



REPORT OF THE WEBINAR HELD ON 31ST JULY 2021

Topic: Understanding Gender Mainstreaming

Organized by

Centre for Business and Financial Laws (CBFL), National Law University, Delhi

On 31st July 2021, The Centre for Banking and Financial Laws (CBFL), NLU Delhi, organised a webinar on the topic, '**Understanding Gender Mainstreaming**'. Dr. Sanghamitra Dhar, currently engaged as an expert in **gender-responsive budgeting** for the State of Manipur by **UN Women** was the resource person of this webinar. An adept social work practitioner and researcher with decades of experience in inter-sectional programme management, particularly in the fields of gender equality, voluntary resettlement, and displacement issues, and child rights, Dr. Dhar has worked with several international organizations. **Prof. (Dr.) Srikrishna Deva Rao, Vice-Chancellor, NLU Delhi** delivered his presidential address while the Vote of Thanks was delivered by **Prof. (Dr.) Anupama Goel, Registrar, NLU Delhi**.

In her brief introductory note, **Prof. (Dr.) Ritu Gupta, the Research Director of the Centre**, spoke about the mission of CBFL and the story behind the change in the name and objectives of the Centre. Earlier the Centre had been named the Centre for Banking and Financial Laws. The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic brought to the front, the changing nature and growing importance of business and commercial transactions. Prof. Gupta said that there has been an increasing need to make Indian policy impactful and effective at the ground level, a journey that begins with making it more inclusive and stakeholder-oriented. The concepts of gender-based budgeting and policy-making aim to fill this vacuum between theory and practice. This webinar was a short introduction to the importance of gender mainstreaming in public policy, the removal of gender biases at every step of a policy's formation, and including the voices of marginalized stakeholders to achieve lasting change.

This mission statement was taken forward by NLU Delhi's Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Prof. (Dr.) Srikrishna Deva Rao, who shared his valuable insights on the connection between gender equality and the law. He drew influence from the 'golden triangle' of the Constitution of India – Articles 14, 19, and 21 to establish that equality is not the sole mission of gender justice initiatives, but is also the primary mandate of education, especially legal education. He believes that education is the key to break free from our social baggage that comes from caste, gender,

and religion. He hopes that through this webinar, all the attendees can unlearn and challenge the narrow notions of the past to participate enthusiastically in an experience that reaffirms the position of women as free, independent, autonomous citizens.

Dr. Dhar started the conversation with a basic, fundamental question – What is gender? As per her view, gender is a social construct, a spectrum, that forms the basis of how we view people and relationships. Over time, the inequality that has been normalized as a result of stereotypical perceptions creates a hierarchy that deprives and oppresses certain stakeholders in it, which strategies such as gender-responsive budgeting aim to change. Dr. Dhar talked about the cynosure of this strategy, the ‘equity approach’, and characterizes her argument using real-life, societal examples, such as how women are often seen in a unidimensional, problematic light – as victims or repositories of filial honour, which limits their potential and their power. She makes a connection between the invisibility of discrimination for a few as a direct product of their social privilege, which reinforces inequality and causes a ripple effect by creating ‘gaps’ in several important areas, such as the absence of women’s concerns while attempting to effectively allocate resources.

Dr. Dhar briefly outlined the strategies that she uses in her work, and the shortcomings she faces as a practitioner working with inadequate data, failures in the government machinery, and the resultant lack of a baseline to construct long-term sustainable programmes. She addressed questions on the inclusivity of the strategy as a whole, and on enhancing the capacity of a multitude of stakeholders to bring more people into the conversation.

The event ended with a vote of thanks, delivered by the Registrar, NLU Delhi, Prof. (Dr.) Anupama Goel.

The Student Team that was responsible for overall coordination and smooth conduct of the event comprised of Prabhat Singh, Khushi Jaffar, Navadha Sharma, Ishita Tulsyan, Lokendra Singh Chouhan, Anup Joseph and Ayush Katyayana.