

2013-14: Conferences/Meetings/Seminars/Workshops

Workshops:

Topic: Workshops on Domestic Violence for Judicial Officers of various districts in Maharashtra

Women's Studies Centre, ILS Law College, Pune, undertook three out of the five scheduled one-day workshops with judicial officers under the District Courts in this year. In October 2013, it sought permission of Hon'able Chief Justice of Bombay High Court, Shri. Mohit Shah, for conducting workshops in the districts of Beed, Latur, Sindhudurg, Raigad and Ratnagiri, in Maharashtra. Besides, judicial officers, other stakeholders such as lawyers, Protection Officers, Counsellors, and NGO representatives were also invited.

The location, schedule, and number of judges and other stakeholders of the five workshops is presented in the table below:

Sr no	Location	Date of workshop	No. of Judicial officers*	No. of other stake holders	Total No. of participants
1	Ratnagiri	11 th Jan 2014	16	19	35
2	Beed	16 th Feb 2014	31	11	42
3	Alibaug, Raigad	8 th Mar 2014	22	13	35
4	Oras, Sindhudurg	6 th April 2014	12	15	27
5	Latur	26 th April 2014	33	10	43

Background: The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005, has been a response of the state to protect human rights of women within the family/home. It has been formulated within the context of international human rights framework and guarantees rights under articles 14, 15 and 21 of the Indian Constitution. It is a civil law that aims at providing speedy remedies through protection and relief orders and mobilising multi-agency support mechanism. The judiciary plays a crucial role in driving the spirit of this gender-just law. Gender-sensitive interpretation of the law is therefore a pre-requisite for achieving its aims.

Objectives of the workshops:

1. Create an enhanced understanding of domestic violence in the broader context of gender-based violence and discrimination against women
2. Develop better clarity on the role that judges can play in the effective implementation of the Act

3. Build better understanding about concerns and difficulties faced by various stake holders such as Protection Officers, Service Providers etc. in making effective use of the Act, and suggest remedies.

Topics of the sessions:

The sessions facilitated during the day from 10.30am to 5.30pm included

1. Gender-based violence (GBV) and Domestic Violence (DV): its manifestations and impact on women
2. The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005(PWDVA): Role of the judiciary in implementation of the Act
3. Response from the higher judiciary to The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005
4. Difficulties faced in implementation of the Act – an interface with lawyers, service providers, protection officers, NGO members etc.

Mr. Anand Pawar, Executive Director, Samyak, Pune, Ms. Vidya Bal, renowned feminist and journalist from Pune, and Dr. Manisha Gupte, Founder Trustee of Mahila Sarvangeen Utkarsha Mandal, Pune, were resource persons on the topic 1 : Gender-based violence and Domestic Violence with inputs on cycle of violence from and Ms. Prasanna Invally, Programme Coordinator of Women's Studies Centre of ILS Law College in the various workshops. Dr. Jaya Sagade facilitated last three sessions on the PWDVA : the role of the judiciary, case law and difficulties faced by various stakeholders in its implementation.

The sessions were conducted in an interactive manner, using power point presentations and film clips.

The participants found the workshops insightful on legal aspects of the law – especially seeking greater involvement of Protection Officers, importance of protection orders, passing of interim and final orders and reliefs, implementing orders, dealing with breach of orders and using procedures for bringing about settlements. It was provided perspective on gender and patriarchy, and insights into the root causes of gender-based violence and moreover violence against women.