The Court of the Future: Integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) to Revolutionize Administration of Justice

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The Court of the Future: Integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) to Revolutionize Administration of Justice

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Abstract

This paper explores how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be appropriately harnessed to strengthen access to justice. The paper notes that the emergence of AI provides solutions that can address gaps, challenges and inequalities in access to justice across the world. It discusses how AI is revamping access to justice. Despite its efficacy, the paper observes that the integration of AI into the access to justice discourse also raises pertinent concerns. The paper discusses the risks and challenges associated with the use of AI in access to justice. In light of the opportunities, risks and challenges presented by AI, the paper examines how this powerful technology can be effectively integrated to revolutionize administration of justice for Sustainable Development.

1.0 Introduction

Justice plays a key role in unlocking Sustainable Development. Justice has been described as an essential dimension of the social contract, a determining factor in ensuring that no one is left behind in the societal progress towards Sustainable Development[1]. It has been observed that justice is one of the most fundamental pillars towards building stable, peaceful and prosperous societies and nations since it represents the principle that guarantees equal and fair opportunities among individuals and the fair and equitable distribution of resources for all[2].

In particular, access to justice is a critical driver of peace, prosperity and development. Access to justice involves right of all citizens to obtain effective and appropriate remedies under international, regional and national laws for harm suffered including human right violations[3]. Access to justice has also been described as a process wherein people in need of help, find effective solutions available from justice systems which are accessible, affordable, comprehensible to ordinary people, and which dispense justice fairly, speedily and without discrimination, fear or favour[4]. Access to justice involves the use of both formal processes such as courts and informal

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[1] United Nations Development Programme., 'Justice and Sustainable Development' Available at https://www.undp.org/sites/g/files/zskgke326/files/2025-01/report_justice_anddevelopment_2023.pdf (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

[2] Social Justice and its Role in Sustainable Development., Available at https://uomus.edu.iq/CollegeEn/Details/95669 (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

[3] Scottish Human Rights Commission., 'Access to Justice for Everyone' Available at https://www.scottishhumanrights.com/media/2496/access-to-justice-for-everyone-a-discussion-paper.pdf (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

[4] Ladan M.T, 'Access To Justice As A Human Right Under The Ecowas Community Law,' available at http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=16&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0CFcQFjAFOAo&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.abu.edu.ng%2Fpublications%2F2009-07- (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

processes including Appropriate Dispute Resolution (ADR) processes such as negotiation, mediation, conciliation and traditional justice systems towards addressing grievances, resolving disputes and promoting peace[5].

The United Nations observes that access to justice is a basic principle of the rule of law which empowers people to have their voice heard, exercise their fundamental rights, challenge discrimination and hold decision-makers accountable[6]. In addition, it has been argued that access to justice is a fundamental right and principle since efficient, effective and responsive justice systems can empower citizens to exercise their rights and freedoms while also ensuring thriving and equitable economic, social, environmental and governance systems that promote Sustainable Development[7]. The *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*[8] recognises the role of access to justice in driving peace, prosperity and deelopment. In order to achieve this ideal, Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16 seeks to promote peaceful and inclusive societies for Sustainable Development, *provide access to justice for all* and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels[9](Emphasis added).

Despite its role as a driver of development, it has been pointed out that the justice needs of many people across the world are not effectively and adequately met[10]. In particular, it has been observed that many countries, especially those in the Global South, are still struggling to establish accessible, functional, timely, affordable, responsive and credible justice systems[11]. This fuels and worsens injustices and inequalities undermining Sustainable Development. Consequently, it is imperative to strengthen access to justice globally towards peace, prosperity and development.

This paper explores how Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be appropriately harnessed to strengthen access to justice. The paper notes that the emergence of AI provides solutions that can address gaps, challenges and inequalities in access to justice across the world. It discusses how AI is revamping access to justice. Despite its efficacy, the paper observes that the integration of AI into

[5] Muigua. K., 'Alternative Dispute Resolution and Access to Justice in Kenya.' Glenwood Publishers Limited, 2015

[6] United Nations., 'Access to Justice' Available at https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/en/thematic-areas/access-to-justice-and-rule-of-law-institutions/access-to-justice (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

[7] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development., 'Access to Justice' Available at https://www.oecd.org/en/topics/sub-issues/access-to-justice.html (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

[8] United Nations General Assembly., 'Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.' 21 October 2015, A/RES/70/1., Available at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/21252030%20Agenda%20for%20Sustainable%20Development%20web.pdf (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

[9] Ibid

[10] United Nations Environment Programme., 'Addressing justice and sustainable development' Available at https://www.unep.org/en/news-and-stories/story/addressing-justice-and-sustainable-development (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

[11] Uwazie. E., 'Alternative Dispute Resolution in Africa: Preventing Conflict and Enhancing Stability.' *Africa Security Brief*, No. 16 of 2011

the access to justice discourse also raises pertinent concerns. The paper discusses the risks and challenges associated with the use of AI in access to justice. In light of the opportunities, risks and challenges presented by AI, the paper examines how this powerful technology can be effectively integrated to revolutionize administration of justice for Sustainable Development.

2.0 Artificial Intelligence and Administration of Justice: Opportunities, Risks and Challenges

In light of global access to justice gaps and challenges, technology and AI-driven justice solutions have emerged as an innovative approach towards strengthen access to justice for Sustainable Development. It has been observed that AI offers the potential to scale solutions that can reduce the justice gap and ensure that individuals access justice in a timely, efficient, responsive, affordable and informed manner[12]. In light of current challenges undermining the effectiveness of justice systems, AI can revolutionize administration of justice by making justice systems faster, more accessible, well organized, and better resourced[13]. AI and other digital technologies have significant potential to support access to justice, as well as to enhance its resilience, efficiency, effectiveness and fairness[14].

AI provides tools and solutions that can support various stakeholders towards strengthening access to justice. For example, for parties seeking justice, AI can enhance access to accurate, reliable, and understandable legal information thus enabling them to make informed decisions[15]. In addition, AI is also supporting the legal profession in the dispensation of justice. For instance, it has been observed that AI-driven legal research platforms integrate natural language processing to summarize cases quickly and efficiently, while contract review software uses machine learning to flag risky clauses[16]. AI tools are also supporting lawyers in drafting memos, streamlining discovery, and litigation analysis[17].

The integration of AI in court processes is also bolstering access to justice. For example, it has been observed that AI is automating court processes such as case management, filing of court documents through e-filing platforms, allocation of matters to judicial officers, and communication between courts and parties therefore enhancing efficiency and expeditiousness

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[12] American Bar Association., 'AI and Access to Justice' Available at https://www.americanbar.org/groups/centers_commissions/center-for-innovation/artificial-intelligence/access-to-justice/ (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

[13] Artificial Intelligence and Justice., Available at https://www.freiheit.org/human-rights-hub-geneva/artificial-intelligence-and-justice (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

[14] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development., 'Governing with Artificial Intelligence' Available at https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2025/06/governing-with-artificial-intelligence_398fa287/full-report/ai-in-justice-administration-and-access-to-justice_f0cbe651.html (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

[15] American Bar Association., 'AI and Access to Justice' Op Cit

[16] How Is AI Impacting the Legal Profession?., Available at https://law.vanderbilt.edu/master-legal-studies/articles/how-is-ai-impacting-the-legal-profession/ (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

[17] Ibid

of dispute resolution[18]. Courts all over the world are already witnessing the benefits of AI in the administration of justice through solutions such as AI-assisted sentencing tools, and increasingly automated administrative processes[19]. In addition, it has been observed that AI tools can help to ensure that judicial processes are more consistent, transparent, fair and free from human biases, while also helping courts and tribunals to monitor efficiency and resources[20]. AI systems are also enabling judicial officers to evaluate briefs, undertake legal research, quickly sift through vast amounts of pleadings and evidence and come up with more cogent rulings and judgments[21]. It has been pointed out that leveraging AI can ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of court processes through solutions such as improved case management, accessibility of court processes, speed in dispute resolution, and improved communication[22].

In addition to supporting court processes, AI can also strengthen access to justice through informal processes. For instance, in ADR processes such as mediation, AI tools can streamline administrative tasks including through scheduling meetings and organizing information and documents[23]. In addition, it has been observed that AI can undertake research and provide language support and translation thus enhancing efficiency in mediation proceedings[24]. AI chatbots can also be closely involved in negotiations by posing questions aimed at identifying parties' underlying interests, proposing offers, and predicting the likelihood that such offers will be accepted by all parties[25]. AI is also improving access to justice through arbitration. For example, AI is enabling arbitrators to effectively draft procedural orders, organise evidence and prepare final awards[26]. In addition, AI has the potential to enable both arbitrators and lawyers to

[18] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development., 'AI in Justice Administration and Access to Justice' Available at https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/2025/06/governing-with-artificial-intelligence_398fa287/full-report/ai-in-justice-administration-and-access-to-justice_f0cbe651.html (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

[19] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization., 'AI in the Courtroom: UNESCO's New Guidelines for the Judiciary' Available at https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/ai-courtroom-unescos-new-guidelines-judiciary (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

[20] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development., 'AI in Justice Administration and Access to Justice' Op Cit

[21] Artificial Intelligence in Court Rooms., Available at https://www.clio.com/resources/ai-for-lawyers/ai-in-courtrooms/ (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

[22] National Center for State Courts., 'Leveraging AI to reshape the future of courts' Available at https://www.ncsc.org/resources-courts/leveraging-ai-reshape-future-courts (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

[23] International Bar Association., 'Guidelines on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Mediation' Available at https://www.ibanet.org/document?id=Guidelines-on-the-use-of-generative-AI-in-mediation (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

[24] Ibid

[25] Shonk. K., 'AI Mediation: Using AI to Help Mediate Disputes' Available at https://www.pon.harvard.edu/daily/mediation/ai-mediation-using-ai-to-help-mediate-disputes/ (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

[26] When Arbitrators Use AI: LaPaglia v. Valve and the Boundaries of Adjudication., Available at https://www.acerislaw.com/when-arbitrators-use-ai-lapaglia-v-valve-and-the-boundaries-of-adjudication/ (Accessed on 13/11/2026)

adequately prepare for arbitration proceedings by automating legal research, organizing evidence, aiding in document review and analyzing relevant case law and statutes[27]. AI is also enabling arbitral institutions to effectively undertake administrative tasks including case management for speed and efficiency in dispute resolution[28].

AI therefore provides effective solutions that strengthen access to justice. However, AI is also presents risks and challenges that undermine effective access to justice. For example, it has been observed that AI can amplify existing biases in the justice system, particularly regarding race, sex or socioeconomic status[29]. Since AI models are only as accurate and non-biased as the data they are trained on, use biased AI systems can lead to unjust outcomes which violate human rights and undermine access to justice[30]. In addition, AI can violate the right to a fair trial which is necessary in ensuring effectiveness, efficiency and fairness of justice processes. For instance, it has been observed that the use of AI in legal processes makes it difficult to understand how legal decisions are made which undermines the fundamental tenets of fair hearing including transparency, accountability and due process[31]. Overreliance of AI in court processes can also undermine judicial independence. In particular, unregulated use of technology and AI in key judicial aspects including drafting of judgments and rulings and analyzing of facts and evidence can potentially replace judicial reasoning undermining judicial independence[32]. The digital divide can also prevent marginalized and disadvantaged groups from meeting their justice needs as justice systems become increasingly digitalized[33].

In light of the foregoing, it is imperative to harness opportunities presented by AI while tackling its risks and challenges towards strengthening access to justice for Sustainable Development.

[27] American Bar Association., 'Artificial Intelligence in Arbitration: Is There Room for AI Arbitrators?—Part I' Available at https://www.adr.org/news-and-insights/ai-in-arbitration-is-there-room-for-ai-arbitrators/ (Accessed on 13/11/2026)
[28] Ibid
[29] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development., 'AI in Justice Administration and Access to Justice' Op Cit
[30] Artificial Intelligence in Court Rooms., Op Cit
[31] Burgess. P., 'AI and the Rule of Law' Available at https://www.bloomsbury.com/us/ai-and-the-rule-of-law-9781509963171/ (Accessed on 13/11/2026)
[32] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization., 'Safeguarding human rights and judicial independence in the age of algorithmic justice' Available at https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/safeguarding-human-rights-and-judicial-independence-age-algorithmic-justice (Accessed on 13/11/2026)
[33] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development., 'AI in Justice Administration and Access to Justice' Op Cit

3.0 Integrating Artificial Intelligence to Revolutionize Administration of Justice

AI provides effective tools and solutions that bolster access to justice towards Sustainable Development. AI is empowering various stakeholders including parties, lawyers, ADR institutions and practitioners, and courts by enabling them to access and dispense justice in an expeditious, responsive, participatory, and affordable manner[34]. Consequently, it has been observed that justice systems, particularly in the Global South, which are challenged by backlogs, lengthy procedural requirements and limited accessibility, can gain immensely from AI integration[35]. The integration of AI into justice systems can improve efficiency and responsiveness, enhance the delivery of services tailored to people's needs, support routine tasks and expand capabilities across a variety of justice domains[36]. However, AI is also associated with risks and challenges that can undermine access to justice.

Consequently, there is need to harness the positive attributes of AI while addressing its risks and challenges in order to revolutionize access to justice for peace, development and prosperity. In particular, when utilising AI in the administration of justice, there is need to minimize the risk of bias, and ensure fair and accessible AI-driven legal tools and services[37]. Consequently, it is imperative to adopt and utilise AI tools trained on inclusive and fair data sets in order to uphold human rights in the administration of justice. Bridging the digital divide is also key towards empowering vulnerable and marginalized populations to meet their justice needs. For instance, ensuring the accessibility, affordability and quality of modern technologies and digital tools including AI systems can ensure that women, indigenous peoples and local communities among other marginalized groups are able to effectively meet their justice needs[38]. In addition, investing in digital literacy programmes targeting marginalized groups including women and girls, rural residents and the elderly can build the capacity of all individuals and societies to utilise AI and other digital solutions towards strengthening access to justice and the rule of law[39].

It is also necessary to ensure that the integration of AI in the administration of justice upholds the fundamental tenets of the rule of law. In order to achieve this goal, there is need to promote the right to a fair hearing by adopting and utilising AI tools that explain the rationale behind their output and decisions for transparency, accountability and fairness[40]. In addition, it has been

[34] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development., 'AI in Justice Administration and Access to Justice' Op Cit
[35] Ibid
[36] Ibid
[37] Simshaw. D., 'Interoperable Legal AI for Access to Justice' *The Yale Law Journal,* Volume 134, 2025
[38] Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development., 'AI in Justice Administration and Access to Justice' Op Cit

[39] Ibid
[40] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization., 'Guidelines for the use of AI systems in courts and tribunals' Available at https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000396582 (Accessed on 14/11/2026)

suggested that when AI tools are used in legal decision-making processes, informing parties on why such tools were adopted, how they were utilised and the data relied on is key towards ensuring transparency and procedural fairness[41]. Further, it has been correctly observed that the ability to review and appeal decisions is both an ethical and legal principle when utilising AI in legal processes in order to avoid arbitrariness, bias, unfair and unjust outcomes[42]. Consequently, there is need to embrace measures such as human review and judicial appeal processes in order to enable parties contest and seek redress for AI decisions that are unfair, biased, unjust and violate human rights[43].

Upholding judicial independence is also critical towards effectively embracing AI in the administration of justice. Judicial independence has been described as a basic principle of the rule of law which ensures that courts and judicial officers are able to discharge their duties freely and impartially without influence or control from other actors[44]. It has been observed that overreliance on AI in key judicial aspects including drafting of judgments and rulings and analyzing of facts and evidence can potentially replace judicial reasoning undermining judicial independence[45]. In order to uphold judicial independence, AI should be adopted and utilised as an assistive tool to expand access to legal information, automate court processes, enhance efficiency in access to justice, and support equitable justice, always under human supervision and ethical review[46]. In addition, it has been observed that human oversight and intervention in algorithmic decision-making is key in order to avoid AI replacing independent analysis of law, facts and evidence by judicial officers[47].

Through the foregoing, it is possible to effectively adopt and utilise AI for enhanced access to justice.

4.0 Conclusion

Access to justice is a key driver of Sustainable Development. However, billions of people across the world are unable to meet their justice needs undermining peace, prosperity and development. Consequently, it is imperative to embrace innovative approaches in order to strengthen access to justice for Sustainable Development. In particular, integrating AI by harnessing the opportunities

[41] Ibid
[42] Ability to Appeal., Available at https://aiethicslab.rutgers.edu/e-floating-buttons/ability-to-appeal/ (Accessed on 14/11/2026)
[43] Ibid
[44] Judicial Independence., Available at https://www.britannica.com/topic/judicial-independence (Accessed on 14/11/2026)
[45] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization., 'Safeguarding human rights and judicial independence in the age of algorithmic justice' Op Cit
[46] United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization., 'Guidelines for the use of AI systems in courts and tribunals' Op Cit
[47] Ibid

and solutions it provides while addressing its risks and challenges is key towards revolutionizing administration of justice for peace, prosperity and development.

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