

J4A's Cross Sector Coordination - essential to the delivery of justice

All of us engage in coordinated activity in virtually every aspect of our daily life. Coordinating individual activities to deliver the overall goal is an integral and essential part of everything we do and is as necessary in the justice sector as anywhere else. For example, in a football game, a great run and cross by a winger is of limited value if the striker has not coordinated his run into the penalty box to get on the end of the cross.

All justice sector organisations need to work in partnership to deliver their respective services effectively and professionally

Wednesday, the witnesses on Thursday and the court listed the case for Friday?

The Justice for All programme recognises this need and is working with stakeholders from across the sector to encourage coordination, cooperation and joint working in a broad range of areas.

Aside from criminal justice, there are many other areas where coordination needs to improve to deliver justice.

Passing well constructed laws is important, but it is also necessary that the organisations responsible for enforcing those laws accept and embrace their responsibilities and that the people most affected by them understand the laws and are willing and able to comply.

There are many types of dispute resolution in operation in Nigeria, ranging from traditional - palace courts to the formal - high courts. All have an important individual role however they also need to work together so that cases are directed to the most appropriate forum, that users are able to exercise choice in the selection of service and that where appropriate their referral systems for cases to pass between different actors are



Public meeting Violence Against Persons Bill

and to ensure that justice outcomes are equitable and effective. In the criminal justice arena, the police may arrest suspects and carry out high quality investigations, but they rely on the prisons to hold the suspects, the courts to bring them to trial, the department of public prosecution of the Ministry of Justice to prosecute them, private lawyers or civil society to defend and witnesses to testify. Only by coordinating all of these activities can effective and efficient justice be delivered. How would a case progress if the accused came to court on Monday, the prosecuting counsel on Tuesday, the defence counsel on

synchronised.

J4A is working across the sector to encourage partnerships that develop / enhance service providers' understanding of the needs of users, and users' understanding of service providers' constraints. This coordinated approach to justice delivery, whether it relates to a specific service or a broader system, can lead to huge gains in efficiency and a significant reduction in errors and other avoidable problems.

In this issue:

PAGE 1 J4A and Cross Sector Coordination

PAGE 2 Traditional Justice Systems (TJS)

PAGE 3 Justice Reform Teams (JRTs)

PAGE 4 Recent events...

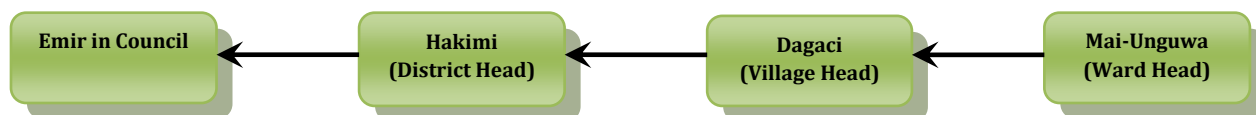
A look at Traditional Justice Systems (TJS): case study of Dutse Emirate in Jigawa State

Traditional Justice Systems (TJS) in Nigeria are as old as the hills. Many people especially the poor and vulnerable rely on these systems for settling disputes. The J4A programme carried out a research on TJS in two districts (Dutse and Sakwaya) in the Dutse Emirate of Jigawa State. The purpose of the study was to identify the different types of systems, their weaknesses and strengths, the needs and concerns of users and the issues within the TJS that would most benefit from change. Examples of such change include the use of more effective and efficient record keeping, the development of ADR skills and increased gender sensitivity by traditional rulers. The findings from the study showed that rural as well as urban dwellers of Dutse Emirate use the TJS, the traditional rulers in particular, to seek justice for minor and major complaints. For many people within Dutse Emirate, the choice of the TJS for dispute resolution stems from the ease of access (there are over 2000 traditional rulers including Mai-Unguwas, Dagacis, Hakimis and the Emir and his council), the fact that the service is relatively free and that the users understand the language of the proceedings. The study also established that an efficient hierarchy exists in the emirate (see Figure 1) that allows for comparatively effective checks and balances. The hierarchy is followed strictly and although a dispute may be lodged at the emirate council, it will either be sent back to lower chiefs or a committee set up to look into it depending on the kind of dispute it is.

Traditional Rulers have an important role to play regarding dispute resolution within their locality...if something happens within their communities they are approached instead of the police or the courts. Additionally, in places like the markets, they do have Sarkin Kasuwa (market chief), Sarkin Pawa (chief of butchers) and Sarkin Tasha (Motor Park chief) to solve problems of their craftsmen (members) rather than going to court or the police. The Sarkin Kasuwa is appointed by the Hakimi of the province in question. If the dispute is complicated, it will be further taken to a higher authority. Where a crime is involved, the police will be directly involved.

Usman Jahun (Child Protection Network, Jigawa State) at an interactive meeting on TJS

Figure 1:
TJS hierarchy
in Dutse
Emirate



Coordinating Reforms across the sector

The Federal Justice Sector Reform Coordinating Committee (FJSRCC) has functioned for more than three years. Its monthly meetings bring together representatives from across the justice sector to develop ideas on how the sector can be reformed. This Committee and the ones like it in a number of states around the country have no executive authority, but they are still able to make an important contribution to the reform of the sector. Their 'authority' does not come from a statute book, rather it is the product of being able to speak as one voice and act together to influence specific service providers or other key actors in the justice sector. When the entire sector (which includes representatives from Police, Judiciary, Legislature, a range of Ministries, private lawyers, civil society and many others) speaks then everyone listens.

In recent months the FJSRCC has supported the Nigerian Prisons Service to review its Standing Orders which will enhance penal administration in the country, and carried out a review of the implementation of Family Courts in the FCT under its international human rights obligations.



Handing over of the draft Prisons Standing Order

It is high time we put behind us the culture of throwing blame at each other's doorstep and come together to work and build a better judicial system as justice delivery is our collective responsibility which, as concerned stakeholders, we must not shy away from.

Honourable Justice R. H. Cudjoe OFR, FCJEI (Chief Judge of Kaduna State)

Coordinated criminal justice delivery

The J4A programme is working with the criminal justice sector in Enugu State to speed up the delivery of justice. This pilot intervention began by encouraging each criminal justice organisation to look inwards at the way they operate, and identify specific aspects of their own performance that delay the delivery of justice. These initial sessions are being followed by a series of gradually broader groupings attended by increasing numbers of justice sector actors thereby developing the understanding of each others roles and constraints and illustrating their interdependence. The products of these sessions are proposals aimed at improving the way that individual organisations deliver their services (Police, Prisons, Ministry, Judiciary, Lawyers, etc.) taking into account the needs of the other organisations and make suggestions for more effective cooperation. This not only helps them individually but also helps them collectively; and most importantly helps the users of the criminal justice system who see a joined-up coordinated justice sector dealing with their case.

Alongside this intervention, the Enugu Justice Sector Reform Team has been working with the sector to support a programme to minimise the number of stalled criminal cases in the courts and reduce the backlog of cases. They have also been supporting the improvement of Human Rights Desks in Police Stations in an effort to reduce inappropriate cases being brought before the courts.



Cross Sector Coordination at work in Kaduna and Enugu States

Enugu - Enugu State Justice Sector Reform Team (ESJRT)

The J4A programme kicked off by rebuilding partnerships developed by its predecessor the Security, Justice and Growth (SJG) programme. One of these was the JRT in Enugu State. Since then the JRT has been busy with 2 major activities. Firstly, the team is extending the use of human rights desks in police stations in the state: human rights desks are been installed in 11 stations in the state to provide advice and services that ensure that the human rights of citizens who come into contact with the police in these divisions are respected in line with provisions set out in the Constitution, relevant legislation and codes of conduct. The ESJRT has also been supporting the Judiciary Task Force that has been set up to resolve or dispose of stalled criminal cases in the courts. As is the case in other states of Nigeria, the number of 'awaiting trial persons' in Enugu is about 70% of prison population. The ESJRT is helping to ensure that criminal cases progress through the court system in an expeditious and efficient manner, that accused persons are held for as short a time as possible before trial and that all parties are satisfied that justice is being delivered equitably and fairly.

The ESJRT currently has 26 members drawn from all the key justice sector institutions, as well as a traditional ruler. The team meets once every month and its secretariat is the state's Ministry of Justice.

Kaduna - Kaduna Justice Sector Coordination Group (KJSCG)

The KJSCG was inaugurated on the 17th of November 2011. Like other JRTs, it comprises of representatives from across the entire sector including the Judiciary, Ministry of Justice, Police and Prisons and aims to work together to help the justice sector take a more coordinated approach to the delivery of justice services in the state. As well as the main justice organisations, members are also drawn from the NBA (Nigerian Bar Association), Legal Aid Council, civil society and the State House of Assembly Committee on Judiciary. When the KJSCG met for the first time, it considered some of the key justice sector services that would benefit from enhanced coordination and how improvements might be achieved.

As well as establishing the group as a credible and respected voice in the reform of the justice sector in the state, the group also considered what other organisations should be invited to join them and the most effective way to function. The group is already working hard to identify key joint actions that can be implemented to speed up the criminal justice process. J4A will continue to provide support, focusing especially on developing the capacity of the group to coordinate the activities of the justice sector in the state.



Inauguration of the Kaduna Justice Sector Coordination Group

Our vision is “to provide fair, timely, accessible and equal justice for all Nigerians, in an efficient manner...and to gain the confidence of the public in the administration of justice in Nigeria”...It is time to “walk the talk”.

Mr Mohammed Bello Adoke, SAN

Honourable Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister for Justice

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Recent Events

Nigeria Police Force (NPF) Public Relation and Media Strategy

The NPF, with support from the J4A programme organised a workshop from the 5th - 7th of December 2011 in Kaduna. The workshop was to review the draft of the NPF Media and Communication Strategy which is now being called the NPF Public Relation and Media Strategy. Participants were drawn from the media and public relations department of the Police Force headquarters, 12 zonal commands, 36 states including the FCT command, NPF training schools and media practitioners. The final document emerging from the



Police woman at the workshop

workshop is being reviewed by key NPF personnel and technical experts and will soon be presented to the NPF management for consideration, adaptation and implementation.

Kaduna Magistrate Courts Validation Workshop

Following an assessment of Magistrate Courts in Kaduna State to identify areas for support to increase efficiency and service delivery in the courts, a one day workshop was organised to validate the findings and recommendations of the assessment. This meeting which took place on Tuesday 06 December



Participants at the workshop

2011 in Kaduna provided an opportunity for participants to gain a better understanding of the shortcomings of the court systems in Kaduna state and see the need for making the systems more effective.

Kano State Police Community Interactive Week

The Police Community Relations Committee (PCRC) Kano state and the Nigeria Police Kano state Police command organised a police community interactive week from 24th -30th October 2011 with a theme 'Enhancing safety and security through police and community partnership'. The special guest of honour, the Executive Governor of Kano State, was represented by his deputy, Dr Abdullahi Umar Ganduje who in his speech said 'today I have seen a Police Force in Kano State and its leadership that is more civil than civilian themselves...if there is any programme I have ever attended which can be called a success this programme is 100% a success'.

The one week interactive programme strengthened the already existing cordial relationships between the Police, PCRC members, other security outfits in the state and the Kano society. During the course of the week's events, participants confirmed that information flow to the police by members of the public had greatly improved. One of the outcomes of the week is that the Kano society is better educated and enlightened on interacting with the police as the programme's activities touched almost all the people groups in Kano – cultural and ethnic groups, expatriates, commercial groups such as the motorcycle riders, commercial buses and taxi drivers, religious and traditional leaders, business groups (skilled and unskilled workers) women, school-aged children and the elderly.

**The J4A Programme
Nigeria wishes all our
partners
a Happy and Peaceful
New Year!**



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