



LEGAL AID SOCIETY

ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT

1st July 2019 – 30th June 2020



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ACRONYMS:

ADR: Alternative Dispute Resolution

BHC: British High Commission

BISP: Benazir Income Support Program

CEFM: Child and Early Forced Marriage

CERP: Centre for Economic Research Pakistan

ECP: Election Commission of Pakistan

FOSI: Foundation Open Society Institute

HESCO: Hyderabad Electric Supply Corporation

LAS: Legal Aid Society

LUMS: Lahore University of Management Sciences

NADRA: National Database & Registration Authority

OXFAM: Oxford Committee for Famine Relief

PWPA: Punjab Women Protection Authority

SAHSOL: Shaikh Ahmad Hassan School of Law

SCSW: Sindh Commission on the Status of the Women

SEPCO: Sukkur Electric Power Company SEPCO

SGBV: Sexual and Gender Based Violence

SLACC: Sindh Legal Advisory Call Centre

SSGCL: Sui Southern Gas Company

VAWG: Violence against Women

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

During the fiscal year 2019 – 2020, LAS entered into the Second No Cost Extension for its Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Project. LAS applied for the One Year grant for continuation ADR project with Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labour (DRL) in July 2019.

The Law, Parliamentary Affairs & Criminal Prosecution Department of the Government of Sindh continued its funding for Sindh Legal Advisory Call Centre in the fiscal year 2019-2020. LAS has applied for a 5 year grant covering the period from 2021 – 2026. The proposal has been forwarded from the Law Department to the office of Chief Minister Sindh, who is expected to approve it before January 2021.

The details of the other projects are:

- The Foundation Open Society Institute, Pakistan (FOSI) awarded a grant to LAS to continue its Literacy Project in Youthful Offenders Industrial School (YOIS) in Karachi and to proceed with extending the project to YOIS Hyderabad. The 3rd cycle of the project started in November 2019. LAS signed a four months no cost extension contract with FOSI Pakistan. The 2nd phase was of the project run parallel with 3rd phase for the period of 4 months.
- Phase one of the FOSI, Pakistan funded “Improving Government of Sindh’s Response to Sexual Violence” project was completed successfully the January 2020 and the second phase of the project was initiated in March 2020.
- The Oxford Committee for Famine Relief (OXFAM) awarded a 35 day consultancy project titled “Mapping and Identifying Gaps for Existing Support Services under Creating Spaces Project” to LAS in the month of February 2020. The primary objective of the project is to conduct a rapid assessment of the services that provided support to the Victims of Child and Early Forced Marriage (CEFM), and Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV). The project includes a Gap Analysis Paper, Directories of Services of Sindh and Punjab (Selected 6 Districts from Sindh and Punjab) and a Visibility Plan of the directories.
- Conflict, Security and Stability Fund (CSSF) of the British High Commission, under the Rule of Law Program, awarded an 11-month grant to LAS for the project, “Strengthening the Criminal Justice System's Response to Sexual Violence in Sindh.” The aim of the project is to work with Sindh Rule of Law Road Map Committee with the aim of improving processing and trial times for cases against Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV).

1. ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR) PROJECT:

The aim of the project is to provide improved access to justice, especially for marginalized populations, through awareness campaigns and capacity-building of legal professionals about ADR mechanisms. LAS signed the 2nd No Cost Extension contract with DRL for a period of three months.

Key Highlights of the Project:

- 1.1. Representation in Asia Pro Bono Conference:** LAS represented the ADR Project and its field component at the 8th Asia Pro Bono Conference held in Nepal from 13th September 2019 – 15th September 2019. 700 participants from 29 different countries across Asia attended the conference. A four-member team of LAS working on the ADR Project attended the conference and presented their work on ADR on the 3rd day of conference in the session titled “Unique Value and Impact of Pro Bono and ADR”. Other panellists during the session included those from Nepal, and Jordan. LAS presented its work through an interactive session in which a role-play was conducted to explain the kind of fieldwork LAS engages in in different communities. More than 50 participants from different countries attended the session and appreciated LAS efforts towards promoting ADR as a workable and effective tool of delivering justice. The session demonstrated various circumstances where ADR may prove to be more effective as compared to other forms of litigation due to its flexibility, efficiency and low cost.

- 1.2. Diversion of Civil Matters towards ADR:** 156 civil matters were successfully diverted from courts to ADR mechanisms through the course of the Project’s first phase. 139 community members from across Sindh (districts in which LAS had deployed its field teams) filed their civil cases before the Office of the Federal ombudsman. These cases were filed against maladministration of various government and semi-governments departments such as National Database & Registration Authority (NADRA), K-Electric, Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal, Hyderabad Electric Supply Corporation (HESCO), Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGCL), Election Commission of Pakistan, Immigration and Passport Directorate Sukkur Electric Power Company (SEPCO), Water Resource Division, SSGCL, Department of Education, Banking Conduct and Consumer Protection Department, State Life Insurance Corporation of Pakistan, Revenue Department, and Benazir Income Support Program (BISP). 13 community members filed their civil cases before the Provincial Ombudsperson related to the maladministration of Hyderabad Municipal Corporation, School, and Education Department Government of Sindh. 04 community members filed their complaints before the Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (HESCO) and Sukkur Electric Power Construction Corporation (SEPCO) for issues

related to Electricity Bills. In addition, 140 legal matters were diverted towards ADR Mechanisms through the Sindh Legal Advisory Call Center.

1.3. Re-Engagement Sessions with Community Members: As the project continues under the No Cost Extension awarded by DRL, LAS is working to ensure continuity of field level engagements with communities in a low cost and sustainable manner. The interventions include community awareness sessions in 8 districts of Sindh. The purpose of the re-engagement sessions on ADR is to create an adequate demand for formal ADR mechanisms to be adopted by the relevant authorities, and improved awareness of ADR processes for the public in general. The field teams continue to engage with the community through small groups meetings as well. The main objective of these meetings is to recall the mechanisms of ADR and to assist community members in accessing ADR mechanisms on an individual basis. LAS field Teams have successfully conducted 128 community re-engagement meetings/small sessions, covering a total population of 1,007 community members during the second no cost extension period. .

1.4. Group Discussions with Community Leaders: LAS conducted group discussions with community leaders in all 7-project districts. The purpose of these sessions was to train and inform community leaders on ADR Mechanisms, especially the importance and relevance of the Ombudspersons office, so that they could assist their communities in filing their grievances under ADR Mechanisms for everyday justice needs such as legal identity matters, gas and electricity issues etc.

2. BASIC AND LEGAL LITERACY INITIATIVES FOR JUVENILES IN SINDH:

FOSI Pakistan awarded a grant to LAS to continue the “Basic and Legal Literacy Initiatives Project for juveniles in Sindh” from November 2019 – October 2020. LAS also identified financial savings from some of the key activities and used these and exchange gain to ensure continuation of the project. The overall goal of the project is to enhance basic literacy and legal consciousness of youth in the juvenile justice system by establishing and continuing the program in young offenders/juvenile detention facilities in Karachi, and Hyderabad.

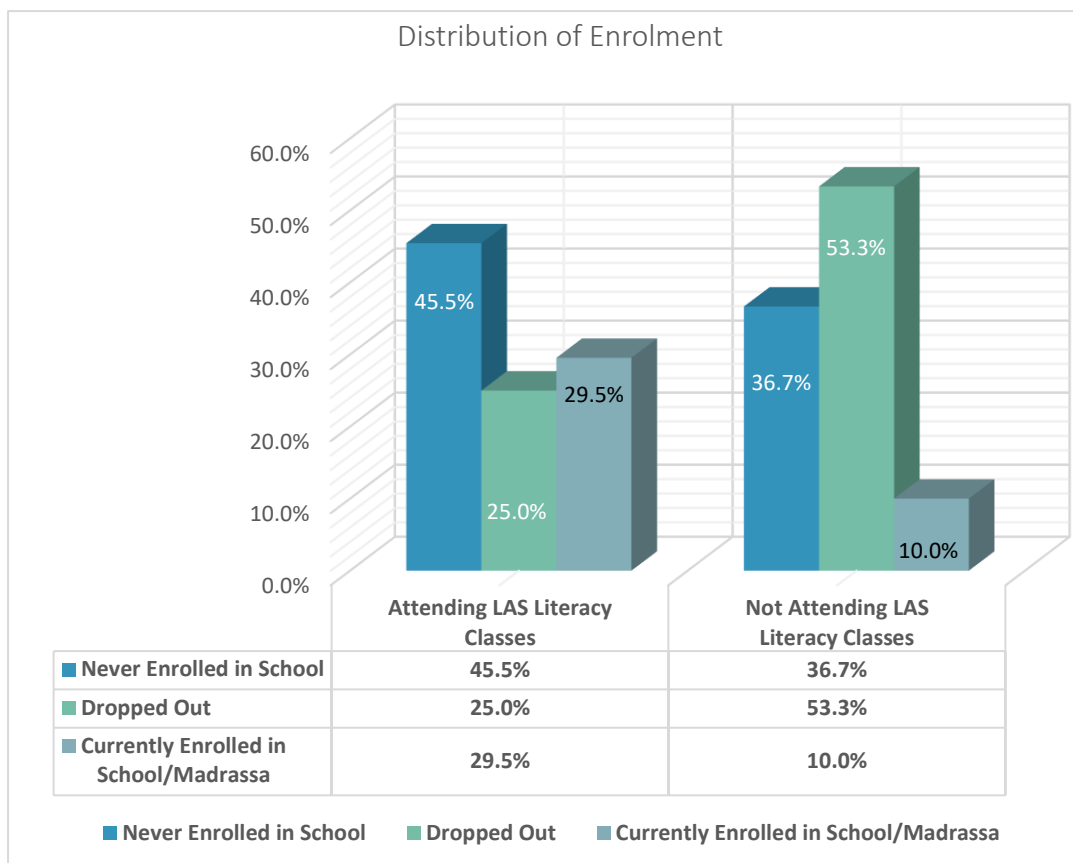
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Sindh Prisons Department allowed limited the access to outside organizations in Sindh Prisons and terminated all activities being conducted by these organizations, consequently affecting the Basic and Legal Literacy classes in YOIS Karachi and Hyderabad.

Key Highlights of the Project:

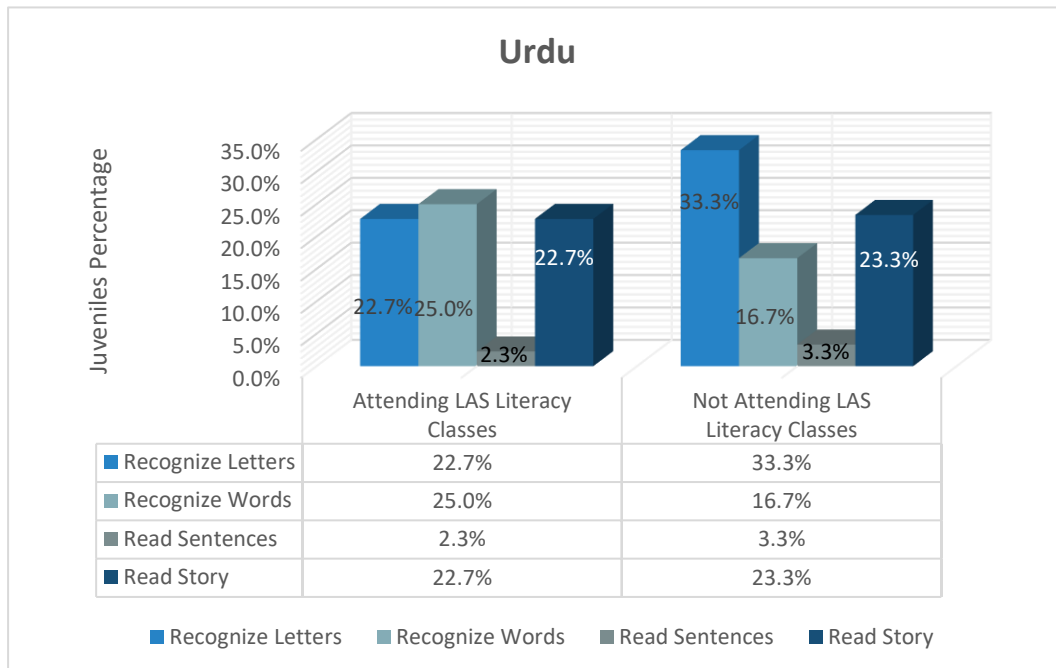
1.1. Impact Assessment of Basic Literacy Classes: LAS signed a contract with Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi (ITA) to conduct post assessment of 75 juveniles that were a part of the Basic Literacy classes in order to measure the impact of this intervention. Due to high acquittal rate in prison, LAS devised a strategy to include the juveniles in the assessment who were not enrolled in LAS literacy classes. The assessment exercise was run on 75 Juveniles; 45 juveniles whom were enrolled in the Basic Literacy Classes and 35 juveniles who were not enrolled in the Basic Literacy Classes. Before starting the exercise of the assessment, a juvenile who attended the basic literacy classes was acquitted from the prison. The exercise was consequently conducted with 74 juveniles. ITA developed a comprehensive learning assessment tool in three subjects (Math, English, and Urdu) along of the lines of ASER Assessment Tool. The literacy assessments were designed to cover up to Class 2 level competencies (as defined by the national curriculum). The arithmetic tool covered to Class 3 level. The results of the post-assessment were as follows:

Out of 44 Juveniles who attended the literacy classes in YOIS Karachi, 44.5% juveniles had never been to school, 25% juveniles dropped out from the school and 29.5% of the juveniles went to madrassa or a school outside the prison.

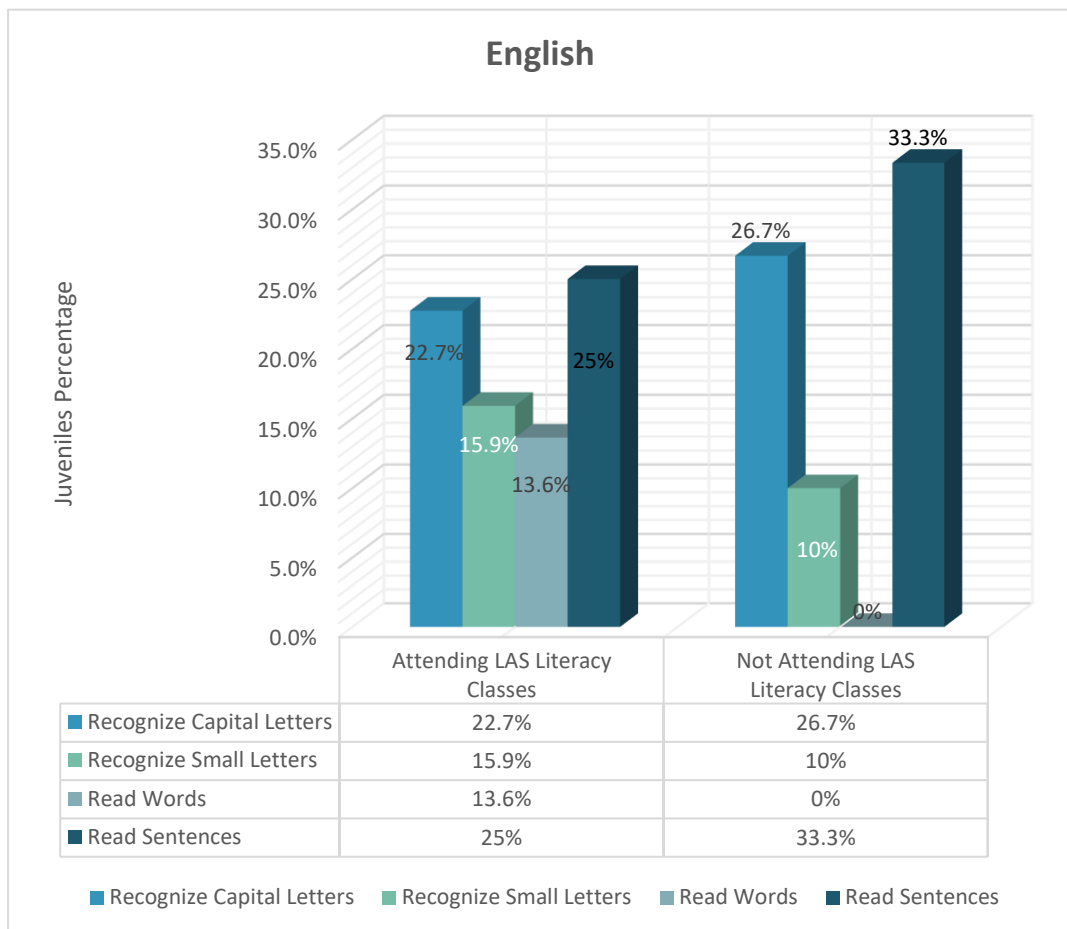
Out of the 30 juveniles, who did not attend the Basic Literacy classes in Karachi, 36.7% had never been to school, 53.3% were dropouts from school at different levels and 10% Juveniles went to madrassa or a school outside the prison. This gave the juveniles who were not enrolled in Basic Literacy Classes a natural advantage over the former treatment group (due to a high school dropout rate which meant that at some point in time, 53.3% of these juveniles had gone to school as compared to only 25% of those who were enrolled in BL Classes).



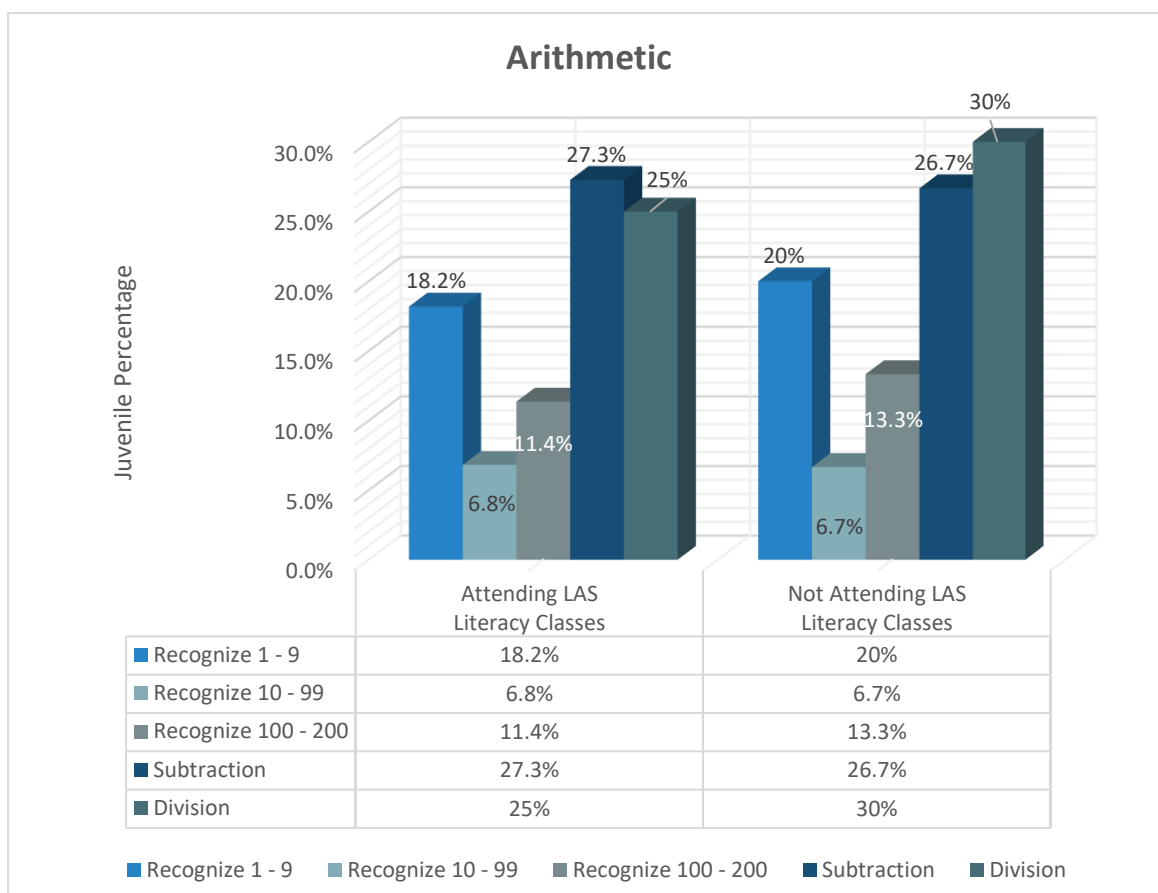
Urdu: 22.7% Juveniles who enrolled in the Literacy Classes were able to read a basic story, 25% read words, 22.7% recognize the letters and only 2.3% juvenies able to read the sentences in Urdu. From the cader of the juveniles who did not attend the litracy classes in YOIS Karachi, but have high dropped out rate from the school. Only 23.3% could read basic story, 33.3% could recognized letters, only 16.7% words and 3.3% juveniles able to read story.



English: As per ITA Assessment, out of 44 juveniles who attended the Basic Literacy Classes in the prison shows that 25% Juveniles were able to read a paragraph comprising of four basic sentences and 13.6% could read simple words. 22.7% recognized capital letters and 15.9% Juveniles could recognize small letters. Out of 30 Juveniles who were not enrolled in the literacy classes, 33.3% were able to read four basic sentences (due to high dropout rates from the school), 22.7% recognized capital letters and 15.9% Juveniles could recognize small letters.



Arithmetic: Out of 44 Juveniles, who were attending the Basic Literacy Classes, 27.3% were able to do simple subtraction and 25% were able to do two-digit division. Out of 30 Juveniles who were not enrol in the Literacy Classes inside the prison, only 26.7% were able to do the subtraction and 30% of juveniles able to solve the 2-digit division.



LAS ran basic literacy classes for the juveniles who were in prison with no education or minimal educational background. The objective of the project was to provide basic literacy and legal consciousness to youth who are in conflict with the law. The literacy assessment shows the good learning outcomes among juveniles who attended the literacy classes in YOIS Karachi. Whilst the figures overall show greater competencies in students who were not enrolled in the Literacy Classes, this is attributed to the higher number (63.3%) of juveniles who attended basic school or were enrolled in the school before coming to the prison in comparison to those enrolled in the literacy classes.

1.2. Basic Literacy Classes: LAS signed an addendum of contract with SAHEE to continue the basic literacy classes for the period of two months i.e. October and November 2019 by using the savings of the project. 220 juveniles were enrolled from July–November 2019 into the program and received customized education covering basic literacy of Urdu, English, and Arithmetic. The basic literacy classes were conducted 5 days a week in the prison. LAS MOU with the Sindh Prisons Department (that allowed these classes to be conducted) expired in November 2019. LAS continued to lobby with Sindh IG Prisons for its renewal. The MOU was renewed in February 2020 for the continuation of Literacy Classes in Karachi and Hyderabad. The classes resumed in the

same month. The classes were suspended on 18 March 2020 due to COVID-19. Before the COVID-19 Pandemic, 51 juveniles were enrolled in Literacy Classes of YOIS Karachi and 11 in Literacy Class of YOIS Hyderabad.

1.3. Legal Literacy Classes: In addition to the Basic Literacy Classes, LAS organized specialized legal literacy classes at the Juvenile detention centre in Karachi. The content of the course was divided into 8 classes, which required a total of 16 hours to complete. LAS started its classes in the February 2020, and after four classes, this particular intervention had to be put on hold due to COVID-19.

1.4. Distribution of Personal Protective Equipment's: As the COVID-19 pandemic reached its peak in Pakistan; LAS launched the initiative to distribute the personal protective equipment in 10 prisons across Sindh. For this purpose, LAS requested FOSI Pakistan for the realignment of Documentary Cost of the program to distribute masks, hand sanitizers, gloves, and soaps among 1300 prisoners. In the 1st phase of distribution, LAS covered the all four Juvenile Prisons, Women's Prisons in Karachi, Larkana, Sukkur, and Adult Male Prisons of Khairpur, Sanghar and Nausheroferoz.

I. Central Prison Khairpur (Total Population 752 as of 1st April 2020): The following items were distributed on 2nd May, 2020 on the request of Prison Officials, Khairpur:

S. No	Name of Items	Distributed Quantity
1	Hand Sanitizers (250 ml)	155 Bottles
2	Surgical Mask	750 Pieces
3	Hand Gloves	250 Pairs
4	Dettol Liquid (500ml)	24 Bottles
5	Antibacterial Soaps	219 Pieces

II. District Prison Sanghar (Total Population 167 as of 1st April 2020): The following items were distributed on 4th May 2020 on the request of Prison Officials, Sanghar.

S. No	Name of Items	Distributed Quantity
1	Hand Sanitizers (250 ml)	50 Bottles
2	Surgical Mask	200 Pieces
3	Hand Gloves	200 Pairs
4	Hand Sanitizers (Medium Sized)	35 Bottles

S. No	Name of Items	Distributed Quantity
5	Antibacterial Soaps	150 Pieces

- III. **District Prison Nausheroferoz (Total Population 135 as of 1st April 2020)**: The following item will be distributed on 13th May, 2020 on the request of Prison Officials, Nausheroferoz:

S. No	Name of Items	Distributed Quantity
1	Hand Sanitizers (240 ml)	70 Bottles
2	Surgical Mask	300 Pieces
3	Hand Gloves	250 Pairs
4	Antibacterial Soaps	50 Pieces

- IV. **YOIS Karachi (Total Population 106 as of 1st April 2020)**: The items were distributed on 14th April 2020 on the request of Prison Officials, YOIS Karachi:

S. No	Name of Items	Distributed Quantity
1	Hand Sanitizers (240 ml)	175 Bottles
2	Surgical Mask	500 Pieces
3	Hand Gloves	07 Packets
4	Antibacterial Soaps	175 Pieces

- V. **Women Prison Karachi (Total Population 145 as of 1st April 2020)**: These items were distributed on 14th April 2020 on the request of Prison Officials, Women Prison Karachi:

S. No	Name of Items	Distributed Quantity
1	Hand Sanitizers (250 ml)	125 Bottles
2	Surgical Mask	500 Pieces
3	Hand Gloves	07 Packets
4	Antibacterial Soaps	125 Pieces

VI. YOIS Prison Hyderabad (Total Population 20 as of 1st April 2020): These items were distributed on 6th April 2020 on the request of Prison Officials, YOIS Prison Hyderabad:

S. No	Name of Items	Distributed Quantity
1	Hand Sanitizers (500 ml)	15 Bottles
2	Surgical Mask	300 Pieces
3	Hand Gloves	100 Pairs
4	Antibacterial Soaps	100 Pieces
5	Antibacterial Hand Wash	10 Bottles
6	Hand Wash/ Sanitizers Pumps	03 Pieces

VII. Women and YOIS Prison Larkana (Total Population 22 (14 women and 8 Juvenile) as of 1st April 2020): These items were distributed on 30th April 2020 on the request of Prison Officials, Women and YOIS Prison Larkana:

S. No	Name of Items	Distributed Quantity
1	Hand Sanitizers (400 ml)	50 Bottles
2	Surgical Mask	100 Pieces
3	Antibacterial Soaps	50 Pieces
4	Antibacterial Hand Wash (250 ml)	11 Bottles
5	Dettol Liquid (500 ml)	05 Bottles

VIII. Women and YOIS Prison Sukkur (Total Population 27 (14 women and 12 Juvenile) as of 1st April 2020): These items were distributed on 6th April 2020 on the request of Prison Officials, YOIS Prison Hyderabad:

S. No	Name of Items	Distributed Quantity
1	Hand Sanitizers (400 ml)	50 Bottles
2	Surgical Mask	100 Pieces
3	Antibacterial Hand Wash (1000 ml)	05 Bottles
4	Antibacterial Soaps	50 Pieces

1.5. Legal Empowerment Help Desk: The Legal Empowerment Help Desk (LED) was established in March 2019 in New Town Police Station, adjacent to the office of the DIG Police (East Zone), CPLC’s East Office and near Central Prison Karachi. The desk under performed in terms of provision of legal advice and assistance to juveniles. Being close to the Central Prison and DIG Police East Zone Office, mobile signals at the Legal Empowerment Help Desk were regularly remained jammed and the footfall was also low, both owing to strict security measures put in place, making the Legal Empowerment Help Desk difficult to access. LAS conducted a meeting with DIG Police (East Zone) on 27th November 2019 along with members of the OSF Team and shared the performance of the LED with him, requesting him to shift the LED unit to an area where greater people could access and benefit from this initiative. He agreed with the proposal and offered to shift the desk to the Police Station in Korangi District. LAS conducted a background assessment/mapping of the proposed location to gauge its merits. The office of the DIG Police East Zone connected LAS team members to SSP Korangi to facilitate the mapping exercise, and the process of shifting the LED. SSP Korangi asked for the official notification from the DIG Police Headquarters for the shifting of the LED. LAS wrote a letter to DIG HQ for the shifting of LED, and proposed pilot LEDs in other two zones of Karachi. DIG HQs agreed to initiate an LED in Baldia Police Station of West Zone, and Chakiwara Police Station of South Zone. The notification to shift the LED from Newtown Police Station to Korangi Police Station, and to initiate LEDs at other two police stations was received by LAS on 16th January 2020. After receiving the notification, LAS started lobbying with all three police stations and hired two more advocates for Baldia and Chalkiwara Police Stations. LAS faced some resistance from SSP Korangi, and from the staff of Korangi Police while shifting the LED. In contrary, the staff of other two Police Stations welcomed the initiative. All three LEDs were fully operational by 2nd March 2020. Due to COVID – 19 pandemic, Sindh Government implemented the lock down from 18th March 2020.

LED provided legal assistance to 126 members during the fiscal year; The below chart shows the details:

S. No.	LED Desk (P.S)	Juveniles	Adult Female	Adult Male	Total
1	New Town (P.S)	8	6	41	55
2	Korangi (P.S)	0	3	0	3
3	Kalakot/Chakiwara (P.S)	4	15	25	44
4	Baldis (P.S)	0	13	11	24
Total		12	37	77	126

LAS has taken up a number of initiatives for the visibility and promotion of the LEDs, which includes meetings with civil society organizations, CPLC Chief East, Government Officials, and information sessions with different communities.

1.6. Online Training of Prison Officials: An on-site training was planned for Prison, Police, Prosecutors, and Probation Officers on April 27, 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the training had to be cancelled. LAS decided to conduct the training of Prison officials via Zoom on 13th and 14th May 2020 from 9:00 a.m. to 01:00 p.m. LAS entered into contract with Aahung to conduct the training on “Effective Communication”, and with Iqbal Detho, a private consultant with expertise in Police trainings, to cover the topic of “Prison Rules” and Juvenile Justice System Act, 2018”. 22 participants attended the training via online mechanism.

1.7. Accelerated Learning Program:

LAS in collaboration with Sindh Prisons Department and Beyond The Classroom (The History Project Pvt. Ltd) conducted classes on key learning areas with 81 juvenile prisoners of Karachi in two batches. Every batch comprised of 5 classes which was held consecutively from Monday to Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Every class was designed to be a complete session, which is very necessary in the prison scenario, as you cannot promise the exact number and same juveniles in every class as some went off for hearings of their cases. The purpose of these classes is to enhance and build skills relating to Empathy, Equality, Critical Thinking, Collaboration, Team Work, and Identity Building and reflective skills of Juveniles.

The **1st session** was on Perspectives, Identity and Discrimination. The objective of this session was to inform juveniles about multiple perspectives, fluidity of identity and the different ways the external environment and internal biases of an individual affect one’s personality. The activities which were carried in this session was grasped by the majority of the class, through the activity of pins and balloons, juveniles were able to form a link between multiple perspectives, identity and behaviour of people, both as individuals and collective groups.

The **2nd session** was on Distortion, Primary and Secondary Sources. The objective of this session was to explain the differences between primary and secondary resources to juveniles and the possible distortion of information. The objective of the session was achieved through carried out different activities and debriefing them. The activities which were conducted with juveniles were Chinese whispers, and the Lego Legends Challenge to give the juveniles a physical manifestation of the aforementioned concepts and make them understand the relevancy of the concepts in practical life. Juveniles were able to grasp the concepts and came up with impressive and relatable examples of the primary and secondary sources and the difference between them.

The **3rd session** was on stereotype and how media impacts our thoughts. The objective of this session was to break stereotypes related to different concepts. The session started with questions. The trainer asked the juveniles for their first thoughts

on a particular keyword, such as, boy, girl, prison, India, US, UAE and Saudi Arabia, Lahore, Karachi, Pakistan and more. The responses of juveniles for each of them were later analysed. Juveniles were able to recall the concepts of multiple perspectives and primary and secondary sources of information. For the latter part, the facilitator deliberately called the two closest friends and split them apart without giving a hint, making them captains of each team. After this division, a series of activities were rolled out that were later to build up the concept of how a person in authority can cause division among people who were so united once. Through sports activities, a competitive ambience was created which further proliferated the idea. Naturally, the friends that were separated earlier did resort to a fighting and an enmity was developed, merely for a box of reward. This made realization among juveniles that an incentive or resource can also become a stimulating factor for the divide.

The **4th session** was on the concepts of Majority and Minority. The session started with an energizer and the trainer distributed the class in two teams. It was an unfair division. One team had less number of students and the other had the larger lot. However, it was ensured that the strongest players are part of the team with lesser members. A competition was initiated between both the teams through sports, such as, voice wars, tug-of-war, dodge the ball, etc. It was observed that each time a new round commenced, the team with fewer members started complaining of their numerical disadvantage, which they thought would cause them to lose. The other team however, constantly boasted about their numerical strength. At some instances, however, the team even proposed to shift a few members to the former team, which is a reflection of the empathetic nature inculcated among the juveniles throughout the course of this training. But, the minority team was confident that they will not give up and keep trying. All the activities were debriefed wherein the juveniles were made to reflect back as to what happened in the past few minutes. Many juveniles were able to come up with an accurate explanation of what happened in terms of the unfair division and the majority team constantly winning each round.

The **5th session** was on Identity and Empathy. The aim of this session was developing an understanding of identity and its dynamic nature as individuals grow and experience different events, which inadvertently have some ramifications on their identities. Firstly, the Juveniles were engaged in the activity, ‘Life Maps’, where they were asked to explain the major events of their lives and the different ways, such events changed their personalities. Some juveniles were able to elucidate the link between such events and their current lives in the comprehensive manner. Juveniles were able to grasp the concept of their identity identity was a result of their experiences and history. This was followed by a marshmallow challenge, in which the students were able to experience the different concepts, which were taught to them.

During all five sessions, the participation of juveniles was amazing. They were highly engaged and participated in an effective manner. To appreciate the juveniles who participated in the program, LAS organized the Certificate Distribution Ceremony of these classes on 27th November 2019. The Country Director and Program Manager of FOSI – Pakistan, DIG Women and YOIS Karachi, Superintendent YOIS Karachi attended the event and appreciated Justice Nasir Aslam Zahid and Legal Aid Society for their work for prisoners especially for and juveniles

3. **LEGAL AID AND REPRESENTATION:**

The core objective of LAS as an entity is to connect vulnerable and disempowered end users of justice with effective and expedient services for the delivery of justice. For this purpose, LAS, at its own expense, continues to provide free legal assistance and representation to marginalized and disempowered citizens of Sindh before district and high courts at trial and appellate stages through its offices in Karachi, Hyderabad, Larkana, Sukkur, Khairpur, Shaheed Benazir Abad and Sanghar. In the fiscal year of 2019 – 2020, LAS provided support to 160 people who otherwise, would have had limited access to justice.

Key Highlights of the Project:

3.1. Darulamans: Designated and specialized LAS advocates regularly visit Darulamans in Hyderabad, Larkana, and Sukkur on a weekly basis to interview females who may require legal advice or representation. LAS provided the free legal representation to 36 female residents of Darulamans in cases of protection and obtaining release orders from Darulaman.

Referral from	Total Received Cases	Resolved Cases
Dar-ul-Aman (Hyderabad)	07	02
Dar-ul-Aman (Larkana)	25	15
Dar-ul-Aman (Sukkur)	04	04
Total	36	21

3.2. Child Protection Units: LAS advocates regularly visit Child Protection Units in all seven districts to provide legal advice or representation to families/children. The cases are either directly referred to LAS by Social Workers of the Sindh Social Welfare Department, or identified by LAS lawyers during their visits to CPUs. LAS received 05 cases from the CPU of Karachi and Sukkur.

Referral from	Total Received Cases	Resolved Cases
CPU (Karachi)	04	02
CPU (Sukkur)	01	01
Total	04 (Male = 01; Female 04)	03 (Male = 01; Female 02)

3.3. Community Referrals: LAS is working directly with various communities in the districts of Karachi, Hyderabad, Larkana, Sukkur, Khairpur, Shaheed Benazirabad, and Sanghar for several programs, including ADR and the Legal Framework of Sexual Violence. LAS field teams consist of a field advocate and a field officer who conduct awareness sessions with

communities to provide legal awareness and on-the-spot free legal advice. If a need and appetite to file a case in the court is identified, LAS advocates assist and provide free legal representation to respective community members. Beneficiaries have the option of contacting LAS directly through walk-ins at LAS field offices, or to have their cases referred to LAS through other organizations who they are in contact with.

119 cases were referred to/received by LAS through different mechanisms. Most of these cases were related to Khula, Guardian Ward, and Habeas Corpus.

Referral from	Total Received Cases	Resolved cases
Community Referrals (Karachi)	65	37
Community Referrals (Hyderabad)	14	08
Community Referrals (Larkana)	07	03
Community Referrals (Sukkur)	07	07
Community Referrals (Khairpur)	21	17
Community Referrals (Sanghar)	05	05
Total	119 (Male=14 ; Female=105)	77 (Male=12 ; Female=65)

4. SINDH LEGAL ADVISORY CALL CENTRE:

The Legal Advisory Call Centre is the flagship project of the Legal Aid Society. It was officially launched on 22nd September 2014 as the Legal Advisory Call Centre (LACC). LACC has its own customized Call Management Software, which has been specifically designed to manage legal and public service related queries, record incoming, and outgoing data and provide back up services. High court enrolled, experienced and trained lawyers receive calls directly and respond to queries from all across Pakistan. LACC operates between 09:00 a.m. to 05:00 p.m., 6 days a week. The calls received at SLACC is categorized under our main categories i.e. Civil Law, Criminal Law, Public Service Matters and General Information. Callers may record their enquiry after these hours and advocates respond to recorded queries the next working day. LACC aims to answer most queries within 24 hours. Advocates provide immediate legal advice to common queries, conduct research, and consult the senior consultant when dealing with complex legal issues or particularly sensitive fact.

After having realized the strengths of LACC and the critical gap it fills in terms of providing citizens free and effective access to sound legal advice, LACC was adopted by the Law, Parliamentary Affairs & Criminal Prosecution Department of the Government of Sindh under the Legal Empowerment of People Programme in Sindh (LEPPS) project for the period of three years from July 2018 to June 2021. The formal MoU was signed on 3rd October 2018 and henceforth, LACC was renamed to Sindh Legal Advisory Call Centre (SLACC). With an influx of funding and government support, SLACC achieved a historic benchmark of 100,000 registered queries on 3rd February 2020.

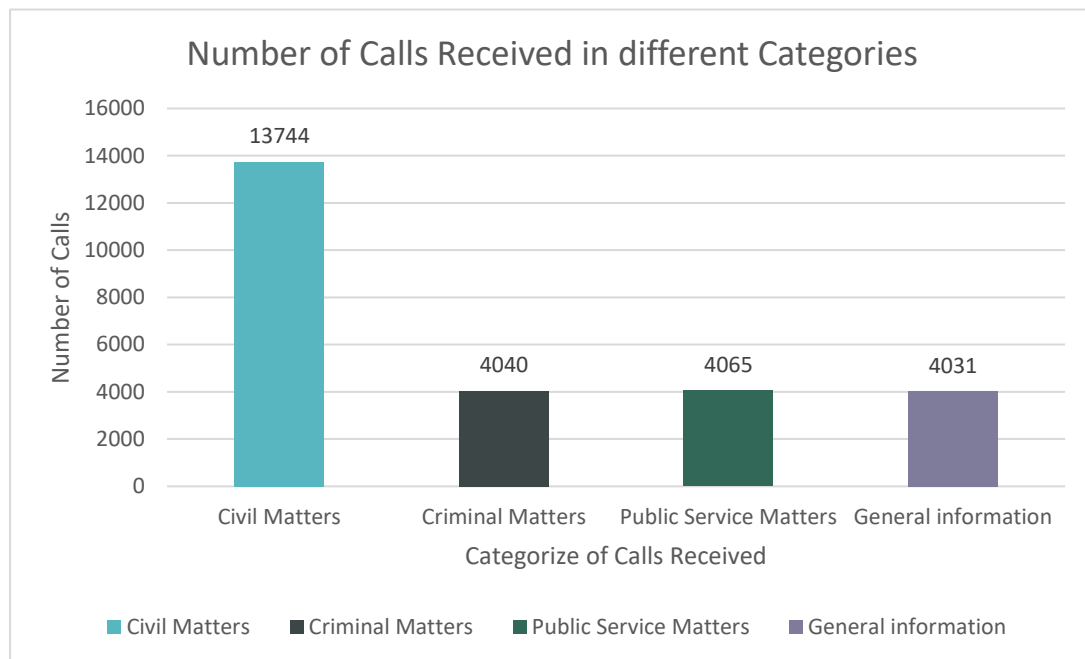
Due to COVID-19, operations at SLACC were temporarily suspended for three weeks of the lockdown, from 19th March to 13th April 2020. On 14th April 2020, the SLACC was allowed to re-open after being declared by the government as an essential service provider. During the period of lockdown, the SLACC received voicemail calls, which were recorded and addressed by the legal advisors once operations resumed.

Key Highlights of the Project:

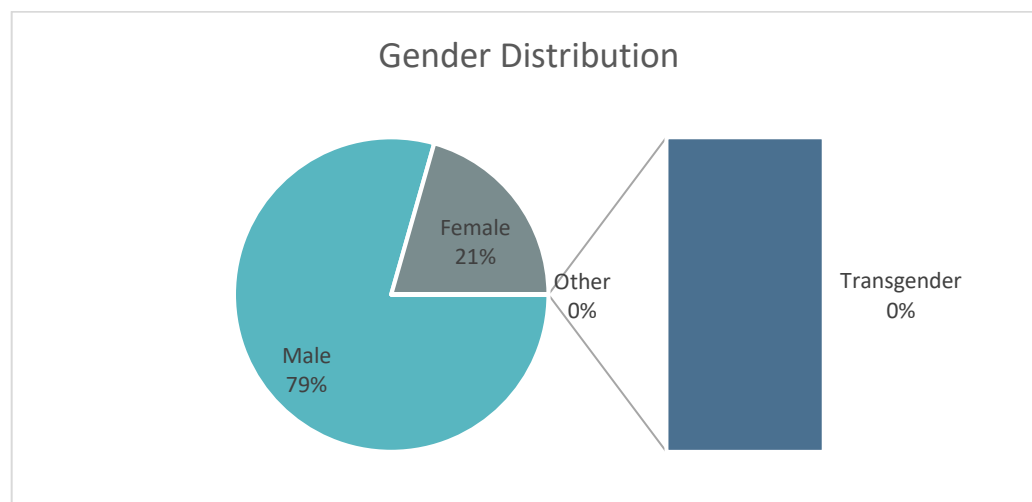
4.1. Performance of Sindh Legal Advisory Call Centre: During the fiscal year 2019-20, 25,880 citizens of Pakistan opted SLACC to seek advice in their legal matters. 13,744 calls received were related to the civil matters, 4,040 related to criminal matters and 4,065 related to public service matters. There were around 4,031 calls related to general legal information queries.

Some callers wished to pursue the ADR methods as opposed to going to courts and hence were guided accordingly. Specifically, 660 callers were directed to Alternative Dispute Resolution Mechanisms. There were also 273 calls from callers who identified themselves

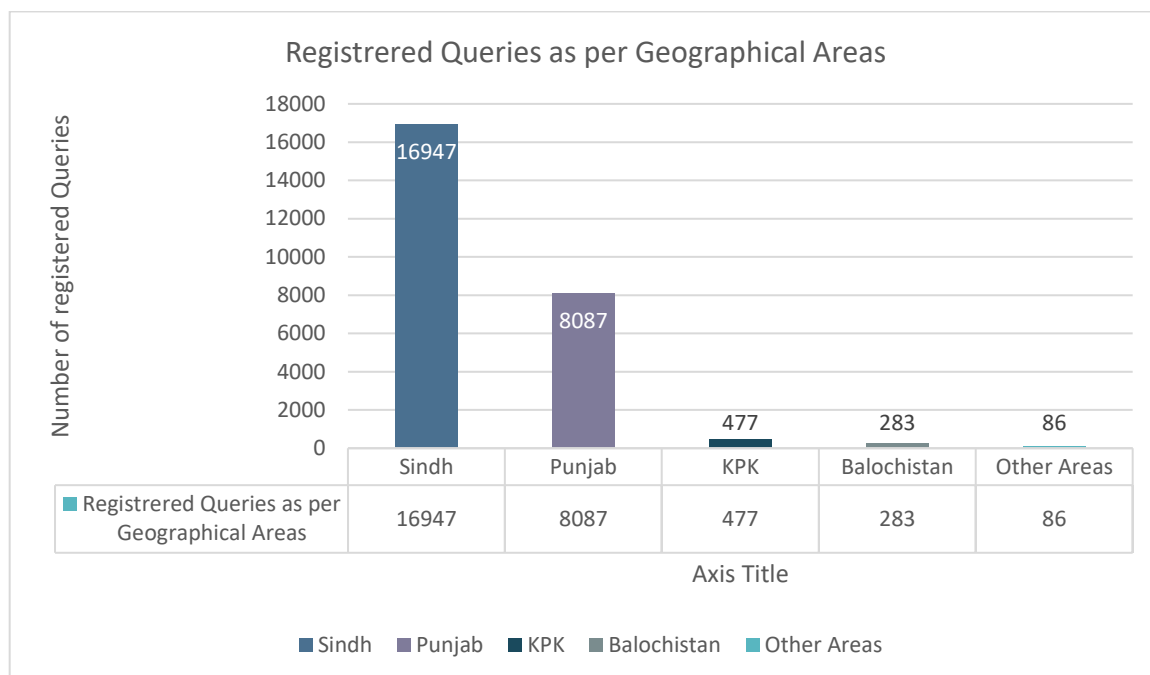
as belonging to a minority group who sought help with issues related to electricity bills, CNIC and B-form and custody of children and others.



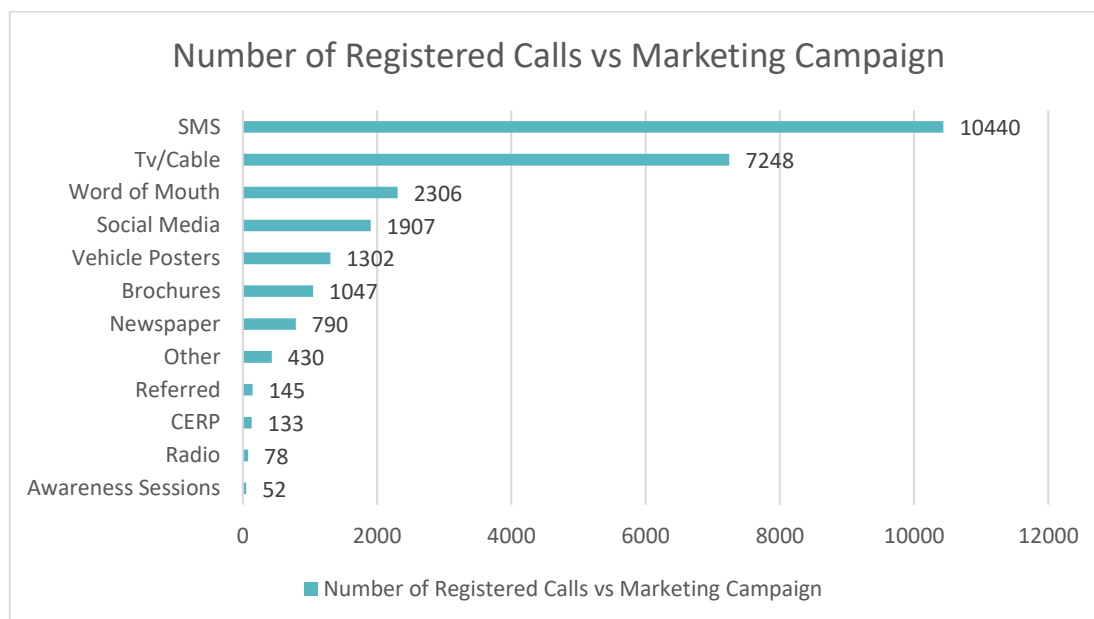
There were 20,549 male callers, 5,324 female callers and 7 persons who identified themselves as belonging to the Transgender group.



Out of 25,880 calls received at SLACC, 16,947 calls were received from Sindh, 8,087 calls from Punjab, 477 calls from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 283 calls from Baluchistan, and 86 calls from other areas such as Gilgit Baltistan and Kashmir.



SLACC relies heavily on SMS marketing as an outreach and visibility tool and engages all major telecommunication operators as vendors. This year, SLACC reports having received 10,440 callers that were made aware of the service through its SMS campaign, followed by 7,248 calls from the television commercial played on Raavi TV. 2,306 callers were made aware of the services through word of mouth from friends and family members. Social media posts regarding the operations of the SLACC led to another 1,907 calls. Approximately 1,302 calls that were received from Sindh were from callers who reported having seen SLACC’s officially toll free number (0800-70806) on Rickshaws and another 1,047 calls were directed from SLACC’s information boards placed in police stations or brochures. The newspaper advertisements placed by the Law Department led to 790 calls. Another 430 calls were referred from other, 145 referred from other organisations, 133 calls were referred through the Center of Economic Research in Pakistan (CERP). Radio advertisements led to 78 calls and 52 calls were due to LAS awareness clinics and trainings in communities across Sindh.



4.2. Research Launch: The one-year progress (2018 – 2019) of the Sindh Legal Advisory Call Centre and the findings of the research paper titled “De-Constructing Conjugal Rights in Pakistani Law” were highlighted on 17th December 2019. This research paper was based on the calls received at the SLACC that related to restitution of conjugal rights. LAS entered into a Public Private Partnership with the Law Department, Government of Sindh last year for enhancing the legal empowerment of the people of Sindh through the SLACC.

Barrister Haya Emaan Zahid, Executive Director of the LAS and Mr. Shariq Ahmed – Secretary Law, Parliamentary Affairs & Criminal Prosecution Department shared the progress of SLACC at the event. **A feedback survey indicated that 82.8% of callers found the services of the SLACC helpful.** Mr. Muhammad Zubair Habib, CPLC Chief, appreciated the SLACC services and the Public Private partnership between LAS and Sindh Government. He stated that efficient legal aid systems significantly help improve access of vulnerable sections to justice and reduce legal exclusion. He highlighted the collaboration between LAS and CPLC while working together for Access to Justice and Legal Empowerment since 2014.

Justice Arif Hussain Khilji, Former Judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan and the Senior Legal Advisor of the Legal Aid Society, shared some interesting stories on human impact and success. A Primary teacher from Sanghar, who was waiting for his promotion for the last two years despite being on top of the merit list of his taluka, had his issue resolved in 20 days after following the legal advice given by expert legal operators at SLACC.

Ms. Naima Qamar and Ms. Maliha Zia Lari presented the detailed findings of their Research Paper “Deconstructing Conjugal Rights in Pakistani Law”. They presented

the analysis and various scenarios in which men and women resort to filing RCR applications.

Barrister Murtaza Wahab Advisor Law, Environment, Climate Change and Coastal Affairs Government of Sindh delivered the keynote address. He referred to the SLACC (0800-70806) as a uniquely effective model of a public private partnership that provides an invaluable service to civil society in upholding the rule of law. He further said, “the lawyers at the SLACC are trained to provide a whole spectrum of legal information and advice and will also connect you to referral services of different service providers, NGOs, and state organs. You will get customized advice within 24 hours. This is our commitment to you.”

Justice Nasir Aslam Zahid Former Judge of Supreme Court of Pakistan and Chairperson Legal Aid Society, said that he founded the call centre in 2014 with a simple mission; to bridge the distance between the average, common person and state institutions responsible for providing justice. He added that free legal advice has been provided to over 95,671 people since its inception in the year of 2014 and deeply appreciated the efforts of the Sindh Government to show their full support to upholding the rule of law and taking efforts towards the empowerment of the people.

4.2. Exposure Visits: A number of visits by external parties were arranged in this year.

- The Centre for Economic Research in Pakistan visited SLACC on 20th August 2019. The visit was to discuss a possible collaboration between CERP and SLACC on citizens’ interaction with state institutions. The delegation was led by Dr. Asim Khwaja, co-founder and board member of CERP and faculty director of the Center for International Development (CID) at Harvard Kennedy School.
- The Sindh Human Rights Commission signed an MoU with SLACC on 27th August 2019 on the understanding that SHRC will spread awareness of SLACC and SLACC will refer callers to SHRC if they are faced with a grievous human rights violation. Ms Abida Lodhi, Secretary SHRC and Justice (R) Nasir Aslam Zahid, Chairperson LAS signed the MOU. Justice Majida Razvi (Chairperson) Mr Muhammad Aslam Sheikh (Member Judicial-II) and Mr Zulfiqar Shah were present from SHRC on this occasion.
- Mr Shariq Ahmed, Secretary Law, Parliamentary Affairs & Criminal Prosecution Department visited the SLACC on 5th September 2019 to monitor SLACC’s legal advisors as they offered legal advice to callers. He was also briefed on marketing and outreach initiatives being taken by SLACC for public awareness.
- Officials from the British High Commission along with Mr Shariq Ahmed, Secretary Law, Parliamentary Affairs & Criminal Prosecution Department visited the SLACC on 11th December 2019 to understand the workings of SLACC. They asked questions

regarding the advice resolution system and were informed about the process through which the calls are routed.

- On 30th December 2019, Justice Mushir Alam and Justice Muhammad Amin from the Supreme Court of Pakistan paid a visit to the SLACC and were briefed about the centre's work. Reports and progress of the SLACC were shared with the esteemed guests.
- On 14th March 2020, the current Law Secretary, Dr Mansoor Abbas Rizvi paid a visit to SLACC and was introduced to the legal team of SLACC. He observed the call centre taking live calls and was highly appreciative of the service that SLACC was providing to the citizens of Pakistan.

5. IMPROVING GOVERNMENT OF SINDH'S RESPONSE TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE:

The inception (1st) phase of the project “Improving the Government of Sindh’s Response to Sexual Violence” ended on 31st January 2020. FOSI Pakistan, based on the success of the inception phase and need for such an intervention, awarded the grant to LAS in March 2020 to continue the project for an additional period of 3 years.

Key Highlights of the Project:

5.1. Legal Awareness Sessions on Rape and Sexual Violence Laws: LAS field team conducted 96 awareness sessions in the project districts Hyderabad (45), Sukkur (43) and in Khairpur (08) from July to December 2019. 3166 (Male: 1444; Female: 1688; Transgender: 34) community members attended these sessions. The objective of these sessions was to make community members aware of the laws and punishment for these offences, the investigation process involved during cases of this nature, the duty of investigators, medical examination process and Safeguards during Trial, and the Referral Process.

LAS also conducted 20 re-engagement clinics with several communities during the first month of the no-cost extension period. The purpose of these sessions was to reconnect with the communities and reinforce the knowledge of the subject. 20 clinics were attended by 624 community members.

5.2. Advocacy Meetings: The LAS Team conducted meetings with various stakeholders to create buy-in regarding the Sexual Violence Response Framework. For this purpose, the LAS Team conducted the meeting with:

- Ms. Syeda Shehla Raza, Minister WDD, Govt. of Sindh
- Mr Justice Khilji Arif Hussain, Former Judge Supreme Court of Pakistan, Director General – Sindh Judicial Academy
- Mr Shariq Ahmed, Secretary Law & Parliamentary Affairs, Govt. of Sindh
- Mr Ayaz Tunio, Prosecutor General Sindh
- Mr Salman Talibuddin, Advocate General
- Mr Fiaz Shah, Prosecutor General, Govt. of Sindh
- Mr Javed Riaz, DIGP Investigation, Sindh Police
- Dr Qarar Abbasi, Police Surgeon
- Dr Shabnam, Chief Technical Advisor, Health Department and Govt. of Sindh
- Ms Lubna Salahuddin, Health Department, Govt. of Sindh

- 5.3. Sexual Violence Response Framework:** The Sexual Violence Response Framework (SVRF) was developed by LAS based on desk review of relevant literature, national and international best practices and recommendations. Women Development Department approved the SVRF but was keen to take buy-in from the Home Department, and Law, Parliamentary Affairs & Criminal Prosecution Department. The purpose of buy-in from other governmental departments is to ensure that the procedural and policy initiatives and interventions proposed successfully convert into impactful and sustainable reforms. On the recommendation of WDD, LAS conducted the meetings with Home and Law, Parliamentary Affairs & Criminal Prosecution Department. They have demonstrated their interest, provided their input for the same, and showed their consent to be part of the SVRF.
- 5.4. Test Case of Sexual Violence:** In this project, LAS is committed to taking at least four test cases related to the sexual violence and pursue these cases in order to record the gaps in the judicial system that do not allow swift and timely justice for victims of sexual violence. During the fiscal year 2019-20, LAS has taken 07 cases from Karachi (03), Hyderabad (01), and Sukkur (03). LAS conducted a detailed analysis of the judicial process of its Rape and Sodomy Cases. In this report, LAS highlighted problems and roadblocks that are present at each stage, from reporting of the case to the relevant authority till the completion of the trial. The findings, both negative and positive, along with concrete recommendations were shared with the key Government stakeholders as an advocacy measure to ensure that the highlighted gaps are filled efficiently.
- 5.5. Rapid Assessment of Essential Services:** In the 2nd phase of the project; LAS conducted rapid assessment of essential services titled “Rapid Assessment on Current Status of Essential Services for Survivors and Victims of Gender Based Violence and Sexual Offences (Sindh)” from 27th April 2020 to 11th May 2020 in three districts across Sindh (Karachi, Hyderabad and Sukkur) to identify the gaps in essential service provision. Through semi-structured questionnaires given to government, quasi-government and public-private essential service providers, the study aimed to map the availability of services responding to SGBV cases during the COVID-19 period, understand the essential services providers' prevention strategies, responses and challenges during this time period, and recognize the varying impacts the pandemic has on different institutions. It concludes with recommendations for the Government and other institutes providing essential services in ways to ensure continued operations for women’s rights and access to justice.

6. **MAPPING AND IDENTIFYING GAPS FOR EXISTING SUPPORT SERVICES:**

OXFAM, under its project Creating Spaces, awarded a 35-day consultancy project to LAS for Mapping and Identifying Gaps for Existing Support Services for the victims of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) and Child, Early and Forced Marriages in Sindh and Punjab (Six districts each). The four deliverables of consultancy project are:

- A user-friendly resource directory for Sindh and Punjab on the existing support services and mechanisms.
- A communication and visibility plan for the dissemination of the Resource Directory through online and offline mediums and media support.
- A Gap Analysis (report) based on the gaps, challenges identified of the support services and mechanisms available, with a list of recommendations to address issues of VAWG, and CEFM incorporated in the analysis. The recommendations will form a thorough base for advocacy to counter and mitigate the identified gaps.
- Two workshops to be held in Karachi and Lahore for the launch of the study.

Due to pandemic of COVID – 19, the project did not complete in 35 days and OXFAM signed extension of contract with LAS until 30th September 2020.

Key Highlights of the Project:

6.1. Resource Directory: LAS, in consultation with the Chairperson of Sindh Commission on the Status of the Women (SCSW), Chairperson Punjab Women Protection Authority (PWPC) and members of the civil society organizations developed a form for the mapping of essential services in Sindh and Punjab. The essential services covered in this directory are Police Stations, Hospitals, Shelter Homes, Legal Aid Service Providers, Civil Society Organisations and Government Organization. The directory contains the names of information provider, focal persons, contact details, and timings for each essential service provider. The directory also includes information of Federal, Provincial and District Level Helplines.

In Sindh, LAS conducted mapping activities in Dadu, Hyderabad, Kamber Shahdadkot, Matiari, Shaheed Benazir Abad (SBA) and Umerkot through its field teams. The field teams collected data that was considered as relevant, accessible, functional and responsive to the immediate needs of survivors of VAWG and CEFM in the Selected Districts.

In Punjab, LAS signed an MOU with Shaikh Ahmad Hassan School of Law, Lahore University of Management Sciences (SAHSOL – LUMS) to conduct the mapping of essential services of Faisalabad, Gujrat, Kasur, Lahore, Rawalpindi, and Sialkot District

of Punjab. The SAHSOL – LUMS engage its resources from the Gender Advocacy Clinic at LUMS for mapping and data collection in selected districts of Punjab.

LAS completed the data collection of Sindh and Punjab and the Sindh directory is in the designing stage. It will be disseminated to relevant stakeholders (already mapped) once it is designed.

6.2. Gap Analysis Paper (Report): LAS hired an external consultant to develop a gap analysis report based on gaps and challenges identified in the support services and mechanisms available, with a list of recommendations to address issues of VAWG and CEFM incorporated in the analysis. The first draft of the report was completed and shared with OXFAM Pakistan for their feedback.

7. STRENGTHENING THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM'S RESPONSE TO SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN SINDH:

The British High Commission in Islamabad, under the CSSF fund, awarded a grant to LAS for a period of 11 months to support the Criminal Justice System specifically in the area of Sexual and Gender Based Violence. The project contributes in the Strategic Priority Area 3 ('Improvement in Processing and Trial Time for Cases Against Sexual and Gender Based Violence (SGBV)') of the Sindh Rule of Law (RoL) Road Map.

The project was initiated in May 2020 with the following objectives:

- Reducing the trial time of SGBV cases through policy interventions by Road Map Steering Committee or Sindh High Court.
- Improving victim/witness handling in SGBV cases

During the two-month project period, LAS has begun working on key research deliverables of the project:

- SMS Campaign for the report "Covid-19 and Sexual and Gender Based Violence Reporting" from the calls received at SLACC.
- Guidelines for Judges appointed to SGBV Courts
- Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) of SGBV Courts
- Policy Brief of Special Protection Measures for the victims of SGBV cases.
- Advocacy to obtain 160 case files from Sindh Police Department in order to obtain case files to write report on the Gaps in competencies of Police, Prosecutors and Judges in handling SGBV cases.