

Lessons from setting up a child rights defence force



A joint initiative of six organizations – Aarambh, Eka, Kanuni Margdashaan Kendra, Muskaan, Bharat Gyan Vigyan Samiti and Parhit. Technical execution by Centre for Social Justice (CSJ) with aid from UNICEF.

Document developed by Centre for Social Justice (CSJ)



About Us

Centre for Social Justice (IDEAL), established in 1993, is a socio-legal organisation working on access to justice and legal empowerment. CSJ fulfils its mandate by training and strengthening community lawyers and paralegals by building their capacities to deliver change-inducing leadership in their communities through a network of law centres. CSJ has also made path-breaking institutional interventions in the form of research, legal reforms and initiatives bringing together grassroots activism, law and policy-making on a wide array of issues affecting socio-economically marginalised and vulnerable groups.

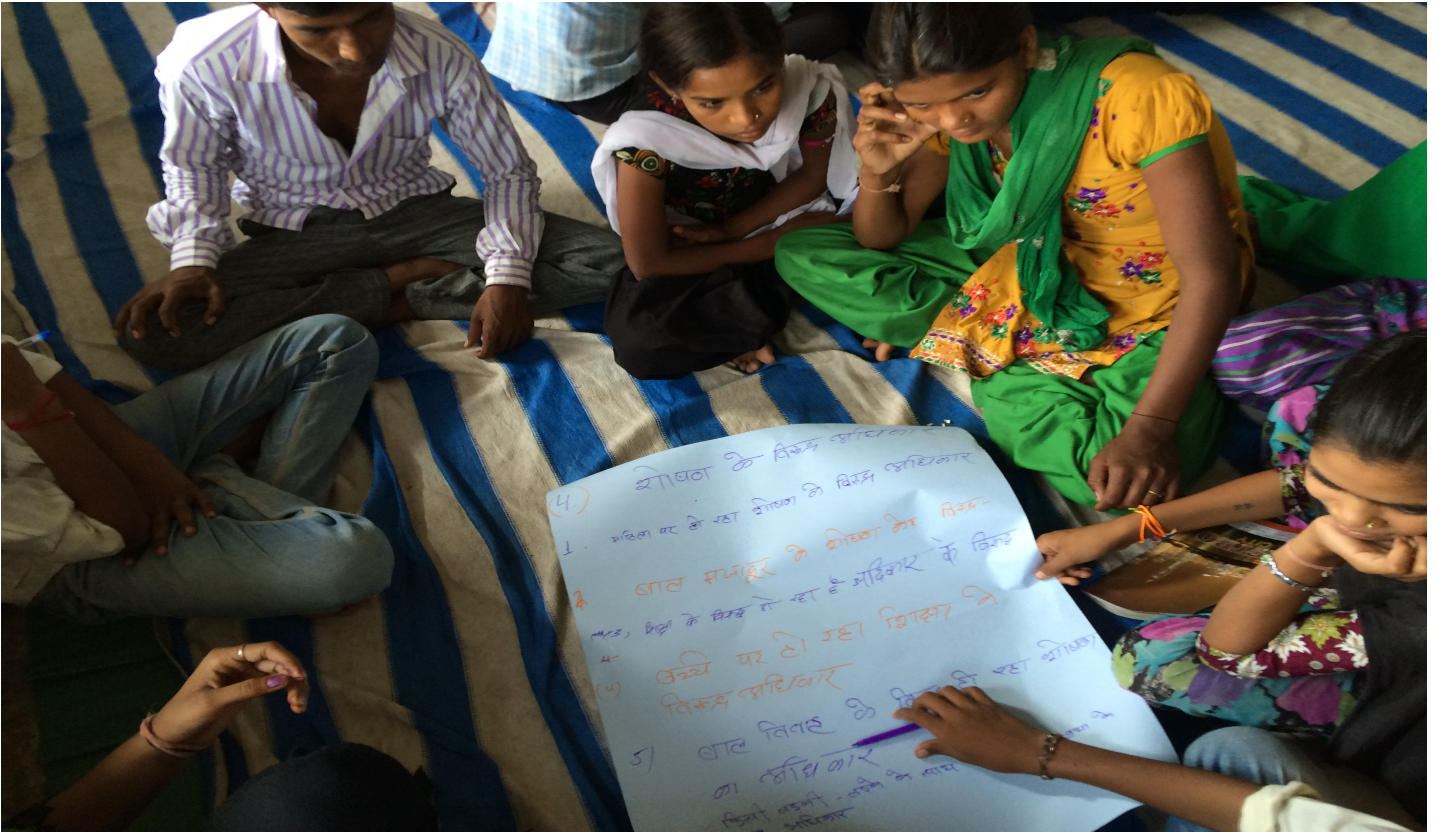
The Initiative

Evidently, CSJ had initiated its work in Madhya Pradesh from the year 2011 on the issue of minority rights, however over the period and now after six years it has worked on different issues extensively in different parts of Madhya Pradesh. The organisation also has its law centres at different places depending on the issues and needs of that area.

Acknowledging CSJ's capacity in developing cadres of paralegals, UNICEF supported CSJ for initiating this child rights paralegal training programme and connected CSJ with five local organizations working on the issues of child rights at different parts of Madhya Pradesh.

The organizations namely are Aarambh, Eka, Muskaan in Bhopal Bharat gyan Vigyan Samiti (BGVS) in Rajgarh and Parhit in Shivpuri. The training aimed to train 150 paralegals who can work on the issues of child rights violations at different levels. These trainings were held at Bhopal, Shivpuri and Rajgarh.

Our Strategy



As mentioned in the above lines, CSJ engages extensively in **capacity building process**. This process is primarily based on **Freire principle** where he insisted on the idea that the function of education was to build on the language, experiences and skills of the ‘educatees’ rather than imposing on them the culture of ‘educators’. From a monologue process, it becomes a process of dialogue in which educators and educatees engage in mutually respectful learning.

A core component of the theory is that learning begins with action, is then shaped by reflection, which gives rise to further action. Learning is thus a continuous process, directed at enhancing the learners’ capacity to act in the world and change it.

Input- Action- Reflection is also an important component of this theory. The cycle of action and reflection is central to the process of community transformation. Very often, the first plan of action will solve some aspects of the problem but not deal deeply enough with the root cause of the problem and for that there is need to visit and revisit the same issue again and again in learning the best method to deal with that issue. The inputs are important in this cycle. The inputs can be provided to them in different forms like giving lectures, showing slides, videos and some short movies. They can also be provided guidelines for action planning. However, the inputs are not an end to itself, it further opens the space for dialogue. It is a constant cycle which keeps on going unless the objective is fulfilled.

The crucial part in this process is that to what extent the role of an educator or a trainer is important. They need to check that to what extent they use their role and the power in the group to try and shape others in their own image. It is important to provide them inputs which are necessary for the participants to understand the gravity of the issue, however it is equally important to give participants the liberty to think, be critical, free and responsible to the inputs they receive and then only it can change from a monologue process to a dialogue process.

Often we have been conditioned in a way like that the information should pass from one person 'who knows' to the others 'who do not know'. This idea is broken through the training process because both the trainers as well as the participants have been engaged through a process of learning from each other through different mediums.

Accordingly, the child rights paralegal programme was designed based on this principle through learning begins with action. The paralegals have been trained through making them do actions in the form of field research, exposure visits and home assignments. Disseminating information through lectures is as much important as seeing the real implementation on the ground.

These paralegals have been given training on enhancing their skills so that they understand how should they work on issues which involve child rights violations. Throughout the training the attempt was made to develop rights based approach for the issues they have been dealing with. Developing a perspective cannot be achieved through one or two events. It requires continuous engagement with the volunteers and a dialogue process where the idea is not just to disseminate information but the learners should understand the concept behind the information disseminated and should develop the skill of disseminate the information further.

This training stage covers the process right from the identification of the volunteers through need assessment to the guided fieldwork where participants have been guided through the assignments and the fieldwork they did. Furthermore, based on their learning they come back received the inputs and go back to the work they did on field. The information has been reinforced several times through different methods.

Preparation Stage

Needs assessment

The needs assessment is basically a method of any social intervention to identify the gap between what is there and what needs to be achieved through a programme or any intervention. For this programme, developing a cadre of paralegals who can work against child rights violation in three districts of Madhya Pradesh was the aim. To understand what is there which is how much volunteers already know and what we need to focus through this programme was done.

These points were considered while doing the needs assessment:

- 1) Awareness of the issues in the three districts of Madhya Pradesh.
- 2) Determining if there is any similar intervention taken place in that area. If yes, then understanding different approaches taken to address it.
- 3) Understanding the barriers of the community in accessing legal services in the context of awareness about the issues, local institutions, procedures, different stakeholders and other social economic and political factors in the area.

Converting needs assessment into focused group discussion

Once the needs assessment was done with different batches, the next step was to organize an internal meeting and discussion within the CSJ team and then with the partners. An assessment was done regarding the need of this intervention in the specific area with the volunteers.

The FGD was done at their places, so that CSJ team should personally visit to these places and study about the local issues of that area. It was also ensured that the discussion should happen at the time which is most suitable to the paralegals. We have created a cycle of seasons mentioned in later pages which gives an idea that which time of the month is suitable for having meetings, discussions and events with the volunteers working on the issues of child rights. Additionally, time was also considered to organize such events because some of them are school students, some are college students while others are involved in part time work. So, their availability is ensured while doing any planning. The needs assessment was converted into focus group discussion and that discussion should mainly focus on these five categories which are:

- 1) Participants' ability to identify problems related to children.
- 2) Participants' ability to prioritize problems and solutions through rights based approach.
- 3) Political and ideological orientation.
- 4) Ability to work in a group.

We identified some volunteers who have these abilities and whose potential can be developed into the attributes of a “paralegal”. In addition to this, child rights paralegal training programme is an intervention to curb violence against children and for doing the same the role of partner organizations becomes equally important to that of CSJ. The suggestions from partners thus become more important as they have been working with their volunteers and they know their skills better than we could decide. So, their choice of volunteers was taken into consideration while selecting the final list of volunteers to be taken into the paralegal training.

General Profile: The participants belonged to the age group of 15 years to 30 years. Some of them were early married men and women while other were college students working voluntarily on issues of child rights since a very long time.

Using, formatting different methods and tools of needs assessment



The FGDs were done with around 150 participants cumulatively in all three different places. The objective of the FGD was to assess the volunteers on these criteria and then to identify those volunteers who can be trained. This FGD involved activities where attempt was made to give participants full opportunity to take part and engage themselves effectively. The activities were designed in a way that they captured all the criteria mentioned above.

These activities were done using different methodologies and have different conceptual underpinnings. The first activity involved breaking the ice activity, where participants were asked to introduce themselves. This was of course, a way to get to know the participants better and finding out about their experience of working in the field of child rights. Additionally, to assess their ability to identify problems related to children.

The participants in the FGD were involved in role play and poster making on rights of children where they were asked to identify and write down the rights of children. Case studies of some of the child rights violation were also discussed where the purpose was to observe participant's views and comments.

Role play: Participants abled to connect those rights with their life incidents and shared their experiences elaborately.

Through their role-plays, they brought out their own experiences of rights violations in their homes and in the society, they inhabit.

Poster making: The poster making activity was aimed at assessing their skills of articulating legal information in a way it is communicated to the community. It was also a group work exercise and observations were made on the basis that whether they can make the process of discussions and presentation participative or not. This was also a way to ensure participation of those participants who were perhaps shy to make a point in a larger group.

Case studies: In the case studies, two cases were given to them of which one was of sexual harassment of the minor and the other one was related to the issue of child marriage. The idea was to note down participants approach to these issues and their understanding level about the issue.

How to make a competency grid

After doing focused group discussion, the next step was to make a competency grid based on the criteria we had for the FGD and our objectives from different training events at different levels. Firstly, to understand the competency grid, we should first need to crack the meaning of competence.

As a matter of fact, the work of paralegals is to create its own space in the work between law and development. There is a gap between the law on paper and execution and thus paralegal is a crucial component and can act as a bridge between the two. In the context of child rights, the paralegals were supposed to understand the gap between the laws made for protecting the rights of the children and its implementation on the ground. Paralegals may fall under different categories which are:

- 1) Single issue, single skill
- 2) Single issue, multiple skills
- 3) Multiple issue, multiple skills

CSJ has categorized different levels of paralegals developed and have different level of expectations from each level. Each level has different role and responsibilities. This categorization can be done in four different levels.

Level 0 - This involves paralegals who have knowledge about local legal issues and support us in field activities like village visits, campaigns, awareness programmes.

Level 1 - This involves paralegals who should be able to identify cases and refer them to the lawyers.

Level 2 - This involves paralegals who should be able to give primary legal support liking doing FIR, filing forms, applications and RTI.

Level 3 - This involves paralegals who does everything that a lawyer does like identifying issues, drafting applications to relevant institutions, fact finding except appearing in courts.

Importance of competency grid

This grid is the mind mapping outcome of the process of equipping individuals with understanding and skills along with access to information and knowledge and training to enable them effectively. This mapping was designed after the needs assessment and focused group discussion organized at the three places with five different batches. The FGD helped CSJ to design a grid based on which CSJ designed all the training events.

The competency grid has been developed keeping in mind the different levels of group. Bhopal, Shivpuri and Rajgarh are three different locations which have different socio economic structure and that affects the level of volunteers as their accessibility to the resources varies from one geographical area to other.

Basically, the idea was to cover all these competencies and developed necessary skills into them. However, the skill can be enhanced at different event and at different level depending upon the learning and understanding capacity of that group. Once one event is done at three different places then the group's competency is assessed on information, perspective and skill as high, medium or low, as the case may be.

Reviewing/analysing the grid

The competency grid was made and revisited after each of the event to see how much has been covered and what all is left in a specific group after an event.

The competency grid includes skills, information and various competencies which we believe the paralegal should have.

The group's competency, information, perspective and skill was assessed as high, medium low as the case may be for three different places. The next event was designed based on reviewing the grid and keeping in mind the need of reinforcing the information or skill or only perspective or everything in the training programme.

The paralegals developed would be of level 3 according to CSJ's understanding and terminology.

Season cycle for conducting child rights training and cases pertaining to child rights violence

The circle season is much important when engaging with participants for the training or dealing with any legal issues and that is because their presence is needed in all this case. In many parts of Madhya Pradesh particularly in rural districts, people migrate to other places for farming and other employment opportunities at times they are also accompanied by their children and adolescents, in any case even if they do not go they are supposed to do the household chores and other work. It then becomes difficult for them to participate in any trainings or similar events.

The season circle would help the trainers to plan and schedule an event keeping in mind the availability of the children of that local area.

Season cycle for Bhopal

The season cycle for Bhopal is bit different from that of Shivpuri and Rajgarh. Bhopal being the urban region, the factors responsible for conducting child rights training are a bit different from that of other two regions.

January and February- It's usually the time when children are free from festivals and can give more time to the studies and other training activities.

March and April- New sessions for school students, it is also the time of the year when the villagers, small farmers including some children get involved in crop cutting, processing and marketing work.

May and June- It's the best time of the year for conducting any such trainings which involve engagement with the children. This is the time when most of the children are free from their own work. It is an off season in terms of farming and agriculture.

July and August- It is again peak time for the agricultural activities mainly farming and irrigation. At the same time, it's a monsoon season so it becomes difficult also for the general mobility of the villagers.

September and October- These two months are best for the cultivation of kharif crops and there are so many Hindu festivals celebrated during these months. So, during this period people prefer to celebrate and enjoy this time and work less.

November and December- Cultivation of Kharif and Rabi crops continued in this period. And in some schools, children have their half yearly exams. But comparatively it is the time when children would participate more in the trainings and work.

Materials developed during the training programme-

During this paralegal training, CSJ developed materials to support the paralegals as well as for different organizations who are making some effort in bringing change in the lives of the children through building legal building capacity. These materials would be a great help for the individuals, paralegals and other civil society organizations who have been working on the issues of protection of the rights of the children since a long time.

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March and April- This is a peak time for school going students, they have exams and other activities which make difficult for them to engage in such activities. Holi and rangpanchmi are celebrated

May and June- This is also considered as marriage season. Hindu marriages generally take place in these sessions and so it might lead to the absenteeism of children on a large scale. Id, Ramzaan

July and August- Monsoon seasons affect them and make their mobility difficult. Ganesh Chaturthi.

September and October- These two months are mainly occupied for long festivals like Istehmaah , and Navratri. Community like to do celebrate and enjoy in this month and there are very few days when they work.

November and December- Diwali, examination time, children are busy in schools and other activities.

Season cycle for Shivpuri and Rajgarh

January and February- January and February are considered the best times for farming and irrigation of Rabi crops. So, most of the people including children in this period engage themselves in farming or even if they don't migrate to other places, they stay back at their home places and engage themselves in other household work. These two months are also the time when school students have their annual exams.

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Needless to mention, that this material would help paralegals to enhance as well as reinforce their knowledge that they received during the paralegal training.

1) The first material was the compilation of existing materials done by different organizations on the issue of child rights. It is mainly in the context of Bhopal. This material extensively covers three acts which are, Juvenile Justice Act, Protection of child from sexual offences (POCSO) act and Right to Information Act. These are basically the acts which were covered during the training programme. (1)

2) Based on this material and seeing the gap of existing resources on child rights, CSJ in collaboration with UNICEF decided to make a child rights paralegal module which will be used as a standard module to be used by any paralegal dealing the case of child rights violations. This material extensively covers need and role of paralegal, structure of various governing and non-governing bodies and several facts about child rights violations. (2)

3) For CSJ's internal use a detailed process document has been developed which essentially captures design of each events, output, participants' observations and outcome of the programme.

Review Workshop

The participants were given a handbook of material that would be useful to them as paralegals. They may either be opinion pieces based on which discussions may be carried out during trainings, background reading material or easy reference manuals for understanding laws as well as working in the field.

(1) [Link to the compilation/ Assessment for suitability](#)

(2) [Link to the module](#)

Purpose of material review workshop

It's a compilation of various materials which essentially required for building perspective of paralegals on child rights. Additionally, it is important to understand that already existing materials can be used for various purposes. Producing a new material would not always keep things in place. There are different organizations working on different aspects of child rights if we place it into two broad categories then one is education and the other one is protection. There is already lot of materials where these issues have been highlighted so we thought the need was to bring them together and pick those which could make most sense and should be suitable for the paralegals working on the issues of violations of child rights.

The different colours show different parts of the competency grid captured through the training process. For instance, yellow marked portion had been covered during the orientation when the event just focused on the constitution and fundamental rights enshrined under the constitution. Similarly, the portion which are red in colour was covered during the three days capacity building programme which extensively dealt with POCSO, and Juvenile Justice Act. The blue portion was covered during our guided fieldwork I, II and III.

Sr. No.	COMPETENCY	SKILL	INFORMATION	VALUE/ ORIENTATION/ PERSPECTIVE
1.	Ability to articulate needs into rights	A) Articulation with rights perspective B) Linking problems with rights	C) Human Rights D) Fundamental Rights E) International Covenants and Conventions (UDHR, ICPCR ICESCR, UNCRC).	F) Understanding availability as right and not as charity G) Human Rights Based Approach H) Equality, Social Justice, Secularism, other Constitutional values I) Importance of preserving childhood

2.	<i>Disseminating legal information through awareness activities</i>	<p>A) Reading Laws</p> <p>B) Articulation in the community's language</p> <p>C) Awareness creation through innovative means (street theatre, posters, songs, etc.)</p> <p>D) Linking issues with laws</p>	<p>Laws related to child rights (POCSO, JJA, provisions in other laws like IPC).</p>	F) Creativity
3.	<i>Ability to give primary legal aid to clients</i>	<p>A) Client interviewing, fact gathering from clients and primary counselling</p> <p>B) Filling <u>Mahiti Patrak</u></p>	<p>C) Basic procedures under JJA and POCSO</p> <p>D) Redressal forums such as JJ Board, CWC</p>	<p>E) Commitment</p> <p>F) Being client centric, empathetic, unimposing, non-judgemental and leaving choices to clients</p>
4.	<i>Ability to develop linkages between community including children therein and administration</i>	<p>A) Communication and Dialoguing (with community and authorities)</p> <p>B) Leadership</p> <p>C) Networking/ forming linkages with GOs and NGOs</p>	<p>E) Information about community</p> <p>F) Information about administrative structures (Government at different levels, Police, <u>CWC</u>, etc.)</p>	<p>G) Identity as a paralegal</p> <p>H) Respect for the community</p> <p>I) Social inclusion (Gender, caste, social background, etc.) and democratic processes</p>

		D) Holding basti/ village meetings		J) Critical eye towards the government machinery
				K) Creating independence
5.	Grass root level research	<p>A) Collection of information- FGDs</p> <p>B) Recording Information and writing skills (Press note, representation)</p> <p>C) Basti Mapping</p> <p>D) Mobilization</p>	E) Information about various media outlets	<p>F) Taking initiative, commitment</p> <p>G) Eye for detail and thoroughness</p>
6.	Drafting (RTI applications, FIR and representations to bodies such as CWC, Police, etc.)	<p>A) Writing</p> <p>B) Converting problems into an issue by linking it with appropriate legal provisions and applicable procedure</p>	<p>C) Police Powers</p> <p>D) RTI Act</p> <p>E) Appropriate Authorities (CWC, Police, etc.)</p>	<p>F) Precision</p> <p>G) Nitty-gritty orientation</p> <p>H) Crispness</p>

Training Stage

Design of three-days capacity building programme

Sr. No	Session Title	Content	Methodology	Materials	Time
1	Introduction and sharing perspectives on rights of the children	Mr. <u>Sethi</u> began the training programme by welcoming all the participants presented in the venue. He started the session by asking participants why they think they are here today, as in their expectations from past two days orientation programme. He posed three questions to the participants and asked them to answer these questions in three different colour cards: 1) If I found a magic lamp and was	Individual reflection, presentations, and group discussion	Chart paper cards, charts, marker pens.	2 hours

		<p><u>granted</u> three wishes-- what would I ask for myself, my family and my village?</p> <p>2) What is the one thing that I would put an end to in my village with respect to children?</p> <p>3) If I were my parent, then what's the one thing I would have done differently to myself?</p>			
2.	Building tower from wooden cubes	It was a group exercise where one person out of three or four was blindfolded and the other members of the group were giving him/her instructions on how to go for that activity.	Group activity	Wooden cubes, a piece of cloth	1.5 hours
3.	Identity of a paralegal	The participants were divided into groups of three or	Group activity, Discussion, Presentation	Chart papers, sketch pens,	2 hours

		what characteristic you should not take from them?			
4	To reflect on the previous day sessions		Group discussion and voluntary presentation	Chart papers, sketch pens, white board, markers.	1.5 hours
5	To introduce participants with the preamble and fundamental rights as enshrined in the Indian Constitution.	The Preamble of the Constitution was shown in Hindi and each of the important terms was discussed which was followed by a long and elaborate discussion. The participants were then asked to sit in the groups to make another chart linking what was written in cards, what was summarized on charts to the Constitutional	Group Discussion, Presentation	Chart papers, sketch pens, white board, markers.	2.5 hours

		principles present in the preamble.			
6	Understanding and learning Juvenile Justice act.	The act includes two types of cases which are child who needs care and protection of child in conflicts with the law. Under the section child who needs care and protection, the role of child welfare committee was explained and discussed.	Lecture based and open ended discussion.	Chart papers, sketch pens, white board, markers.	2.5 hours
7	To disseminate information regarding the structure of CWC.	Movie screening of " <u>hashtacheq</u> ". The movie screen showed the difference structure of CWC and its role in protecting the rights of the children.	Movie screening, Discussion	Projector	1 hour

8	To make participants understand about personal communication on the lines of sender's and receiver's norm.	The trainer focused on the high note and low note of the voice as in when we go to a community, our voice plays an equally important role as a message holds otherwise it would not make an impact on the group or a community who is receiving it.	Open ended discussion, activity	-----	2 hours
9	Importance of Image theatre		Activity based	-----	1.5 hours
10	To make participants learn and understand about protection of children from sexual offences act (POCSO).				
11	Movie screening of Komal .	The trainers explained POCSO act through this	Movie screening	Projector, Laptop	1.5 hours

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		movie and elucidated on the significance of this act. The trainer paused on some shots of the movie and illustrated how each shot is exploiting the laws of POCSO.			
12.	Role of mass communication	press note and press release, covering the utility of the mainstream media, TV cable.			
13.	Role of bureaucracy in governance and their significance in fighting against violence of child rights.		Lecture based and open ended discussion.	-----	1 hour
14.	To familiarize participants about the Right to Information act (RTI) and the various spaces	The idea was to elucidate on the RTI act and paralegals should be able to use it in their work on	Movie screening, songs, open ended discussion	Laptop, Projector, PPTs	2 hours

Inter modular Guided Fieldwork I

Design of event 1:

The guided fieldwork was based on the progress made by the paralegals. These were enforced differently with different groups. For instance, in Bhopal there is an easy accessibility to the institutions, however that was not the case in Shivpuri and Rajgarh as paralegals of these two places come from various small villages so it thus becomes difficult for them to have a direct visit or interaction to lot of governing institutions. Keeping the same in mind along with the capacity of the group we designed the guided fieldwork and based on the same there are some individual and group assignments that were given to the paralegals to do between the two guided fieldworks.

The guided fieldwork was designed in a way that the paralegals should learn doing things on the field with support of CSJ's team members. The paralegals were made to visit relevant authorities and local institutions as a crucial component of the guided fieldwork.

Guided fieldwork 1 and Assignment

1. Visit to childline- The paralegals were taken to the childline where they were provided an opportunity to ask the staff members about the functioning of the childline and how it is benefiting in curbing violence against child rights violations.

2. Legal Awareness- In the presence of our trainers' paralegals were asked to do an awareness around the acts that they learnt during the training programmes using and slogans as a tool for awareness camps.

Inter modular Guided Fieldwork I

3. Tracking a case and application of laws- In the last assignment they were asked to cut newspaper clipping which should highlight/indicates any child rights violations taken place in their area. So, it was discussed how to analyze the case which involves violation of any kind. The focus was on the skill which needs to be built as in how

4. Reinforcing information on RTIs- Their knowledge and information regarding RTI were reinforced. They were previously asked to file an RTI pertaining to the cases or issues where they want information. In this guided fieldwork some of the paralegals have filed the RTI and awaiting the responses, there were few who were having difficulties and thus they asked the trainers about the same.

Reviewing home assignments-

This guided fieldwork and the subsequent assignments were interlinked as first there were dissemination of information in the forms of information, exposure and then they were given sets of assignments as homework which they were supposed to do in the meantime until we meet next. Once they finish this and come for the next guided fieldwork their queries regarding things were resolved and then additional information were given to them and asked to do it again. Similarly, all activities were done by them following the same pedagogy of learning and reflection.

Assignment 1-

1) Every participant was asked to follow a local newspaper of their area, where they need to follow an incident or series of incidents where they found that there has been a violation of child rights.

In related to this incident, they need to make a collage of all the news they would come across, and make an analytical note based on their own individual analysis. Also, participants need to find out important witnesses and other important things which are important to prove that the incident had taken place.

2) Each participant was asked to do a police station visit, where they would go with one complainant. They would be a silent observer who would accompany the complainant. They would need to make an experience note of their visit to the police station highlighting the police behaviour and treatment with the complainant.

3) Each participant was asked to draft an RTI in related to the problems where they want an information to further progress of the work. The detail regarding the RTI will be discussed later in the next meeting. The input on how to draft an RTI has already been given to the participants.

4) Participants was asked to write a script on JJ, POCSO and police atrocity based on their experience and witnesses.

5) Each participant was asked to make a list of journalists. Additionally, they were asked to make a list of folk artists of their area.

Inter modular Guided fieldwork II

1. Street plays in the bastis- The paralegals were made to do street plays in different bastis which were familiar to them. The idea was to reinforce the inputs that were imparted to them during communication as a tool for awareness and a paralegal should be equipped with these tools methods for conducting any such awareness programmes in future.

2. Fact finding under the guidance of trainers- Each group was assigned to go certain places in the city, where they would come across children who needs care and protection. The idea was that the paralegals should go there talk to them and collect relevant facts from them and make a report of it.

3. Writing a fact-finding report- The next day dealt with the discussion around how to make fact finding report and things should be kept in mind while doing the same.

4. Client counselling- The paralegals were given a client counseling demo and then they were given two cases where one person from a group was asked to perform the role of a client and the other one was asked to perform the role of a counselor.

All the activities and exposures incorporated as a part of the training ensured the involvement of the paralegals and made them visit and revisit their work as and when required until they learn. In addition, the responsibilities and work of a paralegal should be continued while they work, and should be merged with the action. The emphasis was given equally on enhancing skills as well as information.

For instance, there are a lot of activities which were repetitive for the paralegals because the idea behind it was that the participants would able to understand the concept about it and the pedagogy followed.

Impact after these phases

The participants learnt when and which institutions to approach in case of any child rights violation. Making them visit different institutions made them more aware of the working of these institutions and doing grassroots research and advocacy.



Learning and Reflection

While getting involved on the issue of child rights and conduct trainings, we realized that there are gaps which needs to be filled. These were some of them which we addressed.

- **Involvement of Local**

Trainers - Involving more local trainers in the training events so that the volunteers get an opportunity to listen to different and varied views on same issues of child rights. Volunteers do understand properly and abled to engage more when the information is disseminated in their regional language or through the person they know. Additionally, two persons engaged at two different points would have different views regarding the same issue. Thus, it is best if both the viewpoints are taken together on the same forum to make the event as effective as possible.

- **Exposure visits** - Focus should be given on learning outside the room. Learning not only about laws but also about the use of laws related to various stakeholders was ensured. The idea was to increase engagement with stakeholders responsible for protecting child rights.
- **Pre-planning to reduce absenteeism of volunteers** – An event calendar should be designed and circulated prior to the training amongst all the partners who in turn shall communicate to all the volunteers well in advance so that the absenteeism of the volunteers is minimal.
- **Use of innovative training medium and techniques** - Additionally, using other mediums or techniques which would create interest in the volunteers to learn more about laws and legal proceedings and encourage them to participate in the training more effectively was another learning that emerged.

Reflection

The reflection of CSJ was based on the experience of working with these volunteers and engaging with them at different levels at different locations.

– This training has provided CSJ with some useful insights to identify gaps between the laws and its implementation on the ground. For instance, the design has been carried out differently in different locations depending on the volunteers. Volunteers in Bhopal found it easy in grasping the information and instructions that they got for doing the fieldwork. Also, in Bhopal which is an urban location the accessibility to local organizations are much easier than it is in other places situated in rural parts of Madhya Pradesh like Shivpuri and Rajgarh.

At a larger level, there is a need to work on issues of child rights violations with a holistic approach. . For instance, on some of the issues the present

is to work on creating legal awareness among the community about the issue at the same time activating institutions responsible for the major laws and acts which protects the rights of the children. There is also a need to be critical about the already existing laws and there is a need to be considerable about the fact that at the policy level, laws should be made with ‘rights based’ approach and not with the ‘welfare’ approach.

Conclusion

This paralegal capacity building training programme has trained almost 70 paralegals who are prepared to identify the violation of the rights of the children and are aware of possible measures to be taken in specific incidents. They are now able to disseminate legal information through awareness activities. Furthermore, they’ve now started doing grassroots research and advocacy in the form of FGDs, conducting interviews, surveys, basti visits so on and so forth.

Volunteers are now prepared to give primary legal aid and support to the victims of child rights violence. They are working with the rights based approach on multiple skills for fighting on violence against children. They can also identify the gaps in the laws enacted and its implementation on the ground. Regarding this, paralegals are now able to recognize the gap and work towards fulfilling those gaps like drafting applications to the relevant authorities and filing RTI on the issues where they need information. This also involves drafting other applications and creating evidences on matters which needs a paralegal to support their case. As mentioned in the above pages, it is also expected from the paralegals that they would be able to work on any case to the extent which is just limited to be appeared in the court, apart from that paralegals may support the lawyers in making their case strong or work as an individual and contribute to the social change through various other mediums.