

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA  
LAW AND JUSTICE  
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3324  
ANSWERED ON:13.12.2012  
ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR MARGINALIZED PEOPLE  
Singh Shri Sushil Kumar

**Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:**

- (a) whether the Government has launched a project Access to Justice for Marginalised people in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof;
- (c) the present status of this project, State-wise; and
- (d) the steps taken by the Government to implement it successfully across the country?

**Answer**

MINISTER OF LAW & JUSTICE (DR. ASHWANI KUMAR)

(a) to (d): The Department of Justice, Government of India has, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), implemented a project on Access to Justice for Marginalized People in seven States of Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh between 2009 and 2012. Several activities related to legal aid and empowerment have been conducted in eighty seven (87) districts in collaboration with thirty three (33) NGOs, law schools, and other partners. Apart from conducting public education and training of communities as well as service delivery organisations, many innovative strategies were used for enhancing legal awareness of the marginalized groups including supporting law school based legal clinics, using SMS, MMS, games, skits and community radio. Many knowledge products have also been developed including action research studies and training manuals for the community, judicial officers and other stakeholders.

The Project has reached out to nearly 2 million people for legal awareness, besides training 7000 paralegal workers as local resources to assist the marginalized communities. Over 300 legal aid lawyers have also been trained and sensitized. The Project activities concluded with an international conference on 'Equitable Access to Justice: Legal Aid and Legal Empowerment' which provided a platform for participants from twenty one (21) countries across the world to share good practices on legal aid and empowerment which will be helpful in devising similar future programmes of Government of India. The Project will conclude on 31st December 2012.

The models of legal aid and empowerment developed under the Projects will be useful for the National and State Legal Services Authorities for replicating and upscaling across the country. The Government has, however, decided to undertake a similar programme in the 8 States of North East India (including Sikkim) and Jammu and Kashmir during the 12th Five Year Plan. The Government will also be undertaking another project with UNDP from January 2013.