**Minutes of Joint Networking Meeting**

**Of**

**Dastageer Legal Aid Center-Sanjog, Lahore**

**Under**

**Access to Justice for Vulnerable Populations in Pakistan Project**

Minutes of the Joint Network meeting held on 5th February, 2015, at Faletti’s Hotel, Lahore to share the progress update of the centers with other Rights Based Organizations (RBOs) and discuss and develop ways to increase and strengthen coordination and collaboration among these organizations within the district.

**Background:**

The basic purpose of Joint Networking Meetings is to promote and support developing partnerships and expanding networks among Dastageer Legal Aid Center (DLAC) Sanjog, Lahore, Rights Based Organizations and other relevant stakeholders of the district. The interaction will ensure collaboration, coordination and establishing networks for workers of human rights.

**Participants of the Meeting:**

1. Rafia Khan (Team Manager, TAF)
2. Raza Ali (Program Manager, INP)
3. Shagufta Aziz (Project Manager, INP)
4. Gul Hassan Abbas (Center Coordinator, DLAC, Sanjog)
5. Waheed Ahmad (Training & Liaison officer, Sanjog )
6. Sher Zaman (Coordinator, DCHD)
7. Arshia Zainab (Coordinator, CRM, Punjab)
8. Tehseen Fatima (Legal counselor, LRC Foundation)
9. Sadaf Abdul Ghani (Psycho-Social counselor, LRC

Foundation)

1. Barsila John (General Manager)
2. Shafiq ur Rehman (Milestones)
3. Rizwan Ijaz (Milestones)
4. Farooq Raza (Voice society for special persons)
5. Humayun Zaheer (President, Voice society for special

persons)

1. Muhammad Ali Khan Mazari (Deputy Director H.R, Ministry of Law and

Justice, Lahore)

1. Aliya Ali Khan (Shirkat Gah, women resource centre)
2. Tehzeeb (HomeNet, Pakistan)
3. Sadia Burhan (SBBHR centre for Women, social welfare

department, Punjab)

1. Zaheer Afzal (Advocate)
2. Rana Nasir (Law Officer)
3. Muhammad Naeem Bhutt (Deputy Director, Social welfare)
4. Mary Gill (MPA-PMLN)
5. Khalid Shahzad (DCSC, Civil rights)
6. Malik Sultan Ahmad (Vice President, LBA)
7. Kashif Kamal (TAF)
8. Adeeb Aslam Bhinder (General secretary, LBA)
9. Zahida Sadiq (Legal Advisor, Women Development

Helpline)

**Agenda of the Meeting:**

Following agenda items were discussed in the meeting:

**Agenda Item 1:** Progress Update by DLAC

**Agenda Item 2:** Improve/ increase coordination among Rights Based Organizations in District on Access to Justice Project

**Agenda Item 3:** Strengthening Referral Mechanism

**Agenda Item 4:** Issues/ Challenges of organizations working on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Minorities and GBV and suggestions to overcome them

**Agenda Item 5:** Charter of Justice for Protecting Rights

**Agenda Item 6:** Action Points for future meetings

**Meeting Progress/ Key Discussion Points**

The details of the deliberations are as follows:

**Agenda Item 1:** Progress Update by Dastageer Legal Aid Center (DLAC), Lahore

1. The meeting was initiated by introducing the participants and then explaining the purpose of the current meeting in detail. A presentation on the progress of the legal aid center was given to the participants whereby the major services provided by the center including 24/7 toll-free helpline, psychosocial support, legal aid and referral mechanism were explained in detail. Brief data comprising of number of beneficiaries in terms of legal assistance and court cases was also provided.

**Agenda Item 2 & 3:** Improve/ increase coordination among Rights Based Organizations in District on Access to Justice Project and Strengthening Referral Mechanism

1. Rafia Khan, Team Manager of Access to Justice for Vulnerable Populations Project, The Asia Foundation highlighted the need for developing referral protocols while getting the clients through referral mechanism from various organizations/ institutes including sharing the amount of information about the court case of the clients with that organization.. She stressed the need to generate general protocols as well as emergency protocols to strengthen the referral mechanism.
2. Raza Ali, Program Manager, Insaf Network Pakistan, reiterated in strengthening coordination with all stakeholders of the project in the district including the Government departments, rights based organizations, judiciary bar associations etc.
3. It was also explained that a mapping of the organizations working the district and the services provided will also be developed to be available for information sharing and synergizing efforts. This will also serve as a referral service directory.
4. Alya Khan, Manager Shirkat Gah shared that they have developed a referral directory of rights based organizations and will share with Sanjog. On her inquiry about the mechanism of intake of cases especially in the case of emergency where a woman survivor of extreme violence reports to the center, it was explained that the woman is usually facilitated in provision of shelter to shelter home or registration of FIR or development of Medico Legal Report (MLC).
5. Shafiq ur Rehman, president MILESTONE shared his organization has been affiliated with DLAC, Lahore since initiation as a support organization with special focus on persons with disabilities. He stressed the need for sustainability of the project whereby legal aid center has been established with its portfolio of services and their ownership taken up by the organization or state. He appreciated DLAC-Sanjog’s sensitization workshop being held at milestone in which all the panel lawyers and pro-bono lawyers participated along with the DLAC and Sanjog’s team. He offered to use their office as a venue for the next joint networking meeting.
6. Muhammad Ali Mazari, Deputy Director, Ministry of Law, Justice and HR discussed about their financial assistance in the form of Revolving and Relief fund that can be utilized for the betterment of the clients all over the Pakistan. He emphasized that this scheme can strengthen the DLAC beneficiaries in regard of their medical, rehabilitation and reintegration into society.
7. Marry Gill, MPA, PMLN, Vice President Punjab Youth Caucus highlighted the role of government in making justice accessible for poor and vulnerable populations. She shared the efforts of the government for the development of women in province of Punjab especially for improvement of policies and legislation for the protection of women. While appreciating the efforts of DLAC-Sanjog for working on poor and vulnerable population, she extended her support for the same.
8. Muhammad Sultan Ahmad, Vice President of Lahore Bar Association also assured of their support on behalf of the Lahore Bar.
9. Adeeb Aslam Bhinder, Lahore Bar Association, asked about the referral mechanism of cases under A2J. He also offered his services in any regard for the beneficiary on behalf of his bar saying that they are available for the betterment and empowerment of the beneficiary.
10. On the subject of sustainability, INP mentioned the forum of District Legal Empowerment Committees (DLECs) to be active under Law and Justice Commission in every district for the provision of free legal services for poor people are mostly inactive.

**Agenda item 4:** Issues/ Challenges of organizations working on Rights of Persons with Disabilities, religious and ethnic Minorities and survivors of GBV and suggestions to overcome them

1. It was emphasized that the privacy of the clients/ beneficiaries is of utmost importance to ensure safety.
2. DLAC, Lahore informed that the center has made efforts to make it accessible for all, especially persons with disabilities by developing a ramp, procuring a wheelchair and sensitization from their support organization Milestone on integrating with PWDs.

**Agenda Item 5:** Charter of Justice for Protecting Rights

1. It was highlighted that the ultimate goal of the coordination through these meetings is to have all organizations working on human rights at a central point together to develop a Justice cluster of the district. The organizations will develop through collaborative efforts some action points to be agreed upon by all to enhance/ improve access to justice in the district.

**Action Points:**

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| Action(s) Required | Responsibility |
| To develop a mailing list of all organizations/ institutions present in the current meeting to keep all stakeholders together and connected for future concerns. | DLAC, Sanjog |
| The next meeting to be organized at Milestone’s office | DLAC Sanjog |
| Referral Directory of Rights Based Organizations in Lahore to be shared with DLAC-Sanjog | Aliya Khan, Manager Shirkat Gah |