
Access to justice for the poor and disadvantaged in low- and middle-income countries: an evidence and gap map

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Submitted to the Coordinating Group of:

- Crime and Justice
- Education
- Disability
- International Development
- Nutrition
- Food Security
- Social Welfare
- Methods
- Knowledge Translation and Implementation
- Business and Management
- Other:

Plans to co-register:

- No
- Yes Cochrane Other
- Maybe

Date submitted: 13 November 2018

Date revision submitted: 18 December 2018

Approval date:

Publication date: 18 December 2018

The effectiveness of interventions to improve access to justice for the poor and disadvantaged in low- and middle-income countries: an evidence and gap map

Short name: Access to justice for the poor and disadvantaged: an evidence and gap map

Access to justice is defined as the ability of both victims and accused to seek and obtain redress through the formal or informal legal system in an accessible, affordable, timely and just manner, regardless of sex, age, socio-economic status, mental or physical capacity, or ethnicity.

The map will not be restricted to interventions targeted exclusively at the poor and disadvantaged. It will include also interventions for the general population or specific groups (e.g. women) which may plausibly be expected to have a significant impact on the poor and disadvantaged.

Background

On 17 December 2010 Tunisian street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi set fire to himself to protest continual harassment by local government officials including confiscation of his goods. Bouazizi's death ignited the Arab Spring. But more commonly the daily instances of the poor being denied justice - oppressed by the very system intended to protect and serve them - go unnoticed.

The reality of lack of justice as part of the daily burden of being poor was highlighted by Voices of the Poor (Narayan et al., 1999), a summary of participatory data from 47 countries. Common themes across countries included police indifference or harassment, a legal system which sided with the powerful and was used to repress minority groups, small businesses deprived of the means of their livelihood, widespread corruption including in the legal system, and lack of access to mediation through courts or alternative mechanism for reasons of institutional barriers, distance and the cost of protracted proceedings.

The international community has come to pay more attention to access to justice through the conjunction of two trends: first the willingness to confront governance as part of the donor agenda and, second, the stronger direct focus on poverty in development programmes. Both these trends emerged in the 1990s. So, for example, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) published an issues paper 'Justice and Poverty' in 2000. The DFID paper identified three main categories of intervention: (i) Safety and security (crime prevention, community policing, and a professional police service); (ii) Access to justice (a fair and equitable legal framework, courts which are accessible and dispense justice speedily, and improved customary justice systems and a greater role for alternative dispute

resolution); and (iii) Penal reform. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) published an 'Access to Justice' Practice Note in 2004 which listed the following types of support to promote access to justice: (i) legal protection, (ii) legal awareness, (iii) legal aid and counsel, (iv) adjudication, (v) enforcement, and (vi) civil society and parliamentary oversight. More recently, the World Bank's 2011 World Development Report 'Conflict Security and Development' devoted a section to justice, and the word 'justice' appears 572 times throughout the report. And in 2014 the Development Bank for Latin America (CAF) published 'For a safer Latin America: a new perspective for preventing and controlling crime' a flagship report which moved the discussion in the region toward a more evidence-based approach.

In recognition of the importance of justice it is included as sustainable development goal 16: 'Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels'. Following this new focus on access to justice there have been a number of national initiatives and externally supported programmes promoting reform of the justice system to be more equitable and introducing innovations such as mobile courts, increased use of paralegals and raising public awareness of their rights and how to access the law (see annex 1 for a list of examples of such donor projects).

The proposed evidence and gap map will present studies of the effectiveness of these interventions across a range of outcome domains. Specifically, the objectives of the map are to:

- i. Develop a clear taxonomy of interventions and outcomes related to access to justice for the poor and disadvantaged in low- and middle-income countries
- ii. Map available systematic reviews and primary studies of the effectiveness of interventions intended to increase access to justice for the poor and disadvantaged in low- and middle-income countries in this framework, with an overview provided in a summary report
- iii. Provide database entries of included studies which summarize the intervention, context, study design and main findings.

Existing EGMs

There is one existing evidence map covering the broader topic of security and justice (Bakrania, 2015). The 'Access to Justice Evidence and Gap Map' is more focused and so will provide a greater degree of granularity with more specific intervention and outcome categories. In addition, there are new studies in this area, which is one reason why the 'map

of maps' conducted by 3ie concluded that 'scoping work by 3ie indicates that there are many more relevant studies not covered by this [i.e. Bakrania's] map' (Phillips et al., 2017).

Suggested dimensions

In addition to intervention and outcomes, the following filters will be coded:

- (1) Population sub-groups of interest include: those affected by conflict (conflict and post-conflict settings), migrants, ethnic minority groups, women and children, people with disabilities, small and medium enterprises.
- (2) Study designs: RCTs, natural experiments, regression discontinuity, propensity score matching, difference in difference, instrumental variables, other matching design.
- (3) Region
- (4) Country

Intervention(s) or problem

Access to justice is defined as the ability of both victims and accused to seek and obtain redress through the formal or informal legal system in an accessible, affordable, timely and just manner, regardless of sex, age, socio-economic status, mental or physical capacity, or ethnicity.

Accordingly, the map will not cover all aspects of the daily injustice suffered by the poor and disadvantaged. Rather it is restricted to their engagement with the legal system, both formal and informal, to seek redress or where they are the accused. It does thus include harassment and discrimination which by legal agencies such as the police.

Given the importance of effective dispute resolution to the functioning of the private sector, and the private sector's importance to overall development, then interventions related to firms are also included.

The included interventions cover all main aspects and branches of the legal system. The six main intervention categories are: (1) Legal protection; (2) Justice and security institutions; (3) Non-court adjudication; (4) Sentencing and prison system; (5) Support to legal aid and counsel; and (6) Support to civil society and increasing legal awareness. Table 1 lists the intervention sub-categories under each of these headings.

Table 1: Intervention categories and sub-categories

Legal protection	<p>Legal framework for, and legal reform of, the justice system both formal and informal</p> <p>Public/civic registration services</p> <p>Anti-corruption commission</p>
Justice and security institutions	<p>Increase physical access to courts including mobile courts, consolidation of court network, and courthouse construction and rehabilitation.</p> <p>Improving court procedures (including reform court practice and procedures; performance measurement/evaluation to increase accountability for service delivery; and enhancing court enforcement capacity)</p> <p>Training court officials</p> <p>Court/criminal justice diversion programmes</p> <p>Interventions to reduce case backload and delays of proceedings (inc. internal court oversight for better case disposal)</p> <p>Police: reform including recruitment of women police/women police stations, training, and monitoring, community policing, and provision of police infrastructure and equipment</p>
Non-court adjudication	<p>Establishing alternative dispute resolution mechanisms and alternative sanctions for children and petty crimes</p> <p>Training customary / informal justice authorities</p> <p>Community mediators</p> <p>Supporting Case Co-ordination Committees</p>
Sentencing and prison system	<p>Improving prison conditions (including reducing violation of human rights of prisoners)</p> <p>Training for prison governors and officers in prisoner rights</p>
Support to legal aid and counsel	<p>Legal aid (availability and quality, including training lawyers)</p> <p>Paralegals (availability and quality)</p> <p>Public defenders (availability and quality)</p>
Support to civil society and increasing legal awareness	<p>Awareness campaigns on legal rights (mass media, community, ICT approaches etc)</p> <p>Train government officials on citizen rights</p> <p>Increased access to legal education</p> <p>Public complaints system</p>

Population

Poor and disadvantaged in low- and middle-income countries

Population sub-groups of interest include: those affected by conflict (conflict and post-conflict settings), migrants, ethnic minority groups, women and children, people with disabilities.

Outcomes

The outcome domains are shown in Table 2. Annex 3 list sample indicators drawn from project documents for each domain, which is informing definition of outcome sub-domains.

Table 2: Outcome domains and sub-domains

1. Safety, security & wellbeing	Stability Safe communities Crime rate Other measures of social and economic wellbeing
2. Public confidence in systems and institutions of justice	Trust in police/army (perception, rate of accessing) Trust in courts (perception, rate of accessing) Satisfaction with police and legal services from institutions Citizen engagement/participation in governance processes
3. Access to legal mechanisms (courts and traditional bodies)	Independent judiciary Costs (fees, access to legal aid) Accessibility of judicial system (barriers to people with disabilities, minorities, availability of interpreters, response to gender-based violence etc) Efficiency of judicial system (e.g. case backload, awaiting trial as % accused persons) Quality of justice (quality of legal representation, absence of bias in legal system) Accessibility of court decisions Justice sector support infrastructure
4. Corruption and harassment	Corruption/harassment by police/army/gov officials Abuses within the legal system Transparency of justice services (reduced incentives for corruption, increased accountability of institutions)
5. Awareness of legal rights	Awareness of rights Legal empowerment

Study designs

The map will include studies of effectiveness, that is experimental and non-experimental impact evaluations with a design with controls for selection bias. The following designs will be included: RCTs, natural experiments, regression discontinuity, propensity score matching, difference in difference, instrumental variables, and other matching design.

The map will also include systematic reviews which included low- and middle-income countries.

Process for developing the framework (including stakeholder consultation)

The framework has been developed through the following process:

Stage 1: Initial framework constructed through consultation of strategy and policy documents (listed below), and coding of 36 externally funded justice projects (see Annex 1).

Stage 2: Iterative revision based on external consultation through: (i) meeting of officials and subject experts organized by Office of the Prime Minister, Government of Uganda (see Annex 2 for meeting note), (ii) webinar/online feedback Campbell experts on crime and justice, (iii) consultation with DFID staff.

Stage 3: Formation of Advisory Group and consultation with that group.

Stage 4: Piloting framework with 10-20 included studies (the number depends on an iterative process ending when no further revisions have been made to the framework after five successive studies). The framework will be finalized once the first 10-20 studies are coded. This protocol will be finalized at that point. Any subsequent changes to the framework will be recorded as deviations from protocol.

References

Strategy and policy documents

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Roles and responsibilities

- **Content: Justice:** Angela Higginson is an Editor for the Campbell Collaboration Crime and Justice Coordinating Group, and has published a number of reviews on crime and justice issues in low- and middle-income countries.
- **Evidence gap methods:** Howard White and Ashrita Saran, who have co-authored a paper on mapping methods used by different agencies. Howard White assisted development of Campbell guidelines and standards.
- **Information retrieval:** Angela Higginson, Howard White and Liussa Zhen. Angela Higginson has authored strategies for other evidence synthesis products in the area of crime and justice. The strategy will be reviewed by John Eyres (IDCG Search Specialist) before submission.
- **Coding and data extraction:** Ashrita Saran will oversee the teams undertaking coding. Jill Adona, Roland Bless and Benjamin Kachero will undertake coding.

The other authors will assist in consultation exercises, coding and writing.

Funding

This EGM is supported by the UK Department for International Development (DFID) under its support for the Centre for Excellence for Development Impact and Learning (Cedil). The draft map should be ready in January 2019 and the final map by March 2019.

Potential conflicts of interest

There are no conflicts of interest.

Preliminary timeframe

Protocol: December 2018

Draft map and report: April 2019

Annex 1 List of projects coded for intervention category and outcomes

DFID projects

	Integrated Programme for Strengthening Security and Justice		
DFID.1	Justice	Nepal	2014-2020
DFID.2	Strengthening Rule of Law in Pakistan	Pakistan	2016-2020
DFID.3	Safety and Justice	Bangladesh	2008-2017
DFID.4	Somalia Security and Justice Programme	Somalia	2016-2020
DFID.5	Building Empowerment and Accountability in Malawi Strengthening Civil Society in Afghanistan	Malawi	2010-2018
DFID.6	(Tawanmandi)	Afghanistan	2010-2017
DFID.7	Access to Security and Justice in Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone	2010-2016
DFID.8	Access to Justice through Paralegal and Restorative Justice Services in Bangladesh	Bangladesh	2013-2018
DFID.9	Improving Security & Access to Justice in the Occupied Palestinian Territories	Palestine	2015-2018
DFID.10	Building sustainable anti-corruption action in Tanzania (BSAAT)	Tanzania	2017-2022
DFID.11	Access to Justice	China	2014-2015
DFID.12	Rights and leadership training for indigenous and campesino communities	Bolivia	2005-2017

UNDP projects

UNDP.1	Afghanistan Access to Justice	Afghanistan	2016-2018
UNDP.2	Malawi National Registration and Identification System	Malawi	2016-2018
UNDP.3	Making Justice Work for the Poor	Philippines	2012-2016
UNDP.4	Access to Justice and Rule of Law	South Sudan	2014-2017
UNDP.5	Support to the Justice Sector Reform in Indonesia	Indonesia	2014-2019
UNDP.6	Strengthening the Rule of Law in Liberia	Liberia	2017-2019
UNDP.7	Consolidating the Democratic Rule of Law and Peace through a strong Justice System in Timor-Leste	Timor Leste	2003-2018
UNDP.8	Promoting Access to Justice, Human Rights and Peace Consolidation	Rwanda	2013-2018
UNDP.9	Legislative Support Project II	Tanzania	2017-2021
UNDP.10	Promoting Access to Justice Human Rights in Bangladesh	Bangladesh	2007-2016
UNDP.11			
UNDP.12	UN JP Access to Justice	Georgia	2016-2018
UNDP.13	More Accessible Justice	Armenia	2017-2018

World Bank

WB.1	Justice Services Improvement Project	Romania	
WB.2	Citizen-Centric Judicial Modernization and Justice Service Delivery Project	Tanzania	
WB.3	Justice Sector Institutional Strengthening Project	Kazakhstan	
WB.4	Second Justice Services Improvement Project	Peru	

WB.5	Justice Sector Support Project	Croatia
WB.6	Justice Services Strengthening Project	Colombia
WB.7	Enhanced Justice Sector Services Project	Mongolia
WB.8	State Judicial Modernization Supporting Access to Justice Project	Mexico
WB.9	Strengthening Social Risk Management and Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response Project	Uganda
WB.10	Inclusive Regulations for Microfinance Project	Egypt
WB.11	Citizen Access to Responsive Services	India
WB.12	Judicial Services and Smart Infrastructure Project	Azerbaijan

Annex 2 Uganda consultation

Results from a consultation exercise to define the framework for an evidence and gap map of interventions to improve access to justice for the poor and disadvantaged in low- and middle-income countries

Background and introduction

The Office of the Prime Minister has identified justice as a key policy area in which an evidence-based is needed to inform better policy and practice. To address this need OPM is working with the Campbell Collaboration, and international research network promoting the production and use of high-quality evidence synthesis.

OPM convened a meeting of representatives from across the justice sector (see Participant list in Appendix 1) for a consultative process to help develop the framework for the evidence map.

The consultation process

Following a brief introduction to evidence and gap maps, a consultation process was undertaken as follows:

1. Each individual participant wrote their definition of access to justice
2. Participants were then divided into three groups of four, separating participants from the same agency
3. Each group was given four of the individual definitions (at random, not those they had written) and asked to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each
4. Each group was then asked to come up with a group definition of access to justice
5. Each group was asked to brainstorm on interventions, writing each intervention on a 'post it' which they stuck on the wall in a common area for all groups. If the intervention matched one already there they stuck it on top of that one. Otherwise it should be stuck close to similar interventions. They were free to move around the existing post its.
6. Each group was asked to brainstorm on outcomes, writing each outcomes on a 'post it' which they stuck on the wall in a common area for all groups. If the outcome matched one already there they stuck it on top of that one. Otherwise it should be stuck close to similar outcomes. They were free to move around the existing post its.
7. As a collective exercise, participants grouped interventions assigning intervention category labels.
8. As a collective exercise, participants grouped outcomes assigning outcome domain labels.

Defining access to justice

Table 1 presents the definitions provided by individuals, the three groups and an overall definition based on these.

Despite very lively discussion, and some variation in the individual definitions, the three group definitions contain clear common elements related to accessibility, timeliness, cost and equity. Although it may seem tautological to include access as part of the definition of access to justice, this item refers specifically to physical access especially with respect to location. It may also refer to the absence of institutional barriers, such as bureaucratic processes which are intimidating and difficult for less advantaged people to navigate. The definition also captures the notion, stated explicitly in some individual definitions, that access is for all regardless of social or legal status. These elaborations of the definition are laid out in Table 2.

Intervention types and categories

Thirty-one intervention types were identified, which were grouped into the following six categories: dispute resolution infrastructure, capacity building, legal assistance, legal and policy framework, increase awareness, and improve processes. The complete list is given in Table 3.

Outcomes and outcome domains

Eleven outcomes were identified. The grouping proved difficult, but the suggestion was made during discussion to use the core components of the definition (accessibility, affordability, timeliness and equity). That is the approach adopted here, with awareness and satisfaction added. The latter two were identified by the participants as outcome domains during the grouping. The complete list is given in Table 4.

These outcome domains can be ordered along the causal chain (with the addition of legal system) as shown in Table 5.

Conclusion

The consultation generated the information needed to produce the framework for the evidence map. It will be combined with other sources to propose the final framework.

Table 1: Defining access to justice: results of consultation exercise

Consensus definition	The ability of a person to seek and obtain redress through the formal or informal legal system in an accessible, affordable, timely and just manner		
Group definitions	A person is able to seek fair, available, transparent, affordable, and timely resolution to grievances in a community (family, village, district, country, etc.)	Accessible, affordable, available, just/fair, enforceable both in formal and informal	Means by which one is able to attain affordable, fair, equitable, timely and satisfactory legal services
Individual definitions given to groups	The ease with which the common person is able to receive justice at all levels of the justice system in the country	The ability of all people regardless of sex, age, ethnicity etc to have access to timely, inexpensive, and just dispute resolution mechanisms	Level of capacity of both supply and demand side of equitable, fair, and affordable justice services including

	<p>Citizens and legal persons can have their disputes or rights enforced by established courts or tribunals in the country</p> <p>Justice services and process / infrastructure being readily available to those in need. Transparency in delivery of justice.</p>	<p>The rate at which people seeking equity and fairness in society find the services in the relevant ministries [institutions, bodies or individuals vested with such power].</p> <p>A2J is the ability to get redress from both formal and informal courts: (1) existence of legal framework, (2) awareness of this existence, (3) existing structures/mechanisms, (4) enforcement of outcome</p> <p>The law is applied to every citizen of a country in a similar manner, objectively with similar results irrespective of status, colour, religious affiliation, age etc.</p>	<p>awareness, knowledge, skills and infrastructure An individual is able or has the right to fair treatment in the courts of laws very easily and at zero or no cost Means by which the community is served in terms of service delivery. The recipient should feel satisfied with the way in which he/she is served.</p>
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Table 2: Elaboration of the components of the definition

Definition	Exposition
The ability of a person	<p>A person implies anyone regardless of</p> <p>Social status e.g. class, caste, gender, disability, ethnicity etc.</p> <p>Legal status e.g. nomads, migrants, street-connected persons and non-citizens</p> <p>And both accuser and accused should be treated justly</p>
to seek and obtain redress	Obtain implies that any legal decision in their favour is enforced
through the formal or informal legal system	Both the formal and informal systems are covered
in an accessible	Refers to physical accessibility (proximity) and institutional (bureaucratic barriers inhibiting access such as language, form filling and so on)
affordable	No or low charges or legal aid is available on a means tested basis
timely	Cases are dealt with in a timely manner and accused not held on remand for excessive periods
and just manner	Cases are heard in an impartial manner not favouring one side (usually the powerful) over the other

Table 3: Intervention types and categories

<p>Dispute resolution infrastructure</p> <p>Availability of human resources Putting in place infrastructure (human, financial, physical) (2) Mobile courts (2) Infrastructure -> communication Strengthening the coordination mechanism of the various justice sector players Establishing Residence office at the grassroots Conducting outreach programmes/sensitisation Conducting sessions Court diversion programmes</p>	<p>Capacity building</p> <p>Training public defenders Capacity building of service providers Capacity building to ADR focal persons at different levels of governance Police training Strengthening investigative function of government</p>
<p>Legal Assistance</p> <p>Legal aid Citizens' Advice Bureau Translation of laws into various languages Legal assistance (state briefs, pro-bono, legal aid)</p>	<p>Legal and policy framework</p> <p>Strengthen legal and policy framework Make laws responsive Routine review of policies and legal framework in the justice system Strengthening of informal/alternative mechanisms (2) Establishing effective feedback mechanisms between the supply and demand side of justice Strengthen enforcement</p>
<p>Increase awareness</p> <p>Increased demand for justice Awareness of laws Awareness creation of civic rights</p>	<p>Improve processes</p> <p>Simplification and shortening process Effective processes Enhance efficient and effective delivery of justice Efficient record management</p>

Note: Numbers refer to number of post-its with that item

Table 4: Outcomes and outcome domains

<p>Equity</p> <p>Fair and equitable justice Fair and just outcomes</p>	<p>Timeliness</p> <p>Reduced case backload Timely delivery of judicial services</p>
<p>Affordability</p> <p>Justice affordable for all Affordable legal services</p>	<p>Satisfaction</p> <p>Restorative justice Enhanced client satisfaction (2)</p>
<p>Accessibility</p> <p>Access to justice for all Peace, security and the rule of law</p>	<p>Awareness</p> <p>Reduction in violation of rights</p>

Note: Numbers refer to number of post-its with that item

Table 5: Outcome domains along the causal chain

Inputs	Activities, outputs and intermediate outcomes		Final outcomes
Legal system	Awareness	Accessibility Timeliness Affordability Equity	Peace and security Satisfaction (accuser and accused)

Annex 3 List of participants

Name	Agency
Waninda Fred	Judiciary
Charles Mukasa	Uganda Human Rights Commission
Okurut Felix	Judiciary
James Musaazi	Uganda Law Reform Commission
Ocetom Edward	Uganda Police Force
Sylvia Namubiru Mukasa	Legal Aid Providers Network (Laspnet)
Nakayili Beatrice	OPM
Violah Tualngwirwe	ODPP
Peter Okubu	ODPP
Adbul Muwamke	OPM
Roland Bless Taramwa	OPM
Benjamin Kachero	OPM

Annex 4 List of outcomes

Outcome domain	Sample indicators (for sub-domains)
Legal system	Political, legal and financial framework Policies on the role of traditional justice system in place Compliance of the customary and statutory justice systems with international human rights standards Effective oversight and accountability mechanisms exist in rule of law institutions at all levels Legal aid Paralegal services Policies, processes and mechanisms that promote access to justice by the poor Attitudes and skills of legal professionals
Awareness	Awareness of legal rights and procedures
Accessibility	Distance from police station and legal facilities Number of appropriate cases or disputes resolved through community mediation Poor and vulnerable people including women and children with access to community legal services across the country % of cases reported to the statutory and customary justice system % of eligible documents available to users 24/7 online

Timeliness and efficiency	<p>Percentage of the national prison population which is on remand:</p> <p>Case backlog</p> <p>Reduced processing times: a) service of notice to parties; b) time between first and final hearings; and c) testimony of expert witnesses</p> <p>Time taken to enforce contracts through courts</p> <p>% of reported cases disposed of (disaggregated by age, sex, disability and type of case)</p> <p>Integrated record keeping and case management system</p> <p>Reliability of ICT environment to perform core functions in courts and prosecution offices</p> <p>Cases resolved per year</p>
Affordability	Availability of free legal aid
Equity	Fair treatment before the law
Transparency	<p>Performance information available on Ministry of Justice and Supreme Court websites</p> <p>Details of cases available online</p>
Enforced	<p>% of judgements enforced</p> <p>Court enforcement capacity enhancement</p>
Trust and Satisfaction	<p>% of victims of crime who have sought help from the police</p> <p>% of people who believe that police performance has improved</p> <p>Citizens' perception of efficacy and fairness of: formal justice system and non-formal justice</p> <p>Improved public confidence in justice institutions</p> <p>% users expressing they are 'fully' or 'somewhat' satisfied with the quality of judicial services</p> <p>% satisfaction with police and judiciary (inclusive of gendered findings)</p> <p>% users expressing satisfaction with access, transparency and efficiency of selected justice services</p>