About Justice for the Poor

The World Bank’s Justice for the Poor (J4P) program supports the emergence of equitable justice systems. The program focuses on identifying and supporting substantive justice outcomes rather than pursuing predetermined institutional structures. The program operates in countries where legal pluralism presents a particular development challenge. As a result, J4P is marked by three essential characteristics:

- The program engages the justice sector as a whole, working with the range of justice institutions present in each country including state, non-state, and hybrid systems.
- The program designs and implements innovative justice initiatives across development sectors, recognizing that rights and accountability are instrumental to achieving broader development outcomes.
- The program is grounded in evidence-based approaches as improving justice outcomes and processes of reform requires better understanding of existing structures and dynamics.

J4P Principles

Focus on justice from the user perspective
Value evidence-based approaches grounded in context
Recognise the importance of demand in building equitable justice systems
Understand justice as a cross-sectoral issue

J4P in East Asia and Pacific

In East Asia and Pacific, J4P is active in Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu.

J4P in Africa

In Africa, J4P is active in Nigeria and Sierra Leone.

The Justice for the Poor Approach

J4P focuses on processes of reform rather than on institutional blueprints.

J4P’s engagement typically begins with research, analysis and dialogue to expand understanding of grievance and dispute resolution processes. J4P supports capacity building for evidence-based policy making, inclusive dialogue and stakeholder coalitions.

From these findings, J4P programs develop operational models specific to country context and test their ability to assist marginalized groups in redressing grievance.

Following pilots, successful elements are scaled up and mainstreamed either through expanded programs or inclusion in national policy.
Justice for the Poor Operational Activities

**Access to Justice** - working to improve the legitimacy and accessibility of formal, informal, and hybrid systems capable of peacefully, equitably, and durably resolving disputes. Activities take into account user perspectives, capacity constraints and the range of justice institutions, while linking demand and supply side interventions. Current programs include:

- **Indonesia**: The program has piloted a range of legal empowerment programs around women’s access to justice.
- **Sierra Leone**: J4P is supporting a national legal aid strategy and scale-up of paralegal services.
- **Solomon Islands**: The program is developing an evidence base for national access to justice strategy.
- **Nigeria**: J4P is supporting the expansion of legal aid to resolve basic civil disputes.

**Equity in Service Delivery** - piloting and mainstreaming systems for addressing grievances around the provision of public goods and entitlements including health, education, social protection and public works. Current activities include:

- **Timor-Leste**: J4P is piloting a grievance mechanism for a cash transfer program.
- **Nigeria** and **Sierra Leone**: The program is using legal empowerment and social accountability tools to support grievance mechanisms in public service delivery.
- **Papua New Guinea** and **Indonesia**: J4P has undertaken analysis to support the design of community driven development projects.

**Land and Natural Resource Governance** - improving the equity and durability of processes for contestation and deal making around land and natural resources. Current activities include:

- **Vanuatu**: The program is working to facilitate more inclusive and equitable engagement of customary land holders in the formal economy through improved understanding of land leasing.
- **Solomon Islands** and **Timor-Leste**: J4P is supporting mechanisms to mitigate conflict and promote equitable arrangements in the development of land, forestry and mining.
- **Sierra Leone**: J4P supports good governance in extractive industries, building on research to advise on accountability and grievance redress mechanisms.

Justice for the Poor Thematic Areas

**Gender** - the program addresses gender as a primary source of inequity in contestations around rights and entitlements and seeks to clarify what kinds of justice institutions, processes or arrangements enable equal opportunities, access and outcomes in plural legal contexts, and how they emerge.

**Development Effectiveness** - this thematic area assesses the extent to which the J4P ‘program approach’ is an effective way to create durable, legitimate and equitable institutions that promote justice.

J4P Aims

To address the immediate justice-related needs of the marginalized through ‘best fit’ rather than simply ‘best practice’ initiatives.

To enhance the effectiveness of development efforts by supporting the inclusion of justice and conflict management.

To bring about incremental systemic change, in the long term, to justice sector institutions and systems of governance by supporting demand side pressures for reform.

To promote legitimate and adaptive justice institutions to manage contest around injustice, exclusion and grievance in fragile and conflict-affected settings.

J4P Donors

- Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID); Government of the Netherlands; Government of Japan; Government of Ireland; and the Governments of Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Finland and Sweden.

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