

THE GILFILLAN PARTNERSHIP
RESEARCH AND CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Law for Life

Legal Capability for Everyday Life

Evaluation report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project piloted a new approach to developing public legal education (PLE) practices with advice agencies. The project was led by Law for Life working in partnership with three advice agencies; Afghan Association Paiwand, Community Links and Disability Law Service (working with the Attend ABI project). Law for Life worked with these partners to design and deliver a PLE course for groups of 10 to 15 people over six two-hour sessions. The project took place from May to December 2012.

The achievements of the *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project were externally evaluated by The Gilfillan Partnership. The external evaluation used the evaluation framework for legal capability developed by Law for Life with University of Bristol and published in the Public Legal Education Evaluation Framework.¹ The *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project offered the opportunity to test the values of the PLE evaluation framework in guiding the design of resources to deliver PLE within the advice sector and for evaluating the effectiveness and impact of PLE initiatives.

Three PLE courses were delivered. Each partner agency recruited from among their service users to take part in the course. For the course run with Paiwand the participants were refugees from Afghanistan living in north London; for the Community Links course participants were local people who are active in community hubs established within the London borough of Newham; and for the Disability Law Service/Attend ABI course the participants were adults with acquired brain injuries. Around 45 people participated in the three courses with around 30 people taking part in all six sessions.

To evaluate the key project objective of improving individual legal capability, course participants were asked to complete questionnaires before the course started and after the course ended. The partner agencies also asked service users who were not participating in the course to complete the same before and after questionnaires. This evaluation approach allows any difference between the before and after position of participants and the before and after position of non-participants to be attributed to participation in the course.

The evaluation results show a strong improvement in the legal capability of individuals participating in the PLE course. Those who took part in the PLE course were better able to recognise the legal dimension of day to day issues and more confident that they could tackle these issues or seek appropriate help when necessary, when compared with service users of the same advice agencies who did not take part in the PLE courses.

The advice agencies that took part in the project consider that PLE is becoming increasingly essential to help ordinary people to cope as funding cuts reduce the availability of legal and general advice services. The PLE course developed and piloted through the *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project represents an

¹ Collard, Sharon, Chris Deeming, Lisa Wintersteiger, Martin Jones, John Seargeant (2011) *Public Legal Education Evaluation Framework*. Law for Life.

accessible and relatively low-cost measure which advice agencies can use to help their users to become better able to manage their everyday lives without recourse to increasingly limited advice service provision.

The project demonstrated that the PLE evaluation framework provides a valuable framework for planning and delivering PLE and for evaluating the achievements and impacts of PLE initiatives.

The resources produced by the project could now be used by other advice agencies wishing to develop and deliver PLE within their communities. However, the evaluation found that it is unlikely that many agencies will initiate and deliver good quality PLE without central support from Law for Life. There is a strong need for continuing support from Law for Life in order to promote the value of PLE, develop resources for PLE, promote high quality in PLE, share good practice between PLE providers, and to evidence the impacts of PLE through co-ordination of robust and systematic evaluation of PLE provision.

The pilot work that Law for Life has undertaken through the *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project should be extended to cover a wider range of advice agencies, particularly agencies working with communities that were not covered in the initial pilot project, such as young people and older people.

The paper-based before and after questionnaires that were used for evaluation within the *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project are an affordable and useful way to evaluate the impact of PLE on individual legal capability. The project evaluation has produced a pool of tried and tested evaluation indicators that can be used by other agencies when evaluating PLE initiatives. However, further work is needed to find ways of helping agencies delivering PLE initiatives to manage the implementation of robust evaluation methodologies. It may be more effective to move to an on-line evaluation process that is centrally managed by Law for Life. This would remove some of the administrative burden from delivery agencies, should result in better quality evaluation data, and would enable centrally co-ordinated data analysis from PLE evaluations to build a robust evidence base demonstrating the benefits and impacts of PLE.

Although this is a key objective for Law for Life, it has not been possible for the *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* evaluation to assess the impact of PLE participation on wider socio-economic outcomes such as improved access to justice, improved health and well-being, or improved productivity. The evaluation indicators developed through this project provide useful information for starting to measure socio-economic benefits, but it is necessary to identify what happens to PLE participants in the longer term to make the links between PLE and wider socio-economic outcomes. Law for Life should explore the possibility of securing funding for a longitudinal research project to measure the longer term outcomes for individuals who have participated in PLE and to identify any causal relationship between PLE and wider socio-economic benefits.

ONE: INTRODUCTION

This report presents findings, conclusions and recommendations from an external evaluation of the *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project. The project was developed and delivered by Law for Life, a charity dedicated to ensuring that people have the knowledge, confidence and skills to deal with law-related issues. The external evaluation of the *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project was carried out by The Gilfillan Partnership.

1.1 About the Legal Capability for Everyday Life project

In April 2012, Law for Life secured funding from the Baring Foundation to pilot a new approach to developing public legal education (PLE) practices with advice agencies. PLE refers to education, training or other interventions which aim '*to transform people's abilities to deal with law-related events in their lives, to bring about beneficial changes at least partly through their own efforts*'.²

The *Legal Capability for Everyday* pilot project took place from May to December 2012. Law for Life invited advice agencies to become partners in the project and held a workshop for prospective participants to outline the aims of the project and introduce the concept of legal capability. Three advice agencies were selected to take part:

- Afghan Association Paiwand (Paiwand), a community organisation supporting refugees from Afghanistan living in Brent, Barnet and neighbouring north London boroughs;
- Community Links, a charity based in Newham, east London, delivering a range of community services including a network of Community Hubs for local people;
- Disability Law Service (DLS), a national charity providing information and advice to disabled people, working in partnership with the Attend ABI project (Attend) which supports adults who have an acquired brain injury.

Law for Life worked with the three partner organisations to design and deliver a PLE course, including through a one day seminar with all partners to develop content in accordance with the needs of learners and appropriate methodologies for teaching within the community setting.

The PLE course delivery took place from early October to early December. Each partner organisation recruited between 10 and 15 of their service users to participate in the course. The PLE course was intended to be delivered over six weeks, with one two-hour session each week and with the same group of 10 to 15 participants taking part in all six sessions. The courses delivered with Community Links and Attend/DLS

² Collard, Sharon, Chris Deeming, Lisa Wintersteiger, Martin Jones, John Seargeant (2011) *Public Legal Education Evaluation Framework*. Law for Life.

took place over six weeks, as originally envisaged. Paiwand considered that a shorter delivery period would better suit their users and so the programme there took place over three weeks. Details of the three PLE courses are shown in Table I and an outline of what was included in each of the six course sessions is in Annex One.

Table I: The three public legal education courses

	Start date	End date	Number of education sessions	Length of each session	Time
Paiwand	3 October	17 October	3	4½ hours	day
Attend/DLS	11 October	15 November	6	2 hours	evening
Community Links	22 October	3 December	6	2½ hours	afternoon

1.2 Project aims and intended outcomes

The following aims were established by Law for Life for the *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project:

- To improve the levels of legal capability of the participants;
- To test the conceptual model of legal capability;
- To implement and test the PLE evaluation framework in the context of advice agencies;
- To improve advice agencies ability to undertake PLE within their local communities;
- To begin to assess the potential wider socio-economic impact, the social benefit, of PLE projects.

The *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project was intended to achieve the following outcomes:

- Learners will be enabled to cope with the law in their everyday lives by improving their ability to deal with common law-related issues and situations;
- Partners will have a better understanding of the domains and elements of legal capability and how they apply to different groups of learners;
- A PLE evaluation framework will be tailored to adapt to advice agency delivery of PLE and to more rigorous data collection on the socio-economic impact of legal capability;

- Advice agencies will better understand the skills and methodologies that are suited to delivering PLE in their communities.

1.3 The public legal education evaluation framework

In November 2011, Law for Life, in partnership with the University of Bristol, published the Public Legal Education Evaluation Framework.³ This sets out a framework for defining legal capability and for evaluating the impacts of PLE interventions in developing legal capability.

The PLE evaluation framework conceptualises legal capability across four domains:

- Recognising and framing the legal dimensions of issues and situations;
- Finding out more about the legal dimensions of issues and situations;
- Dealing with law-related issues;
- Engaging and influencing.

Within these four domains, the PLE evaluation framework sets out 21 measures for evaluating what has been achieved by a PLE intervention. The domains and evaluation measures are shown in Table II.

The *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project offered the opportunity to test the PLE evaluation framework in two important ways; (1) as a framework for the design of resources to deliver PLE within the advice sector, and (2) as a framework for evaluating the effectiveness and impact of PLE initiatives.

In this report a distinction is made between the PLE evaluation framework document, the PLE evaluation framework, and the legal capability matrix. 'PLE evaluation framework document' refers to the full document published by Law for Life and University of Bristol. 'PLE evaluation framework' refers to the evaluation measures, questions and techniques that are identified for each legal capability domain. These are presented in a series of tables in Section 4 of the PLE evaluation framework document. 'Legal capability matrix' refers to the summary of the legal capability dimensions set out in the PLE evaluation framework document. The legal capability matrix is reproduced in Annex Two of this report.

1.4 About the project evaluation

The Gilfillan Partnership was commissioned to carry out an external evaluation of the *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project. The external evaluation was required to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project, and to test the practicalities of using the PLE evaluation framework to evaluate a PLE initiative.

³ *ibid*

To evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project, the evaluation assesses whether the project achieved its aims and intended outcomes. To test the PLE evaluation framework, the evaluation was carried out using (or adapting) indicators, methods and guidance detailed in the PLE evaluation framework document.

The project evaluation used the following methods:

- Use of 'before' and 'after' questionnaires with all participants. Each participant was asked to complete a questionnaire at the beginning of the first session. This questionnaire was intended to establish a baseline for participants of their level of legal capability before taking part in the PLE course. Participants were then asked to complete a similar questionnaire at the end of the last session, designed to measure any increases in legal capability over the course of the programme. The before and after questionnaires used 13 indicators of legal capability which were derived from the PLE evaluation framework. The indicators are shown in Table II, which also shows how they fit within the PLE evaluation framework.
- Use of control groups. Each partner organisation agreed to identify a control group of about 10 service users who were similar to the project participants but who were not taking part in the project. The control groups were to complete the same before and after questionnaires at around the same time as the project participants. The intention was to provide a control for any changes to legal capability that may have occurred over the project period, in order to ensure that any changes for the participant group could be attributed to their participation in the project.
- Observation of training session. The evaluators participated in one session of each programme; the first session of the course which took place at Attend/DLS, and the final sessions of the courses with Paiwand and Community Links. As well as observing the sessions, we talked informally with participants, staff, volunteers and trainers.
- Interviews with partner organisations. These interviews took place after the PLE courses had ended and invited partners to reflect on the experience of participating in this pilot initiative and what they had learned from their involvement.
- Review session with the Law for Life project team. This session took place mid-way through the programme delivery period. It focused on the project experience to date and lessons emerging from this.

Table II: PLE evaluation framework and indicators used in the *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* evaluation

PLE evaluation framework: evaluation measures	Indicators used in the <i>Legal Capability for Everyday Life</i> evaluation
Domain 1: Recognising and framing the legal dimension of issues and situations	
1. Through PLE, participants learn more about the concepts of rights and obligations as a means of recognising and framing law-related issues.	1. How confident are you that you understand your legal rights and obligations? 2. Have you ever had to deal with a law-related issue?
2. Participants are able to apply learning about the concepts of rights and obligations to law-related issues in their lives.	
3. Through PLE, participants learn to identify that civil law might be relevant to deal with issues in their lives.	3. Do you understand the difference between civil and criminal law?
4. Through PLE, participants feel more confident about explaining an everyday issue and asking/answering questions about it.	
Domain 2: Finding out more about the legal dimension of issues and situations	
5. Through PLE, participants learn what rights and obligations apply to a particular issue.	
6. Through PLE, participants learn how to find out what steps are involved in dealing with a law-related issue.	
7. Through PLE, participants learn how to find out more about a law-related issue.	4. What sources of information would you use to find out more about a law-related issue?
8. Through PLE, participants learn how to critically assess different sources of information.	5. When you are deciding what sources of information or advice to use about law-related issues, how important are each of the following to you? [cost, access, impartiality, recommendation]
9. Through PLE, participants learn how to assess when they can deal with a law-related issue themselves and when they need expert advice.	6. How confident are you that you know when you need to get expert legal help to deal with a situation?
10. Through PLE, participants learn about different sources of advice and how to choose one that meets their needs.	7. Do you agree with this statement: "If I had a law-related issue that I needed help to deal with, I would know where to get advice."?
11. Through PLE, participants are better able to identify the obstacles, risks and consequences of law-related issues.	
Domain 3: Dealing with law-related issues	
12. Participants are able to apply information or advice to law-related issues.	8. How well have you dealt with the law-related issues that you have experiences in the past?

PLE evaluation framework: evaluation measures	Indicators used in the <i>Legal Capability for Everyday Life</i> evaluation
	9. If the same law-related issues happened in the future, how well would you be able to deal with them? 10. How confident are you that you can get the best result out of a legal situation?
13. Through PLE, participants learn about different courses of action for dealing with law-related issues.	
14. Through PLE, participants learn how to critically assess different courses of action for dealing with law-related issues.	
15. Through PLE, participants feel able to plan and follow-through a course of action to deal with a law-related issue	11. Do you agree with this statement: "I am good at taking action and seeing things through to the end."?
16. Through PLE, participants learn to organise and keep track.	12. Do you agree with this statement: "I am well-organised and can easily find relevant paperwork and correspondence when I need it."?
17. Through PLE, participants learn how to communicate appropriately and effectively as a way of dealing with law-related issues.	
18. Through PLE, participants learn how to manage their feelings appropriately and effectively.	
Domain 4: Engaging and influencing	
19. Through PLE, participants become aware of issues that might impact positively or negatively on their lives and the lives of others.	
20. Through PLE, participants learn to engage with and influence the world in which they live.	
21. Through PLE, participants learn how to seek changes in the laws and procedures that affect their lives and the lives of others.	13. How much do you know about ways of seeking to make changes in laws and legal procedures?

1.5 Project participants

The project participants were recruited through the partner agencies from among their service users. Around 45 people participated in the PLE courses, although the number who completed all sessions is probably closer to 30. Not all participants who attended the first sessions completed the course and other participants joined the course in the second or third sessions.

In total, 43 participants completed evaluation forms; 12 participants from Paiwand, 10 from Community Links and 21 from Attend/DLS. Thirty two people completed the before questionnaire and 32 people completed the after questionnaire. However, there are only 21 matched pairs; that is, instances where the same individual can be identified as completing the before and after questionnaires.

Table III: Before and after questionnaires completed by project participants

	Number completing before questionnaire	Number completing after questionnaire	Total number of participants who completed either before or after questionnaires
Paiwand	12	10	12
Attend/DLS	12	15	21
Community Links	8	7	10
Total	32	32	43

Some information about the characteristics of the people who took part in the project is available for the 32 participants who completed the baseline questionnaires. Of these 32 participants, slightly more than half (55%) were female. Forty four per cent were White British and 56 per cent from Black, Asian or other ethnic minority groups. Almost half of all participants (44%) had a disability. The great majority (88%) were aged 25 to 59, with only one younger and three older participants.

1.6 Report structure

The evaluation findings are presented in Section Two, conclusions are in Section Three and recommendations in Section Four of this report. The findings and conclusions are presented under the following headings:

Improving individual legal capability (sections 2.1 and 3.1) considers the project aim of improving the levels of legal capability of participants and the associated outcome that learners will be enabled to cope with the law in their everyday lives by improving their ability to deal with common law-related issues and situations.

Testing the conceptual model of legal capability (sections 2.2 and 3.2) considers the project aim of testing the conceptual model of legal capability and the associated outcome that partners will have a better understanding of the domains and elements of legal capability and how they apply to different groups of learners.

Developing delivery of public legal education within the advice sector (sections 2.3 and 3.3) considers the project aims of implementing and testing the PLE evaluation framework in the context of advice agencies, and improving advice agencies abilities to undertake PLE within their local communities, and the associated outcomes that the PLE framework will be tailored to advice agencies and that advice agencies will better understand the skills and methodologies that are suited to delivering PLE in their communities.

Measuring the impact of public legal education (sections 2.4 and 3.4) considers the project aim of beginning to assess the potential wider socio-economic benefits of PLE projects and the associated outcome of developing more rigorous data collection to evaluate the socio-economic impact of legal capability.

TWO: EVALUATION FINDINGS

2.1 Improving individual legal capability

The project aimed to improve the levels of legal capability of the participants. The intended outcome was that learners would be enabled to cope with the law in their everyday lives by improving their ability to deal with common law-related issues and situations.

This section reports the findings from the before and after questionnaires for each of the 13 evaluation indicators established for the four legal capability matrix domains. The data for all indicators are presented in Annex Three.

Domain 1: Recognising and framing the legal dimension of issues and situations

Indicator 1: How confident are you that you understand your legal rights and obligations?

Participants were asked to rate their confidence in understanding their legal rights and obligations on a scale from *Not at all confident* to *Very confident*. A response of *Not at all confident* has been given a score of 1 and *Very confident* has been given a score of 5. Higher scores therefore represent increased levels of confidence, with 5 being the maximum confidence score.

The average confidence rating on this indicator increased from 2.7 before the course took place to 4.4 once the course was completed. This is a 63 per cent increase in the average confidence rating, demonstrating a great improvement in participants' confidence in understanding their legal rights and obligations.

Indicator 2: Have you ever had to deal with a law-related issue?

The question of whether participants had ever had to deal with a law-related issue is an indicator of understanding or recognition that many everyday situations can be law-related. Understanding of this increased significantly for the course participants. Before the course took place, just over half of participants (56%) agreed that they had previously dealt with a law-related issue. After taking part in the course, almost three quarters (73%) agreed that they had previously dealt with a law-related issue.

Of all respondents, the participants from Attend/DLS were most likely to say that they had previously dealt with a law-related issue, both before and after the course took place.

Indicator 3: Do you understand the difference between civil and criminal law?

The results show a great increase in understanding of the difference between civil and criminal law, from just over half of participants (56%) responding positively before the course began, to almost all (96%) responding positively after taking part in the course.

Domain 2: Finding out more about the legal dimension of issues and situations

Indicator 4: What sources of information would you use to find out more about a law-related issue?

Before taking part in the course participants were, on average, able to list fewer than two sources of information. This increased by the end of the course to an average of 2.3. The most frequently mentioned source of information, both before and after the course took place, was an advice centre, which is unsurprising given that all participants were recruited on to the course by local advice centres. The responses to this question after the course had taken place show a much greater range than those given before, and include several that did not appear at all in the before questionnaires, such as the local authority ombudsman and the Advice Now website.

Indicator 5: When you are deciding what sources of information or advice to use about law-related issues, how important are each of the following to you? [cost, access, impartiality, recommendation]

There were no changes on this indicator between the before and after stages. At both stages, the great majority of participants (88% to 94%) rated each element (cost, access, impartiality, recommendation) as either *Important* or *Very important*.

Indicator 6: How confident are you that you know when you need to get expert legal help to deal with a situation?

Participants were asked to rate their confidence in understanding their legal rights and obligations on a scale from *Not at all confident* to *Very confident*. A response of *Not at all confident* has been given a score of 1 and *Very confident* has been given a score of 5. Higher scores represent increased levels of confidence, with 5 being the maximum confidence score.

The average confidence rating for this indicator increased from 3.0 before the course to 4.5 at the end of the course. This is an increase of 50 per cent in the average confidence rating, indicating that participants became far more confident that they would know when to get expert legal help.

Indicator 7: Do you agree with this statement: "If I had a law-related issue that I needed help to deal with, I would know where to get advice."?

Participants were asked to rate how strongly they agreed with this statement on a scale from *Strongly disagree* to *Strongly agree*. A response of *Strongly disagree* has been given a score of 1 and *Strongly agree* has been given a score of 5. Higher scores represent greater agreement with the statement, with 5 being the maximum agreement score.

The average agreement rating for this indicator increased from 3.6 before the course took place to 4.4 after the course was completed, indicating that by the end of the course participants more strongly agreed that they would know where to get advice on law-related issues

Domain 3: Dealing with law-related issues

Indicator 8: How would you rate your ability to deal with the law-related issues that you have experienced in the past?

For this question, participants were asked to score themselves on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means *Terrible* and 10 means *Excellent*.

There was virtually no change in the score that participants gave themselves before and after the course regarding how well they had dealt with law-related issues in the past. The average before rating was 6.2 and the average after rating was 6.1. This suggests that nothing that they learned during the course prompted participants to re-evaluate the way that they had previously dealt with law-related issues. As this was not an objective of the course, the result is unsurprising.

However, it is surprising that the score for this indicator is so high. It would be expected that people who are taking part in a PLE course would give themselves fairly low scores for their previous dealings on legal issues. The scores for this indicator are skewed by the unusually high ratings from the Paiwand participants; three of the five Paiwand respondents to this question gave a rating of 10. None of the nine respondents from Attend/DLS or the three respondents from Community Links gave a rating higher than 9. This raises questions about the reliability of the responses on this indicator, which are discussed in Section 2.4 of this report.

Indicator 9: How would you rate your ability to deal with the same issues if they happened again in the future?

For this question, participants were asked to score themselves on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 means *Terrible* and 10 means *Excellent*.

The question of how they would deal with the same issues in the future shows a significantly increased score after the course took place. The average before rating for this indicator was 6.9. This increased to 8.8 by the end of the course; an increase of 28 per cent in the average rating. This significant increase indicates that participating in the course increased people's confidence in their ability to deal with legal situations in the future.

Several examples of this emerged while the courses were taking place. Some participants in the later sessions reported that since being on the course they had started to tackle legal situations on their own. They reported taking on law-related issues ranging from returning faulty goods to retailers to dealing with employment problems. They felt that these were situations where they would not previously have known what to do and would have sought advice from an agency or, more likely, not taken any action at all. This comment from an after questionnaire is typical of many that were made:

'[Being on the course] has equipped me with lots of knowledge that has made me feel more confident about tackling issues in the future.' [Community Links participant]

Indicator 10: How confident are you that you can get the best result out of a legal situation?

Participants were asked to rate their confidence in understanding their legal rights and obligations on a scale from *Not at all confident* to *Very confident*. A response of *Not at all confident* has been given a score of 1 and *Very confident* has been given a score of 5. Higher scores represent increased levels of confidence, with 5 being the maximum confidence score.

The average rating for this indicator before the course took place was 2.9. The average rating at the end of the course was 4.4. This represents an increase of 52 per cent in the average confidence rating for participants over the programme period, demonstrating that the course increased participants' confidence to feel that they could now get the best result out of a legal situation.

Indicator 11: Do you agree with this statement: "I am good at taking action and seeing things through to the end"?

Participants were asked to rate how strongly they agreed with this statement on a scale from *Strongly disagree* to *Strongly agree*. A response of *Strongly disagree* has been given a score of 1 and *Strongly agree* has been given a score of 5. Higher scores represent greater agreement with the statement, with 5 being the maximum agreement score.

The average rating for this indicator before the course took place was 3.7. This increased to 4.4 by the end of the course. Even before the course began, the most frequent response to this question was *Strongly agree*; 32 per cent of respondents strongly agreed that they are good at taking action and seeing things through to the end. By the end of the course, over half of the participants (53%) strongly agreed with this statement. After completing the course, 91 per cent of participants either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, compared with 58 per cent before taking part in the course.

Indicator 12: Do you agree with this statement: "I am well-organised and can easily find relevant paperwork and correspondence when I need it."?

Participants were asked to rate how strongly they agreed with this statement on a scale from *Strongly disagree* to *Strongly agree*. A response of *Strongly disagree* has been given a score of 1 and *Strongly agree* has been given a score of 5. Higher scores represent greater agreement with the statement, with 5 being the maximum agreement score.

The average rating for this indicator before the course took place was 3.6. This increased to 4.0 by the end of the course. The most frequent response before the course took place was *Agree*; 32 per cent of participants agreed that they were well organised and could easily find relevant paperwork and correspondence. By the end of the course, the most frequent response was *Strongly agree*, with 41 per cent of

participants strongly agreeing with this statement. After completing this course, 75 per cent of participants either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement, compared with 58 per cent before taking part in the course.

Domain 4: Engaging and influencing

Indicator 13: How much do you know about ways of trying to make changes to laws and legal procedures?

Participants were asked to rate their knowledge on a scale from *Nothing at all* to *A great deal*. A response of *Nothing at all* has been given a score of 1 and *A great deal* has been given a score of 5. Higher scores represent increased levels of knowledge about ways of trying to make changes to laws and legal procedures, with 5 as the maximum score.

The average rating for this indicator before the course took place was 1.9. This increased to 3.3 at the end of the course. This represents an increase of 74 per cent in the average rating for this indicator.

The most frequent response from participants before the course took place was *Not very much*, with around half the participants (52%) giving this response. By the end of the course, the most frequent response was *Some*, with 38 per cent of participants giving this response.

Before the course took place, only 13 per cent of participants gave a positive response to this question (by answering either *A great deal*, *Quite a lot*, or *Some*). After taking part in the course, 78 per cent of participants gave a positive response to this question.

Comments from participants

The participants' written comments about the course were all very positive. Participants commented that since being on the course they knew more about legal issues and felt more confident to use this knowledge in everyday situations. The following comments are typical:

'[I learned about] my consumer rights, where to go for advice, what to provide in the way of evidence to pursue a claim and to be resilient (or should that be persistent?)!'
[Attend participant]

'The most useful thing that I learned from the course was about housing, mean landlords, tenancy agreements and about benefits. This course was excellent and very useful for all of us and the course delivery was very good. I really enjoyed the course and learned very much.' [Paiwand participant]

'The most useful thing I've learned is about the law. I still don't know what will happen in the future but I learned something from this course. It was very helpful for me.' [Paiwand participant]

'The course has helped me to know my rights and to find out my options concerning anything.' [Community Links participant]

Participants were also asked if there was anything about the course that they felt could have been improved. Eight participants made suggestions; four said that they would have liked the course to include more sessions, and a further three would have liked specific areas of law to have been covered in more depth (benefits and housing). One suggested improvement related to the noisiness of the training venue.

Comparing the legal capability of project participants and non-participants

Partner organisations were asked to identify a control group for this evaluation. The control group should resemble the participant group (i.e. service users of the partner agency) but would not be taking part in the PLE course. In total, we received 22 completed questionnaires from non-participants (12 from Attend and 10 from Community Links); six were completed before the courses started and 16 completed after the courses had ended. Because only six matched before and after questionnaires were completed (by the Attend control group) it is not possible to make and comparisons in the before and after legal capability of the non-participants.

To compare legal capability of project participants and non-participants, the 16 control group questionnaires completed after the courses ended are used. This small sample enables us to make some comparisons between the legal capability of people with a shared characteristic (i.e. service users of the advice agencies participating in this project) where some have participated in PLE and others have not.

For 12 of the 13 legal capability indicators, the average responses from the non-participants are similar to the average before responses of the participants. The exception is for indicator 8 which asks how well the respondent has dealt with law-related issues that they have experienced in the past. On this indicator, the average rating from the non-participants is significantly lower than the average before rating of the participants. This difference is explained by the bias towards higher ratings for the participant group from the Paiwand participants, as discussed above.

In general, then, the average responses from the non-participants are very similar to the average before responses from the participants. That is, all those who completed a questionnaire at a time when they had not taken part in PLE showed the same levels of legal capability on virtually all indicators.

Comparing the non-participants responses to the after responses of participants shows that the legal capability of participants was significantly higher. The comparisons for key indicators are shown in the charts below. These illustrate that people who took part in the PLE courses are more confident that they understand their legal rights and obligations, that they know when to get expert legal help, and that they can get the best results out of a legal situation.

Importantly, people who participated in the PLE courses are far more likely to recognise that they have already dealt with a law-related issue, demonstrating that they have become better able to recognise the legal dimensions of everyday issues.

Chart III illustrates that while there is a small difference between participants and non-participants in how well they have dealt with law-related issues in the past (a difference that is due to the higher ratings on this indicator from the Paiwand participants), there is a substantial difference between participants and non-participants in how they feel they would deal with law-related issues in the future. The PLE participants consider themselves far better able than non-participants to deal with law-related issues in the future.

Chart I: Responses for participants and non-participants for key indicators (average response ratings where highest rating = 5)

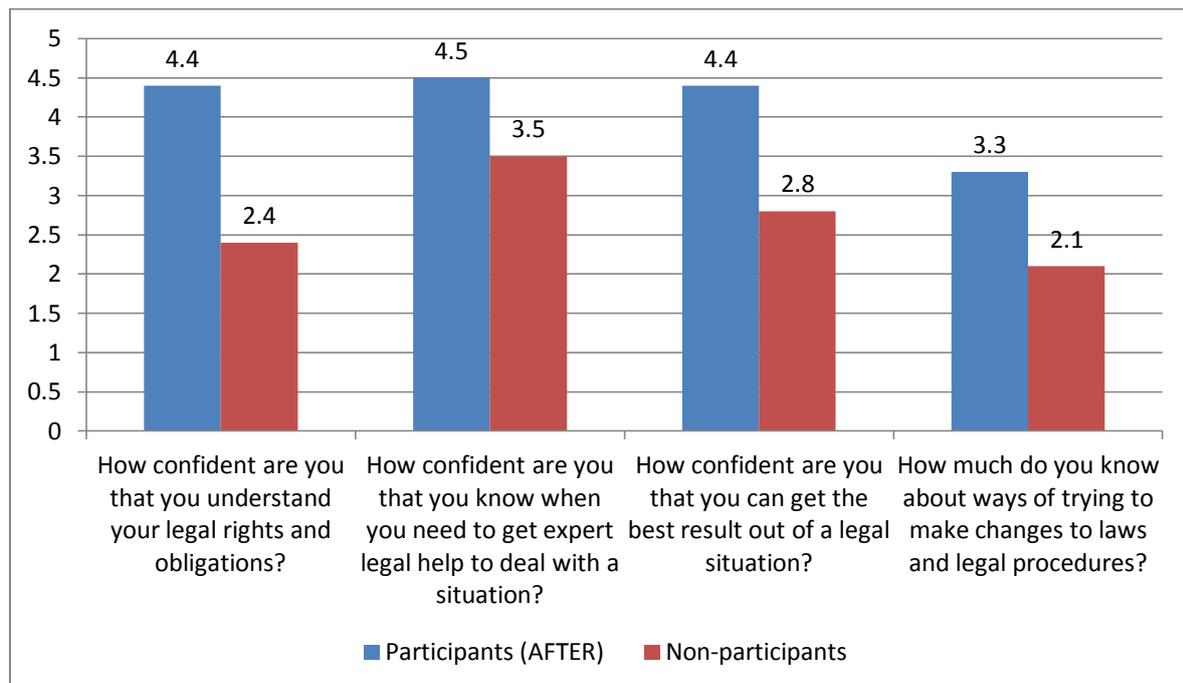


Chart II: Responses for participants and non-participants for key indicators (% answering YES)

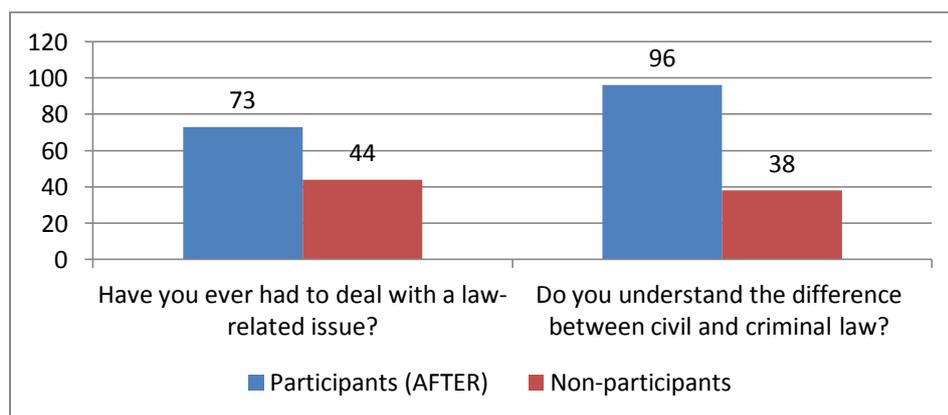
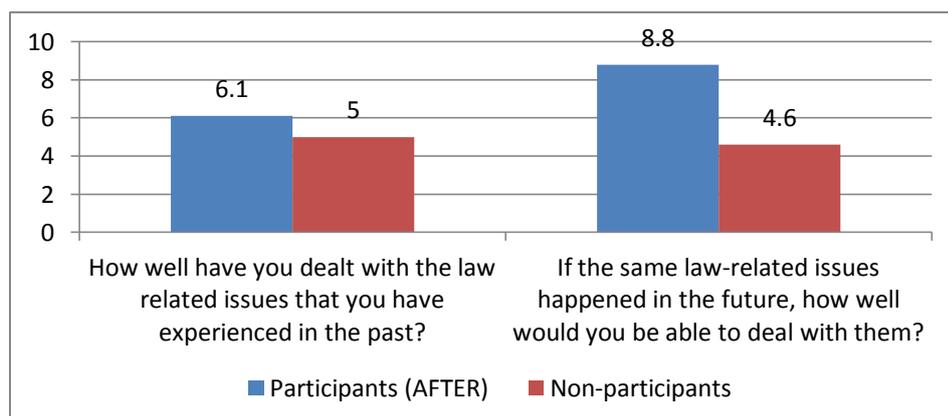


Chart III: Responses for participants and non-participants for key indicators (average response ratings where highest rating = 10)



2.2 Testing the conceptual model of legal capability

The project aimed to test the conceptual model of legal capability set out in the legal capability matrix. The intended outcome was that partners would have a better understanding of the domains and elements of legal capability and how they apply to different groups of learners.

Law for Life selected and worked with three advice agencies which provide information and advice to three different groups of people. This approach enabled the project to test the legal capability model set out in the legal capability matrix and to see how it would work with different groups of learners.

The project team developed the basic structure for a course to be delivered in six two-hour sessions. The broad course content and some materials were produced before the training course delivery began. But much of the detail and the resources for each session were developed week by week, to be responsive to the interests and level of knowledge for each group of learners.

The project team felt that it was not possible to condense the entire legal capability matrix into a 12 hour programme but aimed to ensure that all four domains were addressed, to a greater or lesser degree. The team consider that this was achieved and that the programme they developed matched the legal capability matrix well.

From discussions with the project partners, it is not clear that all of them are familiar with the PLE evaluation framework document, the PLE evaluation framework, or the legal capability matrix, or have had time to consider the value of these in relation to the legal capability of their service users. Only one interviewee from the three partner agencies seemed familiar with the framework and was able to discuss which of the domains were most relevant to their service users.

It is clear from discussions with all three project partners that the domains that they regard as most relevant to their learner groups, whether expressed with reference to

the legal capability matrix or not, are Domain 1 (recognising and framing the legal dimension of issues and situations) and Domain 3 (dealing with law-related issues).

2.3 Developing delivery of public legal education within the advice sector

The project aimed to implement and test the PLE evaluation framework in the context of advice agencies, and to improve advice agencies ability to undertake PLE within their local communities. The intended outcomes were that PLE evaluation framework would be tailored to adapt to advice agency delivery of PLE, and that advice agencies would better understand the skills and methodologies that are suited to delivering PLE in their communities.

The project partners had many different reasons for wanting to take part in this project, but a common motivation was the need to respond to cuts in advice services by enabling users to deal with some relatively uncomplicated issues by themselves, without drawing on the increasingly stretched resources of advice agencies. As an example of the need for this, one participant of the course at Paiwand had, prior to the course, come to Paiwand for advice every day. Since taking the course he had sought advice from Paiwand only twice in two months. Paiwand believe that PLE can help many of their service users to become more independent and less reliant on Paiwand's services. This will help to free up Paiwand staff time to deal with more complex advice cases. And if Paiwand were no longer able to provide advice services, it would lessen the risk that their service users would be unable to cope without their support.

Taking part in the project confirmed to all three partners that PLE is a much needed and valuable approach for their service users. All three partners would like to do more PLE with their clients. DLS has very clear plans for further PLE provision and is actively seeking funding to implement these. DLS had already had some experience of PLE through a previous project in which Law for Life was involved. This previous experience may explain why DLS' plans for further PLE are more clearly articulated than those of other project partners, and perhaps more likely to go ahead independently of any future programme that Law for Life may co-ordinate.

2.4 Measuring the impact of public legal education

The project aimed to begin to assess the potential wider socio-economic impact, the social benefit, of PLE projects. The intended outcome was that the pilot project would lead to more rigorous data collection to evaluate the socio-economic impact of legal capability.

The external evaluation aimed to contribute to this aim and outcome by developing and delivering evaluation methods within the PLE evaluation framework. This section of the report describes the process of conducting the evaluation within this framework and the lessons learned from this.

Evaluation methods

The evaluation used a paper-based questionnaire to collect information about the benefits to individuals of participating in the PLE training courses. This method was adopted because it is the cheapest way to collect information and so potentially has the greatest transferability to other PLE courses, where evaluation budgets are always likely to be very limited.

The indicators used in the questionnaire were derived from the PLE evaluation framework evaluation measures (as shown in Table II). It became apparent at an early stage that it would not be useful to develop an evaluation indicator for each of the 21 measures in the evaluation framework. Not only would this have made the questionnaire very long, but it also proved difficult to sufficiently differentiate the wording for each question so that respondents could easily recognise that each question was in fact different from the previous one. In the end, 13 evaluation indicators were established. These reflect 10 of the 21 evaluation measures and all four of the evaluation domains in the PLE evaluation framework.

The 13 indicators provide a measure of legal capability across the four PLE evaluation domains. Most indicators were presented as questions with tick box response options. A variety of response options were tested, including Yes/No responses and rating scales using four, five and ten point scales.

Participants were asked to complete a questionnaire at the beginning of the first session of the course (the before questionnaire) and to complete a similar questionnaire at the end of the final session (the after questionnaire). The before and after questionnaires were identical apart from some additional questions in the after questionnaire which asked participants (a) if the course had helped them to understand more about legal issues, (b) what was the most useful thing they learned on the course, (c) if there was anything about the course that could have been improved.

To ensure that any changes in the before and after responses from project participants could be attributed to their participation in the training, a control group was established. Each project partner identified a group of 10 people who were similar to the course participants but who did not take part in the course. The control groups were asked to complete the before and after questionnaires at around the same time as the participants.

Using paper-based questionnaires

It was recognised from the outset that paper-based questionnaires might be difficult for some respondents to complete, for example those with poor literacy or English language skills. This did prove to be the case, as some of the participants at Paiwand struggled to complete the before questionnaire. This was probably less about English language skill and more to do with being unfamiliar with this type of questionnaire, as the Paiwand participants had no problems completing the after questionnaire, having learned from the previous experience and feeling more confident with the format.

Because many of the Paiwand participants had difficulties completing the before questionnaire, they received a lot of help from the Law for Life team and Paiwand staff, and several questions were discussed as a group. The responses to some questions may perhaps reflect the group response, rather than individual views. This may explain why some of the Paiwand questionnaire responses are unexpected, with participants giving themselves very high ratings for confidence and knowledge on some indicators.

The evaluation indicators

It is apparent from observing the evaluation questionnaires being completed, and from the completed questionnaires themselves, that some questions were clearer for respondents to understand and could be answered more readily. Fewer people responded to the open questions (those which asked for a written response) than to the closed questions (those with tick box response options).

There was very little movement on the before and after responses to some indicators. With hindsight, it is apparent that the wording of these questions did not link them closely enough to the content of the PLE course, and so they were poorly suited to measure any changes as a result of participating in the course.

An assessment of how well each indicator worked is presented in Table IV.

Table IV: How well did the evaluation indicators work?

Evaluation indicator	How well did this indicator work?	Comments
1. How confident are you that you understand your legal rights and obligations?	Very good	Good response rate. Related well to course content. Showed significant increase from before to after.
2. Have you ever had to deal with a law-related issue?	Very good	Good response rate. Related well to course content. Provides a very good indirect measure of legal capability in Domain 1. Showed significant increase from before to after.
3. Do you understand the difference between civil and criminal law?	Very good	Good response rate. Related well to course content. Showed significant increase from before to after. Very straightforward indicator.
4. What sources of information would you use to find out more about a law-related issue?	Poor	Open question with lower than average response rate. It is not clear whether non-respondents did not know any sources of information or did not want to write answers.

Evaluation indicator	How well did this indicator work?	Comments
5. When you are deciding what sources of information or advice to use about law-related issues, how important are each of the following to you? [cost, access, impartiality, recommendation]	Poor	No changes from before to after. Not clear that this indicator reflected the course content.
6. How confident are you that you know when you need to get expert legal help to deal with a situation?	Very good	Good response rate. Related well to course content. Showed significant increase from before to after.
7. Do you agree with this statement: "If I had a law-related issue that I needed help to deal with, I would know where to get advice."?	Very good	Good response rate. Related well to course content. Showed significant increase from before to after.
8. How well have you dealt with the law-related issues that you have experiences in the past?	Poor	Strong positive bias in responses from some participants.
9. If the same law-related issues happened in the future, how well would you be able to deal with them?	Good	This indicator was paired with number 8, but might work better on its own. The responses showed significant increase from before to after.
10. How confident are you that you can get the best result out of a legal situation?	Good	Good response rate. Related well to course content. Showed significant increase from before to after. But not clear that this indicator is sufficiently different from number 9.
11. Do you agree with this statement: "I am good at taking action and seeing things through to the end."?	Poor	This question can be answered without reference to law-related issues. It was not phrased in a way that reflected the course content.
12. Do you agree with this statement: "I am well-organised and can easily find relevant paperwork and correspondence when I need it."?	Poor	This question can be answered without reference to law-related issues. It was not phrased in a way that reflected the course content.
13. How much do you know about ways of seeking to make changes in laws and legal procedures?	Good	The indicator worked but did not fully reflect course content.

Cognitive bias

It seems likely that there are strong elements of cognitive bias in the responses on some indicators which distort the evaluation findings. Respondents appear to have rated themselves more positively on the before questionnaire than they would if they had the knowledge of legal issues which they then acquired through the PLE course. The before questionnaires were completed at a time when most respondents had no knowledge of the subject they were being asked about, but did not yet recognise this lack of knowledge. Taking the PLE course helped participants to better understand what constitutes knowledge of law-related issues.

An example of this is the evaluation indicator ‘Do you understand the difference between civil and criminal law?’. In the before questionnaires, 56 per cent of respondents said ‘yes’. But it was clear from observing the discussions of this topic during the first PLE sessions that the great majority of participants did not understand the difference between civil and criminal law. So the 56 per cent positive response on this indicator before the course took place is likely to be positively biased, as some respondents thought that they understood the difference when in fact they did not.

This pattern of positive bias may have occurred on most indicators. The results of the before questionnaires, therefore, probably over-estimate the legal capability of people who have not yet participated in PLE. The after questionnaires, completed when people have greater knowledge and understanding of law-related issues, probably more accurately reflect the legal capability of respondents.

For the current evaluation, this cognitive bias means that the achievements of the PLE course in improving legal capability have not been fully captured, as the improvement from the before to the after position is highly likely to be greater than measured.

Managing the evaluation process

The evaluation aimed to use a robust methodology but also to be straightforward for partner agencies to manage. Two separate sets of guidance notes were produced for project partners, one giving information about the external evaluation process and timetable and the other giving detailed instructions for administering the participant and control group questionnaires.

All three project partners reported that the evaluation process was straightforward and easy for them to implement. However, there were a number of issues with the evaluation questionnaires which suggest that the process was somewhat more problematic. These issues include:

- Printing the questionnaires. The questionnaires were designed to print on to four sides of A4 paper. Several questionnaires were wrongly collated, so that page 4 followed page 2, which made the question order confusing and more difficult for respondents to answer. In many cases the pages were not stapled together and some completed pages were lost.
- Coding the questionnaires. The instructions asked for each questionnaire to be coded in a way that would enable the before and after responses from the same individual to be matched but for individual respondents to remain anonymous. The simplest way to do this would be to put the individuals’ initials in the appropriate box at the top of the form. However, a large number of questionnaires were returned with no identifying code on them. Although 32 participants completed the before questionnaire and 32 participants completed the after questionnaire, only 21 before and after pairs could be matched. It is likely that there are more matching pairs within the completed questionnaires, but

there is no way to identify these. The final number of matched pairs was too small to enable any meaningful analysis at this level.

- Control group questionnaires. Although all three project partners reported that there were no difficulties in identifying control groups and administering before and after questionnaires with them, only one partner managed this aspect of the evaluation. It is not clear why other partners found this difficult to achieve. It seems likely that they were just too busy to spend time doing this.

Assessing the potential wider socio-economic impact

The legal capability matrix is focused on measures of legal capability and does not include any socio-economic measures. The PLE evaluation framework document discusses what the wider impacts of increased legal capability might be and how these could be captured through evaluation. The possible wider impacts from PLE which are identified include:

- Preventing law-related issues arising or escalating;
- Improving access to justice;
- Improving individual health and well-being by reducing stress and anxiety;
- Improving productivity, e.g. through reducing absenteeism due to stress and anxiety.

The legal capability indicators developed for this evaluation can be linked to some of these socio-economic impacts. Preventing law-related issues arising or escalating, for example, can be linked to the indicator 'How confident are you that you understand your legal rights and obligations?'; improving access to justice can be linked to the indicator 'How confident are you that you know when you need to get expert legal help to deal with a situation?'

To identify whether there is any link between participation in PLE and these socio-economic outcomes, some longer term follow up of PLE participants would be required. A longitudinal approach would revisit PLE participants after perhaps one year or two years to ask them again about their legal capability.

Some additional indicators would be required to assess the impacts from PLE related to reduced stress and anxiety, as no indicators for stress and anxiety were included in the current evaluation.

It would be valuable to explore methods of measuring these outcomes and for identifying any causal relationship with participating in PLE. This would be an ambitious research project requiring a longitudinal approach to track PLE participants (and non-participants) over a number of years to assess their outcomes on these or other socio-economic indicators.

THREE: CONCLUSIONS

3.1 Improving individual legal capability

The project has fully met its aim of improving individual legal capability. The outcome that learners would be enabled to cope with the law in their everyday lives by improving their ability to deal with common law-related issues and situations has also been fully achieved.

The *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project has developed and tested a set of resources for delivering a six session PLE course to advice service users. The testing carried out through the project found that people significantly increased their legal capability through their participation in the PLE course.

The improvements in individual legal capability are across all four of the legal capability domains identified in the legal capability matrix. The clearest improvements in individual legal capability were in Domain 1 (recognising and framing the legal dimension of issues and situations) and Domain 3 (dealing with law-related issues). These are the domains which partner agencies saw as the priority for their service users, and are therefore the areas in which the course content was focused. The strong improvements in individual legal capability in these domains reflects the emphasis of the course content.

Individuals who took part in the PLE courses were better able to recognise the legal dimension of day to day issues and more confident that they could tackle these issues, or seek appropriate help when necessary. Several participants had already started to act on legal issues as a result of the knowledge and confidence they had gained from the course. One project partner reported that some participants were significantly less likely to use the agency's advice service since taking part in the PLE course, as they now felt more confident to deal on their own with many advice and information issues.

Based on feedback from individual participants and partner agencies, the following factors can be identified as having contributed to the success of the PLE courses:

- Excellent trainers. The trainers were very highly praised for pitching the course at a level which was basic enough for those with no legal knowledge while being sufficiently engaging for people with varying levels of education and experience.
- Useful hand outs. Information sheets about sources of advice on legal issues were handed out during the sessions. Participants found these very useful.
- Course length. Individuals and partner agencies felt that attending a course over three or six weeks was very beneficial. It helped participants to become more confident to join in discussions or ask questions as they got to know the trainers and the other course participants. Several participants commented that they would have liked the course to run for a few more weeks so that more legal issues could be covered.

- Tailoring to meet participant needs. The structure and basic content were the same for the three courses but the substantive areas of law, discussions and exercises varied to reflect the issues of greatest concern to the different course participants. For example, the Attend/DLS participants were particularly interested in legal issues concerning employment and discrimination, so course materials for some sessions were focused on these.
- A legal expert participant. In every session on all three courses a legal expert was on hand to support the trainer with advice on particular points of law or their practical experience of dealing with legal issues. In some sessions the legal expert was from Law for Life and in others volunteers from the partner agencies took this role. The legal experts added great value to the sessions.

3.2 Testing the conceptual model of legal capability

The project aim of testing the conceptual model of legal capability has been fully achieved.

The conceptual model of legal capability set out in the legal capability matrix proved a valuable framework for planning the PLE courses. The evaluation framework provided a helpful reference to ensure that the key elements of legal capability were addressed.

The outcome that partners would have a better understanding of the domains and elements of legal capability and how they apply to different groups of learners has been partially achieved. Only one interviewee from the three project partners seemed familiar with the PLE evaluation framework or the legal capability matrix. For agencies which are approaching PLE for the first time, the PLE evaluation framework document may be slightly daunting. It would be useful for Law for Life to produce a short guide which introduces the legal capability matrix to agencies that are new to PLE.

The testing which took place through the *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project focused on Domains 1 and 3 of the evaluation framework, to reflect the priorities of the partner agencies and their service users. However, the same approach could easily be extended to cover Domains 2 and 4 in more depth, perhaps through a follow up course.

3.3 Developing delivery of public legal education within the advice sector

The project aim of testing the PLE evaluation framework in the context of advice agencies has been fully achieved. The three advice agencies which took part in the *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project provided a useful testing ground for developing the delivery of PLE within the advice sector, particularly with community based advice providers such as Paiwand and Community Links.

It would be useful for Law for Life to extend this pilot to include a wider range of advice agencies, particularly agencies working with communities that were not covered in this initial pilot project, such as young people or older people.

The project aim of improving advice agencies' ability to undertake PLE within their local communities has been achieved. All the partner agencies for this project now have a better understanding of the value of PLE within their own communities and experience of organising and managing the delivery of this. While some of the partner agencies are highly likely to develop their own PLE provision, others are looking to Law for Life for continued support in this area. This suggests that involvement in one PLE project does not in itself give all advice agencies sufficient experience and confidence to plan and deliver further PLE provision without continuing support. There is an important continuing role for central support from Law for Life to organisations wanting to deliver PLE. This support role includes promoting the value of PLE, developing resources for PLE, promoting high quality in PLE, sharing good practice from PLE provision and between PLE providers, evidencing the impacts of PLE through robust, systematic and co-ordinated evaluation of PLE provision.

The outcome that the PLE evaluation framework should be tailored to adapt to advice agency delivery of PLE has been fully achieved. The legal capability matrix has proved a helpful and flexible framework for planning and delivering PLE that is tailored to the needs of advice agencies and their users.

The outcome that advice agencies would better understand the skills and methodologies that are suited to delivering PLE in their communities has been fully achieved. The partner agencies all have a better understanding of what works in delivering PLE within their communities as a result of their involvement in this project.

The advice agencies which took part in the project consider that PLE is becoming increasingly essential to help ordinary people to cope as funding cuts reduce the availability of legal and general advice services. The PLE course developed and piloted through the *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* project represents an accessible and relatively low-cost measure which advice agencies can use to help their users to become better able to manage their everyday lives without recourse to increasingly limited advice service provision.

3.4 Measuring the impact of public legal education

The project aim of beginning to assess the potential wider socio-economic impact of PLE projects has been partially achieved. The project has provided an opportunity to test the PLE evaluation framework as a guide for evaluating the impacts of PLE. The PLE evaluation framework itself, however, can only evaluate these impacts in terms of individual benefits and does not extend to measuring wider socio-economic impacts.

The methods used to evaluate the impacts of the PLE courses delivered through this project found significant improvements in the legal capability of project participants.

The key lessons learned from the project evaluation are:

- Paper-based before and after questionnaires are an affordable way to evaluate project impact. To minimise the errors that can occur in printing, distributing and collecting paper-based questionnaires, they should be kept as short as possible, ideally no more than two sides of A4 and with perhaps no more than six or seven questions.
- Of the 13 indicators tested in this evaluation, eight worked well or very well and five did not work at all well. Any evaluation resources or guidance developed for future PLE projects should use the indicators identified in this report as working well and avoid or re-work those which did not work well.
- There is a strong likelihood of cognitive bias in the responses to the before questionnaires, with many respondents giving positive responses to questions that they believe they know about when in fact, as the PLE course helps them to recognise, they do not have any knowledge in this area at all. This means that the evaluation has probably under-estimated the improvements made in individual legal capability by PLE, as the before position for participants is likely to be lower than has been measured.
- To overcome this cognitive bias, future evaluations should introduce additional questions to test the knowledge of those who respond positively. For example, responses to the evaluation indicator 'Do you understand the difference between civil and criminal law?' could be tested by the inclusion of quiz questions asking respondents to identify whether various actions would fall under civil or criminal law.
- The use of control groups is essential to confirm the results achieved from testing the participant groups. However, it proved particularly difficult for partner agencies to manage the process of completing before and after questionnaires with control groups.
- It would be useful to explore alternative ways of managing the evaluation process in order to minimise errors arising from lack of capacity within partner organisations. It may be more effective to put the evaluation questionnaires on-line, with Law for Life collecting and analysing responses. This would remove the administrative burden from partner agencies and would enable centrally co-ordinated data analysis from local PLE initiatives to build a robust evidence base for the benefits and impacts of PLE.
- It may be helpful to more fully integrate the questionnaire completion within the course sessions, perhaps including a quiz element to make it more engaging and as a means of verifying the accuracy of some question responses.
- Evaluating the socio-economic impacts of PLE will require longitudinal research which looks at the longer term outcomes for individuals who have participated in PLE.

FOUR: RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The conceptual framework for legal capability provides a valuable tool for planning and delivering PLE. The full PLE evaluation framework document may be too long and complex for community advice agencies which are new to this topic. It would be useful for Law for Life to produce a short guide which introduces the legal capability matrix to agencies that are new to PLE.
2. It would be useful for Law for Life to extend the *Legal Capability for Everyday Life* pilot to include a wider range of advice agencies, particularly agencies working with communities that were not covered in the initial pilot project, such as young people and older people.
3. There is an important continuing role for central support from Law for Life to organisations delivering PLE. It seems unlikely that many agencies will initiate and deliver good quality PLE without such support. This support role includes promoting the value of PLE, developing resources for PLE, promoting high quality in PLE, sharing good practice between PLE providers, and evidencing the impacts of PLE through robust, systematic and co-ordinated evaluation of PLE provision.
4. Paper-based before and after questionnaires are an affordable and useful way to evaluate the impact of PLE initiatives. The questionnaires developed for this project should be adapted to become templates for other agencies to use when evaluating PLE initiatives.
5. To overcome the cognitive bias in responses to the before questionnaires, future evaluations should introduce additional questions which are designed to test the knowledge of those who respond positively.
6. Further work is needed to find ways of helping agencies delivering PLE initiatives to manage the implementation of robust evaluation methods. It may be more effective to put the evaluation questionnaires on-line, with Law for Life collecting and analysing responses. It might also help to more fully integrate the questionnaire completion within the course sessions and to use quiz questions to verify the accuracy of some question responses.
7. Law for Life should explore the possibility of securing funding for a longitudinal research project to measure the longer term outcomes for individuals who have participated in PLE and to identify any causal relationship between PLE and wider socio-economic benefits.

ANNEX ONE: OUTLINE OF COURSE STRUCTURE

<p><i>Session 1</i></p> <p>Making sense of the law</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Framing situations in terms of the law - Awareness of the existence of rights and responsibilities - Distinguishing between civil and criminal law - Introducing basic legal principles: contract, duty of care, and reasonableness - Recognising a law-related situation.
<p><i>Session 2</i></p> <p>Getting help and finding out about the law</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finding out what rights and obligations apply to a legal problem - Finding out about basic processes and procedures - Making a complaint or challenging a decision - Knowing when to get help - Knowing how to find that help - Knowing that it is reliable - Sources of legal information - Assessing risks and opportunities.
<p><i>Session 3</i></p> <p>Dealing with problems and getting help from others</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organising and applying information - Deciding what to do/choosing between courses of action - Taking action - preparing for a phone call, writing a letter/email, preparing for a meeting - Keeping track of evidence - having the right papers keeping to deadlines, taking a friend with you - Keeping calm, organised, positive and realistic, not giving up - Planning ahead, deciding what to do next.
<p><i>Session 4 &5</i></p> <p>Dealing with problems – what the law says</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finding out what rights and obligations apply to: housing/benefit/employment situations. - Applying relevant information. - Communication skills and managing relationships. <p>We suggest that these will look specifically at housing, discrimination and benefits</p> <p><i>Housing</i> will include work on dealing problems such as applications, disrepair and discrimination.</p> <p><i>Discrimination</i> will cover job applications, employers' duties, sources of help and recognising unlawful discrimination.</p> <p>Work on <i>benefits</i> will try to highlight good practice in claiming benefits and challenging benefits decisions.</p>
<p><i>Session 6</i></p> <p>Changing the law and wrap-up</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Awareness of processes and structures for influencing changes in the law - Awareness of the impact of the law on people's lives - Able to critically assess situations and weigh up opportunities. - Completing outstanding work, reflections and conclusions.

ANNEX TWO: LEGAL CAPABILITY MATRIX

Recognising and framing the legal dimensions of issues and situations	Is aware of the concept of rights and obligations and can recognise where the law applies to a situation.	Is able to frame a situation in terms of the law and distinguish between civil and criminal legal issues.	Is aware of the basic legal principles that underpin the legal system and can apply them to issues.	Has the communication skills and confidence to explain a law-related issue and ask and answer questions about it.			
Finding out more about the legal dimensions of issues and situations	Able to find out what rights and obligations apply in a particular situation.	Able to find out about basic legal processes and procedures that apply to particular situations.	Able to find out about the steps involved in dealing with a law-related issue.	Able to assess the different sources of information about a law-related issue.	Able to assess risks and opportunities and decide when they can deal with a law-related issue themselves and when they might need expert advice.	Able to find out about different sources of advice and to choose one which will meet their needs.	
Dealing with law-related issues	Able to apply relevant information or advice that has been obtained.	Able to decide what a satisfactory outcome to a law-related issue looks like for them.	Able to anticipate and plan ahead, to identify opportunities and obstacles.	Able to identify and assess different courses of action for dealing with a law-related issue (which may include doing nothing) then plan and follow through an appropriate course of action.	Has communication and interpersonal skills to manage relationships and deal with the other parties involved.	Has personal skills and attributes such as confidence, self-esteem, motivation, calmness to persevere throughout the process.	Able to keep a good record of events, information and correspondence, and keep track of evidence.
Engaging and influencing	Aware of the impact of the law and legal institutions on their lives and the lives of others.	Is aware of relevant processes, structures and institutions that can be used to influence and participate in decision-making in order to achieve changes.	Is able to critically assess situations in order to weigh up opportunities.	has communication and interpersonal skills necessary to engage and influence.	Has personal skills and attributes such as confidence, self-belief and strength to effect change either individually or collectively.		

ANNEX THREE: DATA TABLES

INDICATOR	Maximum rating for this indicator	PARTICIPANTS: BEFORE		PARTICIPANTS: AFTER		Change in average rating for participants (%)	CONTROL GROUP	
		Average rating	Most frequent response	Average rating	Most frequent response		Average rating	Most frequent response
1: How confident are you that you understand your legal rights and obligations?	5	2.7	Moderately confident (38%)	4.4	Very confident (50%)	+ 63%	2.4	Not very confident (38%)
5: When you are deciding what sources of information to use about law-related issues, how important is: the COST of getting information or advice?	4	3.5	Very important (66%)	3.6	Very important (78%)	+3%	3.3	Very important (69%)
5: When you are deciding what sources of information to use about law-related issues, how important is: how EASY it is to access the information or advice	4	3.5	Very important (66%)	3.6	Very important (69%)	+3%	3.3	Very important (53%)
5: When you are deciding what sources of information to use about law-related issues, how important is: Whether the information or advice is IMPARTIAL and objective?	4	3.7	Very important (80%)	3.8	Very important (78%)	+3%	3.5	Very important (73%)
5: When you are deciding what sources of information to use about law-related issues, how important is: whether someone has RECOMMENDED this source of information or advice?	4	3.3	Very important (52%)	3.2	Very important (47%)	-3%	3.5	Very important (60%)
6: How confident are you that you know when you need to get expert legal help to deal with a situation?	5	3.0	Moderately confident (28%) Not very confident (28%)	4.5	Very confident (62%)	+ 50%	3.5	Very confident (27%) Moderately confident (27%)
7: Do you agree with this statement: "If I had a law-related issue that I needed help to deal with, I would know where to get advice."?	5	3.6	Agree (41%)	4.4	Strongly agree (50%)	+ 22%	3.4	Agree (47%)

INDICATOR	Maximum rating for this indicator	PARTICIPANTS: BEFORE		PARTICIPANTS: AFTER		Change in average rating for participants (%)	CONTROL GROUP	
		Average rating	Most frequent response	Average rating	Most frequent response		Average rating	Most frequent response
8: How well have you dealt with the law-related issues that you have experienced in the past?	10	6.2	n/a	6.1	n/a	- 2%	5	n/a
9: If the same law-related issues happened in the future, how well would you be able to deal with them?	10	6.9	n/a	8.8	n/a	28%	4.6	n/a
10: How confident are you that you can the best result out of a legal situation?	5	2.9	Not very confident (29%)	4.4	Very confident (58%)	+ 52%	2.8	Not very confident (40%)
11: Do you agree with this statement: "I am good at taking action and seeing things through to the end."?	5	3.7	Strongly agree (32%)	4.4	Strongly agree (53%)	+19%	3.5	Agree (54%)
12: Do you agree with this statement: "I am well organised and can easily find relevant paperwork and correspondence when I need it."?	5	3.6	Agree (32%)	4.0	Strongly agree (41%)	+11%	3.3	Agree (33%)
13: How much do you know about ways of trying to make changes to laws and legal procedures?	5	1.9	Not very much (52%)	3.3	Some (38%)	+74%	2.1	Not very much (47%)

INDICATOR	PARTICIPANTS: BEFORE	PARTICIPANTS: AFTER	Change in positive response	CONTROL
	YES	YES		YES
2: Have you ever had to deal with a law-related issue?	54%	73%	+ 19 percentage points	44%
3: Do you understand the difference between civil and criminal law?	56%	96%	+ 40 percentage points	38%

INDICATOR	PARTICIPANTS: BEFORE		PARTICIPANTS: AFTER		CONTROL	
	Average (mean)	Most frequent response (mode)	Average (mean)	Most frequent response (mode)	Average (mean)	Most frequent response (mode)
4: Number of information sources identified	1.8	1	2.3	3	1.5	1
4: Most frequently mentioned source of information		Advice centre (60%)		Advice centre (43%)		Advice Centre (50%)