

**REPORT OF ASIAN SEMINAR
FOR LAW SCHOOLS**

on

**Delivery of Legal Services for
the Rural Poor and other
Disadvantaged Groups**

8 - 13 April, 1990
BANGALORE (INDIA)

NATIONAL LAW SCHOOL OF INDIA UNIVERSITY, BANGALORE
INTERNATIONAL COMMISSION OF JURISTS, GENEVA

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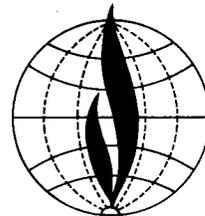
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C. number 82



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Preface

In the 1980's the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) organized a series of seminars in Asia, Africa and Latin America on the relationship between human rights and the process of development. One of the major conclusions of those seminars was that the poor and disadvantaged view law as a tool that is used to oppress them and not as tool that helps them secure their rights.

In view of this, the ICJ sought to establish links with legal services organizations that worked with the poor and disadvantaged groups. In Asia, seminars were organized on the subject of the legal services for the rural poor and other disadvantaged groups and the topics included the role of law schools in dealing with the problems of access to legal services of such groups. These seminars recommended that law school curricula should be reformed so as to awaken social concern in the students, to educate law students of their social responsibility as lawyers, in particular to defend the disadvantaged and oppressed in society.

As a follow-up the ICJ decided to hold a seminar on how this should be done and the role of law schools in providing legal services to the rural poor and other disadvantaged groups in Asia. This seminar was organized by the ICJ jointly with the National Law School of India University (NLSIU) in April 1990 in Bangalore, India. We are deeply grateful to Dr. Menon, Director of the NLSIU and to the staff and students for their efficient organization of the seminar. We were honoured by the presence of Mr. Justice Sabyasachi Mukharji, the late Chief Justice of India who inaugurated the Seminar.* We are also grateful to Mr. Justice S. Mohan, the Acting Governor of Karnataka, and to Mr. Justice P. N. Bhagwati,

* We were saddened to learn of his sudden death on 25 September 1990.

the former Chief Justice of India for having presided over the inaugural function.

The participants included law teachers, lawyers and law students from Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand. A number of observers were also present.

We hope that this publication which contains the conclusions and recommendations of the seminar will prove useful to law schools and organizations providing legal services to the poor and disadvantaged groups in the region.

The ICJ wishes to express its gratitude to the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA) and to Diakonisches Werk der EKD, Germany whose generous financial contributions made it possible for us to hold this seminar and publish the report.

March 1991

Adama Dieng
Secretary General
International Commission of Jurists

Introduction

This booklet incorporates the important conclusions of a week-long international workshop on the role of law schools in the delivery of legal services for the rural poor and other dis-advantaged groups. The participants were mostly law teachers working in different countries of South Asia (The list of participants is annexed at the end of the report). The exercise was part of the continuing promotional work on human rights of the International Commission of Jurists, co-sponsor of the Seminar.

One of the most neglected areas in higher education at least in India has been legal education. Even the objectives are not clear to many involved in policy planning in legal education. Admittedly it aims to train lawyers for the professional practice of law. The way it is organised and administered implies that there are other equally important goals as well. In fact, the system prevailing today in India does not distinguish between the professional goals and others. This has resulted in dilution of standards and the consequent inability on the part of professionals to respond to the challenges of poverty, inequality and denial of justice to large sections of the people. The challenge of professional legal education today is to maximise the social relevance of its content and to inject professional values and skills in its programmes. It is this aspect, more than anything else, which persuaded the National Law School of India University to join the ICJ in sponsoring the Seminar.

The Seminar began with the following specific objects among others:

- a. Assess existing perceptions and experience of law schools in the region in respect of legal services delivery systems;
- b. Exchange information on programmes related to legal services particularly for rural poor and disadvantaged sections of society;
- c. Explore opportunities for curricular and co-curricular innovations for promoting law school involvement in human rights issues generally and access to justice for the poor in particular;

- d. Identify alternate dispute resolution mechanisms in vogue in the region and to find out strategies for its standardisation and popularisation in the cause of easy, fair and inexpensive justice to the dis-advantaged rural poor;
- e. Inculcate constitutional and human rights values among law students through legal service activities that provide opportunities to learn new skills for better delivery of legal services;
- f. Examine the difficulties and barriers in law school involvement in delivery of legal services to the poor and to suggest ways for overcoming them; and
- g. Develop continuing relationships among law schools in the region for exchange of experiences in human rights issues and justice delivery systems for appropriate adoption in legal education.

Of course, as the Seminar progressed through the several committees during the six days of its proceedings, several other issues and concerns emerged. The conclusions and recommendations drafted by Mr. D. Ravindran who piloted the deliberations, provide the range of issues discussed and suggest a plan of action to the participating law schools and law teachers.

The students and teachers of the National Law School of India University found the experience rewarding and instructive. Following the Seminar, NLSIU took three major initiatives towards implementing some of the decisions. They include (a) the launching of a community-based law reform competition for the law schools on 'Women and equal justice', (b) the preparation of a manual on clinical legal education for use by teachers and students interested in legal aid activities, and (c) introduction of a series of clinical courses which students may offer in which they can combine service with education effectively. The existence in the University of a 'Legal Services Clinic' and a 'Centre for Women and the Law' did facilitate the launching of these initiatives at short notice. The University will be happy to share the experiences in these matters with all concerned in the coming years.

NLSIU would like to record its appreciation and thanks for the support extended by the ICJ and more particularly its dynamic, young law officers, Mr. D. J. Ravindran and Ms. Dilbur Parakh.

N. R. Madhava Menon
Director
National Law School of India University, Bangalore

Statement

by

D. J. Ravindran *

Hon. Chief Justice Of India, Hon. Governor of Karnataka, Hon. Justice Bhagwati, Hon. Chief Justice of Karnataka, Distinguished Members of the Bar and Guests. It is a great pleasure to welcome you all on behalf of the International Commission of Jurists.

The International Commission of Jurists is familiar with the city of Bangalore and the State of Karnataka. In 1968, in this city, the ICJ organised an International Conference on Freedom of Movement. In the 50's and 60's the ICJ had several State Branches in India and the only Branch that is still active is the Karnataka Branch.

We are greatly honoured by the presence of His Excellency, the Governor of Karnataka. I would like to convey to him and other distinguished guests the greetings from my Secretary-General and also his apologies for not being able to be present with you all this evening. Mr. Fali Nariman, Executive Committee Member of our Commission has also requested me to convey his apologies for not being able to be here this evening.

The theme of this Seminar is also not new to the ICJ. In 1962, a regional conference on 'Legal Education' was held in Singapore.

However, the context in which the present seminar is being organised is vastly different from the conferences and congresses of the 60's. Before, explaining the present context, let me say a few words about the International Commission of Jurists.

* Former ICJ Legal Officer for Asia

The ICJ was founded in the 50's to promote the understanding and observance of the Rule of Law and the legal protection of human rights. The Commission is limited to forty eminent jurists from all regions of the world. The activities of the Commission are carried out by the Secretariat based in Geneva under the Secretary-General. We at the Secretariat divide our work broadly in two categories-Promotional Work and Protection Work.

As part of our promotional work we organise seminars on human rights and related topics and this seminar is one among them.

Protection activities include:

- Sponsoring proposals within the United Nations and other international organisations for improved and conventions for the protection of human rights;
- Conducting studies or inquiries in to particular situations or subjects concerning the Rule of Law and publishing reports on them;
- Sending international observers to trials of major significance; and
- Intervening with governments concerning violations of human rights.

The ICJ has also established as its headquarters, a Centre for the Independence of Judges and Lawyers, to promote, the independence of these professions and to organise support by lawyers' organisations for victims of harassment and persecution.

In the 50's and in the 60's the ICJ was mainly involved in standard setting activities through conferences and congresses.

The ICJ's approach during this period was in keeping with the general confidence that existed among newly independent countries concerning the role of the legal profession in safeguarding human rights.

However, this optimism was rudely shattered when legal institutions crumbled due to economic, social and political crisis that engulfed most of the developing countries. This led ICJ to examine more closely the relationship between civil and political rights, and the process of development.

As a result the ICJ organised a series of regional and sub-regional seminars on the topic of development and human rights. In these seminars, the ICJ sought to analyse human rights violations from the perspective of those who are deprived of their basic rights.

One of the major conclusions of these seminars was that the rural poor who constitute the majority of the population in developing countries view law as a tool that is used by the oppressors to oppress them and not as a tool that helps them secure their rights.

This aspect of alienation of law and legal processes from the poor is posed in the following manner by Dr. Menon. To quote him,

'Has there been a collective institutional failure in denying justice to the poor? Or is it a failure of law itself to match up to the new values and aspirations of the Constitution? Or is it a deliberate refusal on the part of the poor to avail themselves of legal remedies even when provided free? Whatever be the answers to these questions, one thing is certain that the utilization of the legal system by the poor has been marginal all these years' (end of quote).

For the ICJ, the marginalisation of some sections of society from the legal system is a major concern, for it negates the very concept of the rule of law.

In view of this the ICJ sought to establish links with legal services organisations that help the poor and the disadvantaged to claim their basic rights. We organised seminars on the subject of legal services for the rural poor and other disadvantaged groups. The topics discussed in these seminars included the role of law schools in dealing with the access problems of the rural poor and other disadvantaged groups. These seminars concluded that 'law schools play a greater role in dealing with the access problems of the poor' by training the prospective lawyers and judges to develop a socially oriented and multidisciplinary approach to law.

The present seminar is part of this process of generating a discussion among law schools on their role in dealing with the access problems of the poor and the disadvantaged.

It is fitting that the National Law School of India University which is committed to look at law as an instrument for social change and human well-being is co-sponsoring this seminar. We are grateful to Dr. Menon for co-sponsoring this seminar and helping us organise it in Bangalore.

Before I explain the objective of this seminar, I would like to make some observations on the law schools in the region. These comments are based on our experience and hope it will not be considered too presumptuous.

In the last forty years an impressive body of human rights standards and jurisprudence have developed at the international level and by large they have remained outside the purview of law school curriculum

Even though there have been attempts by law schools at broadening of curriculum, use of interdisciplinary approach, production of new kinds of legal literature and examination of law in its social context, these changes were not sustained nor they have made any significant impact.

There is a bias in the legal education towards urban centered practice which tends to ignore the problems of the rural poor.

In some cases even the limited objective of providing professional skills is not achieved.

Research undertaken by law schools by and large do not contribute to influencing or shaping legal policy.

Nor has legal education and research made any significant contribution towards dealing with vital issues such as gender equality and sustainable development policy.

Similarly, legal scholarship and research has made very little contribution to innovating law and procedures to deal with complex problems faced by developing societies;

Even where innovations have taken place to deal with access problems of the poor and other disadvantaged groups, the law schools have remained peripheral to such developments. Here, we have in mind the Social Action Litigation that was developed by the Supreme Court of India.

Having made some critical comments on the law schools, to be fair to them, we should also acknowledge that in the last decade individual scholars and some law schools have developed innovative programmes to deal with access problems of the poor and other disadvantaged groups.

We are aware of some impressive programmes in Thailand and the Philippines and I am confident that we will discover more of them in this seminar.

Indeed, the purpose of this seminar is to provide a forum for exchange of such experiences and based on the sharing to evolve strategies for providing legal services to the rural poor and other disadvantaged groups. We are encouraged by the response this seminar has generated from various law schools in the region and confident that in the course of the next five days some concrete programme of action will evolve. We, the organisers look forward to a productive seminar. Thank you.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Law Schools and Access Problems of the Rural

Poor and other Disadvantaged Groups

Conclusions

Law schools have an obligation to promote and protect human rights and those constitutional principles that are in consonance with international human rights standards.

As part of this obligation law schools should provide or facilitate provision of legal services to disadvantaged groups so as to increase their access to justice.

Integration of legal services programmes in legal education would enable law schools to meet the legal needs of the rural poor and other disadvantaged groups.

Law schools while designing legal services programmes should take in to account poverty as well as other handicaps that impede access to justice.

Factors that impede access to justice, inter alia, are:

- socio-economic factors. e.g. feudal system, obscurantism and communalism;
- Persistence of inegalitarian agrarian structure and failure of agrarian reforms;
- Violence perpetrated against disadvantaged groups to prevent them asserting their rights;
- geographical isolation;

- legal illiteracy;
- complex and alien language of laws;
- lack of resources and support to overcome disabilities arising out of poverty;
- legal and other restrictions on mobilisation and involvement of the disadvantaged;
- manipulation of political power by the elite;
- bureaucracy's indifference to the problems faced by disadvantaged groups;
- inadequacy of social and economic reforms;
- use of law by the rich to pursue their interests;
- judiciary's lack of understanding of problems faced by the disadvantaged;
- non - involvement of disadvantaged groups in formulating policies that are relevant to them; and
- lack of political will.
- Law schools themselves might face opposition and hostility from vested interests for helping the disadvantaged to assert their rights.

Recommendations

1. A course entitled "Delivery of legal services to disadvantaged sections" should be included in the law school curriculum. This course may be optional.
2. Law schools should organise 'legal aid camps', to provide individual and group counselling. 'Legal aid camps', as they are known in South-Asia are bringing together and providing an opportunity for a large number of people to redress their grievances by meeting in person lawyers, judges, law teachers and government officials. Such 'camps' are normally conducted in rural areas.

Law schools should periodically organise 'camps' or alternatively help by collecting information on problems faced by the people in an area where a 'camp' is to be held and by bringing people to the 'camp'.

'Legal aid camps' help ensure accountability of local officials by enabling the people to voice their grievances directly to the concerned authorities and demand action on them. Law schools should play

a role in ensuring follow-up by monitoring the implementation of decisions taken or promises made at a 'camp'. Law schools should also critically assess the achievement of each 'camp'.

3. Law students and/or faculty members could provide counselling through mobile legal aid clinics.
4. Law schools should organise 'Lok Adalats' (people's courts). This is a programme which originated in India to provide speedy and inexpensive justice. Under this programme, Adalats (courts) are organized involving retired judges, Senior advocates, Law teachers and respected members of society to help conciliated settlement of disputes pending in courts and tribunals. It provides an opportunity for ordinary people to present their case in person and in a setting that is less intimidating. 'Lok Adalats' deal mostly with insurance and revenue cases and solutions are found with the help of officials and advocates or parties present. For example, in insurance cases, accident victims or their representatives negotiate their claim with the representative of the insurance company and the final settlement is recorded by the conciliators (judges) which is later presented and passed as an order of the Court. This enables the accident victims or their representatives to obtain quick relief as opposed to the long drawn proceedings in a court. 'Lok Adalats' are conducted by Legal Aid Boards with assistance of judges and lawyers of various levels.

Law schools should strengthen the effectiveness of 'Lok Adalats' by identifying areas where they could be held, preparing the people in such areas to present their cases properly with relevant documents, assisting in the organization with para-legal support services ensuring follow-up action wherever required.

5. Training law students and social activists to appear before judicial and quasi judicial forums to represent disadvantaged groups.

The countries in the region should adopt the Phillippine model where law students are allowed to practice in courts. Under Supreme Court Rule 138A, students who have completed their third year of the regular four-year prescribed law course and have enrolled in a recognized law school's clinical education programme may appear, without, compensation, in courts to represent indigent clients accepted by the legal aid clinic of the school. The students must have satisfactorily passed courses in civil and criminal procedure, evidence, special proceedings, trial techniques, legal forms and legal ethics.

Law schools in the Philippines as part of their legal clinic programmes train students for supervised appearances in courts to help indigent clients. For every five students at least one lawyer is expected to supervise them in all aspects of litigation including legal and judicial ethics. Students are made fully aware that the rules concerning privileged communication between attorney and client applies to communications made or received by them.

Cases to be accepted under the programme are screened by the law school as to merit, issues involved, necessity and financial status of the client. Students are given two credit points for their participation in this programme.

In countries where similar rules do not exist, the normal rule that any person can appear before a court with the permission of the respective court, should be used for enabling senior students to practice. However, the student as well as the client's case should be sponsored by the law school concerned and the student should be supervised by a lawyer. In almost all law schools practising lawyers are engaged as part time teachers and their help should be sought for supervising those students who appear in court.

6. Public Interest Litigation as it has been developed in India, should be made use of by law schools in the region to ensure implementation of various welfare laws on behalf of the poor.

Public Interest Litigation is a court proceeding initiated by an individual or an organisation on behalf of a class of persons who by reason of their disadvantaged positions are unable to approach the court.

Law schools by involving students and faculty should undertake research on problems faced by different disadvantaged groups and based on that research data initiate litigation on their behalf. Law schools should provide information on legal procedures to social action groups to help them to file public interest cases.

Law schools should also monitor the implementation of judicial orders and directions in public interest cases and study their impact on poverty jurisprudence and access issues.

7. Law schools should undertake studies on existing legal procedures that impede access and propose alternatives to such procedures.

Law schools should also collect information and documentation concerning judicial innovations that minimise access problems of disadvantaged groups.

8. Law schools where necessary should play a role in reforming existing laws.

Legal services programmes of law schools should be seen as a way of understanding law in action and should include where necessary initiatives to reform oppressive laws.

Law schools should analyse existing laws from the perspective of the disadvantaged and draft alternative bills for adoption by law makers.

Aspects of law reform should be included in law school curriculum to train students in analysing existing laws, drafting bills and campaigning for their adoption.

9. Law schools should undertake studies and research on the implementation of welfare laws and their impact on the lives of poor and disadvantaged groups. Based on such studies, law schools should persuade law makers and officials to implement such laws properly and plug any loopholes that contribute to their improper implementation.
10. Law schools should conduct legal literacy programmes. Such programmes should include bringing to the attention of disadvantaged groups, laws enacted for their benefit and judicial decisions of interest and benefit to them.

Law schools should also translate and publish in simple language laws that are relevant to disadvantaged groups.

11. Law schools should undertake training of para-legals who will live and work among disadvantaged groups, educate them about their rights, give them the necessary assistance to secure their rights and in appropriate cases, to contact a lawyer to take proceedings on their behalf. Law students can be trained to function as para-legals during their vacation.
12. Law schools should ensure that their faculty members are adequately equipped to undertake legal services programmes.
13. Law schools should give priority to the admission of eligible students from disadvantaged sections in their educational programmes.
14. Law schools should allocate part of their budget for para-legal activities.

Funds for legal services by law schools can also be sought from State legal aid boards, professional bodies and charitable organizations.

Law Schools, Legal Profession and the Judiciary

Conclusions

Law schools, by training members of the legal profession including judges, are vital for maintaining the legal system. However, there is very little systematic link between lawyers, judges and law schools. In some countries individual lawyers maintain links with law schools as part-time teachers.

Bar councils have also recommended standards of legal education in some countries on the basis of statutory authority.

The lack of adequate response by the legal profession, including the judiciary, to access problems of disadvantaged groups is a reflection on the legal education provided to them. The contribution of law schools in imparting professional attitudes and skills is marginal. Even activities such as moot courts do little towards generating professional skills.

As a result of legal education that does not equip lawyers to respond to the problems of the disadvantaged, the members of disadvantaged groups consider lawyers to be antagonistic to their interests.

Law schools, by training lawyers to understand the problems of disadvantaged groups, can play a role in bridging the gap between lawyers and disadvantaged groups, and also encourage the disadvantaged to make more use of the law, lawyers and courts to assert their rights.

By and large the legal profession has contributed very little to legal services programmes. The legal profession is reluctant to accept the idea of using para-professionals to deal with access problems.

Law schools have ignored the aspect of inculcating professional ethics in law students. This has resulted in lawyers at times exploiting and acting against the interests of members of disadvantaged groups.

Prevailing ethics that are rooted in individualism do not take in to account the social obligations of lawyers. As a result the role played by some lawyers in frustrating social justice is not considered contrary to the accepted code of ethics of the profession.

Bodies established by the legal profession to maintain professional standards and discipline often do not function satisfactorily and are afflicted with delays as well as complex procedures.

The enormous delay in disposing of cases that is common to most countries in the region prevents a greater number of legal aid cases being

taken up by courts. It also discourages disadvantaged groups from making use of the courts.

Recommendations

1. Law schools should make appropriate arrangements to maintain systematic and continuous links with members of the Bar and the Judiciary.
2. Law schools should provide continuing legal education for judges and lawyers through refresher courses, seminars and workshops. Law schools can seek the collaboration of adult and continuing education programmes of universities to assist in such programmes.
3. Latest developments in international human rights law should be included in continuing education programmes for judges and lawyers.

Training and education programmes for judges and lawyers should be relevant to their needs and tasks. Legal services delivery systems and their management in the interest of disadvantaged sections should form part of all judicial training courses.

4. Law schools should conduct special programmes to educate lawyers on their social obligation to help disadvantaged groups.
5. Law schools as part of their legal services programmes can assist members of disadvantaged groups to file complaints, if any, against members of the legal profession.
6. Law schools should undertake studies on the type of complaints made against lawyers and the response of the disciplinary bodies in dealing with such complaints. Based on such studies, law schools should make appropriate proposals to lawyers' organizations. Such studies can also be used as teaching material for teaching professional ethics to law students.
7. Law schools should strive to generate active and sustained participation of the lower judiciary in legal services programmes in court as well as in legal aid work outside the court system.
8. Law schools in order to maintain links with young lawyers, should invite them to participate in legal services programmes, sponsored by the law schools.

Law Schools and Alternative Dispute Settlement Systems

Conclusions

The legal system of the countries in the region are predominantly adversarial and there is a need to develop non-adversarial forums for settling disputes.

Alternative dispute settlement through mediation and conciliation would contribute to co-operation and solidarity among disadvantaged groups. However, non-adversarial forums should not lead to inferior justice for use only by the poor and other disadvantaged groups.

To develop and strengthen non-adversarial forms of justice, lawyers should be trained to have the necessary knowledge and skills to promote these forms.

Recommendations

1. The Philippines example of courts recognising disputes settled at the village level could be adopted by countries in the region. In the Philippines it is known as 'Barangay Justice' (village justice) in which parties in dispute have an option to settle the matter before the 'village head' and the courts recognise such a settlement.
2. Law schools should be involved in conciliation and mediation programmes. Their involvement in such programmes will train them to use law in a creative manner.
3. To train lawyers in non-adversarial forms of justice, law school curriculum should include courses dealing with them. Law students and faculty members should be trained in conducting mediation and conciliation programmes.
4. Law schools should undertake studies and publicise programmes that promote alternative dispute settlement. Such studies would enable more legal services organisations to incorporate mediation and conciliation in their programmes.
5. To provide first hand experience to law students, law schools should consider establishing campus mediation centres to settle disputes that arise among students, employees etc.

Law Schools and Government Agencies

Conclusions

In view of the expertise and influence of the law schools, they should play an active role in persuading their respective governments to recognise and deal with problems faced by disadvantaged groups.

Law schools should play a link role between disadvantaged groups, non-governmental organisations and government agencies. It is for the governments to recognise the fact that involvement of law schools in legal services programmes would ultimately help government agencies by reducing social inequalities and tensions as well as enhancing respect for the rule of law.

Recommendations

1. Governments recognising the importance of law schools' legal services programmes should provide adequate financial and other support.
2. In countries where statutory recognition is not given to legal aid programmes, law schools should campaign to persuade the respective governments to enact suitable legislation.
3. Law schools should conduct seminars with training programmes for government officials to make them aware of problems faced by disadvantaged groups.
4. Seminars and discussions should be organised in which law makers, officials and representatives of disadvantaged groups participate. This would create a dialogue between law makers, officials and representatives of disadvantaged groups and would also provide an opportunity for officials to understand the problems faced by disadvantaged groups.

Law Schools and Non-Governmental Organisations

Conclusions

The term Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO's) can be interpreted in a wider sense to include trade unions, peasant organisations and professional associations.

Law schools through NGO's should establish links with disadvantaged groups that work for the rural and urban economy and are in a position to contribute to social change.

NGO's in the region often face obstacles in the form of:

- legal and other restrictions to form their own associations
- restrictions on their access to disadvantaged groups
- opposition to their activities from vested interests
- lack of human and financial resources
- inadequate information and lack of knowledge concerning the working of the legal system
- lack of co-operation and co-ordination among them.

Relationship between law schools and NGO's should be based on:

- Common objectives to bring about social change
- non - dominance
- non - interference
- non - hierarchical and critical collaboration and
- mutual learning.

Law schools involvement with NGO's may at times lead to a dilemma whether to limit their role to providing information and education, or also engage in direct action. It is difficult to answer in the abstract. The answer must depend on specific circumstances. The risks involved in going beyond educational activities should be evaluated on a case by case basis.

Law schools' collaboration with NGO's will contribute to mutual education and law schools should be willing to learn from the experience of NGO's.

Recommendations

1. Each law school should develop appropriate ways to involve the NGO's in their legal services programmes.
2. Law schools should develop links with a wide variety of NGO's that are working with different disadvantaged groups. Law schools should also equip themselves to cater to specific needs of different NGO's and where possible should bring together NGO's to contribute to their networking.

3. Law schools should work for the abolition of restrictions imposed on NGO's in countries where such restrictions exist.
4. Law schools should encourage and help NGO's to integrate legal services programmes in health, education and other development programmes conducted by them.
5. Law schools should conduct courses and training programmes for NGOs. Law schools may confer diplomas or certificates to the participants.
6. Law schools should prepare model teaching and learning materials for use by NGO's.

Law Schools and the Media

The media have an important role to play in helping law schools reach out to disadvantaged groups.

Law schools in their legal services programmes should make use of radio, television and newspapers. They should also use other forms of communication such as posters, exhibitions and folk theatre.

Law students should be trained in legal journalism.

Law schools should conduct training programmes and courses for journalists and other media persons.

Teaching material for use in law schools should include media reports concerning violations of human rights.

Law Schools and International Human Rights Standards

Law schools should incorporate in their curriculum international human rights standards and jurisprudence.

International human rights standards should be included in continuing legal education programmes for judges, lawyers, administrators and law teachers.

Training programmes and courses on international human rights standards should be conducted for NGO's also.

Law schools should conduct research on domestic application of the United Nations' Covenants and Conventions on human rights*.

* A book containing the text of these documents can be attained free of charge from the UN Centre for Human Rights, Palais des Nations, Ch-1211, Geneva 10.

Law schools should campaign for ratification and implementation of U.N. Covenants and Conventions by the respective governments.

Law schools should play a role in monitoring the implementation of Covenants and Conventions ratified by the country concerned.

Law schools should conduct information campaigns to educate the public on international human rights standards.

Coordination and Cooperation among Law Schools

Following are some suggestions for increasing cooperation among law schools in the area of legal services to the disadvantaged sections.

1. Establishment of law teachers' associations (involved in clinical legal activities at the national and regional levels.
2. Coordination in planning and implementing legal services programmes at the national and regional levels.
3. Undertaking joint legal services projects.
4. Organisation of seminars and exchange visits to facilitate sharing of experience in conducting legal services programmes.
5. Joint research on legal services related topics.
6. Preparation of an Asian Directory of law schools and of clinical teachers.
7. Organization of community - based law reform projects including competitions among law students on specific themes relevant to disadvantaged groups.

Asian Seminar for Law Schools of Legal Services
for the Rural Poor and Other Disadvantaged Groups

8-13 April 1990

Bangalore, India

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National Law School of India University (NLSIU)

The National Law School of India is a University for legal studies and research set up in 1987 in Bangalore (S. India) by the organized legal profession (The Bar Council of India). Its mandate is to achieve excellence in professional legal education and to disseminate legal knowledge for the welfare and development of human beings everywhere.

The University has both under-graduate (B.A., LL.B. Hons.) and post-graduate (LL.M., M.Phil, LL.D.) programmes besides offering a series of continuing education courses for lawyers, judges, law teachers, administrators, corporate executives and social activists interested in the legal process. A specialised Centre for Women and Law working as part of the School, develops Women's Studies in jurisprudence and promotes gender justice.

The University publishes two annual journals - The National Law School Journal and the March of the Law - besides a variety of monographs and research papers on socio-legal problems.

The Legal Services Clinic (LSC) is a community service programme of the NLSIU intended to support the clinical legal education demands of the students while serving the legal needs of disadvantaged sections of the people.

The International Commission of Jurists

The International Commission of Jurists is a non-governmental organisation devoted to promoting throughout the world the understanding and observance of the Rule of Law and the legal protection of human rights.

Its headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland. It has national sections and affiliated legal organisations in over 50 countries. It enjoys consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, UNESCO and the Council of Europe.

Its activities include the publication of its Review, Newsletter and CIJL Bulletin; organising congresses, conferences and seminars; conducting studies or enquiries in to particular situations or subjects concerning the Rule of Law and publishing reports upon them; sending international observers to trials of major significance; intervening with governments or issuing press statements concerning violations of the Rule of Law; sponsoring proposals within the United Nations and other international organisations for improved procedures and conventions for the protection of human rights.

In 1980, the International Commission of Jurists was awarded the first European Human Rights Prize by the 21-nation Council of Europe, in 1984 the Wateler Peace Prize and in 1989 the Erasmus Prize.