

# Liberia

## Supporting Evidence-Based Justice Reform

PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION GLOBAL UNIT | INSTITUTIONS IN ACTION #6



**The Global Program on Justice and Rule of Law (JROL)** focuses on the pursuit of more effective justice institutions. When justice institutions operate effectively, accountability increases, trust in the government grows, and citizens and businesses can invest with confidence that their rights will be protected. JROL contributes to advancing judicial effectiveness by producing research pieces (papers, policy briefs, and practical guides on justice reform) on cutting edge topics and by engaging at the country level through operational reform work. This work focuses on legal framework reform, process reengineering, capacity building, legal empowerment initiatives, workflow efficiency, case management, and human resource strengthening. JROL's JUPITER framework aids in assessing a country's judicial effectiveness. JROL also fosters collaboration through the Global Partnership on Justice and the Rule of Law, engaging diverse stakeholders to advance the justice reform agenda. Learn more: [www.worldbank.org/justice](http://www.worldbank.org/justice)

### Challenge

Liberia's justice system has been navigating challenges during the country's transition from conflict and fragility. This is evidenced in the judiciary's extended court disposition times, the high costs associated with litigation, and the need for improved coverage of court services in rural areas. Additionally, the majority of Liberians resort to customary justice actors for dispute resolution, valuing their proximity, cost, speed, linguistic and conceptual accessibility, and cultural relevance. However, navigating between customary and statutory justice in Liberia can be challenging due to unclear jurisdictional boundaries and referral rules. This ambiguity hampers the statutory system's ability to effectively engage customary actors in expanding access to justice, and may lead to unfair outcomes or allow harmful and discriminatory practices within the customary system to persist.

### Solution

While Liberia's justice institutions have made progress towards addressing these challenges, efforts to strengthen the sector have often been hindered by the limited availability and analysis of reliable performance data to inform decision-making and guide reforms. To support more evidence-based approaches, the World Bank's Institutions Global Department implemented the Justice Pillars Towards Evidence-based Reform (JUPITER) assessment under the Governance Reform and Accountability Transformation (GREAT) Project in Liberia. This innovative methodology provided a robust framework for evaluating the justice system's performance across access, efficiency, and quality, and offered a comprehensive diagnostic to help identify and prioritize areas for reform.

### Impact

The implementation of JUPITER in Liberia enabled a data-driven assessment of justice system performance, supporting policy dialogue among key stakeholders, guiding the prioritization and sequencing of justice sector reforms, and contributing to the analytical foundation for an upcoming World Bank project. Building on its success in Liberia, the JUPITER methodology was subsequently applied in South Sudan, demonstrating its value as a robust tool for justice sector diagnostics. Its effectiveness in generating actionable insights has drawn the attention of other countries seeking to strengthen their justice systems through data-driven approaches. The methodology is already being implemented in Ethiopia and Kenya, with ongoing discussions taking place in several countries in Latin America. These efforts reflect the World Bank's broader commitment to supporting evidence-based justice reform and institutional strengthening to promote the rule of law in client countries.

#### Related resources:

##### **Governance for Development Blog**

A tale of two systems: why trust matters for people-centered justice in Liberia [🔗](#)

##### **Open Knowledge Repository**

Publication: Improving Access to Justice in Liberia – A 2023 JUPITER Assessment [🔗](#)

Publication: Supporting Access to Justice in South Sudan – A 2025 JUPITER Assessment [🔗](#)

#### Liberia / Data

