

No. of Children identified and provided help under Project Shishu

Sl. No.	DLSA	No. of Children identified and provided help under Project Shishu during Pandemic Covid-19 (till June, 2022)	No. of Children as on 30.06.2026
1	Bokaro	85	81
2	Chaibasa	30	24
3	Chatra	50	43
4	Deoghar	78	61
5	Dhanbad	66	45
6	Dumka	20	14
7	Garhwa	27	12
8	Giridih	36	16
9	Godda	14	7
10	Gumla	46	34
11	Hazaribagh	54	37
12	Jamshedpur	180	159
13	Jamtara	32	25
14	Khunti	78	52
15	Koderma	64	40
16	Latehar	27	0
17	Lohardaga	40	35
18	Pakur	35	35
19	Palamau	76	45
20	Ramgarh	62	39
21	Ranchi	184	159
22	Sahibganj	41	31
23	Seraikella	61	43
24	Simdega	60	48
TOTAL		1446	1085

2531

JHARKHAND STATE LEGAL SERVICES AUTHORITY

Half Yearly Data of ASHA Unit (January-June 2026)

8.2.2 Legal Services :

Numbers of Victims identified or approached	Number of Victims who were assisted/helped by the ASHA unit	Kind of Assistance/help Provided
127	110	1. Providing a Legal Aid 2. Legal Counselling 3. Assistance in drafting 4. Legal intervention to marriage

8.2.3 Rehabilitation :

The number of victims who are provided counselling.	Number of victims who are provided vocational or skills training	Kind of Training/whether vocational/regular provided to the victims.	Number of victims who were provided safe space/rescue centres	Number of victims who were dropped from school/who were admitted later with the intervention of ASHA unit.
129	31	0	32	19

8.2.4 Awareness :

Number of awareness camps organized	The number of Awareness Camps organized in schools/educational institutions/religious institutions.	The number of programs conducted through Radio/Television and other digital means.	Number of Special drives conducted :
10624	1640	146	171

Draft Speech

on

State level Consultation on
Ten Years of the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015:
Progress, Challenges, reforms and Priorities for the Next Decade.

At

Judicial Academy, Jharkhand

on

30th August 2026
Strengthening Child Freindly Justice System-The Role of Legal Services Authrities

By

Ms. Ranjana Asthana

(Member Secretary, JHALSA)

Hon'ble The Chief Justice, High Court of Jharkhand

Hon'ble Mr Justice Sujit Narayan Prasad, Judge ^{H.C. of Jh.} & Chairperson, JJ-cum-POCSO
Committee High Court of Jharkhand & Executive Chairman JHALSA

~~Hon'ble Mrs. Justice Anubha Rewat Chaudhary, J.J. H.C. Jharkhand, & Member of JJ cum POCSO committee~~
~~Hon'ble Mr. Justice Sanyal, J.J. H.C. Jharkhand, & Member of JJ cum POCSO committee~~

Hon'ble Judges of the High Court of Jharkhand,

~~Director General of Police, Jharkhand,~~

Registrar General and Members of the Registry,

Secretary, Department of Women, Child Development & Social Security,

~~Divisional Commissioners,~~

Judicial Officers,

~~Officers of JHALSA-Govt.~~

Officers of the Police Department

Director, RINPAS

Dr Kaninika Mitra, Chief of Field Office for Unicef Jharkhand and team of Unicef

Officers of the District Administration,
Chairpersons and Members of Child Welfare Committees,
Representatives of Civil Society Organisations and NGOs,
Mental Health Professionals,
Distinguished Resource persons
and all other distinguished participants and guests present here.
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a matter of privilege to speak on access to justice for children, a subject at the very heart of our constitutional mandate. A child entering the justice system, whether in conflict with law or in need of care and protection, is not merely a litigant or beneficiary of legal aid, but a rights-bearing individual whose dignity, welfare and future must remain central to the justice process. Article 39A, read with the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, embodies the commitment to equal justice and free legal aid. In the case of children, however, this mandate must extend beyond representation in court to meaningful access to rights, protection, rehabilitation and social reintegration.

For a child, legal aid must go beyond court representation to ensure meaningful access to rights, remedies, compensation and rehabilitation. Over the last decade, JHALSA has extended court-based legal aid to 1,815 children, reflecting its commitment to helping children understand the proceedings and assert their rights. Our endeavour must be to ensure that such representation is meaningful, substantive and child-sensitive, so that every child is heard, understands the process and available remedies, and is treated with dignity.

The mandate of Legal Services Authorities extends beyond representation before courts and statutory forums. Under the guidance of the Hon'ble Executive Chairman, JHALSA, legal services have been broadened to connect children with the rights and entitlements guaranteed by law through initiatives such as NALSA's Child-Friendly Legal Services, Project Shishu and Project Bal-Suraksha. These initiatives mark a significant shift from litigation-centred legal aid to proactive, child-centred legal services—taking justice to the child, rather than waiting for the child to approach the justice system.

This is particularly significant because a child's needs often extend beyond what a court order alone can address. Through Project Shishu and Project Bal-Suraksha, JHALSA seeks to bridge this gap by taking legal services to the child, identifying their legal and entitlement-based needs, and facilitating access to compensation, rehabilitation, statutory entitlements and government schemes. The endeavour is to make legal services not merely court-centric, but accessible, proactive, child-centric and rights-oriented, particularly for vulnerable children who may otherwise remain outside the formal justice system.

The child-friendly approach under NALSA's legal services framework recognises that a child cannot be expected to engage with the justice system in the same manner as an adult. The manner of communication, the language used and the conduct of proceedings must be sensitive to the child's age, maturity and circumstances. The child must be made to understand why he or she is before the authority, the rights available and the assistance that can be sought. Thus, effective

legal aid is not merely the appointment of counsel; it is ensuring meaningful communication between the child and the justice system.

The same philosophy of dignity, care and rehabilitation is reflected in the initiatives undertaken under the guidance of the Hon'ble Executive Chairman, JHALSA, for children residing in juvenile homes. The endeavour is to create an environment resembling a hostel rather than a custodial institution, with a daily routine comprising Yoga, physical exercise, sports, studies and other constructive activities, so that children are prepared for dignified and meaningful reintegration into society.

These interventions are equally significant from the perspective of legal services, for access to justice cannot be viewed in isolation from the statutory objectives of rehabilitation and social reintegration. The true measure of justice is not merely the disposal of a case, but whether the process enables the child to regain confidence, dignity and the capacity to lead a constructive life. The ultimate endeavour must, therefore, be to ensure that every child emerges from the justice system better prepared for a dignified and meaningful reintegration into society.

The work under Project Shishu and Project Aasha reflects a sustained commitment to turning child protection into meaningful action. *with help of PLV's were protected more than 2000 children from child marriage.* Project Shishu has identified and assisted 1,446 children across Jharkhand, with 1,085 continuing to be reflected as on 30 June 2026. Project Aasha has complemented this through legal assistance, counselling, rehabilitation, skills training and educational support, reaching hundreds of vulnerable persons in the first half of 2026, alongside extensive

awareness initiatives. These are not merely numbers; they represent lives touched, protected and given a renewed opportunity for dignity and a secure future.

by the end of 2011, the state has more than 2000 children for child marriage in Asha project.

Another important dimension of legal services is victim compensation.

For a child victim, the conclusion of criminal proceedings does not undo the consequences of the offence. Over the last decade, 2,705 victims have been provided compensation through the legal services mechanism. This reflects the broader role of legal services in ensuring that victims can effectively access the remedies and entitlements available under law, and that eligible victims receive the support necessary for their recovery and rehabilitation.

Thus, compensation is not merely a financial remedy; it is an important component of access to justice, dignity and rehabilitation. Equally important is ensuring access to justice for children with disabilities, who may require additional assistance to access the rights and entitlements available to them. In this regard, JHALSA has, from time to time, organised special camps to facilitate the issuance of appropriate medical and disability certificates. Such interventions assume significance because the absence of the requisite certification may itself become a barrier to accessing various statutory benefits and government schemes.

This intervention seeks not merely to inform children of their rights, but to remove the practical barriers that prevent them from exercising those rights. In furtherance of this objective, JHALSA has undertaken intensive State-wide campaigns, under which 2,825 children benefited from various government schemes during the initial 45-day campaign, followed by 19,971 children during the

subsequent 15-day campaign. These initiatives exemplify the role of legal services as a facilitator of rights, ensuring that the inability of a child or family to navigate administrative processes does not become a ground for denial of lawful entitlements, and thereby bridging the gap between rights guaranteed in law and rights realised in practice.

The Legal Services Authority cannot function in isolation; effective child-friendly justice requires coordinated action among the JJBs, CWCs, Children's Courts, DLSAs, TLSCs and other statutory institutions. Such coordination, however, must remain within the respective statutory mandates of each institution. The role of the Legal Services Authority is to serve as a point of convergence, ensuring that the child receives timely legal assistance and is connected with the appropriate authority or mechanism for addressing the particular need, so that no child is left unattended in the gaps between institutions.

The experience of JHALSA demonstrates that child-centred legal services must move from representation to empowerment, from court-centric assistance to child-centric outreach, and from case disposal to outcome-oriented justice. Under the guidance of the Hon'ble Executive Chairman, JHALSA, this vision has found expression through court-based legal aid, victim compensation, NALSA's Child-Friendly Legal Services, Project Shishu, Project Bal-Suraksha, assistance to children with disabilities, facilitation of government entitlements and a more rehabilitative environment in juvenile homes. While the figures reflect the reach of these initiatives, the ultimate measure is whether a child is able to understand and

assert his or her rights, access meaningful assistance and entitlements, and emerge from the justice system with dignity, protection and a genuine opportunity for rehabilitation and reintegration. This, ultimately, is the constitutional promise of equal access to justice for every child.

Thank you.