Designing Effective Legal Empowerment Programs
A 2017 COURSE PARTICIPANT:

“This was a superb training and I’m deeply grateful for the opportunity to participate. The invigorating, compelling and inspiring content made this one of the best trainings I have ever attended. Being around a group of intellectually brilliant advocates was a true joy. This is the first time in many years that I feel proud to be a lawyer. I enjoyed all of the sessions and appreciate the diversity of presenters, topics and approaches.”
Around the world, more than four billion people are living outside the protection of the law. They are unfairly driven from their land, denied essential services, excluded from society, and intimidated by violence.

Legal empowerment seeks to turn this tide. It is about enabling people to understand, use, and shape the law. From at least the 1950s, when community paralegals in South Africa began helping people to navigate and resist apartheid, legal empowerment has grown into a global movement. Today, grassroots legal advocates in the Philippines are helping farmers to take part in nationwide agrarian reforms. In Argentina, shantytown residents are pursuing legal remedies to bring clean water and other essential services to their communities.

World leaders increasingly agree that access to justice and legal empowerment are crucial to ensuring equitable and inclusive development, a recognition that led to the integration of justice in the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Every year the legal empowerment field becomes more robust, with greater evidence of what works. The 2018 Legal Empowerment Leadership Course is a unique opportunity to take stock of our collective knowledge and build upon it to strengthen a global movement for justice.

The aim of the course is to cultivate a global cadre of leaders who are committed to legal empowerment, and who share a common understanding of the field, including history, methodology, and evidence. A faculty of respected practitioners and academics will lead course participants in an in-depth exploration of key themes, including the conceptual framework of legal empowerment, community organizing and social movements, and the role of grassroots legal advocates in realizing systemic change. The participatory course design will also emphasize peer-to-peer learning through small group work.

The 4th edition of the annual course will focus on “Designing Effective Legal Empowerment Programs.” The course is a collaboration between the CEU’s School of Public Policy (SPP), the Open Society Justice Initiative, Namati, and the Robert L. Bernstein Institute for Human Rights at New York University School of Law.
Course structure

A 2017 COURSE PARTICIPANT:

“The leadership course has provided me with additional tools to effectively implement and monitor the project that I’m working on. It has shown me that there is a large network of participants I can rely on. It has connected me with people that have already implemented similar projects.”
The theme for the 2018 course will be “Designing Effective Legal Empowerment Programs.” Participants identify a concrete challenge, growth opportunity or research question before the course, and then develop an action plan during the course with the help of co-participants and faculty. The course will be organized as follows:

1. PREPARATORY WORK

Participants will review selected readings in advance of the course. They will also prepare and submit one of the following:

a) a problem statement, describing a challenge area or inquiry facing them in their work, or

b) a proposal for research or action that they wish to workshop throughout the course and beyond.

2. IN-PERSON PARTICIPATION

The course will require in-person attendance at Central European University over five days, from December 2nd (afternoon) through the 7th (morning).

3. PARTICIPATORY CURRICULUM

The course will combine four types of sessions: case studies, cross-cutting sessions, skills-building modules and small working group discussions.

Case studies

The course will feature a comparative exploration of common themes across three case studies. Themes include legal empowerment methods; training, supervision of frontline staff; learning and evaluation; use of media and communications; financial sustainability; and pathways to scale. Case study topics include:

• The paralegal movement in the Philippines. How the movement of community-based paralegals have adapted and innovated over the decades, to bring about large-scale change in the Philippines.
• **Data collection and analysis for impact.** How women-led and indigenous peoples’ movement of grassroots advocates, lawyers, and activists have collected, visualized and analyzed data for advocacy.

• **Use of technology for legal empowerment programs.** How applied approaches to technology design that can be integrated in legal empowerment programs.

▶ **Cross-cutting sessions**

Cross-cutting sessions will address special challenges faced by the movement for legal empowerment.

• **Session I: Introduction to legal empowerment.** This introductory session will explore what we mean by legal empowerment. It will address basic concepts, history, and philosophy. The session will offer a vocabulary and a set of questions that we will return to throughout the course.
Session II: Legal empowerment, organizing and social movements. This session will explore how legal empowerment groups have combined strategic litigation and legal services with community organizing, and how paralegals and legal empowerment practitioners constitute an essential part of social movements.

Session III: Designing a strategic legal empowerment program. This session will look into the key steps and important aspects to consider in developing legal empowerment programs or in refining existing programs.

Session IV: Communications for impact. This session will tackle the use of effective communications for advocacy to present impact, and make a case for public and private investment.

Skills-building modules
Modules will be devoted to community mapping strategies, popular education, grant proposal writing, innovative financing and participatory technology design.
Small working group discussions

Each afternoon, participants will come together in small groups to apply the day’s lessons to their individual challenge or research question. Experts and instructors will be available during this time for consultation and support in developing their action plan.

4. POST-COURSE

After the course, each participant will either submit their final reflections on their problem statement, or a revised version of their proposal. In either case, candidates should detail a course of action for acting on, or exploring further, what has been learned over the last few days. Faculty and experts will provide follow-up support. All participants will also become members of the Global Legal Empowerment Network in advance of the course and we will remain in contact through our online community discussion forum. There, you can pose questions and support others with their action plans to ensure that our cohort of learners remain engaged in future efforts to strengthen their work.
A 2017 COURSE PARTICIPANT:

“Before participating at this course, I had fragmented pieces of knowledge related to legal empowerment. Today, I feel like this knowledge filled all the gaps of the puzzle and I understand much better how I should work from this day on. Being able to learn from my colleagues from different countries, to talk with them about their challenges and opportunities made me feel more empowered.”
A 2017 COURSE PARTICIPANT:

“Having completed the course, I understand my theory of change better, I am clearer about legal empowerment methods, tactics and use of data handling. Also, I really appreciated the faculty making themselves available in the evening after long tiring days.”
The course is intended for people whose work and interests are directly related to legal empowerment.

This includes:

• exceptional paralegals and leaders of civil society organizations who are running, or wish to run, legal empowerment programs;

• parliamentary leaders and government officials (ministries of justice or development, centralized planning units, NHRIs) with the power to support or regulate legal empowerment efforts;

• development agency representatives working on legal empowerment at an international or country level;

• academics and researchers interested in working with legal empowerment programs.
A 2017 COURSE PARTICIPANT:

“The working sessions were very educative and interactive. I loved the innovations of each day especially the regional grouping as it was important to create synergies on how best to carry forward legal empowerment in our respective regions.”
ARRIVAL AND DINNER RECEPTION: Sunday, 2 December 2018

The course will be held at the School of Public Policy, on the campus of the Central European University in Budapest, Hungary.

The full cost of participation in the course is EUR 2,000.– (incl. VAT). This does not include travel and accommodation (lunch and coffee breaks during the course will be provided).

A limited number of scholarships covering travel, accommodation and the full cost of tuition will be available on a competitive basis. Note that scholarships will not be available for applicants from donor institutions.

Interested individuals should complete the application form by 12 August 2018.

There, you will be asked to submit

• a short problem statement, describing a challenge area or inquiry facing you in your work, or
• a short proposal for research or action that you wish to workshop throughout the course; and
• your CV.

The course will finish on 7 December (noon).
A 2017 COURSE PARTICIPANT:

“This is a fantastic coming together of passionate and compassionate people. I hope it stays alive and continues to grow!”
Vivek MARU

Vivek founded Namati in 2011 to grow the movement for legal empowerment around the world. Namati and its partners have built cadres of community legal workers — sometimes known as “barefoot lawyers” — in ten countries. The advocates have worked with over 65,000 people to protect community lands, enforce environmental law, and secure basic rights to healthcare and citizenship. Namati convenes the Global Legal Empowerment Network, more than 1,000 groups from 150 countries who are learning from one another and collaborating on common challenges. This community successfully advocated for the inclusion of access to justice in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

From 2003 to 2007, Vivek co-founded and co-directed the Sierra Leonean organization Timap for Justice, which has been recognized by the International Crisis Group, Transparency International, and President Jimmy Carter as a pioneering model for delivering justice services in the context of a weak state and a plural legal system. From 2008 to 2011, he served as senior counsel in the Justice Reform Group of the World Bank. His work focused on rule of law reform and governance, primarily in West Africa and South Asia. In 1997–1998 he lived in a hut of dung and sticks in a village in Kutch, his native place, working on watershed management and girls’ education with two grassroots development organizations – Sahjeevan and Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan. Vivek graduated from Harvard College, magna cum laude, and Yale Law School. He writes regularly in academic journals and in the press. He also directs the Legal Empowerment Leadership Course at Central European University and New York University School of Law.

Vivek serves on the board of trustees of the global advocacy organization Avaaz, the international advisory council of the Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, the advisory board of the evaluation firm ID Insight, and the boards of the Constitutional Accountability Center and the International Senior Lawyers Project. He was an affiliate expert with the UN Commission on Legal Empowerment and is a term member of the Council on Foreign Relations. Vivek received the Pioneer Award from the North American South Asian Bar Association in 2008. He was named an Ashoka Fellow in 2014 and a “legal rebel” by the American Bar Association in 2015. He, Namati, and the Global Legal Empowerment Network received the Skoll Award for Social Entrepreneurship in 2016. In 2017, the Schwab Foundation named Vivek and Sonkita Conteh, director of Namati–Sierra Leone, two of its Social Entrepreneurs of the Year. Vivek studies capoeira angola with Dale Marcelin at Universal Capoeira Angola Center.
Marlon J. MANUEL

As Namati’s senior adviser to the Global Legal Empowerment Network, Marlon has more than two decades of experience in legal empowerment work, having devoted practically his entire career to social justice and human rights lawyering. He has combined grassroots education activities with active involvement in strategic litigation on human rights and public interest issues, policy reform work on social justice legislation, and justice system reform programs on improving access to justice. From 2008–2017, he was the Coordinator of the Alternative Law Groups (ALG), a coalition of twenty (20) legal resource NGOs in the Philippines with distinct programs that are primarily concerned with the pursuit of public interest, respect for human rights, and promotion of social justice. Marlon is deeply involved in justice and human rights education, not only as a law school professor, but also as a grassroots community educator, continuously practicing and advocating the principles of education for people empowerment as he work with farmers, workers, and other vulnerable groups. He is a professor at the Ateneo de Manila University School of Law, where he received his JD in 1994. He received his BSc degree in Management (Major in Legal Management) from the College of Arts and Sciences of the same university.

FACULTY

Matthew BURNETT

Matthew is a policy officer with the Open Society Justice Initiative, where he focuses on legal empowerment, technology and innovative financing. Previously, he was director of the Immigration Advocates Network, a groundbreaking collaboration among leading immigrant rights organizations in the United States. He played a key role in launching the organization and growing it into a recognized leader on innovative approaches to increasing access to justice for immigrants and building the capacity of immigrant-serving organizations. Prior to his work at the Immigration Advocates Network, Matthew represented asylum seekers in the United States and served as law clerk to Justice Z.M. Yacoob of the Constitutional Court of South Africa. He holds a JD with concentrations in poverty law and public international law, and a joint BA in philosophy and the comparative history of ideas.
Sukti DHITAL

Sukti is the Deputy Director of the Robert L. Bernstein Institute for Human Rights at New York University School of Law, an academic center committed to the advancement of legal empowerment through innovative research, education, and advocacy. She is a human rights lawyer with extensive international law experience in the fields of economic and social rights. Previously, she was the Executive Director and Co-Founder of Nazdeek, an award-winning legal empowerment organization committed to bringing access to justice closer to marginalized communities in India. At Nazdeek, Sukti worked closely with affected community members and social movements to advance labor, food, health and housing rights through a community-driven approach, with a focus on indigenous and Dalit women. Prior to Nazdeek, she was the Director of the Reproductive Rights Unit at the Human Rights Law Network, India where she assisted in securing landmark social and economic rights judgments including *Laxmi Mandal v. Deen Dayal Harinagar Hospital & ORS*, W.P.(C) 8853/2008, the first decision by a national court to recognize maternal mortality as a human rights violation. Sukti has also worked at the American Civil Liberties Union’s Reproductive Freedom Project and the firm of Bingham McCutchen LLP.

Alix DUNN

Alix is the Executive Director and a Co-Founder of The Engine Room, a not-for-profit organisation supporting strategic uptake of technology by change agents around the world. She is a leading advisor on how to fund, develop, and use technology effectively and responsibly. She sits on the board of Open Data Kosovo, the Advisory Council for Open Technology Fund, and the Advisory Board for Circle of 6. She was formerly on the Technology Advisory Council of Amnesty International and the board of HURIDOCS. She holds an M.A. in Media Studies from University of Oslo and a B.A. from Colorado College.
Kim MCQUAY

Kim is a lawyer and development professional with 28 years of experience in program design, implementation, and management in law and justice, governance, and other areas. As Managing Director of The Asia Foundation’s Program Specialists Group, he leads a team of 17 technical specialists in governance and law, conflict and fragility, women’s empowerment, economic development, environment, and technology for development who provide expert advice and technical assistance to Foundation country offices in program design and implementation, fundraising, and strategic partnership formation. He previously served as the Foundation’s country representative to Thailand (2010–16), managing programs that promoted peaceful conflict resolution, criminal justice reform, more responsive systems of governance, economic development, and Thailand’s emerging role as a non-traditional Asian donor. Prior to this, Kim served as the Foundation’s Bangkok-based director of law and justice programs (2009–10) and country representative to Bangladesh (2003–09). As special assistant to former Asia Foundation president William Fuller (1999–2001), he worked closely with senior officers and the board of trustees on a range of institutional policy issues, coordinated the Foundation’s regional human rights programs, and co-led a seven-country, ADB-funded study on Legal Empowerment for Governance Reform and Poverty Reduction. Kim holds a B.A. and LL.B. from Queen’s University and LL.M in Public International Law from the University of Cambridge.

Zaza NAMORADZE

As the director of the Open Society Justice Initiative’s Berlin office, Zaza oversees activities on legal aid and defendants’ rights and legal empowerment and capacity. He previously served as staff attorney and, later, deputy director of the Open Society Institute’s Constitutional and Legal Policy Institute, where he designed and oversaw projects in constitutional and judicial reforms and student law clinics and human rights litigation capacity building in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia. Zaza has worked for the Center for the Study of Constitutionalism in Eastern Europe, the Central Electoral Commission of Georgia, and was a member of the State Constitutional Commission of Georgia. He graduated from the Law Faculty of Tbilisi State University, studied in the Comparative Constitutionalism Program of the Central European University, and earned an LLM from the University of Chicago Law School.
Margaret L. SATTERTHWAITHE

Margaret is a Professor of Clinical Law, Faculty Director of the Robert L. Bernstein Institute for Human Rights, and Co-Chair of the Center for Human Rights and the Global Justice at New York University School of Law. Her clinical work focuses on advancing human rights by making rights advocacy accountable to affected communities, and her research interests include economic and social rights, human rights and counterterrorism, methodological innovation in human rights, and vicarious trauma among human rights workers. Before joining the academy, she worked for a number of human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, Human Rights First, and the Commission Nationale de Verité et de Justice in Haiti. She has authored or co-authored more than a dozen human rights reports and dozens of scholarly articles and book chapters. Margaret serves on the boards of Digital Democracy and the Global Initiative for Economic and Social Rights.