The Justice Audit

WHAT IS A JUSTICE AUDIT?

The Justice Audit is a rigorous data collection, analysis and visualization process for criminal justice policy makers and other stakeholders advancing justice and the rule of law. The JA does not rank countries nor score institutions. Instead, it presents an empirical account of system resources, processes, and practices. It is a powerful diagnostic resource which takes a problem-solving approach to meeting demands on the ground, while being affordable to the state. The Justice Audit is conducted in partnership with the host nation and a local research institution using a methodology that emphasizes transparency. It is multi-dimensional, sustainable, and presented in a user-friendly, Web-based format:
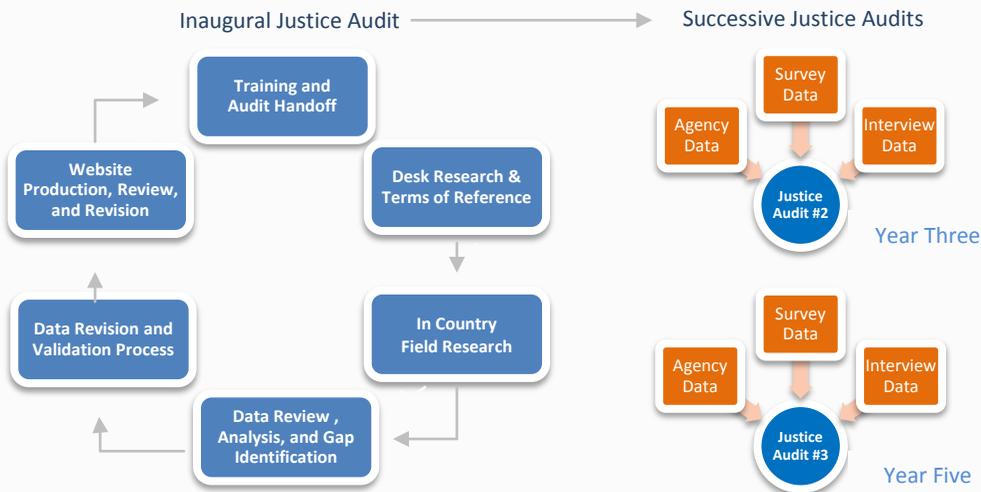
Multi-Dimensional Data Collection	Sustainable Policy Analysis Protocol	Web-Based Graphical Information Display
•System-Wide, Institution-Based Data •Customary Justice Practice Information •Expert/Constituent Surveys •Individual Interviews	•Structured Database of Key Measures and Variables •Tailored Survey Questionnaires •Meta-Data and Source Documentation Catalogue	•Infrastructure Maps and other Geographic Data •Graphical Display of Quantitative Data •Data Input Administration Interface

WHY CONDUCT A JUSTICE AUDIT?

Conducting a Justice Audit using this methodology can be of immense value in countries that are recovering from recent civil conflict, undergoing societal transformation, or are otherwise committed to making measurable improvements to how criminal justice is delivered in their jurisdictions. It is unique in its focus on a data-driven approach, which takes specific local context into account and captures data across the whole justice system (including customary justice mechanisms). Furthermore, it engages government directly in the collection and analysis of its own data, and leaves it with the software infrastructure to conduct periodic Justice Audits going forward.

WHAT IT DOES

- Takes a 'snapshot' of a country's criminal justice system illustrating how the justice process works, the points of system pressure and associated challenges, as well as opportunities to apply good practices to solve problems.

- Organizes a spectrum of data about a country's criminal justice system into an updatable database with benchmark measures and variables displayed through a graphical user interface (GUI), including GIS mapping.
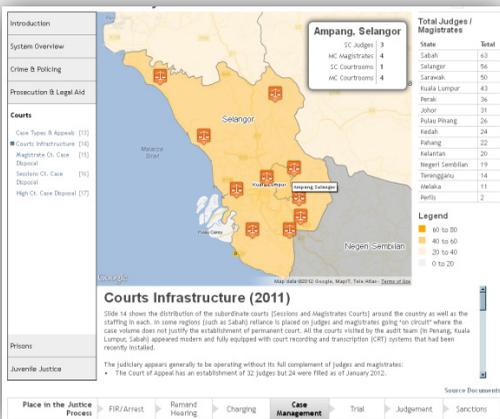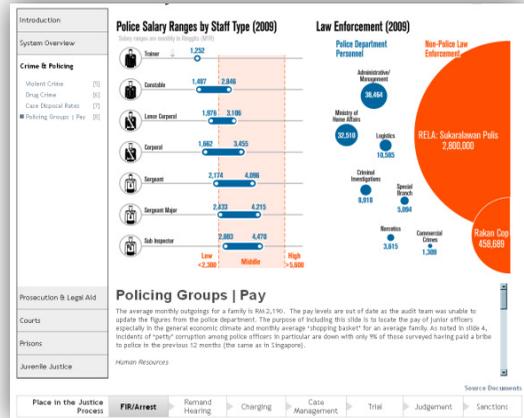

WHY IT'S AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO VIEW THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

- The Justice Audit triangulates official agency-based data, survey-based perception data (expert and public), and individual interviews, to get beneath what 'seems' to be, to what the situation actually *is.*

- The Justice Audit is a collaborative venture between the host nation and the Justice Audit Team. It invests the home country in using its own data to improve system performance.

WHAT MAKES IT UNIQUE

Instead of having to wade through pages of dense technical language and endless tables of figures, the Justice Audit is user friendly with one-click navigation throughout. The narrative is plain-speaking. Information graphics highlight important nuances in the data. And computer mapping reveals birds'-eye- and zoom-in- views of the distribution of criminal justice resources, with easy access to all source documentation.

The Justice Audit generates a series of data-driven, justice-process narratives—crime and policing; prosecution, legal aid, adjudication and equality of arms; detention, prison, and sanctioning—and weaves them together to describe how the whole of a country's justice system operates (including customary and non-state justice mechanisms).

Most important, the Justice Audit helps to develop the capacity of a country's information authority to run successive Justice Audits at regular intervals going forward.

WHO ADMINISTERS THE JUSTICE AUDIT?

The Justice Audit is administered by the Governance and Justice Group (GJG) and Justice Mapping Systems (JMS) in association with Bluhm Legal Clinic, Northwestern University. Together, they partner with a respected institution in the host country. It is headed up by Judge Johann Kriegler, former justice of the South African Constitutional Court.

WHAT WE HAVE DONE

The GJG has conducted two Justice Audits of criminal justice systems: firstly in Helmand, Afghanistan (2011 for the UK Stabilisation Unit); and secondly in Malaysia, 2012 in association with the International Centre for Law and Legal Studies (I-CeLLS). Further it has applied its methodology to reduce jail overcrowding in Manila (2012 in the Philippines for the ICRC).

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At a meeting of international experts to review the Justice Audit methodology at Wiston House, UK, one participant observed that it was 'the justice equivalent to a full medical check-up', describing it as a 'non-specific survey of all factors that contribute to the functioning of the body politic' while 'leaving the diagnosis to the patient based on what is there.' Its value is that it is 'complete' and presented in an accessible way 'without being prescriptive.'