



# ANNUAL REPORT 2025-26



**PARTNERS FOR LAW IN DEVELOPMENT**  
**Annual Report (April 2025 - March 2026)**

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Author: Partners for Law in Development 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 I: PROGRAMME UPDATES

This report provides an overview of activities undertaken in 2025-26, clustered under our thematic focus areas: Sexual Harassment at the Workplace, Adolescent Concerns and Early Marriage, Feminist Law Archives, concluding with participation of PLD in convenings and meetings as panellist. The report is divided into two parts: part one pertains to programme updates, while part two pertains to organisational updates.

### I. Sexual Harassment at the Workplace Law

A safe, equitable, and dignified workplace remains a key concern, and we continue to invest in efforts to deepen and expand the implementation of the law on sexual harassment prevention. We convene dialogues to strengthen understanding of the law, explore both challenges and breakthroughs in its implementation, and, importantly, bring together practitioners and change agents in peer learning and exchange communities. Through these communities, we seek to map the landscape of experiences and emerging trends, strengthen practice through collective learning and exchange, and, in turn, contribute to a broader ecosystem of change.

#### (A) Knowledge production and outreach



#### कार्यस्थल पर महिलाओं के यौन उत्पीड़न से सुरक्षा के लिए जागरूकता पुस्तिका का विमोचन

झुंझुनू। महिलाओं को कार्यस्थल पर यौन उत्पीड़न से सुरक्षा के उनके अधिकारों के प्रति जागरूक करने के उद्देश्य से सोमवार को कलेक्टर सभागार में जिला कलेक्टर रामावतार मोषा द्वारा जागरूकता पुस्तिका का विमोचन किया गया। पुस्तिका के विमोचन के अवसर पर महिला अधिकारिता विभाग के उप निदेशक विप्लव न्यौला ने जानकारी दी कि जिला कलेक्टर के निदेशन में यह नवाचार किया गया है। उन्होंने बताया कि यह पुस्तिका कार्यस्थल पर महिलाओं के साथ होने वाले यौन उत्पीड़न को रोकने, उनसे जुड़ी कानूनी प्रक्रियाओं की जानकारी देने तथा महिलाओं को उनके अधिकारों के प्रति सजग करने के उद्देश्य से तैयार की गई है। इस पुस्तिका के निर्माण में एनजीओ 'पार्टनर्स फॉर लॉ इन डेवलपमेंट' (पीएलडी) का विशेष सहयोग रहा है। इसमें कार्यस्थल पर महिलाओं के साथ होने वाले लैंगिक उत्पीड़न की परिभाषा, शिकायत प्रक्रिया, आन्तरिक समितियों की भूमिका, 'कार्यस्थल पर लैंगिक उत्पीड़न (निवारण, प्रति एवं प्रतिरोध) अधिनियम, 2013' के महत्वपूर्ण प्रावधानों को सरल भाषा में समझाया गया है। उप निदेशक न्यौला ने यह भी बताया कि 16 अप्रैल को सुबह 10:30 बजे सूचना केंद्र सभागार में एक आमुखीकरण कार्यशाला आयोजित की जाएगी। इस कार्यशाला में जिला स्तरीय कार्यालयों में गठित आन्तरिक समितियों के अध्यक्ष, सदस्य, समस्त जिला स्तरीय अधिकारीगण एवं ब्लॉक सुपरवाइजर शामिल होंगे। कार्यशाला के दौरान जिले में गठित 3 हजार से अधिक आन्तरिक समितियों को यह जागरूकता पुस्तिका निशुल्क वितरित की जाएगी, ताकि वे अपने-अपने कार्यालयों में महिला कर्मचारियों को जागरूक कर सकें।

In 2014, soon after the enactment of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (SHWW Act), we produced a comprehensive legal primer in Hindi to complement initiatives aimed at building the capacities of grassroots functionaries and stakeholders. Now in its fourth edition (2023), the legal primer - *Karyasthal Par Yaun Utpeedan* continues to serve as a resource for district officials, government institutions, social workers, and lawyers at the grassroots level. It remains in demand and serves to support training and capacity-building workshops.

*Reprinted by the WCD Rajasthan, Jhunjhunu district, the legal primer was widely distributed to government functionaries and public institutions.*

*Source: Dainik Udyog Aas Paas, April 8 2025, Jaipur.*

At the initiative of the District Collectors and the District Women Empowerment Officers of the Rajasthan Women and Child Development (WCD) Department in Jhunjhunu and Sikar districts, nearly 5,000 copies of the legal primer were reprinted. We are honoured by this collaboration, which enabled the reprinting and distribution of the primer among government functionaries, departments, frontline workers, and public institutions. This effort supports the implementation of the law at the grassroots level in Jhunjhunu and Sikar districts, whose departments re-printed and distributed the legal primer in April and July 2025, respectively.

**(B) Capacity building and advisory support:**



In addition to conducting training programmes on request for organisations seeking to strengthen institutional implementation of and compliance with the SHWW Act, we provide technical assistance and advisory support on the establishment and functioning of Internal Committees, inquiry processes, annual reporting requirements, and policy development. We continued to respond to such requests during the year, alongside conducting the following training workshops.

Sr. No.	Collaborating Partners and Location	Participant's Profile
1.	Centre for Pastoralism: CFP 2.4.25	<b>Total:</b> 30+ <b>Profile by role:</b> staff
2.	Centre for Pastoralism: CFP 2.4.25	<b>Total:</b> about 10 <b>Profile by role:</b> IC members
3.	Delhi Bible Institute 10.12.25	<b>Total:</b> 75+ <b>Profile by role:</b> Administrative and other staff

### **(C) Cross Sectoral Multistakeholder Exchange and Dialogue Initiative**

PLD has initiated a dialogic process with strategic stakeholders across diverse sectors to facilitate knowledge exchange, consolidate emerging learnings, and advance conversations on the prevention of sexual harassment and the creation of safe and equitable workplaces. The initiative seeks to strengthen cross-sectoral communities of practice and foster an enabling ecosystem for change through multisectoral practitioner leadership.

During this period, conversations were initiated with practitioners from the cinema and performing arts sector, the legal profession, and the unorganised sector. Strategic practitioners from these fields were engaged to map key concerns and identify pathways for initiating sector-specific dialogues. This process aims to deepen understanding of sectoral realities, identify opportunities for change, and strengthen the knowledge base on sexual harassment prevention and workplace safety across diverse work contexts.

Separately, we continue to anchor SHARP, a diverse community of practitioners engaged in sexual harassment prevention and response, comprising Internal Committee members and organizational advisors. The network serves as an active platform for peer learning, knowledge exchange, and problem-solving, providing practitioners with opportunities to seek guidance, share experiences, and navigate complex issues encountered in their practice.

## **II. Early Marriage & Adolescent Concerns**

Building on PLD's evidence-based studies, our focus is to advance dialogue, foster learning, and socialise findings across diverse contexts. The processes of outreach, evidence gathering, and collective meaning-making affirm that empowering adolescent girls and expanding resources and opportunities for girls from marginalised communities

are among the most effective strategies for addressing the drivers of and ending child, early, and forced marriage and unions (CEFMU).

The findings from PLD's studies, together with evidence emerging from diverse contexts, highlight the need to address the structural inequalities that shape girls' lives and opportunities as a pathway to tackling early marriage. These efforts must be complemented by laws that respond to the varied trends and contexts of early marriage, while respecting the agency and participation of girls in legal processes. Our participation in and contribution to collective dialogue and planning processes on these themes during the year are outlined below.

**(A)** As a member of the Child, Early and Forced Marriage and Unions Coalition and the Sexuality Working Group (CEFMU & SWG), PLD contributed significantly to a series of global convenings organised by the CEFMU & SWG in collaboration with the UNFPA, through both planning processes and participation in events towards this end. Key engagements included:

- Panellist in the pre-convening for the global consultation, *Towards a Rights-Based Approach to CEFMU Laws*, held on October 8, 2025.
- Panellist in the global convening, *Towards a Human Rights-Based Approach to CEFMU Laws*, held at the United Nations on November 17-18, 2025.
- Panellist in the global consultation organised by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) *to share lessons learned and promising practices for preventing and responding to child, early, and forced marriage*. The consultation was convened to inform the development of action-oriented guidelines mandated under Human Rights Council Resolution 53/23 on ending and preventing child, early, and forced marriage.



- Panelist at the webinar held on March 26, 2026 to present the guidance points on which consensus was forged through the yearlong convenings,

titled: *New guidance grounded in evidence, adolescent girls lived realities and human rights principles.*

**(B)** PLD also participated as a panellist in the webinar, *Good Practices in Child Marriage Laws and Their Implementation*, organised by Equality Now and the UNFPA–UNICEF Global Programme to End Child Marriage on November 13, 2025. The presentation examined lessons learned in strengthening child marriage laws and their implementation, while exploring legal approaches that balance protection with the principle of adolescents' evolving capacities and progressive autonomy.



**(C)** In addition, PLD participated as a panellist in the National Consultation, *Reimagining Adolescence: Rights, Agency and Protection*, organised by Nirantar in Delhi on December 22-23, 2025. The presentation traced the evolution of laws that recognise adolescents as rights-bearing individuals and examined the legal and policy position of those navigating the transition between childhood and adulthood. The discussion highlighted the need for frameworks that acknowledge adolescents' agency while ensuring appropriate support and protection.

**(D)** We continue to anchor the National Coalition Advocating for Adolescent Concerns (NCAAC), a platform that holds the space for sustained conversation on judicial and legal developments and emerging concerns relating to adolescents, learnings from grassroots realities, and collective action.

### III. Feminist Law Archives

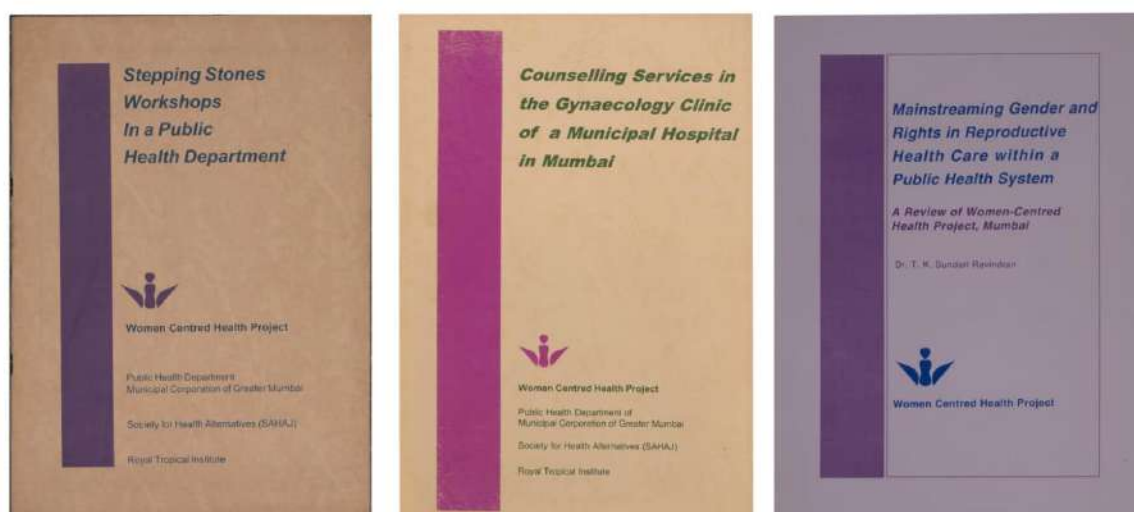
The archiving of rights-based activism by the women's movement, and its engagement with law and culture through diverse forms of expression - including debates, artefacts, memoranda, publications, and other records - constitutes a strand of PLD's work. Preserving artefacts, documents and oral histories to inform ongoing and future work is valuable. It safeguards accounts that remain marginal to mainstream narratives of women's rights, preserves the memory of the processes through which these discourses evolved, and, even brings to light marginal standpoints, internal contestations, and differing perspectives within the women's movement itself.

Since 2013, PLD has sourced records from organisations and individuals for digital preservation and has curated approximately 1,300 artefacts and documents across 18 themes and 77 sub-themes, which are further organised into more specific categories. In this year, the following work was undertaken in relation to archiving.

#### (A) Partnership with the Archives at NCBS

During 2025–26, PLD partnered with the Archives at NCBS (National Centre for Biological Studies), Bengaluru, a unit of the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research. Through a sub-grant, we participated in a year-long mentorship programme focused on archiving artefacts and publications relating to: (a) women's health and community health held by SAHAJ, Vadodara; and (b) community engagements by PLD, as a member of Voices Against 377 coalition.

The mentorship by NCBS enabled us to adopt formal archiving methods and tools for documenting, preserving, and cataloguing archival material.

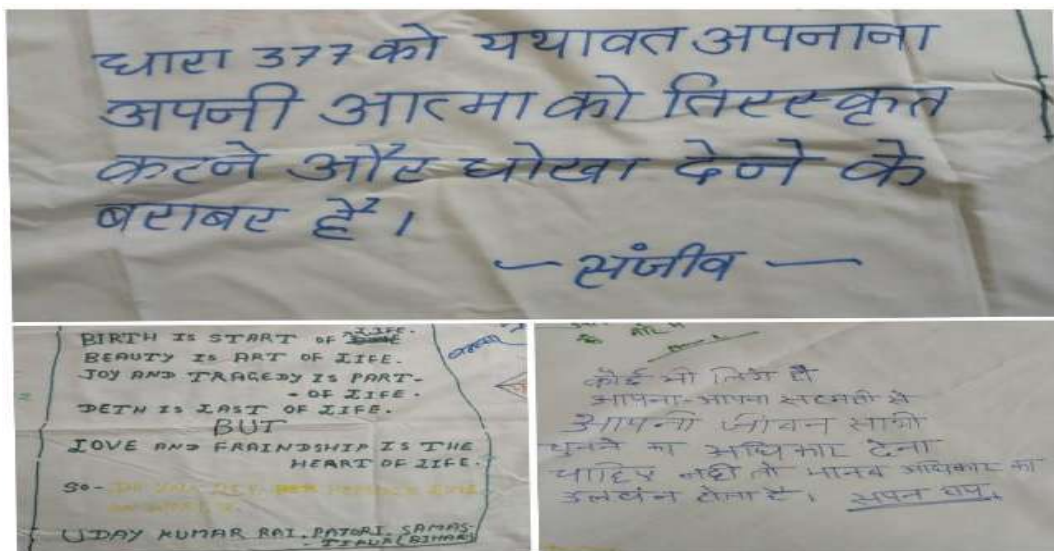


Source: SAHAJ in collaboration with PLD,

Available at: NCBS Archives catalogue

[https://catalogue.archives.ncbs.res.in/repositories/2/archival\\_objects/26535](https://catalogue.archives.ncbs.res.in/repositories/2/archival_objects/26535)

- We obtained old publications from SAHAJ, Vadodara pertaining to women's, holistic and community health interventions carried out by them together with other public health organisations. These were appraised, documented, digitally preserved for archiving at the NCBS Archives.
- We also retrieved and preserved banners from PLD's storage pertaining to the Million Voices Campaign, for appraisal and archiving. These banners in the mid-2000s, were part of a campaign, which PLD participated and carried out, as a member of the Voices Against 377 coalition. The cloth banners contain early expressions and sentiments de/criminalisation of homosexuality by grassroots activists and social workers in Odisha, Bihar and Jharkhand. They served to foster critical conversations with social workers and allied practitioners on questions of sexuality and homosexuality - deeply stigmatized issues at the time. By creating opportunities for reflection, dialogue, and engagement, the interventions contributed to the broader efforts surrounding the intervenor petition filed by Voices Against 377 in the Naz Foundation's constitutional challenge to decriminalise homosexuality in the Delhi High Court.



The publications and artefacts relating to the above community-based interventions - women's health and community health, and the movement to decriminalise homosexuality - are now been archived and housed at the Archives at NCBS.

## **(B) Partnership with QAMRA**

Another significant milestone in our archiving efforts has been our partnership with QAMRA. This collaboration helped address the longstanding challenge of preserving primary data and physical documentation relating to gender and sexual justice. As time passes, safeguarding such materials becomes increasingly important, particularly because they document significant milestones in the struggle for rights relating to sexual and gender diversity.

Through this partnership, PLD transferred the following publications, materials, and artefacts to QAMRA's archives for long-term preservation:

- THE MILLION VOICES CAMPAIGN (mentioned above), which contains early expressions and reflections by community workers across districts of Bihar, Jharkhand, and Odisha on the decriminalisation of homosexuality. Recorded on cloth banners, many of these expressions had begun to fade over time and required urgent preservation.



- LEGAL DOCUMENTS AND BRIEFS FROM THE VOICES AGAINST 377 INTERVENTIONS, including records from proceedings before both the Delhi High \*Court and the Supreme Court. As a signatory to the Voices Against 377 coalition, PLD served as custodian of these materials, which are now securely preserved in QAMRA's archives.
- PLD'S FIELD NOTES AND RESEARCH ON DIVERSE NON-NORMATIVE CONJUGAL RELATIONSHIPS (2005–2009): this body of work by PLD is significant for reframing of rights of women in the family – to a wider inclusive framework of intimate relationships. The lived realities of women across diverse family forms are evidence that not all conjugal family forms may conform to legal marriage. Many like Nata Pratha, bigamy, Maitri Karar arrangements, and same-sex relationships, exist, are socially recognised, are shaped by local practices, customs and desire. The inclusive framework serves to extend core rights and protections to women across family forms, irrespective of their legal status, to fulfil the promise of equality in the private sphere. The field notes and research material of PLD relating to this was donated to QAMRA.

## IV. Participation in convenings and conferences

### 1. Key engagements during the year included the following speaking and panel contributions:

- Speaker in the online series *From Practice to Impact*, curated by the Centre for Social Justice. PLD was invited to share reflections on a distinctive and impactful area of its work in a session held on September 12, 2025.
- Panellist at the multi-stakeholder dialogue, *Access to Justice for Women: Pathways, Barriers, and Lived Realities*, organised by the United Nations Information Centre (UNIC) in Delhi on March 17, 2026 as part of the CSW@70 process.
- Panellist at the online expert consultation on *preventing adolescent pregnancy*, organised by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) on March 30, 2026.

### 2. PLD contributed to a number of expert consultations and stakeholder dialogues through active participation and engagement:

- Experts Consultation on *Advancing Feminist Engagement with Law and its Practice for Gender Justice and Responsive Institutions*, organised by the South Asian Women's Fund in Delhi on July 20, 2025.
- *Beijing & Beyond: Celebrating Multigenerational Leadership for Gender Justice*, organised to honour leaders associated with erstwhile UNIFEM, held in Delhi on October 13, 2025.
- Annual partners' meeting organised by the Ford Foundation in Delhi on January 29-30, 2026.

## PART II: ORGANISATIONAL UPDATES

This section covers two organisational aspects – the strategic planning undertaken in this year, and the team composition in this period.

### I. Strategic planning and organisational refresh

We undertook an externally facilitated process to reflect on PLD's programmatic trajectories, situating these within the contemporary concerns, the context and the ecosystem to chart our organisational direction for the next five years. We were ably guided by Aline Partners, who facilitated this process, and the participation of some longstanding allies, partners and staff. This process cemented our plans and direction for the coming five years.

## II. Team composition in the year 2025-26:

<b>Chief Functionary</b>	Nandini Narula
<b>Head (Research and Trainings)</b>	Madhu Mehra
<b>Programmes</b> <b>Lead: Sexual Harassment Prevention</b> <b>Law Trainers (consultants)</b>	Nivedita Guhathakurta Celin Thomas Anchal Gupta Adv. Monika
<b>Archiving (short term)</b> <b>Technical Consultants</b>	Mahi Narayanan Aman Raj Sachin Khati
<b>Programme Support</b>	Kishore Tirkey
<b>Interns</b>	Mahi Narayanan Anjali Meena Singh
<b>Administration and Finance</b>	Deepak Yadav