



# Report of Legal Aid on Access to Justice Programme

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PREPARED BY LEGAL AID SOCIETY, NLUO.  
TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE SOCIETY CLICK [\*\*HERE\*\*](#)

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# ABOUT LAS

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The Legal Aid Society of National Law University Odisha, is a student committee of the University and was constituted in 2012. It is run with constant support and guidance of its faculty advisor Ms. Kuntirani Padhan and Ms. Nikita Pattajoshi. The members and volunteers of the Society are a group of enthusiastic students who have constantly been involved in various activities to keep the spirit of legal aid alive. This committee appoints students from each year and designates certain posts to them in order to ensure the smooth and effective functioning of the committee. The Fifth year members act as mentors for the committee; the convenor and co-convenor are appointed from the members of the fourth year followed by a secretary and a treasurer from third year members. The students first and second years act as helping hands by serving as member of this committee.

The Society carries out its functions with an aim to provide access to justice to the disadvantaged and marginalized sections of the population, primarily by spreading legal awareness and legal education in educational institutions and under-privileged communities. Since its inception, the Society has conducted numerous legal literacy programmes in remote areas of Odisha, predominantly in schools, colleges, orphanages, mental asylums, prisons, brick kilns and old age homes, in addition to conducting several legal surveys in order to identify issues faced by the target groups and formulating solutions to solve the same.

# ACTIVITIES

## 1. PRE-PANDEMIC

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### 1.1 UNDP

NLU Odisha had collaborated with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for its “Access to Justice Programme” by implementing it in certain districts of Odisha. The project, “Access to Justice for Marginalized People and Socially Relevant Legal Education” was supported by the Department of Justice, Ministry of Law and Justice, Government of India. Under the project, the Society has set up three Legal Aid Clinics in Jankia, Dampara and Brahmagiri regions to make legal aid easily accessible to people in these areas. A permanent staff of UNDP co-ordinators and para-legal volunteers have been appointed to all the three clinics. The staff renders paralegal assistance to visitors. This assistance involves drafting of applications and related documents, referral services, follow-up of the cases with appropriate authorities, counselling and in that process creating a link between NLUO Legal Aid Society and the communities. The Society members and students volunteers regularly conducts Legal Literacy Programmes in these three districts. The student volunteers who participate in the programmes discussed and deliberate on issues directly relevant to the audience, which includes inter-alia social security measures introduced by the government and the importance of Lok Adalats in dispute resolution.

## 1.2 AYUDA

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The Legal Aid Society introduced our own inter-university annual Legal Aid Fest 'AYUDA', where colleges from different districts of Odisha participate. The aim of the event is to expand its outreach and viability to all the people across the country. To implement the same effectively and efficiently, an idea of cooperative working is envisaged not only among the law universities but also among the universities from other streams by inviting them to contribute in legal aid through their skills and services. The objective of the fest is to introduce the participants to the idea of legal aid, have them contribute to our understanding and thus ultimately culminating into a greater collaboration among the students of NLUO and the participating colleges to help and support the cause of legal aid in the state of Odisha.

The conclave is not only aimed at providing a platform to colleges across Odisha to share their ideas and experiences in the field of legal aid and education but also to learn and understand the best practices that they can employ in furthering the cause of Legal Aid. It also encourages the colleges to establish their own Legal Aid Clinic/ Society, as to ensure that more and more people are associated with legal aid and increase the outreach to the maximum beneficiaries possible. It is only with the aid of dedicated volunteers we believe that the Constitutional dream of Legal Aid for the marginalized can be achieved.





## 1.3 DONATION DRIVE AND VISIT TO SHELTER HOMES AND ORPHANAGES

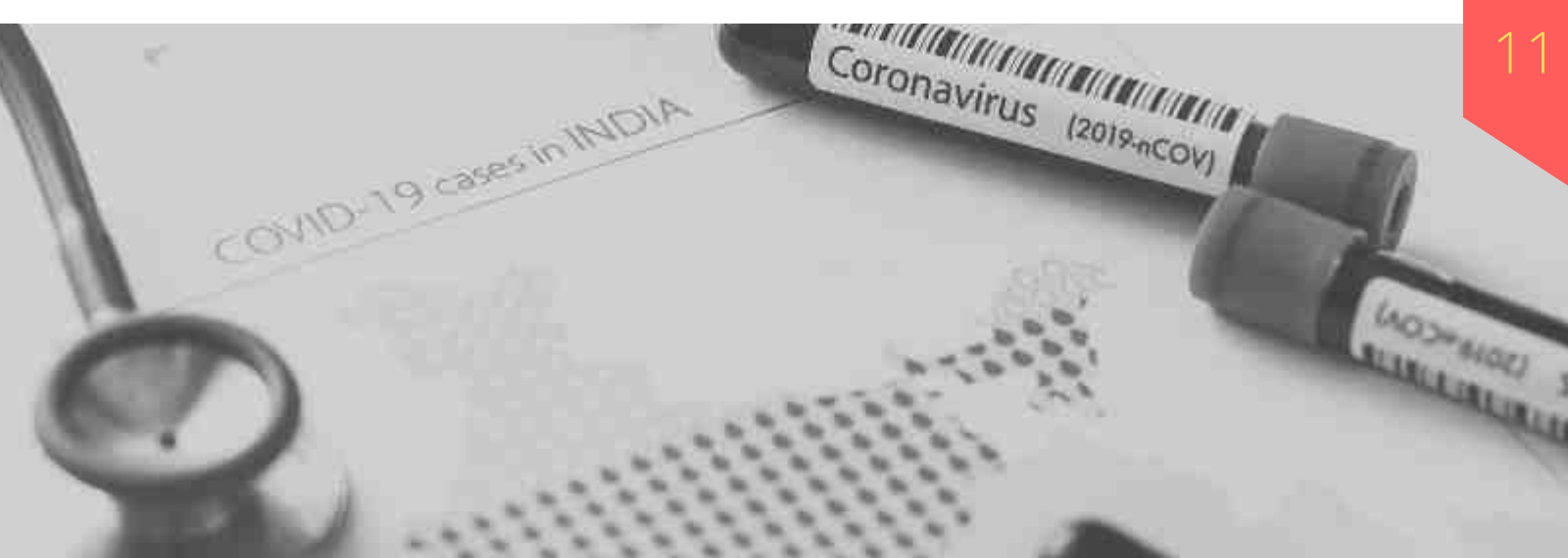
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The Legal Aid Society organized a donation drive on the University Campus. The proceeds were then donated to 'Basundhara' and Orphanage located in Bidanasi, Cuttack. Several student volunteers along with the members of the Society visited the Orphanage with sweets, colouring pencils and sketch pens. Apart from the donations. Clothes was also distributed amongst the residents of shanties that line the bank of the Kathajodi River.

## 1.4 LEGAL LITERACY CAMPS

The Legal Aid Society has undertaken a number of legal aid camps in Odisha to educate the masses regarding their legal aid rights and to raise awareness regarding social issues.



## 2. POST PANDEMIC

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THE LEGAL AID SOCIETY HAS ALSO BEEN ACTIVELY WORKING IN THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC FOR THE BETTERMENT OF THE SOCIETY AT LARGE AND HAS UNDERTAKEN A LARGE NUMBER OF PROJECTS.

### 2.1 Project Prayas

While the second wave of the coronavirus ravaged India, the Society, to assuage the fears of the people and to act as an information depository, has started Project Prayas. The idea behind the project is to disseminate information to the people of Odisha through a 24x7 helpline. People could reach us through the helpline for information like:

- a. Oxygen Cylinders
- b. Tele-medications
- c. Food delivery
- d. Vaccination Procedures
- e. Mental Health Counsellors etc.
- f. Hospital Bed Availability

At the end of the first month of the Project, we had helped resolve 100+ queries. These included queries for 14 beds, 34 oxygen cylinders, 12 medicines, 07 food delivery and 12 other queries.



## 2.2 PROJECT PRAYAS-SAHYOG

The Society, under its flagship Project Prayas, also started a Blood Donation Repository called “Project Prayas- Sahyog” to help Covid patients as well as people in need of blood all over Odisha. The Society acts as a mediator between the patients requiring blood and the donors and works on arranging blood for patients. A repository containing information of volunteers, with their contact information and their blood groups, has been created by the Society. LAS acts as a channel between volunteers willing to donate their blood with those requiring the same.

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## 2.3 COLLABORATION WITH NYAAYA (VIDHI CENTRE)

The Society with its objective to serve the society especially in these uncertain times has collaborated with NYAAYA (Vidhi Centre) on their newly launched initiative. Nyaaya has launched COVID WhatsApp helpline number to assist people by answering any legal question that they may have during the existing crises. Any person will be able to reach us either through WhatsApp message or voice note on WhatsApp helpline number or through social media handles and ask their doubts on legal processes, information and rights. The purpose of this helpline is to empower people with the knowledge of their rights and enable them to take action. The services were primarily provided in English, Hindi, Kannada, Bangla and Gujarat. Now through this collaboration these services will be provided in Odia too.



## 2.4 GENDER SENSITIZATION

Conception of law can act as an effective tool for pursuing social and political change around sexual rights and gender equity. It provides aspirational norms that can be mobilized to hold institutions accountable and to provide material benefit to those excluded from systems of power. The fundamental questions, then, involve how, and when, formal law is useful for attaining gender equity in international and domestic law. And, when is it limited in utility? To answer such questions, the Society conducted training sessions on Gender, Sexuality, and Law in collaboration with The Centre for Studies in Gender and Sexuality (CSGS), Ashoka University. The training was divided in three main sessions

1. Framing Gender
2. Exploring Sexuality
3. Understanding the Law and Diversity

Our aim was to provide a safe, hospitable and inclusive environment for all sex, gender and orientation alike and an opportunity to grow by learning.



## 2.5 COLLABORATION WITH DCPU KHORDHA

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While the world grapples with Covid-19 , its impact on children is worrisome. The pandemic has exacerbated the child related issues and has particularly perpetuated the practice of child trafficking and illegal adoption.

To protect these children from the shackles of ill-practices, the Legal Aid Society has joined hands with DCPU Khurda in their fight to preserve the innocence of the children and spread awareness to safeguard their rights.

Through this collaboration we attempt to make innovative posters and short videos in Odia and English to educate the masses regarding the fundamental rights of children, various schemes launched by the Central and State government for their protection and informing them about the legal penalties for abetting or non-reporting of crimes against children to appropriate authorities.

## 2.6 LEGAL AID CLINIC

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The University inaugurated its own in-campus Legal Aid Clinic in the midst of the pandemic with the help of the society in tandem with District Legal Services Authorities Cuttack(DLSA). The Clinic acts as a succour to the localities, and has seen an influx of cases which were promptly assisted through the legal process up until resolution by the trained para-volunteers and panel lawyers of DLSA.

The Legal Aid Clinic further aims to amicably resolve the disputes by providing pre-litigation services, including developing legal awareness.



## 2.7 COVID-19: SHARE FOR THOSE WHO CARE



The first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic had brought the world to a standstill and countries all around the world, India being no exception, announced lockdown to prevent the spread of the deadly virus. However, in the midst of this lockdown, the most affected ones were those employed in the lower strata of the society which included the Housekeeping Staff, Guards, Gardeners and Mess Workers. Thus, to help those who always ensure that we live in a clean and hygienic environment at college, the Society along with a few enthusiastic students of the college

took an initiative to extend our gratitude to 55 house-keeping staff, 45 guards, 32 gardeners, and 36 mess committee workers that were struggling to survive this lockdown and it was for these 168 individuals that the campaign COVID-19: SHARE FOR THOSE WHO TAKE CARE was started. The collection of monetary donation is in addition to their salary, which they have already received from the university since the beneficiaries belong to the rural and unprivileged sector. The Society within three days of our campaign: help the helping hands, with the joint efforts of Staff, Alumni and Students, had successfully raised INR 1,24,000+ and after 15 days the total amount successfully raised up to INR 2,35,000+. The total amount raised was INR 2,55,297 and was equally distributed to the bank accounts of the 168 beneficiaries.



## 2.8 Webinar on Migrant Labour Crisis

Migrant labourers were among the worst affected community of the Covid-19 pandemic. Migrant labourers were caught unaware when the lockdown was announced, and were in absence of a safety net. In our population of 130 crore Indians, these 130 million+ are one of the most affected in the crisis. The Society in collaboration with GNLU, Centre for Law and Society conducted a webinar on Migrant Labour Crisis and issues in contemporary India on 8th May, 2020. The session was very informative for the students and an opportunity to learn and deliberate on the issues encountered by the migrant workers.

## 2.9 Conference on Right To Education

The Society collaborated with Sarkarischool.in for celebrating a decade of the Right to Education that gave wings to the future of children of our country. We collaborated to give power and passion to 10 substantial years of Right to Education by organizing a Virtual National Conference on "10 years of Right to education". Through this conference, our aim was to ignite a healthy discussion on the journey of the implementation of this crucial fundamental right in the span of 10 years and its expected prospects ahead. We attempted to reflect on the changes that came in our country post 10 years of RTE: our achievements as well as challenges that still need to be addressed. The conference was graced by our Chief Guest- Ms. Aparajita Sarangi, Guest of Honour- Prof. (Dr.) Yogesh Pratap Singh and Guest of Honour- Dr. Aruna Srilakshmi.

# OUR TEAM



# THANK YOU!!