



Justice for All

The Task Force
on Justice

Highlights and
Policy Recommendations
www.justice.sdg16.plus



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Photos by: Bart Hoogveld

To deliver justice for all by 2030
in a world where billions of people
are not yet able to obtain justice,
we must resolve justice problems,
prevent injustices from occurring, and
use justice systems to create opportunities
for people to participate fully
in their societies and economies

Building just societies

Realizing the ambitions of the 2030 Agenda
for Sustainable Development

At the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development lies a vision of a just, equitable, tolerant, open, and socially inclusive world in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met.

SDG16.3 promises to ensure equal access to justice for all by 2030. Other justice-related targets cover legal identity, injustices such as corruption and illicit financial flows, and the promotion of rights and gender equality.

To achieve the goal of providing access to justice for all, we must:

- Place justice at the heart of sustainable development
- Put people at the center of justice systems
- Move from justice for the few to justice for all



Place justice at the heart of sustainable development

Justice is a thread that runs through all 17 Sustainable Development Goals. Without increased justice, the world will be unable to

- End poverty, reduce inequality, and reach the furthest behind first
- Create conditions for shared and sustainable prosperity
- Promote peace and inclusion, and protect fundamental rights

Put people at the center of justice systems

In the past, justice reforms have often focused on institutions that are distant from people. In contrast, a people-centered approach to justice

- Understands how men, women, and children experience justice and injustice
- Draws on evidence of what works to meet people's justice needs
- Is delivered by an inclusive justice system open to partnership with other sectors

Move from justice for the few to justice for all

Closing the justice gap requires a transformation in ambition – a sustained effort to provide billions more people with access to justice to

- Help people resolve their justice problems
- Prevent injustices large and small from occurring
- Create opportunities for people to participate fully in their societies and economies

Why we need justice for all

To deliver the SDG targets that promise justice for all, we must understand the size of the justice gap and build a case for the investment needed to close it

How many people are confronted by justice problems? What do they need and want when they seek justice? And what kind of justice do they receive?

Until recently, a lack of data has obscured the scale of the failure to meet people's justice needs, but more and better data is now available.

Drawing on research by the world's leading justice organizations and experts, the Task Force on Justice provides a first estimate of the global justice gap.

Closing the justice gap requires a transformation in ambition – a sustained effort to provide billions more people with access to justice.

Countries need to target investments to the most urgent justice needs, direct resources to lower-cost approaches, and diversify funding sources.

The Task Force has highlighted three dimensions of the global justice gap. In total, 5.1 billion people fall into at least one of these three groups. Around the world, women, children, poor people, people with disabilities, and people from ethnic minorities find it hardest to access justice. The justice gap is both a reflection of structural inequalities and a contributor to these inequalities.

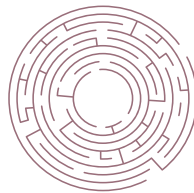
The Global Justice Gap

5.1 billion people deprived of justice



4.5 billion

are excluded from the social, economic, and political opportunities that the law provides



1.5 billion

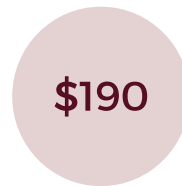
have a criminal, civil, or administrative justice problem they cannot solve



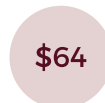
253 million

live in extreme conditions of injustice, without any meaningful legal protections

- > Without justice, people and societies fail to reach their full potential
- > People with a justice problem lose an average of one month's wages
- > Everyday justice problems cost countries 0.5-3% of their GDP
- > Every dollar invested in justice leads to \$16 in benefits from reduced conflict risk
- > Expenditure on people-centered justice delivers a high return on investment



High-income countries



Middle-income countries



Low-income countries

Annual cost of providing a person with access to basic justice services

Solving justice problems

A people-centered approach to justice starts with people's needs and aims to solve the justice problems that matter most to them

In the past, justice reform has focused on buildings, processes, and institutions, but has failed to close the justice gap for billions of people.

Notwithstanding the differences between countries and the diversity of legal systems, surveys tell us that people across the world experience many of the same types of justice problem.

The greatest needs for justice are found in six areas:

- Violence and crime, in the public sphere, at work, and at home
- Problems with money and debt, or consumer problems
- Disputes over housing or land, or conflicts with neighbors
- Difficulties related to access to and quality of public services
- Family disputes, for example around divorce and inheritance
- Problems at work, whether as an employee or business owner

By taking people's justice problems as a starting point, countries can design better justice journeys that help more people reach a destination where they believe their problems have been fairly resolved. Justice journeys should empower people, provide them with access to quality justice services, and help them achieve outcomes that lead to measurable increases in justice.



**Empower people
and communities**

- Help people understand the law
- Support people to seek solutions
 - Invest in legal aid for the most vulnerable
- Increase participation in justice

**Access to people-centered
justice services**

- Accelerate and simplify processes
- Support alternative pathways to justice
 - Provide one-stop services
- Tailor services to justice needs

Fair outcomes

- Meet standards for human rights
 - Offer the right remedy
- Collect and disseminate data on outcomes
- Establish effective grievance mechanisms

Preventing injustice

Given the size of the justice gap, we must prevent justice problems as well as working to resolve those that have already occurred

Prevention reduces the harm that people suffer by focusing on the root causes of injustice. When there are fewer disputes, lower levels of violence, and people have proper legal protections, societies are more likely to be peaceful and to prosper.

Prevention makes sense for four reasons:

- The justice gap cannot be bridged with traditional approaches and tools.
- Justice is needed for communities and societies, not just for individuals. Addressing the root causes of injustice is the best way to tackle structural justice problems.
- Justice systems can increase resilience, by helping people protect their rights or by providing space for peaceful contestation.
- Prevention is cost effective – for people, for society, and for the justice system itself.

Prevention requires justice actors to move from considering only individual justice problems to influencing how a population experiences injustice and justice.

Effective prevention requires the justice system to collaborate with other sectors to address the root causes of disputes and avert conflict, violence, and human rights abuses. Prevention strategies aim to create trustworthy justice systems, tackle structural injustices, and use the law to reduce the risk of injustice.

Preventing and de-escalating disputes

Working proactively to reduce the number of disputes or resolve them before they become more serious

Preventing criminal, organized, and interpersonal violence

From punitive measures to evidence-based prevention that reduces levels of violence, especially against women, children, and vulnerable groups

Promote trust in justice systems

Provide people with a reasonable expectation that their rights will be protected, their disputes managed peacefully, and that they will be safeguarded from abuses of power

Tackle the root causes of injustice

Provide legal identity and other documentation and empower communities and marginalized groups to realize their rights and overcome unfairness

Use the law to reduce risk

Strengthen legislative frameworks for violence prevention and implement laws and regulations that make it less likely that disputes will arise or escalate

Prevention Strategies

Preventing conflict and instability

Reducing grievances and addressing the risks that lead to violent conflict

Promoting inclusion and protecting rights

Reducing abuses by the justice system and providing justice for those facing the highest levels of exclusion

Pathfinders for justice

The Task Force has developed an agenda for action that will help deliver the SDG targets that promise justice for all

A shift to justice for all requires a new focus on delivering tangible results for people. Reformers around the world are beginning to transform their justice systems, providing lessons for others to learn from.

Four levers build momentum for reform:

- Use data and evidence to steer reform
- Unlock the transformative power of innovation
- Implement strategies for smarter justice financing
- Build more coherent and inclusive justice systems

The Task Force calls on governments, justice professionals, civil society, the private sector, international and regional organizations, foundations and philanthropists – and people themselves – to work together to deliver justice for all.

The Task Force makes a series of recommendations to accelerate progress towards justice for all. National implementation should be supported by intensified international cooperation and revitalized partnerships for justice.

Resolve the justice problems that matter most to people

Understand justice problems through regular surveys · Recognize, finance, and protect justice defenders · Provide access to people-centered justice services · Use cost-effective alternatives to help people resolve disputes and gain redress

Prevent justice problems and enable people to participate in their society and economy

Implement multi-sectoral prevention strategies · Increase independence, combat corruption, and ensure independent oversight · Tackle structural injustices · Strengthen laws and regulations to reduce the risk of violence and the number of disputes

Invest in justice systems and institutions that work for people and that are equipped to respond to their need for justice

Provide open access to justice data · Create a supportive regulatory environment for innovation · Develop a national roadmap for financing justice for all · Increase representation in the justice system and implement new governance models

National Action

Support national implementation

Register voluntary commitments to implement SDG16.3 and help governments develop credible, realistic, and funded strategies to implement these commitments

Measure progress

Agree a new SDG16.3 indicator to measure progress on civil justice

Increase justice leadership

Hold a biennial meeting of Ministers of Justice, Attorneys General, and other justice leaders

Intensify cooperation

Form an alliance of international and regional justice partners and a funders' collaborative

Build the movement

Amplify demand for change through global, national, and local movements that campaign for justice for all

International Action

The Task Force on Justice

Co-Chairs



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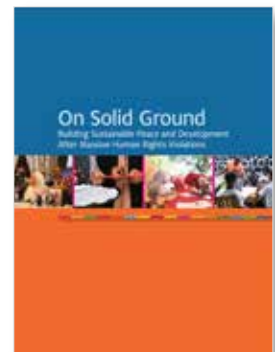
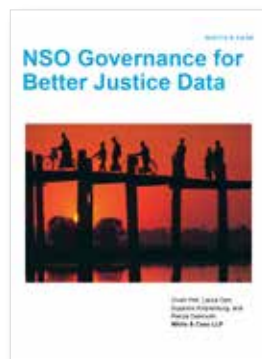
New York University's Center on International Cooperation (CIC) served as the secretariat to the Task Force on Justice. CIC co-founded and hosts the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies.

Justice Partners





The Justice for All report is available in English, Spanish, and French. It builds on a series of reports from working groups and other commissioned research. Download these and other materials from: www.justice.sdg16.plus/report



The Task Force on Justice is an initiative of the Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies, a multi-stakeholder partnership that brings together UN member states, international organizations, civil society, and the private sector to accelerate delivery of the SDG targets for peace, justice and inclusion.

The Task Force is chaired by ministers from Argentina, the Netherlands, and Sierra Leone, and by the Elders.

TASK FORCE 
ON JUSTICE
PATHFINDERS FOR PEACEFUL, JUST AND INCLUSIVE SOCIETIES

