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FACT SHEET

Improving customer service at Kenya's courts

Customer care desks in court stations, also referred to as customer service centres, are the first point of contact for those in need of assistance. Located in every court station in Kenya, they are central to the Judiciary's service delivery as they link the courts to their users who include the general public, police officers, prosecutors, advocates and the media.

However, due to a lack of resources, many of these desks were ineffective as they offered limited information and were ill-equipped. In response, the Judiciary and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) have collaborated since 2021 to identify, and address, the main gaps in service delivery with the goal of transforming the customer service experience at court stations and adopting service standards countrywide. The European Union's financial support through the Programme for Legal Empowerment and Aid Delivery in Kenya (PLEAD) has made this work possible.

NATIONAL STUDY

A study was conducted by the Judiciary and UNODC on customer care experiences in courts. Its objective was to explore the state of customer care desks and recommend opportunities to improve service delivery and increase the effectiveness, efficiency and impact of the services offered to court users.

This included fieldwork and interviews in 15 court stations and observed interaction between the customer care desks and visitors. More than 100 individual interviews and three group sessions took place to obtain feedback from heads of station, court administrators, registrars,

customer care desk staff, members of Court Users' Committees and other court users.

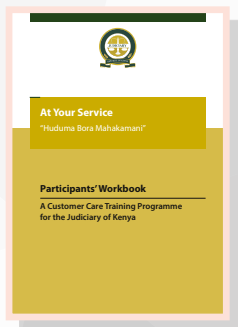
The main gaps identified in the survey included:

- ⊗ Insufficient equipment and furniture needed so that staff could respond to user enquiries and record feedback
- ⊗ Lack of training for customer care desk staff
- ⊗ Limited information about the operations of courts and scarcity of relevant information to be distributed to court users

The study resulted in 16 wide-ranging recommendations, among them being:

- ✔ Equipping the desks with the required tools to transform the customer care desks into fully-fledged service centres
- ✔ Development of a customer care plan
- ✔ Scaling down the customer care training to all staff in the court stations
- ✔ Developing an e-learning module on customer care that can be hosted by the Kenya Judiciary Academy
- ✔ Training on the effective utilization of the different Judiciary ICT systems to enable them to provide faster services by easily accessing the systems
- ✔ Well-maintained public toilet facilities accessible to people living with disabilities as part of the facilities in courts, among others.

CUSTOMER CARE TRAINING



UNODC assisted the Judiciary to develop a training workbook for the staff who work at customer service desks which incorporates international best practice. The modules in the workbook are customer care, understanding customers in the Judiciary, customer care principles, effective communication, customer care processes and standards, customer feedback management and action planning.

In February and March 2022, the first 70 customer care personnel were trained using the new curriculum. The trainees demonstrated a high level of commitment to improving everyday customer interactions at the court stations. They were able to identify the need to improve customer care at the individual and station level and understand their individual responsibility as customer care champions in making those improvements.

This has resulted in the trainees reporting marked improvement in their ability to respond swiftly and effectively to the needs of customers, including attending to inquiries and addressing complaints more efficiently.

Judiciary customer care champions from 70 court stations trained – each of whom serve between 100 and 1,000 court users daily

EQUIPMENT

UNODC has supported customer care personnel with computers and uninterruptible power supplies (UPS) among other items in over 30 court stations to complement the training and to enable effective service delivery.

UNODC has also equipped the Judiciary with screens which are now being used in courts to show the cause lists and to share key information. To enhance court users' understanding of the justice system, UNODC developed a video which is currently playing on TV screens in the said court stations. UNODC has also supported the Judiciary with furniture such as desks and chairs as part of an activity that aims to enhance the effectiveness of the customer care desks.

INFORMATION MATERIALS

UNODC also supported the printing and delivery to each customer care desk in 29 court stations of a total of **over 140,000 printed information materials** in English and Kiswahili. The materials cover topics such as bail and bond, diversion, plea bargaining and witness protection.

Enhancing customer care at the Judiciary overall goal is to improve public trust and enhance access to information in the Judiciary and adopt service standards across court stations countrywide.



Customer Care Desk at Mombasa Law Courts

Sharon Kinyanjui/UNODC

ALIGNMENT WITH THE CHIEF JUSTICE'S VISION

UNODC's customer care support through the PLEAD partnership is aligned to the vision of Chief Justice Martha Koome, entitled Social Transformation Through Access to Justice. Among other outcomes, this seeks standardization of service delivery across all courts, from the Magistrates Courts to the Supreme Court.



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

unodc-plead@un.org

www.unodc.org/easternafrika/plead/

Programme for Legal Empowerment and Aid Delivery in Kenya – PLEAD