

# LEGAL AID EVENT: AWARENESS CAMPAIGN ON ENERGY CONSERVATION DAY

“The earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s needs but not every man’s greed”-Gandhiji.

The campaign project conducted was on the occasion of the 14th Energy Conservation Day. The project involved visiting a few slums of Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh and spreading awareness and imparting the children with basic knowledge with respect to energy and its conservation as well as the importance of our eco-system.

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## **1. Concept Note :**

The Legal Aid Centre at Symbiosis Law School, NOIDA conducts various awareness programmes to sensitize the society towards a plethora of legal and social issues. As an extension of such initiatives I, a learner of the college and a Volunteer at the Legal Aid Centre conducted a session on Word Energy Conservation Day in a few slums in Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh in collaboration with the reputed Non -Government Organization, Robin Hood Army, Greater Noida Chapter on November 15, 2019.

Energy consumed is Energy lost. All living creatures depend on energy for almost everything in their lives, in-order to make our lives comfortable, productive and enjoyable. However, what is unfortunate is that, we do not realize that we have started taking things for granted and we have started wasting energy unnecessarily. Most of us forget that energy is available in abundance but it is limited and hence to maintain the quality of life, it is important that we use our energy resources wisely.

The increasing demand for power has led to a considerable amount of fossil fuels burning which has in turn had an adverse impact on environment. Moreover, humans consume energy at a faster rate than it can be produced. The increasing pace of industrialisation and urbanisation , have surely made the world more developed and equipped to handle hurdles , however is going against the flow of nature. The devastating effects can be clearly seen: the habitat loss, the rising pollutants in the air, the lack of oxygen in the ocean , the list goes on.

Hence, there is a need for serious thinking to improve this sector by inducting new technology, at-tracting more investment, developing non-conventional sources and inculcating habits for saving and conservation.

The conservation of energy can be achieved by changing the individual habits, utilising latest technology, reducing the subsidy and increasing the price of the energy.

## **2. OBJECTIVES :**

The main objective of the Legal Aid Centre of SLS-N was to create awareness and educate people about preventive measures pertaining to environmental degradation, especially with respect to energy. The urban populace is relatively more educated about such topics and thus, the target audience of this demonstrative and interactive session were children .

As said, the Earth is not ours alone, it also belongs to the future generation. Thus it becomes imperative to make them understand the need to conserve the environment and use energy judiciously.

The purpose of conducting the awareness campaign on Energy conservation are can be narrowed down as follows:

- a. To instil a sense of responsibility among the new generation towards the environment
- b. To make the audience of the campaign aware of the gravity of the degrading environment
- c. To make the audience understand the impact of what an individual can do to help the environment
- d. To make them understand the importance of conserving energy and teach them about reduce, reuse and recycle.
- e. To inspire them to take a stand for themselves and the environment by taking small steps by interactive storytelling of inspiring stories such as that of the Chipko movement.

## **3. Preliminary Preparations:**

In order to teach, explain and inspire the young minds, the learner had to make the following preliminary preparations to achieve the purpose of understanding the importance of conserving energy:

- a. Design a simple pictorial template that explains the right and wrong usage of energy sources
- b. Detailed reading of the Chipko movement and storytelling techniques to present the former as a story
- c. Researching effective strategies to make discussion revolving around environmental pollution and preservation child-friendly and well- received by the audience.
- d. Interaction with previous LAC volunteers and the Robin Hood Army, Greater Noida chapter to understand the effective means of communication and the level of understanding the targeted audience has for effective and efficient communication.

#### **4. Conducting the programme :**

The Legal Aid Campaign awareness programme on the occasion of the 14<sup>TH</sup> World Energy Conservation Day, took place on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2019 in the slums of Greater Noida , near the Gautam Buddh University, Greater Noida.

The programme was led by the Robin Hood Army , Greater Noida Chapter along with a few volunteers of the Legal Aid Cell namely, Mannat Marwah and Pratham Arya and myself.

The awareness team visited two slums and spoke to children of ages 5-12 years. The first slum, that team visited was in a dilapidated state and was relatively bigger in comparison to the second slum that we visited. In the first slum, the number of children were more and were not educated at all, as informed by the Robin Hood Army. The Robin Hood Army and the LAC volunteers present called out to the children and asked them to

gather around and listen carefully to what the team had to say. Some of the LAC volunteers talked about the importance of environment, the need and the utilities that are provided to human beings by the environment. The oxygen, the shade as well as the fruits were referred by the students when asked about the importance of trees. Further questions were asked on tree like "What will happened if trees are no longer there?" ;" What will happen if there is no water?" etc.

Carrying it forward, I explained to them the Chipko movement and the Bishnoi community that together fought against the developers and managed to save more than 2000 trees . Seeing, the water being wasted on the site, I asked them ,"Is this right ? To waste water like this". Many of them were puzzled however, a handful of them who were listening said no.

Further , all of us asked them that weren't they used to taking out their sweaters in around the time of Diwali . Most of them agreed. On further conversations, we explained to them that due to burning wood and coal for work and factories , pollution is increasing making it difficult to breathe and moreover, other such activities are rising the temperature of the planet, thereby explaining them that this is the reason as to why the sweaters are coming out so late in the year.

In the second slum, the children were taught basic education everyday and knew how to speak rudimentary English . Therefore, the poster came in handy as opposed to the first slum. Through the poster , and observing the surroundings of the second slum, I showed them that the bulb that they were using was in-fact more energy consuming and harmful to the environment. Therefore as illustrated in the poster showed them the less energy consuming bulb and also where it could be possibly be made available. Here, the children were also taught about the importance of recycling, reusing and reducing things.

At both the slums, after the energy awareness food was provided by the Robin Hood Army , where the LAC volunteers assisted as well.

### **5. Response of the Target Audience:**

The Legal Aid awareness team hoped that the children would range between 8-12 years so that the campaign could be understood better.

The response from the First slum that was visited by us, was minute and limited due to young age of the children. The lack of attention span, the dilapidated state and the aversion to change could be seen . However, in spite of the limitation the team was able to convey the message of conserving energy to a few children.

The conditions of the second slum were far better, therefore it was much more interactive, more responsive and more willingness could be perceived. They played close attention to our session. They were answering the questions loudly in unison and repeating points after us. They had their own suggestions for all topics and issues and were not afraid to voice them.

### **6. Key Personal takeaways:**

The awareness campaign made me realise a few things. Firstly, that in spite of having so many schemes the real needy people are not a part of the scheme. Secondly, that children at young age will listen to anything that is being told to them in an interesting way, therefore they can be taught to save the environment easily. Thirdly, no matter how uncomfortable and overwhelmed one feels on seeing such conditions the willingness to make a change , overpowers it

## **7. Future Plan of Action:**

On seeing that the environment is degrading at a pace faster than ever before, such interactive session to spread awareness about environment, especially air pollution should be carried out often in Delhi and Delhi –NCR as the target audience will be able to relate to the issue and will be more interactive and responsive. Possibly, can even help out in finding innovative solutions.

Further, taking to those who volunteer regularly can be of great help as it will help the first timers to overcome their apprehensions, thus a seminar or a talk should be conducted by them.

## **8. Suggestions/Feedback :**

Follow up action should be encouraged and more and more such topics to be taken up not just with children but with people of all ages so that these preventive measures that we talk about become habits and a way of life. Moreover, as law student we must file RTI's or use other mechanisms to ensure and keep a check on the enforceability of schemes , to whichever extent is possible.

## **9. Conclusion/Remarks :**

This was a great learning experience. I got the opportunity to take a stand on an important issue and also got the chance to educate young minds on it. Also, as a law student and a future legal professional, it was of tremendous help as I understood some techniques and strategies to be used while dealing with the rural populace, who are not often educated on such issues so as to create a comfortable space for discussion.

## **ANNEXURE -1**







**ANNEXURE -2**

