



Action Committee on
Access to Justice
in Civil and Family Matters

Canada's Justice Development Goals: 2020



CHALLENGE & CHANGE



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JDG 1

P. 11

ADDRESS EVERYDAY LEGAL PROBLEMS

- 1.1 Educate early
- 1.2 Prevent
- 1.3 Offer a continuum of services
- 1.4 Reflect Canadian society

JDG 2

P. 15

MEET LEGAL NEEDS

- 2.1 Focus on legal needs for everyone
- 2.2 Encourage innovation
- 2.3 Expand scope of legal aid
- 2.4 Focus on access to justice

JDG 3

P. 20

MAKE COURTS WORK BETTER

- 3.1 Ensure access to courts
- 3.2 Promote multi service centres
- 3.3 Help people who are representing themselves
- 3.4 Manage cases effectively
- 3.5 Be accessible and user-focused
- 3.6 Protect judicial independence

JDG 4

P. 23

IMPROVE FAMILY JUSTICE

- 4.1 Offer a broad range of services
- 4.2 Promote consensual resolution
- 4.3 Innovate
- 4.4 Restructure family courts

JDG 5

P. 27

WORK TOGETHER

- 5.1 Establish coordinated efforts
- 5.2 Include everyone
- 5.3 Be bold; Take action
- 5.4 Work within institutions
- 5.5 Coordinate across Canada

JDG 6

P. 30

BUILD CAPABILITY

- 6.1 Educate law students and legal professionals
- 6.2 Expand justice education in schools

JDG 7

P. 33

INNOVATE

- 7.1 Keep track of what is working
- 7.2 Share good ideas

JDG 8

P. 36

ANALYZE AND LEARN

- 8.1 Develop metrics
- 8.2 Work with researchers in all fields

JDG 9

P. 42

IMPROVE FUNDING STRATEGIES

- 9.1 Coordinate to spend money well
- 9.2 Better fund legal aid
- 9.3 Make sure the money lasts

A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

2020 was an extraordinary year. Across the globe, we faced the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, which left millions dead, economies in decline and amplified the precarious nature of employment, housing and safety, including in Canada. A number of tragic murders and the ensuing protests highlighted the systemic racism prevalent across the fabric of society.

Access to justice has never been more important. As poverty, illness, mental health challenges, family breakdown and violence increase, so too does the need for a strong, independent and accessible justice system.

In last year's Report, as the pandemic was just beginning, I called for collaborative and bold leadership in the justice system for 2020. I am pleased to say our leaders responded to that call. Although, like in every sector, we scrambled to be responsive at the outset of the pandemic, across all areas of the justice system and across Canada, people found innovative, personal and meaningful ways to ensure that court was held, legal advice and support was provided, information was accessible, and people could understand their rights. Indeed, in a number of areas, justice sector leaders took the pandemic as an opportunity to push for much-needed reform. We will showcase a number of these efforts in a special section of this Report.

This is not to say the job is done. The pandemic and the spotlight on racism highlighted the frailties of our justice system. We are not yet 'there' – access to justice in civil and family matters remains a crisis in Canada. The Justice Development Goals focus our work and support our collective understanding of progress on A2J.

I am grateful for the tremendous work done by the individuals and organizations featured in this Report and for the resilience shown by justice sector workers across Canada this year.

Beverley McLachlin

Chair, Action Committee on Access to Justice in Civil and Family Matters

ABOUT THE ACTION COMMITTEE ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE IN CIVIL AND FAMILY MATTERS

Established by Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin in 2007, the Action Committee on Access to Civil and Family Matters works towards improved access to justice for people in Canada. Put simply, the current civil and family justice system is complex, slow and expensive, and often doesn't produce outcomes that meet people's needs. While many dedicated people work on access to justice, the system has not evolved at the scale that is needed to make it work for everyone. In short, major change is needed.

The Action Committee on Access to Civil and Family matters brings people from all corners of Canada's justice system together to propose and examine approaches on this critical issue. It adopted Canada's Justice Development Goals to align the work of organizations across the country. Progress on the JDGs is published annually. The Action Committee coordinates national metrics on justice and connects people to share innovations throughout the year and at its annual Summit. Learn more about the work of the Action Committee and access to justice across Canada at justicedevelopmentgoals.ca.

ABOUT THE JUSTICE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Canada's nine Justice Development Goals (JDGs) are a common framework to coordinate access to justice efforts, share innovation and measure our progress. The JDGs align the work of organizations large and small, in every province and territory, but do not prescribe a specific approach, recognizing that communities have different needs, expertise and resources. They are based on cross-sector research and consultation about effective strategies to improve access to justice across the country. To see who is involved and read about the JDGs, visit justicedevelopmentgoals.ca.

MESSAGE FROM THE HONOURARY CHAIR

This year, access to justice has been more important than ever. The innovative and thoughtful ways that people who work in the justice sector across Canada worked to ensure that there was a meaningful response to justice needs, is encouraging. Together, we can ensure that our system is accessible and available to everyone who needs it. My thanks go to those who took part in the work reported here.

Rt. Hon. Richard Wagner

Chief Justice of Canada

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This Report highlights access to justice efforts across Canada in 2020. The Report is organized according to the JDGs framework for accessible justice in Canada. This year, the Report contains a special feature on justice sector responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The projects and data reported here were shared with the Action Committee by organizations across the country, building on their ongoing efforts and sustained commitment to improving access to justice. There are many organizations advancing access to justice that are not yet connected with this collaborative effort. Other organizations may not have shared all of their new initiatives.

The Report features work done specifically in 2020. Of course, the justice sector organizations who shared these projects are also involved in the ongoing delivery of legal services, law reform or public education, operating courts, administering the justice system and training legal professionals. The efforts of the people in these organizations is immense and appreciated.

To connect with the Action Committee and share your work on access to justice in next year's Report, visit justicedevelopmentgoals.ca and subscribe to the A2J Newsletter.

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THE ACTION COMMITTEE IS SUPPORTED BY:



JDGS BY THE NUMBERS

The Report is the collection of contributions from access to justice organizations across Canada who align their work to the Justice Development Goals (JDGs).

JDGs results



People impacted



Total # of organizations



Total # of projects

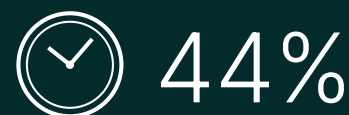


36% more!

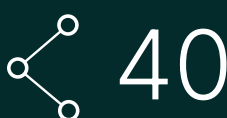
Organizations that evaluate projects



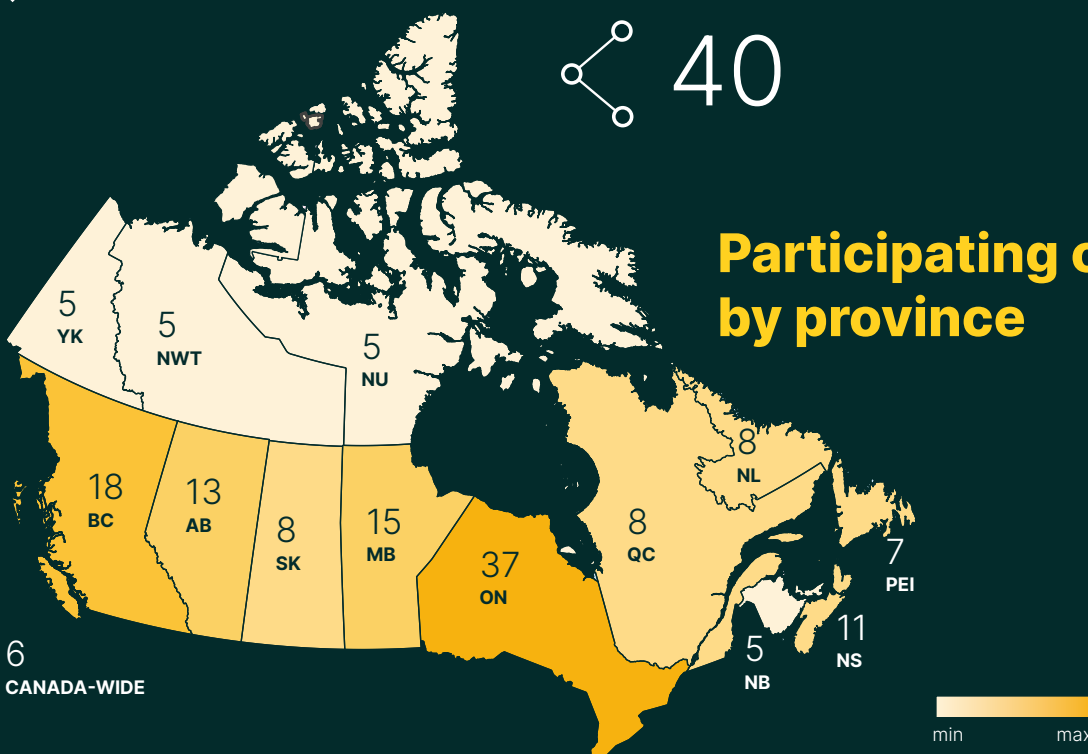
Percentage of people's time devoted to A2J



Organizations that share evaluations



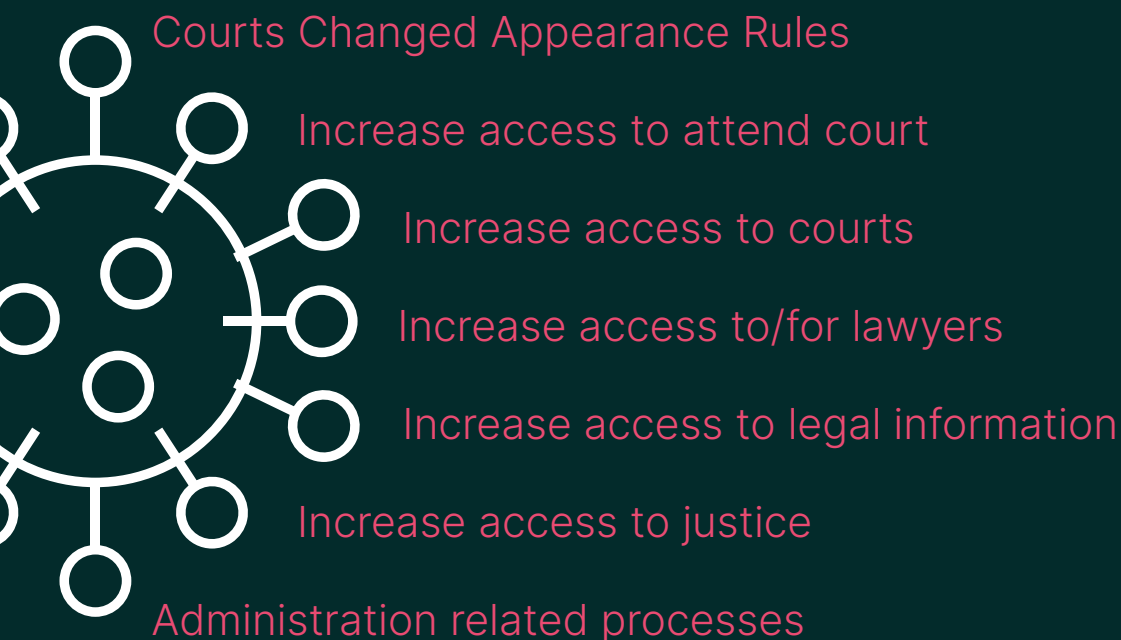
Participating organizations by province



Organizations said they use the JDGS to:

17	List them in our funding applications
25	Use them in our measurement of A2J
30	Talk about them with our colleagues
32	Mention them in communications or the media
32	Hear about them from the Action Committee
35	Use them when advocating for A2J
37	Talk about them with our clients, partners or the public

Kinds of pandemic responses



JDGS BY THE NUMBERS

RESPONDING TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Many public legal education organizations worked very hard. In 2020, a global pandemic drastically altered everyday life in Canada and across the globe. At the outset of the pandemic in March and April 2020, and in order to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 virus, in-person activity was limited in some places and shut down entirely in others. Given the vast number of in-person interactions in the justice system, including court appearances, lawyer meetings, family mediations, preparing, swearing, serving and filing documents, and public education sessions, many justice services across the country came temporarily to a halt.

Fortunately, the justice system response was swift and nimble. Governments, courts and service providers worked overtime to find ways to ensure that individuals could access the justice services they required. The system embraced technological options, eliminated rules and processes that presented barriers to access and found creative ways to get legal information and support to people.

No hurried response will be perfect. Technological solutions require access to technology – which is not a consistent reality for many Canadians. Video and telephone appearances do not suit every proceeding. Access to justice was not always improved for everyone in these solutions. However, the speed and magnitude of the response across the country ensured that most people could continue to use the system to address their most urgent legal issues.

The work ahead will be to meaningfully assess the changes made, understand which changes support increased access to justice in the future and which ones may require further work. The spirit of the system's response to the pandemic – assessing need, being flexible and creative, and caring about the life challenges facing Canadians – should be celebrated as a significant achievement.

This section of the JDGs Progress Report looks at over **350** solutions introduced directly in response to the pandemic. Each of these solutions has multiple impacts supporting the ongoing provision of justice services.



Reducing Formal Barriers

One of the major ‘culture shifts’ that occurred in the justice system as a result of the pandemic was the acknowledgement that processes as set out in the rules of courts required revisiting. Rules and practices requiring in-person appearances and in-person filing could no longer be met. Courts and tribunals, in partnership with governments and law societies, moved quickly to amend rules, issue temporary practice directions and open the door to the use of new technologies and creative solutions in order to hold remote and virtual hearings, amend filing deadlines and methods, change court processes, and remove barriers to commissioning and filing documents.

Service providers, including legal aid and clinics, amended their practices in response. Justice stakeholders worked collaboratively across provinces and territories and nationally to address these issues and ensure that formal barriers to remote access were reduced. Justice advocates pushed decision-makers to ensure that COVID-related laws and processes supported and enhanced access to justice for people.

BC

The Ministry of the Attorney General in BC introduced the **Electronic Witnessing of Wills (COVID-19) Order** allowing people to remotely witness wills with the assistance of a lawyer. The order particularly benefits the elderly in care homes, because of the limitations placed on in person visits, as well as individuals who live in rural areas and small towns.

Canada

The Canadian Bar Association’s Task Force on Justice Issues Arising from COVID 19 Report, released in Feb 2021, made recommendations on how courts, tribunals and other dispute resolution processes can deliver their services differently to meet the needs of stakeholders both during and after the pandemic.

BC

BC introduced a **new, temporary process to change child or spousal support agreement or order of the Provincial Court for families affected by COVID**, including an early resolution service that offers a needs assessment and out-of-court dispute resolution.

Embracing Technology

A major component of the justice system’s response to pandemic shutdowns was to move hearings and other appearances onto a remote platform. Courts and tribunals across the country began to hold remote hearings using the telephone and video platforms, in which all parties were separate and frequently none of the participants, including the decision-makers were in the courthouse itself. Many organizations developed supporting materials for clients and parties appearing online, holding webinars on the technology and the rules and offering technical support for parties.

Lawyers, mediators, clinics and information providers also went digital – appearing online, meeting with clients virtually, and pushing clients to virtual information and support platforms.

AB

In Alberta, like many jurisdictions in Canada, they established **virtual court capabilities**, holding thousands of remote video or telephone court matters including trials, dockets, pre-trial conferences and sentencing.

ON

At Lakehead University Community Legal Services, **student caseworkers were equipped with the technology for video conferencing with their clients and applicants**. For clients without the technology required to participate in such a meeting, the clinic set up a designated meeting room to allow the client to attend and use clinic computer technology to join a video conference with their caseworker.

Supporting litigants

Access to courts was not simply a matter of setting up virtual meetings. Supporting litigants meant ensuring that people could use the technology adopted by the court, had access to support and early resolution options, and were able to access the community, cultural and language services meant to support the positive resolution of their matters.

NL

Newfoundland & Labrador Justice and Public Safety provided opportunities for individuals to **access virtual court proceedings in their own language**.

PEI

The PEI Court of Appeal set up a **computer room in the courthouse** to allow self-represented litigants who did not have access to a computer to join their virtual proceeding.

BC

The Provincial Court of BC held **traffic court at school sites**, using retired judges and expanded hours.

Supporting Justice Workers

Part of ensuring access to justice is ensuring that the system actors can function as effectively as possible. During the pandemic, a number of rapid responses were developed to ensure that lawyers and paralegals could serve clients, meet court requirements and continue to meet their professional obligations. Training and support for community workers went online. Justice workers of all types worked from home or found themselves in modified workplaces.

NU

The Law Society of Nunavut moved **Continuous Professional Development** training from in-person to **online** with an early focus on access to justice projects.

QC

In response to an unexpected influx of requests for legal advice on sexual harassment in the workplace during the pandemic, Juripop in Quebec offered a series of **online webinar trainings** for lawyers volunteering with the program.

NB

The Law Society of New Brunswick offered **FAQs for lawyers on practising remotely, virtual commissioning, trust account guidelines and professional obligations** during the pandemic.

Ensuring Information and Support Gets to People

Legal needs were exacerbated by the onset of the pandemic, which created housing, employment and financial instability. COVID-related public legal education, including responding to emerging issues, was shared on virtual platforms for maximum distribution. Providing information and support about all legal needs in the pandemic environment required innovative approaches, including online access to law libraries, virtual information sessions, curated links, and public promotion through social media.

ON

Downtown Legal Services in Toronto launched **numerous PLE sessions on housing rights** in the pandemic.

BC

Rise Women's Legal Centre in Vancouver moved **all legal services online**.

MB

Manitoba Justice, Family Resolution developed **"Parenting Arrangements during COVID-19"**, available online.

NWT

Outreach Legal Aid Clinic in the Northwest Territories held **virtual legal aid clinics in remote communities**.

NL + QC

Both Newfoundland & Labrador (the COVID-19 Legal Support Service) and Quebec (COVID-19 Legal Assistance Clinic) launched **free, remote legal support and advice clinics for people directly impacted by COVID-19**.

PEI

In PEI, the Department of Justice and Public Safety introduced the **Co-parenting Action Team**, an interdepartmental program that offers personalized supports to help parents address co-parenting challenges exacerbated by COVID-19.

ADDRESS EVERYDAY LEGAL PROBLEMS

1.1 EDUCATE EARLY

Provide targeted, free, accessible public legal education about frequent legal issues, different types of solutions and the process of enforcing rights.

1.3 OFFER A CONTINUUM OF SERVICES

Develop and expand legal services to include the full continuum of information, advice, help lines, online services, in-person services, and partial or full representation.

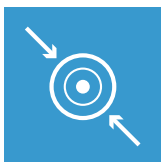
1.2 PREVENT

Foster legal capability so that people can spot legal issues early, get preventative or proactive help and anticipate, avoid or manage frequent legal issues.

1.4 REFLECT CANADIAN SOCIETY

Put the services people need in the communities where they live with the resources to address the barriers they face.

Projects advancing this goal



125

Organizations identifying this goal as their primary focus



26

HIGHLIGHTS

250

new COVID-19 related FAQ's posted on
CLEA's Step-to-Justice website

The public

can conduct legal research at the NL
Law Society's library

18 month

consultation of the Black community across
Ontario by the Black Legal Action Centre

5

vulnerable groups received education and
support to avoid investment fraud through
the Nova Scotia's Legal Information Society's
Investor Protection and Fraud Awareness Project

What is JDG#1 About?

Building people's legal capability strengthens their ability to identify and avoid legal problems and get help when they need it. Activities under this goal focus on developing broad public understanding of legal options and the skills to take a first step. Public legal education organizations are often the first point of contact for people trying to understand their legal issues. Educational resources and information session offered by non-profits, clinics, courts and lawyers help people prepare for common legal issues.

Triage and referral services are part of the continuum of legal services. Identifying legal needs early and connecting people with both legal help and other kinds of supports can minimize the impact on their health, relationships and finances. In 2020, as people faced uncertainty in their workplaces, health care, housing and safety, the public legal education and information community responded quickly, helping people understand pandemic related changes to benefits and legal protections. Programs designed to connect with specific communities or focus on particular legal communities also adapted to find ways to deliver these critical programs.

Educating People about Pandemic Benefits and Rights

Many public legal education organizations worked very quickly to develop new resources to help people understand the changing range of government benefits, tenancy rights and protocols for workplace safety throughout the pandemic. **Educaloi** produced a 12-page special booklet on the legal issues created by the pandemic and their impact on the justice system, which was published in print and on the web by the Journal de Montréal.

Shortly after the start of the pandemic, **Community Legal Education Ontario's (CLEO)** created detailed FAQ's on its Steps to Justice site to respond to people's most pressing questions about COVID-19 and income support, returning to work and housing. As the pandemic continued, it added new COVID-19 FAQs based on questions posed in the live chat service. In 2020, **CLEO** added almost 250 COVID-19 related FAQ's and estimate almost 2 million page views of the COVID-19 related content on Steps to Justice.

With the onset of the pandemic, **CLEO** began to receive many pleas from community workers across Ontario for support in helping their clients with questions arising from the pandemic. In response, it hosted a series of COVID-19

"hot legal topic" webinars for community workers conducted in partnership with experts from Ontario's community legal clinics, to provide practical, grounded support. Ten of these COVID-19 webinars for community workers were attended by a total of over 2500 participants.

LawNow, published 6 times/year by the **Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta**, published issues focused on civil liberties and laws affected by changing responses to the pandemic as well as emerging issues around working from home. With a focus on these timely issues, in addition to its regular emphasis on credible and readable legal information and analysis, **LawNow** helps Canadians understand the roles law plays in society and how it affects their lives.

Expanding Online Resources

Established websites offer up-to-date legal information continue to people across Canada. Many of these expanded their services adding new legal resources and adding more interactive and navigational tools. In BC **Courthouse Libraries'** Clicklaw and Clicklaw Wiki Books resources continued to expand, linking BC's legal information with wiki-style contributions from lawyers. **The People's Law School** added new content to its website linked to major life events including illness, or buying a home. **Saskatchewan PLEA** Website optimized its search functions and overhauled the mobile optimization to make legal information more accessible.

Manitoba's **Community Legal Education Association** launched a new website in March 2020. It reorganizes existing and new content to make it easier for people to navigate, organized by 12 common topics. On each topic, the site provides information on general legal questions, resources for resolution outside of court, and detailed information on court procedures as well as next steps and resources. Resources for students and teachers have also grown to include case summaries and lesson plans. A new topic was added to address COVID-19 related issues with 73 questions and answers.

Justice Canada launched its Access to Justice website outlining its commitment to a people-centred approach to justice that puts consideration of the individual at the heart of justice responses. The website provides information and resources related to access to justice and links to external research and organizations.

CLEO's Steps to Justice site now includes a larger body

of practical, process-oriented, user-friendly information designed for online use. People in Ontario who have legal questions or problems, and the digital literacy, skills, and digital access, can make use of the site to find answers to questions, links to forms and connection to resources. Steps to Justice focuses on the legal questions and issues facing people who live on low or moderate incomes, or who face other forms of disadvantage as well as the trusted intermediaries who help their clients use the site. Steps to Justice had over 5.4 million visits in 2020.

Éducaloi continues to add to the 1000+ articles available in both French and English on its website. The site covers addresses employment, housing, health care, and laws protecting vulnerable populations, as well as a special Covid-19 feature.

New self-help guides to Family Law and Civil Law, with detailed instructions and ready-to-complete court forms, were released by the Northwest Territories' **Outreach Legal Aid Clinic**. The guides address commonly-encountered legal issues, such as divorce, variation of child support, small estate administration, and others.

Programs to Build Legal Capability

Alberta's **Justice Sector Constellation** has developed and released Client Journey Maps as part of its Post-release Issues Project. These maps are visual representations of the process individuals can follow to find support and resources at transition points in life, such as on release from custody. Support for personal identification, addictions, mental health, employment and education, housing, and transportation are part of the journey maps. These maps are designed to improve the process of connecting individuals with the appropriate agencies and resources to meet essential needs and foster successful community integration.

The **Outreach Legal Aid Clinic**, run by the **Legal Aid Commission of the Northwest Territories**, offered free Wills, Incapacity and Estate Planning seminars in partnership with a local non-profit organization.

Public Legal Information Association of Newfoundland and Labrador's Legal Rights for Newcomers initiative supports newcomers by answering questions about everyday legal problems in the areas of labour and employment, residential tenancies and housing, human rights, family and criminal law. Services have expanded to include direct, one-on-one legal information and new plain language legal

information materials aimed at recent immigrants, refugees, international students, temporary foreign workers, and other people who have recently arrived in Newfoundland and Labrador. Public information sessions were adapted to virtual presentations and direct support provided to individuals via phone, Zoom, and email.

Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter developed Protection Order Maps to help frontline service providers to help clients navigate Emergency Protection Orders, Reviews, Restraining Orders and Parenting Orders. Based on these maps, training was provided for these intermediaries.

Justice Canada funded **Egale Canada** to develop new legal information for LGBTQ2 Canadians who have been disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, in response to evidence of increase legal needs. Webinars in both official languages, focused on LGBTQ2 individuals with intersecting, racialized identities experiencing unique and exacerbated challenges related to housing, employment and immigration.

Access Pro Bono in partnership with the **BC Court of Appeal** provided an appeals program education. Judges and staff of the Court of Appeal offered a series of educational programs to help pro bono counsel working on appeals.

BC's **Ministry of Attorney General** installed public access computer kiosks as part of the expansion of its Justice Access Centres. In three family justice centres and in all self-help resource rooms located in justice access centres, citizens can access legal information, complete court forms online, and watch court-mandated parenting education courses. During periods when the family justice services offices were closed due to COVID-19, work was done to upgrade the system to be compatible with new applications such as the DivorceApp and to update new court forms.

Newfoundland and Labrador's Law Society opened up its law library allow members of the public to use resources and conduct legal research.

New plain language signage was developed by the **Law Society of Yukon** to help people attending court. The information is posted outside the first appearance courtroom in Whitehorse, designed to help the general public understand and better navigate the Yukon's court system.

Working with the **Office of the Treaty Commissioner and the Saskatchewan Teacher's Federation**, **PLEA** developed new learning resources for Saskatchewan students on Indigenous legal issues

Law students at **Community Legal Services at Western University** developed a plain language Landlord Tenant Handbook in partnership with local community organizations. The handbook is available in print and virtually to members of the public.

Nova Scotia's **Legal Information Society** launched its Investor Protection and Fraud Awareness Project providing investor education to minimize or avoid investment fraud, with particular emphasis on five identified vulnerable groups. The project includes podcasts on financial literacy and ways to identify and avoid scams. A Legal Planning Information Kit focuses on seniors, newcomers, youth as well as women and middle aged individuals both facing income disruption or low financial literacy. As the Society adapted its Kit for each of these audiences, it integrated the community expertise of the **Mount Saint Vincent University Centre on Ageing**, the **Immigrant Association of Nova Scotia**, **Student Assistance**, and the **Security Commission**.

In all adult correctional institutions in Newfoundland & Labrador, inmates received legal information and attended presentations self-litigation and court processes, delivered by **Justice and Public Safety**.

CREATE Justice's Saskatchewan Access to Legal Information Project, a partnership of justice stakeholders, improved access to legal information for Saskatchewan residents through the public library system. In 2020, the project focused on engagement with public library staff. A position, created through the **Ministry of Justice Innovation Division** now focuses on E-Justice initiatives and developing an Online Legal Information Portal to enhance public library staff's ability to help patrons access legal information.

Ontario's **Black Legal Action Centre** launched its School to Prison Pipeline Project providing resources and research about the impact of disciplinary policies and practices within schools that ultimately put students into direct contact with law enforcement. The **Black Legal Action Centre** launched an 18 month consultation process reaching out to the Black community across Ontario to better understand their experiences and to advocate for meaningful change and policy reform within justice and educational systems.

The new Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Harassment in the Workplace program, launched by the **Law Society of Nunavut** offers public legal education and information initiatives, to ensure that Nunavummiut, including employers, workers, and service providers assisting workers, are able to recognize workplace harassment and violence and explain rights and legal options. The

initiative includes Inuit-specific practices for healing and wellness and public legal education resources developed in partnership with ilinniapaa Skills Development Centre, including a comic poster, a guide for employers, a video on workplace violence, a resource sheet for service providers, and a legal and wellness resource booklet for employees. Two training sessions for lawyers and law students built their capacity to run community workshops and pro bono clinics, including on trauma-informed approaches to serving Inuit clients.

Ontario's **Advocacy Center for Elderly** held public legal education sessions for seniors and service providers to provide seniors with the information necessary to advocate for themselves or to identify areas in which they may need legal assistance.

MEET LEGAL NEEDS

2.1 FOCUS ON LEGAL NEEDS FOR EVERYONE

Focus on addressing service gaps for basic, essential legal services including family law, wills, employment, housing and consumer issues.

2.3 EXPAND SCOPE OF LEGAL AID

Make legal aid available to more people and for a wider range of legal problems.

2.2 ENCOURAGE INNOVATION

Develop and expand alternative ways to get legal help including different kinds of professionals, partnerships or ways of doing business.

2.4 FOCUS ON ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Emphasize the responsibility of lawyers and paralegals to fill access to justice gaps.

Projects advancing this goal



148

Organizations identifying this goal as their primary focus



50

HIGHLIGHTS

Bill C-15

addressing UNDRIP protections was introduced in Parliament providing a framework for reconciliation and renewal of relationships with Indigenous Peoples

3

hours of free summary advice is now offered by the NWT's Outreach Legal Aid Clinic with no means test

7

LGBTQ families, represented by private lawyers and the Manitoba Public Interest Law Centre, changed family law processes for same-sex parents

All 13 jurisdictions

now offer workplace sexual harassment services and resources including hotlines, apps, legal advice, and information portals

What is JDG#2 About?

Meeting legal needs is a combination of maintaining critical core services and developing new ways to meet emerging needs, connect with under-served communities and expand services. This includes delivering legal help in language that people understand, in locations and on technologies they use. Meeting legal needs means expanding and innovating legal services while also maintaining existing legal aid and pro bono services.

Meeting legal needs also requires finding ways to deliver legal services in difference languages, reflecting different approaches to dispute resolution, available across big distances. Technology and creativity are being used to meet the same range of needs in remote and rural communities as in cities.

In 2020, many legal services faced an initial period of adjustment when in-person services, including courts, moved online. However, it quickly became clear that legal services were more urgent than ever. Individual lawyers, private and public legal services found new ways to meet with clients, connect with each other and protect individual legal right in this new virtual environment. As the pandemic continued and people faced the serious consequences of job loss and housing instability, legal services and clinics have offered new services. Throughout all of this adjustment, people's ongoing legal issues, unrelated to the pandemic continued. Legal services evolved to meet all of these type of legal needs over the year.

New Government Services

The **BC Ministry of Attorney General** started a consultation on family legal aid and access to justice, part of an agreement with the **Association of Legal Aid Lawyers** and **Legal Aid BC**. The agreement increased tariff rates, established framework for future tariff negotiations and established a formal and ongoing relationship between the province, legal aid and lawyers providing legal aid to explore ways to provide better services, and greater stability in justice processes.

Changes in the Law

The **Government of Nova Scotia** made changes to the Legal Aid Act to modernize legal aid services. The changes allow for greater support for social justice matters, benefits and income protection. It has also changed the governance of the Legal Aid Commission to increase its operational autonomy and ensure that its Board has knowledge and experience with Indigenous, Black and Mi'kmaw communities.

Manitoba Public Insurance adopted a new policy on non-binary government identification to settle case brought by **Legal Aid Manitoba** on behalf of non-binary residents seeking to expand the gender markers on driver licenses and identification cards. The opportunity to have a legal identification which accurately reflects a person's gender identity removes systemic barriers for meaningful participation in society.

Responding to a request made by **The Law Society of Manitoba**, the **Provincial Government** introduced Bill 24 in the fall of 2020. Once passed, the amendments to The Legal Profession Act will allow the Society to create a new category of legal service provider to be known as "Limited Practitioners." This new category of regulated professional will be able to provide specific legal services.

At the federal level Bill C-15, An Act respecting the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples was introduced in **Parliament** in December 2020. The legislation will provide a framework for reconciliation and renewal of relationships with Indigenous Peoples. By providing a framework and process for working collaboratively, the legislation can provide the basis for dialogue required to advance reconciliation, resolve long-standing disputes, and position the UN Declaration as a key guide for policy and legislative development. The legislation requires the federal government to work together with Indigenous Peoples to develop and action plan for implementing the UN Declaration within Canada.

Legal Aid Manitoba's **Public Interest Law Centre** represented a 65 year old man with disabilities who was forced to start collecting CPP at age 60. The Law Centre argued that persons with disabilities are disproportionately affected, are at greater risk of living in poverty and are dramatically over-represented among those in receipt of income assistance. The Court of Appeal found that the provision discriminatory. The **Law Centre**, working with the **Social Planning Council of Winnipeg** ensured that community voices were heard at Court of Appeal.

Private bar lawyers working in collaboration with the **Public Interest Law Centre** represented 7 LGBTQ families to successfully challenge the Manitoba Family Maintenance Act as discriminatory. The Act will be amended to remove the requirement that same-sex parents who use on assisted reproduction must go through a costly and complicated legal process to be recognized as the child's parent.

Legal Clinic Services

CASA (Childhood Arrivals Support and Advocacy) launched, serving young people who were brought to Canada as children and are living in Ontario without immigration status. Housed at **Justice for Children and Youth**, CASA provides outreach, legal representation, and trusted intermediary supports to ensure these “undocumented” young people, to help them access the knowledge, resources, and legal supports they need to take agency of their futures and live safe, secure, chosen lives.

Legal Help Centre of Winnipeg offered a specialized Consumer Protection Clinic helping people with small claims, residential tenancies, employment, debt collection, estate administration and other civil matters. Help includes drafting pleadings and correspondence and communication with third parties to attempt resolution of conflicts.

Pro Bono Ontario Workplace established a Sexual Harassment Hotline providing free legal assistance for individuals who are victims of workplace sexual harassment. Callers to the helpline can get help identifying their legal issues, understanding the legal options, drafting letters and legal forms and referrals to lawyers.

BC’s Virtual Initial Needs Determination (VIND) providing seamless access to family law supports, was expanded to include Kelowna and Vancouver, now offering services throughout the province. Through an integrated telephone/computer-based service, family justice centres’ local office phones are routed to a hub of staff that can give family justice services to clients wherever they live in the province. Clients speak with an administrative staff within 30 seconds and are connected to an Interviewer in under two minutes. Interviewers screen for safety, provide legal information, make referrals to legal advice and community resources as appropriate, and book appointments with family justice counsellors and child support officers.

Nova Scotia Courts offered four free Legal Clinics legal clinics at courthouses across the province. These clinics help people who need help with civil law matters and family law appeals, excluding child protection. The clinics offer private one-hour sessions with a pro bono lawyer, by appointment, one day a week. Since the pandemic, that service has transitioned to telephone appointments only, which in many instances has proved to be easier for clients and the lawyers.

The NWT’s **Outreach Legal Aid Clinic** started offering up to 3 hours of summary advice with no means test.

The amount of assistance provided is proportional to the need and vulnerability of the client - the more needy and vulnerable clients get advice and help drafting forms while less needy or vulnerable clients are referred to other resources after receiving summary advice.

Indigenous Justice Centres operated by the **BC First Nations Justice Council** provide free legal counsel to Indigenous people in BC. Located in Prince Rupert, Prince George and Merritt, these clinics serve people who self-identify as First Nations, Metis or Inuit and are facing criminal or child protection matters. Staff also work with the surrounding Nations to encourage support and connection to Nation citizens that are involved in the justice system. The IJCs are part of the First Nations Justice Strategy to reduce the over-representation of Indigenous people in the justice and child protection systems.

In Manitoba, **Legal Aid’s** weekend Duty Counsel services were expanded to offer evening and overnight duty counsel. Duty Counsel is now available 24/7 to negotiate and secure release of persons held in custody without moving them from their Communities. This service is available to everyone with no financial eligibility test.

New Legal Services

In 2020, the **Law Society of Alberta** started operating the Lawyer Referral Service, connecting members of the public with a lawyer. Contact information for up to three lawyers is provided to a member of the public, who may help them with their legal needs. The first half-hour of conversation with the lawyer is unbilled and is generally used to discuss legal issues, explore options, evaluate potential costs and help determine if the lawyer is a good fit for the legal issue.

In Quebec, **Justice Pro Bono** offered a virtual Immigration Law Conference following the August 2020 Beirut bombing to support the Lebanese community. **Justice Pro Bono** continues to offer free legal information, by video, to Lebanese citizens who want to learn more about immigration to Canada. Lawyers answer questions about family sponsorship, economic immigration process and temporary residence permits.

Yukon Department of Justice started offering Free Independent Legal Advice and information for victims of intimate partner violence and/or sexualized assault, including those who do not wish to report their experience to the RCMP.

Justice Canada provided funding to the **Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia** for a new project entitled Sexual Harassment Prevention through Legal Advice, Legal Information and Training for Employees in the Workplace. The project provides public legal education and free legal advice to people who have been sexually harassed at work. The Society is developing an app to allow victims to access resources, community support services, and legal information and with a reporting option. The app is a discrete platform, especially for those who are reluctant to use a work computer or shared home computer.

A new Limited Scope Retainer Guide for Lawyers was developed by the **Law Society of Yukon** helping lawyers who are performing only a portion of the work of a larger legal matter. The **Law Society of Manitoba** has also been promoting the provision of unbundled legal services and developed resources on unbundling and limited scope retainers for lawyers in the province. Making it easier for lawyers to work on this limited basis will reduce legal costs and increase the affordability of professional legal services in Yukon and Manitoba.

Nova Scotia Legal Aid now helps Nova Scotians get title to their land in the five Communities of East Preston, North Preston, Cherry Brook, Lincolnville, and Sunnyville. These five communities, among others, have suffered from historical discrimination that has prevented people from receiving legal title to the land they own. The Province is working with stakeholders to remove barriers to the clarification of land ownership and address the unequal treatment that African Nova Scotians have faced.

Free legal help is offered by **Pro Bono Ontario** to families of the victims on Ukrainian Airlines Flight 752 who had connections to Canada. Families can speak to a lawyer, ask questions, identify legal issues, draft legal forms and get referrals to legal representation.

Remote child support mediation service is now offered by **Legal Aid BC** to help people with child support issues, as part of the online resolution services for people living on lower incomes who do not qualify for legal aid. The service connects eligible parents with a professional family law mediator who provides five hours of free remote mediation. It is available to parents who need to change a child support order or agreement because their income has been affected by COVID-19, or have recently separated and need to make a child support agreement.

The second phase of the Social Justice Support Worker based at **Nova Scotia Legal Aid** was funded this year.

Clients, served in-person and remotely by phone and video have access to the Social Justice Support Worker to provide an innovative approach to service delivery for vulnerable and low-income individuals and families. This provides earlier intervention and support through improved legal information, navigation, and advocacy.

P.E.I.'s **Community Legal Information** continues to run its Tenant Support Centre, providing tenants and landlords with accurate and understandable information about renting on PEI despite a gap in funding. In September 2020, it published a new publication, Renting on PEI: A Guide for Tenants to help navigating legal aspects of renting.

The **Law Society of Alberta** has expanded its Approved Legal Services Providers (ALSPs) Program to further improve access to legal services in Alberta, by creating a clear process for established and new pro bono organizations to provide legal services to the public.

All non-insured members under the **Law Society of Nunavut's** group insurance contract are covered to perform pro bono services through the Society's Access to Justice Program. A motion was recently passed to include the provision of pro bono legal services to not-for-profit corporations and societies. This will address a significant gap by supporting not-for-profits that provide valuable services to Nunavummiut. To ensure high quality services, the **Law Society of Nunavut** also held professional development training for its members on advising societies and not-for-profit corporations.

In Manitoba, the **Community Legal Education Association** set up a Workplace Sexual Harassment Hot Line. A new staff lawyer handles calls to the hot line and answer emails. The hot line allows people to quickly connect with a lawyer and discuss legal options after experiencing harassment in the workplace without having to leave their name or contact information. Callers are referred to lawyers for additional legal services as needed. 1300 brochures and bookmarks were distributed, and a pilot workshop held in February. A further 25 workshops will be offered in the next two years.

Pro Bono Ontario's Consumer Protection Project accepts referrals from the Ministry of Government and Consumer services to provide legal assistance to individuals who cannot resolve their problems through the consumer complaints process. The bulk of clients are seniors that have been victims of unfair business practices. In 2020 alone, **PBO** achieved more than \$1 million in economic benefits for these clients by facilitating contract cancellation or

rescission, court awards and settlements, refunds and honoured warranties.

Saskatchewan's Legal Coaching and Unbundling Pilot Project, a project of **CREATE Justice**, launched an associated practice group and continued to deliver Continuing Professional Development seminars for lawyers and awareness events for the public on legal coaching and unbundling. **CREATE**, in collaboration with the **Law Society of Saskatchewan** and the **Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice**, launched a research study in fall of 2020 associated with the project.

Ontario's **Income Security Advocacy Centre** engaged in systemic advocacy with government and community partners for permanent reform to the EI system, to make it more accessible to precarious and low wage workers. This ongoing work to insure access to EI and CPP benefits became more critical for many as the pandemic-related changes to EI and employment benefits did not affect all workers equally.

The Alberta Legal Assistance Network, an initiative of the **Alberta Ministry of Justice**, is designed to increase access to justice for Albertans, particularly low income Albertans and Indigenous Albertans by alleviating pressures in all areas of the justice system by empowering and supporting Albertans in their journey through the justice system.

MAKE COURTS WORK BETTER

3.1 ENSURE ACCESS TO COURTS

Courts must be adequately staffed and located where people live to make sure people can get access to a judge when needed, especially when fundamental and constitutional rights are at stake.

3.2 PROMOTE MULTI SERVICE CENTRES

Courthouses should offer mediation, dispute resolution, and informal or non-legal services to make it easy for people to access cheaper and simpler options at any stage of the process.

3.3 HELP PEOPLE WHO ARE REPRESENTING THEMSELVES

Courts should offer services, including early resolution and information services, for people who are navigating the legal system alone.

3.4 MANAGE CASES EFFECTIVELY

Timelines, simplified procedures, shared experts, and limited number of witness should be agreed to, or insisted on by judges, to make better use of court time and encourage early settlement.

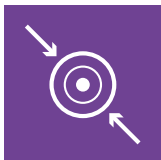
3.5 BE ACCESSIBLE AND USER-FOCUSED

Courts and procedures need to be modernized to reflect people's needs, including better use of technology where it can make the process faster or easier without ignoring the needs of vulnerable people.

3.6 PROTECT JUDICIAL INDEPENDENCE

Ensure system improvements do not interfere with a judge's ability to make independent, ethical decisions to protect people's rights.

Projects advancing this goal



87

Organizations identifying this goal as their primary focus



35

HIGHLIGHTS

7th

Indigenous Court opened by the Provincial Court of BC in Williams Lake

95

Lawyers attended virtual open house held by NS Courts

14.9%

of small claims cases were mediated by lawyers from the Barreau du Québec

Free parenting resource on childminding options offered by the Justice Sector Constellation in Alberta

What is JDG#3 About?

While many access to justice efforts focus on preventative approaches or alternatives to court processes, courthouses remain critical in the continuum of legal services. Courts are where many people turn first for legal information or resolution, speaking with court staff, judges and lawyers. Direct and ancillary services that help people during periods of crisis are often based at or near courthouses. Continuing to improve court-based legal services is critical to improving access to justice.

Programs in the courthouse, including legal information centres, pro bono services, and duty counsel programs help people understand legal processes and provide immediate assistance. Court staff provide frontline services to litigants and judges manage cases in their courtrooms.

In 2020, the work to improve the court process focused heavily on increasing the use of virtual tools and providing self-empowerment resources to litigants, to ensure that as many people as possible could access the courts. Early resolution and case management programs increased, helping support litigants to decrease cost, participate in resolution and reduce conflict.

Supporting Court Users

In 2020, the **Provincial Court of BC** became the first court in Canada to modify the protocol for courtroom introductions to include non-binary titles and pronouns.

The **Justice Sector Constellation** in Alberta commissioned research that concluded that a lack of childminding services presents an impediment for individual seeking to access the justice system. The research noted the personal safety issues and potential for trauma for children who attend court, as well as the potential for distraction and additional stress placed on the parent, as key factors supporting the conclusion. The Constellation developed a resource outlining childminding options available on a drop-in basis within reasonable walking or transit access of the Calgary Courts Centre. The free resource is available for clients and has been shared with service providers for distribution.

The **Canadian Bar Association** made a number of submissions aimed at improving access to justice in courts and tribunals. The French Speaking Members section advocated for bankruptcy and insolvency proceedings being available in both official languages. The Child and Youth Law Section made a submission to the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, which

included comments on measures needed to enhance access to justice for children in Canada.

The seventh Indigenous Court was opened by the **Provincial Court of BC** in Williams Lake, BC.

In the early phase of the pandemic, the **Law Society of Manitoba** worked with the provincial government to issue an Emergency Order to allow for remote or virtual execution of documents. The Law Society prepared checklists and a webinar to support lawyers using remote execution. While this was initially a pandemic-related initiative, the changes will be made permanent to realize ongoing benefits to members of the public who reside in remote, rural and northern Manitoba.

Increasing Access and Efficiency

The new **Abbotsford Law Courts** in BC, opened in 2020, will serve the needs of one of the province's fastest growing regions. The 14-courtroom facility includes three Supreme Court courtrooms, eight Provincial Court courtrooms, three judicial conference rooms and space for ancillary programs that support the provision of justice. The facility includes state-of-the-art technology systems to support the delivery of justice services now and well into the future.

In 2020, the **BC Ministry of Attorney General and Housing** advanced its Court Digital Transformation Strategy focusing on Online Divorce, Protection Orders and initial development of new forms under the Family Law Act.

In 2020, the Executive Office of the Judiciary livestreamed six hearings in the **Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court** of Nova Scotia. All were matters with broad public and media interest that dealt with fundamental principles of law, important Charter rights and social justice issues. The archived video of the webcasts is also available for viewing on the Courts' website.

In order to support counsel to effectively participate in virtual hearings, the **Nova Scotia Supreme Court** held virtual open houses to welcome counsel to the virtual court initiative, provide basic training and an overview of future plans. 95 counsel and parties attended the sessions. The sessions are posted on the Virtual Court page of the Courts of Nova Scotia website, along with tip sheets and virtual court self-help videos.

The **Nova Scotia Department of Justice** introduced an innovative alternative to traditional in-person court for single

family matters using an online platform for judicial case management, settlement conferencing and adjudication. The platform allows electronic filing, exchange of motions, affidavits and court documents, online exchange between Judge and counsel, online caucusing and the creation of an electronic record of all online proceedings.

As part of a pilot project the **Court of Appeal of Quebec** launched the first phase of its future digital court office. The electronic platform rolled out in April 2020 for appeals as of right in civil matters. The project will be expanded to include other e-filings.

The **Court of Appeal of Alberta** opened the public portal of its digital case management system to allow counsel and litigants to file documents electronically and access their case materials and information about their appeals online.

The first virtual court hearing in Nova Scotia took place on April 30, 2020. Virtual court hearings now occur daily across the province, including for selected **Supreme Court** (General and Family Division) hearings and specialty court programs in Provincial Court, such as the Domestic Violence Court Programs and the Dartmouth Wellness Court.

The BC **Better Justice Lab** created a proof-of-concept demonstration of a methodology for prototyping and solving problems in the justice system. The demonstration involved reducing the number of steps in the interlocutory bench order process from five steps to one. The new approach is expected to be implemented for interlocutory bench orders across BC in 2021.

A Focus on Early Resolution

The **Court of Queen's Bench** for Saskatchewan amended its rules to provide an option for parties in civil and family disputes to resolve their case without going to trial. Binding pre-trial conferences all parties that cannot reach an agreement during their settlement pre-trial conference to leave the decision in the hands of the pre-trial judge.

Québec introduced the **Coordination Parentale** program, a non-adversarial dispute resolution process, ordered by the Court or accepted by divorced and separated parents who have a continuous pattern of conflict and/or litigation about their children. The CP is designed to help parents implement and comply with court orders or parenting plans and to make timely decisions in a manner consistent with the developmental and psychological needs of children.

The Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta extended the enforcement of its Mandatory Alternative Dispute Resolution

Rules, requiring parties to participate in at least one dispute resolution process to be completed prior to trial.

The **Provincial Court of BC** introduced new Provincial Court Family Rules to encourage early resolution and case management, and introduce new approaches that support self-represented litigants through guidebooks, interactive forms. In 2020, both Surrey and Victoria became designated Early Resolution and Case Management Model registries, adopting and implementing the new rules.

Online dispute resolution was leveraged in 8 boards/tribunals across 3 different ministries in BC in 2020. The approach included a Solution Explorer with a free, online question and answer application that provides free legal information and a range of tools to help citizens resolve legal problems and a Dispute Resolution Suite, which is the **Civil Resolution Tribunal's** case management system that provides the web-based interfaces that support online dispute resolution.

BC introduced a new Arbitration Act in 2020, supporting party autonomy to efficiently resolve disputes out of court. Party and court resources have been freed up through a streamlined, simplified appeal process: four rounds of appeal hearings in court under the previous legislation have been condensed to a maximum of two. Parties may now agree to opt out of appeals altogether. Arbitration provisions for family law disputes were modernized and moved to the Family Law Act.

The Small Claims section of the **Barreau du Québec** offered information sessions to the public on preparing cases for Small Claims Court. Lawyers from the section also offered on-site mediation on the day of the hearing. As a result, in 2020 14.9% of all small claims cases were mediated on site.

The **Court of Appeal of Alberta** continued its efforts to encourage early resolution of appeal matters by expanding the existing Judicial Dispute Resolution program.

JDG 4

IMPROVE FAMILY JUSTICE

4.1 OFFER A BROAD RANGE OF SERVICES

Provide targeted, free, accessible public legal education about frequent legal issues, different types of solutions and the process of enforcing rights.

4.3 INNOVATE

Educate people about less adversarial approaches and experiment with new services and processes to create opportunities for consensus resolution.

4.2 PROMOTE CONSENSUAL RESOLUTION

Foster legal capability so that people can spot legal issues early, get preventative or proactive help and anticipate, avoid or manage frequent legal issues.

4.4 RESTRUCTURE FAMILY COURTS

Locate all of the aspects of family law in the same place, including separation, custody and access, and divorce, ideally under one judge.

Projects advancing this goal



75

Organizations identifying this goal as their primary focus



8

HIGHLIGHTS

1180 people

served by the Legal Aid Manitoba's child protection duty counsel program

Positive Parenting from Two Homes

offered to PEI families in partnership between PEI and NS departments of justice

90 parents

were offered online resources by Justice Pro Bono's Porte 33 program in Quebec

New legislation in NB

centres the best interests of the child and reduces the time and complexity of family disputes.

What is JDG#4 About?

Family law continues to be a major focus of access to justice efforts in Canada. The majority of self-represented litigants in Canadian courts are dealing with the legal aspects of separation and divorce, or are managing the ongoing custody and financial arrangements between parents.

Legal clinics and public legal information services have long focused on helping people understand the processes, forms and options in family disputes. Family courts, lawyers and mediators continue to provide direct legal services while alternative approaches work to reduce conflicts or avoid legal disputes altogether.

In 2020, virtual clinics and empowerment tools supported self-represented litigants and people at the beginning of their family law issues. Courts, public legal education providers, clinics and students increased their focus on early resolution and conflict avoidance. The sector emphasized the best interests of the child through a variety of parental support and by increasing the profile of children at the centre of family issues. Changes to legislation nationally and provincially aligned the priorities of early resolution and the best interests of the child, ensuring that provinces, courts and service providers were empowered to meet family law needs.

Empowering People with Family Law Issues

Community Legal Education Ontario's Family Law Guided Pathways help people in Ontario to complete family law court forms. By year end, 39 family law pathways were available in both English and French, leading users to a total of 65 court forms and tip sheets. Each pathway takes users through a number of questions and their answers determine what additional questions they will be asked. At the end of each pathway, a user's answers automatically populate the requisite family law court forms. From April – December 2020, users completed over 6000 sessions and over 28,000 documents were created.

The **Public Legal Education Association of Saskatchewan** introduced Remote Self-Help tools for family law litigants. The project includes "How to" videos for people dealing with family breakdown without assistance from a lawyer and an online safety planning tool with a guided pathway for people experiencing intimate partner violence. The videos support user success by creating confidence in the use of the online planning tools.

In 2020, students working in the Family Law Clinic of **Legal Help Centre of Winnipeg** assisted 100 people to prepare to self-represent and working with court staff to assist unrepresented individuals.

The Law Society of Manitoba introduced a Family Law Hub in the library of the courts building. Law students, under the supervision of a family law lawyer, provide legal information and limited legal services to self-represented litigants. Early feedback indicated that the in-person presence in the courthouse was a positive move to address unmet legal needs. As a result of the pandemic, the Hub began to offer virtual services.

Pro Bono Students Canada, Epstein Cole LLP and **Legal Aid Ontario** partnered to launch the Family Justice Centre, hosting virtual legal clinics for Ontarians dealing with family law issues who are unable to afford a lawyer but may not meet the threshold for legal aid services. At the clinics, family law lawyers supervise law students in the delivery of unbundled legal services to self-represented litigants. The Centre also created public legal education resources to support self-represented litigation in navigating the family law process. 2020 was spent developing the Centre and client-facing work began in early 2021.

In 2020, Ontario's **South Asian Legal Clinic** provided help, including legal information, legal advice and emergency help, for victims of forced marriage in Canada.

Courthouse Libraries BC's Family Law Unbundling Program provided information to the public and the legal profession about family unbundling, including helpful retainer letter templates, checklists, flowcharts and more, to support self-represented litigants in family law.

Encouraging Early Resolution and Reducing Conflict

The **Court of Appeal in Alberta** launched a pilot to fast track all family law appeals. Case management officers schedule a mandatory appeal conference in all Family Law Fast Track Appeals, approximately two weeks after the Notice of Appeal is filed. The purpose of the pilot project is to increase access to justice and encourage resolution between parties of outstanding appeals in an effort to reduce family conflicts and expenses.

The **Yukon Family Mediation Service** was granted a two-year extension. The free service is an alternative to court

that helps parents resolve child-related matters when separating or divorcing. The Yukon Family Mediation Service works closely with the nearby Family Law Information Centre to support parents who are willing to work together to make decisions about parenting arrangements and the ongoing needs of children after separation or divorce.

At the **Quebec Superior Court**, the Parenthood/Conflict/Resolution Pilot Project (PCR-2) focuses on the best interests of the child and allocates one judge to one family from the start to the finish of the case. The judge is empowered with additional tools to intervene in family matters to re-establish communication and support a meaningful relationship between child and parents.

The **Supreme Court of NS** (Family Division) and the **Unified Family Court NS** participated in an e-court pilot in Halifax to provide legal counsel the opportunity to engage in real time, online exchanges with a judge for dispute resolution. The program is the first online judicial dispute resolution service in the country and its goal is to eventually include access for self-represented litigants.

In 2020, **Manitoba Justice, Family Resolution** introduced a new single-window Family Resolution Service which consolidates and expands voluntary out-of-court services. Early Resolution supports were delivered by Family Guide specialists in intimate partner violence, safety planning, mediation, family law and court processes. A single Get Guidance email and telephone line offers a 'digital first but not digital only' focus, recognizing that some clients prefer or require phone or in-person support. The Family Law Manitoba website provides a one-stop authoritative source for family law resources and supports, including self-service tools. In 2020, 1700 people benefitted from the Family Resolution Service.

Supporting Children and Parents

As a part of the Interjurisdictional Support Orders Deputy Minister Working Group on Trace and Locate, Secured Electronic Documents, Bank Garnishments and Metrics, **Nova Scotia Department of Justice** led the Secured Electronic Documents and Bank Garnishments portions, seeking to increase the ability of bodies across Canada to enforce maintenance orders even when payors move to or live in other jurisdictions.

Legal Aid Manitoba expanded the child protection duty counsel program, making duty counsel available to all parents and families regardless of their financial

circumstances in many provincial and superior courts in Manitoba. Affected parents have in-court assistance with making representations on interim or temporary disposition of issues pending formal determination of apprehension proceedings. This program served 1180 people in 2020.

The coParenter Case Study is a collaboration between the **Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter, Reforming Family Justice Services and coParenter**. The Case Study started in October 2020, providing each individual at the shelter with a three month free license to the coParenter tool. The Study will provide an opportunity to gain experience with the coParenter tool in Alberta with a specific focus on family violence and abuse cases.

The **Departments of Justice and Public Safety of PEI** and NS have partnered to offer Island families the Positive Parenting from Two Homes course online. This free program can support parents to gain a greater understanding of their children's needs through the separation or divorce process.

Legal Aid NS's Child Protection Practice Group entered the second year of the pilot. The program provides wraparound services for child protection clients with a focus on early intervention. The team, which includes two lawyers, a navigator and a support assistant, provides enhanced services at the initial stage of the hearing and keeps all files that can be resolved collaboratively. The team also partnered with the judiciary and the Departments of Justice and Community Services to develop a pre-court judicial led conferencing model allowing parties in matters where a proceeding is foreseeable to address concerns without a court application. The model will be assessed for its application across the province. In 2020, the pilot benefitted 341 people.

In Quebec, **Justice Pro Bono's** Porte 33 program offered free meetings for parents with a family law lawyer and a community support worker, as well as an online resource. In 2020, the service went virtual and served 90 parents.

The Youth Voice Initiative, part of the **BC Family Innovation Lab**, aims to support the well-being and resilience of children and youth whose families have experienced separation or divorce. Using human-centred design process, Youth Voices created a platform to showcase stories from young people, designing education for system professionals and engage with young people and stakeholders through Instagram.

Aligning Legislation Across Canada

Federally, **Justice Canada** introduced amendments to the Divorce Act and federal support enforcement Acts (Bill C-78) to address the best interests of the child, family violence and the reduction of child poverty to come into force on March 1, 2021. Justice Canada developed a broad range of public legal education and information materials to help Canadians understand the changes to the law. Some of the materials will be available in multiple languages. A suite of professional training resources is also being prepared to support effective implementation.

In **New Brunswick**, the **provincial government** introduced new legislation to align the Family Law Act with the changes to the federal Divorce Act and to create a new recalculation service to help avoid court appearances. The new legislation replaces terminology of custody and access with the concepts of parenting time, decision-making responsibility and the terms parenting order and contact order. It introduces requirements specific to the relocation of children and for legal advisors to advise clients about using non-court options for dispute resolution. The best interests of the child criteria are updated and now include specific considerations around family violence and First Nations families.

In Ontario, the **Moving Ontario Family Law Forward Act**, 2020 introduces modernized language, simplified appeal routes and improved the online child support service.

The **BC Provincial Court of Justice** introduced amended rules focusing on early resolution of family law cases, including case management, streamlined processes and new easier-to-use forms.

The **Family Law Modernization Act** established a framework to reform Manitoba's family law services and expand out of court options. The amended Arbitration Act facilitates private arbitration to resolve family law disputes and the enhanced authority and discretion of the Maintenance Enforcement Program prevents the need for court applications in certain circumstances. In 2020, Manitoba introduced the Child Support Calculation Service for initial child support and recalculation decisions outside of court and is establishing an administrative family dispute resolution service to make facilitated resolution and adjudication mandatory for all eligible common law families.

WORK TOGETHER

5.1 ESTABLISH COORDINATED EFFORTS

Bring all of the organizations involved in access to justice in each province or territory together to focus on local solutions.

5.2 INCLUDE EVERYONE

Involve the major institutions (courts, governments), professional groups (lawyers' associations), community groups and non-profits (clinics, PLE providers) academics and individuals to find new creative approaches.

5.3 BE BOLD; TAKE ACTION

Local and national coordination must lead, take action and inspire others to tackle access to justice.

5.4 WORK WITHIN INSTITUTIONS

In addition to coordinating across the justice system, access to justice should be a series focus within judges' organizations, lawyers' and paralegals' associations, courts and institutions.

5.5 COORDINATE ACROSS CANADA

Keep momentum and sustained attention to these issues across the country to complement local and regional activity.

Projects advancing this goal



101

Organizations identifying this goal as their primary focus



7

HIGHLIGHTS

in AB, SK, ON, NS

Access to Justice Week events were held simultaneously

1641 people

were served by Pro Bono Ontario's Medical-Legal Partnership in children's hospitals

62 clients

were connected to service providers and provided with culturally appropriate services by The African Nova Scotian Social Worker program

210 survivors

of sexual violence were provided legal support by The Journey Project in NL

What is JDG#5 About?

Collaboration is increasingly recognized as the best way to find innovative and effective responses to the A2J crisis. Traditional justice sector actors now understand that the participation of community members and leaders in developing and implementing new models brings a greater degree of resolution for people's legal issues.

In response to the Action Committee's Roadmap to Change, issued in 2014, a collaborative group or committee has been established in each province or territory in the country. Each year, the Action Committee meets for its annual Summit bringing together representatives from these provincial/territorial collaboratives and representatives of justice sector institutions and equity seeking organizations to coordinate access to justice efforts. In 2020, these events were held virtually.

The Action Committee has many ways to share access to justice ideas in Canada. Anyone involved in access to justice can subscribe to its monthly A2J Newsletter to receive highlights of interesting projects and innovative approaches. The Access to Justice Research Network, hosted by the CFCJ, is a community of researchers working universities and in community organizations, sharing research results, academic writing and new thinking on these issues. Links to these two communications tools and other Action Committee news can be found at justicedevelopmentgoals.ca.

In 2020, collaboration on A2J highlighted the value add that working together brings to those in need. Across the country and within provinces, justice sector organizations came together with the express purpose of ensuring that the focus remains on the crisis in access to justice and ensuring that the right voices come to the table for problem-solving and decision-making.

2020 was also a practical year for collaboration, focusing on ensuring that community members are empowered to support each other, including with respect to COVID-related legal issues.

Recommitting to Collaborative Efforts

Canada's **Access to Justice Week** took place in Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario and Nova Scotia. Organizers highlighted the work of justice organizations and pro bono organizations in each province, hosting a series of webinars to educate the public, lawyers and community organizations on how to improve access to justice in their own neighbourhoods. National events included: Unbundled

Legal Services in Canada, A Conversation about Access to Justice and Systemic Racism, and Exploring Community Justice Help to Advance Community-based Access to Justice. Canada's Access to Justice Week is a collaborative effort supported by CREATE Justice at the University of Saskatchewan College of Law, the Law Society of Saskatchewan, CBA Alberta, the University of Alberta Faculty of Law, The Access Group on A2J (Ontario), the Law Society of Ontario and the Access to Justice and Law Reform Institute of Nova Scotia.

Legal Aid BC signed two memoranda of understanding in 2020 to support Indigenous clients and its Reconciliation Action Plan. The first MOU, signed with the **BC Métis Federation** reinforces the coordination of supportive justice services for Métis people in BC and establishes a process for relationship building between the two organizations. The second MOU, signed with the **Native Courtworker and Counselling Association of BC** outlines the long-standing collaborative relationship between the two organizations and recognizes the importance of supporting each other's mandates to move forward on key Indigenous justice services.

Access to Justice BC developed a practical family justice leadership strategy to address child well-being issues in the family justice system and invited Indigenous justice leaders to co-develop a sub-strategy focused on Indigenous family well-being. The approach applied an Indigenous lens and is based on brain science, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and resilience research.

In Manitoba, the **Law Society** advanced collaborative A2J efforts, establishing a two year pilot role for a Manitoba Access to Justice Coordinator to lead the A2J initiatives of the Law Society, act as primary support for the Manitoba Access to Justice Steering Committee and serve as a liaison to the Faculty of Law, developing A2J initiatives. The Law Society also established an Advisory Committee for implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, with membership participation by the Hon. Murray Sinclair.

The **Access to Justice Committee for Nova Scotia** was convened following the wrap-up of the work of the original Access to Justice Coordinating Committee in 2018. The new committee will continue to promote coordination and collaboration on A2J initiatives in Nova Scotia. The Committee is co-chaired by the Chief Justice of Nova Scotia and the Deputy Minister of Justice and is supported by the Access to Justice & Law Reform Institute of Nova Scotia.

Coordinating A2J Efforts

Justice sector leaders in Quebec, including the **Ministry of Justice**, the **Chief Justices** of all three levels of court, the **Chambre des notaires**, the **Law Commission** and the **Director of Criminal and Penal Prosecutions** convened a table, with three subcommittees to propose 40 innovative measures to improve access to justice, including in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The tables considered justice system responses to the state of emergency as well as long term approaches to reduce delays and costs to litigants, simplifying procedures for citizens and promoting out of court settlement in the area of civil and small claims, family and child protection, and criminal. The Small Claims subcommittee created an Inventory of Ongoing and Upcoming Initiatives to promote awareness of the services or tools available to parties.

The **Justice and Health Partnership Measuring Impact Advisory Committee**, a national committee stemming from the Justice and Health Partnership Community of Interest identified justice and health partnerships as one of the critical components of access to justice, met throughout 2020.

Justice Canada chaired the Global Dialogue of Justice Leaders from around the world who came together to discuss strategies to increase justice as a part of the COVID-19 response and recovery. During Global Week for Justice, it also chaired the Inaugural meeting of the Open Government Partnership Coalition on Justice and participated in a Roundtable on Justice Data Priorities and the Pandemic and a discussion on Justice for Women and Girls: Moving from Commitment to Action Amidst COVID-19.

The Journey Project, a collaboration between the **Public Legal Information Association of NL** and the **NL Sexual Assault Crisis and Prevention Centre**, provided legal support for survivors of sexual violence, developed and provided training on trauma and sexual violence to legal stakeholders and prepared public legal education materials related to sexual harassment in the workplace, serving 210 people.

The **African Nova Scotian Social Worker** program entered the second phase of the pilot ensuring the delivery of culturally appropriate services and making connections with communities and frontline service providers for 62 clients.

In NWT, the **Outreach Legal Aid Clinic** networked proactively with government departments on the frontlines of services for NWT residents, as well as representatives from Indigenous governments, child protection services and the family law bar to proactively identify and seek out potential areas of miscommunication and service failures before they occur, and to maintain an ongoing dialogue about the various services available to clients.

In 2020, the medical-legal partnership between **Justice Pro Bono** in Quebec and the **Children's Hospital** in Montreal provided legal support to 40 patients and their families.

Pro Bono Ontario's Medical-Legal Partnerships program, run in partnership with every children's hospital in Ontario, addressed health-harming legal problems. Triage lawyers embedded within clinical teams trained clinicians on how to identify legal problems and direct legal services to patients. In 2020, the program served 1641 people.

In 2020, **Pro Bono Ontario**, in collaboration with the **Métis Nation of Ontario**, began providing free legal services to Métis Ontarians who have civil legal problems, including family law issues, serving 36 people from October-December 2020. In addition PBO is providing legal issue spotting and legal triage training to frontline workers serving the community.

The **Canadian Bar Association** launched its Reaching Equal Justice Advocacy Guide. This guide is designed to empower CBA members to effectively advocate for greater access to justice. It summarizes key access to justice issues in Canada, and links to advocacy tools members can use to advocate for change including sample social media posts, key issue sheets, and sample questions.

The Provincial/Territorial Collaboratives

The Provincial/Territorial Collaboratives foster a local, regional and national link for individuals and organizations working on access to justice.

BC A2JBC - Access to Justice BC
YK Access to Justice Committee
AB Reforming Family Justice System Project
NWT Northwest Territories Access to Justice Committee
SK Saskatchewan Access to Justice Network
MB Access to Justice Steering Committee
ON TAG - The Action Group on Access to Justice

NU Access to Justice Committee
QC Forum Québécois sur l'accès à la justice civile et familiale
PEI Access to Justice Committee
NS Access to Justice Committee for Nova Scotia
NFLD Access to Justice Steering Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador

BUILD CAPABILITY

6.1 EDUCATE LAW STUDENTS AND LEGAL PROFESSIONALS

Offer training on access to justice, emerging approaches, changing social situations and the skills to meet people's needs, both at the start of and throughout legal careers.

6.2 EXPAND JUSTICE EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS

Introduce legal capability into elementary and secondary schools to prepare people for legal issues in their lives; Officer training about access to justice issues in post-secondary programs to integrate legal, health, social and education services.

Projects advancing this goal



42

Organizations identifying this goal as their primary focus



3

HIGHLIGHTS

> 80 members

are now part of the National Trusted Intermediaries and Legal Information Network across Canada

24 legal clinics

were offered training by Egale Canada in 18 cities across Canada to build awareness about LGBTQI2S issues in the justice system

20 Éducaloi trainings

on the legislative framework of sexual violence offered for free to staff and student leaders at 46 CEGEPs, 16 universities and 17 private colleges

Braiding Diversity into Justice

by OJEN, connected young marginalized and racialized women with members of the legal sector

What is JDG#6 About?

School-age students and university students are the primary audiences for building legal capability. Having not yet settled on career choices, nor developed their own conflict skills, efforts to build legal capability in these audiences offers the potential to transform how people respond to legal conflict, whether in their own lives or in these professional roles. Students developing practice skills and aptitudes at the beginning of their career, can be exposed to access to justice issues before they make career decisions. The efforts to build capability in these audiences is the priority under this goal, complementing the training of existing legal professionals.

Ongoing professional development is a critical responsibility of all legal professionals. Lawyers, paralegals and judges continue to expand their practice skills and awareness of access to justice issues. In 2020, these opportunities were a combination of internal training opportunities offered by legal aid societies, judges associations and employers, cross-sectoral conferences and courses.

Over this last year, many legal professionals have also examined their personal and professional roles in pursuing racial justice and reconciliation through formal and individual training.

Building Legal Capability in Young People

Educational and competitive mock trials exposes thousands of students each year to legal professionals, careers in law and basic legal concepts. Offered by dedicated justice organizations like **Éducaloi**, **Ontario Justice Education Network (OJEN)**, **Level Justice** and the **Justice Education Network**. Members of the Manitoba and Ontario Bar Association volunteer to work with high school students and their teachers, preparing them to present mock trials. These programs happened virtually in 2020.

In Ontario the **OJEN** Charter Challenge is a mock appeal experience for high school students in which students receive a mock judicial decision in which complex Charter issues are raised on appeal. Students all over Ontario form teams and research and write a factum with legal arguments for either side of the arguments.

Éducaloi offers 14 legal education workshops to high school classes each year, delivered by one of its over 1600 legal sector volunteers. **Éducaloi** also held a 2nd edition of

its National Legal Education Week virtually, offering a fun way for students to learn about law in society and develop the skills to face simple or complex situations of everyday life, to take thoughtful actions, to develop a critical thinking about legal issues.

OJEN developed a new program “Braiding Diversity into Justice”, to connect young marginalized and/or racialized women with members of the legal sector. The **OJEN Twitter Moot** is an online debate for students from across Ontario who tweet their opinions either individually or in teams/classes, engaging in new and complex legal discussions.

Empowering Trusted Intermediaries

As part of Alberta’s **Justice Constellation**, the **Centre for Public Legal Education Alberta** developed Intermediaries Training for service providers and intermediaries such as community and faith community workers and volunteers outside of the justice sector. The training helps those outside of the justice sector to recognize clients’ legal issues and know where to refer them for assistance.

As a part of Calgary’s poverty reduction strategy, the **Justice Sector Constellation** developed **Poverty and the Law: Expanding Perspectives**, a free, interactive online module for students and working professionals in nursing, education, development, psychology and social work. The free module builds understanding of the issues that arise at the intersection of poverty and the legal system.

The **Ontario Justice Education Network** developed new online delivery methods for training high school teachers to teach law and civics to Ontario high school students. The online delivery ensured that its annual Summer Law Institute remained a highlight of educators’ professional development.

Éducaloi offered training on the legislative framework of sexual violence for stakeholders in post-secondary institutions. Offered for free, 20 sessions were offered in 16 regions, building the capability of staff and student leaders at 46 CEGEPs, 16 universities and 17 private colleges.

In Manitoba, the Community Legal Intermediary Training Course offered by **Community Legal Education Association Manitoba** provides training for those in the community who are often called upon to help others with legal problems. In 2020, the program delivered nine virtual presentations reaching more community members than the in-person model.

2020 marked the first full year of meetings for the **National Trusted Intermediaries and Legal Information Network (TILI Network)**, which began as a collaboration between the **Saskatchewan Access to Legal Information Project**, the **National Self-represented Litigants Project** and British Columbia's **LawMatters Program**. The network has over 80 members from 9 jurisdictions across Canada. This year's discussions included COVID-specific sessions.

Supporting the Development of Legal Professionals throughout their Careers

Law school students at the **University of Manitoba** can participate in Externships in their final year of law school based in family law, at the Law Society's Library Hub or in the Community Law Centre or the Legal Help Centre. Students help self-represented litigants and assist with legal aid cases in a range of areas including uncontested divorces, poverty law, summary conviction matters, Highway Traffic Act offences, small claims cases that involve consumer problems and individual disputes with Manitoba Public Insurance.

Justice Canada funded **Egale Canada** to develop and deliver the first national Gender Diversity and Inclusion Training Program for 24 Legal Clinics in eighteen cities across all provinces and territories. The training builds awareness and understanding among legal and paralegal professionals about LGBTQI2S issues as they intersect with the justice system. The project includes a bilingual handbook on gender diversity and inclusion geared to legal and paralegal professionals.

The Manitoba Bar Association offered educational resources to the legal community to increase awareness of the legacy of the Indian Residential School System, support anti-racism and anti-bias training and to increase cultural competency of legal professionals working with the Indigenous communities. These programs are part of efforts to remove barriers to Indigenous participation in the Association.

Éducaloi set up a Clear Communication 101 course for lawyers in Quebec's workplace health and safety agency with examples drawn from their practice areas. Offered to all staff, the program introduces them to plain language principles and develop skills for interviewing people accessing services.

INNOVATE

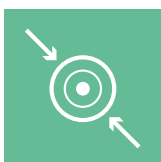
7.1 KEEP TRACK OF WHAT IS WORKING

Create a culture of innovation in the justice system by focusing on new ideas and learning about successes and failures.

7.2 SHARE GOOD IDEAS

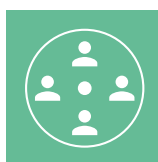
Promote the sharing of new models, ideas and successes to expand the impact of innovation.

Projects advancing this goal



40

Organizations identifying this goal as their primary focus



4

HIGHLIGHTS

Transform the Family Justice System Collaborative
introduced by A2JBC

Seniors

linked to volunteers and services to complete personal healthcare directives through an app offered by Legal Information Society of NS

210 lawyers

joined Ontario's Family Law Limited Scope Services project providing services in 24 languages

Artificial Intelligence Regulatory Sandbox

introduced by the Barreau du Québec

What is JDG#7 About?

There are genuine challenges to innovation in the justice sector, including the need to protect the independence of the judiciary and the bar that creates separation between institutions and groups. The culture of precedent and tradition has hindered experimentation. Given the extent of the A2J challenge, the sector is changing, adopting new thinking, flexibility, experimentation and user-centred approaches.

In 2020, the sector took user-centric innovation and design to heart, trying new service delivery models and tools based on the direct input of people. The sector expanded its exploration of AI and other technological tools to provide greater information and autonomy to individuals with legal issues.

Transforming Service Delivery

The **Barreau du Québec** introduced its Artificial Intelligence Regulatory Sandbox, whose activities aim to support and encourage existing initiatives in the field of AI and other technological innovations in the practice of the legal profession, and align these initiatives with the regulatory and legislative regime applicable to the practice of the legal profession in Quebec. The sandbox will look at New Practice Models for the Legal Profession, AI Tools for Lawyers and AI Tools for the Public.

In BC, the **Environmental Appeal Board, Forest Appeals Commission, and Oil and Gas Appeal Tribunal** introduced an Electronic Hearing Project, transitioning appeal hearings from paper-based to live electronic hearings. They conducted multiple training sessions with parties, participants and staff and developed in-house hearing procedures. These matters are now all livestreamed for accountability and transparency, providing web-links to allow any member of the public to observe hearings in real time.

The **Family Resolution Service** of Manitoba Justice introduced the Family Law Modernization initiative using co-design (Design Thinking, Innovation Engineering, Behavioural Insights) to shift family law services delivery, building on the benefits of earlier interventions and an out of court model. A public engagement report in January 2020 showcased the innovation efforts including client journey mapping which aligned efforts of over 20 public, private and community service providers and co-design sessions with families, adult children and cross-sector service providers generated over 250 ideas for change. A Collaboration Table was initiated by the Minister of Justice

to guide efforts for a continuum of affordable services using a single-team approach aligning efforts across sectors. 5000 Manitobans have benefited from this initiative.

In 2020, A2JBC developed a practical plan for leadership to address child wellbeing issues in the family justice system, based on brain science, Adverse Childhood Experiences, and resilience research. A diverse working group including youth and other sector leaders looked critically at approaches used in other jurisdictions and sectors. It applied an Indigenous lens. Work was done, in collaboration with Alberta, to develop a strategic mapping approach that aligns participating organizations around common objectives, evaluates success with common measures and visually tracks targets and actions.

Courthouse Libraries BC created Lawbster, a closed community online platform to help legal practitioners connect, share precedents, papers and other resources, engage in dialogue and build relationships around the profession.

Ontario's **Family Law Limited Scope Services Project** is a private-bar driven collaborative effort to improve access to family justice for Ontarians through the use of limited scope retainers, legal coaching and summary legal counsel. The project facilitated access to, and use of, unbundled legal services through its website with a province-wide roster of trained lawyers. People searched the website by location, type of service, languages spoken or the name of a particular lawyer. In 2020 there were 210 lawyers on the directory located in more than 56 municipalities in Ontario. 91 of the lawyers provide services in 23 languages in addition to English. 43,400 people have benefited from this initiative.

The **Law Society of Alberta** developed a pilot for active part-time status and fees for lawyers. This pilot was the result of data gathered through feedback and surveys from lawyers and the Retention and Reengagement Task Force Report, in alignment with the Law Society's goals of furthering equity, diversity and inclusion in the profession and supporting access to justice for the public.

BC amended the legislation to allow people to remotely witness wills without the need for a lawyer and to recognize electronic wills. This will particularly benefit the elderly in care homes, when in person visits are limited. People who live in rural areas and small towns will also benefit by more easily accessing remote will-making services.

Innovating Tools for the Public

The **BC Better Justice Lab**, opened in 2020, aims to radically improve the ability of online tools to predict case outcomes for legal system users. The project chose an existing solution explorer from the BC Property Assessment Appeal Board and radically improved it through both gamifying the process and by implementing AI solutions to allow for people to upload data to support their claim. The goal is to allow people to reduce their time, expense and effort in assessing whether they will have success in validating their legal rights.

The **Legal Information Society of Nova Scotia** introduced the Seniors' Navigator Project providing online training for community volunteers who help seniors in their communities by telephone to use the Personal Directive App to complete their personal healthcare directive. The App creates a finished form. An online matching platform automatically matches a person looking for help with a volunteer. Law students support the program by becoming trained navigators.

In Nova Scotia, the **Department of Justice** launched SmartLink, an app that allows individuals in the community to check in with community corrections using facial and voice recognition. The app allows individuals to self-report life changes and provides them with calendar events, reminders and direct access to service providers to assist with their reintegration into the community. The app reduces the need for in-person reporting and, in 2020, was implemented across the province.

ANALYZE AND LEARN

8.1 DEVELOP METRICS

Establish benchmarks and standardized metrics to build a shared understanding of legal services, models and needs.

8.2 WORK WITH RESEARCHERS IN ALL FIELDS

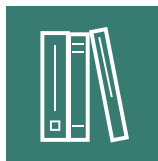
Coordinate research between institutions and universities, and between social scientists, economists, system users, and legal institutions to better understand the issues.

Events focusing on on A2J



28

Publications in Canada on A2J



26

Projects advancing this goal



44

Organizations identifying this goal as their primary focus



2

HIGHLIGHTS

986 people

logged into the Action Committee's annual Summit keynote event

35% of respondents

to Legal Aid BC's Everyday Legal Needs Survey reported that legal problems were caused or made worse by the pandemic

80% of cases

sent to ADR at the Social Security Tribunal of Canada were resolved

The Law Society of Nunavut and Pauktuit Inuit Women of Canada studied the needs of Inuit women experiencing intimate partner violence

What is JDG#8 About?

Understanding the access to justice challenges people face is critical to making meaningful system changes. Viewing the problem from within the system provides only one perspective. Efforts to make user-centred and evidence-based decisions rely on learning from many perspectives and collecting robust data.

Justice sector organizations have long collected statistics about their own operations. PLE organizations know how many people use or download their resources. Courts know how many cases are heard. Legal Aid tracks its clients' and lawyers' time and case work. Law Societies and Pro Bono organizations know about the activities of their members and volunteers.

In 2020, research focused on hearing the voices of the users of the system, gathering experiential data to build a greater understanding of the impact of legal problems and resolution options on real people. A person-centred approach to access to justice featured predominantly in new research and initiatives. Of course, research and data collection about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was also begun in 2020, starting with developing an understanding of how the pandemic changed both the nature of legal problems and the available avenues for resolution.

Digging Deeper into Access to Justice

Legal Aid BC concluded the Community Dialogues project, receiving the views of more than 260 people from across BC on service needs, barriers and gaps, and possible solutions. The final report identified the following themes: a need for greater awareness and increased exposure to legal aid services; demand for more client-centric services that adapt to clients' needs; service navigation, guidance and step-by-step assistance; a balanced approach to online and in-person help; and more guidance on holistic services to help clients address issues related to their legal problems.

The "Measuring the Impact of Legal Service Interventions" project at the **Canadian Forum on Civil Justice** aims to assess the effectiveness of different types of legal service interventions on the outcome of legal disputes and the long-term effects on the health of clients and the costs and benefits over time of access to legal help when resolving disputes. The first phase of the project was completed in 2020, producing a methodology report and a literature review.

Legal Aid BC's Everyday Legal Needs 2020 Survey surveyed 1207 people to identify the types of legal problems that low-income British Columbians face and how they deal with them, as well as barriers and challenges people encounter. It also looked at how these legal problems affect respondents' perceptions of the justice system in BC and their everyday lives. The 2020 survey also investigated whether legal problems resulted from the pandemic and whether it affected problem outcome or resolution. 36% of respondents reported that legal problems were caused or made worse by the pandemic.

The **Canadian Forum on Civil Justice** published a book entitled "The Justice Crisis", based on the research gathered through the Forum's 7-year Cost of Justice study. The book collection explores years of research and critical thinking on the costs of meaningful access to civil and family justice in Canada and the value associated with the provision of an effective justice system. It is the first book to provide an in-depth overview based on new empirical research of what is working and not working to improve access to civil and family justice in Canada.

The **Action Committee** took its annual Summit online this year, opening the keynote event to anyone interested in access to justice. 986 people logged on from across the country to listen to Duncan McCue moderate a discussion between Bob Rae, Beverley McLachlin and Megan Longley. Their conversation centered around vignettes from 4 Canadians who shared their A2J challenges in housing, employment and child custody issues. The panelists addressed their questions about immediate strategies to make the system more accessible and about a long term view for Canada's leadership globally to advance access to justice as part of its commitment to the UN Agenda 2030 and SDG16.

The **Action Committee's** Regional Colloquia brought the A2J community together to strengthen coordination and share resources. 60 people working in justice and Indigenous organizations across BC and the Yukon spent four hours listening to Indigenous leaders and then imagining ways to transform the family justice to better meet the needs of Indigenous children, families and communities. In Ontario sector leaders met at the end of A2J Week to strategize about to use the JDGs to align projects across the province and make sure that system changes are driven by data about what people need. The Sask / Alberta / Manitoba colloquium brought together over 100 people from the

Prairies, as well as from Nunavut and NWT to focus on family law transformation. Profiles of local projects spurred small group discussion and seeded collaboration across jurisdictions. The A2J community in Quebec focused on how their activities feed into and amplify national momentum, examining new strategies for coordination. The Atlantic colloquium focused on the use of restorative justice in the civil and family contexts with presentations about restorative practices in human rights tribunals, in federal cases and in addressing system racism. The experimental model of the new Restorative Justice Lab was the focus of breakout discussions.

Access to Justice Week events took place in the fall of 2020 in BC, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Quebec. The week-long focus on access to justice saw events for intermediaries, librarians, lawyers, justice professionals, law students and the public. Conducted online, this year's events drew attendees from across the country, cross pollinating ideas and project models.

Understanding the Needs of Vulnerable Communities

The **Law Society of Nunavut** and **Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada** are partnering on a project involving research study and an awareness campaign on the Family Abuse Intervention Act. The research study component of the project was carried out in 2020, examining how the implementation of the Act is or is not meeting the needs of Inuit women experiencing intimate partner violence. Research findings were validated by the project's advisory community and key stakeholders in order to engage in discussions on how collaborations between cross-sector community-based organizations in Nunavut can be strengthened to deal with the issue of family violence in a holistic manner. The next phase of the project will involve developing public legal education resources with key messages informed by the research, in collaboration with project partners and guided by Inuit societal values.

CALIBRATE and **OJEN** conducted research into the impact of serious legal problems in the lives of 16 – 30 year olds in the Black community. This was one of 14 qualitative research projects commissioned by **Justice Canada** to develop a better understanding of how civil legal issues affect people's health, well-being, finances and sense of security and belonging.

The "Access to Justice for Refugee Claimants" project was launched as a collaborative research initiative between the **United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, York University's Centre for Refugee Studies, the Canada Excellence Research Chair in Migration and Integration and the Canadian Forum on Civil Justice**. This project seeks to offer a timely and important investigation into the impact of access to justice for refugee claimants in Canada.

A research team at **UBC's Allard Law** began working with the **British Columbia Court of Appeal** in spring 2020 to examine the court's Fee Waiver application process and its implications for access to justice. The team examined a data sample of the Court's cases, conducted cross-jurisdictional research and conducted interviews with key stakeholders including judges, self-represented litigants and community legal advocates.

OP Lab, led by the **ARCH Disability Law Centre**, aims to develop awareness of the UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities, its Optional Protocol and other UN disability rights tools. Participants from across Canada participated in training, online discussion forums, accessing materials and building an advocacy network across Canada.

Increasing Our Responsiveness

The **Social Security Tribunal of Canada** introduced an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) pilot at its Appeal Division, in which approximately 10% of its cases (84 cases) were sent to ADR for a settlement or case conference. 2020 results indicated that 80% of the cases sent to ADR were resolved without the need for a hearing, required half of the usual processing time for Appeal Division Cases and received a high level of satisfaction from parties and representatives. Given the proven benefits, the Appeal Division will continue to offer ADR.

In 2020, the **Social Security Tribunal of Canada** also evaluated a 15 month pilot of the readability of Tribunal decisions based on plain language training received by members. The evaluation, which focused on structure, style, clarity and comprehension, showed gradual but clear progress in plain-language decision-writing. 32% of decisions met the grade 9 reading level target, while 33% met a grade 10 level.

The **BC Family Justice Innovation Lab** launched an initiative to create a user-friendly system to collect and report the experiences of lawyers and clients on an ongoing basis, with the hopes of providing both point-in-time effectiveness

snapshots and continuous, evidence-based progress information to stimulate innovation.

The Action Group on Access to Justice (TAG) launched Research and Technology Communities of Practice in July 2020 to facilitate knowledge, collaborative research and data sharing within the justice sector.

In response to increasing public confusion about whether the Legal Services Society was the same as legal aid, the name was officially changed to **Legal Aid BC**. The goal of the rebranding initiative was to make it easier for clients to find services, making the organization more recognizable and welcoming.

In July 2020, **Community Legal Education Ontario** published a report: *Community Justice Help: Advancing Community-Based Access to Justice*, authored by CLEO's Executive Director Julie Mathews and UOttawa Faculty of Law professor David Wiseman. The report calls for increased recognition

and support for the vital role played by community workers in helping people access meaningful access to justice. The report was downloaded over 1300 times.

A research team at **UBC's Allard Law** conducted cross-jurisdictional analysis into credibility assessments in trial courts, both in person and virtual. The team identified the specific challenges associated with virtual credibility determinations, concluding that assessing credibility online is not actually less effective than assessing it in person; that credibility determinations in both contexts are imperfect but that different considerations influence virtual credibility determinations. The work is intended to be the foundation for future work directed toward increasing courts' accessibility and efficiency, as well as addressing the kinds of unconscious bias that affect credibility determinations in different contexts.

Expanding the Dialogue

In 2020, despite the pandemic, research publications on A2J continued to inform the evolution of our understanding in key areas and we gathered virtually to discuss issues and opportunities. Canadian A2J research published in 2020 included (article titles are listed in the language they were published):

Someone Out There Helping: Final Report of the WellCoMs Mobile Van Project

Ab Currie

Restoring Court Operations in Northern, Remote and Indigenous Communities

Action Committee on Court Operations in Response to COVID-19

Tracking Client Outcomes: A Qualitative Assessment of Civil Legal Aid's Use of Outcomes Data, With Recommendations

Amy Widman and David Udell

Les cliniques juridiques communautaires de l'Ontario et l'accès à la justice en français

Anne Levesque (La Revue Du Barreau Canadien)

Expanding Our Vision: Cultural Equality & Indigenous Peoples' Human Rights

Ardith Walpetko We'dalx Walkem

Here There Be Dragons - The Likely Interaction of Judges with the Artificial Intelligence Ecosystem

Frederic I. Lederer

Predictive Coding: Adopting and Adapting Artificial Intelligence in Civil Litigation

Gideon Christian

Erga Omnes or Inter Partes? The Legal Effects of Federal Courts' Constitutional Judgements

Han-Ru Zhou

Seniors on the Stand: Accommodating Older Witnesses in Adversarial Trials

Helene Love

The Challenges of Algorithmic Bias

Jacquelyn Burkell

The Role of Data in Organizing an Access to Justice Movement

James Gamble and Amy Widman

The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly: A Preliminary Assessment of Whether the Vavilov Framework Adequately Addresses Concerns of Marginalized Communities in the Immigration Law Context

Jamie Chai Yun Liew

Judging by Numbers: How Will Judicial Analytics Impact the Justice System and Its Stakeholders?

Jena McGill and Amy Salyzyn

Mapping Domestic Violence Law and Policy in Alberta: Intersections and Access to Justice

Jennifer Koshan

Juries, Miscarriages of Justice and the Bill C-75 Reforms
Kent Roach

Defamation Law in the Internet Age
Law Commission of Ontario

Measuring Impacts of Legal Services - Literature Review
Lisa Moore, Trevor C.W. Farrow and Ab Currie

Measuring Impacts of Legal Services - Methodology Report
Lisa Moore, Trevor C.W. Farrow and Ab Currie

*Self-Represented Litigants & Legal Doctrines of
"Vexatiousness": An Interim Report from the National Self-
Represented Litigants Project*
Megan Campbell & Julie Macfarlane

*Digital Justice: HMCTS Data Strategy and Delivering Access
to Justice: Report and Recommendations*
Natalie Byrom

*Reconciliation and Ethical Lawyering: Some Thoughts on
Cultural Competence*
Pooja Parmar

*Access to Digital Justice: Fair and Efficient Processes for
the Modern Age*
Rabinovich-Einy and Ethan Katsh

*Judging Sexual Assault: The Shifting Landscape of Judicial
Education in Canada*

Rosemary Cairns-Way and Donna Martinson

Court Innovations and Access to Justice in Times of Crisis
Tania Sourdin, Bin Li, and Donna Marie McNamara

*Legal Needs of Individuals in England and Wales – Summary
Report 2019/20*

The Law Society, YouGov and the Legal Services Board

*The Law Handbook: Your Practical Guide to the Law in NSW
(15th edition)*

Thomson Reuters, Australia

*Changing Direction: Mental Health Needs of Justice-
Involved Young People in Australia*
UNSW Sydney, Kirby Institute, et al.

World Justice Project Rule of Law Index 2020
World Justice Project

Events (events listed in the language they were held)

Date	Event	Organization
Jan 23	Cuts to Legal Aid: How can the legal profession help?	Women's Legal Education Action Fund (LEAF)
Feb 05	Courts Without Cases: The Law and Politics of Advisory Opinions	Carissima Mathen
Feb 19	CBA Annual Meeting	Canadian Bar Association
Mar 13	CBA-FLSC Ethics Forum	Canadian Bar Association
Apr 2-4	CBA Immigration Law Conference	Canadian Bar Association
Apr 25	CBA Criminal Justice Conference	Canadian Bar Association
May 22	CBA Charity Law Symposium	Canadian Bar Association
Jun 24-26	CBA Aboriginal Law Conference	Canadian Bar Association
Oct 25-29	A2J Week Ontario	The Action Group on Access to Justice (TAG)
Oct 20	Facing resistance Speaker Series: A2J and its Effects on marginalized youth	Level Justice
Oct 20	Global Dialogue of Justice Leaders	Justice Canada
Oct 22	Investing in and Financing Justice	Justice Canada
Oct 22	Justice Data Priorities and the pandemic	Justice Canada
Oct 26	Intersectionality and Gender Justice	Women's Legal Education Action Fund (LEAF)
Oct 27	The Legal System and Justice for Indigenous Women, Girls and 2SLGBTQQIA Persons	Women's Legal Education Action Fund (LEAF)

Date	Event	Organization
Oct 29	Justice For All	Legal Innovation Zone: Ryerson University
Oct 29	Reimagining Justice: Ontario Colloquium	Action Committee on Access to Justice in Civil and Family Matters
Oct 30	Towards a Grand Assembly of Justice	Éducaloi, Institut québécois de réforme du droit et de la justice (Quebec Law and Justice Reform Institute)
Nov 2-6	A2J Week Saskatchewan	CREATE Justice
Nov 2-6	A2J Week Alberta	University of Alberta
Nov 18	Reimagining Justice: BC / Yukon Colloquium	Action Committee on Access to Justice in Civil and Family Matters
Nov 23	Reimagining Justice: SK/AB/MB Colloquium	Action Committee on Access to Justice in Civil and Family Matters
Nov 25	Reimagining Justice: Atlantic Colloquium	Action Committee on Access to Justice in Civil and Family Matters
Dec 09	Frontiers of Digital Enforceable Contracts (FDEC) Workshop	Cyberjustice Laboratory, Chaire Lexum Information Juridique and Autonomy Through Cyberjustice Technologies (AJC)
Dec - Jan	A2J Week BC	A2JBC
Dec	Reimagining Justice: Quebec Colloquium	Action Committee on Access to Justice in Civil and Family Matters

IMPROVE FUNDING STRATEGIES

9.1 COORDINATE TO SPEND MONEY WELL

Learn what the real costs of legal issues are and divert funding to prevent legal issues and minimize the demand on other social services.

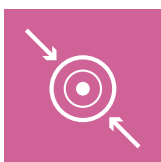
9.2 BETTER FUND LEGAL AID

Increase funding of legal aid, to make more people eligible and to expand the types of legal problems that are eligible.

9.3 MAKE SURE THE MONEY LASTS

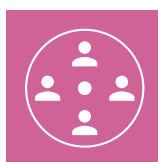
Maintain the focus on access to justice to ensure that improvements can be sustained and changes are funded indefinitely.

Projects advancing this goal



23

Organizations identifying this goal as their primary focus



15

HIGHLIGHTS

\$27 million

over four years to modernize Alberta's justice services through the Justice Digital project

\$72,504,597

in Law Foundation funding given to A2J projects

\$21.6 million

committed to increase access to family justice in the official language of one's choice across Canada

\$50000 grants

to A2J projects from the Law Society of Yukon's Initiatives Fund Pilot Project

What is JDG#9 About?

Funding announcements and spending on A2J has been in flux throughout 2020 as funders have been an active part of addressing access to justice during the pandemic. Not only have existing and new sources of funding been maintained, but funders have also been flexible about the timing and activities as organizations have adapted to changing needs of their users.

Stable funding for legal services is critical to existing and new access to justice services. Improved funding strategies would see more money allocated to legal aid in Canada, as well as to preventative approaches to understanding and managing conflict. It also means strategic use of that money by leveraging opportunities to work together, to avoid duplication and to learn from each other. Understanding the impact of unresolved legal conflict on people's finances, as well as on publicly funded services is also a part of a complex funding strategy.

Funding Pandemic Responses

Many funders, particularly **Law Foundations** across the country worked with the A2J organizations and projects they fund to provide flexibility and support. Not only have services and legal institutions adapted quickly, but funders have also worked collaboratively with people providing frontline services. Allowing organizations time to adjust their delivery plans and respond to new needs meant that these organizations were agile and responsive in a time of considerable uncertainty. This flexibility also ensured that the staff at these organizations who work on access to justice have been able to focus on their work without worrying about funding related instability.

As governments responded to economic challenges, legal institutions kept a focus on the access to justice implications of funding announcements. The **Canadian Bar Association** made submissions about the federal governments various benefits and changes to individual and business benefits packages and changes to reporting and tax deadlines to ensure that access to justice and the continuity of legal services remained high priority. This included advocacy to remove the GST/HST on personal protective equipment and changes affecting home and long term care workers.

New Government Funding

Public funding of increased access to justice is critical to addressing systemic and entrenched accessibility issues. As more provinces and territories are responding to calls for legal system reform focused on access to justice, public funding is being announced.

The **BC government** funded a 6% increase in legal aid rates in the province in 2020, resulting in the second consecutive increase in the legal aid tariff. The increase in the tariff rates helps to provide stability in the system by attracting and retaining lawyers to take on legal aid work.

The **Alberta government's** Justice Digital initiative saw an investment of \$27 million over four years to modernize services. Justice Digital will create faster, cost effective and better services for Albertans, the courts, the legal community, stakeholders, and other end users. In collaboration with the Courts Resolution and Courts Administration Services, Justice Digital will deliver transformational initiatives to ensure an effective and timely justice system that is flexible and responsive to the evolving needs of users. Specific digitization projects underway include the Courtroom Digital Service, Traffic Ticket Digital Service, Filing Digital Service (Surrogate Estate applications), Adjournment Digital Service, Transcript Digital Service, case management, virtual courts and others.

The **federal government** committed 21.6 million over the next 5 years to support the implementation of the language rights provision of Bill C-78 and increase access to family justice in the official language of one's choice under the amendments to the Divorce Act. This funding will make it possible for parties to use either official language in any family law proceeding.

The **BC government** gave \$1.5 million in funding to 7 legal clinics. The clinics provide free legal information, advice and representation to low-income individuals. Four poverty law clinics in Kamloops, Surrey, Prince George and Kelowna, a Housing Law Clinic, Disability Clinic and Immigration & Refugee clinic now have a staff lawyer providing legal advice, in addition to advocates and support staff.

The federal government provided \$8.1 million in the Fall Economic Statement to develop Administration of Justice Agreements between Indigenous communities and the federal government in order to recognize and support the implementation of Indigenous justice systems.

Collaborative Approaches to Funding

Nova Scotia announced Collaborative Supports and Housing for Women at Risk investing \$360,000 to the Elizabeth Fry Society's Holly House for the next two years. This funding will provide stability and services to more women in conflict with the law to help them break the cycle of poverty and criminality. The funding, coming from the **departments of Justice, Community Services, Municipal Affairs and Housing, and Health and Wellness**, take a collaborative, wholistic approach to providing the residents of Holly House with the programs and services they need.

Le Barreau du Québec has advocated for changes to the legal aid tariff and promoted legal aid reform. It has entered into agreements to address funding levels and to promote legal aid to lawyers to ensure the participation of its private practice members. This collaboration ensures high quality legal aid services from both emerging and experienced practitioners.

In Manitoba the **Public Interest Law Centre, Legal Aid Manitoba** and the **First Nations Family Advocates Office of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (FNFAO-AMC)** are collaborating on the "Bringing Our Children Home through Advocacy and Research" project. This project, funded through legal aid, will address Manitoba's high rate of First Nation children in care by hiring staff lawyers and law student to assist First Nation families dealing with the child welfare system. The **Public Interest Legal Centre** will conduct research into child welfare law reform aimed at reconciliation and nation-to-nation relationships through First Nation laws, institutions, and ways of being and knowing.

Justice Institutions

Law Society of Yukon established the Initiatives Fund Pilot Project. The Fund invites applications from non-profit organizations, community groups, individuals and Law Society members for access to justice projects with budgets of \$5000 or less. The new fund will focus on enhance the public's understanding of access to justice issues in Yukon.

Le Barreau du Québec is an annual funder of access to justice organizations in Quebec, contributing to the financial stability of **Educaloi, Justice Pro Bono** and **Juripop**.

The **Federation of Law Societies** contributed funding to the **Action Committee on Access to Justice in Civil and Family Matters** as part of its commitment to a national approach to access to justice.

Law Foundations

Progress in access to justice continues to require ongoing and project-based funding across Canada. In 2020 Law Foundations continued their focus on A2J providing coordination and leadership on access to justice across Canada.

Both the **BC Law Foundation** and the **Law Foundation of Ontario** have dedicated funds devoted to access to justice initiatives fostering innovation in the area. In both Manitoba and Nova Scotia, **Law Foundations** provided funding to establish new coordination of A2J collaboration in the province. Across the country **Law Foundations** are supporting both long-standing organizations and projects that provide critical services ensuring access and funding new and emerging approaches. In total, **Law Foundations** grant \$72,504,597 to community and non profit initiatives for A2J projects.

**Money from Law Foundations
> \$72,504,597***

In 2020 The **McLachlin Fund** was announced. This new Fund was established to honour Beverley McLachlin's contribution to access to justice in Canada. The Fund will support innovations in access to justice. Administered with the support of both the **BC Law Foundation** and the **Vancouver Foundation**, the **McLachlin Fund** will be granting money in 2021. It is the first foundation devoted solely to Access to Justice in Canada and is a welcome addition to the funding landscape.



"There is no justice without access to justice."
The Rt. Hon. Beverley McLachlin

* taken from available Law Foundation annual reports

ORGANIZATIONS REFLECTED IN THIS REPORT

Access to justice is a longstanding priority of many organizations across the country. The new initiatives and progress in 2020 highlighted in this report are on top on the longstanding, ongoing work of legal clinics, ministries of justice, legal aid lawyers, courts and non-profits. Law Societies and association across the country continue to prioritize access to justice in their daily operations.

In compiling this report, The Action Committee received information about 2020 projects from the organizations listed below (in the language each submitted). To add your organization's work next year, sign up for the Action Committee's A2J newsletter at www.justicedevelopmentgoals.ca / www.objectifsdelaaccèsàlajustice.ca

National Organizations

Canadian Bar Association
Canadian Forum on Civil Justice / Forum canadien sur la justice civile
Justice Canada
LEAF : FAEJ
Pro Bono Students Canada
Social Security Tribunal of Canada

Justice Sector Constellation
Law Foundation Alberta
Law Society of Alberta
LawNow- Alberta
Pro Bono Alberta
Resolution and Court Administration Services, Alberta
Justice and Solicitor General

British Columbia

Access Pro Bono BC
Access to Justice BC
BC Court of Appeal
BC Family Justice Innovation Lab
BC First Nations Justice Council
Better Justice Lab
British Columbia Ministry of Justice
Court of Appeal for British Columbia
Courthouse Libraries BC
Environmental Appeal Board, Forest Appeals Commission, Oil and Gas Appeal Tribunal
Law Foundation of BC
Legal Aid BC
Ministry of Attorney General and Minister responsible for Housing
People's Law School
Peter A. Allard School of Law, UBC
Provincial Court of BC
Rise Women's Legal Centre
Supreme Court of British Columbia

Northwest Territories

Court of Appeal for the Northwest Territories
Law Foundation of NWT
Northwest Territories Department of Justice
Outreach Legal Aid Clinic, Legal Aid Commission of the Northwest Territories
Supreme Court of the Northwest Territories

Saskatchewan

Court of Appeal for Saskatchewan
Court of Queen's Bench for Saskatchewan
CREATE Justice (Centre for Research, Evaluation, and Action Towards Equal Justice), College of Law, USask
Law Foundation of Saskatchewan
Law Society of Saskatchewan
Panko Collaborative Law and Mediation
Public Legal Education Association of Saskatchewan (PLEA)
Saskatchewan Ministry of Justice and Attorney General

Manitoba

Community Legal Education Association (Manitoba)
Court of Appeal of Manitoba
Court of Queen's Bench for Manitoba
Law Foundation of Manitoba
Law Library Hub
Legal Aid Manitoba
Legal Help Centre of Winnipeg, Inc.
Manitoba Bar Association
Manitoba Justice
Manitoba Justice
Manitoba Justice, Family Resolution Service, Courts Division
Manitoba law Reform Commission
Taylor McCaffrey LLP
The Law Society of Manitoba
University of Manitoba - Faculty of Law

Yukon

Law Foundation of Yukon
Law Society of Yukon
The Court of Appeal of Yukon
Yukon Department of Justice
Yukon Supreme Court

Alberta

Alberta Justice and Solicitor General
Alberta Law Libraries
Alberta Ministry of Justice and Solicitor General
Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter
Court of Appeal of Alberta
Court of Queen's Bench of Alberta
Government of Alberta, Ministry of Justice & Solicitor General

Ontario

Aboriginal Legal Services
Advocacy Center for Elderly
Advocacy Center for Tenants Ontario
ARCH Disability Law Centre
Beesley Garhns
Black Legal Action Centre
Canadian Environmental Law Association
Centre for Spanish-Speaking Peoples
Chinese and South East Asian Legal Clinic
CLEO (Community Legal Education Ontario / Éducation juridique communautaire Ontario)
Community Advocacy & Legal Centre
Community Legal Services (Western University)
Court of Appeal for Ontario
Downtown Legal Services
HIV & AIDS Legal Clinic Ontario (HALCO)
Income Security Advocacy Centre
Industrial Accident Victims Group of Ontario
Injured Workers Community Legal Clinic
Justice for Children and Youth
Ken Chasse, lawyer
Kensington-Bellwoods Community Legal Services
Lakehead University Community Legal Services
Landlord's Self-Help Centre
Law Foundation of Ontario
Level Justice
Ministry of Attorney General- Ontario
Ontario Family Law Limited Scope Services Project
Ontario Justice Education Network/ Réseau Ontarien d'Éducation Juridique
Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General
Ontario Superior Court of Justice
Pro Bono Ontario
Queen's Prison Law Clinic
South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario
TAG (Action Group on Access to Justice)
The Law Society of Ontario
Vanier Community Service Center
Workers' Health and Safety Clinic- Ontario

Nunavut

Law Foundation Nunavut
Law Society of Nunavut
Nunavut Court of Appeal
Nunavut Department of Justice
The Nunavut Court of Justice

Quebec

Barreau du Québec
Chambre des notaires
Court of Appeal of Quebec
Éducaloi
Fondation du barreau
Institute québécois de réforme du droit et de la justice
Justice Pro Bono
Quebec Superior Court

New Brunswick

Law Foundation New Brunswick
Law Society of New Brunswick
New Brunswick Court of Appeal
New Brunswick Court of Queen's Bench
New Brunswick Ministry of Justice

Prince Edward Island

Community Legal Information
Court of Appeal for Prince Edward Island
Law Foundation of Prince Edward Island
Prince Edward Island Court of Appeal
Prince Edward Island Department of Justice and Public Safety
The Supreme Court of Prince Edward Island

Nova Scotia

Access to Justice & Law Reform Institute of Nova Scotia
Avalon Sexual Assault Centre
Coverdale Courtwork Society
Department of Justice – Nova Scotia
Executive Office of the Nova Scotia Judiciary / Nova Scotia Courts
Law Foundation of Nova Scotia
Legal Information Society of NS
Nova Scotia Department of Justice
Nova Scotia Legal Aid
The Nova Scotia Court of Appeal
The Supreme Court of Nova Scotia

Newfoundland and Labrador

Court of Appeal of Newfoundland and Labrador
Law Society of NL Law Library
Newfoundland & Labrador Justice and Public Safety
Newfoundland and Labrador Access to Justice Steering Committee
Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Justice and Public Safety
Public Legal Information Association of NL
Supreme Court of Newfoundland and Labrador
Law Foundation Newfoundland and Labrador



Action Committee on
Access to Justice
in Civil and Family Matters