

# LEGAL AID SOCIETY

## INFORMATION BROCHURE



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 Asst. Prof. Suman Dash Bhattamishra and Ms. Kuntirani Padhan.

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.

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.

### LEGAL LITERACY PROGRAMME

The Legal Literacy Programme is the Flagship project of the Legal Aid Society. With an aim to spread necessary legal awareness among the common people, predominantly those with no access to it, the Society has undertaken the Legal Literacy Programme. Under this project, legal literacy camps are regularly conducted in schools, colleges and village communities of Cuttack district to educate the recipients about their legal rights, social-welfare legislations and the mode and

manner of availing them. Apart from creating awareness, the idea is also to monitor government schools with an aim to provide them their legal entitlements.



Legal Literay Camp at Brahmagiri

### THE UNDP PROJECT: ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR MARGINALIZED PEOPLE AND SOCIALLY RELEVANT LEGAL EDUCATION (2014-2017)

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 had set up three Legal Aid Clinics in Jankia, Dompara and Brahmagiri districts, to make legal aid easily accessible to people in these areas. A permanent staff of UNDP co-ordinators and para-legal volunteers had been appointed to all the three clinics.

The staff renders paralegal assistance to visitors. This assistance involved drafting of applications

and related documents, referral services, follow-up of the cases with appropriate authorities, counseling and in that process they created a link between NLUO Legal Aid Society and the communities.



Legal Awareness camp - Damapada

The Society members and students volunteers regularly conducted Legal Literacy Programmes in these three districts. The student volunteers who participated in the programmes discussed and deliberated on issues directly relevant to the audience, which includes social security measures introduced by the government and the importance of Lok Adalats in dispute resolution.

### **THE LITIGATION AND LEGISLATIVE POLICY GROUP**

Litigation and Legislative Policy Group was envisaged by the Society in 2016 and undertook its activities in October 2016. The Group was constituted with the objective of conducting in-depth and thorough research and survey on various legal issues faced locally in Odisha, particularly in the rural areas of the state. This research would ultimately culminate in Public Interest Litigation initiated by the Legal Aid Society,



Legal Awareness camp – Mundali with the help of local lawyers and NGOs.

The Litigation and Legislative Policy Group consists of student attorneys and research assistants. The Group has undertaken the task of researching various governmental policies of relevance to the state of Odisha and filing RTI applications in respect of health, sanitation and related policy.



Legal Awareness camp – Jankia

### **'AYUDA' –2016 1ST NLUO LEGAL AID FEST**

The Legal Aid Society conducted its first inter-University Legal Aid Fest 'Ayuda' from the 13th to 15th October, 2016. The objective was to increase



Ayuda 2016-1st Nluo Legal Aid Fest

the visibility of the Society within the student body and to encourage the students to participate as volunteers in the activities conducted by the Legal Aid Society. The Fest saw a huge participation by the students in competitions such as 'Q-riosity', the Legal quiz and 'Pro-bono', the problem solving competition. It also provided a platform for students to share their experiences in the field of legal aid. The fest also saw creative contributions from the students in the essay and photography competitions, which were based on the theme 'Access to Justice'.



Donation drive at Kathajodi river bank shanties

**CLOTH DONATION DRIVE AND VISIT TO 'BASUNDHARA'**

The Legal Aid Society organized a cloth donation drive on the University Campus. The proceeds were then donated at 'Basundhara' and Orphanage located in Bidanasi, Cuttack on the occasion of Diwali on 30th October, 2016. Several student volunteers along with the members of the Society visited the Orphanage with sweets, colouring pencils and sketch pens for the children.

A part of the donations were also distributed amongst the residents of shanties that line the bank of the Kathajodi river.



Donation drive at Basundhara Orphanage on Diwali



Legal Awareness camp – Mundali

## Community Stakeholders' Training Programmes on "Access to Justice for Women in the State of Odisha"

The project team organized a one day training programme for women on 6th of December 2016 at Kantapada. Around 300 people consisting of government officers and community stakeholders participated in the event. The event was planned after consulting the Project Director, DRDA and the BDO on the major issues confronting people in the said community. The objective of the training programme was to sensitize women about their rights so that they know the remedies available under the law while dealing with domestic violence.



A similar programme was organised at Gotara Gram Panchayat for Community Stakeholders on 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2017 under the project. The event was inaugurated and presided by Sarat Kumar Nayak, Chairman, Mahanga Block in the presence of Ms. Rasida Begum, Vice Chairman, Mahanga Block, Ms. Suchitra Behura, Sarpanch, Gotara Panchayat

, Ms. Suman Dash Bhatamishra, Faculty Advisor, Legal Aid Society National Law University Odisha, Ms. Kuntirani Padhan, Faculty-in-charge of Clinical Legal Education National Law University Odisha, and Ms. Sujata Jena, Advocate, High Court of Odisha. Drubadala Mantry, Programme Associate, Cuttack District, Jitendra Khadiratna, Programme Associate, Puri District, Ramasish Das Pattanayak, Consultant for Khordha District and other members of the community were also present.

## Training of Trainers for Capacity Building of Paralegals in Odisha: 29th-31st March, 2017



*Training of Trainers for Paralegals Programme organised in collaboration with CSJ, Ahmedabad and Centre for Peace and Justice, Bangladesh*

The South Asian Institute of Advanced Legal and Human Rights Studies [SAILS], in association with BRAC University, Bangladesh and IDEAL Centre for Social Justice [CSJ] and the Legal Aid Society. The Training of Trainers Workshop was attended by 30 participants from Odisha. Over the three days of the workshop, training sessions for paralegals were designed by incorporating principles of adult learning and alternative legal education.

## Training Programme on “Role of School Teachers in Enhancing Access to Justice for Marginalised People”



On 11.9.2017 a Training Programme was organised on “Role of School Teachers in Enhancing Access to Justice for Marginalised People”. The objective of the training programme was to orient school teachers towards various aspects of access to justice and encourage them to establish legal aid clinics in their premises. Participants were familiarised with various concepts like Right to Information, Child Rights, legal issues and problems of marginalised people. Thereafter, the legal aid mechanism in India was discussed and the structure of legal aid clinics was explained to them. Ms. Mrinalinee Padhee, Advocate, High Court deliberated on the issue of Engineered Inequality and highlighted its repercussions on children. Mr. Jagadananda Sarangi discussed the various ways in which RTI can be used as a tool to enhance access to justice. The sessions were presided by Prof. Srikrishna Deva Rao.

## Training Programme on “Role of Law Teachers Promoting access to justice through Legal Aid Clinics”



This Training Programme was organised on 12.9.2017. Law Teachers from various parts of Odisha participated in the deliberations. There were discussions on the nature of legal aid clinics in their respective colleges and the manner in which they operated. Participants from the KBK districts of Odisha deliberated on the difficulties faced by them in organising legal aid activities. Apart from that, there were also deliberations on ways in which linkage can be established among various stakeholders for running a legal aid clinic efficiently.

## The International Conference on Rethinking Socially Relevant Legal Education: Best Practices and a Way Forward



The International Conference on Rethinking Socially Relevant Legal Education: Best Practices and a Way Forward was conducted in National Law University Odisha (hereinafter referred as NLUO) from 16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> September 2017. The seminar was organized with a view to making what should be the role of law schools and how different stakeholders of society can be helpful in providing access to justice to all which mainly encompasses how legal education can become relevant to legal aid. The seminar was organized with the furtherance of vision of creating a network and providing a pedestal to different law schools, NGOs in order to exchange the ideas for delivering legal aid services and legal education. The two-day seminar was attended by different Law Schools with an objective to share the suggestions, to raise questions and to exchange the ideas.

## Ayuda : Odisha Students' Alliance for Securing Legal Aid and Access to Justice



A 3 day Inter-University event with the purpose to spread awareness about the need for legal aid clinics in institutions imparting legal education in the state of Odisha and to establish a network in the state with students from different colleges. Workshops conducted on How to run a Legal Aid and Nukad Natak organized for the purposes of generating awareness about legal literacy.



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