

## ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24

**Centre Name:** CENTRE FOR WOMEN AND LAW

**Logo:**



**About Us:**

The Centre for Women & Law (CWL) is a Research Centre of National Law University Odisha which works with the combined effort of faculty members and students of NLUO. The Centre was established with a view of having a platform for unremitting study of the structural, societal, legal and regulatory issues associated with gender from a multi-disciplinary perspective. The CWL aims to look at regulatory process through the lens of gender justice, and to disseminate the research work through varied mediums such as academic publications, training programmes, webinars, government consultation projects with a view to apprise the policy, initiate change that would promote equitable justice for women in Indian society.

**Vision and Mission:**

### VISION

The Centre envisions to undertake studies and raise awareness through holistic approach to gender issues, working towards equity and justice for all and provide a deeper legal and cultural appreciation of power imbalance. CWL operates as a research support group undertaking research projects, training and capacity building programmes for women's organisations and formal bodies involved with the execution of laws affecting women. It also works towards dissemination of knowledge and sensitization of society through its publications, webinars and conferences.

## MISSION

The Centre has been established with the goal of promoting and encouraging research, new ideas, views, approaches, discussions and disseminating high-quality literature on issues concerning 'women and law'. In this context, the objective of the Centre is to

- To establish, promote, and support interdisciplinary studies and research in the subject of gender justice that are at the crossroads of law and policy.
- To undertake policy review and conduct a thorough evaluation of existing legislation and propose fact-based, concrete solutions to address current public policy concerns.
- To engage in comprehensive research and capacity building on issues concerning women's wellbeing and gender justice in India.
- To engage in an interdisciplinary research consuetude for augmenting the appreciation of legal, cultural and social issues in gender studies for law graduates and professionals.
- To improve public policy in the areas of women's rights, education, mental health, and overall welfare by conducting independent, nonpartisan, and thorough research and analysis.

**Objectives of the Centre:** The Centre for Women and Law aims to empower women by increasing their understanding of their legal rights and entitlements. This involves conducting workshops, seminars, and awareness campaigns to educate women about various laws that affect them, such as those related to marriage, property rights, domestic violence, workplace harassment, and inheritance. The Centre engages in rigorous research to analyze existing laws and policies related to women's rights. It identifies gaps, inconsistencies, and areas in need of improvement, and then advocate for policy changes based on evidence-backed research. This involves engaging with policymakers, lawmakers, and government bodies to influence legal reforms. This Centre focuses on gathering and analyzing data related to women's legal issues, such as cases of violence against women, discrimination, and economic disparities. Data-driven insights can inform policy decisions and highlight areas where interventions are most needed. The Centre provides training programs and resources for legal professionals, judges, police officers, and other stakeholders to enhance their understanding of gender-related legal matters. This contributes to more effective implementation of laws and fairer outcomes for women in the legal system.

### Contact Us:

E-mail – [cwl@nluo.ac.in](mailto:cwl@nluo.ac.in)

**Other Links:**

LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/company/centre-for-women-and-law/>

Instagram - [https://www.instagram.com/cwl\\_nluo/](https://www.instagram.com/cwl_nluo/)

**Activities:**

**Date:** 29 July 2024 – 9 August 2024

**Event:** Single Credit Course on “Gendered Justice: Understanding the Complex Implications of Gender: Sexuality and the Law”

**About the Event:** The Centre for Women and Law at NLUO organized a single credit course on "Gendered Justice: Understanding the Complex Implications of Gender, Sexuality, and the Law. The credit course was a resounding success it was conducted in a hybrid mode. It saw immense participation from students across the university. The course, led by Professor L. Denice Labertew, an expert in gender justice with over two decades of experience. The course was both interactive and engaging inviting various opinions from a multitude of students with differentiated thinking and suggestions.

The course was held from July 29th to August 9th, 2024, whereby it delved into the intersection of gender and law, offering theoretical insights and practical applications. Each session encouraged active participation, with assessments and discussions that allowed students to deeply engage with the reading material. The structure of the course, which included units on feminist theory, gender understanding, and the future of gendered law, facilitated a comprehensive exploration of the subject matter.

Students found the course to be highly interactive in nature, they like the overall theme of the course particularly the discussions that fostered a collaborative learning environment. The assessments were thoughtfully designed to test the understanding of complex concepts, making the course a valuable addition to their academic journey. Overall, this credit

course not only enriched students' knowledge but also empowered them to think critically about gender and law.

**Date:** 20 July 2024

**Event:** Panel Discussion on “Access to Justice for Victims of Domestic Violence” and “Gender Diversity in the Legal Profession.”

**About the Event:** The event, organized by the Centre for Law and Public Policy and the Centre for Women and Law, featured notable panelists including Justice Savitri Ratho of the High Court of Orissa, Judge Rupa Searight Goswami of the Superior Court of Los Angeles County, Justice Gita Mittal, former Chief Justice of J&K and Ladakh High Court, and Dr. Suman Dash Bhattamishra, Associate Professor at NLU Odisha.

The first session, led by Prof. Dr. Paromita Chatteraj, focused on domestic violence. Justice Mittal discussed gender violence and legislative gaps in Indian law, particularly the Domestic Violence Act, 2005. Judge Goswami compared US and Indian legal responses, highlighting supportive measures like domestic violence classes in the US. Dr. Bhattamishra identified gaps in institutional responses to domestic violence in India.

The second session, moderated by Prof. Dr. Rangin Pallav Tripathy, addressed gender diversity in the legal profession. Judge Goswami and Justice Ratho discussed the under-representation of women judges and barriers in India and the US. Justice Mittal highlighted challenges faced by women in judicial roles. Prof. Ved Kumari, Vice Chancellor of NLU Odisha, emphasized the broader role of women in development and the need for inclusive representation beyond mere appointments.

**Date:** 12 March 2024

**Event:** REKHTI – INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY EVENT

**About the Event:** The Centre for Women and Law in collaboration with the Gender Sensitization Committee conducted an event “Rekhti” in pursuance of International Women's Day. The theme for this event, "Invest in Women: Reinventing Progress," encapsulated our commitment to advancing women's contributions across all spheres. 'Rekhti'—a tribute to the rich legacy of Urdu feminist literature and art—was not only a celebration of women's accomplishments but also a vibrant canvas for artistic expression and profound discussions. It was a day of forging solidarity, championing inclusivity, and empowering our academic fellowship. The highlight of the day was the T-shirt and Tote-Bag Painting Competition, which ignited a wave of creativity as participants embraced themes of feminism, equality, and empowerment and exciting games of Antakshri and Pictionary which showcases the unique talents of the faculties as it integrated the bliss of music and art to rejoice in this remarkable event.

**Date:** 12 January 2024

**Event:** NCW Sponsored Regional Consultation On Rights Of Women Under Property Laws (Eastern India)

**About the Event:** Women's property rights in India have historically been limited, often facing discrimination and exclusion from inheriting ancestral property. Despite legal reforms, socio-cultural norms continue to hinder equal property ownership for women. The NCW Sponsored Eastern Region Law Review Consultation by National Law University Odisha’ aims to address these disparities. The regional consultation seeks to delve into complexities surrounding women's property rights under Indian law, fostering discussions and proposing solutions to ensure equitable property rights for women, promoting gender equality and empowerment in society. The Regional Consultation followed a

structured format, comprising distinct sessions and segments. After the welcome address and the inaugural, the consultation was divided into four sessions, attended by all the resource persons in online or offline mode. Each resource person presented their recommendations on the topic allotted to them by National Law University Odisha, and at the end of the session, a moderated discussion took place regarding all the recommendations in that session, encompassing viewpoints of any resource persons who expressed their opinion.

**Date:** 6 October 2023

**Event:** NCW Sponsored National Seminar on “Challenges Faced by Sex Workers and Their Children”

**About the Event:** On October 6th, the Centre for Women and Law (CWL), in partnership with the National Commission for Women (NCW), hosted a seminal seminar addressing the myriad challenges encountered by sex workers and their children. This seminar sought to illuminate the legal, educational, health, and occupational hurdles that have long marginalized this vulnerable community. The CWL, National Law University, Odisha, and the National Commission for Women, a governmental body promoting women's rights, collaborated to raise awareness and advocate for gender-specific issues. Access to critical health services, particularly for HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases, is a significant hurdle. Female sex workers are particularly susceptible to diseases due to high-risk sexual behaviours and substance use. Society frequently stigmatizes them, isolating them from mainstream society due to their mothers' profession. The speakers included Lalitha S.A., the vice president of the Society for Participatory Integrated Development (SPID); Namrata Chadha, a former member of the Odisha State Commission for Women; Dr. Paromita Chatteraj, Professor of Law at NLU Odisha and Dr. Sohini Mahapatra; Assistant Professor of Law at NLU Odisha. The seminar showcased pressing

issues faced by sex workers and their children and proposed solutions to improve their conditions.

**Date:** 15 September 2023

**Event:** NCW Sponsored National Seminar on “Women in Decision Making Roles in Corporate”.

**About the Event:** The Centre for Women and Law conducted a National Seminar on “Women in Decision Making Roles in Corporate” sponsored by the National Commission for Women on 15th September, 2023. The Seminar consisted of six technical sessions conducted by inspiring women who shared their insights on how they made it in the corporate world including Ms. Priyanka, the Chief Operating Officer at Manupatra; Dharitri Patnaik, Chairperson of Diversified Energy Solutions Pvt. Ltd; Neelasha Nemani, currently working at Clifford Chance LLP; Madhura Aparajita, deputy head legal at Vedanta Limited. Highlighting the crucial role women-owned businesses play, the speakers acknowledged that throughout their career they faced gender-based challenges such as intrusive personal inquiries during job interviews and subtle biases affecting professional opportunities and in client interactions, showcasing the existing disparities in the legal industry. She stressed the need for enhanced female representation at the top levels of the legal sector, recognizing the importance of female role models to guide successful careers and address distinct challenges women encounter.

**Date:** 4th August 2023

**Event:** NCW sponsored Capacity Building and Personality Development Programme For Female UG/PG Students

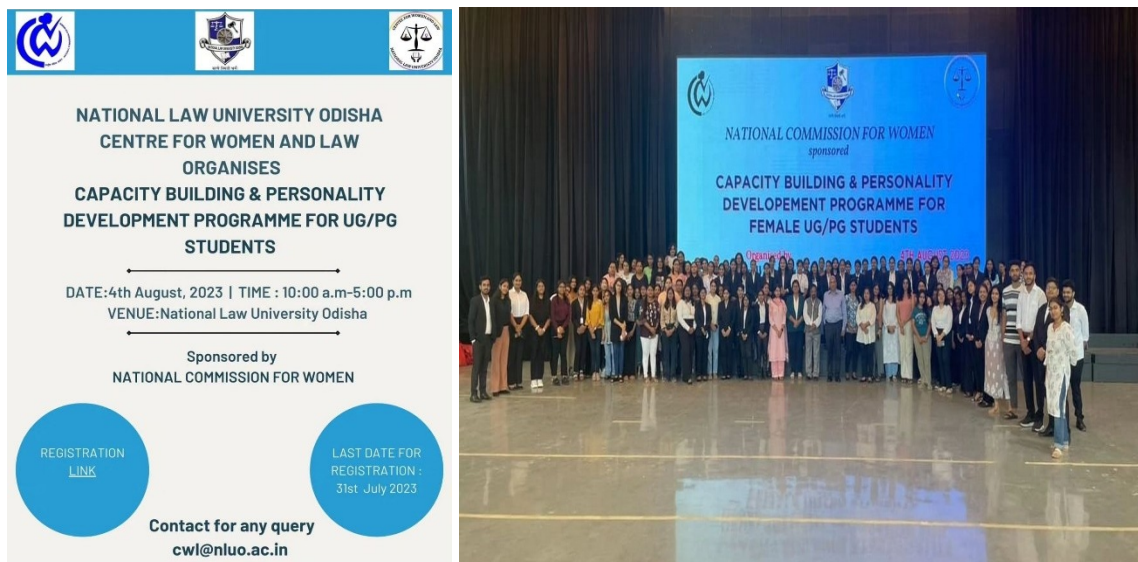
**About the Event:** The Centre for Women and Law, National Law University Odisha (NLUO), in collaboration with the National Commission for Women, orchestrated a remarkable one-day seminar

titled "One day capacity building and personality development programme for female UG/PG students." The event, dedicated to fostering women's growth and empowerment, attracted around 200 enthusiastic participants.

The workshop featured an array of distinguished speakers who shared their wisdom and insights to inspire the attendees including Prof. Supriya Pattnayak: The Vice Chancellor of Centurion University of Technology & Management; Prof. (Dr.) Ved Kumari: The Vice Chancellor of NLUO; Dr. Arjyalopa Mishra: An Assistant Professor at NLUO; Prof. Augustine Veliath: An Adjunct Professor at NLUO and a Communication Specialist at UNICEF and Mr. Saumendra K. Priyadarshi, IPS: The Commissioner of Police for Bhubaneswar-Cuttack.

### PICTURE GALLERY:

### EVENT – NCW sponsored Capacity Building and Personality Development Programme for Female UG/PG Students 2023

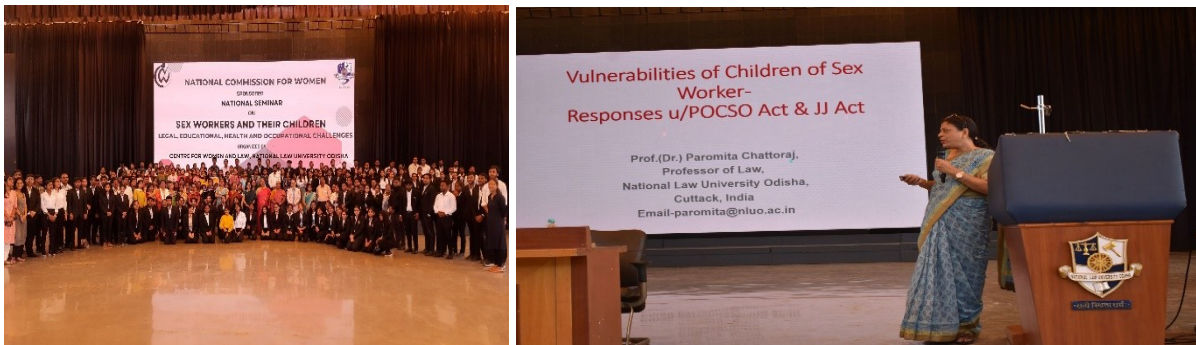




EVENT: NCW Sponsored National Seminar on “Women in Decision Making Roles in Corporate”.



Event: NCW Sponsored National Seminar on “Challenges Faced by Sex Workers and Their Children”



Event: REKHTI – INTERNATIONAL WOMEN’S DAY EVENT



Event: PANEL DISCUSSION ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND GENDER DIVERSITY IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION 20<sup>th</sup> July 2024



Event: A SINGLE CREDIT COURSE ON “GENDERED JUSTICE’ 29<sup>th</sup> July 2024 - 9<sup>th</sup> August 2024



