



## Justice Action Coalition Statement on the importance of equal access to justice for all issued during the Summit of the Future

September 23, 2024



We are grappling with a world beset by intersecting and multiplying crises—increasing conflict, rising inequalities, growing human displacement, intractable poverty, and climate change—and confronted by people clamoring for change. As we strive “for a world that is safe, peaceful, just, equal, inclusive, sustainable and prosperous,” justice must be the bedrock and tool for change and sustainable development.

The Justice Action Coalition is committed to closing the justice gap and delivering on the promise of SDG16.3 to ensure equal access to justice for all. We believe that justice lies at the heart of the sustainable development agenda and is critical to reduce poverty and inequalities, empower people, and address the impact of climate change.

Ordinary people, all over the world urgently need solutions. Now is the time for deliberate and decisive action.

We therefore welcome the Summit of the Future and the opportunity it presents us to course correct. To mend eroded trust and demonstrate that **international cooperation** can effectively achieve the SDGs and address the array of crises before us.

We welcome the [Pact for the Future](#)’s action towards strengthening efforts to “build peaceful, just and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice and that are based on respect for human rights, on rule of law and good governance at all levels and on transparent and effective and accountable institutions.” In the spirit of multilateralism and decisive action and in pursuit of peaceful, just, and inclusive societies, we call for a **people-centered approach to justice**, which puts people’s needs and priorities at the center of justice systems, policies and services, in line with their individual human rights.

With billions of people lacking meaningful access to justice and with finite resources to address this, we must rely on data, act innovatively, finance smartly, and respond to the needs of those who are most at risk of being left behind.

We must collect and rely on **data** on people's justice problems and needs to prevent and resolve their problems and grievances. With regard to **innovation**, we welcome the **Global Digital Compact's** recognition of the pace and power of emerging technologies in creating new possibilities but also new risks for humanity.

Recognizing that many people currently live under conditions that are not conducive for harnessing technological innovation to its fullest extent, we believe that over and above safe digital innovation, we must implement low tech and non-technological innovation. This includes reimagining the justice system and collaborating with informal justice actors, civil society organizations, and other sectors such as healthcare, labor, migration, education as well the private sector. We must bring new players into the justice sector and develop approaches that deliver justice at scale.

We need **smarter and evidence-based financing** strategies, which repurpose resources away from ineffective approaches and towards what works, thereby contributing to closing the SDG financing gap in developing countries as articulated in the Pact for the Future.

This is why we call for a people-centered approach to financing justice. It enables countries and funders to better allocate resources into justice solutions that work for the people, protect their human rights, are scalable, and sustainable.

Finally, we need to genuinely engage with and listen more closely to women, children, young people and others who are at risk of being left behind. We welcome that the Pact for the Future seeks to promote, protect, and respect the human rights of all people and foster social inclusion and integration.

Promoting equal access to justice for all is essential to protecting other rights. A rights-based approach to justice puts people and their justice problems and aspirations at the center of efforts to reform.

In closing, we call for this Summit to be a turning point in the trajectory of multilateralism. A turning point that acknowledges our shortcomings and seeks to repair the harm and lack of trust. By deploying a people-centered approach to justice, we can not only achieve equal access to justice for all but also underwrite the success of the 2030 Agenda in its entirety.