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RAPPORT

Evaluation of JURKs legal information programme for immigrant women

by

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Introduction

The main task of the project was to analyze the effectiveness and challenges of the free legal information provided by JURK. The focus was on immigrant women. In order to assess how this information was given and the effectiveness of the information, the intern got the opportunity to attend different lectures provided by JURK caseworkers who are law students at the University of Oslo. These lectures took place at different places such as Oslo Crisis Center and Adult Education Center. During these sections, the intern got the opportunity to observe the way free legal information is conducted. The intern had the opportunity to gather information from teachers at Adult Education Center regarding the effectiveness of the information in relation to the women receiving the information claiming their rights. The intern got the opportunity to ask immigrant women at Adult Education Centre about the importance of the information for them and its impact on claiming as well as defending their right. These women were also asked about their satisfaction with the method used by JURK when they provide the free legal information.

At the Oslo Crisis Center the intern had one hour conversation with Olaug Rønningsdalen who is the leader (Editor) and has a long experience of cooperation with JURK.

Feedback/results and recommendations

Migrant women at Oslo Crisis Center do appreciate the free legal information provided by JURK. They argued that, it's extremely important to provide such information to women due to the fact that there are many women who are real suffering daily just because they lack the knowledge about their rights.

They argued further that language barrier is the major problem, it's believed that there are several women who need legal information but since they do not understand the Norwegian language then they do not see the meaning of attending these lectures. They suggested the introduction of an interpreter in order to tackle this problem.

The issue of language problem was also highlighted by the leader of Crisis Centre Olaug R. Due to the language barrier facing migrant women; she suggested that it's important to have an interpreter. Knowing that its very costfull to have an interpreter for each woman, she proposed that it could a good idea if JURK in future take a contact with the Crisis Center days

before they conduct lecture to find out that if there are some women who seriously need the information but must have the interpreter. She insisted that there is a time when employees at the Crisis Center think that there are some women who real need this kind of legal information provided by JURK but due to the language barrier these women are unable to receive it.

Many immigrant women have unmet needs for the information about their rights, for these matter the Oslo Crisis Center gives high credibility to JURK for the job they are doing.

Most women especially immigrant women are still leaving in the violent relationships because they lack knowledge about their right. They often believe that if they divorce their husbands or partners it will be difficult for them to manage life financially which in reality is not true in the case in Norway. According to Olaug R, these women are often threaten by their partners or husbands that if they divorce they will lose their children. She insisted that it's very important to inform these women that their children will not be taken if they divorce. According to Olaug R, workers at Oslo Crisis Center have heard many stories from women who believed that their children will be taken if they divorce their husband or partner.

Olaug R emphasized that it's important that JURK and Crisis Center throughout the country maintain a close contact. This is due to the fact that Crisis Center receives information about rights and law and at the same time JURK receive training on violence against women which Crisis Center knows much about.

The intern is under the impression that women around Oslo city get more information about their rights and help than women in the countryside and this is due to the fact that many organizations which provide such information are based in Oslo. So for this matter women in the countryside should also be given the priority. The leader of Oslo Crisis Centre had the same feeling.

The intern believes that providing information to men about women's right is very important too. The intern understands that JURK provides this information for men too but not at the same level as women. The intern believe that if men and women are having enough knowledge about women's rights, there will be a greater level of understanding among the couples, and women's rights will be more respected. Women's rights are often violated because there is a little knowledge about laws that protect.

It is essential that immigrant women know about their rights and protections they are entitled to under Norwegian law because it may be very different from the law in the country they came from. Knowing what protection and entitlements are available to these women can be empowering and act in their self interests.

According to the teacher at the Adult Education Center (Hero), there is a very great need for the rights information for immigrant women. JURK is doing an incredible job. She insisted that this information helps women to realize and defend their rights. From her long experience of working with women at Hero, Adult Education Center do appreciate the method JURK is using to provide right information especially the use of simple language, short sentences and the use of illustrations.

According to Erlinda Munoz, a teacher at Adult Education Center (Hero), the method of using pictures is very important due to the fact that there are some women who cannot read and write, therefore the picture simplifies the information.

On the other hand some women at the Adult Education Centre complained that most of them have problems understanding some of the terminology used during the lectures. They suggest that maybe JURK could take this into consideration.

These women complained about the time limit and amount of information. They are provided with too much information within a short period of time. They insisted that, it is better to provide less information which could be easy for them to understand rather than providing too many information which may not be understood.

Finally the intern believes that the issue of language is a big problem at Adult Education Center too. Since the use of interpreters seems to be expensive, the intern suggests that women who are better in Norwegian language may be used to explain this information to those who speaks the same native language in the class after lectures by JURK.

Since many women are poor in Norwegian language, concentration is very important; the intern suggests that cellphones should be set off or in a silent mode during the lecture. This is due to the fact that some women were receiving phone calls during the lecture which may disturb others.