

Investing in and Financing Justice: In Search of Policy Solutions for Sustainable Scaling up of Effective and Accessible Justice

22 October 2020

8:00 – 9:30am (CET, Ottawa time) / 14:00 – 15:30 (CEST, Paris time)

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The world has been dramatically shaken by the current experience of the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuing economic crisis. The demands on justice systems worldwide are rapidly surging, with loss of jobs and livelihoods, bankruptcy and commercial conflicts, evictions, small claims, social protection and family law, and most probably, criminal cases are increasing globally, exacerbated by prison overcrowding and need to ensure state duty to protect health and life of all incarcerated individuals. Poor and vulnerable are unequally and disproportionately effected by corruption, joblessness, health challenges, discrimination and other problems that the pandemic has intensified. Yet, even before the crisis, many justice systems have already faced challenges in responding to legal needs and operated under tight fiscal pressures, which are likely to increase in view of growing public indebtedness.

Justice systems, as never before, need to be accessible, fair, and effective. An economic recovery hampered by an inefficient and inaccessible justice system will not only be slower: it will also be more unequal and less inclusive of vulnerable populations. Fast and fair resolution of conflicts is a fundamental tile to rebuild the economy in the post-COVID-19 world.

Besides making the case for continuous investment in justice to ensure sustainable and inclusive recovery, there is a growing need to make the case for more and better resourcing of access to civil justice across different sectors; and to identify pathways and opportunity structures by which this can be encouraged.

To this end, this session will provide an opportunity to reflect on the need for investment in effective and accessible justice and explore innovative policy approaches to increasing access to civil justice financing and responding to legal needs across different sectors and legal needs issues.

Focus topics:

- Deepening the business case for investing in effective and accessible justice
- Public financing of access to justice - lessons from the field
- Understanding the scale and nature of problems and role of new normative tools

Moderated by: Zaza Namoradze, Open Society Foundations

Panel Members:

- **Tatyana Teplova**, Head of Division and Senior Justice Counsellor, OECD
- **Sara Vassalo**, Directorate General of Justice, European Commission
- **Trevor Farrow**, Canadian Forum of Civil Justice
- **Pilar Domingo and Marcus Manuel**, Overseas Development Institute
- **Gustavo Maurino**, Professor at University of Palermo and Di Tella University in Buenos Aires, and Former National Director of Access to Justice in Argentina
- **Roman Romanov**, Director of Rule of Law, International Renaissance Foundation, Ukraine

Q&A with participants