

ANNUAL REPORT

2023 - 2024



**A DECADE SINCE ENACTMENT OF
LAWS ON SEXUAL VIOLENCE, SEXUAL
HARASSMENT AND TRAFFICKING:
STOCKTAKING AND EXCHANGE**

23rd to 25th August 2023

New Delhi



PARTNERS FOR LAW IN DEVELOPMENT

Annual Report (April 2023 -March 2024)

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Partners for Law in Development (PLD)

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Partners for Law in Development (PLD) is a non-profit legal resource group founded in 1998 that facilitates assertion of social justice and women's rights. Our work focuses on contexts of marginalization shaped by gender, sexuality, caste, culture, and poverty, to take into account the intersecting systems of oppression that diminish recognition and access to rights. We pursue our mission through three mutually complementary strategies – of building capacities, creating evidence-based knowledge, and information resources, alongside engaging with social policy at domestic and global levels. PLD is registered as a public charitable trust under the Indian Trusts Act, 1882 (registration no: 10514/ IV of 16-12-1998).

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PART II: ORGANISATIONAL UPDATE

The year 2023 marks the completion of 25 years of our organisational journey as PLD. In this period, our three pronged programmatic strategies of capacity development, knowledge creation and engagement with feminist discourses have evolved considerably, to encompass innovative approaches in response to the needs of changing contexts and the available technology. We celebrate our journey and the collaborations with the diverse stakeholders: at community, state, national and international levels, within civil society and the government, that sustained our growth. This report outlines activities carried out under each of PLD's core strategies in relation to the thematic areas: Sexual Harassment at the Workplace Law; Gender Based Violence and the Law; Gender, Consent and the Law; Adolescent Concerns and Early Marriage; and the CEDAW - in the financial year (April 2023-March 2024). The first part highlights the programmes, followed by the second part relating to the organisational information.

PART I: PROGRAMME UPDATES

I. Sexual Harassment at Workplace (SHW) and the Law

(i) Capacity Development:

The passage of ten years since the enactment of the sexual harassment at the workplace law provided the impetus for carrying out a series of trainings. In response to demand from the civil society as well as other stakeholders, these trainings served to refresh, invigourate and strengthen individuals and organisations after the Covid induced hiatus. Most of the trainings conducted were for Internal Committee and Local Committee members across cities, and besides strengthening capacities, enabled us to map trends, queries and importantly, gaps in the implementation of the law. The list of trainings conducted in this period are clustered for different stakeholder groups and states in tables below.



**ORGANISED BY THE WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION,
GOVERNMENT OF BIHAR, IN COLLABORATION WITH UNFPA BIHAR & PCI INDIA**

Sr. No.	Government Departments	No. and profile of participants	Date
1.	Road Construction department, Food and Consumer Protection Department, Rural Works Department, Labour resource Department, Cooperative Department, BC and EBC Welfare Department, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes Welfare Department, Home Department, Bihar Police Headquarters (Personnel & Welfare Division)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 28 ● IC members and Staff members 	June 19, 2023
2.	Department of Science and Technology, Women and Child Development Corporation, Bihar Mahadalit Vikas Mission, Bihar Police Headquarters, Building and Construction Department, Office of the Chief Electoral Officer, Department of Information and Technology, Labor Resource Department, Parliamentary Affairs Department,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 36 ● IC members and staff members 	June 20, 2023
3.	Minor Water Resources Department, Cabinet Secretariat, Panchayati Raj Department, Transport Department, Industry Department, Urban Development and Housing Department, Directorate of Social Security, Directorate of Social Security, Directorate of Social Security, Directorate of Provident Fund, Social Welfare Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 35 ● IC members and staff members 	June 21, 2023
4.	Audit Directorate, Finance Department, Finance Dept, Education Dept, Prohibition, Excise & Registration Department, Department of General Administration, Rural Development Department, Revenue and Land Reforms Department, Mines and Geology Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 36 ● IC members and staff members 	22 June 2023
5.	Land Acquisition Department (Revenue and Land Reforms Department), Agriculture Department, Minority Welfare Department, Vigilance Department, Public Health Engineering Department, Department of Art, Culture and Youth, Sugarcane Industry Department, Department of Energy, and Tourism Department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 29 ● IC members and staff members 	23 June 2023
6.	Planning and Development department, Department of Law, Department of water resources, Department of Commerce and Tax, Department of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Home department, Disaster management department, Information and Public Relations Department, Department of Animal and Fisheries Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 28 ● IC members and staff members 	24 June 2023
Total participants			192



MULTI-CITY TRAININGS ORGANIZED COLLABORATIVELY WITH PARTNER ORGANISATIONS

Sr. No.	Organisers/ Date/ Location	Participant's profile
7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLD with Indian School of Development Management • September 15, 2023 • New Delhi (Virtual) 	<p>Total - (116) Profile by role: Students of Indian School of Development Management</p>
8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLD • November 18, 2023 • New Delhi 	<p>Total - (21) Profile by role: Internal committee members (13), Members of Management (5), Teacher (1), Counselor (2), Lawyer (1) Profile by organisation: IIT Delhi; CEOEDECON Jaipur; Sambhaavnaa Institute of Public Policy and Politics; HAQ Centre for Child Rights; IIT Madras; Jagori; Thomson Press India Ltd; Institute for Research and Growth; Butterflies; Nirantar Trust; Kamud Bhushan Educational Society ; Self-Employed; North East Network; Advocate</p>

9.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLD with Sakhi Women's Resource Centre • December 20, 2023 • Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala 	<p>Total - (19) Profile by role: Assistant Commissioner(1), Translator (1), Principal Scientist (1), Chief Manager (2), Law Officer (1), Assistant Director (1), Development Officer (1), Scientific Assistant (2), State Coordinator (1), Lecturer (1), Project Coordinator (2), State Consultant (1), Lawyer (2), Assistant General Manager (1), Medical Officer (1) Profile by organisation: Central GST and Central Excise Commissionerate, TVM; Senior Hindi Translator; ICAR-Central Tuber Crops Research Institute, Sreekariyam; State Bank of India, Thissur/ Kollam; Don Bosco Veedu Society; Childline, TVM; National Bank For Agriculture And Rural Development, TVM; National Centre for Earth Science Studies; Kerala Mahila Samakhya Society; Kerala University, Kariyavattom; Animal Husbandry; Food Corporation of India; Lakshmi Bai National College of Physical Education, Kariyavattom; Independent Advocate.</p>
10.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLD with Bailancho Saad • March 2, 2024 • Panaji, Goa 	<p>Total - (47) Profile by role: Counselor (1), Professor (14), Teacher (9), Project Coordinator (5), Women's group representative(2), Project Officer (8), Caregiver (1), Lawyer (4), Activist (2), Consultant (1) Profile by organisation: Sharda Mandir School (Kadamba); Department of Women Studies, Goa University; MES Vasant Joshi College of Arts and Commerce; Ezekiel Methodist School; Government College of Arts, Science and Commerce (Quepen); Nirmala Institute of Education (Panaji); Goa College of Home Science; Our Lady of the Rosary High School (Dona-Paula); Government College (Khandola); Dhupe College of Arts and Science; D.M.S. College of Research Centre; Fr. Agnes College; PES College; The Muslim Women Association; Wow Foundation; Adolescent Health and Well Being; UDANT; Navjyoti Rehabilitation Centre; Zindagi; Bailancho Saad; MAPUSA; Comunidade; NABARD; WYMCA - Women's Support Forum</p>
11.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PLD with Bailancho Saad • March 3, 2024 • Pernem, Goa 	<p>Total - (29) Profile by role: Primary and middle school teachers from Pernem taluka Profile by organisation: School teachers from areas such as Pedne; Khajane; Hasapur; Mandrem; Poraskade; Kasarwarne; Tiwade; Chawderwada; Tambose; Talarn; Sakral; Chandel; Dadeechiwada; Agarwada</p>
Total participants		232

Sexual Harassment at Workplace Resource Pool (SHARP)

PLD anchors a cohort of about 25-30 practitioners working on the sexual harassment law, called SHARP. This innovative approach to capacity development is a peer learning and exchange platform, that besides supporting each other through case-work and queries, also holds online discussions on common concerns. The following meetings took place in 2023:

Sr. No.	Meeting theme	Date
1.	To discuss challenges, and problems faced by practitioners and SHARP members and discuss strategies to address them	April 15, 2023
2.	To discuss Innovative Strategies and Approaches adopted by members	June 10, 2023
3.	A preliminary discussion on mental health concerns and the possible responses within the workplace	August 12, 2023

(ii) Knowledge creation and dissemination:

In tandem with the capacity development workshops, new and updated resources were produced on the sexual harassment law in English and Hindi. These are listed below, and each has been widely disseminated across the country.

Sr. No.	Title of the resource material	Relevance
1.	Booklet on Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Hindi) (2023) [Booklet] Click here to access	The 4th edition of the booklet on workplace sexual harassment was brought out in August 2023 and holds significance as the only comprehensive resource on the subject in Hindi.
2.	Reflections on the Challenges Relating to Implementation Of The Sexual Harassment Of Women At Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition And Redressal) Act, 2013 [Article] Click here to access	This was achieved through training sessions and workshops as well as the distribution of information materials such as posters and brochures. Through this, PLD has accumulated five years' worth of documentation through which they now reflect on the law and its implementation.
3.	A guide to complaint and the inquiry procedure under the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (English, Hindi) (2023 - 24) [Infographics] (Hindi / English)	An easy-to-understand guide on the workplace sexual harassment law.
4.	Frequently Asked Questions - The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (English, Hindi) (2023 - 24) [Booklet] (Hindi / English)	A collection of frequently asked questions answered in this pocket-sized information guide.

The 4th edition of the booklet on sexual harassment at workplace law, released in August 2023, stands out as the only comprehensive resource on the subject in Hindi. The first edition was published in 2014, shortly after the law was enacted. Over 4,000 copies have since been

distributed across Hindi-speaking regions. The latest edition, with 700 copies printed—400 by PLD and 300 by UNFPA Bihar—continues to serve as a crucial resource for capacity building and legal reference.

(iii) Contributing to feminist discourses

Through this paper by us, Reflections on the Challenges Relating to Implementation Of The Sexual Harassment Of Women At Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition And Redressal) Act, 2013, as well as panelist and participant in the following meetings, we engaged with and contributed to sectoral understanding on the issues:

II. Gender Based Violence and the Law

Having been part of decades of engagement with the sexual violence laws, especially the period of law reforms in 2013, we held a commemorative National Meet to take stock of a decade of the laws relating to sexual violence, harassment and trafficking; and additionally, conducted trainings for first responders and grassroots workers on laws relating to violence against women.

PLD was a moderator for a panel discussion for an event “10 Years of PoSH Act: Taking Stock from All Stakeholders, organised by the High Commission of Canada and SEWA Delhi on November 29, 2023”.

PLD was also a member of the discussion organised by Centre for Law and Policy Research (CLPR) virtually, held on January 13, 2024 about the Supreme Court's recent decision in Aureliano Fernandes v. State of Goa and implementation of the Sexual Harassment at the Workplace Law.



(i) Dialogue and exchange:

Commemorating a decade of laws on sexual violence, sexual harassment and trafficking: Stocktaking and Exchange (August 23-25, 2023)

The National Meet brought together perspectives from across contexts to bring out the interplay between law, society, and the state from a feminist perspective. It was attended by 70 participants, comprising first responders, academicians, lawyers, practitioners, One Stop Centre staff, and researchers from 10 Indian States (Assam, Delhi, Haryana, Kerala, Karnataka, Maharashtra Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal). The rich discussion enabled a mapping of concerns and trends relating to implementation of the law, and provided a platform for exchange of experiences of participants from different states and regions, from across the country.



(ii) Capacity Development

Community based trainings for first responders:

Sr. No.	Event details	Participant's profile
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CEQUIN• October 30 - 31, 2023	Total - (30) Women's collective members
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• CEQUIN• November 13 - 14, 2023	Total - (15) Women's collective and community members
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Transform Rural India Foundation (TRIF)• February 23 - 24, 2024	Total - (50) State Livelihood Rural Mission gender council members
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PLD with Vanangana• March 22, 2024• Chitrakoot, Uttar Pradesh	Total - (35) Women survivors of violence ("sangharshel mahilaen")
Total participants		130



III. Gender, Consent and the Law

In the context of a violation-centric binary approach to consent, PLD's work on consent has intentionally adopted a preventive approach. Its focus on the self, the impact of location and power and the influences that shape decisions and actions, enables reflection and conversations on many aspects of their lives, including on consent and rejection. To widen outreach with youth, we initiated film symposiums in colleges, across several states, as listed below.

Sr. No.	Film Symposium details	Participant's profile
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Law University, Delhi November 7, 2023 	Total - (80) Law students and faculty members
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> B. R. Ambedkar University, Delhi December 10, 2023 	Total - (50) Students of gender studies, sociology, media studies and history departments
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loyola College of Social Sciences, Thiruvananthapuram; Sakhi Women Resource Centre, Thiruvananthapuram December 19, 2023 	Total - (50) Students and faculty members of psychology, gender studies and women studies departments
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ParimalLab (Pracademic Action Research Initiative Multidisciplinary Approach Lab); MP Police and Department of Women and Child Development; Eka Collective, Bhopal January 5, 2024 	Total - (300) Police officials, UN Women, WCD officials, civil society organisations, anganwadi and community workers
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bhopal School of Social Sciences, Bhopal; Eka Collective, Bhopal January 6, 2024 	Total - (100) Students of psychology department and civil society
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai January 19, 2024 	Total - (40) Students of Centre for Health and Mental Health
7.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Visva-Bharati, Shantiniketan February 28 - 29, 2024 	Total - (203) Students of Comparative Religion studies, Sangeet Bhawan, English, Bengali, Anthropology, Education, Drama, Philosophy, French, Mass Communication, Social Work, Vinaya Bhawan, Physics, Geography, Law, Maths, Botany, Computer Science, teaching and non-teaching staff.
8.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nirmala Institute of Education, Goa; Bailancho Saad, Goa March 4, 2024 	Total - (100) Students of Bachelors in Education
9.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Association of Women in Radio & Television (IAWRT) March 9, 2024 	Total - (60) Students from National Institute of Fashion Technology, Panchkula (Haryana); lawyers, filmmakers and film students
Consent Workshops		
10.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai February 19, 2024 	Total - (32) Students of Bachelors in Social Work
Total participants		1,015



IV. Adolescent Concerns and Early Marriage

In the last five years, PLD’s three published studies on the theme have been widely appreciated for offering evidence and insight into how laws designed to protect rights of girls, are used by parents selectively to retaliate against elopements. The findings of PLD’s studies on child and early marriage (CEM) and adolescent sexuality have significantly reframed the role of law in protecting against early marriage, and indeed, questioned its centrality in addressing the issue. Conversations with civil society stakeholders and writings are the medium of sustaining engagement with discourse setting on the issue, which primarily emphasizes affirmative action and welfare support for girls from vulnerable contexts, instead of punitive approaches. To continue, widen and deepen discourse, linkages are forged with existing and potential allies, as indicated by the following:

(i) Participation in conferences and meetings:

- PLD participated in several meetings in this period, which include - ‘Manthan’ a retreat organised by AJWS and Jagori Grameen from October 27-30, 2023; Instrumentalist to Empowering – A Feminist Approach to Early and Child Marriage, organised by Nirantar and AJWS on January 30, 2024; we were part of the advisory group for the UN Women report on “Legislating And Enforcing The Minimum Age Of Marriage: [A Comparative Study Of Experiences And Lessons Learned In Ending The Legalization Of Child Marriage](#)”; and we co-organised together with RESURJ and allies

- Hidden Pockets, Education as a Vaccine (Nigeria) a virtual event at the Women Deliver conference 2023, on the theme of 'Does criminalization mean justice? A feminist learning session on ways to address sexual and reproductive rights violations.' in which PLD was part of the interactive dialogue on July 18, 2023.
- PLD anchors the National Coalition Advocating for Adolescent Concerns (NCAAC), and held a meeting on July 13, 2023 to discuss concerns relating to adolescent girls that were emerging from the field. Among the concerns were - natal family violence including forced marriage by families, digital safety and mental health – which require building of synergies in relation to documentation and interventions.



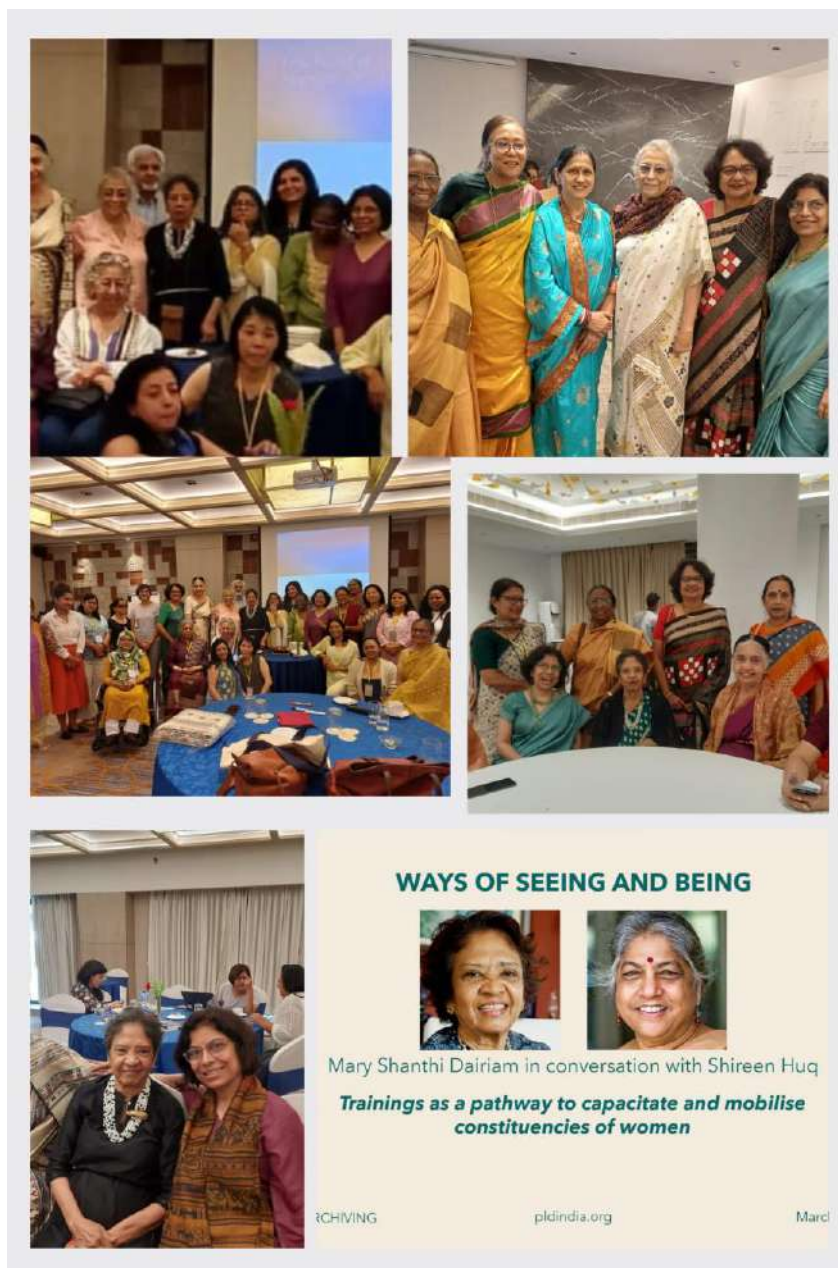
V. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

(i) Discourse setting and exchange:

PLD is a leading resource group on CEDAW, and as part of celebrating history of CEDAW related work in India and South Asia, the following two activities were carried out.

Celebrate Our Journeys: The Legacy of Accountability through CEDAW in South Asia:

To honor Shanthi Dairiam's contribution to India and South Asia, PLD co-organized a meeting with IRAW-AP and FWLD in Nepal on August 31 – September 1, 2023. The convening brought together activists, researchers, and legal practitioners in the field of gender equality, to reinvest in and reinforce substantive equality approaches to gender justice. Shanthi's book on the journey of IRAW Asia Pacific, which she founded, was released at the event.



(ii) Knowledge creation:

Audio video conversation with Shanthi Dairiam: PLD produced a video conversation of Shanthi Dairiam, the founder of IWRAW-Asia Pacific whose efforts rooted CEDAW activism in civil society in India and South Asia. This conversation anchored by Shireen Huq with Shanthi Dairiam is part of PLD’s video series called, Ways of Seeing and Being, available on our Feminist Law Archives website.

VI. Impact of PLD's work

PLD has conducted trainings and meetings across various themes which involved reaching out to about 1,569 – 1,700 participants. Each of the thematic areas on which events were organized are listed below with the registered number of participants and their work profiles. In 2023, our studies were cited by the following articles:

- Raj, Suhasini (2023), "India Struggles to Eradicate an Old Scourge: Witch Hunting", The New York Times, May 13, 2023.
- Consensual Teen Sex Is Real Complicated in India, Vice, May 26, 2023.
- PLD study 'why girls run away to marry' referenced in Indian Express editorial on July 28, 2023.

PART II: ORGANISATIONAL UPDATE

- We undertook a documentation of PLD's journey over 25 years in discussion with our partners and stakeholders to commemorate the milestones and achievements over this period.
- Team composition in the year:

Head (Research and Trainings)	Madhu Mehra
Chief Functionary	Nandini Narula
Administration and Finance	Subash K.B. Vipin Kumar Ankur Kashyap
Programmes (Training and Research)	Pratibha D'Mello Shivangi Shikhar Renu Singh Sagrika Rajora Monika (Consultant)
Consultants	Ratna Appender Bina Paul Smriti Nevatia Shivam Rastogi
Interns	Arushi Singh Shruti Jain
Programme Support	Kishore Tirkey