



एहसास - न्याय का सबके लिए



Campaign on
Gender Sensitization at the Courts of the State as a Workplace
By
Gujarat State Legal Services Authority
In association with
Gender Resource Centre
Women & Child Development Department,
Government of Gujarat

"Gender equality is not women's issue, it's a human issue." It affects us all.

-Michelle Obama

Gender inequality is discrimination on the basis of sex or gender causing one sex or gender to be routinely privileged or prioritized over another.

India has been ranked low on various indices that measure gender equality - including economic participation and opportunity; educational attainment; health and survival; political empowerment; and legal protection - due to multiple factors such as high levels of women discrimination in India as well as various discriminatory social norms, laws and cultural practices. Some of the key areas or examples of gender inequality in India where women face discrimination include less access to education and employment, under-representation in political positions, poorer health and nutrition than men, and the most obvious violence against women. Women are treated as second-class citizens in India, and the situation is getting worse. The country's record on gender equality is dismal. According to a report by the World Economic Forum (WEF), India ranked 134th out of 145 countries for gender parity in 2018, down from 130th in 2017.

Gender equality is mentioned in the Constitution, in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles of State Policy. The Constitution not only guarantees women's empowerment but also encourages the State to adopt various measures of equality and empowerment in favor of women.

A recent incident of rape and murder of a doctor at her workplace has surfaced serious concern of safety and security of women at their workplaces in India. Without a doubt, this is a wake-up call for all of us. We all have to join hands and help women overcome these crises. Not only there is a need to create awareness among Indian women about their legal rights but we need to bring about a positive change in the mindset of people, especially men, who still believe

that women are inferior to them and the workplace in the society are not meant for women. We need to inject the concept of women empowerment into everybody's minds. We have to build a result-oriented process of enhancing and promoting the social, political and economic status of women. Majorly, we have to work on following main concerns-

Give women access to education just like men

Give women opportunities to be in power and achieve economic success.

Stop the violence and sexual assault against women.

End child marriages

Aware women about women's rights in India

Although women participation in public institutions has increased considerably which is a positive sign, there are lots of hurdles and hindrances which create bottlenecks in creating gender neutral work place. Gujarat State Legal Services Authority under the stewardship of Hon'ble the Chief Justice and Patron-in-Chief, Gujarat State Legal Services Authority - Mrs. Justice Sunita Agarwal and with the abled guidance of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Biren Vaishnav Executive Chairman, Gujarat State Legal Services Authority proposes to launch a campaign on the theme of gender sensitization in the name and style "Ehsas – Nyay Ka Sabke Liye" for all the officers and employees of Courts in Gujarat including High Court of Gujarat.

It is proposed to organize one seminar giving in brief the idea of gender equality and gender neutral workplace. The stakeholders from top to bottom layer are intended to be sensitized on gender stereotypes, cynical perception about women in key position, providing progressive and positive atmosphere for

betterment of women employee and establishing effective dispute redressal mechanism provided under statutes. The seminar is intended to apprise all the stakeholders about the gender sensitization training programme, the GSLSA proposes to carry over in association with gender resource centre. It is proposed that apart from Hon'ble Judges and officers of High Court Registry all the employees of High Court of Gujarat be invited in the seminar wherein facets of issues of women employee working as a judicial officer, as a staff member, as a member of registry and as a lawyer be discussed.

It is proposed to organize batch wise sensitization training programme for the officers and employees of High Court of Gujarat at Gujarat State Judicial Academy in association with gender resource centre where the resource persons shortlisted by Hon'ble the Chief Justice and having the profound knowledge of the subject shall deliberate on gender sensitization, issues of women at workplace particularly sexual harassment and the redressal and remedies provided under the statute established in the High Court of Gujarat. The training intends to change the mindset of all employees for making the Court a gender neutral workplace with avoidance of use of gender stereotypes.

The training programme devised for the High Court then shall be taken to all district courts in the State.

In order to make the campaign successful it is proposed to seek assistance from distinguished luminaries on the subject.
