is used in many different ways, both scientifically and in common parlance. In this study, sociology of law based definition of the concept of norms is used that meets the needs of both the social and legal sciences: Norms are *action instructions* that are *socially reproduced* and represent the *individual’s perception of the expectations surrounding their own behaviour* (Hydén & Svensson 2008). Norms are imperatives and thus direct actions, which is the essence of norms (Leo, 2010; Leo & Wickenberg, 2014; Leo & Wickenberg, 2013; Wickenberg, 2013b).

This article’s starting point is the *legal norms* from the international policy document called Child Rights Convention, CRC, and how these legal norms are influencing social and professional norms within classrooms, schools and other educational domains like Teacher Training Universities and Institutes. But also the other way: how the norms are changing some legal norms in the mentioned three countries and their educational contexts and settings. Below there is a simplified figure (Figure 2) to show the main ideas behind the implementation of the CRC or Education Act in schools and classrooms. The figure helps to understand the complex processes of implementation of CRC in the education sector at different levels and contexts in the different countries. There is a top down approach where policies like CRC or the Act on Education are to be implemented and applied. But there is also a bottom up approach. When you want to implement new ideas and policy documents at the local level, there are already existing social and professional norms, dedicated people and organisations working with the issue and forming the local undercurrent in Figure 2. The figure also shows a combination of a top down and bottom up approach that has been successful in many of the participating countries.



**Figure 2. Implementation of CRC at three socio-administrative levels: National/State; Provincial/Regional, and Local School level (elaborated according to Wickenberg, 1999)**

The top down approach starts at the international or global level, passing through different national-provincial socio-administrative educational levels, and in the end reaching down to the very local level in community: the school and the classroom with all the different actors: pupils/children or students, teachers, principals/heads, adults/parents, school councils, local labour unions, local politicians, local councils, community members, NGOs and other local stakeholders. But also to note here, there are already existing social and professional norms, dedicated people and organisations working with the issue at stake and forming the local undercurrent or local norm-streaming processes in Figure 2. The approaches often meet in the local school or classroom – and a bottom up process could take place and start to make changes in the norms.

### **The Role of Change Agents and Dedicated Actors in Norm Creations**

Studying the creation, establishment or change of norms it is from sociology of law point of view vital to include social science and actor perspective with concepts like *souls of fire* and *change agents*. “Souls of fire” are very dedicated and enthusiastic persons in organizations, who are figuratively burning for some particular cause in which they strongly believe. They could be studied as key actors, as they are acting in and influencing processes and, in that, they are carrying on an actorship. Philips (1988) studied 16 “souls

of fire” in nine case studies in three big Swedish companies, and his definition of those actors is: ‘... a limited number of deeply involved individuals [that] seems to have had an important impact on the development and viability of the new organizational solutions. These individuals were often referred to as “souls of fire” (Philips, 1988: 173). Philips did his study of actorship in work organization development efforts, and within a tradition of organizational development. His work is connected to Scandinavian work organization experiences which started in the early 1970s. Philips uses international research references to social science and human resource researchers, such as Kurt Lewin, Donald A. Schön, Chris Argyris, David Kolb and Gareth Morgan. The concept of “souls of fire” was used in the research (Wickenberg, 1999, p.452) to understand the role of project leaders in local schools working with implementation of new legal norms (Wickenberg, 2013b,p.210)

Other Swedish social science research on the theme of “souls of fire” has been carried out by Frånberg (1994 and 1996), Brännberg (1996 and 1998), Lewin (1998), Markström (2003), and Palm (2008). A common theme in this research is that it is about deep commitment, dedication, burning interest and enthusiasm. But none of the previous research work has a reference or links to norms or to the role of norms in organizations (Ibid, 2013b, p.211).

Another, very connected concept in this norm context is “change agent”, and that concept is used by Robert C. Ellickson when referring to a person who is relatively early in supplying a new norm as a “change agent” (Ellickson in Hechter & Opp, 2001,p.40; Ulf Leo, 2010, pp.68-69). There are evidently interesting links between these two concepts: from “souls of fire” to “change agents” in terms of when new norms are created in organizations. They could be very dedicated, enthusiastic and deeply involved persons in organizations burning for some cause that they strongly believe in; sometimes, they are called “souls of fire”. We can compare this with the concept “charismatic authority” from Weber (1947, pp.358–63, in Wickenberg, 2013b, pp.211-12).

Bringing about change in schools, such that new norms are established, requires enthusiasts or change agents who challenge old norms, who want to stake out new paths and establish new norms. There are three subcategories of change agent according to Ellickson: self-motivated leaders, norm entrepreneurs, and opinion leaders. The first ones, self-motivated leaders, favour changes and do not need special esteem rewards to challenge the existing norms. They could be seen as charismatic change agents, with their own internal driving forces working for social change, and with unexceptional leadership abilities supplying the establishment of new norms. They are acting, from the start, in the supply of a new norm in the forefront. The enthusiasts or change agents could also, in the study, be seen as vital links – or even “putty” or glue –between the legal norms and the new local professional norms in schools. Change agents are often acting as forerunners and norm setters, bringing their personal commitment from their “lifeworld” into the professional role in the system, to use the wordings and concepts of Habermas (1986, p.13 and 342; 1987, p.113). In this way, the processes are going the opposite way to that of the system which is most common colonizing the lifeworld. This would not have been easy or

possible without norm-supporting actors and structures (Wickenberg, 2013b, p.212).

The ambition here, using an actor's perspective, is to elaborate and clarify what has been studied regarding the role of change agents: as a link to the norm-creation processes in local organizations. These dedicated actors are, in this norm context, the important link - or even "putty" or glue - between the (new) legal norms and the (new) local norms in creation. This definition is used of the concept: a "soul of fire" is a very dedicated, burning, key actor, who brings her or his personal engagement, beliefs and values into the professional organization and makes a difference in norm-creation processes through her or his influence. The "change agent" is similar norm actor or norm setter in organizations but they are not necessarily heavily burning or dedicated in the same emotional way as the "soul of fire" (Wickenberg, 2013b, p.212).

### **International Experiences on CRC in Schools and Education**

During the above mentioned Swedish international training programme on CRC in Education – "Child Rights, Classroom and School Management" – there have been a lot of experiences over more than 10 years gathered in books, films and reports. Every batch with 10 team countries each from number 12 on is publishing their final reports in a common book. During spring 2014 there are now five completed books (batch 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16) and soon there will be another five report books (batch 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21). That will be some 100 final country and project report. All these reporting books are available as pdf-files at the website ([www.education.lu.se/sida/child](http://www.education.lu.se/sida/child)). Furthermore the mentors taken all together have made about 170 follow-up visits during one week on the CRC-project sites in "their" countries (3 countries per mentor and batch). Every visit is followed by a "mentor's report" on the processes and changes in the CRC projects and the networks. The training programme, so far, has done 18 progress workshops each of 10 days in different participating countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

In 2009 there was an Impact and Dissemination Seminar held in Bangkok, Thailand, with 160 participants from 25 different countries. Those were the change agents of the training programmes of the first five years (2003-2008) and involving the batches 1-7. All reports were published in a book including analysis and reflections of all the involved lecturers and researchers in this training programme (Wickenberg, et al., 2009).

In 2013 there was a second Impact and Dissemination Seminar in Bangkok - "Bangkok II" - inviting all change agents in batches 8-14 in this ITP.160 change agents from 15 countries participated during one week. They all also wrote their new country reports and reflections of the training programme and their own CRC change projects in their home countries, communities and schools.

The participants evaluated the Impact and Dissemination Seminar 2013 and the result of this evaluation shows that the outcomes that were planned for have been achieved. The change agents have learnt from each other and been inspired to continue to work with their initiated change processes for CRC in the education sector.

Many comment that the most important thing was to meet and exchange successes and challenges with change agents from different contexts who have initiated change processes similar to their own. The seminar has strengthened the participants' identity as change agents and at the same time revealed that they are all a part of a global community of CRC change agents, batch 1-21, and working for the same results. The importance of commitment and establishment of national networks for changes to be sustainable and reach national impact level was also stressed in the answers (Lund University Evaluation Publications, 2013).

With the mentioned publication (Leo et al., 2014), Lund University disseminates the results and reflections from the Impact and Dissemination Seminar in June 2013 as well as the experiences of 10 years of the ITP on Child Rights, Classroom and School Management.

Before the Bangkok Impact Seminar in June 2013 the mentors of this training programme made a web-based survey on different aspects of "the role of the change agents" among all participants, change agents, that had taken part in the international training programme "Child Rights, Classroom and School Management" from batch 1, who started the programme in 2003, to batch 14 who started in 2013. The web-based questionnaire was open for five weeks and resulted in 204 answers, which is a response rate of 65%. That is considered to be good considering the time span, with the first batch trained in 2003, and the technical problems in getting the right e-mail addresses after 10 years.

One aim of that web-based study was to present it during the Impact Seminar in Bangkok to have an opportunity to reflect on and discuss the results of the survey together with the participants, the change agents, and also for participants and mentors, to have the opportunity to learn from the results. In the analysis the mentors used their different competencies and different perspectives as social science researchers from the fields of education, social work, and sociology of law. The results of the web-based survey are presented in the above mentioned report book (Leo et al., 2014).

## **Professional Norms and Expectations**

In this web-based study Leo and Wickenberg, with their research background in social science, education and sociology of law, wanted to study and identify *professional norms* that might guide change agents in their efforts to implement child rights in education. From a sociology point of view, change agents are people who first transmit new norms, or change old norms, in this case, in the field of education (Wickenberg, 1999; Leo, 2010; Wickenberg, 2013; Leo et al., 2014, p.181). One part of this questionnaire was focusing professional norms – actions, driving forces, external expectations and communication patterns – to be able to study if it was possible to identify new norms and actions.

In one of the questions in the survey, the participants or change agents gave three



examples of what they do as professional change agents. The results were sorted according to the “3Ps” used as CRC basic concepts in the training programme (protection, provision and participation). In order to *protect* children, there are a lot of actions against corporal punishment and against bullying and discrimination. In schools there are actions to *provide* for children in the school environment by offering meals, water, plants, furniture and beautification of schools. *Participation* is encouraged at classroom level by class activities where students learn together, and teachers listen to students. At school level, students are involved in decision-making in class councils on all continents. A frequently mentioned goal, which a lot of actions are aiming for, is to create child-friendly schools and classrooms. Examples of actions to promote child-friendly schools are: different awareness programmes, training of pre-service and in-service teachers, development of guidelines, and also to include CRC in courses, curriculum, and syllabuses (Leo et al., 2014, p.182).

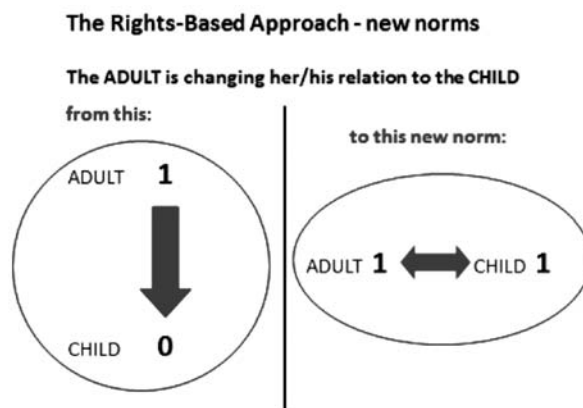
The questionnaire in this part of the survey used an open ended question to get information on what motives, or driving forces, lay behind the Change agent’s actions. There were *two main types* of motives or driving forces, *internal* and *external*. There are statements that reveal a high degree of commitment like; “As a change agent, I have a *moral responsibility* to make the society responsible to its children in their rights in education”; and a number of answers showing the passion; “*Love* for my profession”, “*Love* to children”, or “*Love* of the *social justice*”. Perhaps one of the most important insights is that we have to change ourselves in order to change others; “I know I have changed, and if I can change, others can also”. The internal motives are linked to and triggered by external motives to be able to improve conditions for children. Challenges like overcrowded classrooms, high drop-out rates and making a revolution in education are mentioned (Ibid, 2014, p.182).

External expectations and social pressure play a major role in norm-setting (see also above on norms). For example, collective expectations influence individuals to engage in correct or culturally desirable behavior (Durkheim, 1982/1895). The change agents were asked about how strongly they experienced external expectations that they should apply the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Each item was ranked on a scale 0 – 7, where 0 is no expectations and 7 is high expectations. The results showed that there are very strong and widespread external expectations “pressuring” the change agents. There is a top-down pressure deriving from the legal norms, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, but there is also a bottom-up pressure stemming from the children in the projects, the team members and the family. The mentors in the training programme represent the strongest external pressure, and from an educational perspective that is interesting. Research shows (Hattie, 2008) the importance of teachers having high expectations on students’ learning outcomes in schools, and there are reasons to believe that it is the same with adults, that strong expectations promote learning. The overall conclusion is that the pattern of strong expectations from different directions, from different actors, is a prerequisite for establishing professional norms in favour of rights of the child (Leo et al.,

2014, pp.182-183).

One of the norm related questions in the survey was designed to identify how often the participants *communicate* with different actors in their role as change agent on Child Rights issues in the CRC project. From the results we learned that the personal and professional “self” is interlinked. Most of the change agents communicate almost daily on issues related to children’s rights with their families. And there is a lot of communication at grass-roots level, with students and teachers in the projects. The interpretation of the results is that the communication at local level, in the family and in the schools, gives the projects a solid base. There is also evidence of regular communication between professionals in the teams, with supervisors and colleagues in the organisations. The different forms of communication reveal a combination of bottom-up and top-down approaches in the projects and that is an important factor to implement good and sustainable projects (Leo et al., 2014, p.183).

The actions, the motives and driving forces, the communication and the external expectations, play different roles to establish or change norms. There are of course a lot of different norms; for example, *change agents should*: protect children, listen to children, pupils and students, and give students opportunities to express themselves and take part in decisions regarding the child’s own life. Here, it is appropriate to highlight one special change of norm – to a *new norm* – that is perhaps a vital precondition for being able to implement the CRC. There are a lot of examples of a change in the relation between change agents and children described in the following figure:



**Figure 3. The rights-based approach gives a new norm; change agents follow a new norm guiding the relation to the child**

Source: Leo, U. et al. (Eds.), 2014, p.19.

This fundamental change in the relation, when adults start to recognize and to listen to the child, is perhaps the first step in becoming a change agent for the rights of the child. That change of norm leads to another overarching norm showing that CRC is integrated both personally and professionally; *change agents should act as role models*. This picture

is consistent with the findings from the analyses of all final reports, and from the last Bangkok seminar in 2009. As role models, *change agents* are dedicated, enthusiastic, and deeply involved in organisations, committed to a certain cause that they strongly believe in. They are change agents who challenge old norms, who want to walk new paths, establish new norms, and enforce rights of the child in their home base (Leo et al., 2014, p.184).

The following final parts of this article will be completed by concrete examples and applications of changes and new norms drawn from schools and educational fields in the state of Kerala in southern India.

### **CRC Activities 2004-2014 in Kerala State, India**

The following text is based on 10 final project reports 2004-2014 by 10 different teams, 10 mentor's visit reports and one Progress Workshop in Kerala (batch 7), Bangkok I and II report books, and a report book written by the Kerala CRC Network, 2013, and also on Wickenberg, 2013a.

In May 2014, Kerala state has been represented by altogether 29 change agents in 11 teams in this above mentioned international training programme on Child Rights in Schools. The Kerala State has 14 districts and the change agents from the programme has so far been coming from the following 10 districts Kasaragod, Kannur, Wayanad, Kozhikode, Thrissur, Malappuram, Palakkad, Kottayam, Pathanamthitta, and Trivandrum (the capital district). There are nine school principals and 17 teacher trainers at different DIETs and at education offices in SSA (see further below). They now have a critical mass of dedicated actors and they have established a network of change agents from all over the Kerala state and on different socio-administrative levels. In due time for the Bangkok Impact and Dissemination Seminar in June 2013 the change agents in the network wrote a joint report book on the work done so far on CRC in Kerala: "Kerala's Real Story in Ensuring Child Rights. The Kerala Network of CRC Change Agents" (2013). The book tries to document the work done so far and to analyze the success factors behind the development of Child Rights in Kerala.

The first change agent from Kerala, Mathew Zacharias, participated in batch 3 (2005) and is still working although formally retired from his position as lecturer in DIET Wayanad. The DIET – District Institute of Education and Training – is the Teacher Training organization in each district and DIET Wayanad was the very first DIET in India in 1982. The DIET and SSA (see next footnote) had played an important role in the development and implementation of CRC in Kerala. The Indian Act on Education was decided upon in 2009 and SSA has a vital role in the Implementation of the new Education

Act.<sup>2</sup>

In the country chapter on Kerala in the Bangkok report book 2014 and the Kerala networks' book on "Ensuring Child Rights" the following factors are mentioned to make a difference in the change work in CRC. Those experiences are challenging the old norms and supporting the establishment of new norms based on Child Rights.

### ***Professional networks of change agents***

Establishing *professional networks of change agents* is one of the most important steps in this competence and capacity building for supporting new norms to take root. The CRC-network – as a professional norm creating arena – is certainly one of the preconditions for sustainable implementation of new CRC-norms. The change agents have now established a well-functioning CRC-network that has their regular meetings and workshops. They also support the state Education Department in Kerala (with training organisations like SCERT and SIEMAT in the capital Trivandrum) on in-service training on CRC for teachers, principals, teacher trainers and education officers. Furthermore they have initiated changes in curricula and written and published policy documents and books as teaching-learning guidelines on CRC in education for teachers and principals (Wickenberg, 2013a, pp.95-97)

This Kerala network have some *key persons* (supporting actors) – being former participants in the programme – as change agents that are acting as coordinators in Kerala on further implementation of CRC-norms in schools and education. They have good contacts by personal meetings, by mobile phone or e-mail with all the other 29 change agents and they meet regularly in the network. The network is supporting each other and other professionals in applying and communicating new norms related to CRC in education. Three of change agents are now retired as educational leaders but they are still committed and convinced of their continued work within applying CRC-norms in their education system in the districts in Kerala. They are also communicating the new norms to other professionals within schools and education in their near districts – they are *role models or norm models*. The participants are mostly doing this continued work on implementing new norm on CRC within their ordinary professional work positions on a local, district or a provincial level. The network and coordinators are very skilled in connecting to local media when they are presenting something new on norm

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<sup>2</sup> SSA - Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is Government of India's flagship programme for achievement of Universalization of Elementary Education (UEE) in a time bound manner, as mandated by 86th amendment to the Constitution of India making free and compulsory Education to the Children of 6-14 years age group, a Fundamental Right. SSA seeks to provide quality elementary education including life skills, and has a special focus on girl's education and children with special needs. SSA also seeks to provide computer education to bridge the digital divide. In January 2014, Mohandas EP, Change Agents in batch number 4 (2006) and one of the key actors in Kerala's long work on Child Rights in Schools and Education was appointed New State Project Director for SSA Kerala.

implementation and other CRC-related news in schools and within education. The change agents are bringing their personal values from the lifeworld – as noted above – into the educational system and are *socially reproducing new norms on CRC* (Wickenberg, 2013a, p.97; Leo et al., 2014, p.183).

### ***School principals as change agents and as supporting norm or role models***

In the projects I also noted that *the school principals* of the local schools in Kerala – as seen in many other participating countries in this training programme – are important key persons or actors when supporting the establishing of new norms in the CRC implementation in schools. They are most often the norm setters or norm breakers in education arenas. They also create different social arenas for students, teachers and parents on meetings and communications on new norms on CRC within their schools. The examples heading for participation and ownership are class councils, schools councils and school parliaments, and PPTA (pupils-parents-teachers-association). Principals it is noticed in all the documents from Kerala are very vital in these change processes regarding students influence and real participation in decision making in the schools. Communication is also as vital and important for creating and establishing the new norms (see the definition of norms above). That goes for teachers, students (student councils for active participation in decision making processes), parents (parents and students for participation) and also including persons from the local community and local government in the communication on new legal norms (Wickenberg et al., 2009, p.44; Leo et al., 2014, p.183). Media - including social media - plays an important and supportive role in communication and social reproduction of new norms. To be able to communicate professionally one need to have established social arenas for those meeting places. On these arenas the new norms could be tested, verified and then spread out in the organisations or school as professional norms. These arenas are vital to the rooting and to the social reproduction of the new norms and are also part of the infrastructure in the schools. There are good examples of how big signs or wall papers in school yards have been built up to visually underline the importance and the vital content or norms in Child Rights Convention to be seen and read by all the students. Those are part of the *norm supporting structures* in the schools (Wickenberg, 2013a, pp.97-101).

### ***Legal documents and policy documents***

Legal and policy documents are important, more than we sometimes think of. When the change agents are active in taking initiatives in establishing new norms on a local level they use the law– legal norms and legal documents–*as moral support* for their work. Another important experience in these implementation processes is the important matching or congruence between the legal norms and the existing social norm at the local level. That is the vital interplay between social norms and legal norms. If there is a

real misfit between legal norms and social norms: then it is difficult to get a sustainable implementation of new norms on the local level. And on the contrary: if legal and social norms are congruent, the implementation and application processes of new norms will function/work and most probably will be sustainable over time (Wickenberg, 2013a, pp.101-102).

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