



TRAINERS TRAINING MANUAL
ON THE
NATIONAL MINIMUM
STANDARDS

FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION
OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF CRIMINAL
JUSTICE ACT/ACJLS



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Trainers Training Manual

on the

National Minimum Standards

for

Effective Implementation

of the

**Administration of Criminal Justice
ACT/ACJLS**



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INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE TRAINING MANUAL AND THE NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS

I. Background and Context

The enactment of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act (ACJA) 2015 marked a major milestone in Nigeria's criminal justice reform efforts. The Act repealed the Criminal Procedure Act (CPA), the Criminal Procedure Code (CPC), and the Administration of Justice Commission Act, and introduced a unified framework aimed at promoting efficiency, fairness, accountability, and timely dispensation of justice across the country.

Following its enactment, many States domesticated the ACJA through various Administration of Criminal Justice Laws (ACJLs). While this widespread adoption demonstrated national commitment to reform, differences in state-level implementation and legislative variations created new challenges. The criminal justice system across Nigeria increasingly became uneven and, in some instances, unpredictable.

Experience since the introduction of the ACJA and ACJLs has demonstrated that the existence of progressive legislation alone is insufficient to achieve meaningful reform. Persistent implementation gaps

continue to undermine the objectives of criminal justice administration.

II. Implementation Challenges in the Administration of Criminal Justice

Several systemic challenges continue to affect effective implementation of the ACJA and ACJLs across jurisdictions, including:

- a. Weak investigations and prosecutions arising from inadequate resources and limited training;
- b. Delays in case disposal resulting from congested court dockets and inefficient case management;
- c. Overcrowded correctional facilities, largely driven by prolonged pre-trial detention;
- d. Limited access to modern technology and infrastructure within justice institutions;
- e. Inconsistency in the application of criminal justice procedures across states due to variations in ACJL provisions. etc

The result is a fragmented criminal justice landscape in which practices differ widely from one jurisdiction to another. Although some states have made significant progress in implementing criminal justice reforms, others lag behind, creating disparities that undermine public confidence and equal access to justice.

These challenges contribute to prolonged trials, weaken deterrence, and erode trust in institutions

responsible for justice delivery, thereby exacerbating societal problems such as corruption, kidnapping, terrorism, banditry, armed robbery, and abuse of power.

III. **The National Minimum Standards Project**

To address the persistent implementation gaps and promote nationwide consistency, the National Minimum Standards (NMS) Project was developed as a collaborative initiative involving Ministries of Justice, justice sector institutions, civil society organisations, and development partners.

The National Minimum Standards were therefore developed to establish uniform benchmarks for the effective implementation of the ACJA and ACJLs across federal and state jurisdictions.

IV. **Objectives of the NMS**

The National Minimum Standards aim to create a national framework for evaluating the implementation of the ACJA and ACJLs, including a National Scoresheet to track and display the performance of each state.

The National Minimum Standards serve three main purposes:

1. Provide a Standardized Evaluation Framework or common benchmark for assessing the performance

of criminal justice reforms and institutions across the country.

2. Promote Healthy Competition Among States.

Encourage states to improve their criminal justice systems by fostering competition based on measurable performance.

And

3. Provide a strong basis for advocacy efforts to secure added resources and investment in criminal justice administration.

V. **Purpose of this Training Manual**

This Manual was developed from the National Minimum Standards to support effective implementation through structured capacity building. It serves as a practical guide for trainers responsible for building the capacity of justice sector stakeholders to translate standards and policy principles into institutional practice.

The Manual recognises that implementation is the cornerstone of reform. Its purpose is therefore to equip trainers with practical tools, structured content, and facilitation guidance necessary to drive behavioural and institutional change within the criminal justice system.

In accordance with the National Minimum Standards, all courts, agencies, authorities, and persons exercising criminal justice responsibilities at the pre-trial, trial, or post-trial stages are expected to promote and comply with these standards. This Manual

supports trainers in enabling such actors to effectively discharge this responsibility.

VI. **Who this Training Manual is For**

This Training Manual is designed specifically for:

- a. Trainers and facilitators;
- b. Capacity-building institutions;
- c. Judicial training bodies and justice sector academies.

It is intended as a Trainer's Guide, not a general instructional text for justice sector actors. The Manual provides structured guidance for designing, delivering, and evaluating training programmes targeted at judges, magistrates, prosecutors, law enforcement officers, court staff, correctional officers, and other criminal justice stakeholders.

VII. **Training Philosophy**

The Manual adopts a practice-oriented and problem-solving training philosophy grounded in the realities of Nigeria's criminal justice system. Accordingly:

- a. Training prioritises implementation over theory;
- b. Participants are treated as experienced professionals whose insights enrich learning;

- c. Sessions emphasise practical application, institutional reflection, and collaborative problem-solving;
- d. Trainers are expected to facilitate learning rather than merely transmit information.

The ultimate goal of every training delivered using this Manual is institutional change, rather than mere knowledge acquisition.

VIII. **Training Methods**

The Manual employs a range of adult-learning approaches, including:

- a. Short lectures;
- b. Facilitated discussions and peer learning;
- c. Scenario-based analysis for practical application of standards;
- d. Plenary feedback sessions to reinforce shared understanding.

Trainers are encouraged to vary methods to maintain engagement and deepen learning outcomes.

IX. **Inclusion in Training Design and Participation**

In designing and delivering training programmes based on this Manual, trainers and institutions should ensure inclusive participation, particularly by women and

persons living with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations should be made to promote accessibility and meaningful participation.

Inclusive training practices are essential to ensuring equitable, representative, and sustainable implementation of the National Minimum Standards.

X. How to Use this Manual

This Manual is modular and flexible. Trainers may:

- a. Deliver all five modules as a comprehensive programme; or
- b. Select specific modules based on training objectives, participant profiles, and institutional needs.

Trainers are encouraged to:

- a. Adapt examples to federal, state, or institutional contexts;
- b. Adjust pacing according to participant experience and available time;
- c. Use the Manual both as a planning tool and as a live reference during training delivery.

XI. Structure of the Manual

The Manual is divided into five modules:

1. Module 1: Basic Training Techniques

2. Module 2: Trainers' Guide – National Minimum Standards at the Pre-Trial Stage
3. Module 3: Trainers' Guide – National Minimum Standards at the Trial Stage
4. Module 4: Trainers' Guide – National Minimum Standards at the Post-Trial Stage and Cross-Cutting Themes
5. Module 5: Evaluation and Feedback

MODULE 1

BASIC TRAINING TECHNIQUES

1.0 Purpose of the Chapter

This module provides practical guidance for trainers on effective training techniques. It explains how adults learn, outlines essential presentation and facilitation skills, and clarifies the role of the trainer before, during, and after a training course. The chapter is designed for use as a reference during training preparation and delivery.

1.1 Learning Method Mix

Effective delivery requires deliberate movement between three methods: Lecture → Facilitation → Assessment. Use each method according to the objective and participants' experience.

I. When to Lecture

To give a common baseline for a mixed audience; to introduce standards, present slides, statutory timelines or complex provisions.

Trainer tips:

Don't read slides verbatim; use slides as prompts; immediately link law to practice.

II. When to Facilitate (dominant method)

To explore implementation challenges, compare practices, and surface solutions.

To run group problem-solving, peer learning and plenary sessions.

Trainer tips:

Ask open questions; balance voices; connect all discussions to the NMS.

III. When to Assess

Assessment is continuous, it should be done before training to ascertain skill gaps, to confirm understanding before moving on; to detect misconceptions early; after the training to measure knowledge gained and readiness to implement.

Assessment methods:

Short quizzes, scenario exercises, group presentations, review of action plans.

Trainer tips:

Use assessment to support learning and give prompt, constructive feedback.

Typical Sequence

Assessment → Lecture → Facilitation → Assessment

Remain flexible: adapt pacing if participants need more practice or clarification.

1.2 Adult Learning Principles

A key aspect of being an effective trainer is understanding how adults learn. Adults differ from children and adolescents in their learning needs, motivations, and expectations. Training programmes must therefore be designed and delivered in ways that recognise these differences.

Adult learners typically demonstrate the following characteristics:

1.2.1 Adults are Autonomous and Self-Directed

Adults need to be free to direct their own learning.

Implications for trainers:

Trainers must actively involve participants in the learning process, and serve as facilitators for them. Specifically, they must enable participants to participate in discussion, group work and other activities. They should allow the participants to assume responsibility for presentations and group leadership. They have to be sure to act as facilitators, guiding participants to their own knowledge rather than supplying them with facts.

Finally, they must show how the training will help them reach their personal development objectives.

1.2.2 Adults Bring Experience and Knowledge

Adults have accumulated a foundation of life experience, including professional work, family responsibilities, and prior education. Learning is most effective when it builds on this experience.

Implications for trainers:

Draw out participants' relevant experience and knowledge, both criminal justice-related and more general;

Relate theories and concepts to participants' practical experience;

Recognise experience as a valuable source of learning.

1.2.3 Adults are Goal-Oriented

Adults usually enter training with specific objectives and value programmes that are well organised and clearly structured.

Implications for trainers:

Clearly explain how the training supports participants' professional goals within the criminal justice system;

Ensure sessions are logically structured, focused, and in line with criminal justice practice.

1.2.4 Adults are Practical

Adults prioritise learning that has immediate and clear application to their work.

Implications for trainers:

Work with participants to identify how each session can be applied in their daily duties;

Emphasise practical application and problem-solving over abstract theory.

1.2.5 Adults Need to be Shown Respect

Respect is central to effective adult learning and engagement.

Implications for trainers:

Acknowledge and value the experience participants bring to the training;

Treat participants as professional equals in experience and knowledge;

Encourage open and respectful expression of views.

1.2.6 Diversity in Adult Learning

Adult learners differ in background, experience, ability, and learning style.

Implications for trainers:

Use varied training methods to accommodate different learning preferences;

Ensure inclusive participation and equal opportunities for contribution.

1.3 Presentation Skills

Trainers are responsible for presenting information clearly and effectively. Good presentations are essential to successful learning and require thorough preparation and skilled delivery.

1.3.1 Preparation

Before delivering a session, trainers should:

- a. Study the training materials and lecture notes;
- b. Note session timings and prioritise key points;
- c. Practise the presentation to ensure confident delivery within the allocated time.

1.3.2 Delivery

Effective delivery requires attention to voice, eye contact, body language, and appearance.

Voice

- a. Speak clearly and at an appropriate volume;
- b. Avoid monotone delivery;
- c. Use pauses to emphasise key points;
- d. Vary speed and pitch to maintain interest.

Eye Contact

- a. Maintain eye contact to support communication and credibility;
- b. Avoid focusing on individual participants;
- c. Address the presentation to the entire room.

Body Language

- a. Use facial expressions, including smiling, to convey warmth;
- b. Use natural gestures to enhance understanding;
- c. Maintain an upright and open posture.

Appearance

- a. Dress professionally;
- b. Respect cultural and social norms;
- c. Ensure dress standards are not lower than those of participants.

1.3.3 Use of Visual Aids

Visual aids, particularly slides, should support and enhance presentations. Power points should be

points and not notes. They should be straight to the point.

Research indicates that information is absorbed approximately as follows:

75% through sight; 13% through hearing; 12% through other senses.

Visual aids help participants understand information more quickly and retain it longer. Slides should be legible, and designs should be moderate, as excessive imagery and colours may distract participants.

1.4 Facilitation Skills

Facilitation is essential during group discussions and participatory exercises. It involves enabling individuals and groups to contribute fully, share responsibility for learning, and work collectively toward understanding and decision-making.

1.4.1 Benefits of Effective Facilitation

Effective facilitation:

- a. Improves focus, productivity, and communication;
- b. Encourages inclusive participation;
- c. Promotes shared responsibility for decisions;
- d. Supports high-quality decision-making;
- e. Reduces negative attitudes and disengagement.

1.4.2 Creating a Participatory Environment

Trainers should:

- a. Monitor participation and encourage balanced contributions;
- b. Use small-group work where appropriate;
- c. Intervene tactfully when individuals dominate discussions.

1.4.3 Core Facilitation Techniques

A. Questioning

Useful question types include:

Open-ended questions: “Can you give some examples of...?”

Probing questions: “Will you explain a little more about that?”

Inclusive questions: “Who has other ideas about this?”

Questions encouraging alternative viewpoints: “Can anyone provide another view on this?”

Questions leading to summarisation: “Will someone summarise the points presented so far?”

B. Paraphrasing

Paraphrasing demonstrates understanding and clarifies issues, for example:

“What I heard you say was... Is that correct?”

C. Summarising

Summarising pulls important information together, establishes a basis for further discussion, or marks transitions. Examples include:

“I believe we all agree that...”

“What we are saying is that...”

“We seem to have covered the following...”

“If I understand correctly, the shared view is that...”

1.5 Use of Training Materials

Participants should actively use training materials during sessions. For example, they may be asked to open and read relevant provisions of the National Minimum Standards or applicable Practice Directions. Materials not used during training are unlikely to be used afterwards.

1.6 Feedback and Responding to Questions

Trainers should encourage feedback and address questions openly. Where answers are not immediately available, trainers may consult participants, refer to materials, or commit to providing information later, ensuring follow-up as promised.

1.7 Role of the Trainer

1.7.1 Before the Course

- a. Arrive early; set up registration and seating; check Audio-Visual devices, lighting and ventilation.
- b. Prepare training materials, (name tags, NMS Documents and writing materials).
- c. Agree roles with co-trainers; prepare pre/post assessment tools; rehearse sessions.

Physical Comfort (Accessibility)

Ensure support for persons living with disabilities; comfortable room temperature; adequate breaks; access to restrooms; water and basic refreshments; allowance for religious breaks.

1.7.2 During the Training

Join daily briefings; coordinate with co-presenters; stick to time unless participants agree otherwise. Be flexible: speed up/slow down based on comprehension.

Encourage participation and ensure sessions are practical and in line with the NMS.

1.7.3 After the Course

Participate in debriefs; collect feedback; issue post-training assessments; revise materials; submit reports.

1.8 General Guidelines

- a. Get to Know the Participants: Use names throughout the training and encourage familiarity, including the use of name tags.
- b. Set Expectations: Establish behavioural norms and participation expectations at the outset (e.g. respectful listening, active participation, limited phone use).
- c. Time Maximisation: Design efficient systems to ensure effective use of all training time.
- d. Positive Framing and Feedback: Use constructive language focused on improvement rather than fault.
- e. Culture of Error: Create a safe learning environment where participants feel comfortable sharing views and making mistakes; training exists because learning is ongoing.

In all, remember that justice sector reform is a journey, and no single training programme is an end in itself.

1.9 Trainer Preparation Checklist

- Review the NMS and relevant Practice Directions.
- Know participant institutional mix and roles.
- Prepare slide deck (prompts, examples, not verbatim).
- Draft pre- and post-training assessments.
- Select case examples and scenarios.

- Ensure inclusion of women and persons living with disabilities.
- Confirm venue accessibility, power, internet etc
- Prepare handouts, name tags and any materials.

1.10 **Trainer Risk Management Notes**

Trainers should be prepared to:

- a. Manage resistance to topical reform framed as “practical impossibility”; e’g Plea Bargain on all offenses
- b. Practice emotional regulation when dealing with sensitive topics such as sexual offenses, persons living with disability, murder, terrorism, gender based violence etc. Remember, participants are humans and must be treated with respect.
- c. Navigate hierarchy where senior officials dominate discussions;
- d. Address federal–state procedural differences constructively;
- e. Reinforce that NMS are minimum standards, not aspirational ideals.
- f. Reinforce that certain provisions of the NMS are futuristic.

DRAFT TRAINING PROGRAM ON THE NMS

TIME	SESSION OVERVIEW
9:00- 9:30	Arrival and Registration of Participants
9:30- 10:30	Session 1: (Opening Ceremony)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opening Prayer • National Anthem • Introduction of Guests • Welcome Remarks • Goodwill Messages • Presentation of the Validated NMS Document • Keynote Lecture: Overview of the National Minimum Standards Document for Effective Implementation of the ACJA/ACJLs <p>Group Photograph</p>
10:30- 11:00	Tea Break
11:00- 11:20	Pre training Assessment
11:20- 12:00	(Capacity building Session 1)
	Background of the National Minimum Standards- Origin, Process & Challenges
12:00 - 12: 40	(Capacity building Session 2)
	National Minimum Standards at the Pre-Trial Stage
1:00 -2:00	Question and Answers or breakout session
2:00 pm	Lunch/ Wrap up and Announcement

DAY 1

DAY 2

TIME	SESSION OVERVIEW
9:00- 9:30	Arrival and Registration of Participants
9:30- 10:00 am	Recap and overview of the NMS
10:00 am- 10:40 am	(Capacity building Session 3)
	National Minimum Standards at the trial Stage
10:40am-11:10am	Tea Break
11:10am- 11:50 am	(Capacity building Session 4)
	National Minimum Standards at the Post-Trial Stage and cross cutting themes.
11:50- 12:50	Breakout session
12:50 - 1:30	plenary
1:30-1:55	Post assessment
2:00 pm	Lunch/ Wrap up and Announcement

Nigerian National anthem

Nigeria, we hail thee,
Our own dear native land,
Though tribes and tongues may differ,
In brotherhood we stand
Nigerians all, are proud to serve
Our sovereign Motherland.

II

Our flag shall be a symbol
That truth and justice reign,
In peace or battle honoured,
And this we count as gain,
To hand on to our children
A banner without stain.

III

O God of all creation,
Grant this our one request:
Help us to build a nation
Where no man is oppressed,
And so with peace and plenty
Nigeria may be blessed.

MODULE 2

TECHNICAL SESSION ONE

NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS AT THE PRE-TRIAL STAGE

2.0 Module Learning Outcomes

At the end of this module,

Trainers should be able to train justice sector stakeholders to implement, monitor, and enforce the National Minimum Standards applicable at the pre-trial stage of criminal proceedings.

2.1 Pre-Trial Hearing

2.1.1 Learning Outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Apply mandatory pre-trial case management hearings and enforce statutory timelines under ACJA/ACJLs.
- b. Implement active judicial case management, including day-to-day trial and appropriate early orders and directions.
- c. Promote the use of technology and alternative justice mechanisms, including diversion and restorative justice, especially for children.

2.1.2 National Minimum Standards on Pre-Trial Hearing

1. Every Criminal Court in all jurisdictions shall conduct pre-trial case management hearing to ensure a hitch-free trial following arraignment.
2. Pre-trial case management includes:
 - a. the early identification of the real issues;
 - b. the early identification of the needs of witnesses;
 - c. achieving certainty as to what must be done, by whom, and when, in particular by the early setting of a timetable for the progress of the case;
 - d. monitoring the progress of the case and compliance with orders and directions;
 - e. ensuring that evidence, whether disputed or not, is presented in the shortest and clearest way;
 - f. discouraging delay, dealing with as many aspects of the case as possible on the same occasion, and avoiding unnecessary proceedings;

- g. encouraging the participants to co-operate in the progression of the case;
 - h. making use of technology; and
 - i. promoting diversion of cases for children in conflict with the law and ensuring the delivery of child-friendly justice.
3. The Court shall actively manage the case by giving any order or direction appropriate to the needs of that case as early as possible.
 4. Where appropriate video (audio-visual) link facilities are available, making use of or directing the use of such facilities, whether an application for such a direction is made or not.
 5. The minimum standard for criminal trial after arraignment, is day-to-day until judgement. However, day-to-day does not necessarily mean trial on consecutive days but effective case management.
 6. The case management timetable agreed by the parties at the pre-trial stage shall be in conformity with the timelines stipulated in the ACJA/ACJLs.
 7. Following arraignment, every court shall consider the application of any appropriate restorative

justice mechanism in the best interest of the state, the defendant, and the victim.

2.2 Witness Support Unit

2.2.1 Learning outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Explain institutional requirements for establishing and operating Witness Support Units.
- b. Apply standards relating to payment of witness expenses and witness safety, protection, and support.
- c. Identify and coordinate the roles of courts, Ministries of Justice, and specialised agencies in witness support.

2.2.2 National Minimum Standards on Witness Support Unit

1. Each jurisdiction shall establish a Witness Support Unit either at the office of the Chief Judge or the Ministry of Justice or both.
2. The Federal Government, F.C.T Administration, State Governments or specialized agencies shall put in place a mechanism for paying witness expenses (either through the court, Ministry of

Justice or specialized agencies) to enable witnesses to attend court hearings.

3. The Federal, FCT or State Governments shall make regulations to ensure the safety, support, and protection of witnesses.

2.3 Time Limit for Issuance of Legal Advice

2.3.1 Learning outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Apply and enforce timelines for prompt issuance of Legal Advice.
- b. Ensure timely dissemination of Legal Advice to the police and courts.
- c. Monitor compliance and develop mechanisms for addressing delays.

2.3.2 National Minimum Standards on time Limit for Issuance of Legal Advice

1. The Attorney General of the Federation and the Attorneys General of States shall ensure that Legal Advice is issued within a time limit of 14 days from the date of receipt of the case file(s) from the investigating agency.
2. The Attorney General of the Federation and the Attorneys General of States shall ensure that the

police and the court receive a copy of the Legal Advice within the said time limit of 14 days.

2.4 Filing of Criminal Charge

2.4.1 Learning Outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Apply standards governing electronic filing and assignment of charges.
- b. Enforce timelines for filing charges after vetting and approval, including accompanying legal representation forms.
- c. Identify and address operational challenges affecting timely filing and assignment.

2.4.2 National Minimum Standards on Filing of Criminal Charge

1. Each jurisdiction, federal or state, shall provide structures to facilitate the efficient filling and assignment of criminal cases. This shall include:
 - a) Use of electronic filing of charges and other court processes.
 - b) Use of electronic assignment of criminal cases to the courts.
2. A charge shall be filed within 7 days after vetting and approval of the charge.

3. A form for legal representation shall be filed and served along with the charge.

2.5 Assignment of Charges

2.5.1 Learning Outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Develop and implement trial timetables agreed at the pre-trial stage.
- b. Monitor compliance with case progression timelines by courts and parties.
- c. Apply appropriate sanctions, distinguishing between corrective and punitive measures.

2.5.2 National Minimum Standards on Assignment of Charges

1. A Charge or Information shall be assigned to a court for trial within 7 working days of its filing.
2. The court to which the case is assigned shall within 7 working days, issue a Hearing Notice to the parties, physically or electronically.
3. Where a judge/magistrate is elevated to a higher court, retires or is otherwise unable to continue with the trial of the case, the head of court shall re-

assign the case to another judge/magistrate within 14 days.

2.6 Service of Charge /Information

2.6.1 Learning Outcome

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Enforce prompt and effective service of charges and hearing notices.
- b. Apply rules governing electronic service and determine validity of service.
- c. Resolve disputes relating to defective or delayed service.

2.6.2 National Minimum Standards on Service of Charge / Information

1. The Registrar of Court shall ensure prompt service of the Hearing Notice and charge, not more than 7 working days from the date of issue.
2. Rules of Court/Practice Direction shall provide for service of charge by Post, E-mail or other electronic means possible. Service by electronic means shall be deemed to be proper service once it is sent to the electronic mail address and telephone number (SMS/WhatsApp) or any other

mode of electronic communication provided by the suspect.

2.7 Timetable for Trial and Sanctions for Non-Compliance

2.7.1 Learning Outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Develop and enforce agreed trial timetables.
- b. Monitor compliance with trial timelines by courts and parties.
- c. Apply reasonable sanctions, including costs, for non-compliance.

2.7.2 National Minimum Standards on Timetable for Trial and Sanctions for Non-Compliance

1. The Court and all parties shall comply with any agreed timetable for progressing the trial.
2. The rules/practice direction shall impose a reasonable sanction, including costs where there is non-compliance with the timelines stipulated by the law.

2.8 Bail

2.8.1 Learning Outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Apply standards governing police bail, court bail, and verification of suspects and sureties.
- b. Operationalise Bail Information Management Systems and supervise bail administration structures.
- c. Enforce non-discrimination, regulate bondspersons, and exercise suo motu bail powers appropriately.

2.8.2 National Minimum Standards on Bail

1. The heads of court exercising criminal jurisdiction shall establish a Bail Information Management Systems (BIMS) that is designed to capture information such as names, biometric data, National Identification Number (NIN) and any other relevant data of suspects/defendants, and their sureties for all bails processed through the courts.
2. A person shall not be prevented from standing as a surety for bail because of sex or gender.
3. Before granting administrative bail, law enforcement agencies shall obtain and verify the names, addresses (temporary and permanent home addresses), telephone numbers, National Identification Numbers and any other relevant data of suspects and their sureties.

4. A Judge/Magistrate may grant bail *suo motu* in appropriate circumstances.
5. All Heads of Court shall take immediate steps to operationalize the provisions of the ACJA/ACJLs on bondspersons as applicable to their courts and must ensure the existence of Regulations to prevent abuse and exploitation of suspects/defendants by licensed bondspersons.
6. Every investigating and prosecuting agency shall establish a bail management Unit to ensure compliance with Paragraph 9.3 above.

2.9 Remand Protocol

2.9.1 Learning Outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Apply remand procedures in compliance with statutory provisions and ensure remand orders are time-bound and reviewed.
- b. Enforce protections for vulnerable persons, including children, women, and persons with disabilities, and apply diversion where appropriate.
- c. Monitor remand compliance, enforce mandatory release where timelines expire, and ensure reporting obligations are met.

2.9.2 National Minimum Standards on Remand

1. Remand proceedings protocol shall be modelled after the provisions of section 293 of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act 2015.
2. Every remand order shall stipulate the duration of the order.
3. No child shall be remanded in any adult remand or custodial facility.
4. The FCT and states shall ensure the operationalization of family courts and the application of child justice procedures in cases involving children.
5. The Nigerian Correctional Service or any other detention, remand, custodial or rehabilitation centre shall provide all necessary facilities to address the special needs such as medical and nutritional needs of female inmates including pregnant women, nursing mothers, babies and children in custody.
6. The Nigerian Correctional Service or any other detention, remand, custodial or rehabilitation centre shall provide all necessary facilities to

address the special needs of persons living with disabilities.

7. The interval of adjournment when a Remand order is made shall not exceed a period of 14 days.
8. Application for renewal of remand order may only be granted if the prosecution makes a case justifying the renewal and shall not be granted as a matter of course.
9. At the expiration of the final remand order, the suspect shall be released unconditionally where a charge has not been filed against the suspect in a court of competent jurisdiction.
10. Application for remand in cases involving allegations of capital offences shall only be made at the High Court.
11. The Registrar of Court shall submit quarterly reports to the ACJMC secretariats/or equivalent bodies, of all cases of remand applications that did not result in the filing of charges after the expiration of the remand period.
12. A court seized of remand proceedings shall make quarterly returns of remand commenced and dealt with in the court to the Chief Judge.

13. The Nigerian Correctional Service/Detention Facilities shall forward on a monthly basis the return of persons remanded to the ACJMC/equivalent bodies.
14. The officer in charge of a Correctional Facility shall at the expiration of the period notify the court in writing for appropriate direction.
15. Upon the expiration of the remand order, the court shall vacate the remand order immediately or not later than 72 hours.

2.10 Inspection and Reporting Obligations by Judges and Magistrates

2.10.1 Learning Outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Apply standards for regular inspection and visitation of detention facilities.
- b. Identify and address rights violations and ensure proper documentation and reporting.
- c. Support monitoring, accountability, and capacity building through ACJMC review and enforcement mechanisms.

2.10.2 National Minimum Standards on Inspection and Reporting Obligations by Judges and Magistrates

1. The Chief Judge of the Federal High Court, FCT or State High Courts shall make adequate administrative arrangements for logistics, funding and security for designated Magistrates to enable them effectively to discharge their obligation to visit and inspect police stations and for Judges to visit other places of detention within their jurisdiction monthly.
2. Where in the course of the visit, the Judge or Magistrate discovers that a child is held in an adult correctional facility or detention centre, the Judge or Magistrate shall in the exercise of inherent powers make appropriate orders for the removal and transfer of such a child and may require the detaining authority to show cause why the child shall not be released either unconditionally or upon reasonable terms.
3. The Report of the visitation and inspection shall be forwarded to the appropriate authority and ACJMCs/equivalent bodies for review, analysis and necessary remedial action. The

ACJMCs/equivalent bodies shall within 14 days from holding of their periodic meetings share the Report with the Attorney General, Chief Judge and any other relevant stakeholder in the administration of criminal justice.

4. ACJMCs/equivalent bodies shall develop a standard procedure to guide the visitation and inspection of police stations and other places of detention including templates for visitation which should cover conditions of detention and wellbeing of detainees.
5. ACJMCs/equivalent bodies shall organize capacity building for Judges, Magistrates and law enforcement agencies on the conduct of visitation and inspection of police stations and other places of detention.
6. ACJMCs/equivalent bodies or Ministry of Justice shall organize capacity building for Judges, Magistrates and law enforcement agencies on the implementation of child justice procedures including but not limited to diversion.
7. Upon the receipt of the reports of visitation to detention facilities, the ACJMCs/equivalent bodies

shall review, evaluate and identify actionable points in such reports for implementation.

8. The ACJMCs/equivalent bodies, in evaluating the Reports shall identify for commendation and reward Judges, Magistrates, or heads of police stations and other places of detention with outstanding performance in the discharge of their obligations concerning the monthly visitation.
9. The ACJMCs/equivalent bodies, shall identify individuals and law enforcement agencies who obstruct or refuse to discharge their obligations to cooperate with visiting and inspecting Judges or Magistrates and shall make a formal report to appropriate authorities for necessary sanctions.

2.11 **Activity 1: Breakout Session (30 Minutes)**

Implementing the National Minimum Standards (NMS) at the Pre-Trial Stage

Structure and Timing (30 - 45 Minutes Total)

Step 1: Group Formation (5 Minutes)

Participants should be divided into small groups of 5–7 persons with:

- a. Mixed agency representation
- b. Gender balance
- c. Inclusion of persons with disabilities where possible

Each group should appoint:

- a. A **Rapporteur**
- b. A **Presenter**
- c. A **Timekeeper**

Step 2: Group Discussion (15-25 Minutes)

Each group should address any of the following structured questions:

1. Case Management
 - a. Is pre-trial case management consistently conducted after arraignment?
 - b. What causes the most delay in your jurisdiction?
2. Witness Support and Filing of Charges
 - a. Does your state have a functional Witness Support Unit?
 - b. What is the average timeline from filing to service of charge?
 - c. Where do bottlenecks occur?

3. Reform Action

Identify two practical actions that can be implemented within the next 3–6 months without legislative amendment.

Groups should focus on practical, implementable solutions not theoretical reforms.

Step 3: Group Presentations (10 Minutes)

Each group presents:

- a. One major implementation gap
- b. Two practical reform actions.

Facilitator should:

- a. Note recurring challenges.
- b. Highlight cross-cutting issues (e.g., delay in legal advice, lack of electronic systems, weak inter-agency coordination).
- c. Link discussions back to compliance with statutory timelines and institutional accountability.

2.12 **Activity 2 POP QUIZ Section A: Multiple Choice Questions**

1. A pre-trial case management hearing must be conducted:
 - A. Before filing a charge
 - B. Immediately after arraignment**
 - C. After the prosecution closes its case

- D. Only in capital offences
2. The minimum standard for criminal trial after arraignment is:
- A. Weekly sittings
 - B. Consecutive daily sittings without exception
 - C. **Day-to-day trial subject to effective case management**
 - D. At the discretion of counsel
3. Legal Advice must be issued within how many days of receipt of the case file?
- A. 7 days
 - B. 10 days
 - C. **14 days**
 - D. 30 days
4. A charge must be filed within how many days after vetting and approval?
- A. 3 days
 - B. **7 days**
 - C. 14 days
 - D. 21 days
5. A charge or information must be assigned to a court within:
- A. 3 working days
 - B. **7 working days**
 - C. 14 working days
 - D. 30 working days

6. Electronic service of charge is deemed effective when:
- A. It is acknowledged by the defendant
 - B. It is printed by the court
 - C. **It is sent to the provided electronic address**
 - D. It is confirmed by the police
7. The interval of adjournment where a remand order is made shall not exceed:
- A. 7 days
 - B. 10 days
 - C. **14 days**
 - D. 30 days
8. Application for remand in capital offences shall only be made at the:
- A. Magistrate Court
 - B. Area Court
 - C. **High Court**
 - D. Court of Appeal
9. Bail Information Management Systems (BIMS) are designed primarily to:
- A. Monitor prison capacity
 - B. **Capture biometric and identity data of suspects and sureties**
 - C. Track court revenue
 - D. Replace physical sureties

10. A person may be disqualified from standing as a surety because of:
- A. Gender
 - B. Marital status
 - C. **Criminal conviction**
 - D. Sex

Section B: True or False

11. Every remand order must stipulate its duration.
(**True** / False)
12. A child may be remanded in an adult custodial facility if space is limited.
(True / **False**)
13. The court may grant bail suo motu in appropriate circumstances.
(**True** / False)
14. Witness Support Units must be established only at the federal level.
(True / **False**)
15. Sanctions, including costs, may be imposed for non-compliance with trial timelines.
(**True** / False)

Section C: Short Answer Questions

16. Mention two core objectives of pre-trial case management.

17. State two key responsibilities of ACJMCs regarding inspection reports.
18. Identify two protections required for vulnerable persons in remand facilities.
19. What must accompany a charge when it is filed in court?
20. Mention two immediate administrative reforms that can reduce delay in criminal trials.

MODULE 3

MINIMUM STANDARDS AT THE TRIAL STAGE

3.0 General Outcome

At the end of training on Minimum Standards at the Trial Stage, trainers shall be able to ensure that participants are equipped to understand, apply, and institutionalise the National Minimum Standards governing trial proceedings within the criminal justice system.

3.1 Defence Disclosure Obligations

3.1.1 Learning outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Apply frontloading and disclosure obligations of the prosecution and defence, including timelines and required contents of proof of evidence.
- b. Distinguish mandatory disclosure requirements from constitutional protections, including the right to silence.

- c. Properly manage objections to confessional statements and other evidentiary issues in a manner that safeguards voluntariness and eliminates unnecessary trial-within-trial proceedings.

3.1.2 National Minimum Standards on Defence Disclosure Obligations

1. The prosecution shall frontload proof of evidence which must include the extra-judicial statement of the defendant(s), witness statement on oath, documents and expert opinions that the prosecution may wish to rely on during the trial.
2. A defendant is at liberty to frontload his defence during the pre-trial stage.
3. A defendant shall disclose the defence he/she intends to rely on within 14 days after the close of the prosecution's case:
 - a. if the defendant intends to enter his/her defence; or
 - b. after a no case submission has been overruled by the court and the defendant is called upon to enter his/her defence, without prejudice to the

right of the defendant to decide not to give evidence.

4. A defendant entering his/her defence shall frontload witness statements, documents and expert opinions that he/she may wish to rely on during the defence.
5. Disclosure obligations shall apply in all courts exercising criminal jurisdiction.
6. A Practice Direction may provide for defence disclosure pending the amendment of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act or Administration of Criminal Justice Laws where applicable.
7. Where a defendant intends to object to the admissibility of his/her confessional statement during trial on the ground that such statement was not made voluntarily, he/she shall in the opening statement or not later than 7 days before the commencement of trial or at such later date as the court may permit, file a notice to that effect.
8. The notice shall be served on the prosecutor within 7 days failing which the defendant shall be deemed

to have waived his right to object to the admissibility of his confessional statement.

9. The prosecution shall as part of its case, proceed to call witnesses who shall adduce evidence to prove that the statement was made voluntarily.
10. The defendant shall during his/her defence, and as part of his/her defence, call witnesses and adduce evidence in proof of the fact that he/she did not make the confessional statement voluntarily.
11. At the conclusion of the trial, the defendant and the prosecution shall in their final addresses in the case, also proffer legal argument on the admissibility or otherwise of the confessional statement.
12. The presiding judge/magistrate in his final judgement, shall first rule on the objection to admissibility or otherwise of the confessional statement.

3.2 Arraignment

3.2.1 Learning outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Apply standards for lawful and valid arraignment, including cases involving unrepresented defendants.
- b. Ensure defendants are fully informed of their constitutional and statutory rights and referred to legal aid or pro bono representation where necessary.
- c. Implement electronic or virtual arraignment procedures while safeguarding transparency and fair hearing.

3.2.2 National Minimum Standards on Arraignment

1. Where a defendant is not represented by a legal practitioner, the court shall inform him of his rights under the ACJ legislation and under the Constitution before he takes his plea. Where a defendant fails to secure the services of a legal practitioner of his choice, the court shall after 2 adjournments not exceeding a total of 30 days, refer the matter to the Legal Aid Council of Nigeria, Office of the Public Defender, Nigerian Bar Association or any other bodies or persons

rendering free legal service for legal representation, etc.

2. Electronic arraignment can be carried out through video links (audio-visual).

3.3 Trial in Absentia

3.3.1 Learning Outcome

Trainers should train participants to identify circumstances in which trial in absentia is legally permissible after arraignment.

3.3.2 National Minimum Standards on Trial in Absentia

In appropriate circumstances after arraignment, a court shall not be precluded from conducting trial, delivering judgment and passing sentence on an absconding defendant.

3.4 Transfer of Trial Judge/Magistrate

3.4.1 Learning Outcome

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Determine when a criminal case qualifies as being at an advanced stage.

- b. Apply standards requiring transferred judges or magistrates to continue and conclude pending criminal cases.

3.4.2 National Minimum Standards on Transfer of Trial Judge/Magistrate

1. Where a Trial Judge/Magistrate is on transfer, such Trial Judge/Magistrate shall continue to hear and determine all pending Criminal Cases that are at an advanced stage.
2. A case shall be considered as at an advanced stage if the prosecution has called at least three witnesses out of the total number of witnesses listed, closed its case or the case is for defence.

3.5 Stay of Proceedings

3.5.1 Learning Outcome

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Apply the prohibition against stay of proceedings arising from interlocutory applications or appeals.

- b. Manage interlocutory issues by deferring rulings in accordance with applicable standards and case management principles.

3.5.2 National Minimum Standards on Stay of Proceedings

1. Stay of trial proceedings on account of an interlocutory application appeal is prohibited.
2. Delivery of Ruling on any interlocutory matter shall be done at the time of judgment on the substantive matter.

3.6 Plea Bargaining

3.6.1 Learning Outcome

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Apply plea bargaining provisions in a manner that protects public interest, victims' rights, and the integrity of the justice system.
- b. Integrate plea bargaining as a transparent and accountable tool for case decongestion and effective justice delivery.

3.6.2 NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS ON PLEA BARGAINING

1. States shall have provisions on plea bargaining in their Administration of Criminal Justice Laws that protect the public interest, interest of justice, and prevent abuse of legal process.
2. The provisions in the Administration of Criminal Justice Act and Laws on plea bargaining shall be supplemented by Plea Bargaining Guidelines that outline guiding principles and establish procedures and templates designed to promote public confidence, accountability and transparency in plea bargaining.
3. Plea bargaining should be made available to all offences provided that due process, public interest, the interest of justice and of the victim are observed.
4. The heads of court shall provide capacity-building programmes on the application of Plea Bargaining for Judges, Magistrate and other officers exercising criminal jurisdiction.

5. The Attorney-general and Heads of Prosecuting Authorities shall provide capacity-building programmes on the application of Plea Bargaining for State Counsel/Prosecutors and sensitization workshops for defence counsel.

3.7 Case Tracking

3.7.1 Learning Outcome

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Understand institutional responsibilities for deploying and managing case tracking systems.
- b. Use case tracking data to monitor case progress, counsel performance, and systemic delays.
- c. Promote coordinated and remedial action based on case tracking outcomes.

3.7.2 National Minimum Standards on Case Tracking

1. The Attorney-General of the Federation and Attorney-General of States shall each deploy case tracking systems for monitoring the progress or otherwise of their cases. This will include the assignment of cases to counsel, conduct of cases

in Court and the progress of such cases and taking of remedial action where necessary.

2. The Chief Judges/Heads of Courts shall deploy case tracking systems for monitoring the progress or otherwise of their cases. This will include the assignment of cases to Courts, conduct of cases and the progress of such cases and taking of remedial action where necessary.
3. The AGF and Attorney's-General of states and the Chief Judges/Heads of Court shall explore the option of having an integrated case tracking system that enables the courts, prosecuting authorities, criminal justice agencies and defence counsel to share and access information on pending cases.

3.8 ACTIVITIES

CASE STUDY 1: The Widow's Only Son

Mrs. Hassan is a 60-year-old widow with two sons. During a heated argument over family property, the elder son stabbed the younger son. The younger son died from the injury.

The surviving son was arrested and charged with murder, an offence punishable by death.

There is strong evidence against him, including eyewitness testimony and his own admission that he acted in anger. There is no evidence of premeditation.

Mrs. Hassan has lost one son. The accused is now her only surviving child and sole means of support. She has informed the prosecution that she does not want her remaining son sentenced to death.

Defence counsel proposes a plea bargain to a lesser offence carrying a long term of imprisonment instead of capital punishment.

The community is divided, some demand the death penalty and others believe the family has already suffered enough.

Discussion Questions

1. Should plea bargaining be considered in this case?
2. How should the court balance public interest with the victim's wishes?

3. Can justice be achieved without imposing the death penalty?

CASE STUDY 2

Transfer of Trial Judge and the Dangers of Trial De Novo

Background

In 2018, a High Court in a state jurisdiction commenced trial in a complex armed robbery case involving five defendants. Over four years, 12 prosecution witnesses testified, 8 witnesses were cross-examined at length, over 40 documentary exhibits were tendered, the prosecution closed its case, the court ruled that the defendants had a case to answer and two defendants began their defence.

At this stage, the trial judge was elevated to the Court of Appeal.

Upon transfer, the new judge ordered that the trial must commence **de novo**, citing lack of jurisdiction to rely on evidence recorded by another judge.

What Happened Next

Three prosecution witnesses could no longer be located, one witness had died, the complainant relocated abroad, the defence filed fresh objections to admissibility of documents already admitted, the case restarted from arraignment.

After two more years, the prosecution applied to withdraw charges for lack of available witnesses and the defendants were discharged.

Discussion Issues

1. When does a criminal case qualify as being at an “advanced stage”?
2. What are the dangers of ordering trial de novo in long-running cases?
3. How does judicial transfer affect victims’ confidence and public trust?
4. How do the National Minimum Standards prevent this scenario?

MODULE 4

PART 3: Minimum Standards at the Post-Trial Stage

4.1 Compensation

4.1.1 Learning Outcomes

Trainers should train participants to

- a. Correctly interpret and apply standards relating to compensation orders, alternatives to monetary payment, and the role of sentencing guidelines in addressing indigence.
- b. Use community service and other court-ordered alternatives where convicts are unable to pay compensation, ensuring compliance with sentencing objectives and human rights principles.
- c. Integrate victim rights and restorative justice principles into post-trial decision-making and enforcement processes.

4.1.2 NATIONAL MINIMUM STANDARDS AT THE POST-TRIAL STAGE PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION

1. Where a convict has served out his term of imprisonment but is unable to pay the

compensation imposed on him, the sentencing Guideline should provide for these circumstances.

2. Where a Court imposes a sentence that includes the payment of monetary compensation by a convict, the sentence should include the options of community service or such other orders as the Court may deem fit to make in the circumstances.
3. The Federal, F.C.T. and State Governments shall establish a Trust/Compensation Fund for victims of crime.

4.2 PART 4: Cross-Cutting Themes

Cross-Cutting Themes

4.2.1 Early Engagement Between Investigators and Prosecutors

1. Learning Outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Apply standards requiring early collaboration between investigators and prosecutors in serious offences.
- b. Clarify institutional roles and responsibilities in joint investigation and prosecution processes.

4.2.2 National Minimum Standards on Early Engagement Between Investigators and Prosecutors

1. Where there is reasonable suspicion that any Suspect has committed an offence punishable with death or 14 years imprisonment and above, the investigating authority shall ensure that the investigation is conducted in conjunction with designated Law Officers from the Ministry of Justice or prosecutors from the relevant investigating authority.
2. Upon request by an investigating authority, the Attorney-General shall immediately assign a Law Officer to work with the investigator.

4.3 Development of Practice Directions

4.3.1 Learning Outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Draft and apply Practice Directions regulating key trial procedures such as disclosure, plea bargaining, technology use, and witness management.

- b. Use Practice Directions as tools for effective case management and procedural consistency.

4.3.2 National Minimum Standards on Development of Practice Directions

1. The Heads of Court shall develop robust Practice Directions to regulate pre-trial issues including but not limited to:
 - a) active case management;
 - b) use of technology in trial proceedings;
 - c) plea bargaining;
 - d) disclosure obligations; and
 - e) issues relating to securing the attendance of witnesses.

4.4 Control of Lay Prosecution

4.4.1 Learning Outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Apply safeguards for vetting, supervision, training, and monitoring of lay prosecutors to prevent abuse of prosecutorial powers.
- b. Implement reporting, accountability, and sanction mechanisms relating to lay prosecution.

4.4.2 National Minimum Standards on Control of Lay Prosecution

1. To prevent the abuse of prosecutorial powers where the ACJL of a state still permits lay prosecution, the state shall provide quality control measures aimed at ensuring quality and compliance with the standards stipulated in the ACJL. These measures include the following:
 - a) a charge to be filed by a lay prosecutor at the lower Courts shall be vetted and endorsed for filing by the office of the Attorney General or by a legal practitioner in the Legal Department of the Nigerian Police or a Legal practitioner in any other prosecutorial authority.
 - b) supervision of prosecuting personnel by the Ministry of Justice;
 - c) standard training of lay prosecutors;
 - d) standard operating procedures/guidelines to be issued by the Attorney General; and
 - e) periodic reporting to the ACJMC/equivalent bodies by the OC Legal of cases prosecuted, which shall include the number of cases, progress report of cases, outcome of cases and

impediments encountered in the prosecution of cases.

- f) The ACJMC/equivalent bodies shall ensure that the information and data arising from the report are collated, analysed and actionable points identified for implementation.
- g) The Commissioner of Police shall administer appropriate sanctions where there is a failure by the police to prosecute in accordance with the standard operating procedures/guidelines.
- h) Any member of the public aggrieved by the conduct of a police prosecutor, may submit a written complaint to the Commissioner of Police and send a copy of the complaint to the ACJMC/equivalent body for necessary remedial action.

4.5 Fiat

4.5.1 Learning Outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Apply reporting obligations and accountability standards where private practitioners or State

Attorneys-General exercise delegated prosecutorial powers.

- b. Monitor compliance with quarterly reporting requirements to ensure transparency and oversight.

4.5.2 National Minimum Standards on Fiat

1. Where private lawyers are given fiat by the Attorney-General, the legal practitioner shall submit quarterly reports to the Attorney-General on the progress of the case.
2. Where the Attorney-General of the Federation has granted fiats to any State's Attorney General, they shall provide quarterly reports to the Attorney-General of the Federation on the progress of cases conducted or otherwise.

4.6 Adoption of Sentencing Guidelines

4.6.1 Learning Outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Apply sentencing guidelines that promote consistency, proportionality, and consideration of alternatives to custodial sentences.

- b. Integrate sentencing principles that address minor offences and children in conflict with the law.

4.6.2 National Minimum Standards on Adoption of Sentencing Guidelines

1. Heads of Courts shall adopt sentencing guidelines that outline the objectives, principles and procedure of sentencing.
2. The Heads of Courts, Ministry of Justice or other agencies shall provide capacity-building programmes on the application of Sentencing Guidelines for Judges, Magistrates and other officers exercising criminal jurisdiction
3. The Attorney-Generals shall provide capacity-building programmes on the application of Sentencing Guidelines for State Counsel and sensitization workshops for defence counsel.
4. Sentencing guidelines shall include provisions requiring judicial officers to consider alternatives to custodial sentences for minor offences and for children who are in conflict with the law.

4.7 Sex Offenders Register

4.7.1 Learning Outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Explain the purpose and legal framework for establishing and maintaining Sex Offenders Registers.
- b. Apply ethical, statutory, and human rights safeguards in managing offender registries.

4.7.2 National Minimum Standards on Sex Offenders Register

1. The Federal Government of Nigeria, States and Federal Capital Territory Administration shall each establish a Sex Offender Register for the purpose of recording information on convicted sex offenders.

4.8 National Minimum Standards on Compensation

1. Where a convict is unable to pay a court-ordered compensation to a victim due to ascertainable financial constraints, the victim will receive compensation from the government Victim Compensation Trust Fund.

2. An individual who has completed his/her sentence but is unable to pay the court-ordered victim compensation shall be required to perform community service, agricultural service or other forms of services that benefit the government, a designated private entity or person.
3. The wages earned from his service shall be repayable to the government's victim compensation trust fund.

4.9 Cross-Cutting Themes Institutional Oversight and Monitoring (ACJMCS)

4.9.1 Learning Outcomes

- a. Trainers should train participants to understand the mandate, composition, reporting structures, and coordination functions of ACJMCs and equivalent bodies.
- b. Trainers should train stakeholders on the deployment and governance of court automation tools, including e-filing, e-service, case management systems, virtual proceedings, and inter-agency digital connectivity.
- c. Trainers should train participants to identify practical steps for integrating technology into existing workflows while addressing capacity, budgetary, and infrastructure constraints.

4.9.2 National Minimum Standards on the Administration of Criminal Justice Monitoring Committees

1. Every State shall establish a body to be known as the Administration of Criminal Justice Monitoring Committee (ACJMC)/equivalent Bodies
2. The composition of the body shall represent all the stakeholders of the Criminal Justice Sector including the Judiciary, Ministry of Justice, Nigeria Police Force and other Prosecuting Agencies, DSS, Civil Society, Legal Aid, Human Rights Commission, NBA, Nigerian Correctional Services etc.
3. The Federal and State Governments shall ensure that their ACJMC/equivalent Bodies are well-funded and included in their annual budget. The ACJMC/equivalent Bodies shall have functional Secretariats, dedicated staff and Sub-committees to carry out various functions. The Sub-committees shall include but not limited to:
 - a. Decongestion Sub-committee
 - b. Visitation Sub-committee
 - c. Media and Sensitization Sub-committee.

d. Child Justice Committee.

4. The ACJMC/equivalent Bodies shall develop standard operational templates and guidelines for any reporting obligation under the ACJA/ACJLs and the National Minimum Standards.
5. The ACJMC/equivalent Bodies shall adopt specific programmes and measures aimed at ensuring harmonious working relationship among the Criminal Justice Sector stakeholders.
6. Every ACJMC/equivalent Bodies shall carry out sensitization activities in various courts for public complaints and suggestions.
7. Heads of Courts and Heads of other Criminal Justice Agencies shall ensure that reports of ACJMC/equivalent Bodies are acted upon within 30 days of receipt.
8. The ACJMC Federal shall operate as a Coordinating Body for all ACJMC/ Equivalent Bodies across the country and support the development of uniform standards and templates for implementing the provisions of the ACJA/ACJLs to achieve the objectives of the ACJA/ACJLs.

9. The Attorney-General of the Federation and Minister of Justice shall facilitate an annual review and evaluation of all ACJMCs including the Federal ACJMC, with a view to ensuring compliance with the National Minimum Standards on the implementation of the ACJA/ACJLs across the country.
10. The ACJMC/equivalent Bodies shall ensure that all Criminal Justice Reform stakeholders collect and collate relevant data which will serve as the basis for informed decision making.
11. The ACJMC/equivalent Bodies shall hold regular meetings targeted at implementing specific programmes, identifying problems and determining pathways for solving them.
12. The Federal and State Governments shall prioritize the establishment of Criminal Record Registries.
13. The ACJMC/equivalent Bodies shall ensure that sufficient data exist in their reports to demonstrate the extent of compliance with the implementation of ACJA/ACJLs and the reports shall form the basis for advocacy.

4.10 Technology

4.10.1 Learning Outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Apply standards for court automation, including e-filing, virtual proceedings, electronic records, and inter-agency connectivity.
- b. Identify practical steps for integrating technology into justice sector workflows while addressing resource constraints.

4.10.2 National Minimum Standards on Technology

1. The Heads of courts at all levels, shall prioritize the automation of courts by making provisions for the E-filing of cases, E-assignment of cases, E-service of processes, Case Management software, virtual court proceedings, E-recording of court proceedings, video link (audio-visual), connecting the courts with the custodial centres, CCTV, and other electronic devices for facilitating speedy conduct of proceedings, record keeping, transcription and retrieval.

2. All Attorneys-General shall facilitate the provision of adequate budgetary allocation for the deployment of technology in aid of the administration of justice.

4.11 Duty of Compliance and Implementation

4.11.1 Learning Outcomes

Trainers should train participants to:

- a. Promote institutional responsibility for implementing and complying with the National Minimum Standards across all criminal justice stages.
- b. Support peer review, monitoring, and collaborative evaluation processes aimed at improving nationwide compliance.

4.11.2 National Minimum Standards on Duty of Compliance and Implementation

1. It shall be the duty of all courts, authorities, agencies and persons exercising criminal justice authority in one form or the other at the pretrial, trial or post-trial stage to promote these National Minimum Standards and take concrete measures

and actions to comply or ensure compliance with the Standards.

2. The head of each agency, institution, organization in the public sector and civil society shall actively support, promote and facilitate the implementation of the National Minimum Standards.
3. There shall be conducted by the Federal Ministry of Justice in collaboration with States Ministries of Justice, agencies of criminal justice as well as civil society and development partners periodic peer review meetings and activities aimed at enhancing the monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the National Minimum Standards for the effective implementation of the Administration of Criminal Justice Act and laws of the various States.

4.12 Facilitator's Discussion Questions

1. How can courts balance victim compensation, offender indigence, and the use of community service or other non-custodial options without undermining justice or deterrence?
2. What practical challenges hinder early collaboration between investigators and prosecutors, and how can oversight mechanisms prevent abuse of delegated prosecutorial powers?
3. How effectively are Practice Directions and lay prosecution safeguards implemented in your jurisdiction, and what improvements are needed to ensure quality and accountability?
4. How can sentencing guidelines and offender registries be applied consistently while safeguarding human rights, privacy, and proportionality?
5. How can ACJMCs and digital justice tools strengthen coordination, monitoring, and compliance with the ACJA/ACJLs across institutions?

MODULE 5

Evaluation and Feedback

5.0 Introduction

Evaluation and feedback are critical components of training on the National Minimum Standards (NMS) in the Administration of Criminal Justice. Effective assessment enables trainers to measure learning outcomes, assess changes in knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and determine participants' readiness to implement the Standards in practice.

Pre- and post-training assessment must therefore be deliberately integrated into the design and delivery of every training programme conducted under this Manual.

5.1 Purpose of Pre-Training Assessment

The purpose of pre-training assessment is to enable trainers to:

- a. Establish the baseline knowledge, skills, and experience of participants;
- b. Identify participants' institutional roles and responsibilities within the criminal justice system;
- c. Assess current levels of compliance with the National Minimum Standards;

- d. Identify knowledge gaps, misconceptions, and capacity needs;
- e. Tailor training content, methodology, and emphasis to the specific needs of participants.

Pre-training assessment ensures that training is relevant, targeted, and responsive to context, rather than generic.

5.2 Pre-Training Assessment Tools

Trainers may use one or a combination of the following tools:

- a. Pre-training questionnaires;
- b. Short written or multiple-choice assessments;
- c. Guided group discussions to surface practical challenges and institutional realities;
- d. Case scenarios to test decision-making at the pre-trial, trial, or post-trial stages.

Pre-training assessments should prioritise practical application over theoretical knowledge.

5.3 Purpose of Post-Training Assessment

The purpose of post-training assessment is to enable trainers to:

- a. Measure knowledge and skills acquired during the training;

- b. Assess participants' ability to apply the National Minimum Standards in practical scenarios;
- c. Determine whether learning objectives and outcomes have been achieved;
- d. Evaluate the effectiveness of training content and methodology;
- e. Identify areas requiring follow-up training or technical support.

Post-training assessment supports accountability, learning reinforcement, and continuous improvement in training delivery.

5.4 Post-Training Assessment Tools

Trainers may employ the following assessment methods:

- a. Post-training tests or quizzes in line with learning outcomes;
- b. Practical exercises, simulations, or role-plays;
- c. Case study analyses requiring application of the National Minimum Standards;
- d. Development of individual or institutional action plans.

Assessment tools should be in line with the minimum standards and expected competencies of participants.

5.5 Inclusion and Accessibility in Assessment

Trainers shall ensure that all assessments are:

- a. Inclusive and accessible to all participants;
- b. Designed with reasonable accommodations for persons living with disabilities, where required;
- c. Free from bias or discriminatory assumptions;
- d. Conducted in a manner that allows fair and objective evaluation.

5.6 Use of Assessment Results

Assessment results shall be used by trainers to:

- a. Refine training content and delivery methods;
- b. Adjust pacing and emphasis during training sessions;
- c. Identify high-impact areas for institutional reform;
- d. Inform reporting to commissioning institutions and development partners;
- e. Contribute to the continuous improvement of this Training Manual.

Assessment results should be documented and retained as part of training records and quality assurance processes.

5.7 How a Trainer Will Know the Training Was Successful

The success of training on the National Minimum Standards (NMS) is not measured solely by attendance or participant satisfaction, but by the extent to which learning translates into understanding, practical application, and institutional change. Trainers should therefore assess success using a combination of observable indicators during and after the training.

I. Demonstrated Understanding and Application of the Standards

Training is successful where participants demonstrate a clear understanding of the NMS and the ability to apply them in practical contexts.

Indicators include:

- a. Ability to explain key NMS provisions accurately and in their own words;
- b. Correct identification and application of relevant standards in case studies and scenarios across pre-trial, trial, and post-trial stages;
- c. Reduction of misconceptions as sessions progress;
- d. Informed, implementation-focused questions reflecting practical engagement;

- e. Group work outputs that are realistic, legally sound, and in line with the Standards.

Where participants move from describing the Standards to discussing how they can be implemented within existing institutional constraints, meaningful learning has occurred.

II. Quality of Participation and Peer Learning

Effective training is characterised by active, inclusive, and informed participation across institutions and professional roles.

Indicators include:

- a. Broad and balanced participation rather than dominance by a few voices;
- b. Constructive disagreement grounded in legal and institutional realities;
- c. Peer-to-peer learning drawing on professional experience;
- d. Increased confidence and engagement among quieter participants as the training progresses.

A participatory learning environment reflects both trainer effectiveness and participant engagement.

III. Institutional Action Commitments and Readiness for Change

A critical measure of training success is whether participants leave with clear, realistic commitments for institutional improvement.

Indicators include:

- a. Development of concrete, role-specific action plans;
- b. Identification of practices to be initiated, strengthened, or discontinued;
- c. Recognition of accountability, supervision, monitoring, and reporting mechanisms.

Action plans that are specific, time-bound, and institution-focused signal readiness for implementation.

IV. Assessment Results and Post-Training Engagement

Formal and informal assessments, combined with post-training signals, provide objective evidence of training effectiveness.

Indicators include:

- a. Measurable improvement between pre- and post-training assessments;

- b. Reduction in fundamental errors or misunderstandings;
- c. Post-training feedback highlighting clarity, relevance, and applicability;
- d. Requests for follow-up support focused on implementation rather than basic clarification.

Sustained engagement after the training indicates lasting impact and readiness to implement the Standards.

Key Principle for Trainers

A training is successful when participants do not merely know the National Minimum Standards, but are **able and prepared to apply, monitor, and enforce them within their institutions.**

Trainers should therefore judge success by observable learning, practical application, and credible pathways to institutional change, rather than participant satisfaction alone.

5.8 Rapporteur's Report Template

A Rapporteur's Report is an official record of the training process, discussions, outcomes, and agreed next steps. It supports institutional memory, informs follow-up actions, and provides evidence of progress in implementing the National Minimum Standards (NMS).

Rapporteurs must focus on substance, learning outcomes, and implementation insights rather than verbatim proceedings.

1. Training Details

- Title of Training:
- Module(s) Covered:
- Date(s):
- Venue (Physical/Virtual):
- Organising Institution(s):
- Facilitator(s):

2. Objectives of the Training

3. Participant Profile

- Number of Participants:
- Institutions Represented:
- Gender and Inclusion Notes (including persons living with disabilities, where applicable):

4. Training Methodology

- Methods Used (e.g. lecture, facilitated discussion, group work, case studies):
- Duration of Sessions:

5. Key Issues Discussed

6. Major Challenges Identified

7. Good Practices and Practical Solutions Proposed

8. Action Points and Commitments

9. Assessment and Learning Outcomes

- Evidence of understanding and engagement:
- Areas requiring further capacity building:

10. Participant Feedback

- Key observations and suggestions:

11. Conclusion and Recommendations

Rapporteur's

Signature:

Date:

Name:

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