



GOOD PRACTICE REPORT ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN BANGLADESH



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IN BANGLADESH**

Author	Handicap International
In partnership with	Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST)
In association with	<p>10 Disabled People’s Organisations in Chittagong, Kushtia Pabna, Sirajgonj and Meherpur Districts:</p> <p>Adorsha Prothibondhi Kallyan Sangstha (APKS) Alliance of Urban DPOs in Chittagong (AUDC) Disability Development and Research Center (DDRC) Federation of DPOs Sitakunda (FoDS) Kampon Zila Protibondhi Federation (KZPF) Protibondhi Punarbason O Manobadhikar Samity (PPOMS) Sabar Shathe Shikbo Disability Organization (SSSDO) Spondon Prothibondhi Kallyan Sangstha (SPKS) Save the Planet and Disability (SPD) Uttaran Protibondi Unnayan Sangstha (UPUS)</p>
Contributors from Handicap International	Md. Abul Basar, Ripon Chakraborty, Md. Nazrul Islam, Sharmin Khan, David Lowen, Alison O’Connell, Javid Sadat, Md. Jamal Uddin
National Advisory Committee	Dr. Nafeesur Rahman, Dr. Meghna Guhathakurta, Julian Francis, Fahim Munaim, Ilias Kanchan, Syed Aminul Islam
National Technical Committee on Access to Justice	Sara Hossain, S.M. Kuddus Zaman, Khondoker Shahriar Shakir, Khandaker Jahurul Alam
District Advisory Sub-committees	5 district-level advisory committees – see Annex C for details.
Design & Printing	Hummingbird Ltd.
Date of publication	February 2015

This document has been produced with the financial assistance of the European Union. The contents of this document are the sole responsibility of Handicap International and can under no circumstances be regarded as reflecting the position of the European Union.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Handicap International would like to express its gratitude to the large number of people who contributed their valuable time and shared their experiences in the development of this report.

We are very grateful to the Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs), as central actors in the Making it Work process, for their huge contribution to this report through the collection of good practices, along with the organisation of the local sub- committees.

We would also like to thank in particular the members of the local sub-committees, along with the national advisory and technical committees who have orientated and provided technical input on access to justice for people with disabilities, along with qualifying the content of this report through their full participation in the validation of the good practices. In addition we are grateful to the wider community of judges, lawyers, public prosecutors, police and local administration representatives who have been involved in the process.

This publication would not be possible without the goodwill and generous input of the people with disabilities who have shared their experiences regarding their access to justice and particular thanks go to them.

I. ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report is an output of the project titled **“Making it work: Access to justice for persons with disabilities in Bangladesh”** which was implemented by Handicap International with funding from the European Union under the European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights for the period March 2013 – February 2015. The project has been implemented by Handicap International, in partnership with Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST) and in linkage with 10 Disabled People’s Organisations (DPOs) in Chittagong, Kushtia, Pabna, Sirajgonj and Meherpur Districts. BLAST provides free legal aid services to poor and disadvantaged men, women, and children and has considerable experience of supporting people with disabilities in accessing their rights through providing legal aid and undertaking public interest litigation, including winning rights for persons with disabilities to sit for civil service examinations, challenging harassment of such persons in educational institutions, and advocating for accessibility in the Supreme Court.

The project has contributed to the implementation of Articles 12 on equal recognition before the law and 13 on access to justice of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD). People with disabilities were directly provided with legal advice, mediation and litigation support by BLAST. The project also worked with legal professionals, including lawyers and judges, to integrate disability into their practices. DPOs were supported in their capacity as agents of change on access to justice for people with disabilities. As part of this process, DPOs identified good practices related to Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD to be documented and disseminated to other actors, as advocacy for changes in policies and practices to ensure access to justice for people with disabilities.

Objectives of the report

This report has been compiled to showcase good practices collected by DPOs and to promote practical recommendations, based on local evidence, on how to ensure access to justice and legal services for people with disabilities in Bangladesh. The key references on access to justice for people with disabilities are Articles 12 and 13 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) and Section 16 of the Bangladesh Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013).

ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN THE UNCRPD

Article 12: Equal recognition before the law

1. States Parties reaffirm that persons with disabilities have the right to recognition everywhere as persons before the law.
2. States Parties shall recognize that persons with disabilities enjoy legal capacity on an equal basis with others in all aspects of life.
3. States Parties shall take appropriate measures to provide access by persons with disabilities to the support they may require in exercising their legal capacity.
4. States Parties shall ensure that all measures that relate to the exercise of legal capacity provide for appropriate and effective safeguards to prevent abuse in accordance with international human rights law. Such safeguards shall ensure that measures relating to the exercise of legal capacity respect the rights, will and preferences of the person, are free of conflict of interest and undue influence, are proportional and tailored to the person's circumstances, apply for the shortest time possible and are subject to regular review by a competent, independent and impartial authority or judicial body. The safeguards shall be proportional to the degree to which such measures affect the person's rights and interests.
5. Subject to the provisions of this article, States Parties shall take all appropriate and effective measures to ensure the equal right of persons with disabilities to own or inherit property, to control their own financial affairs and to have equal access to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit, and shall ensure that persons with disabilities are not arbitrarily deprived of their property.

Article 13: Access to justice

1. States Parties shall ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others, including through the provision of procedural and age-appropriate accommodations, in order to facilitate their effective role as direct and indirect participants, including as witnesses, in all legal proceedings, including at investigative and other preliminary stages.
2. In order to help to ensure effective access to justice for persons with disabilities, States Parties shall promote appropriate training for those working in the field of administration of justice, including police and prison staff.

¹The Disability Rights and Protection Act is in Bengali and no official translation is available. Translation of this specific article in this report has been done by Handicap International and is not officially recognised.

ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN THE BANGLADESH DISABILITY RIGHTS AND PROTECTION ACT (2013) AND SCHEDULE

BANGLADESH DISABILITY RIGHTS AND PROTECTION ACT (2013)

Section 16: Rights of Persons with Disabilities:

1. Without affecting the generality of any other laws relevant to the rights of persons with disabilities, each person with a disability will have the following rights with consideration for the type of disability:

1(b). Everywhere equal recognition before the law and access to justice

SCHEDULE OF THE BANGLADESH DISABILITY RIGHTS AND PROTECTION ACT (2013)

Clause 5: Accessibility

- A. Measures for accessibility and transportation for persons with disabilities have to be taken by governmental, statutory and non-governmental agencies or institutions and their facilities and services.
- B. under the aforementioned clause (a) the following services and facilities shall be included, such as
 - (a) buildings, vehicles, roads, education and training institutions, hospitals, courts, police stations, railway stations, bus terminals, launch terminals, airports, seaports, river ports, ground transportation, disaster shelters, cyclone shelters, places where cultural programs are held, buildings of public services, entertainment and sports places, tourist spots, parks, libraries, public toilets, underpasses and over-bridges and all common travel places for people.
 - (b) Information, communication, information and communication technology, medical services, banking services and electrical and emergency facilities, including all related services.
- C. To take steps to ensure the inclusion of the concept 'accessibility of persons with disabilities' in the academic curriculum for engineering science.
- D. To take steps to allow the easy identification of the different denominations of domestic currency.
- E. To take steps for ensuring the utilization of textbooks of the National Curriculum and Textbook Board (NCTB) and different library books via an e-learning platform by using an acceptable and appropriate technology to make them accessible for persons with disabilities.

Clause 12: Freedom from violence, and Access to Justice and Legal Aid

- a. To take measures for appropriate training of the personnel of the judicial department including police and prison authorities to effectively ensure the rights of access to justice for persons with disabilities.
- b. To take measures including proper medical treatment, legal, administrative, social, educational or other steps for the protection of persons with disabilities, irrespective of their gender, from physical and mental torture and all kind of exploitation including sexual violence and rape inside or outside of their place of residence.
- c. To take measures to keep persons with disabilities in custody and persons with disabilities who are victims of torture in suitable 'Safe Houses'.
- d. To take appropriate measures to ensure legal assistance to persons with disabilities who are victims of violence, including taking necessary steps to engage an expert in case of linguistic communication needs.

Making it Work methodology

The methodology used for the development of this report is Making It Work, an international multi-stakeholder initiative which aims for the effective implementation of the UNCRPD by documenting good practices on inclusion of people with disabilities. The methodology is based on identifying effective or innovative actions by any actor that have achieved positive changes (whether from grass-roots level initiatives or national-level activities), documenting the change and analysing how such good practices could be sustained or replicated. At the heart of this process, are people with disabilities who validate what works and use the evidence-based good practices to strengthen their advocacy to influence social change. MIW offers a set of tools and guidelines that empower groups to work collectively to identify and document good practices, and use this evidence to define advocacy activities with constructive, practical recommendations influencing positive changes to policies, systems and services in line with the principles of the UNCRPD. More information is available at: <http://www.makingitwork-crpd.org/>

Making It Work has four main components:

1. *Adopting a multi-stakeholder approach:* engaging with multiple stakeholders at local and national levels, through multi-stakeholder groups to collectively review good practices.

2. *Documenting evidence of good practices:* analysing the most significant changes created by good practices, how changes which occurred and how they can be replicated or sustained, focused on access to justice for people with disabilities.

Instead of focusing on human rights violations and on what does not work, **Making It Work** shifts the attention of stakeholders on to what works and what can be **continued, replicated and scaled up.**

3. *Evidence-based advocacy:* using evidence from good practices to build advocacy actions based on examples of what is working to advance the rights of people with disabilities.

4. *Producing and disseminating a report:* examples of good practices are used to develop practical and constructive recommendations, applied to different types of stakeholders, such as civil society organisations (including NGOs and DPOs), service providers and policy makers, which are disseminated in the form of a good practice report.

Methodology of good practice documentation

Based on the Making it Work approach, the following methodology was used to collect, review and validate the good practices:

3 District-level sub-committees in Kushtia, Pabna and Chittagong: these committees are lead by Disabled People's Organisations and comprised of district-level stakeholders from different sectors, including judges, lawyers, media, local government, non-governmental organisations and other actors. These committees were responsible for identifying and mapping potential disability-inclusive good practices at district level on access to justice, acting as an initial filter for practices which were then submitted to the national committees. (See Annex C for the lists of members)

National Advisory Committee: this committee brings together actors from different spheres with national influence and steered the good practice documentation process, providing final validation of good practices, ways to use this evidence to promote changes and policy recommendations. The committee has a key role as a mouthpiece on disability rights issues, including public awareness, media promotion and government negotiation (See Annex A for the list of members).

National Technical Committee: this committee involves national-level experts on access to justice and provided technical validation of disability-inclusive good practices, submitted by the district-level sub-committees. (See Annex A for the list of members).

The process of analysis, selection and final approval of the good practices for this publication was carried out in a participatory way, through the local sub-committees and national committees. 50 good practices on access to justice for people with disabilities were initially identified by DPOs, of which 14 were approved by the district sub-committee for further data collection by DPOs. Individual interviews and focus group discussions were carried out by DPOs with stakeholders involved in the practices, documenting on paper, along with audio and video recordings. HI provided initial support to the DPOs in collecting and documenting the good practices.

The DPOs presented the collected good practices to local sub-committee at district level for review and validation. The 3 district level sub-committees analysed and validated these 14 good practices which were then shared with the national technical and advisory committees. The national committees validated all 14 practices, provided feedback and formulated recommendations towards different stakeholders. This report includes these 14 validated good practices.

The good practices were reviewed according to the following criteria :

1. Compliance with Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD on equal recognition before the law and access to justice
2. Empowerment of people with disabilities as an outcome
3. Participation of people with disabilities in the process
4. Sustainable and/or locally owned and resourced
5. Replicable

The draft of this good practice report, along with a selection of the good practices were shared during a national conference organised on 28th February, 2015 in Dhaka with the participation DPOs, legal practitioners, academics, researchers, development experts, relevant government officials and human rights activists to highlight what is working in ensuring access to justice for people with

²The criteria were selected by HI based on criteria followed by the advisory sub-committees

disabilities. The participants raised recommendations on improving access to justice for people with disabilities, particularly related to the activation of all articles of the Disability Rights and Protection Act, coordination between the Ministry of Social Welfare and other Ministries, and highlighting the particular barriers faced by people with sensory disabilities. As the chief guest, Justice Md. Abdul Wahhab Miah, Honourable Justice of the Bangladesh Supreme Court highlighted the importance of training on access to justice for people with disabilities for those working in the field of administration of justice. He committed to proposing to Judicial Administration Training Institute (JATI) that disability-inclusive practices be integrated into their curriculum and that this be included in University curricula for lawyers. He advised those working on access to justice for people with disabilities to send a recommendation to the Law Commission to amend Section 3 of the Evidence Act to ensure that people with disabilities are systematically able to participate in court proceedings. Justice Naima Haider, Honourable Justice of the Bangladesh Supreme Court as the special guest, highlighted in particular the plight of women with disabilities, who are more vulnerable to violence against women. Referring to the barriers of cost, duration of trials and lack of knowledge of the functioning of the legal system, she emphasised the limited access to courts of people with disabilities. She raised the importance of monitoring implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Disability Rights and Protection Act and gave a call to action to all those working on access to justice, to be activists for access to justice for people with disabilities.

II. DISABILITY IN BANGLADESH: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Disability is linked to multiple forms of discrimination faced by people with disabilities along with social stigmatization. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that approximately 15% of the world's population has a disability. According to the World Bank, there is an intricate link between disability and poverty and people with disabilities represent the poorest of the world's poor³. Experiencing multiple vulnerabilities, people with disabilities are among the most marginalized groups in the world, with marginalization having a negative impact on health outcomes, educational prospects and access to economic opportunities⁴.

On November 30, 2007, the Government of Bangladesh ratified the UNCRPD, one of the first countries in the world to do so, and it entered into force on 3rd May 2008. Prior to this, Bangladesh adopted the National Policy on Disability (1995), the Disability Welfare Act (2001) and the National Action Plan on Disability (2006). The UNCRPD has subsequently been translated into the national Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013), enacted by Bangladesh National Parliament on 3rd October 2013.

Although these positive policy measures have been taken, they are yet to be fully implemented. People with disabilities remain amongst the most vulnerable and marginalized groups, suffering from isolation and rejection due to a lack of awareness and mindsets which serve to exclude people with disabilities from society. Turning these policy commitments into a reality continues to be a challenge

³World Bank:

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTSOCIALPROTECTION/EXTDISABILITY/0,,contentMDK:20183395~menuPK:417335~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:282699,00.html>

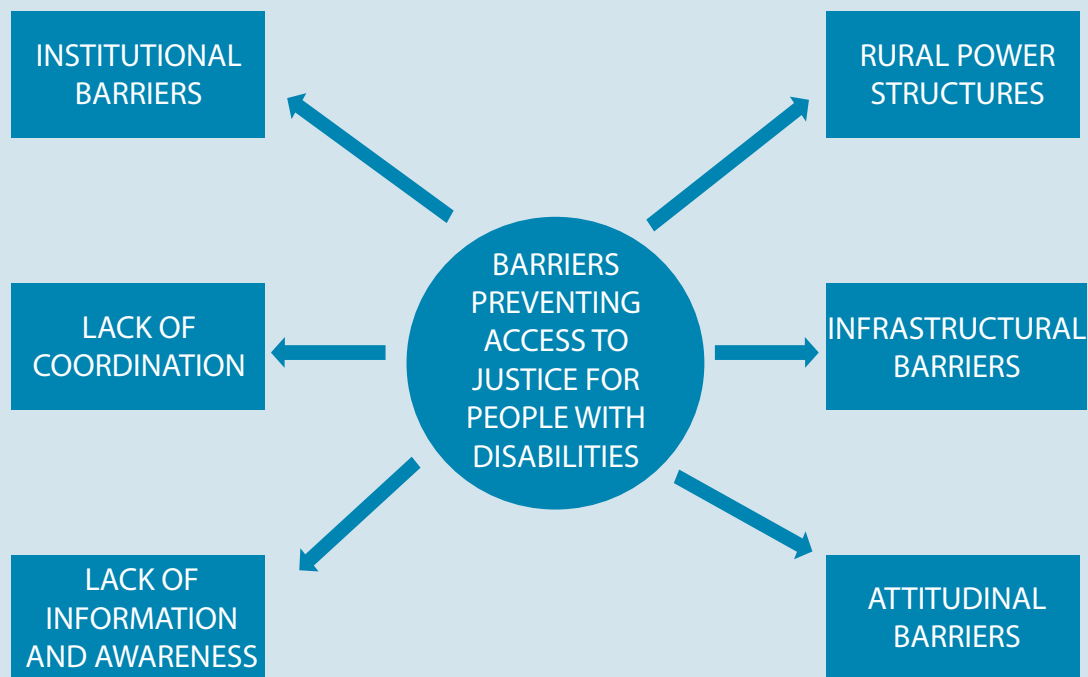
⁴World Health Organization, World Report on Disability, 2011:

http://whqlibdoc.who.int/publications/2011/9789240685215_eng.pdf

in Bangladesh, although the situation is improving. The Making it Work methodology has been a basis to capture the reality at ground level for people with disabilities and the good practices show that despite limited resources and in the absence of concrete plans to implement the policies at local level, there are cases where people with disabilities have accessed justice. However, the justice system is not yet systematically responsive on disability.

There are several forms of statutory protection for people with disabilities under Bangladeshi law and many national laws explicitly or implicitly provide protection and rights to people with disabilities. However, knowledge of these amongst legal professionals, government authorities, civil society members, people with disabilities and the general public is limited. Legal professionals, including judges and lawyers, need support to ensure that legal services are inclusive of people with disabilities, such as reasonable accommodation to allow for participation in legal proceedings. Government agencies are in need of increased knowledge and resources to ensure that statutory obligations for people with disabilities are fulfilled, in the absence of which people with disabilities can be denied rights and obligations afforded to them under Bangladeshi law. Bangladesh has a strong tradition of civil society supporting the Government in implementation of national policies and a large number of Disabled Peoples Organizations (DPOs) operate within the country. These DPOs are a direct entry point to people with disabilities, linking them with resources at local and national levels. However, many DPOs need additional skills and knowledge to support access to justice, including on disability rights, disability-related laws and policies, advocacy, along with the process for accessing legal aid.

Handicap International conducted a barrier assessment in December 2013 in collaboration with BLAST and the DPOs, through 3 mapping workshops uniting governmental, non-governmental and other actors. This assessment identified barriers in access to justice for people with disabilities. The main barriers identified are illustrated in the diagram below:



INSTITUTIONAL BARRIERS

There are no policy guidelines on filing cases or on legal proceedings for people with disabilities; provisions for reasonable accommodation are not in place at police stations and courts, such as sign language interpreters.

INFRASTRUCTURAL BARRIERS

Many Court buildings, BAR Association buildings and police stations are not physically accessible for people with disabilities; transport systems allowing access to police stations and Courts are not yet accessible for people with disabilities.

ATTITUDINAL BARRIERS

In general societal attitudes and mindsets of actors within the justice system are not sensitive towards people with disabilities, who experience discrimination. Negative attitudes towards disability also present problems with regards to local mediation, particularly in rural areas.

LACK OF COORDINATION

Although there are exceptions, a lack of coordination exists among relevant actors within the justice system, such as police stations, hospitals and those working in the field of administration of justice on issues related to access to justice for people with disabilities.

LACK OF INFORMATION AND AWARENESS

There is a lack of awareness among people with disabilities about the justice system and available legal aid services, with limited access to information, particularly for women with disabilities living in rural areas.

RURAL POWER STRUCTURES

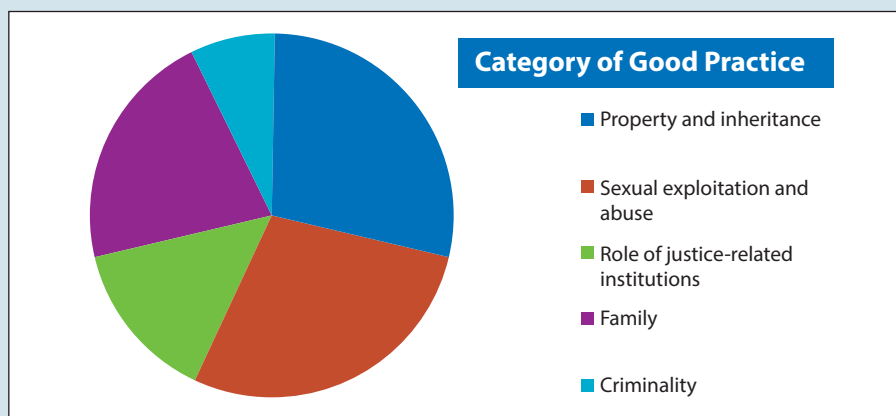
Rural power structures influence access to justice of people with disabilities, for example dominant groups in local areas have influence over community-level mediation.

III. GOOD PRACTICES ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

This good practice report showcases the good practices collected by Disabled Peoples Organizations on how people with disabilities have obtained justice through initiatives of different stakeholders, along with the support of legal aid organizations such as BLAST, District Legal Aid Committees, the police, representatives of local authorities, DPO representatives and individual lawyers. The majority of the good practices focus on individual legal cases involving people with disabilities where disability-inclusive practices were ensured with limited resources at local level. The specific conditions related to these individual cases are not necessarily directly replicable, however they show that disability-inclusion related to access to justice is possible. Based on these cases, this report gives practical recommendations on how changes could be made to the justice system to allow access to justice for people with disabilities to become systematic and for full implementation of Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD and Section 16, 1(b) of the Bangladesh Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013).

The break-down of the areas of access to justice covered by this report are as follows:

Type of Good practice	# of good practices
Property and inheritance	4
Sexual exploitation and abuse	4
Role of justice-related institutions	2
Family	3
Criminality	1
Total	14



Most significant facilitating factors for the good practices:

Facilitating factors	# of good practices
DPO or civil society-led initiatives	6
Individual initiatives	2
Community-led initiatives	2
Knowledge on justice system	1
Support from other legal aid organizations	2
Knowledge or awareness of disability	1
Total	14

Stakeholder involvement in initiating or facilitating good practices:

Stakeholder	# of good practices
Disabled People's Organisations	7
Local authorities	1
Non-Governmental Organisations	3
Legal professionals (judges, lawyers, DLAC, BLAST)	14
Police	8
Media	3
People with disabilities and their families	14

GOOD PRACTICE I: How to ensure access to justice for people with disabilities through the active role of the local police

Related articles of the UNCRPD:

Article 12: Equal recognition before the law

Article 13: Access to justice

Related articles of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013):

Section 16 (1-b): Everywhere equal recognition before the law and access to justice

Location: Mirpur, Kushtia district

Stakeholders involved: Police, Courts (Magistrate court, Tribunal for Violence against Women and Children), Lawyers, DPO (Shobar Shathey Shikhbo Disability Organization), Social Welfare Officer, Physically Handicapped Training Centre (PHTC), Khulna.

DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

Shobar Shathey Shikhbo Protibondhi Shongathon is a local DPO involved in promotion of access to justice for people with disabilities in Kushtia district of Bangladesh. Before this practice began, people with disabilities had limited access to justice, which included limited support from the local police station, due to challenges in communication, particularly for those with hearing impairments. In addition people with disabilities were neglected by the local administration, their families and society in general.

Since 2013, Mirpur Police Station has taken direct action to provide legal protection to people with disabilities. This came as a result of advocacy initiatives taken by the local DPO with to the Officer in Charge (OC) of the Station. As an example of such actions, a police sub-inspector investigated a case of attempted rape filed by a woman with a hearing impairment in January 2014 and submitted a charge sheet before the court. The assigned police officer, in contact with the local DPO, coordinated the provision of a sign language interpreter from the Physically Handicapped Training Centre (PHTC) in Khulna, to allow the victim to participate in the legal proceedings. As a result it was possible to record the victim's statement in the Magistrate Court. The case is currently ongoing in the Tribunal for Violence against Women and Children.

Three further cases of people with disabilities have now been filed at the police station and the police have also conducted an outreach initiative to help identify people with disabilities in need of access to justice.

FACTORS THAT MADE THIS GOOD PRACTICE POSSIBLE

DPO advocacy: A series of advocacy initiatives by the DPO, Shobar Shathey Shikhbo Disability Organization, including regular communication with police officers played a significant role in making these changes happen. As a result, the local police station became more responsive as regards justice for people with disabilities.

Active role of police: the Officer in Charge at the Police Station played a central role in this case and was sensitive towards people with disabilities. This in turn inspired other police officers to support

people with disabilities and lead to the implementation of an outreach programme. The Officer in Charge was also able to influence other actors in the justice system, for example persuading the court to provide reasonable accommodation for a person with a hearing impairment.

Mobilization of resources: the involvement of a sign language interpreter in the court proceedings by mobilising resources through coordination between the police and the PHTC was essential for recording the statement of the victim, who has a hearing impairment.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME

Initially the police were not supportive of people with disabilities, but as a result of advocacy by the local DPO, targeting the Officer in Charge; prompt action was later taken by the police department to file cases.

HOW CAN THIS PRACTICE BE IMPROVED OR REPLICATED?

This is an example of the important role that the police can play, when they are sensitized on disability, in ensuring compliance with Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD on equal recognition before the law and access to justice for people with disabilities. People with disabilities participated in this good practice through the role of the local DPO in sensitizing the police and were empowered by being able to access legal proceedings directly. It is a locally owned practice that can continue at local level through ongoing collaboration between the police and DPOs.

In terms of replication of this practice in other areas, regular advocacy work by DPOs towards police stations, in particular targeting Officers in Charge can sensitize the police on access to justice needs for people with disabilities and a strong relationship between police and DPOs is essential to ensure continued support to people with disabilities.

However, for this practice to be integrated within the justice system on a wider scale there is a need for systematic training on disability rights for those working in the field of administration of justice, including the police. If members of the police force are systematically sensitized and trained on disability, their support for access to justice for people with disabilities will be increased, without the need to depend on the good-will or initiatives of individuals at local level.

Resources were mobilized by the police in this practice to ensure reasonable accommodation in court proceedings for a person with a sensory disability, through engaging a sign language interpreter. According to the schedule of the Disability Rights and Protection Act clauses 5 and 12 it is the responsibility of the government to provide accessibility measures, including sign language interpretation for people with disabilities and this reasonable accommodation should be made systematically available. All those working on the administration of justice are encouraged to replicate this practice of the police by requesting reasonable accommodation within courts directly to the court officials and judges.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Mr. Shawpon Ahmed
Finance Secretary
Shobar Shathey Shikhbo Disability Organization
Mirpur, Kushtia district
Cell: 01719161395

GOOD PRACTICE II: How to ensure access to justice for women with disabilities in family disputes, through local mediation

Related articles of the UNCRPD:

Article 12: Equal recognition before the law

Article 13: Access to justice

Related articles of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013):

Section 16 (1-b): Everywhere equal recognition before the law and access to justice

Location: Mirpur, Kushtia district

Stakeholders involved: Neighbors, Local government, DPO (Shobar Sathey Shikhbo Disability Organization) Lawyers, Local Family Court, Police station, people with disabilities

DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

According to a local DPO, Shobar Sathey Shikhbo, involved in the promotion of access to justice for people with disabilities in Kushtia, before this practice began women with disabilities had limited access to both formal and informal justice mechanisms in the area. In certain cases police and local authorities were also not supportive towards them. This was often due to a lack of awareness of police officers and local authorities on the rights of people with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities.

China Khatun is a woman with a physical disability living in Mirpur Upazila of Kushtia district. She married a local man, Jhoru Ali, and had one daughter and two sons. She was subsequently abandoned by her husband due to difficulties within the marriage related to their financial situation. Her husband then married another woman and left China with no means of financial support.

China Khatun informed the chairman of the Union Parishad (local council) of the situation who arranged a Shalish (mediation) to settle the issue. In the Shalish, Jhoru Ali committed to support the family financially, but the financial support lasted only for a few months.

The Chairman of the Union Parishad suggested that China Khatun contact a local DPO, Shobar Sathey Shikhbo. The DPO referred her to a private lawyer who then helped her file a case with the Family Court in Kushtia. The court issued an arrest warrant, but the local police station could not arrest Jhoru Ali as by then he was living in Dhaka. The DPO met the Officer in Charge at the local police station and requested them to forward the warrant to Uttara Police station in Dhaka. When Jhoru Ali discovered that there was a warrant for his arrest, he met the Chairman of the Union Parishad and appealed to him to settle the case through mediation. The Chairman arranged a second mediation session in the presence of the DPO and both parties, where Jhoru Ali agreed to support the family financially. China Khatun then withdrew the case from the Family Court and to date she continues to receive financial support from her husband.

FACTORS THAT MADE THIS GOOD PRACTICE POSSIBLE

Individual initiative: China Khatun took the initiative herself to communicate with the Union Chairman who was aware of the forms of justice available in such family disputes.

Engagement of the DPO: The DPO referred China to a lawyer who filed a case with the Family Court, requesting maintenance costs. The DPO met with the local police to ensure that they forwarded the arrest warrant to Uttara police station.

Role of local authorities: the Chairman of the Union Parishad had good knowledge of the justice system, existing remedies and of local actors able to support people with disabilities. He referred China to the DPO that in turn referred her to a lawyer and played a key role in local level mediation, supporting the timely resolution of the family dispute.

Internal coordination of the police: the police had strong internal coordination which ensured the communication of the arrest warrant from Kustia to Uttara.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME

In the first mediation arranged by the chairman of the Union Parishad, Jhoru Ali agreed to provide financial support but the decision was not taken seriously and was not enforced. To overcome this difficulty, China filed a case with the Family Court, which put pressure on her husband to take the situation seriously.

Jhoru Ali was no longer living at his permanent residence, having moved to Dhaka, hence the local police were not able to arrest him. The local DPO therefore met with the Officer in Charge of the local police station who then arranged for the police in Dhaka to put out a warrant for his arrest. This prompted him to come to an amicable agreement.

HOW CAN THIS PRACTICE BE IMPROVED OR REPLICATED?

This is an example of the important role that local authorities can play when they are sensitized on disability in ensuring compliance with Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD on equal recognition before the law and access to justice for people with disabilities. In addition, it shows how essential it is that individual people with disabilities are aware of their rights, as China was the strongest driver of her own process to access justice, participating in and being empowered by this process, through her success in activating both formal and informal justice mechanisms. People with disabilities also participated in this good practice through the role of the local DPO in referring China to legal support and meeting with the police. It is a locally owned practice that can continue in this area through continued collaboration between the local authorities, DPOs and individual people with disabilities.

The practice could be replicated in other areas by raising awareness about the justice system and rights of women with disabilities among community members, including people with disabilities. Awareness-raising can be conducted by DPOs, who also have a key role to play in conducting advocacy on access to justice for people with disabilities. A strong relationship between local authorities and DPOs is also essential to ensure continued support to people with disabilities. To ensure replication, strengthening the capacity of local DPOs across Bangladesh on advocacy and awareness raising, along with strengthening their knowledge of the justice system and the legal regulatory environment for people with disabilities should be a priority.

Through initiatives taken by an active Union Parishad Chairman justice was achieved in this case, however for this practice to be integrated within the justice system on a wider scale, appropriate standard training on disability, including specific training on women with disabilities, is needed for those working in the field of administration of justice, including local authorities, along with the police, court officials and judges. If local governmental and administrative bodies systematically support the access of people with disabilities to justice, particularly women with disabilities their support for access to justice for people with disabilities will be increased, without the need to depend on the good-will or initiatives of individuals at local level.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Swapon Ahmed
Finance Secretary
Shobar Shathey Shikhbo Disability Organization
Mirpur, Kushtia
Cell: 01719161395

GOOD PRACTICE III: How to ensure justice for a woman with a disability in a case of sexual violence, through coordinated action of disability organisations and legal professionals

Related articles of the UNCRPD:

Article 12: Equal recognition before the law

Article 13: Access to justice

Related articles of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013):

Section 16 (1-b): Everywhere equal recognition before the law and access to justice

Location: Sirajgonj district

Stakeholders involved: Police, Court (District Court, Tribunal of Violence Against women and Children), Lawyer from the Sirajgonj District Legal Aid Committee (DLAC), DPO (SPONDON Protibondhi Kallayan Songstha)

DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

According to a local DPO (SPONDON), people with disabilities experience limited access to justice in the local area. Criminal offenses against people with disabilities met with no response from local authorities and were influenced by prevailing rural power structures, linked to dominant groups at local level.

A woman with a physical disability was raped in 2008 by a neighbor and consequently became pregnant. She then asked the neighbor to marry her, but he required her to get an abortion as a pre-condition for marriage. He provided her with medication to abort the child without having consulted a doctor. The medication had serious physical consequences on her, but did not result in an abortion. After five months, he refused to marry her. The woman then informed her sister of the situation, disclosing the name of the offender. They then met with the Chairman and other members of the Union Parishad (local council) to get support, but were unsuccessful, as the accused was a member of a prominent family in the local area.

SPONDON learned of the case through one of their community-level self-help groups and met the victim's family to gather more detailed information. The DPO consulted ADD International who referred the victim to the District Legal Aid Committee, who appointed a lawyer, supported the victim to file a case with Sirajgonj District Court and covered the legal costs. A warrant for the arrest of the accused was sent to the police, but he was not arrested, so SPONDON, ADD International and the lawyer met the Officer in Charge at the police station. As a result, the Officer in Charge arrested the accused and ensured his appearance before the court. The accused was later released on bail.

The woman was admitted to Bogra Medical College Hospital with severe pain and delivered a premature baby, but both she and the newborn baby died. After her death the lawyer filed a petition to the Tribunal of Violence Against Women and Children in Sirajgonj to consider the matter as attempted murder, as the forced medication by the accused had resulted in her death. The tribunal issued an order to the police to produce the accused before the Court. The accused offered a financial settlement to the woman's family, who were tempted to accept the monetary compensation. However, the lawyer persuaded them to pursue justice through the Court. At the next hearing, the Court sent the accused into custody, after which the woman's family and other

witnesses were threatened by the relatives of the accused, who blocked their entry into the Court to prevent them from giving their statements. The Public Prosecutor, Abdul Hamid Lavlu, protected the victim's family and other witnesses, keeping them in his room on the date of the hearing. After a two year trial, in 2011 the Court convicted the accused and gave him a life sentence.

FACTORS THAT MADE THIS GOOD PRACTICE POSSIBLE

The family's resolve in pursuing formal justice: the family was able to trust in the rule of law and the justice system rather than accepting a financial settlement or informal justice in a criminal case. This was ensured with the support of the lawyer, the Public Prosecutor and the DPO.

Active role of the District Legal Aid Committee: DLACs are district-level governmental bodies, under the National Legal Aid Services Organization (NLASO) mandated to appoint lawyers and cover legal costs of people with limited financial means. Their active role in this case ensured the appointment of a lawyer and coverage of legal fees.

Referral linkages: the DPO, SPONDON, has strong linkages to grass-roots self-help groups, who know how to identify and refer to the DPO when a person with a disability in need of access to justice is identified. In addition the DPO has strong linkages to ADD International and got their support for referral to a legal service provider.

Collective action of the DPO, ADD International and lawyers: through collective action ADD international, the DPO and the lawyer persuaded the Officer in Charge to comply with the arrest warrant. This collective action ensured that action was taken by the police.

Role of Public Prosecutor: the Public Prosecutor took security measures to protect the victim's family and other witness from the threats of the accused on the day of the hearing. In addition, he played an important role in convincing the family of the victim to have confidence in the justice system and the Prosecutor's continued role.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME

Women with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to sexual violence and need support from their families, communities and local DPOs.

Initially the police station did not arrest the accused. The DPO, ADD International and the Lawyer conducted collective action to ensure the arrest was carried out by collectively meeting the Officer in Charge.

Threats to the victim's family by the accused: the Public Prosecutor took protective measures on the day of the hearing to protect the victim's family from being threatened by the accused.

As the victim's family had limited financial means, they were tempted to settle the matter on receipt of a financial settlement. The advocate Rima convinced the victim's family to continue with the legal proceedings.

HOW CAN THIS PRACTICE BE IMPROVED OR REPLICATED?

This is a case which shows the key role which an active District Legal Aid Committee can play in supporting women with disabilities to ensure compliance with Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD on

equal recognition before the law and access to justice. In addition it shows the importance of referral linkages and coordinated action among disability organisations and legal professionals, from the initial identification of the case to the end of the legal proceedings. There was participation of people with disabilities in the process through the role of the DPO in identifying the case and referring to other organisations and legal services, the vulnerability of the woman with a disability in this case could however have been reduced through increased access to knowledge of available protection and remedies for violence against women. The positive role of the DLAC and the collaborative practices among actors in this local area are locally owned and can continue.

In terms of replication, the circumstances of the case itself should not be replicated; however there are positive factors that can be taken forward and the conviction of the offender can increase deterrence of cases of sexual violence against women with disabilities, by showing how the legal system will bring perpetrators to justice.

The practice could be improved by reducing the vulnerability of women with disabilities to violence through increasing knowledge of their rights at community level, specifying available protection and remedies for violence against women. The key role played by DPOs in identifying people with disabilities in need of access to justice through their networks, ensuring referral and conducting advocacy to ensure due legal process is followed can be replicated. DPOs across Bangladesh can play a central role in awareness raising and advocacy to target police stations, lawyers associations and legal aid organizations for ensuring access to justice for women with disabilities in cases of violence against women. Strengthening the capacity of local DPOs across Bangladesh to assure this role, along with strengthening their knowledge of the justice system and the legal regulatory environment for people with disabilities should be a priority.

Collective action should be encouraged among disability-specialised organisations, such as DPOs and those with legal expertise, such as lawyers and legal aid organisations. Such collective action can sensitise those working in the field of administration of justice on the needs of women with disabilities in cases of violence against women. However, to ensure that this protection and remedies in cases of violence against women are systematically integrated into the justice system, local authorities, police and legal professionals need to receive systematic training on responding to cases of violence against women.

The active role of the District Legal Aid Committee should be encouraged in districts across Bangladesh with the potential of DLAC to effectively and systematically provide legal services for people with disabilities through free-of-cost legal services for people with limited financial means and vulnerable groups, such as women with disabilities.

In this case protection was ensured through the individual initiative of the public prosecutor, however to ensure such forms of protection are systematic, there is a need for protection mechanisms for female victims with disabilities and their families from threats by the accused.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Al-Amin Sheik
President
Spondon Protibondhi Kallyan Songstha
Sirajgonj
Cell: 01749899020

GOOD PRACTICE IV: How to ensure justice for acid attack victims through support from NGOs and free legal services

Related articles of the UNCRPD:

Article 12: Equal recognition before the law

Article 13: Access to justice

Related articles of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013):

Section 16 (1-b): Everywhere equal recognition before the law and access to justice

Location: Ullahpara, Sirajgonj, Bangladesh

Stakeholders involved: Neighbors, Local government, NGOs (BRAC, Acid Survivors foundation, Manab Mukti Sangstha), Police, People with Disabilities



DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

According to a local DPO, Adarsha Protibondhi Kollyan Songstha, involved in the promotion of access to justice of people with disabilities in Ullahpara sub-district in Sirajgonj, people living in situations of poverty and marginalization in this local area had limited access to justice, with numerous occurrences of land disputes, in particular.

Hafijul Islam Alawol, a 17 year-old boy, sustained a hearing and visual impairment as a result of an acid attack related to a land dispute. In 2011, after the death of his father, Alawol inherited land and began to face difficulties with his neighbors over the ownership of this land. He went to the Chairman of the local Union Parishad for support, who arranged a mediation session in 2011. The decision was in favor of Alawol as he had the required papers showing his ownership of the land, however this decision was not accepted by the opposing parties. On 4th of April 2013, while he slept Alawol was the victim of an acid attack. He was admitted to Sirajgonj Upazila Health Complex then moved to Dhaka for advanced treatment with the support of the Acid Survivors Foundation, along with two other local NGOs, Manab Mukti Sangstha and Socio health and Rehabilitation Program (SHARP).

On 7th April 2013, BRAC provided legal support to Alawol and on behalf of BRAC, Advocate K M Hasan Rumeed took on the new case related to the acid attack which was filed with Ullahpara Police Station. The acid attack had an impact on Alawol's sensory capacities, he sustained a hearing and visual impairment and was not able to give his statement during the trial, as he was hospitalised. As a result, the trial was delayed for three months, however later the Police were able to visit Alawol in hospital and take his statement there. The Criminal Court, Sirajgonj convicted the accused of the acid attack, Md. Kashem Ali and Babu Chad, on 16th April in 2014. They each received life sentences and were required to pay 100,000 BDT as compensation to Alawol.

FACTORS THAT MADE THIS GOOD PRACTICE POSSIBLE

Support from NGOs: Within a short time-frame, Acid Survivors Foundation, Manab Mukti Sangstha and Socio health and Rehabilitation Program (SHARP) provided the necessary financial support and referral for the medical treatment of Alawol. A representative of the local NGO, Manab Mukti Sangstha, provided psychological support on an ongoing basis to Alawol and his family to have confidence in the justice system and the rule of law and facilitated interactions with different local actors. BRAC provided free legal support which allowed the case to go to trial, through BRAC's support to the victim and his family in filing a case and assigning a lawyer to deal with the case.

Role of the Criminal Court: the Criminal Court gave special permission for the statement of Alawol to be taken at the hospital, as he was unable to attend in person.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME

Alawol and his family had limited financial means to bear the cost of medical treatment and to bring the case to trial, which was overcome through the support of local NGOs who provided access to free legal services. Acid Survivors Foundation, Manab Mukti and Sharp supported Alawol to cover the costs of medical treatment.

The vulnerability of people in the community to attack following legal decisions: This case, bringing perpetrators of such attacks to justice, has the potential to be a deterrence mechanism.

As Alawol was admitted to hospital during the initial trial related to the land dispute, he could not directly attend the Court hearings, so the Court gave special permission for his statement to be taken at the hospital.

HOW CAN THIS PRACTICE BE IMPROVED OR REPLICATED?

This is a case which shows the key role which a dynamic NGO sector plays in ensuring compliance with Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD on equal recognition before the law and access to justice through psychological support and legal aid. In addition it shows the importance of the Court adapting to the needs of people with disabilities, or people who are hospitalized. Alawol participated in the legal proceedings and even after the attack had the strength to trust in the justice system, which was a form of empowerment. Cases such as these also act as a deterrence to ensure that people are not subject to violent attacks after legal decisions are made.

The positive role of NGOs, collaborating closely in this local area is locally owned and should continue. Although a dynamic NGO sector, providing access to free legal services is key in ensuring access to justice, when it comes to replication District Legal Aid Committees should also be active across Bangladesh in fulfilling their mandate of ensuring free of cost legal services for people with

disabilities with limited financial means. DPOs can also play a role in identifying people with disabilities and raising awareness on rights of people with disabilities and supporting the referral process.

The practice of the Criminal Court in this case adapting to the needs of people with disabilities can be replicated by other courts. Court officers should be informed about the special needs of persons and disabilities so they can ensure a fair trial adapted to the disability and make reasonable accommodation to ensure persons with disabilities are able to give evidence even when they are not able to attend Court in person. According to the schedule of the Disability Rights and Protection Act clauses 5 and 12 it is the responsibility of the government to provide accessibility measures, including sign language interpretation for people with disabilities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Mr. Abdul Matin
Secretary
Adarsha Protibondhi Kollyan Songstha
Ullahpara, Sirajgonj
Cell: 01733199810

GOOD PRACTICE V: How to ensure equal rights of people with disabilities to own and inherit property through collaboration between DPOs and legal aid organisations

Related articles of the UNCRPD:

Article 12: Equal recognition before the law

Article 13: Access to justice

Related articles of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013):

Section 16 (1-b): Everywhere equal recognition before the law and access to justice

Location: Potia, Chittagong

Stakeholders involved: Police, Lawyers, DPO (Disability Development and Research Center), Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP), BLAST



DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

According to the local DPO, Disability Development and Research Center (DDRC) people with disabilities in the local area had limited access to justice, at times facing threats to their property and assets. There was a lack of awareness of the rights of people with disabilities to access to justice on an equal basis with others.

In 2001, Noor Mohammad, a worker in the Chittagong Export Processing Zone (CEPZ), became injured and sustained a disability as a result. He was admitted to the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Paralyzed (CRP), a national NGO based in Savar, Dhaka, which supported him with physical rehabilitation and to start up an income generating activity. He set up a grocery shop on his own land, which he had inherited after the death of his father. In 2014 his cousins attempted to seize the land in collaboration with local government representatives and the police.

In March 2014, Noor Mohammad went to the local DPO, Disability Development and Research Center (DDRC) who are involved in the promotion of access to justice for people with disabilities in

Chittagong. He became aware of DDRC when he had originally sustained his injury. DDRC then consulted BLAST, an NGO providing free legal aid services to poor and disadvantaged people, through the Chittagong unit office and requested that they take necessary legal measures to resolve the matter. BLAST suggested that Mr. Noor Mohammad file a General Diary (GD) at the local police station, however his cousins had influenced the police to work in their favor to gain control over the property. The police officers went to Noor Mohammad to check his papers and they were satisfied with them. Following advocacy by the local DPO, the police took steps to arrange a mediation session among Noor Mohammad and his cousins to resolve the matter. The mediation session took place under the supervision of BLAST and with the presence of the DPO at the local police station. BLAST also sent a legal notice to Noor Mohammad's cousins, which ensured their presence at the proceedings. Mr. Noor Mohammad was able to reach an outcome in his favor through this mediation process.

FACTORS THAT MADE THIS GOOD PRACTICE POSSIBLE

The role of the DPO: DDRC referred Noor Mohammad to BLAST to seek legal support to resolve the land dispute, provided peer support and conducted advocacy towards the local police to encourage them to take steps to resolve the dispute.

The role of BLAST: BLAST provided timely and appropriate legal measures by carrying out mediation procedures, which ensured a positive resolution of the situation. The services were also provided free of cost. In addition, they issued a notice to ensure the presence of the cousins of Noor Mohammad at the mediation.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME

Noor Mohammad was in a vulnerable position and was denied his rights, including by his family members. The DPO (DDRC) and BLAST played a key role in pooling their resources to provide legal support.

The lack of awareness and sensitivity of public and law providing agencies towards the rights of people with disabilities to own and inherit property and the lack of knowledge of individuals about the justice system was a challenge. DDRC conducted regular advocacy towards such agencies to support disability-inclusive practices.

The imbalanced power structure in local society was a challenge, but the DPO and BLAST were able to ensure that formal justice processes were followed through advocacy and legal aid.

HOW CAN THIS PRACTICE BE IMPROVED OR REPLICATED?

This is a case which shows the key role which the collaboration between an NGO specialised in legal aid and local DPOs plays in ensuring compliance with Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD on equal recognition before the law and access to justice for people with disabilities, through effective referral and legal aid support. Noor Mohammad participated in the process by contacting the DPO himself and was empowered as he was able to achieve a successful outcome through a mediation process. There was participation of people with disabilities in the process also through the role of the DPO in referring to BLAST, following the evolution of the case and conducting advocacy towards the police. The practice of the collaboration between DPOs and BLAST in supporting people with disabilities and of low-cost community-level mediation supervised by legal experts is locally owned and sustainable at local level.

In terms of replication, linkages between DPOs and governmental and non-governmental legal aid organisations are to be encouraged in other districts of Bangladesh, such as BLAST and District Legal Aid Committees. Such pooled resources can cover the different forms of support that a person with a disability requires in accessing justice. To ensure replication, strengthening the knowledge of local DPOs across Bangladesh of the justice system and the legal regulatory environment for people with disabilities and strengthening disability-inclusive practices of legal aid organisations should be a priority.

To improve the practice, further awareness-raising is required at local level on the rights of people with disabilities among community members to deter similar occurrences related to property rights. There is a need to increase knowledge of people with disabilities of their rights, particularly property rights, of available legal remedies and how and where to access such remedies. People with disabilities should also be aware of the existence of DPOs as the first port of call when they face violations of their rights and DPO's capacity on awareness-raising should be strengthened towards this aim.

As in this case, regular advocacy work by DPOs towards the police can sensitize the police on access to justice needs for people with disabilities, particularly property rights, and a strong relationship between police and DPOs is essential to ensure continued support to people with disabilities. However, for this practice to be integrated within the justice system on a wider scale there is a need for systematic training on the rights of people with disabilities to property for those working in the field of administration of justice, including the police. If members of the police force are systematically sensitized and trained on disability, their support for access to justice for people with disabilities will be increased, without the need to depend on advocacy initiatives.

Community-level mediation in cases of property disputes, when available at a low-cost and supervised by legal experts is a practice to replicate, while ensuring standards in local mediation practice.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Ms. Nurunnahar
Coordinator
Disability Development and Research Center (DDRC)
Chittagong
Cell: 01965448610

GOOD PRACTICE VI: How to ensure access to justice in cases of sexual violence against women with disabilities brought to light by the local media

Related articles of the UNCRPD:

Article 12: Equal recognition before the law

Article 13: Access to justice

Related articles of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013):

Section 16 (1-b): Everywhere equal recognition before the law and access to justice

Location: Ishwardi, Pabna, Bangladesh

Stakeholders involved: Neighbors, local government (Union Parishad and Upazilla Nirbahi), DPO (Uttaran Protibondhi Unnoyon Songstha), Lawyers, Tribunal for Violence against Women and Children, High Court, Police, people with disabilities

DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

People with disabilities experienced denial in accessing formal and informal justice mechanisms in the local area, at times experiencing a lack of cooperation from police stations and local governmental bodies due to local power dynamics and a lack of awareness of the rights of people with disabilities.

In 2006, in Pabna district, a woman with a hearing and speech impairment was raped by her neighbor. The violation was witnessed by another neighbor who shouted for help, while the perpetrator escaped from the scene. A report of the incident was published in the local newspaper after which the offender tried to settle the issue through monetary compensation. The father of the victim refused this form of compensation and went to the Union Parishad (local council) for support. The Union Parishad Chairman and members proposed that they should settle the issue out of court, as the offender was a member of a prominent family in the area.

By this time a local DPO, Uttaran Protibondhi Unnoyon Songstha, saw the story from the newspaper and met with the family. The victim along with her father, cousin and the DPO went together to the police station to file a case. Key evidence related to the attack has been destroyed by the Police Officer in Charge, who apparently had encouraged the victim to wash after the attack. The local DPO then met with the Upazilla Nirbahi Officer (local civil administration) along with district level NGOs and journalists to seek assistance in ensuring justice. Together they put pressure on the police, who finally recorded the complaint, filed a case for rape, arrested the accused and presented him before court. As part of the hearing procedure, after recording the statements of nine witnesses the judge of the Tribunal for Violence against Women and Children in Pabna attempted to exclude the witness statements from the trial. In addition, the court did not take measures to ensure reasonable accommodation and allow the participation of the victim in the Court proceedings and she was unable to testify herself due to her speech and hearing impairment. However, the Public Prosecutor filed a petition to the High Court seeking an order to include all witness statements, which was allowed by the High Court. Finally in March 2013 the judge convicted the accused of rape and gave him a life sentence. The victim stated that she was satisfied with the judgment.

FACTORS THAT MADE THIS GOOD PRACTICE POSSIBLE

The role of the local media: The local media played a key role as a watch dog to bring to light situations on rights violations for women and in particular women with disabilities. In this case the local newspaper published a report through which the DPO became aware of the situation and was able to provide support.

The strength of the victim and her family: in insisting on court proceedings rather than an out of court settlement.

The role of the DPO: played an important role in identifying the case, providing peer support to the woman with a disability and her family, including psychological support, supporting the referral process, facilitating linkages with the police and other actors and conducting joint advocacy with the local administration and civil society.

Collective action of the DPO, local civil administration and civil society: through collective action the police were persuaded to file the case and arrest the accused.

Role of the Public Prosecutor: who submitted an application and written argument about the case to the High Court and was successful in obtaining an order to include the witness statements as evidence.

Role of the High Court: which responded positively by providing an order to the Tribunal for Violence against Women and Children to consider all witness statements to be used as evidence.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME

The vulnerability of women with disabilities in situations of sexual violence; this case which brought a perpetrator to justice can set a precedent in deterring future acts of sexual violence against women with disabilities.

The woman was unable to testify herself due to her speech and hearing impairment and reasonable accommodation was not made for her at the court. However, the witness statements were sufficient to ensure a conviction in this case.

Lack of awareness and sensitivity of the Union Parishad on the rights of people with disabilities, along with their susceptibility to external pressure. The Union Parishad tried to settle the issue through mediation and monetary compensation even though this is a criminal offence related to violence against women. The victim's father refused to accept an out-of-court settlement and the DPO provided support to the family to allow them to collectively deny the proposal from the Union Parishad and pursue prosecution and punishment of the offender.

At the initial stage, the police apparently destroyed evidence of the crime. However, there were many witness statements which provided evidence of the crime. In addition, the DPO conducted joint advocacy with the local civil administration and civil society to ensure that the police was cooperative.

The judge of the Tribunal for Violence against women and children fell susceptible to external pressure and tried to conclude the hearing without completing the recording of all witness statements. However the Public Prosecutor played a positive role in taking the witness statements and filing an application to the High Court to seek an order to include witness statements in the trial.

HOW CAN THIS PRACTICE BE IMPROVED OR REPLICATED?

This is a case which shows the key role which the local media plays in highlighting situations of injustice to start the process for ensuring compliance with Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD on equal recognition before the law and access to justice for people with disabilities. In addition, it shows the importance of collective action of DPOs, civil administration and civil society, along with the key role of the Public Prosecutor and of the High Court in supporting the process of justice. People with disabilities participated in this practice through the role of the DPO in providing peer support to the woman with a disability and her family, along with conducting advocacy initiatives, however the woman with a disability could have been supported to directly participate in the Court proceedings and her vulnerability could have been reduced through increased access to knowledge of available protection and remedies for violence against women. The practice of the collaboration of local media, civil administration, DPOs and other civil society is locally owned and is sustainable at local level.

In terms of replicating the practice, local and national media should be encouraged in acting as watch dogs on human rights violations to go above local power dynamics and ensure that access to justice is made available for people with disabilities. Collective action should also be encouraged among DPOs, the civil administration and civil society, which can sensitise those working in the field of administration of justice on the needs of women with disabilities in cases of violence against women. Strengthening the capacity of DPOs across Bangladesh in playing this advocacy role should be a priority. However, to ensure that this protection and remedies in cases of violence against women are systematically integrated into the justice system, local authorities, police and legal professionals need to receive systematic training on responding to cases of violence against women, including women with disabilities.

In this case, the High Court held the Violence against Women and Children's Tribunal to account for due legal process and the use of this recourse should be maximized especially in cases of women with disabilities as a safeguard to ensure that judges and other actors are not susceptible to external pressure.

The practice could be improved in other areas by raising awareness about the justice system and rights of women with disabilities among community members, including people with disabilities. Awareness-raising can be conducted by DPOs, who also have a key role to play in conducting advocacy on access to justice for people with disabilities and strengthening the knowledge of DPOs on the justice system and the legal regulatory environment for people with disabilities should be a priority.

In addition, the practice could be improved by ensuring knowledge among legal professionals and Courts of existing provisions related to reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities, this can ensure that people with disabilities are able to participate in Court proceedings. According to the schedule of the Disability Rights and Protection Act clauses 5 and 12 it is the responsibility of the government to provide accessibility measures, including sign language interpretation for people with disabilities

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Mr. Akbar Ali
President
Uttaran Protibondhi Unnayan Songstha
Iswardi, Pabna
Cell: 01739487349

GOOD PRACTICE VII: How to ensure women with disabilities have access to justice in family law cases

Related articles of the UNCRPD:

Article 12: Equal recognition before the law

Article 13: Access to justice

Related articles of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013):

Section 16 (1-b): Everywhere equal recognition before the law and access to justice

Location: Jamalpur, Bheramara, Kushtia

Stakeholders involved: DPO (Kompon), NGO (BLAST), local government (Chairman), family members

DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

Nargis, a 21 year-old woman from Kushtia, was born with hearing and speech impairment. She is the youngest of six children in her family. Nargis married Shakib in August 2008. Before marriage, Shakib demanded a dowry of BDT 10,000 from Nargis' family to purchase a van and BDT 30,000 after marriage. He claimed a dowry as compensation for Nargis' disability. Soon after, he began to beat Nargis demanding more money even after she became pregnant. He threw her out of the house and she went to stay with her father. She later gave birth to a son and Shakib did not contact them again.

After six years, Nargis, with her aunt, Kona, made a complaint to the local Chairman as Shakib had not given her any maintenance costs. However the local Chairman was Shakib's maternal uncle and he proposed that Nargis takes back the dowry of BDT 40,000 and accept a divorce. Nargis and her aunt contacted a local disability and development organization, who referred Nargis to their district DPO network, KOMPON. KOMPON referred her to BLAST, who provided legal support for Nargis to file a complaint related to the maintenance costs and dowry. In August 2013, BLAST issued a notice to Shakib to attend a mediation session. He did not attend but attended a second session after BLAST threatened to file a court case, where Shakib agreed to return the dowry and provide maintenance costs.

FACTORS THAT MADE THIS GOOD PRACTICE POSSIBLE

Support of family members: Nargis's aunt was supportive and had regular communication with a friend who was a member of a local disability and development organization.

Referral linkages: the local disability and development organization was supportive and referred Nargis to the DPO federation, KOMPON, who referred her to BLAST for legal support.

Support from BLAST: the BLAST staff lawyer was supportive and acted to mediate a solution to the issue, ensuring the presence of Shakib during the mediation process.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME

Nargis and her family were not aware of the rights of women with disabilities under family law and did not know how to access the justice system. Nargis's family members helped her to identify relevant people who could further provide support on this. As Nargis made a complaint to the BLAST

staff lawyer, Shakib's family threatened her telling that they would not give the money back and would take her child away from her. Nargis's aunt gave her psychological support to be able to continue the legal process.

The local chairman was not supportive towards Nargis as he was Shakib's relative. The BLAST staff lawyer supported Nargis by organising a mediation process and ensuring the presence of Shakib.

HOW CAN THIS PRACTICE BE IMPROVED OR REPLICATED?

This is a case which shows the key role which referral linkages and legal aid support by non-governmental organisations play in ensuring compliance with Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD on equal recognition before the law and access to justice for people with disabilities. Nargis participated in the process to access justice, with the support of her family members and was empowered by the process, through the successful mediation by BLAST. People with disabilities also participated in this practice through the role of the DPO, in providing peer support to the woman with a disability and her family along with referring her to a legal aid organisation. The practice of referral and provision of legal aid support is locally owned and can continue in this local area.

The practice could be improved by reducing the vulnerability of women with disabilities to violence through increasing knowledge of their rights at community level, specifying available protection and remedies for violence against women. DPOs across Bangladesh can play a central role in awareness-raising, so strengthening the capacity of local DPOs across Bangladesh to assure this role, along with strengthening their knowledge of the justice system and the legal regulatory environment for people with disabilities should be a priority.

Community-level mediation in cases of property disputes, when available at a low-cost and supervised by legal experts is a practice to replicate, while ensuring standards in local mediation practice in compliance with the law.

The prompt and appropriate support of non-governmental legal aid organizations is key in ensuring access to justice and, when it comes to replication, District Legal Aid Committees should also be active across Bangladesh in ensuring free of cost legal services for people with disabilities with limited financial means. DPOs can also play a role in identifying people with disabilities and raising awareness on rights of people with disabilities and supporting the referral process. The key role played by DPOs in identifying people with disabilities in need of access to justice through their networks and ensuring referral to governmental and non-governmental legal aid organisations can also be replicated.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Mr. Rupchad Ali
Secretary
Kompon Zilla Pratibandhi Foundation
Kushtia
Cell: 01732765067

GOOD PRACTICE VIII: How to ensure equal rights of people with disabilities to own property

Related articles of the UNCRPD:

Article 12: Equal recognition before the law

Article 13: Access to justice

Related articles of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013):

Section 16 (1-b): Everywhere equal recognition before the law and access to justice

Location: Anandabazar, Chittagong, Bangladesh

Stakeholders involved: Judges, Lawyers, Magistrates Court, DPO (Alliance for Urban DPOs Chittagong), people with Disabilities

DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

According to the local DPO, Alliance for Urban DPOs (AUDC), involved in the promotion of access to justice for people with disabilities, before this practice began people with disabilities had limited access to justice, whether it be formal or informal mechanisms. Sometimes local government bodies and dominant local groups refused support due to lack of awareness about the rights of people with disabilities.

In 2008, in Anandabazar Upazila, Abdul Khaleque, a man with a visual impairment was deprived of his right to own property by his younger brother. His mother who also has a visual impairment had inherited land from her father, which was put in the name of both her sons. The younger brother convinced his mother to go to Court saying that a correction was required on the land deed and the deed was put in his sole name.

Abdul Khaleque went to his maternal uncle to show him the changed deed. He also informed the local DPO, AUDC, and they met with a lawyer Ruhul Amin, from a private chamber of lawyers. The Advocate agreed to carry the work out pro bono and suggested that he file a case before the Magistrates Court. After two years, the magistrate briefed the younger brother during the initial proceedings about his possible conviction as a result of the trial and asked him to resolve the dispute out of court, by recognizing the ownership of the property by both sons. Following this, the deed was dissolved and the property was returned to both sons. The younger son was ordered to pay the court costs.

After this experience Abdul Khaleque mobilized the people with disabilities living around him and formed a DPO: Shurzomukhi Protibondhi Unnayan Shangstha.

FACTORS THAT MADE THIS GOOD PRACTICE POSSIBLE

Role of the DPO: AUDC, supported Abdul Khaleque in meeting the lawyer Mr. Ruhul Amin and provided psychological support to increase his confidence to undertake legal proceedings.

Role of the lawyer: Mr. Ruhul Amin suggested he file a case at the Magistrates Court and handled the case pro bono.

Support from family members: Khaleque's maternal uncle provided personal assistance to Khaleque particularly on mobility and communication.

Role of the Magistrate: who took the initiative to talk to the accused about the potential conviction and suggested that they resolve the matter out-of court, which avoided lengthy court proceedings.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME

The vulnerability of people with disabilities to being denied their rights, particularly property rights, even within their own family, which was overcome through legal proceedings.

Abdul Khaleque's lack of knowledge of the justice system and available remedies, which was overcome with the support of the local DPO. Abdul Khaleque also did not have financial resources to cover the cost of a civil case, but he was supported pro bono by a lawyer, as a result of his referral by the DPO.

HOW CAN THIS PRACTICE BE IMPROVED OR REPLICATED?

This case is an example of the role of DPO support and pro-bono legal support in ensuring compliance with Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD on equal recognition before the law and access to justice for people with disabilities. This case shows the empowerment of Abdul Khaleque through his participation in the process to regain ownership of his share of the property, ultimately forming his own grass-roots DPO to support others in similar cases. The practices of the DPOs in this local area are locally owned and can be sustained.

To improve the practice, further awareness-raising is required at local level on the rights of people with disabilities among community members to deter similar occurrences related to property rights. There is a need to increase knowledge of people with disabilities of their rights, particularly property rights, of available legal remedies and how and where to access such remedies. People with disabilities should also be aware of the existence of DPOs as the first port of call when they face violations of their rights and DPO's capacity on awareness raising should be strengthened towards this aim.

In this case, a private chamber of lawyers played a pivotal role in access to justice for people with disabilities, offering pro-bono services. Lawyers and lawyers associations across Bangladesh can be encouraged to make similar provisions for people with disabilities. However, when it comes to systematic replication, District Legal Aid Committees should also be active across Bangladesh in fulfilling their mandate of ensuring free of cost legal services for people with disabilities with limited financial means.

DPOs play a central role in this case in identification and referral and in replicating this practice elsewhere, strengthening DPOs' knowledge of the justice system and the legal regulatory environment for people with disabilities should be a priority, along with building on their linkages with governmental and non-governmental legal aid organisations.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Safia Begum
President
Alliance for Urban DPOs Chittagong - AUDC
Anandabazar, Chittagong
Cell: 01716874038

GOOD PRACTICE IX: How to ensure access to justice for children with disabilities through mediation

Related articles of the UNCRPD:

Article 12: Equal recognition before the law

Article 13: Access to justice

Related articles of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013):

Article 16 (1-b): Everywhere equal recognition before the law and access to justice

Location: Tiger Pass, Sadar, Chittagong, Bangladesh

Stakeholders involved: DPO (Disability Development & Research Center), BLAST, local government (city corporation), local ward commissioner, relatives



DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

In 2004, Ranu, a 27 year old woman, married Ibrahim. They had a child named Emon who was born with Down's Syndrome and could not move and communicate with others. In 2009, Ibrahim left his wife because of Emon's disability. In the meantime Ranu had become pregnant and had another child. Ibrahim did not contribute to the family expenses and, consequently, Ranu had to be supported by her sister and neighbors. Ranu tried to work, but she had to use her time to look after Emon. In 2013, Ranu came to know that Ibrahim had remarried. Ranu informed Ibrahim's parents about the matter, but they did not respond.

Ranu's sister and neighbors suggested that she should seek legal support. Ranu went to the office of the local Ward Commissioner to receive an ID card for Emon and asked for advice on how to do something about the maintenance of her family and children. She was referred to a DPO in Chittagong Sadar, Disabled Development and Research Centre (DDRC).

On 18th February 2014, DDRC registered her claim for her husband to contribute financially to the family and referred Ranu to BLAST for a legal consultation. BLAST issued a notice to Ibrahim to attend a mediation session but he refused to attend, so BLAST issued a notice to Ibrahim's parents to attend the mediation session. This time, on 12th June 2014, Ibrahim attended the mediation session with his parents. As a result Ibrahim agreed that he had a responsibility to support his family and Ibrahim is now living with Ranu and his family and providing financial support to her and the children.

FACTORS THAT MADE THIS GOOD PRACTICE POSSIBLE

Family support: Ranu's sister and neighbors provided financial and psychological support and advice to her on seeking legal support.

Role of the local authorities: Ranu was referred to DDRC by the local Ward Commissioner as a result of coordination between DDRC and the local authority at ward level, which meant that the local ward commissioner was aware of DDRC's role and activities on access to justice for people with disabilities.

Role of the DPO: as a result of the close linkages between DDRC and BLAST, the DPO was able to refer Ranu immediately to BLAST for legal support.

Role of BLAST: BLAST organised a mediation process between the parties, tailoring the form of legal proceedings appropriately to the individuals and their circumstances and achieved resolution within a short space of time, without the need to enter into litigation.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME

Ranu, her sister and neighbors lacked information and awareness on the justice system and the steps to follow, but were able to refer Ranu to other actors, in particular the local ward commissioner.

Ibrahim first ignored the notice from BLAST to attend the mediation session, so the BLAST staff lawyer's strategy of issuing another notice to Ibrahim's parents warning them that a case would be filed if he was absent was efficacious in ensuring Ibrahim's attendance.

HOW CAN THIS PRACTICE BE IMPROVED OR REPLICATED?

This is a case which shows the key role which referral linkages and local mediation, overseen by legal experts, play in ensuring compliance with Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD on equal recognition before the law and access to justice for people with disabilities. Ranu was empowered during the process by achieving success through mediation and people with disabilities participated through the role of the DPO in providing peer support and referring Ranu to BLAST. It is a locally owned practice that can continue in this area through continued collaboration between the local authorities, DPOs, legal aid organisations and individual people with disabilities.

The prompt and appropriate support of non-governmental legal aid organizations is key in ensuring access to justice and, when it comes to replication, District Legal Aid Committees should also be active across Bangladesh in ensuring free of cost legal services for people with disabilities with limited financial means. Community-level mediation in cases of family disputes, when available at a low-cost and supervised by legal experts is a practice to replicate, while ensuring standards in local mediation practice in compliance with the law DPOs played a key role in identifying people with disabilities with legal needs and supporting the referral process. In replicating this, it can be ensured that DPOs have strong linkages with local government actors, along with governmental and non-governmental legal aid organisations. People with disabilities, local authorities and other actors should be aware of the existence of DPOs as the first port of call when they face violations of their rights and DPO's capacity on awareness raising and relationship-building should be strengthened towards this aim, along with their knowledge of the justice system and the legal regulatory environment for people with disabilities.

To improve the practice, further awareness-raising is required at local level on the rights of people with disabilities among community members to deter similar occurrences related to family disputes. There is a need to increase knowledge of people with disabilities of their rights, particularly their rights within the family, of available legal remedies and how and where to access such remedies.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Ms. Nur Nahar
Coordinator
Disability Development and Research Centre (DDRC)
Lalkhan Bazar, Chittagong
Cell: 01965448610

GOOD PRACTICE X: How to ensure equal rights of people with disabilities to own and inherit property

Related articles of the UNCRPD:

Article 12: Equal recognition before the law

Article 13: Access to justice

Related articles of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013):

Section 16 (1-b): Everywhere equal recognition before the law and access to justice

Location: Mirpur, Kustia

Stakeholders involved: Lawyers, Local People, DPO (KOMPON), people with disabilities

DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

According to KOMPON, a district level DPO federation working on the promotion of access to justice, people with disabilities had limited access to both formal and informal justice systems before this practice began.

Asgor Ali, a person with a physical disability from Kustia district, was evicted from the family home by his elder brother after the death of their father. The property was in the father's name. After three months Asgor Ali consulted one of his friends who attempted to mediate between the brothers, but no settlement could be reached. He then consulted a lawyer who filed a case with the District Court, but the lawyer died during the trial. Asgor Ali consulted another lawyer who accepted to handle the case pro bono, as Asgor was a person with a disability.

After two years, the District Court gave a judgment in favor of Asgor Ali, issuing an order to establish his ownership over his share of the property. His brother, however, did not respect the Court's order. The situation was shared with the representatives of the local government and consequently a representative of the local government arranged a mediation session. The mediation process resulted in the allotment of the property between the two brothers, who are now living in peace.

FACTORS THAT MADE THIS GOOD PRACTICE POSSIBLE

Role of the lawyer: the provision by the lawyer of pro bono legal services allowed Asgor Ali to file a case and pursue formal legal proceedings.

Role of the District Court: which ensured that due legal process was followed.

Role of local authorities: Mediation arranged by the local governmental body to ensure compliance with the Court judgment ensured a resolution of the situation.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME

There was a lack of knowledge on the legal process and of property rights at community level.

The death of the lawyer Mr. Sayod Mushfiqur Rahman, who was later replaced by another lawyer.

The lack of respect by Akbar of the judgment of the District Court. The lawyer and Asgor consulted with the local government representative, who arranged a mediation session to ensure compliance with the Court's judgment.

HOW CAN THIS PRACTICE BE IMPROVED OR REPLICATED?

This case is an example of the role of pro-bono legal support, supportive local authorities and local mediation in ensuring compliance with Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD on equal recognition before the law and access to justice for people with disabilities. Asgor was empowered by his participation in the process to regain ownership of his share of the property. The practices of the DPOs in this local area are locally owned and can be sustained. The practice can be continued in this local area through the continued supportive role of lawyers and local authorities to people with disabilities.

In this case, a private chamber of lawyers played a pivotal role in access to justice for people with disabilities, offering pro-bono services. Lawyers and lawyers associations across Bangladesh can be encouraged to make similar provisions for people with disabilities. However, when it comes to systematic replication, District Legal Aid Committees should also be active across Bangladesh in fulfilling their mandate of ensuring free of cost legal services for people with disabilities with limited financial means.

Community-level mediation in cases of property disputes, when available at a low-cost and supervised by legal experts is a practice to replicate, while ensuring standards in local mediation practice in compliance with the law.

To improve the practice, further awareness-raising is required at local level on the rights of people with disabilities among community members to deter similar occurrences related to property rights. There is a need to increase knowledge of people with disabilities of their rights, particularly property rights, of available legal remedies and how and where to access such remedies. People with disabilities should also be aware of the existence of DPOs as the first port of call when they face violations of their rights and DPO's capacity on awareness raising should be strengthened towards this aim.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Mr. Rupchad Ali
Secretary
KOMPON Zila Protibondhi Federation
Kushtia
Cell: 01732765067

GOOD PRACTICE XI: How to ensure access to justice for women with disabilities in cases of sexual violence

Related articles of the UNCRPD:

Article 12: Equal recognition before the law

Article 13: Access to justice

Related articles of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013):

Article 16 (1-b): Everywhere equal recognition before the law and access to justice

Location: Sadar, Kushtia, Bangladesh

Stakeholders involved: Police, Tribunal of Violence Against Women and Children, Lawyers, DPOs (Shobar Shathe Bolbo Disability Organization and KOMPON), ADD International, Social Welfare Officer

DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

According to Shobar Shathe Bolbo Disability Organization (a local Disabled People's Organization), involved in promotion of access to justice for people with disabilities in Kushtia area, people with disabilities experienced barriers in accessing justice before this practice began; sometimes they faced pressure to participate in community level mediation for criminal cases. This was due to a lack of awareness about the justice system, applicable law and rights, vulnerability of people with disabilities and local power dynamics.

A woman with a physical disability was raped in 2003 by a neighbor and consequently became pregnant⁵. The offender forced her to abort the pregnancy as a pre-condition for marriage, but after the abortion he refused to marry her. The victim's mother consulted a local NGO and was referred to the DPO Shobar Shathe Bolbo, who supported her in filing a case with the Tribunal of Violence Against women and children.

Prominent local groups, including the chairman of the local union council arranged a traditional Shalish (mediation) in the village and asked the victim to attend while a criminal was under trial in the court, although mediation is not allowed in such cases. The Shalish held the victim guilty and demanded that she pay monetary compensation. The local DPO representatives rejected this decision and, with the support of the DPO federation KOMPON started a social mobilization and advocacy initiative to build public consensus and demand justice for the victim, conducting lobbying towards the civil administration, holding press conferences and submitting a memorandum to the Superintendent of Police and Deputy Commissioner.

The accused and his associates directly threatened the victim and the DPO. The DPO referred the victim to BLAST for legal support. After consultation with a BLAST appointed lawyer, BLAST and the DPO supported the victim in filing a General Diary at the local police station and the police arrested the accused and sent him to court. A member of the local DPO also provided psychological support to the victim. At the same time an international NGO specialised on disability, Action on Disability and Development (ADD) provided financial support to the DPO to cover the victim's transportation costs for the case.

Through the justice procedure The Tribunal on Violence against Women and Children, Kushtia convicted the accused and sentenced him to 22 years jail with a 30,000 taka fine.

FACTORS THAT MADE THIS GOOD PRACTICE POSSIBLE

Role of the DPO: the DPO provided psychological support to the victim to ensure that she did not succumb to community pressure to accept the decision of a local Shalish, referred the victim to BLAST and conducted a series of advocacy actions to ensure the prosecution and punishment of the offender. The financial support by ADD to the DPO for transportation costs for the victim played a significant role to ensure access to justice as she could not otherwise have participated in the trial process.

Role of BLAST: legal services were provided by BLAST's local office who gave advice and appointed a panel lawyer.

⁵The name of the victim is not disclosed to ensure privacy

Role of Tribunal on Violence against Women and Children: the court prioritized the case in the allocation of trial dates to ensure that a verdict was given within a short time-frame.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME

The tendency for local groups to compel poor or vulnerable victims of violent crimes to undergo community-level mediation processes, which are not overseen by legal experts and do not comply with the law. In this case the decision given by the Salish was rejected by the victim through support from the DPO.

Lack of awareness about the justice system among community members, and the lack of awareness about legal aid system among people with disabilities; the referral to the DPO ensured that this issue was overcome and that the victim was made aware of available legal services and the potential for access to justice.

The imbalanced power structure in local society was one of the challenges in seeking justice. The local DPO was able to restore this balance in favor of the victim and to target the required authorities such as the police, lawyers and other local stakeholders, which contributed to the increased awareness among those groups about disability rights and the scope for accountability.

HOW CAN THIS PRACTICE BE IMPROVED OR REPLICATED?

This case is an example of the role of referral linkages, DPOs and non-governmental legal aid organisations in ensuring compliance with Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD on equal recognition before the law and access to justice for people with disabilities. Through the peer support of the DPO, the victim participated in the process to access justice, rejecting the result of the illegal mediation session and participating in the Court proceedings, as a result of which she was empowered. The referral linkages among DPOs and non-governmental legal aid organisations are locally owned in this area and can be continued.

The prompt and appropriate support of non-governmental legal aid organizations is key in ensuring access to justice and, when it comes to replication, District Legal Aid Committees should also be active across Bangladesh in ensuring free of cost legal services for people with disabilities with limited financial means.

In improving this practice, local mediation should be prevented in cases of violence against women and should always be overseen by legal experts, bringing to account local authorities for imposing illegal penalties by Shalish.

The practice could be improved by reducing the vulnerability of women with disabilities to violence through increasing knowledge of their rights at community level, specifying available protection and remedies for violence against women. The key role played by DPOs in identifying people with disabilities in need of access to justice through their networks, providing peer support, ensuring referral and conducting coordinated advocacy actions to ensure due legal process is followed can be replicated. DPOs across Bangladesh can play a central role in awareness raising and advocacy to target police stations, local authorities and legal aid organizations for ensuring access to justice for women with disabilities in cases of violence against women. Strengthening the capacity of local DPOs across Bangladesh to assure this role, along with strengthening their knowledge of the justice system and the legal regulatory environment for people with disabilities should be a priority.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Mr. Abdul Halim
President
Sobar Sathe Bolbo Disability Organization
Hatas Horipur, Sadar, Kushtia
Cell: 01855603228

GOOD PRACTICE XII: How people with disabilities accessed justice through effective legal support from the District Legal Aid Committee

Related articles of the UNCRPD:

Article 12: Equal recognition before the law

Article 13: Access to justice

Related articles of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013):

Section 16 (1-b): Everywhere equal recognition before the law and access to justice

Location: Sirajgonj

Stakeholders involved: District Legal Aid Committee, Lawyers, Judges, DPO (SPONDON), People with disabilities

DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

Before this practice began, people with disabilities had limited access to justice both through formal and informal mechanisms. Sometimes they experienced barriers in accessing court buildings and engaging with lawyers due to a lack of awareness and sensitivity about the rights of people with disabilities.

In 2008, the chairperson of the Sirajgonj District Legal Aid Committee (DLAC), who was also the District Judge took an initiative to provide awareness about justice systems and the scope of DLAC among local communities through a series of consultations at union level. As a result of these awareness-raising activities, people with disabilities along with other marginalized groups knew about how to access legal aid services and the DLAC. From 2011 to 2014 Sirajgonj DLAC provided legal aid services in 1440 cases. Among these cases three were significant in ensuring access to justice for people with disabilities; e.g. a woman with a physical disability, received justice in a case of rape and the perpetrator received a life sentence. Now people with disabilities are easily accessing the courts and lawyers associations due to the impact of this initiative by the DLAC. The DLAC along with lawyers in Sirajgonj and other districts became sensitive towards the rights of people with disabilities, which has been done in collaboration with the local DPO, SPONDON.

FACTORS THAT MADE THIS GOOD PRACTICE POSSIBLE

The role of DLAC: the initiative of the District Judge as the Chairman of DLAC to generate awareness about the justice system and the scope of DLAC to provide legal services to people living in poverty and social exclusion including people with disabilities, resulted in extensive access to justice for people with disabilities.

The role of DPOs: DPO regular collaboration with DLAC to raise awareness DLAC officers and other lawyers to ensure they are sensitized on the rights of people with disabilities.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME

There was a lack of awareness at community level about the justice system and existing legal aid services. DLAC overcame this challenge through organizing awareness sessions including people with disabilities.

After raising awareness about the existence of DLAC, they received many cases and initially had difficulty managing the work load. To address this, the assigned officers worked beyond office hours to manage the case flow and, as the chairperson of DLAC, the judge conducted the hearings of DLAC supported cases on the fixed dates.

HOW CAN THIS PRACTICE BE IMPROVED OR REPLICATED?

This is an example of the important role that the District Legal Aid Committee can play, when it is sensitized on disability, in ensuring compliance with Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD on equal recognition before the law and access to justice for people with disabilities. People with disabilities participated in this good practice through the role of the local DPO in sensitizing DLAC and were empowered by being able to access legal proceedings. It is a locally owned practice that can continue at local level through ongoing collaboration between the DLAC and DPOs.

District Legal Aid Committees with disability-inclusive practices play a key role in supporting access for people with disabilities to legal services, who are particularly vulnerable and in need of this form of legal aid. In replicating this practice, there is scope for the National Legal Aid Services Organisation to build on this role in all districts through systematic training on disability, which will ensure that inclusion of disability is not dependent on the initiatives of individuals and by showing DLACs in other districts how the DLAC can effectively ensure outreach to people with disabilities in the local community through awareness initiatives targeted at or including them.

The practice shows the key role of DPOs in working with DLAC to facilitate this process of access to justice by sensitizing DLAC staff and conducting concerted advocacy towards other actors in the justice system. DPOs should be encouraged can play a key role in identifying people with disabilities with legal needs and supporting the referral process. In replicating this, it can be ensured that DPOs have strong linkages with governmental and non-governmental legal aid organisations. People with disabilities, local authorities and other actors should be aware of the existence of DPOs as the first port of call when they face violations of their rights and DPO's capacity on awareness raising and relationship-building should be strengthened towards this aim, along with their knowledge of the justice system and the legal regulatory environment for people with disabilities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Mr. Al- Amin Sheikh
President
SPONDON Protibondhi Kollyan Songstha
Sirajgonj
Cell: 01749899020

Good Practice XIII - How to ensure people with sensory disabilities have reasonable accommodation to participate in court proceedings through action of a lawyer with a disability

Related articles of the UNCRPD:

Article 12: Equal recognition before the law

Article 13: Access to justice

Related articles of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013):

Article 16 (1-b): Equal recognition before the law and access to justice

Location: Potia, Chittagong, Bangladesh

Stakeholders involved: Lawyer, Police, Criminal Court, Physically Handicapped Training Centre (PHTC)

DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

In Potia, Chittagong, people with disabilities experience denial in accessing formal and informal justice mechanisms and sometimes a lack of cooperation from the police due to the domination of local groups and a lack of awareness and sensitivity about the rights of people with disabilities.

In 2004, in Potia sub-district of Chittagong district, a woman with multiple disabilities, including a speech and hearing impairment was raped by her neighbor Amir Hamza. The accused was a known offender in the local area. People in the local area, including the father of the victim had been vocal about the accused's criminal activities prior to the incident. The accused put pressure on the victim to refuse formal justice mechanisms, including threats and attacks of the victim and her family.

The victim's father met with local dominant groups to seek assistance in getting access to justice but without success, as they wanted to avoid conflict with the accused. He then met with a lawyer from a private chamber, Mr. Khademul Islam, who is a well-known lawyer with a visual impairment. As the lawyer has a disability, he was immediately sensitive to the needs of the victim and offered to take the case on a pro bono basis. With the assistance of Mr. Khademul Islam, the victim's father filed a case before the Criminal Court. The accused continued to make threats to the family of the victim. A report of the incident was published in the local newspaper, as a result of which the journalist was attacked by the accused. This journalist was later one of the witnesses in the trial.

During the trial, the lawyer took the initiative to ensure that the Court accepted reasonable accommodation to include the victim in the Court proceedings, allowing the presence of a sign language interpreter. The lawyer hired the interpreter at his own cost from the Physically Handicapped Training Centre (PHTC), Chittagong and as a result the victim was able to give her statement.

The local police station also took quick action to arrest the accused and produce him before the Court, due to the key role of the Officer in Charge, who acted despite the local dominant groups and was sensitized to disability. Through the trial in 2007 the Criminal Court convicted the accused and punished him with a life sentence.

FACTORS THAT MADE THIS GOOD PRACTICE POSSIBLE

The role of the lawyer with a disability: through the lawyer's understanding of disability rights and requirements of people with sensory disabilities, the lawyer was able to effectively persuade the

court to make reasonable accommodation for the victim, in the form of hiring a sign language interpreter to take the statement of the victim, which was central to the case. The lawyer also supported the family to seek formal justice and to file the case despite pressure from the accused and conducted the case pro bono, paying also for the sign language interpreter.

The strength of the victim's family: insisting on formal legal proceedings through approaching different resources at community level.

The role of the local media: acting as a watch dog in bringing to light situations of injustice, able to see beyond local power dynamics.

The role of the police: particularly the Officer in Charge, who was sensitized to disability in arresting the accused on time and producing him before the court despite the power dynamics at play at local level.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME

The vulnerability of women with disabilities in situations of sexual exploitation and abuse. Lack of awareness and sensitivity on the rights of people with disabilities, particularly of the local dominant groups.

The difficulties of people with sensory disabilities in participating in formal legal proceedings. In the initial Court proceedings, the victim struggled to participate: the lawyer addressed this by engaging a speech and language interpreter. The victim did not understand sign language, but she was able to explain herself to the sign language interpreter using her habitual language and he was able to understand based on his practical experience working with people with speech impairments.

Pressure from the accused to the victim and her family to drop formal legal proceedings, however the family remained firm and the police arrested the accused.

HOW CAN THIS PRACTICE BE IMPROVED OR REPLICATED?

This is an example of the important role that the providing reasonable accommodation during court proceedings can play in ensuring compliance with Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD on equal recognition before the law and access to justice for people with disabilities. Participation of people with disabilities in this case was through the role of the lawyer with a disability, although there was no role of a DPO in this case and the woman with a disability was empowered by being able to directly participate in the court proceedings. The lawyer with a disability will continue to operate in the area, supporting people with disabilities.

The practice could be improved in other areas by raising awareness about the justice system and rights of women with disabilities among community members, including people with disabilities. Awareness-raising can be conducted by DPOs, who also have a key role to play in conducting advocacy on access to justice for people with disabilities and strengthening the knowledge of DPOs on the justice system and the legal regulatory environment for people with disabilities should be a priority.

Although in this case, the lawyer with a disability took measures to ensure the provision of reasonable accommodation to allow the participation of the victim in the court proceedings, such provision of accommodation is provided for under the law and should become systematic and be organised and paid for by the Court. According to the schedule of the Disability Rights and Protection Act clauses 5 and 12 it is the responsibility of the government to provide accessibility measures,

including sign language interpretation for people with disabilities. Steps can be taken by all legal professionals to ensure reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities during legal proceedings, so people with disabilities can give evidence, with particular attention for people with sensory impairments. Lawyers can request this reasonable accommodation from court officials and judges, so the practice becomes systematic.

In this case, the particularity of the existence of a lawyer with a disability cannot be replicated in other areas, however, the case shows that legal professionals who are sensitized to disability and/or have disability-inclusive practices play a key role in access to justice of people with disabilities. This role can become systematic if pre-service training is provided to judges, lawyers and court officials on disability. For example, this can be integrated into university curricula for lawyers, including a component of “how to think like a disability rights lawyer”.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Shafia Begum
President
Alliance of Urban DPOs Chittagong (AUDC)
Chittagong
Cell: 01716874038

Good Practice XIV - How to ensure the respect of property inheritance rights of a woman with a disability

Related articles of the UNCRPD:

Article 12: Equal recognition before the law

Article 13: Access to justice

Related articles of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013):

Section 16 (1-b): Everywhere equal recognition before the law and access to justice

Location: Pachlais, Chittagong

Stakeholders involved: Lawyer, Police, Civil Court, Local authorities (Ward Commissioner), NGOs (YPSA)

DESCRIPTION OF THE GOOD PRACTICE

According to a local DPO, Alliance of Urban DPOs Chittagong (AUDC), involved in the promotion of access to justice for people with disabilities, before this practice began people with disabilities had limited access to formal and informal justice and there was limited awareness on disability rights.

Sadia Tazin, is a woman with a physical disability living in Chittagong. In 1999 after the death of her father in 1996, her elder brother tried to sell the property that they had jointly inherited, without informing Sadia. Sadia protested against the sale of the land and her brother made life difficult for her within their family home, where she was living with her husband, including by attempting to create a conflict between her and her husband and pushing her to get a divorce, so she and her husband eventually left.

After leaving the house, Sadia met the local Ward Commissioner for support in addressing this situation, without success as her brother was a powerful individual in the local area. In 2001 Sadia filed a case before the Civil Court as a legal measure to stop the sale of the land by her brother and the Court gave an order to prevent the immediate sale of the property. However, the trial became delayed, for reasons that Sadia did not understand and she lacked the financial means to bear the cost of the lawyer to continue with the case.

Sadia later got a job at a local NGO, YPSA and consulted her colleagues, who introduced her to a lawyer from a private cabinet, Mr. Mozammel Ali Chowdhury. The lawyer extended his support pro bono considering Saia's financial means, her disability and his connection with YPSA. He was quickly able to resolve problems related to the filing of the case, which had resulted in delays: the initial case had only been filed to prevent the sale of the land, rather than claiming her ownership of her share of the land. The lawyer then filed another case to claim her ownership of her share of the land. In 2014, the Civil Court delivered a verdict in Sadia's favor and she is currently living on the land.

FACTORS THAT MADE THIS GOOD PRACTICE POSSIBLE

The role of YPSA: in referring Sadia to the lawyer and having a good legal support network.

The Role of the Civil Court: which gave an order to prevent the immediate sale of the property by her brother.

The role of the lawyer: in addressing effectively the problems within the case and his agreement to take on the case pro bono.

MAIN DIFFICULTIES AND HOW THEY WERE OVERCOME

Lack of awareness and sensitization of local government representatives about the rights of people with disabilities, who also gave in to pressure from powerful individuals at local level.

Limited financial means of Sadia to bear the cost of a lawyer, which was solved later as Advocate Mozammel Ali Chowdhury dealt with the case pro bono.

Delayed trial procedure of the Court which was overcome later with the support of the lawyer.

HOW CAN THIS PRACTICE BE IMPROVED OR REPLICATED?

This is an example of the important role that linkages between local NGOs and legal professionals can play in ensuring compliance with Articles 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD on equal recognition before the law and access to justice for people with disabilities. Sadia participated in the legal process and was empowered through the process of re-gaining ownership of her share of the land. The connections between the NGO, YPSA, and lawyers in the local area are locally owned and can continue on this basis.

In this case, a private chamber of lawyers played a pivotal role in access to justice for people with disabilities, offering pro-bono services. Lawyers and lawyers associations across Bangladesh can be encouraged to make similar provisions for people with disabilities. However, when it comes to systematic replication, District Legal Aid Committees should also be active across Bangladesh in fulfilling their mandate of ensuring free of cost legal services for people with disabilities with limited financial means.

There was limited role of DPOs in this case, which could be improved by further awareness-raising at local level on the rights of people with disabilities among community members to deter similar occurrences related to property rights. There is a need to increase knowledge of people with disabilities of their rights, particularly property rights, of available legal remedies and how and where to access such remedies. People with disabilities should also be aware of the existence of DPOs as the first port of call when they face violations of their rights and DPO's capacity on awareness raising should be strengthened towards this aim.

Local authorities played a negative role in this case, so the practice could be improved by ensuring systematic training for local authorities on disability.

There is also scope for Courts to prioritise cases in which people with disabilities are victims to avoid delays in the trial procedure.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Shafia Begum
President
Alliance of Urban DPOs Chittagong (AUDC)
Chittagong
Cell: 01716874038

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to Disabled Peoples Organisations

- DPOs have a key role in creating a space for dialogue with other actors on access to justice for people with disabilities, including lawyers, judges, local authorities and police and using this space to conduct multi-level advocacy and concerted advocacy actions, such as collective action of disability organisations and legal professionals. To play this role, DPOs capacity in conducting advocacy should continue to be strengthened.
- DPOs should play a key role to increase awareness about rights of people with disabilities related to justice and equality before the law among people with disabilities, their families and communities to change mindsets on disability. In particular, DPOs should focus on violence against women and inheritance and ownership of property, which are recurrent issues.
- DPOs should continue to play a key role in identifying people with disabilities in need of access to justice and providing peer support to increase self-confidence, instill confidence in the legal system and refer them to legal services or other local resources, such as sign language interpreters. To play this role, DPO's capacities need to be further strengthened on understanding the justice system and the legal regulatory environment for people with disabilities.
- DPOs should continue to build up their local networks to develop relationships with actors in the justice sector, such as private and public lawyers, NGOs, police and the local administration. In addition, DPOs should take advantage of the influence and voice of the local media to pass messages on incidents involving people with disabilities. Further, DPOs should build on linkages to grass-roots self-help groups to increase early identification of people with disabilities with access to justice needs.
- DPOs should use different forms of media, particularly video to pass advocacy messages to legal professionals, local authorities and police on evidence-based good practices related to access to justice of people with disabilities.
- Given the particular vulnerability of women with disabilities to violence, DPOs should adopt a targeted approach to raise awareness on available protection and remedies for violence against women, identify cases of violence against women and work with legal stakeholders on adapting their approach when working with women with disabilities in cases of violence against women.

Recommendations to legal professionals, including judges, lawyers and court officials, along with their professional associations and training bodies

- Legal professionals who are sensitized to disability and/or have disability-inclusive practices play a key role in access to justice of people with disabilities and this role can become systematic if pre-service training is provided to judges, lawyers and court officials on disability. This can be integrated into university curricula for lawyers, including a component of "how to think like a disability rights lawyer" and the Judicial Administration Training Institute (JATI) should consider integrating disability-inclusive practices into their curriculum.
- Private cabinets of lawyers play a pivotal role in access to justice for people with disabilities, in many cases offering pro-bono services for vulnerable people. Lawyers and lawyers associations

can be encouraged to make similar provisions for people with disabilities. However, when it comes to systematic replication, District Legal Aid Committees should also be active across Bangladesh in fulfilling their mandate of ensuring free of cost legal services for people with disabilities with limited financial means, based on the Legal Aid Act (2000).

- Steps can be taken by all legal professionals to ensure reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities during legal proceedings, so people with disabilities can give evidence, with particular attention for people with sensory impairments. Lawyers can request this reasonable accommodation from court officials and judges, so the practice becomes systematic. According to the schedule of the Disability Rights and Protection Act clauses 5 and 12 it is the responsibility of the government to provide accessibility measures, including sign language interpretation for people with disabilities.
- Legal professionals and their professional associations can work with DPOs to identify ways to sensitise other legal professionals on disability and conduct concerted advocacy actions with DPOs towards other actors in the justice system.
- Local resources can be mobilized by legal professionals to provide specific support required by people with disabilities in accessing justice, such as sign language interpreters for people with hearing impairments and Braille facilitators for people with hearing impairments.
- NGOs specialised in legal aid provide services free of cost to people with disabilities and should continue to play a key role in access to justice and in identifying resources to further support people with disabilities.
- Legal professionals have a role to play in setting and ensuring standards in local mediation, in cases where mediation is appropriate. Local mediation should be prevented in criminal cases (except for petty crime) and cases of violence against women.

Recommendations to National Legal Aid Services Organisation and District legal aid committees

- District Legal Aid Committees who have disability-inclusive practices play a key role in supporting access for people with disabilities, who are particularly vulnerable to free-of-cost legal services. There is scope for the NLASO to build on this role in all districts through systematic training on disability.
- Key role of DPOs in working with DLAC to facilitate this process of access to justice by sensitizing DLAC staff and conducting concerted advocacy towards other actors in the justice system.

Recommendations to the Police and the National Police Academy

- Officers in Charge and other members of the police force who have disability-inclusive practices can be key drivers to ensure that people with disabilities get equal treatment when seeking access to justice, as they are generally the first port of call after an incident and prompt action to investigate, file reports and make arrests have made a significant difference in ensuring people with disabilities access justice. To ensure these practices become systematic pre-service training on disability rights for police can be foreseen, in linkage with the National Police Academy.
- Particular attention should be placed on women with disabilities, specifically those who are victims of violence and this requires also specific training for the police force.

- Police can coordinate closely with DPOs to support the identification of people with disabilities in need of access to justice and to gain support in sensitizing other members of the police force on disability.
- The police can play a key role in ensuring the safety and security of people with disabilities and their families while they are awaiting the conclusion of legal proceedings. Appropriate training on protection of witnesses for those working in the field of administration of justice, including police should be promoted.

Recommendations to Local Authorities

- Where local authorities, such as Union Parishad Chairmen or Upazilla Nirbahi Officers have disability-inclusive practices and knowledge, along with strong knowledge of the justice system and available remedies, this plays a significant role in ensuring access to justice for people with disabilities. To ensure that local governmental and administrative bodies systematically support the access of people with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities, to justice appropriate standard training is needed.
- Strong linkages between DPOs and local authorities have facilitated access to justice, including referral of people with disabilities by local authorities to DPOs and vice-versa. Concerted advocacy action is also possible between DPOs and local authorities towards other actors in the justice system.
- Local authorities are key actors in local level mediation, in cases where this form of mechanism is appropriate. Local authorities should further engage with legal professionals on standards of local mediation practice and avoid local mediation in criminal cases (except petty crime) or cases of violence against women.

Recommendations to national policy makers

- Ensure effective implementation of article 12 and 13 of the UNCRPD and section 16-1b of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013) to ensure access for persons with disabilities to justice on an equal basis with others, including forming necessary committees, as required under Sections 17, 19, 21, 23 and 24 of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013) and framing Rules, as required under Section 41.
- Ensure full activation of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013), including the two provisions which have not yet come into force: Section 31, which provides for registration of persons with disabilities and issuance of identity cards and Section 36, which prohibits discrimination based on disability and provides remedies for discrimination, including compensation.
- Ensure cross-sectoral coordination of all Ministries in support of the implementation of the Disability Rights and Protection Act (2013).
- Amend Section 3 of the Evidence Act to ensure that people with disabilities are systematically able to participate in court proceedings.
- Take measures to support pre-service training on disability and violence against women for those working in the field of administration of justice, including police, court officials, lawyers, judges and local authorities to allow for disability-inclusive practices to be integrated within the justice system on a wider scale.

- Take measures to prevent informal mediation processes in criminal cases (except petty crime) or cases of violence against women.
- Take measures to ensure the implementation of the provisions related to reasonable accommodation of the Disability Rights and Protection Act. According to clauses 5 and 12 of the schedule of the Disability Rights and Protection Act, it is the responsibility of the government to provide accessibility measures, including sign language interpretation for people with disabilities. Legal professionals, including judges and court officials, should be informed of these requirements and be encouraged to systematically ensure accessibility of legal proceedings, particularly for people with sensory disabilities.
- Take measures to ensure the implementation of the Disability Rights and Protection Act as regards physical accessibility of courthouses, including through integrating accessibility in building codes and the academic curriculum for Engineers. According to the schedule of the Disability Rights and Protection Act clauses 5, it is the responsibility of government to ensure physical accessibility, including of court houses, police stations and other public services.
- Support specific action related to protection and remedies for violence against women among those working in the administration of justice, in line with existing provisions for women under the Prevention of Repression of Women and Children Act (2000) and Prevention and Protection of Domestic Violence Act (2010), along with guidelines to prevent sexual harassment, stalking and eve-teasing provided by the High Court Division of Supreme Court.
- Take measures to develop safeguards to ensure that judges and other actors in the justice system are not susceptible to external pressure.

Recommendations to the media

- The media plays a key role as a watchdog for human rights violations and is able to bring to light situations of lack of access to justice for people with disabilities, in particular women with disabilities, which attracts the attention of key stakeholders. This type of media role should continue to be encouraged which is able to go above local power dynamics.
- The media also plays an important role on increasing awareness on the rights of people with disabilities. In this regard, the media can highlight violence against women with disabilities and inheritance and ownership of property by people with disabilities, which are recurrent issues. By highlighting successful outcomes of cases, the media can also in this way support deterrence of similar occurrences.

V. CONCLUSION

This report is evidence that access to justice for people with disabilities is possible. With this report, we request DPOs, legal professionals, national and local authorities, the police and the media, to support the replication of similar initiatives to ensure disability-inclusive practices. These good practices promote the effective implementation of existing national policies related to access to justice under the UNCRPD and Disability Rights and Protection Act and the report and its recommendations are a call to action to ensure their effective implementation.

Even in a situation of minimal resources, actors at different levels, including public, private and non-governmental actors have been able to collaborate to generate changes in the lives of people with disabilities throughout Bangladesh. Key actors in this are Disabled Peoples Organisations, who act as facilitators among different actors and have created the space for dialogue and change at local level on disability.

Although the good practices focus largely on individual legal cases involving people with disabilities where disability-inclusive practices were ensured with limited resources at local level, they show that disability-inclusion related to access to justice is possible. Based on the recommendations from these cases, changes can be made to the justice system to allow access to justice for people with disabilities to become systematic to close the gap between policy and its implementation. If changes take place at the national level, which create the obligation for local actors to include people with disabilities in access to justice, the inclusive environment can be improved at local level.

All actors included in the recommendations are encouraged to take steps to implement them, as we work together to create access to justice for people with disabilities.

VI. ANNEXES

Annex A: List of members of National Technical Committees and National Advisory

A1. National Advisory Committee

Sl no	Type of Organization	Organisation	Details of representative
1	Disability movement	The National Forum of Organisations Working with the Disabled (NFOWD)	Dr. Nafeesur Rahman Director
2	University (Human Rights Activist)	Research Initiatives Bangladesh (RIB)	Dr. Meghna Guhathakurta Executive Director, RIB House -104, Road-25, Block-A Banani, Dhaka-1213 Ph : 9840830-1
3	Human Rights	Independent	Julian Francis Disability Rights Activist
4	Media	Maasranga Television	Mr. Fahim Munaim CEO & Chief Editor
5	Celebrity	Nirapad Sarak Chai	Mr. Ilias Kanchan Chairperson and Film Actor
6	Bangladesh Government	Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs	Mr. Syed Aminul Islam Registrar General of Appellate Division District Judge Registrar, Bangladesh Supreme Court

A2. National Technical Committee on Access to Justice

Sl no	Type of Organization	Organisation	Details of representative
1	Advocate	Supreme Court	Mr. Khondoker Shahriar Shakir Advocate, Bangladesh Supreme Court
2	Judiciary	Supreme Court	Mr. S.M.Kuddus Zaman Dhaka District and Session Judge

Sl no	Type of Organization	Organisation	Details of representative
3	Non- Govt. Organization(NGO)	Bangladesh Legal Aid and Services Trust (BLAST)	Sara Hossain Honorary Executive Director
4	Disability movement	Center for Services and Information on Disability (CSID)	Khandaker Jahurul Alam Executive Director

Annex B – List of Disabled Peoples’ Organisations involved in good practice documentation

	Disabled Peoples’ Organisation	Location	Contact Details
1	Adorsha Prothibondhi Kallyan Sangstha (APKS)	Ullapara, Sirajgonj	Dhoroil Bazar, PO: Dhoroil Hat Upazila: Ullapara, Sirajgonj-6762. Cell: 01768905238, 01733199810 Email: apks.dharail@gmail.com
2	Alliance of Urban DPOs in Chittagong (AUDC)	Chittagong	2111, Tahera Bhaban, (1st Floor) Pahartoli, Akbar Shah Chittagong-4000 Cell: 01716874038, 01717474650 Email: dpo_alliance_ctg@yahoo.com
3	Disability Development and Research Center (DDRC)	Chittagong	House no # 09 (Jahirul Islam House) Block # B, 17/A, High Level Road Lalkhan Bazar, Chittagong-4000 Cell: 01712087990, 01965448610 Email: ddrc_sazzad@yahoo.com ddrc.bd@gmail.com
4	Federation of DPOs Sitakunda (FoDS)	Sitakunda Chittagong	Ayesha Villa, East Mohadevpur (College Road), Sitakunda, Chittagong Cell: 01814815202, 01832747119 Email: fods.ctg@gmail.com
5	Kampon Zila Protibondhi Federation (KZPF)	Kushtia	1/12/1, Abdur Razzak Lane Village: Court Para PO & Upazilla: Kushtia Sadar, Kushtia Cell: 01719161394, 01731172053 Email: kampon.kushtia2010@gmail.com

	Disabled Peoples' Organisation	Location	Contact Details
6	Protibondhi Purnabason O Manobadhikar Samity (PPOMS)	Ishwardi, Pabna	Village: Charruppur Jigatola PO: Pakshi, Upazila-Ishwardi, Pabna Cell: 01713-717256, 01753296391 Email: ppms977@gmail.com
7	Sabar Shathe Shikbo Disability Organization (SSSDO)	Mirpur, Kushtia	Village: Hazrahati, PO: Hazrahati Upazilla-Mirpur, Kushtia Cell: 01719161395, 01774677723 Email: shobarsathesikhbobd@gmail.com
8	Save the Planet & Disability (SPD)	Mujibnagar Meherpur	SPD Complex, PO & Upazila: Mujibnagar Meherpur-7102 Cell: 01720139888, 01718702412 Email: spdmujibnagar@gmail.com
9	Spondon Prothibondhi Kallyan Sangstha (SPKS)	Sirajgonj	Borogola Potti, Mujib Sarak Sirajgonj-6700 Cell: 01749899020, 01719826718 Email: alaminspondon95@gmail.com
10	Uttaran Prottibondi Unnayan Sangstha (UPUS)	Ishwardi, Pabna	Muladuli Bazar, PO: Muladuli Upazila: Ishwardi, Pabna-6623 Cell: 01739487349, 01813850115 Email: rojina.uisc@gmail.com uttaran.pabna@gmail.com

Annex C: District Advisory sub-committee: LIST OF MAKING IT WORK SUB-ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS - PABNA

	Name and Position	Contact Address
1	Alhaj Md. Mirza Azizur Rahman President of BAR Association, Pabna	Bar Association Bhaban, Pabna
2	Md. Abed Karim Deputy Director Department of Social Service, Pabna	Deputy Commissioner Office, Pabna
3	Md. Mozed Ali Executive Director Jamuna Samaj Kallyan Sangstha	Birahimpur, Sujanagar, Pabna Email: ed.jamunapabna@gmail.com
4	Dr. Md. Saif Uddin Consultant Pathology	Sadar Hospital, Pabna
5	Ashraful Biswas General Secretary Uttaran Protibondhi Unnoyon Sangstha	Muladuli Bazar, Ishwardi, Pabna Email: rojina.uisc@gmail.com

	Name and Position	Contact Address
6	Rabiul Islam President, Press Club, Pabna	Press Club, Pabna
7	Adv. Ahsan Habib Sohel Member of BAR association, Sirajgonj	BAR association Bhaban, Sirajgonj

LIST OF MAKING IT WORK: ADVISORY SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERS - CHITTAGONG

	Name and Position	Contact Address
1	Dr. Abdullah Al Faruque Professor & Dean	Faculty of Law University of Chittagong E-mail : faruquecu71@yahoo.com faruqueabdullah@yahoo.com
2	Ms. Bondona Das Deputy Director	Social Services Department Chittagong E-mail : dssoctg@hotmail.com
3	Cdr. Iftekhar Hasan(Rtd), BN GM	Sena Kallan Songstha, Chittagong E-mail: ibnat759@yahoo.com
4	Advocate Robel Paul Executive Committee Member Chittagong District	BAR Association Lawyer, Supreme Court of Bangladesh & Judges Court, Chittagong E-mail: ad.robel_paul@yahoo.com
5	Omar Kaiser Journalist	Prothom Alo, Chittagong office A.S Tower Road-01, Plot-553 Hill View R/A, (Near Mimi Super Market) Chittagong
6	Representative from Police Commissioner	Chittagong Metropolitan Police (CMP)
7	Sahidul Islam Sazzad Secretary & Executive Director	Disability Development & Research Center (DDRC) House -09, Jahirul Islam House Block-B, Road No-17/A Lalkhan Bazar High Level Road Khulshi, Chittagong

LIST OF MAKING IT WORK ADVISORY SUB-COMMITTEE MEMBERS - KUSHTIA

	Name and Position	Contact Address
1	Adv. Shiraj ul Islam President of BAR association, Kushtia	BAR association, Kushtia
2	Mukul Khasru Editor	Dainik Protigya S.B.P. Road, Thana Para, Kushtia Email:pressmukul80@gmail.com
3	Md. Abdul Goni Deputy Director	Department of Social Service, Kushtia
4	Dr. Arobindu Paul R.M.O. Kushtia	Sadar Hospital, Kushtia
5	Md. Asgor Ali DPO representative (President Kampan)	1/11/1 Abdur Razzak Lane Court Para, Kushtia
6	Salma Sultana Vice President, ADAB Executive Director, Nikushimaz	Nikushimaz
7	Adv. Shafi Uddin Pannel Lawyer, BLAST, Sub unit Meherpur Lawyers Association Building, Meherpur	Lawyers Association Building, Meherpur



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HANDICAP INTERNATIONAL

Bangladesh Office

House- SW (F) 1/A, Road- 4

Gulshan- 1, Dhaka 1212, Bangladesh

Tel/Fax: +880-2-9859794/ 8819128

E-mail: support@handicap-internationalbgd.org

Web: www.handicap-international.org