

Reform Kuje

NEWSLETTER



Welcome to Our Newsletter

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Case Management Module

RADIO/TV AWARENESS

Background

The Reforming Pretrial Detention in Kuje Custodial Center Project (Reform Kuje) is funded by the US Embassy Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL).

The project is being implemented by Partners West Africa Nigeria, Partners Global, the Network of University Legal Aid Institutions Nigeria, and New-Rule L.L.C.

The project commenced in July 2018 and is set to run through March 2020. The project aims to achieve significant reduction in the size of pre-trial detention population in Kuje Custodial Center Project and ensure effective implementation of the pre-trial provisions of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act (ACJA).

Engagement with Stakeholders

During this project, PWAN and implementing partners have engaged with so many stakeholders in the Law enforcement Agencies, Justice sector, traditional heads, Chairmen of Local governments, chiefs of different communities, NULAI, NPF, Law Clinic Students of Nile University and the University of Abuja, ROLAT, LEDAP, PRAWA, Center for Socio-Legal Aid studies, NBA, Nigeria Correctional Service (NCS), Community leaders, NULAI, Legal Aid Council, Chairman, Kuje Area Council, Nigerian Correctional Service (NCS), FIDA, amongst others.

These stakeholders through collaboration have contributed their bits towards achieving the overall aim of the project.

At the beginning of the reform Kuje project, it was intended that a committee be set up serve as a forum for exchanging ideas and brainstorming creative solutions to challenges to reducing pre-trial delays in Kuje Custodial Center as well as assist the ACJMC in knowing what issues the agencies have.

This committee was set up and met 4 times last year. These meetings had a total of 62 attendance with 34 females and 28 males



STAKEHOLDERS AT THE FOURTH KPCC MEETING

The committee meetings have been very helpful with getting access to the Ministry of Justice through DPP who is a member of setting up a meeting with the DPP during the exchange visit from Washington.

More access to the Custodial center was fostered through the members of the Committee in carrying out an ACJA survey at the Custodial center.

There has been tremendous access to the Magistracy through the Director of Magistracy who has been greatly assisting the implementation of the project and attendance of her members to all project activities like Committee meetings, Townhall awareness,

training, and other activities they are invited.

The Committee meetings have greatly served the purpose of information sharing; For example, ACJMC was informed during the interagency on the need to further share reporting templates to criminal justice agencies who complained during the meeting.

Through the interagency, the NBA indicated support to observe the implementation of ACJA through the use of the Court Observer App. FIDA has participated and facilitated awareness sessions on the ACJA through this collaboration.

At the presentation made by the Network of University Legal Aid

Institutions (NULAI) on the Case Management System during the last Kuje Prison Coordination Committee (KPCC) meeting, it showed data which revealed that the Kuje Custodial Centers are being decongested monthly by the release of inmates due to the implementation of all the coordinations.

PWAN Court Observers (Law Clinic students from Nile, the University of Abuja, and members of the NBA) were trained to monitor the sittings in courts, using the Court observer App and this has made This collaboration has exposed before the Justice sector actors, the level of progress and limitations in the implementation of the ACJA in the FCT.

The data generated were analyzed

and the challenges hindering adherence and engagement with the justice actors were discussed at the KPCC thereby improving the effective implementation of the law to protect the rights of pre-trial detainees.

Also, the International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), the Legal Aid Council, PWAN, and NULAI provided free legal services to citizens across Nigeria.

The Nigerian Bar Association's Human Rights Committee also took pro-bono cases, which altogether led to the review of case files, hastened up the pre-trial detention process and release of a very large percentage of inmates.

By building the capacities of stakeholders in the Law enforcement agencies; Nigeria

Police Force (NPF), Nigeria Bar Association (NBA), Nigeria Correctional Service (NCS) through this project to improve case management, there has been a massive reduction in the pre-trial detention population and also, pre-trial detention provision of the ACJA which has given hope to the citizens of Nigeria by sensitizing them on their human rights and making them trust in the Justice sector once again.

Finally, there has been the inclusion of the Non-custodial provisions into the Nigerian Correctional Service Act in Part 44 of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act, and this has strengthened the position of the ACJA and given them full backing to work towards its implementation.



PARTICIPANTS AT A TRAINING SESSION


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Court Observer App

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The objectives of the app include: Improving the administration of justice in the Nigerian Legal system

- Increasing public awareness and participation in the justice system
- Identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the Nigerian legal framework
- Accountability of the justice system, by promoting public presence in the courts

The court observer app provides information on the following indicators such as commencement of hearing, duration of the hearing, cause list, reasons court did not sit, reasons cases were not attended to, non-custodial sentences, plea bargain cases, adjournments, detention, place of the court sitting.

Objectives of the Court Observer App



Court proceedings were monitored by 113 independent observers across the FCT.

There were a total of 158 court sittings recorded in this data. It consisted of 77 high court sittings, 80 magistrate court sittings, and 1 area court sitting.

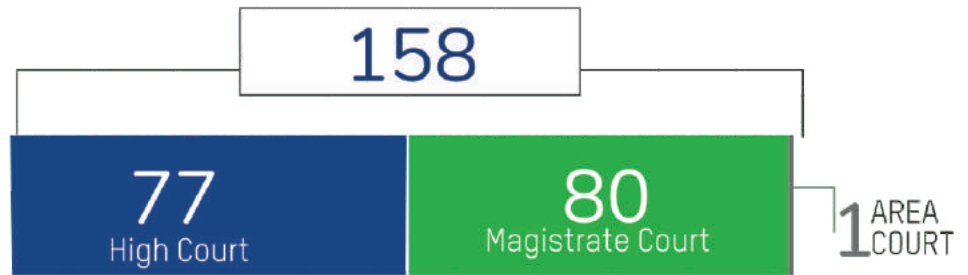
Also, PWAN trained law clinic students from the University of

Abuja Gwagwalada and Nile University in the FCT to monitor the court's compliance and implementation of the ACJA and day-to-day court process using the court observer app on their Android or IOS mobile phones.

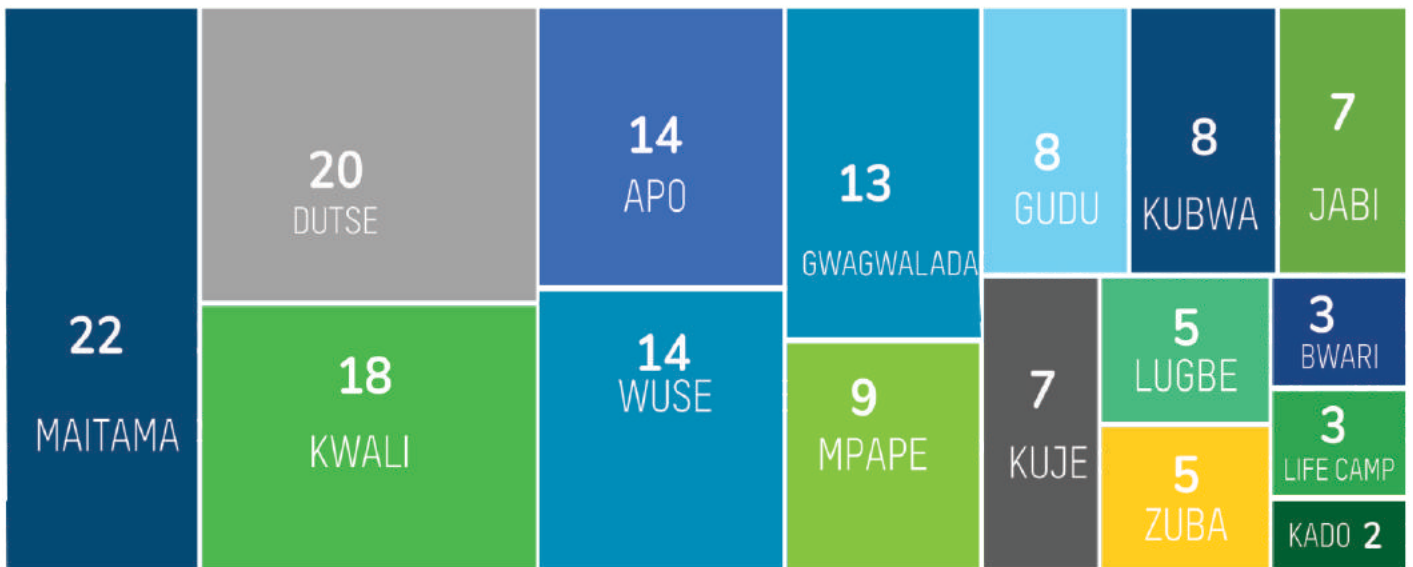
They were informed on how the data inputted from this app helps to sustain the Case Management System (CMS) and promote accountability in the judicial sector.

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Court Type



Distribution of Location for Observers



LCPK – PROVIDING LEGAL AID TO KUJE DETAINEES

PARTICIPANTS AT A TRAINING SESSIONAs a part of the activities of the Reform Kuje Project, the Network of University Legal Aid Institutions (NULAI) collaborated with the Legal Aid Council (LACON) of Nigeria to set up and recruit law students to provide pro-bono legal services to detainees at the Kuje Correctional Service. This collaboration brought to life the Law Clinic Partnership for Kuje Prison (LCPK). Four MOUs were signed between NULAI, three university law clinics (Nile

University, and the University of Abuja) and Legal Aid Council after which a professional clinical advisory team was established to provide mentorship and guidance to the Law Clinic Partnership for Kuje Prison (LCPK). A total of 124 law students applied, out of which 95 were recruited.

Since the establishment of the LCPK to date, they have been able to facilitate the release of 21 inmates at the Kuje Custodial Center, strike out 5 cases, convict

11 detainees, attend 33 court hearing, contact the families of 22 detainees and helped 2 detainees to be acquitted/discharged.



Awareness Engagements

(PWAN Sensitizes The Public On The Provisions Of The ACJA)

In a bid to increase public knowledge and awareness on the ACJA, rights of citizens, and access to justice, PWAN carried out several awareness activities in the FCT including townhall awareness, radio, and TV programs.

The total that attended the awareness was 839, 38 made calls and sent messages, 123 views on youtube and at the end of the awareness activities, many of the participants sensitized said that they were more informed now about their rights.



Case Management Module

Since the adoption of the case management module (CMM) in January 2019 to support the institutionalization of a new case management system for reducing pre-trial detention at Kuje correctional centers, a total of 4398 inmates have been enrolled out of which 1194 were released with 130 transfers and 4 deaths.



The case manager has so far tracked 10,326 court appearances.

It was also observed that the pre-trial detainees occupy between 80-82% of the full capacity in the Kuje Custodial Center.

This is due to the constant inflow and outflow from the center over time. For instance, in each month,

about 30 – 35 pretrial detainees may be released but about 35 - 40 detainees are also remanded.

Some of the factors contributing to this include detainees whose charges are for non-bailable offenses such as terrorism, culpable homicide, armed robbery, etc.

The awareness-raising activities were organized in the form of advocacy to community members and security agencies, townhall meetings, and dramatization for ease of understanding of human rights provisions, radio and Tv sensitization, development, and distribution of fliers, posters and newsletters on the rights of citizens and the ACJA.



DRAMA PRESENTATION BY THE LAW STUDENTS



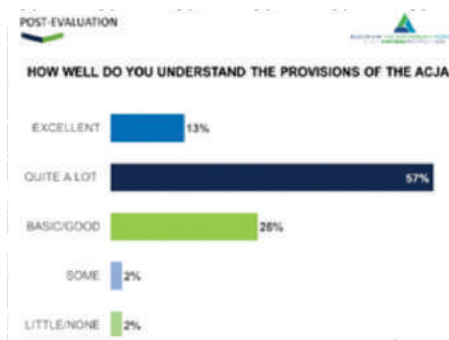
Based on the result of a prior community assessment key messages were developed for the awareness.

Community members also informed on the selected medium of sensitization through radio and tv networks most accessible by their communities.

The physical awareness activities in Bwari, Kuje, Lugbe, Karu, Gwagwalada other environs around the FCT has informed over 800 physical participants, as well as other family and friends of participants of their rights and the ACJA.

The population reached out to were made up of community religious and youth leaders, members of the various Nigerian security agencies, secondary and tertiary students, market women, Nigerian Bar Association, kada (Motorcycle) Riders Association, National Union of Road Transport Works (NURTW), media and the general public etc.

During the awareness at Karu community, a pre and post evaluation was conducted for participants



After which they appreciated our efforts in raising awareness and even recommended more locations to continue our awareness programs.

At the awareness/town hall meetings, the project was introduced with key emphasis on the prevailing issues on pre-trial detention cases in Kuje and how the non-implementation of the ACJA by various agencies is increasing the number of cases in the Kuje Custodial Center.

Drama sessions were presented by students of the law clinics from The Nile University, University of Abuja. The drama focused on some key provisions of the ACJA such as the Arrest and Search protocol.

Several sessions explained the different provisions of the rights of the people under the ACJA on Arrest, Search, Bail, and the right of a woman to stand for bail, etc. IEC materials in infographics were produced in Hausa, Pidgin, and English on some of the provisions of the ACJA and were shared out at all awareness activities.



Radio/TV Awareness

To reach the larger population, 8 radio programs and 1 tv awareness program was carried out with total coverage of about 15 million people. Listeners were enlightened on their rights as is provided in the Administration of Criminal Justice Act.

Radio stations like Human Rights Radio also have live YouTube and Facebook streaming and thus, we were able to reach a wider

audience and more citizens of Nigeria are now more aware of the law and their rights as it pertains to the law.

Each radio program discussed different aspects of the law such as search protocols, custodian and non-custodial sentencing, etc. During each radio program, calls came in from different parts of the country with questions about the law.

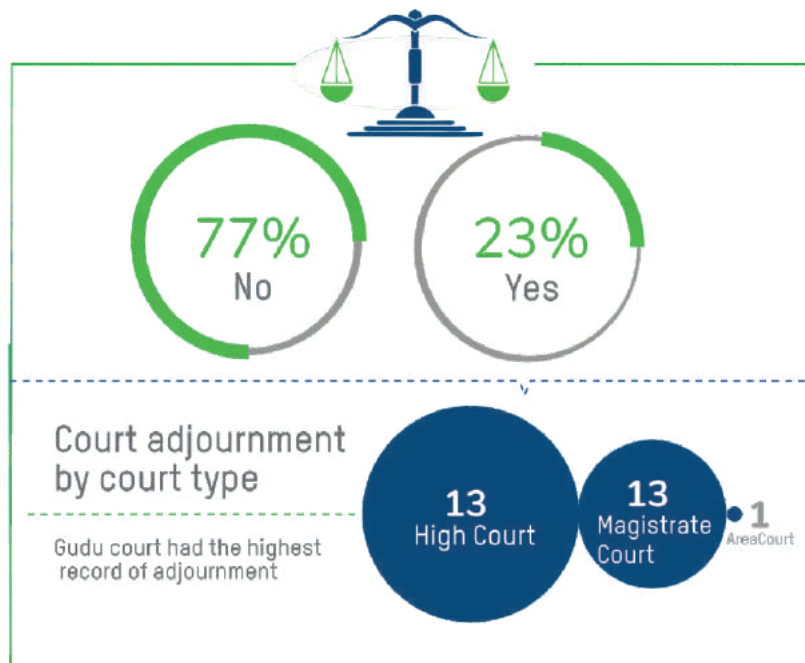


NTA TV APPEARANCE TO DISCUSS THE ACJA

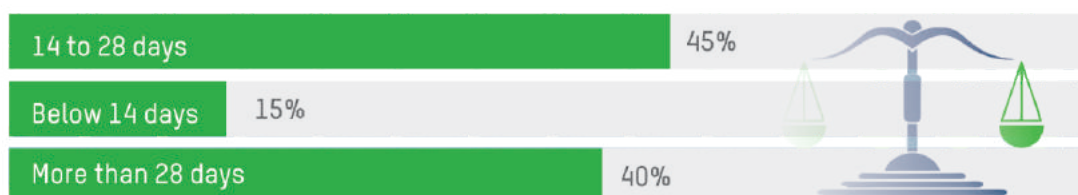
Why did the Court not sit?



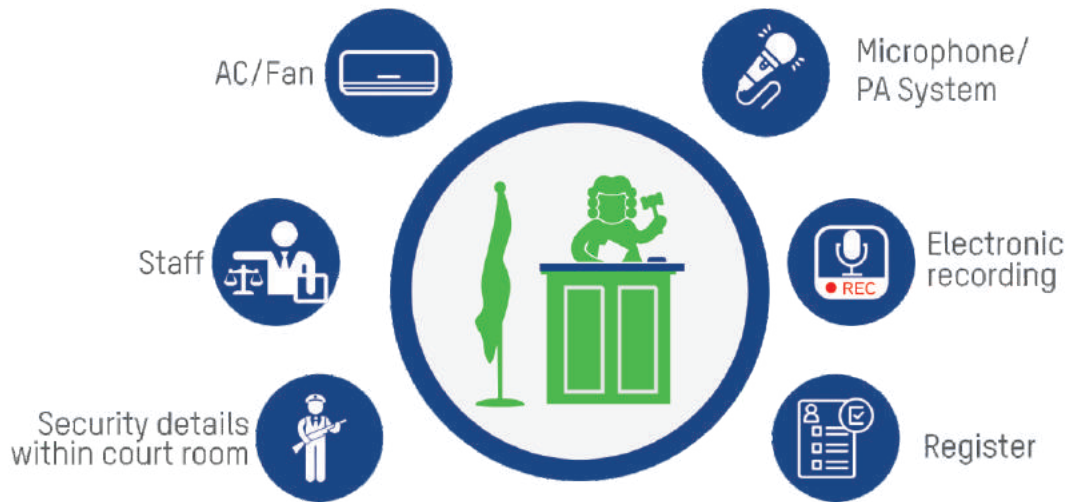
Did the court adjourn criminal cases before it from day to day?



Interval of days between adjournments



What support is available to the judge ?



Reason why some cases were not attended to



The major reason why some cases were not attended to in the high courts is due to a witness not available



The major reason why some cases were not attended to in the magistrate courts is due to One or all the lawyers were not available/One or all the parties were not available



PHOTO GALLERY

ENGAGEMENT WITH STAKEHOLDERS AND CAPACITY BUILDING



·ADVOCACY AND AWARENESS ACTIVITIES





COURT OBSERVATION AND LEGAL AID SERVICES



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

ACJL

Law wey dey protect
YOUR RIGHTS

Never deny a man help when you are in position to help him, what goes round, comes around

ABOUT PWAN

Rule of Law and Empowerment Initiative known as Partners West Africa Nigeria (PWAN) is a non-governmental organization working towards enhancing citizens' participation and improving security governance in Nigeria and West Africa broadly.

We are located in Abuja, Nigeria's capital and have field offices in the North East-Borno and North-West-Kano and other with national and regional reach.

MISSION: Our organization is dedicated to enhancing citizens participation and improving governance and security in Nigeria and West Africa.

VISION: Robust good governance and accountable institutions in Nigeria and West Africa.


VALUES: Integrity, Inclusiveness, Impact and Professionalism.

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