

GUJARAT NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY



Gujarat National Law University

G N L U C E N T R E F O R L A W & S O C I E T Y

4TH G N L U
A N N U A L L E G A L S E R V I C E S F O R U M



21ST-22ND MARCH | 2020

ABOUT

GUJARAT NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY

Gujarat National Law University (GNLU), Gandhinagar, is a premier institute of legal education in India established under the Gujarat National Law University Act, 2003. With its motivated staff and committed students, the University endeavours to impart quality legal education, contextualising it within the latest policy and practical developments in the fields of humanities, commerce, business administration, social work and science and technology. GNLU is the largest NLU in India in terms of student, faculty and research associates' strength and the only Indian National Law University to offer integrated law degrees in five streams including B.S.W. L.LB, and LL.M., MBA, PhD and diploma programmes in law and interdisciplinary fields.

GNLU CENTRE FOR LAW AND SOCIETY & THE LEGAL SERVICES COMMITTEE

The Centre for Law and Society, established in 2015, acts as a community legal aid clinic and focal point for socio-legal research at GNLU. The Centre is responsible for leading a wide range of activities from pro-bono and legal aid clinics to piloting research projects and organizing sessions which help students, academics, lawyers, and policy-makers to gain insights on contemporary legal problems such as child rights, LGBTQ+ rights, disability rights, women rights, data privacy, etc. The Centre functions through two wings - the Legal Services Committee (LSC) and the Law and Society Wing. The Legal Services Committee is responsible for providing legal assistance through traditional casework, summary advice, self-help, community legal education, community development and policy reform initiatives, in line with its motto "Awareness, Assertion, Action".

4TH ANNUAL LEGAL SERVICES FORUM

The GNLU Legal Services Forum is the annual flagship event organized by the Legal Services Committee under the aegis of the Centre for Law and Society. It aims to facilitate deliberation, collaboration and contribution by Legal Aid Committees of law schools, NGOs, PLVs and Legal Services Authority across India to achieve the objective of providing free and competent legal services to the underprivileged by sharing their unique experiences. The 4th edition of the GLSF organized in collaboration with UNICEF shall witness a series of lectures by various experts, lawyers, academicians and professionals on effective community engagement to bring about positive societal change. This series of lectures will be followed by a deliberation on impediments faced in providing legal aid, the objective of this deliberation will be to come up with a road map to improve legal aid mechanism. The methodology followed in the sessions will be more practical-oriented so as to groom law students and young lawyers to take up more pro bono cases and engage actively in community engagement exercises. The underlying idea of the GLSF is to enable students, PLVs to understand nuances of civic engagement and apprising them about practical realities faced while providing legal aid.

The 4th GLSF will also witness project presentations by legal aid clinics competing for the "GNLU Legal Services Funding Grant". The GNLU Legal Services Funding Grant is a first of its kind initiative by an Indian University. Established in the 3rd GLSF, it seeks to honour and support impactful and meaningful social-legal initiatives by Legal Services Committees (LSC)/ Legal Aid Clinics (LAC) in law schools across India. The Grant aims to nurture legal aid clinics engaging in effective legal aid work across law universities in India.



ABOUT THE SESSIONS



DAY 1

SESSION I INTRODUCTION TO **PROBLEM** IDENTIFICATION

PROBLEM

More often than not, the root cause of a societal problem is hidden in multiple layers of complexities which surround the individual and the social milieu in which she/he finds herself/himself. This makes it imperative to define the problem in terms of the interaction between the person and the social environment. Prevalent methods that assist in the problem identification process include counselling, conducting a focused group discussion, conducting a survey, among others. The first lecture session will acquaint participants with the intricacies of such identification techniques.



INTRODUCTION TO ALTERNATIVES OF SOLUTION

Post identification of the problem, analysing possible solutions to the problem become apparent. This part of the problem solving process aims to generate a whole range of possibilities, culminating into selection of the best possible option, and accordingly, develop a plan of action. The proposed solution may be directed at individual change (micro-level intervention), organizational or group change (mezzo-level intervention) and/or community or social change (macro-level intervention).

The practical aspects related to the following solutions will be discussed in this session:

A. SESSION: UTILIZING RIGHT TO INFORMATION:

The Right to Information provided through the RTI Act, 2005 has been an instrument for ushering in a participative democracy and also an effective tool for enforcing accountability and ensuring transparency in the administration of the State. This session will deal with the process associated with RTI and the way it can facilitate community engagement programmes.

B. SESSION: FILING PUBLIC INTEREST LITIGATIONS:

PIL means a legal action initiated in a court of law for the enforcement of a general interest in which the public has pecuniary interest or any other interest by which their legal rights or liabilities are affected. PIL's explicit purpose is to address the sufferings of all those aggrieved by the detriment caused to the larger public interest. Transparency in public life and fair judicial action are the right answers to check impairment of public interests. For this session GCLS and UNICEF will adopt a case study approach in order to better understand the intricacies related to PILs. The case study will pertain to child rights and gender related issues and how the same have been addressed by the tool of PILs. The case study model will attempt to look into driving force behind the suit, identification of issues, pre-petition filing field work, among other things.

C. SESSION: DIRECT COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

Direct engagement with the community, instead of approaching public authorities, is usually in the form of mezza intervention such as working with other NGOs, self-help groups, co-operatives etc. Speakers in this session will talk about their experiences of community engagement giving participants valuable insights on pointers to take care of while directly engaging with the community.

D. SESSION: PRO-BONO LAWYERING:

In this session, a discussion will be held on pro-bono lawyering and its relevance in the current world. Here, the focus of GCLS and UNICEF is to train students to take up pro bono work and explore ways in which community engagement can be achieved. A practicing advocate who is actively involved in pro bono cases will hold this session, key takeaways from which include understanding the rationale behind taking pro bono cases while doing a commercial practice, benefits and contribution of pro bono cases towards the community and ways in which the pro bono setup in India can be improved.

DAY II INTRODUCTION TO IMPACT ASSESSMENT STUDY

Once a plan of action has been implemented, it becomes essential that an evaluation of the outcome of the problem solving is done to see whether the problem solving process has been helpful in resolving the societal issue. This session aims to introduce the participants on how to do an impact assessment.



PANEL DISCUSSION: IMPEDIMENTS FACED IN PROVIDING LEGAL AID AND THE ROAD AHEAD

Providing legal aid is an efficient tool for problem resolution post its identification. In the current scenario, there are many problems associated with legal aid clinics functioning in law schools and independent legal aid clinics as well. This session will deal with the ways community legal aid clinics can help in facilitating access to justice for the underprivileged. GCLS and UNICEF will look into the reasons as to why the legal aid clinics have not been able to reach their full potential and provide ways the same can be achieved.

The session will seek to identify impediments faced in providing legal aid through legal aid clinics in law schools, or issues faced by PLVs, DLSA/SLSA/NALSA and NGOs. It will further involve a discussion on solutions to the problems identified and methods to encourage more law students to engage in community service and pro bono lawyering. This session will specifically look into aspects such as training of PLVs/law students, funding, procedure, infrastructure and awareness about free legal aid.

The objective of this session is to identify specific issues faced under the abovementioned broad heads, brainstorm possible solutions and draft a road map for improving legal aid. After the sessions are concluded, the presentations for the Legal Services Funding Grant will begin.

Based on the 4 sessions, the panel discussion and the presentations made by the LSCs/LACs the following will be guides will be compiled: A) A step-by-step guide to file a PIL on Women and Children's issues in India; B) Guide for establishing and running a Legal Aid Clinics within Law Departments/Universities; C) List of actionable recommendations to strengthen legal aid system in India; D) A briefing volume on the entire event.

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GUIDELINES FOR REGISTRATION

1. Students, social workers, practitioners, academicians and LSC/LAC are eligible to take part in the Forum.
2. LSC/LAC may nominate a maximum of 2 Representatives as participants for the Forum.
3. Interested participants may register by filling the following Google form:
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScolUrXv7tlhlt1EcxAB38M6q2SYAt-Dbs9XMH_mTmhpkRtXA/viewform?vc=0&c=0&w=1
4. The fee (Inclusive of GST charges) for the Forum is as follows:
 - a. Individual: INR 1500
 - b. LSC/LAC: INR 2000
 - c. Additional representative of LSC/LAC: INR 1500
5. Last date for payment and registration is February 16, 2020

Note: The link for the payment of Registration fee will be emailed to the participants upon registration through the above Google form.



ORGANISING AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE



CHIEF PATRON
PROF. (DR.) S. SHANTHAKUMAR
DIRECTOR, GUJARAT NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY,
GUJARAT, INDIA



MS. APOORVA PATEL
FACULTY COORDINATOR,
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,
GNLU



DR. A.N. RAO
DEPUTY COORDINATOR,
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,
GNLU



DR. SAURABH ANAND
DEPUTY COORDINATOR,
ASSISTANT PROFESSOR,
GNLU



Gujarat National Law University

unicef 
for every child

CONTACT US

For any queries, you may leave us an e-mail at legalservices@gnlu.ac.in or contact:

MS. DISHA DEVADAS
STUDENT CONVENER, GLSC
+91 940816318 devadasdisha@gmail.com

MR. ZAID DEVA
STUDENT CONVENER, GCLS
+91 9419061802 deva.zaid@outlook.com

MR. JAYADITYA MALLIK
STUDENT CONVENER, GCLS
+ 91 9909964944 jayaditya.m@gmail.com

MR. HEMANDU ASWAL
CO-CONVENER, GCLS
+91 9414011181 shrutihemandu@gmail.com