



Empowering Educators as Legal First Responders: Institutionalizing Statutory Training for Addressing Caste and Gender Violence in Chhattisgarh Classrooms by 2047

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ABSTRACT

India seeks to have a society based on dignity, equality, and intelligence by 2047. With abundant tribal knowledge and various groups in Chhattisgarh, schools as bastions of justice need to be the priority. This Research paper suggests a model for identifying teachers as "**Legal First Responders**"—trained to recognize, resolve, and prevent caste- and gender-based violence through statutory legal training and cultural competence. It blends constitutional directives, the RTE Act, SC/ST (POA) Act, POCSO Act, and POSH framework, with local Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) integrated in a holistic intervention. The research blends international best practices with the regional issues in order to present policy, pedagogical, and legal reforms with the objective of sustainability, inclusivity, and innovation in education.

1. Introduction

The vision of "**Chhattisgarh@2047**" is of a society that has changed for the better - a society that is equitable, inclusive, and built on sustainability, dignity, and cultural roots. In all the domains in this aspirational vision, one domain has transformative potential: education. Education is not just a vehicle for the transmission of pedagogy, but also a vehicle to change social awareness and minimize structural marginalization, as well as create fair, humane, and intellectual citizenry. Because of the very tribal,



multifaceted, and social life present in Chhattisgarh, education also has to be conceptualized as a site of social inclusion, civic agency, and cultural coexistence.

Schools, however, often embody the same social hierarchies that they are supposed to disrupt. Classrooms across India—including in Chhattisgarh—are not immune to the practices associated with casteism, patriarchy, and exclusion. The marginalization of Dalit and Adivasi children, the stereotyping of girls and the normalization of discrimination are practices that are already well documented. These experiences not only inhibit learning but also undermine the rights of children that are guaranteed in the Constitution of India.

Teachers sit in an important position here. They are children's first adults outside their family systems. They observe children closely; the influence the class culture has on children, the interventions they can make at the start of social distress, etc. Despite this important position, teachers are rarely trained or encouraged to practice around caste-based discrimination or gender-based violence in the classes they lead. Often, they cannot apply timely intervention because of their own unconscious biases or lack of legal information.

The following paper defines the term "**Legal First Responder**" in order to shift the educator's role in the school's eco-system. A Legal First Responder is an educator with legal knowledge, institutional support, and moral conviction who is able to recognize, prevent, and respond to incidents of caste and gender-based violence. Being a Legal First Responder means having a knowledge of the legislation protecting against caste and GBV; procedural knowledge of reporting such incidents, including both administrative and material avenues for redress; and the ability to create a safe environment for all students, regardless of their social background, to feel heard, protected, and to realize their potential.

To date, there is no statutory obligation for teachers in India to become trained in legal literacy with regard to caste and gender. However, we advocate for the institutionalization of such training as a pillar of teacher education in Chhattisgarh as an important way to develop a new form of considered teaching. In this paper, we present a new conceptual framework that draws upon constitutional values, statutory protections, global best practices, and Indigenous Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) to empower teachers as pre-emptive justice agents in their respective contexts as participants among educational entities.

As we approach the milestone of 100 years of Indian independence in 2047, there is an urgency for systemic change to education that is inclusive, fair, and legally grounded. Enabling teachers as Legal



First Responders could have a foundational role in this transformation, not of course to merely serve the most marginalized students, but as a means to reinforce our society's legal and moral fabric.

2. Problem Statement

Even with effective laws in place to protect children's rights and the rights of marginalized communities to education, schools in Chhattisgarh and across the rest of India remain sites of caste-based and gender-based discrimination. The reports and studies of the National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR), National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), and civil society organizations have demonstrated that the denial of mid-day meals, segregation in classrooms, verbal humiliation, corporal punishment, exclusion from peers, and sexual harassment are all commonly experienced abuses in schools. Such abuse is particularly experienced by marginalized groups such as Dalits, Adivasis, and girl students, creating environments of psychological distress, academic alienation, and dropouts.

Most troubling is the normalization of caste and gender discrimination as part of the everyday schooling culture. Discriminatory practices may go unrecognized or unchallenged simply because educators are either blinded by their unconscious social biases or are ethically apathetic to their students' experiences. Teachers, generally unprepared to intervene thanks to limited or no training about human rights legislation, are also completely unaware of the legal obligations on them under statutes such as the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, or the POCSO Act, failing to intervene when required. It is easy to see that our well-documented violations will never see the light of day or will go unpunished, leading to further consequences of victimization and an unrelenting atmosphere of impunity.

Research conducted by other grassroots organizations in remote, disconnected locations of the tribal districts in Chhattisgarh has reported instances of Dalit and tribal children hiring the toilets for a group activity, being asked to sit separately in classrooms, or being verbally abused based on their caste identity. They have also specifically identified girl students, especially from marginalised communities, being sexually harassed and without a complaint mechanism in place for reporting and remedying their experiences. These are not one-off incidents that point to an institutional or systemic failure towards addressing caste and gender-based discrimination.

Adding to these challenges, glaring omissions in the education of teachers aggravate the situation. In their Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) and Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.) programs, most students will never engage with modules (if they even exist) on legal literacy, understanding child rights, crisis intervention, or being sensitive to the corruption arising from social hierarchies. The curriculum we give



preservice teachers is largely conceptual and technical, and very little involves any social justice orientation. This significant gap in education means our students will finish their preservice education without any understanding of the signs of abuse or be able to respond in a legally defensible and child-focused way.

In addition, both district and school management authorities typically do not have Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to respond to complaints based on caste or gender. So even if students or their parents were to complain, there is often no person or mechanism for responding to a complaint. This institutional ambiguity only serves to heighten the vulnerability of children and leads to institutional neglect.

In this regard, there is an immediate and fundamental necessity for reform. The reform does not exist in the form of stand-alone awareness campaigns, but rather, ensuring statutory legal training is part of teachers' education and school governance. In short, teachers must be trained as Legal First Responders to discrimination and violence - to identify, address, report, and escalate acts of discrimination and violence. This formal recognition of teachers as protectors of child rights can help enhance educational outcomes, reduce violence in schools, and create a more inclusive society in line with **Chhattisgarh@2047..**

3. Legal Framework Analysis

All children and vulnerable marginalized groups are entitled to freedom from discrimination, violence, or abuse in India, and a comprehensive legal framework exists to that end. However, even with that breadth, the framework is rarely utilized sufficiently or even implemented properly in school settings, due to a lack of knowledge, monitoring, and responsibility attributed to teachers. There are many provisions in the Indian constitution and statutory mandates will form the basis of this section, and the gap therein provides considerable rationale for statutory training for teachers as Legally First Responders to discrimination and violence.

3.1 Constitutional Provisions

India's Constitution ensures a solid foundation for treating people equally and protecting disadvantaged groups, including children, from exploitation and discrimination:

- Article 14 ensures that all individuals receive equal legal rights and protection. In schools, this means students must all be treated equally, irrespective of their class background, gender, or socio-economic status.



- Article 15 does not allow discriminatory treatment based on religion, race, social class by gender, or birthplace. When the classroom discriminates in seating based on caste or religion against equal punishments, or unequal access to resources, it infringes on this provision.
- Article 21A gives each child between the ages of 6 and 14 a right to free compulsory education. The right is not merely to admission at school; it aims at furnishing a secure, cordial, and protective environment for learning.
- Article 39(f) of the Directive Principles emphasizes that children must be given prospects for wholesome growth and protected from exploitation and moral abandonment.
- Article 51A(j) declares a basic obligation to develop scientific temper and humanist spirit—principles that are central to an inclusive school ethos.

These constitutional values, as such, need to be translated into statutory processes and brought to fruition on the ground by empowered teachers.

3.2 Relevant Statutes Multiple statutes exist to actualize these constitutional ideals:

- **Right to Education Act, 2009:** Requires free and compulsory education in a way that maintains child dignity and provides inclusive education. It bans physical punishment and mental harassment, social background discrimination, and requires child-friendly pedagogy.
- **POCSO Act, 2012:** Establishes a robust legal framework for safeguarding children against sexual offence. Teachers, being close interaction with students, are under an obligation to detect and report mandatorily any suspected sexual offence.
- **SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989:** Imposes accountability upon caste-based discrimination, including acts perpetuated within schools and other educational institutions. Denial of access to common facilities or caste-based verbal abuse is covered under this act.
- **POSH Act, 2013:** Though mainly applied to workplaces, schools fall under its ambit when staff are involved in sexual harassment. It also provides a framework for creating Internal Complaints Committees (ICCs) that could be adapted for schools.
- **Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015:** Establishes norms for the care, protection, and rehabilitation of children in conflict with the law or in need of care. Schools have a duty to inform the Child Welfare Committee when a child is at risk.



3.3 Need for Statutory Teacher Training In spite of such exhaustive legislation, no formal training for teachers in legal literacy or child protection principles is mandated by law. This is a significant implementation gap. Teachers are not even aware of the reporting requirement under POCSO, what forms of discrimination are prohibited under the SC/ST Act, or how to behave when charges are made under the POSH regime involving students or employees.

This failure of legal consciousness is not a technicality; it has real-world implications. Mistakes—negligent or wilful—are likely to cause delayed justice, gagging of victims, or even traumatization. It also undermines student confidence and jeopardizes the school as a safe haven.

Additionally, statutes such as the RTE and SC/ST Acts clearly imagine the school as a place of transformation, but their prescriptions often reach only as far as institutional building or curriculum, and not as far as endowing individuals within the system with usable legal mechanisms. A teacher force empowered by law would be the bridge that closes the gap in making these statutory aims a reality.

Therefore, the case is evident: Teachers, through their day-to-day interactions with children, must mandatorily be trained in certified legal courses that cover child rights, anti-discrimination standards, and effective redressal procedures. Not only will this be a fulfilment of existing laws, but it will also enhance the preventive and rights-oriented school management approach necessary to achieve Chhattisgarh's target of an inclusive, equitable educational system by 2047.

4. Teachers as Legal First Responders

They are not only instructors but also guardians, mentors, and caretakers within the school setting. From their daily interactions with students, teachers have the best vantage point to observe changes in behaviour, pick up distress signals, and act when there is a violation of safety, dignity, or equality. Trained and sensitized legally, teachers can be first-line protectors against gender- and caste-based violence—just the way a medical first aider provides preliminary treatment before clinical intervention, a Legal First Responder provides the immediate identification, reaction, and referral for legal violations against children.

There are several tangible ways in which legally trained teachers can have an impact:

- **Early Detection:** An educated teacher can recognize subtle yet informative indicators of harassment—such as withdrawal from social interactions, academic underperformance,



unexplained absence, or acquiescent behaviour. These can indicate bullying, sexual abuse, or exclusion on the basis of caste.

- **Safe and Legal Intervention:** Teachers who are aware of the legal provisions (e.g., POCSO, SC/ST Act) can intervene in a manner that will ensure the safety of the victim, maintain evidence, and adhere to reporting requirements under the law. This ensures that the teacher becomes a facilitator for justice instead of an unsuspecting witness.
- **Rich Reporting:** Trained as Legal First Responders, the teachers can collaborate with the School Management Committee (SMC), Child Welfare Committees (CWCs), and even the police whenever needed. They know the hierarchy and redressal procedure—ensuring immediate, proper, and sensitive handling of cases.
- **Creating Safe Spaces:** Not only are they reactive, but these teachers can also proactively develop a student-centered, respect-based, law-aware classroom. Legal First Responders play a central role in establishing the classroom culture of respect, membership, and justice.

The global education sector offers models of this concept:

In the UK, every school must have a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), a trained professional who learns about child protection, crisis management, and mandatory reporting procedures.

• Title IX Coordinators are utilized in schools and colleges in the United States to ensure policies on gender discrimination and sexual harassment are enforced. They are statutorily trained and also held accountable within stringent federal compliance systems.

Chhattisgarh can take the lead in India by replicating a similar model at the state level. Training teachers as Legal First Responders through recruitment policy, in-service training, and inclusion in B.Ed./D.El.Ed.

The course curriculum can institutionalize this idea.

The effect of such a model would be multifaceted:

- Greater confidence in schools as safe havens.
- Improved reporting and resolution of discriminatory events.
- Decrease in school dropout rates on account of psychological distress.
- Conformity with SDG objectives and the overall constitutional vision of social justice.

Additionally, such an approach is consistent with India's NEP 2020, which advocates for inclusive and secure schooling. A Legal First Responder framework does not simply place a legal addition to education



but turns the classroom into a miniature model of constitutional morality. Teachers, therefore, become no longer passive witnesses but active defenders of justice so that education is a tool not just of education but of emancipation.

This institutionalization of legal roles within educational environments can become a cornerstone of Chhattisgarh's strategy to build a socially conscious and legally literate generation by 2047.

5. Chhattisgarh is a culturally and demographically diverse state with outstanding diversity. With more than 30% Scheduled Tribe population and an appreciable percentage of Scheduled Castes (SCs), the education system in the state functions in a rich socio-historical context dictated by centuries of marginality, underdevelopment, and resistance. Though the government has started several welfare programs to empower tribal and Dalit communities—like Eklavya Model Residential Schools, Swami Atmanand English Medium Schools, and scholarship schemes—the entrenched social disparities tend to be revealed in pedestrian and transparent means within schools.

Even with constitutional protections and policy interventions at the level, schools in tribal and rural districts of Chhattisgarh often mirror prevailing caste hierarchies and social biases. For example, a number of field studies and NGO reports suggest that tribal and Dalit students are subjected to various types of exclusion, including being forced to sit apart, excluded from co-curricular activities on an equal basis, and referred to by derogatory caste-based idioms. These everyday microaggressions, though not always evident in statistical returns, have eventual psychological and academic consequences.

The case is worse in interior areas such as Bastar, Dantewada, and Surguja, where the cross-section of tribal identity, poverty, and absence of infrastructural support leaves students further disadvantaged. Most teachers in government schools in these districts are oblivious to the provisions for anti-discrimination in the SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act or lack training on how to respond to cases of caste or gender discrimination. In most schools, the teacher will be the sole authority person within a school, especially in single-teacher or undermanned schools, which makes their knowledge of the law even more critical.

One of the main obstacles to changing this scenario is teacher training itself. Colleges of education awarding Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.), Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.), and other teaching qualifications of the state have traditionally focused on content pedagogy rather than rights-based pedagogy. Legal literacy modules, where they exist, are cosmetic and hardly contextualized to the actual realities of caste and gender in Chhattisgarh. There is little emphasis on training teachers to be guardians of children's rights or first-line defenders against social injustice.



However, this systemic gap presents a critical opportunity. Chhattisgarh is uniquely placed to pioneer a rights-based education model grounded in both legal knowledge and indigenous wisdom. Introducing Legal First Responder training into the foundational structure of teacher education—especially in government-run teacher training colleges and DIETs (District Institutes of Education and Training)—can serve as a transformative policy intervention.

In addition, the model resonates with the state's cultural heritage of the social reform movements. Individuals such as Guru Ghasidas and the rebellions such as the Bhopalpatnam Struggle represent a firm commitment towards equality and justice. Incorporating such historical accounts into Legal First Responder training would not only place legal learning in context but also enrich teacher involvement.

If well implemented, this campaign has the potential to effect a state-wide cultural shift and make Chhattisgarh a model of inclusive, constitutionally literate, and socially responsible education. By 2047, Chhattisgarh can develop an educational ideology and practice wherein every **educator is a custodian of constitutional morality** and **every classroom a secure and respectful space for all to learn**.

6. Policy and Pedagogical Innovations

- **Policy and Pedagogical Innovations** To implement and operationalizing this vision for transforming educators into Legal First Responders will require a multifaceted policy and pedagogical strategy. The following innovations are designed to create a way of being in the teacher education ecosystem in Chhattisgarh that has legal awareness, cultural contextuality, and practical responsiveness built in .
- **Mandatory Legal Literacy Modules:** Legal literacy core modules must be built into pre-service and in-service teacher education programs, including B.Ed., M.Ed., and D.El.Ed. programs, with a pedagogical emphasis on legal literacy's practical implications. For example, in the core module of constitutional values and anti-discrimination laws (SC/ST PoA Act; POCSO; RTE), developing practical engagement strategies concerning child rights and grievance redress. The state education board and regulatory bodies must require and track the core modules in the curricula.
- **Collaborative Workshops and Certifications:** It is recommended to formalize the use of partnerships between teacher education institutions, law faculties, the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC), the State Commission for Protection of Child Rights (SCPCR), and the State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT). These partnerships will help to



facilitate collaborative workshops and short-term certification courses related to the essential legal protection/safeguarding, child protection, and crisis intervention, which can be offered on a periodic basis. The certification should continue to be associated with teacher qualification or professional development credits.

- **Simulation-based teacher education through contextual activities:** It is also recommended to find a way to use the warranties that teacher education institutions enforce with regard to rote learning and to shift teacher education toward an experiential learning framework. It is essential for teachers to actively participate in simulated activities and be exposed to activities such as mock drills of reporting and responding to incidents of child abuse, case studies of discrimination in schools, and role plays of legal standards related to real-world incidents. These simulations can be organized through Learning Resource Centres (LRCs) and NGOs working in child rights and education.
- **School-Based Legal Literacy Cells:** Each school should set up a Legal Literacy Cell with a trained Legal First Responder teacher. These cells will conduct peer-to-peer awareness sessions, allow for reporting of incidents, and act as a link between students, the school management, and outside agencies such as Child Welfare Committees. These cells could operate in connection with legal aid clinics operated by local law colleges.
- If well implemented, this campaign has the potential to affect a state-wide cultural shift and make Chhattisgarh a model of inclusive, constitutionally literate, and socially responsible education. By 2047, Chhattisgarh can develop an educational ideology and practice wherein every educator is a custodian of constitutional morality and every classroom a secure and respectful space for all to learn.

The radical equality teachings of Kabir, Ravidas, and Meera from Bhakti and Sufi Literature can be included in value education programs.

The ancient fables of the Panchatantra and the Jataka Tales often incorporate values of justice and fairness that are derivative from concepts underpinned by modern legal concepts.

- **Tribal Justice:** the indigenous people in Chhattisgarh's conflict resolution methods of collective decision-making, symbolic expressions of regret, and mediations by their communities provide another type of justice that is focused on participatory ethics and restorative justice.



Together, these pedagogical and policy changes work not only to develop legal education, but also to change the educational culture itself in Chhattisgarh.

They create a learning environment where teachers embody constitutional values, students feel empowered to assert their rights, and schools become active hubs of justice, inclusion, and sustainability. By integrating global best practices with indigenous systems and statutory imperatives, Chhattisgarh can become a model for rights-based and culturally grounded educational transformation by 2047.

7. Comparative Best Practices

1. Comparative Best Practices. Global examples illustrate the necessity and feasibility of empowering a teacher to perform a legal function with training. Countries that have invested in teachers as part of the systems of safeguarding and child protection seem to have less abuse, better reporting and response, and more positive school environments. Chhattisgarh can learn from these international examples:

1. **United Kingdom: Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs).** In the UK, the Children Act 1989, amended in 2004 and 2019, requires that every school have a designated safeguarding lead (DSL). The DSL usually holds a senior role in the school. The DSL is trained to identify child abuse, the legal requirements for reporting, and to manage a disclosure from a student. In the UK, the training is verified and updated every two years. The DSL is supported by a larger safeguarding framework which links the school to local authorities, police, and health services. The framework provides assurance that teachers are not only aware of their legal obligations with respect to child protection, but also supported as professionals to enact those responsibilities. The UK model has a clear outline of the role of the teacher, mandatory training, and a coordinated multi-agency response. Only some of which could be adapted in the Chhattisgarh education system.
2. **United States: Title IX Coordinators** In the U.S. Title IX of the Education Amendments Act (1972) prohibits any form of gender discrimination in education. Schools and universities are required to have Title IX Coordinators who are specially trained to handle cases of sexual harassment, gender discrimination, and/or assault. Title IX coordinators are observers to the policy implementation, timely investigations, and any support services for affected students, and lead educational campaigns for the school environment. It provides a legally structured role in education which could provide a framework for implementing gender justice if Chhattisgarh had educational personnel dedicated to monitoring cases of teacher-student, as well as student-student interactions.



3. **South Africa:** Teachers Implementing the Children's Act South Africa's Children's Act 2005 acknowledges teachers as mandatory reporters of child abuse. The South African Department of Basic Education runs teacher training sessions on the detection, documentation, and reporting requirements for abuse of children. Schools need to have safeguarding policies and liaise with social workers and law enforcement. In a country with a history of racial and economic inequality, this approach has allowed for some degree of recognition of intersectional vulnerability. Given the systemic marginalization of tribal and Dalit groups to date, Chhattisgarh could also benefit from this multi-layered, rights-based approach.

Kenya puts legal stuff into its Life Skills Education (LSE) for all kids in primary and secondary school. They learn their rights and how to get help if someone hurts them or treats them unfairly. Teachers get training from charities and the Education Ministry. So, both teachers and students learn – this could be a good example for Chhattisgarh to copy by adding rights education to what they teach.

What Chhattisgarh Can Do:

Even though countries have their own laws and cultures, they all want to keep kids safe by helping teachers. Chhattisgarh could learn from these examples by:

- Having Legal First Responders in schools.
- Teaching kids about their rights in class, like in Kenya.
- Making rules for reporting problems, like in South Africa.
- Getting help from SCERT and local groups to make sure things are done right.

These ideas from around the world prove that teaching about the law makes schools safer and fairer. If Chhattisgarh changes things to fit their situation, they could be the best in India at protecting kids in schools by 2047.

8. Sustainability and Inclusion Outcomes

The proposed Legal First Responder (LFR) model for teachers is consistent with the national education objectives of states and with worldwide development frameworks. It specifically supports three of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):



- **SDG 4: Quality Education** – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- **SDG 5: Gender Equality** – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
- **SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions** – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable institutions at all levels.

If this model is implemented in Chhattisgarh, there are a number of measurable and long-term outcomes:

1. Decreased Dropout Rates for Marginalized Groups: A primary source of school dropouts for students who are Dalit, Adivasi, and female is continued social exclusion, harassment, or abusive treatment. When teachers are in a position to act, respond legally, and create a positive and inclusive classroom and school environment, it is more likely that at-risk students will stay engaged in school. By taking active measures against discrimination, LFR-equipped teachers will help mitigate the impact of hostile educational environments that lead to dropouts.

2. Increased Reporting and Redress of Discrimination: One of the ways LFR and the limited legal knowledge of teachers circumscribe discrimination and abusive practices is by increasing the reporting of discrimination and abuse cases. When students know their teacher knows how to assist with discrimination and abuses in a legal manner, and teachers know their legal responsibilities, and are empowered to advocate for students, and harm reduction, the reporting rates are high. This creates a culture of accountability for schools and improves the responsiveness of child welfare and resolution processes, as **Child Welfare Committees (CWC)**, and **Internal Complaints Committees (ICCs) or SC/ST monitoring**.

3. Improved Psychological Safety and Student Engagement: Research has also identified psychological safety as an important variable in learning outcomes. Students typically engage much more in the classroom, share their opinions, and engage with their learning process much more when they feel valued, recognized, and safe. Legal First Responders contribute directly to a student's sense of dignity and emotional safety by removing fear and augmenting the concept of fairness.

4. Sustainable and Inclusive Learning Environments: Legal advice being offered in classrooms is not only a response to emergencies, but we are all creating a preventative culture. With regular delivery of legal literacy, inclusion practices and remedial processes, students then begin to normalize concepts of



justice and rights. These interventions create a future state in which a school community is built on equity, sustainability, and participatory governance.

In addition, training teachers in culturally relevant legal norms and IKS would lead to this change not simply being perceived as an external force, but rather something that resonates locally. Legal, education, and cultural roots need to be an important component of sustainability.

The Legal First Responder structure offers an effective, affordable, and equitable path to achieve SDGs through education while empowering and transforming society. If this is built into the fabric of Chhattisgarh, it will both solve effective social injustices and regional inequities, while also positioning the region as a visionary leader in rights-based and inclusive education to the world by 2047.

9. Recommendations

To ensure that the Legal First Responder (LFR) model is successfully institutionalized in Chhattisgarh, a systematic, multidimensional path must be followed. The pathway includes legislative action and practical application through administrative coordination, technology, and university partnerships.

1. Passage of State Legislation or Executive Protocols: To formally implement the LFR model, the Government of Chhattisgarh must legislate an education reform that establishes an LFR requirement, or executive protocols that require all teacher candidates to complete LFR training for professional qualification and school accreditation. Either law-making, as an amendment to the Chhattisgarh School Education Rules, or establishing a procedure or protocol through a Government Order (GO) through the Department of School Education, will establish a legal mandate to provide structural legitimacy and sustainability.

2. Monitoring and Accountability through DEOs: The implementation of any technocratic policy will ultimately determine its success. DEOs must act as the nodal authorities to oversee the operationalization of the LFR model. They will have to keep records of trained teachers, maintain logs of workshops and certification, and ensure that there is an LFR designated in every school. There could be a completely separate LFR cell in the Office of the DEO to perform surprise audits, respond to incidents, and provide guidance as a technical expert.

3. Technology-Enabled Continuous Learning: Because legal frameworks and modes of education delivery change rapidly, continuous training is important. A state e-learning platform could be developed to host micro-courses, legal updates, interactive videos, and self-assessment quizzes for teachers.



Perhaps, AI legal chatbots could be applied to answer teachers' real-time questions about child rights, the legal process, or reporting obligations. These digital tools can improve equity of access to knowledge sources for teachers working in remote or tribal areas.

4. Assessment through School Audits: Legal literacy for teachers is one of the components of the annual audits for schools. These are audits performed by teams from the district, and they need to look at these items:

- Whether legal literacy facilitators (hereafter LFRs) are in place and whether they are trained.
- How many cases LFRs have taken and the nature of those cases.
- The extent to which legal literacy is embedded in student engagement.
- The extent to which the Legal Literacy Cells are functioning.

Audits must include incentives for schools, like; ratings, extra grants, teacher recognition awards, or alternative forms of recognition, so that schools will engage proactively in the audits.

5. Collaboration and Partnerships with Law Departments and Legal Aid Clinics: Law departments and legal aid clinics in Chhattisgarh, particularly those affiliated with these state institutions like the state universities and the Chhattisgarh State Legal Services Authority, need to be integrated with the Legal Literacy Facilitator ecosystem. They could mentor new LRFs, introduce the legal field through role play with students, and send law interns to run awareness days and events, thereby ensuring relevance to the legal field and setting up collaboration across academic disciplines.

With these systemic interventions, Chhattisgarh can begin to establish an ecosystem in which access to legal protections becomes integral to day-to-day life in school. A phased implementation process that not only ensures the technical rollout of the Legal First Responder model, but also its sustainability, scalability, and embedding in socio-cultural practices, opens the doors for education systems across India to enact similar changes by 2047.

10. Conclusion

If Chhattisgarh is going to transform in a meaningful way by 2047, and within the education system, there must be a move from a narrow conception of literacy located around the academic to an expansive vision of legal and social empowerment. The classroom must not be a solitary space of curriculum and nothing more; it must be a place of the practice of democratic values, protection of rights, and making



justice real. Teachers will need to be more than the deliverers of education; they will need to be social agents of change.

The proposal to position teachers as Legal First Responders is not a simple procedural change; it is a fundamental paradigm shift in how we define the responsibilities of educators. Teachers are frequently the first adults' children confide in, and as such, they can truly make the difference between silence and justice by providing them with knowledge of the law, knowledge of their ethical duty to intervene, and real-world tools to intervene. The degree to which teachers are prepared makes the difference in whether incidents of caste oppression, gender inappropriateness, and systemic neglect are either ignored or acted upon.

This has to be a multi-dimensional, context-dependent, future-oriented plan of action. If we agree that legislation or executive instructions can provide statutory support for Legal First Responders, I believe we can guide a plan. And, teachers' response to their professional responsibilities can become part of a Legal First Responder framework. A comprehensive training module that incorporates best-case simulations, cultural references, and relevant legal developments can prepare teachers to understand the law, but moreover, models how to live the law and teach the law. Technology can ensure that legal literacy can even reach the most remote districts, while long-standing partnerships with various legal institutions will ensure that teachers receive usable professional development and ongoing mentoring.

Additionally, the model draws on the values of the Indian Constitution and is aligned with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), in particular, quality education, gender equality, and justice. It draws upon diverse Indian Knowledge Systems through Bhakti poetry, tribal practices, and moral stories to produce a pedagogy that is rooted, resonant, and revolutionary.

The outcomes look very rewarding—in terms of dropping out students from marginalized groups, increased reporting of abuse, improved classroom conditions, and a generation of young people conscious of their rights and responsibilities. Chhattisgarh has the opportunity to lead the way, not just for India but for other localities with similar disparities in educational attainment along the lines of social exclusion.

Ultimately, empowering educators as Legal First Responders is a proclamation that education does not exist merely in textbooks and exams - it is suitable for justice, dignity, and democracy. It signifies that every classroom offers the possibility for change, every teacher can be a rights defender, and every



student can be a bearer of hope. This is the future we must pursue in Chhattisgarh - where learning is free and schools offer equity and empowerment.

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 - Article 14: Equality before law.
 - Article 15: Prohibition of discrimination.
 - *Article 21A*: Right to free and compulsory education.
 - *Article 39(f)*: Protection and development of children.
 - *Article 51A(j)*: Promotion of scientific temper and humanism.
3. **National Dalit Movement for Justice** – *Report on Dalit School Exclusion.*
4. **International Dalit Solidarity Network (IDSN)** – *Testimonies of caste discrimination in schools.*
5. **Human Rights Watch (2007)** – *Hidden Apartheid* – documents caste discrimination in Indian schools.
6. **National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB)** – *Crime in India 2023*: Significant data showing an increase in juvenile sexual offences and school-related crimes.
7. **Unequal Spaces Journal** – *Intersectional analysis of discrimination in education* (used for theoretical grounding of gender + caste analysis).
8. **Curriculum Reviews & B.Ed./D.El.Ed. Critiques** – *Overview of teacher education deficits*, particularly the absence of legal literacy and social justice orientation.
9. **KS-Education Survey** – *Policy critiques and analysis of underreporting of school violence and discrimination.*



10. **Tamil Nadu Government Initiative** – *Introduction of welfare officers in schools* to mitigate bias.
11. **UK Government – Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), 2024:**
 - Mandatory Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs).
 - Role clarity on DSLs liaising with external agencies.
 - Mandate of annual training and biannual refreshers.
 - Schools must allocate dedicated time for safeguarding.
 - Legal obligations clarified by Ofsted under KCSIE.
12. **United States: Title IX of the Education Amendments Act (1972)** – Requirements for *Title IX Coordinators* in schools to enforce gender protection and redressal of sexual harassment.
13. **South Africa: Children’s Act (2005)** – Mandates *teachers as mandatory reporters* of abuse, training mechanisms included.
14. **Kenya: Life Skills Education (LSE)** – A national program that includes rights awareness for students and teacher training supported by NGOs and the Ministry of Education.