Innovation - Sierra Leone Justice App

According to the [**report of Task Force on Justice**](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.justice.sdg16.plus%2Freport&data=02%7C01%7Cainura.bekkoenova%40undp.org%7C2b233fd9fc3140cbd45508d7095a24af%7Cb3e5db5e2944483799f57488ace54319%7C0%7C0%7C636988155082943595&sdata=MjQ02TIQKMS9h71drZ43v9ltVLPMeo%2BjwPGm6t8%2BxyQ%3D&reserved=0), two-thirds of the world’s population and especially the poor are deprived of justice. Approximately 244 million people experience extreme conditions of injustice and around 1.5 million people have unsatisfied legal needs around the world. There is thus an urgent need for justice systems to shift from a model that provides justice only for the few, to one that delivers measurable improvements in justice for all. Innovation on traditional means of delivering justice and making justice more accessible through technological solutions can narrow the gap that currently exists. In that regard, UNDP has been promoting innovations on access to justice for all, tailored to the local contexts and especially the needs of disadvantaged groups in many countries.

In Sierra Leone UNDP has been promoting transparency of the judiciary through a Criminal Case Management Systems App, called the Justice App. Designed to improve coordination of the already overburdened case management system, fast-track court cases, improve information sharing within the justice sector, and minimise logistical case transportation issues, the Justice App was developed in the context of the Sierra Leone Government’s poverty reduction strategy, which identified the reliance on a paper filing system within the justice sector as cause for lost and destroyed files which continued to hinder progress on case management. Since its creation, the app has allowed for a more efficient way of updating the database while also facilitating case tracking. It has been designed so it can be used on tablet devices with the use of a SIM card, therefore enabling its use in courts without access to WiFi and also has solar powered charging packs which ensure the tablets remain functional during power outages.

The Justice App is the first of its kind in Sierra Leone, as well as in West Africa. So far it has been utilised at the highest level of the judiciary including by the Chief Justice, to monitor cases in an efficient manner. To date, the app has been extended to 11 Magistrates Courts and 7 High Courts, with members of the judiciary from all 16 districts of the country having received training on its use. With more than 750 cases registered since its inception in 2017, the app is striving towards its objective of implementing a modernised and capable case management across the country. UNDP has recently been supporting the judiciary in widening the scope of the app, and has been coordinating with the Ministry of Justice to link it to the Correctional Services electronic case management system.