

# THE INFORMAL JUSTICE COURT PROJECT AT IKOYI & KIRIKIRI FEMALE CORRECTIONAL CENTRES, LAGOS NIGERIA

## SUSTAINABILITY REPORT



## Abstract

*This is a report on the working and sustainability of the Informal Justice Court (IJC) project in Nigeria. The Public Interest Law Partnership (PILP) and Stichting Aardschap, applied and received funding for the project from KMF of Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law in 2022.*

*The project is a continuation of the pilot IJC project which KMF supported in 2021. Through the IJC, we utilize a multidisciplinary approach by fusing the law and art to innovatively tackle the problem of prolonged and unnecessary pre-trial detention, one of the major justice problems around the world. The aim of the project is highlighted as follows:*

- To engage and train pre-trial detention inmates in the correctional center, by improving and accelerating inmates' judiciary process through mock trials;*
- To decongest the overpopulated correctional centers by assisting awaiting trial inmates with free legal representation, thereby securing their release in the long run;*
- To simplify the court process and train inmates on the intricacies of the justice system prior to their trial dates in court*
- To ensure that the Nigerian justice stakeholders and policy makers are engaged in order to create lasting solutions to the justice problems.*

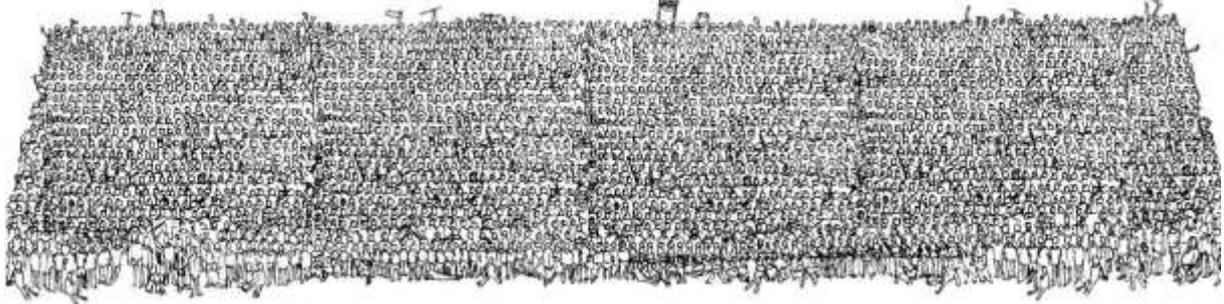
*This report supports our initial assessment for the scalability of the IJC and provides the steps that may be taken towards ensuring the sustainability of the project within the Nigerian Criminal Justice System. We have undertaken various activities and done sufficient research to make an informed assessment of the potential and strategy for adopting the IJC and sustaining it within the local context.*

*We thank KMF for their support, and all our partners in the public and private sectors for their contributions and participation.*

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# IKOYI PRISON POPULATION



## SELECTION 1

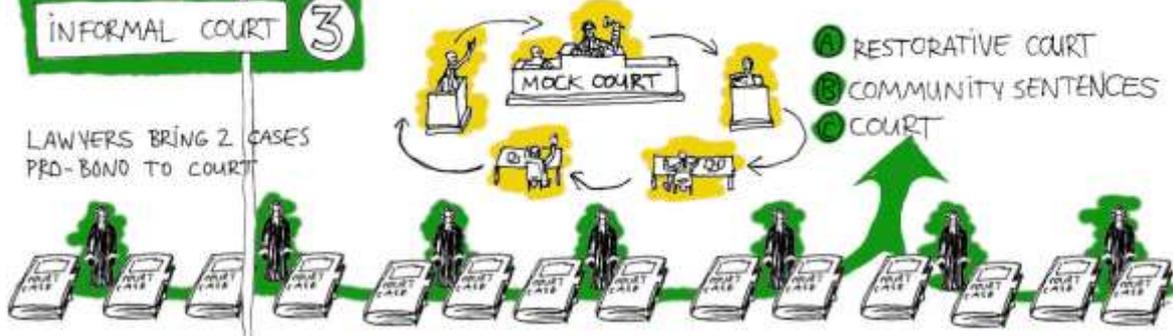


## TRAINING 2

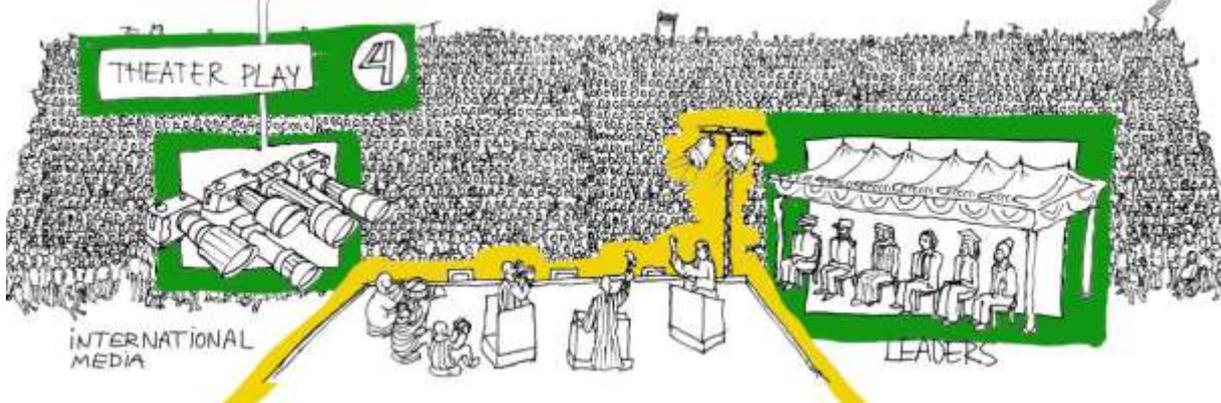


## INFORMAL COURT 3

LAWYERS BRING 2 CASES PRO-BOND TO COURT



## THEATER PLAY 4





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# INTRODUCTION: INFORMAL JUSTICE COURT PROJECT

## 1.1. PROJECT BACKGROUND:

Lagos State is the commercial capital and nerve center of Nigeria, with an estimated population of 16 million people, 70% of whom are adjudged to be indigent. The State's dense population, combined with low levels of individual economic power, a high illiteracy rate among the poor and attitudinal issues creates deep urban inequalities. The language that the court uses, the strict formalities and lack of resources to pay fees for legal advice or representation also prevent a large number of persons from enforcing their rights. As a result, large swathes of the population have difficulty using Lagos State's legal system to protect their interests—that is, when they can access the legal system at all.

Legal aid and other government-funded programs aimed at increasing access to justice remain woefully insufficient. Despite the government's efforts, requests for legal services far outstrips the available supply leaving institutions over-burdened, Left without recourse, citizens often turn to self-help, vigilantism or simply give up, having been left without any access to justice at all. The government has acknowledged that these resources are grossly inadequate, and that it intends to support programs which increase access.

In 2012, the Lagos State Government ("LASG"), through the office of the Lagos State Attorney General, established the Public Interest Law Partnership ("PILP"). PILP is a platform where Lagos State partners with private law firms to provide pro bono legal services to indigent citizens in Lagos State. The scheme has been registered as an incorporated trustee under Part C of the Companies and Allied matters Act, Cap C20, Laws of the Federation of Nigeria 2004 ("CAMA"). The PILP has since worked to develop the culture of Pro Bono in the country through two intervention strategies - a pro bono clearinghouse and several pro bono projects.

One of such pro bono projects is the Informal justice Court (IJC) which was originally conceived by our Dutch Partners, Stichting Aardschap. After 4 years of research and assisting Aardschap in conceptualizing the project to fit the Nigerian legal system, in 2020, PILP with our project partners kicked off the IJC in one of Lagos' most congested prisons (Ikoyi) to improve and accelerate inmates' judiciary process through mock trials and pro bono assistance. Since the pilot, more than 300 pre-trial detainees have prepared their cases through the IJC and received free legal counsel thereby ensuring their rights are promoted and protected. The demand for the project is vast and our scalability report shows that scaling is highly feasible.

In 2022, the follow-up project Informal Justice Court 2.0: From Experiment to Model was implemented to strengthen the successful pilot by extending it to more inmates in Ikoyi, Kirki Kiri Prison and also importantly, making it available to the only female prison in Lagos, while developing a promotional manual to inform and make the program available to other prisons in Nigeria and worldwide. At the same time, the project introduces the IJC into the local operational pro bono framework starting with

Lagos’s restorative, ADR and criminal justice programs. In doing so, the program’s reach and effectiveness will increase significantly.

## **1.2. TACKLING THE AWAITING TRIAL SITUATION WITH THE IJC:**

Prolonged, unnecessary pre-trial detention is one of the major global justice problems, affecting around 15million people yearly. In the 5 prisons of Lagos, 90% of the thousands of inmates have been awaiting trial for many years with no access to quality counsel, a judge or knowledge of their legal position. The pretrial detention situation in Lagos is an example of the aforementioned larger justice problem of prolonged detention around the world. As in other jurisdictions, the large majority of pre-trial detainees have no access to legal counsel, or their counsel is inactive or poor in quality.

Being a pre-trial detainee for a long time creates uncertainty and severely congests the justice and prison system. To reduce this grave (global) justice problem, not only policy changes and government investments are needed, but also innovative and practical programs that can be carried out in prisons around the world.

After four years of preparation, in 2021, PILP and Stichting Aardschap in collaboration with several stakeholders in the public and private sectors including the Lagos State Government’s Ministry of Justice, Nigerian universities, the Nigerian Correctional Service, the Judiciary, PILP partner pro bono law firms and NGOs amongst others, established the Informal Justice Court (IJC) in Ikoyi prison - a training program for pre-trial detainees to prepare their cases assisted by pro bono lawyers assigned by PILP to them. The project is aimed at improving and accelerating inmates’ judiciary process through mock trials. In the court that is established inside the prison, the inmates act out their own cases, assisted by PILP partner pro bono lawyers and law students. By taking on the different roles present in a formal court, such as judge, prosecutor, defense counsel and defendant, inmates gain legal knowledge and learn the skills to defend their case in court. Pro bono lawyers and law students, who are normally educated in mock courts on university campus, will prepare the cases together with the inmates and help find alternative, innovative legal outcomes that will be incorporated in the legal strategies for their real court case. Finally, the cases of the participating inmates go to court where the inmate has their formal trial, assisted by their pro bono lawyers.

Through the practical learning, they gain skills to defend their case in court, build trust with lawyers, reduce uncertainty and acquire restorative legal strategies for their case. Between October 2020 and September 2022, more than 800 pre-trial inmates have prepared their cases and received free legal counsel through the IJC project.

### 1.3. STAGES OF THE INFORMAL JUSTICE COURT PROJECT IN IKOYI CORRECTIONAL CENTRE – STRAND 1

The pilot was conducted in four stages:

**STAGE 1 – Interviews:** The selection of inmates that will participate in the project. This involved the aforementioned awaiting trial inmates plus a small group of voluntary convicted inmates who were trained to become coaches and assist in future informal court sessions.

**STAGE 2 – Training:** The training program for the participating inmates. In this stage, the inmates learnt more about the set-up, goals and workings of the informal justice court. We invited professionals, such as judges, a professor of Law, the Lagos State University Theater team, lawyers, prosecutors, the community service, NGOs and other staff of the Lagos State Ministry of Justice. These professionals educated the inmates about the justice system, criminal trials and their rights.

**STAGE 3 – Informal Justice Court:** The actual informal justice court was in session in the form of moot courts. The inmates played out selected cases, and they all had key roles like lawyers, court clerks and registrars, and judges. The acting inmates were watched by other inmates, lawyers and staff of the correctional centre.

**STAGE 4 – The Play:** IJC proceedings and stories were made into a theatre play by groups of experienced theatre makers led by the Professor of theatre from the Lagos State University (LASU). The participating inmates acquire acting and performance skills (and learn prop and costume making) during the project and become actors in their own play. The play was performed for the other inmates of Ikoyi Prison, to sensitize and educate a larger group of inmates about their legal position and rights. Decision-makers and stakeholders who can make a difference (the Deputy Chief of Staff to the President of Nigeria, the Lagos State Attorney General, judiciary, policymakers, police, amongst others) were invited to the performance of the play during PILP's pro bono week to raise awareness of the issue of pre-trial detention and its effects. We made sure national and international media covered the project and the play in order to reach the general public.

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#### **Strand 1 – Scaling the pilot to reach more inmates at Ikoyi**

The goal of strand 1 was to expand the initial project to the benefit of the several inmates who had not participated initially. We engaged a wide range of inmates and covered a variety of alleged offences like stealing, murder, manslaughter, breach of the peace, assault and conspiracy. We engaged the experienced inmates who participated during the pilot to assist with training the new participating inmates. At strand 1 we achieved the following:

- a. We reached a larger number of inmates especially those who were reluctant during the pilot;
- b. Ambassadors of the project i.e the old inmates, encouraged new inmates who were admitted to the correctional center to participate in the IJC sessions in preparation for their court dates;

- c. More success stories of discharged inmates motivated additional inmates to participate in the project;
- d. Professionals in custody like lawyers and law enforcement officers participated actively, thereby using their experience to teach other inmates;
- e. We worked on the lapses of the pilot and ensured that Strand 1 was more effective;
- f. We let the inmates take charge and coordinate all the fortnightly sessions during Strand 1, with lawyers increasingly taking a backseat as spectators only making corrections where necessary, thereby accomplishing a sustainable model of inmate-driven IJC sessions.

## **1.4 STAGES OF THE INFORMAL JUSTICE COURT PROJECT IN KIRIKIRI FEMALE CORRECTIONAL CENTRE – STRAND 2.**

The project was conducted in three stages:

Stage 1 – Interviews: The selection of inmates participating in the project. This entailed the awaiting trial inmates plus a small group of voluntary convicted inmates who were trained to become coaches to assist in future informal court sessions.

Stage 2 - Training: The training program for the participating inmates, during which the female inmates learnt more about the set-up, goals and workings of the informal justice court. We invited professionals, such as a magistrate, a law professor, lawyers, a prosecutor, officials from the newly established Lagos State Restorative Justice Unit, and staff of the community service department who all addressed the inmates and enlightened them on the justice system, proper conduct in court, the option of fines and non-custodial sanctions, plea bargaining as well as restorative justice option which is available for inmates who have been charged with non-capital offences. The inmates were educated about the justice system, trials and their rights in general.

Stage 3 – The informal Justice Court/Mock Trials: During this stage we facilitated volunteer inmates in sharing their stories and set up the informal justice court to enable the inmates act out selected cases. The sessions were organised with pro bono lawyers and other inmates.

The Deputy Chief Registrar, Lagos State Judiciary who is also a Chief Magistrate was in attendance. She identified the IJC as an opportunity to engage in one-on-one discussions with the participating inmates and therefore provided them with the opportunity to outline their legal positions with the guidance of PILP pro bono lawyers in a bid to facilitate the release of inmates who were yet to meet up with their bail conditions.

## **1.5 TARGET AUDIENCE AND IMPACT**

The project has several target groups and seeks to have a positive impact on a diverse group of people.

For key Nigerian stakeholders, policy makers, and actors in the justice system; the project has shed more light on the menace of long pretrial detention to the local and international justice stakeholders through lectures, articles, and presentations. Some of the individual groups are highlighted as follows:

1. Inmates in Nigerian Correctional Centers including the vulnerable female demographic are empowered as follows: They gain a better understanding of the criminal justice system, prepare for their trials, receive pro bono counsel for the indigent inmates and gain new skills such as acting, advocacy and communication. They are also better rehabilitated prior to their reintegration into open society.
2. Pro bono lawyers and law firms: Increase the impact of their pro bono efforts and engage in the IJC as an innovative approach to legal clinics
3. National justice community in Lagos and Nigeria, specifically Nigerian Correctional Service and Ministry of Justice: An introduction to a restorative justice mechanism that can be utilized in reducing prison congestion and providing pre-trial detainees an opportunity to engage with the justice system in a more effective manner that can impact the productivity of the courts
4. International justice community, specifically International Prison association and knowledge platforms: An innovative means of tackling the global challenge of prison congestion
5. General public: A better understanding of the justice system and a sensitization of their rights which will provide the ability to engage better with the system

## **2.1 WORKING AND SUSTAINABILITY**

In exploring under which conditions the IJC Project can sustainably fit ADR, restorative and criminal justice programs in Lagos and Nigeria, we employed several research methods. We firstly considered the Nigerian Legal system and then researched best practices, engaged in extensive discussions on sustainability with key stakeholders in strands 1 and 2 of the project and conducted interviews and meetings with our key partners.

## **2.2 ALTERNATIVE DISPUTE RESOLUTION (ADR)/ RESTORATIVE JUSTICE.**

Restorative Justice is a response to wrong doing that prioritizes repairing harm by providing an opportunity for those harmed, and those who take responsibility for the harm caused; to communicate, make amends and put the parties in the position they would have been prior to the occurrence of the harm i.e. return parties to status quo. ADR is the use of other methods of dispute resolution like negotiation mediation, conciliation, or arbitration without resorting to litigation. Plea bargain on the other hand is simply a negotiated agreement between the prosecutor and the defendant, where the defendant is given an option to plead to a lesser offence or to one of multiple charges in exchange for a lesser sentence.

In Nigeria, the courts and legislation have resolved that ADR is only exclusive to civil cases and cannot be applicable in criminal cases, as crimes are deemed as offences against the state and not only against the complainant. Many scholars have likened plea bargain to ADR, and even though ADR has not been accepted as an alternative to criminal trials, it is firmly rooted in our judicial system especially in the case of plea bargain. In Lagos for instance, plea bargain has been incorporated into the Administration of Criminal Justice Law of Lagos.

The project can therefore leverage on the use of various alternatives to custodial sentences for quick dispensation of justice through settlements by parties to the suit as a form of alternative dispute resolution mechanism. In the course of strand 2 of the IJC Project, PILP invited a prosecutor from the Lagos State Ministry of Justice who enlightened the inmates on the option of plea bargain as an alternative for speedy resolution of cases, where the inmate admits that he is guilty of the alleged crime. It is not mandatory but optional if the inmate is truly guilty of the alleged offence. Plea bargain saves the time of the court in conducting trial, the inmate would therefore plead guilty to the offence for a lesser sentence. The prosecutor further informed the inmates that upon reaching an agreement which will be put in writing, the inmate is at the discretion to reject the terms reached and the proposed sentence, if it does not seem favorable. After our pilot at Ikoyi, 10 inmates have entered into favorable plea bargain sentences and are currently serving lesser sentences, whilst some other inmates are in the process of concluding plea bargain arrangements.

In strand 2 of the project, we also had staff of the Restorative Justice Unit, Lagos State Ministry of Justice address a crowd of over 250 female inmates in Kirikiri on the option of restorative justice. Although this is an innovation introduced by the State, it has kicked off in full force. Inmates were told that they could make restitution for simple offences that would restore parties to status quo ante i.e. a position before the harm was done. It involves the defendant admitting to the offence and willingness to restore the former position of the complainant. We had inmates who were willing to refund certain amounts of money, and or even stolen items to the complainants.

In practice, PILP counsel have had cases in the Magistrate Courts where the defendants agree to pay back the stolen amounts or even return the items stolen in exchange for a withdrawal of the charge by the prosecutor, this is practicable and has worked in so many cases.

In Strand 2 stage 3 of the project, the Deputy Chief Registrar Legal/ Chief Magistrate, sought ways to involve lawyers in applying to the courts to vary strict bail terms to aid prison decongestion. Many inmates are being held in custody as they have not been able to meet up the bail conditions stipulated by the courts.

## 2.3 STRATEGIC INTEGRATION INTO EXISTING STRUCTURES

As a public-private partnership, one of PILP's intervention strategies is to regularly facilitate thought-provoking knowledge exchange through our seminars and conferences which attract a cross-section of stakeholders from the public and private sectors. We therefore continue to partner with Stichting Aadscharp to showcase the IJC project's findings and present it as a viable restorative justice mechanism to be used in increasing access to justice for the inmates as well as decreasing prison congestion. With our partnership with the Ministry of Justice and correctional services, we have identified an opportunity to encourage the adoption of the model especially as the Nigerian government has shown an appetite for engaging in new restorative justice models to tackle the serious prison congestion problem. The Lagos state government in particular, has recently inaugurated a restorative justice unit who have already collaborated with us on the project.

We believe that by integrating the project into this existing justice framework, we will increase the effectiveness and sustainability of the IJC, using the insights gathered in the experimental phase and connecting it to the available knowledge on the criminal justice system.

**The Nigerian Correctional Service Act 2019:** This Act changed the Nigerian Prison Services to Nigerian Correctional Services, in a bid to convert the system from strictly punitive measures to reformation and rehabilitation of offenders whilst ensuring a smooth reintegration back into society. There is also a focus on non-custodial measures. The IJC is a readily available project that directly fits the government's desired outcomes if fully integrated as part of the criminal justice programs.

**Sections 33 and 34 of The Administration of Criminal Justice Act 2015:** The Act empowers Magistrates as designated by the Chief Judge to visit police stations and other detention facilities once in a month; in the bid to decongest detention centers, and ensure that suspects are not detained beyond the constitutional limit of 24 hours. These visits have a direct impact in decongesting the correctional centres and solving some of the criminal justice problems. As part of the IJC activities, PILP engaged key stakeholders which included facilitating trainings with Magistrates on how best to achieve the Act's mandate. The IJC provides a potential opportunity for Magistrates to identify inmates who can benefit from the provisions of the Act.

**Nigerian Bar Association Conference** in August 2022 served as a platform to further educate stakeholders on the project and collaborate with partners using practical steps from the IJC to enhance access to justice. This practical workshop involved a visit to the Bar Beach police station to provide a live IJC demonstration to suspects to educate them on arraignment proceedings and to ensure that they are not detained beyond the specified constitutional limit, thereby ensuring that their constitutional rights are enforced.

**Supports Government's Policies:** Through the collaborative model requiring minimal funding, the government has the opportunity to achieve several of its policy agendas as it relates to realizing criminal justice reforms.

For participating inmates, the project has already shown the ability to enlighten them on the justice system, court practices as well as to boost their chances of a fair trial through the legal assistance of pro bono lawyers and law students. The project simplifies the complex court practices and provides long awaiting inmates with hope and some expectations on the possible outcomes of their cases.

For newer inmates who have only been to court on arraignment prior to entering the correctional centers; the IJC has become an avenue for understanding their next line of action and whether their offences are bailable. The experienced participating inmates already refer them to attend the IJC sessions where all their questions are answered by the PILP team, and more experienced inmates.

The project proffers solutions that are legally sound and provides a basis for the inmate's legal strategies and approaches in their formal trial. The sessions also positively impact their emotional and psychological wellbeing, by giving them the assurance that they are not forgotten and are still of value to themselves, their families and the society at large, with proper rehabilitation and where possible, reintegration into the society.

**A Successful Proof of Concept:** Now that the inmates have been empowered to self-organize and coordinate the sessions, they can further recommend inmates whose cases are simple and fall under the purview for restorative justice, or plea bargain. The instruction manual we create will also guide the inmates on how to conduct each session, and where necessary the pro bono lawyers, law students and staff of the restorative justice unit can come in to advise and take down necessary information that will be useful for following up with practical steps within the formal criminal justice structures.

The correctional center officials can now more easily identify inmates who have already served their time but have not been released due to administrative issues, other unforeseen circumstances such as misplacement of warrants due to accidents, END SARS protests/riots; inability to pay fines in situations where payment of fine is compulsory alongside custodial sentences, thereby surpassing the maximum sentences. Some of these cases are now being addressed by the right authorities, lawyers, and or referred to NGOs with financial capabilities to assist with paying fines.

The IJC project in Lagos is a model that can easily be integrated by other states, as there is evidence to show that legal and judicial reforms in Lagos usually set a trend for other states in the federation to follow. Thus, the IJC is a proof of concept that can eventually be scaled up to the federal level. An example of this is in 1999, where Lagos State initiated the Directorate for Citizens Rights, which was comprised of the Office of the Public Defender, the Consumer Rights Protection Unit, and the Citizens Mediation Centre. In 2005 the Lagos Attorney General adopted this model, and since then 35 other states of the federation have replicated the directorate based on Lagos' model. Another example is the Lagos State's "multi-door courthouse" model, a public/private collaboration aimed at facilitating alternative dispute resolution, which has also been adopted by several other states

Furthermore, some of PILP’s collaborative partners and stakeholders operate at the Federal level. Thus we will leverage on their support when scaling up the project to other Nigerian states. It will be essential to successfully integrate the scheme in Lagos as a proof of concept before engaging these influential stakeholders towards exploring a similar initiative in their states. .

## 2.4 CRITERIA, CONDITIONS AND REQUIREMENTS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Our research identifies 7 conditions, requirement or criteria that must ideally be met to be able to sustain the project in the prisons where we have already kicked off same

Criteria	Description
1. <b>Effectiveness</b>	Effectiveness of project in terms of meeting its objectives
2. <b>Willingness</b>	Demand for the informal justice court session for new inmates and other inmates whose trials are coming up in court; and willingness of the inmates to have IJC sessions.
3. <b>Partners</b>	Availability of necessary network and partners; pro bono lawyers, key stakeholders in the justice sector, students and trained inmates to partake in the informal justice court Project
4. <b>Project Manual and Guide</b>	Availability of a detailed and workable manual that can be used to guide the facilitators in the absence of PILP Coaches/Lawyers.
5. <b>Sustainability</b>	Availability of resources and form for sustainability
6. <b>Dedicated Time and Practicalities</b>	Availability of dedicated time for continuance of IJC by the inmates and other practicalities inside prisons
7. <b>Support</b>	Support and cooperation of prison administration and inmates

### CRITERIUM 1: EFFECTIVENESS (HAS THE PROJECT BEEN EFFECTIVE?)

Based on a successful pilot of the project at Ikoyi and Kirikiri Female Correctional Centers, and the demand for more sessions by the inmates, it can be inferred that the project has been effective, with a record of 21 inmates being released either on bail or a discharge of their cases. Over 10 inmates have received lesser sentences for grievous offences as a result of plea bargain arrangement facilitated by PILP Counsel.

The inmates are able to set up the IJC Court and facilitate the sessions, they also recommend IJC to new inmates who have questions about the court system and have no idea of what to expect in court.

**Strength(s).**

- The success stories from the Correctional Centers is strong evidence and serves as an encouragement to other inmates to participate in the project.

**Weakness (es):**

- Lack of enthusiasm was noticed with the female inmates who appear to receive a lot more interest from NGOs than the male inmates and have therefore had more disappointment from the many organisations promising them various forms of support. More effort has to be deployed to gain their trust and demonstrate the benefits of the IJC.

**CRITERIUM 2: WILLINGNESS (IS THERE A DEMAND FOR THE PROJECT?)****Strength(s):**

- There is a large demand for the services that are provided in the project, particularly in the male prisons.

**Weakness:**

- The inmates, especially the females, have to see continued evidence of the IJC's benefits in the formal criminal system in order to be willing to participate. They also require incentives such as meals in both prisons because many appear undernourished during the programs and are unable to fully participate until they are fed.

**CRITERIUM 3: PARTNERS (ARE THE RIGHT PARTNERS AVAILABLE TO SUSTAIN THE PROJECT?)****Strength(s).**

- Participating parties in the project are experienced actors in the justice and prison system and are trusted partners of the authorities, they are enthusiastic about making the justice system better.
- A strength of the current project is that it takes place under the umbrella of the PILP. With our strong ties with the government, as an NGO that was original founded by the Lagos

State Government; we are able to use this relationship to promote the project and get the participation of key stakeholders in the justice sector.

- The participating parties, including the Nigerian Correctional Services, have indicated that they want to continue after strand 1 and 2.

**Weakness:**

The communicated commitment by participating partners to continue after the project is not guaranteed, situations may change etc. Funding could be another challenge although only minimal funds are required for monitoring once the training manuals are fully deployed at the centers.

#### **CRITERIUM 4: PROJECT MANUAL/GUIDE (IS THERE A MANUAL THAT CAN BE USED BY SUBSEQUENT FACILITATORS?)**

We identify the following strengths regarding the proposed manual.

**Strength(s).**

- The manual being drafted by AADSCHAP and PILP takes the stress off any partner adopting or continuing the project, as the manual is detailed with specific tools and requirements for each stage to be successful

#### **CRITERIUM 5: SUSTAINABILITY (IS THE MODEL SUSTAINABLE?)**

**Strength(s).**

- There is enthusiasm among the pro bono lawyers and PILP Partners to participate in the informal justice project, pro bono lawyers are already helping inmates, and this model is an engaging way of performing their work.
- The project is set-up in such a way that it can largely be self-sustainable and eventually by inmates themselves, the correctional center staff also show keen interest and appreciate the benefit of the project

**Weakness:**

- Funding is crucial to sustain the project
- It would require the continued commitment of the government and its correctional centers to allow the inmates to engage in the project

## **CRITERIUM 6: DEDICATED TIME (ARE THE INMATES AVAILABLE TO HOLD SOME SESSIONS?)**

### **Strength(s):**

This particularly applies to the female inmates in kirikiri who have more activities and organisations vying for their attention. Now that they have seen the effectiveness of the project they are eager for more sessions

### **Weakness:**

- Due to time constraints and a lineup of activities they usually have, they are not able to dedicate time to participate for adequate number of hours per session (at least 4hrs every 2 weeks). There is a need to encourage the prison officials to adopt IJC as part of their necessary activities every fortnight.

## **CRITERIUM 7: SUPPORT AND COOPERATION OF THE CORRECTIONS OFFICERS**

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### **Strength(s)**

- The officials were enthusiastic to have lawyers and other key justice system actors come regularly to talk to a crowd of inmates at Kirikiri and Ikoyi.

## **2.5 PARTNERS**

The project is developed and carried out with the help of the following key partners:

- STITCHING AADSCHAP, our partner in Netherlands who conceived the initial idea, and participated in the pilot stage of the project, as well as an advisory role in the subsequent project in strands 1 and 2.
- Knowledge Management Fund, Knowledge Platform Security & Rule of Law, a leading knowledge platform for the international Justice sector, sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- The Nigerian Correctional Services, the government agency in charge of prisons in Nigeria;
- Lagos State University - Prof T. Azeez of Theatre Arts Department;
- The Lagos State Ministry of Justice.
- PILP Partner Pro Bono Lawyers and NGOs

- Key policy makers

### 3.0 CONCLUSION

The aforementioned analysis shows that the project has considerable strengths in terms of sustainability. There are also some highlighted weaknesses that need to be addressed and where possible mitigated. Overall, the project has many opportunities to grow, and be sustained. To do so, the potential weaknesses can be mitigated in the following ways:

- Active collaboration with various actors including the Government, Judiciary, Restorative justice team, prosecutors and community service team; which would lead to further visits and subsequent release of inmates
- Use of video recordings to prevent constant need for reliance on manpower
- More trainings for the inmates and staff
- Ensuring effective publicity of positive results, discharged inmates, and success stories of the impact of the project.
- Funding for encouraging inmates to participate through refreshments as well as transportation costs for participating lawyers

## IJC Gallery

The following gallery features a collection of pictures from several activities over the course of the project. They include:

- i. Various workshops and seminars with several key stakeholders, policy makers and project partners
- ii. Preparatory workshops for IJC team members and project partners from varying sectors of the criminal justice system
- iii. Legal clinics, training, mock trials and IJC play at the Ikoyi and Female Corrections Centers
- iv. Other project activities including presentations at the Pro Bono Week and the Nigerian Bar Association Conference as well as snapshots of Nigerian tv news coverage of the project



