



Justice Reform Initiative Survey Results



February 2024

Cabrera & Company

A member firm of the PwC network



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- Court processes, services, delays

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Foreword

Supreme Court

Justice is a collaborative endeavor-it is making the product of the combined efforts of our judges, of litigants and their counsels, and even of our communities. This holds true not only in cases that reach our courts, but also in the judiciary's efforts to reform itself, especially to ensure it remains relevant amid the growth and evolution of our nation and its economy, responsive to the changing needs of our communities, and effective and efficient in dispensing justice even in the face of the increasingly faster pace of today's world.

In recognition of this, the Supreme Court, as always, has strived to remain attentive and responsive to the needs and the sentiments of stakeholders across the entire justice system, especially in its ongoing efforts at reform under our Strategic Plan for Judicial Innovations 2022-2027 or the SPJI. This kind of attentiveness and responsiveness, of course, was arguably the same animating force behind the SPJI, which itself is the product of exhaustive study, deliberation, and collaboration, not just among the magistrates of the Supreme Court, but across the entire judiciary and beyond.



A handwritten signature in white ink, which appears to read "A. Gesmundo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chief Justice Alexander G. Gesmundo

Foreword

Supreme Court

In this regard, we in the Supreme Court are truly grateful to the Justice Reform Initiative for undertaking and publishing this survey, and we are carefully taking note of its findings and recommendations.

May this publication serve as a concrete step towards the realization of the vision we hold in common: a judiciary that is responsive and accountable.

Now that we approach the midpoint of the SPJI's implementation, the findings of this survey will be particularly useful in creating a snapshot of the effectiveness of the reforms we have accomplished so far, while also providing useful insights that we can take into account in calibrating our approach towards reforming the judiciary as we work to accomplish the remaining programs and activities in the SPJI's agenda. What they offer is a guidepost, richly grounded in the lived experiences of stakeholders and practitioners in the justice system, in our pursuit of this path of reform for the judiciary, through the SPJI and beyond.

Again, our thanks to the JRI and the business organizations, judicial advocacy groups, and foreign chambers of commerce in the Philippines under its umbrella, not just for this undertaking but for your continued support for the judiciary and its ongoing efforts for justice reform. May this publication inspire reflection and dialogue. May it spark action and collaboration. And may it, in the end, serve as a concrete step towards the realization of the vision we hold in common: a judiciary that is responsive and accountable; that earns and nurtures the confidence of the public it serves; that promotes and advances rights and the rule of law; and that delivers in real-time, whether for industries or individuals, the justice that our people deserve.

Foreword

Justice Reform Initiative

It is with great pleasure and a profound sense of responsibility that I present this report on the Justice Reform Survey conducted in Q3 2023 by PwC Philippines and JRI. This survey represents a significant step in our ongoing commitment to fostering an inclusive and transparent justice system in the Philippines. It is a testament to our belief that the insights and opinions of those who interact with our legal system are invaluable in shaping its future.

The survey aimed to gather a broad range of perspectives from key stakeholders in our society, with particular focus on the business sector.

Their responses have provided us with a rich tapestry of experiences and ideas that are essential for understanding the current state of our justice system and the path to sustainable reform.

At the heart of this endeavor is the recognition that freedom – a condition that allows individuals to realize their fullest potential – is inextricably linked to the effectiveness of our justice system. This sentiment echoes the words of former Philippine President Sergio Osmeña, Sr., who highlighted our nation's duty to contribute to a just peace, not only for ourselves but for the global community that values freedom.



Atty. Francisco Ed. Lim
Chairman, Justice Reform Initiative

Foreword

Justice Reform Initiative

In this context, justice reform is not merely a legal or administrative challenge; it is a pathway to greater freedom. Through this survey, we have explored various dimensions of the judicial system, including its critical role in creating a stable and predictable legal environment for businesses, its contribution to promoting corporate responsibility and ethical practices, and its importance in paving the way for sustainable development and social equity.

The findings of this survey underscore the necessity of reforming our judicial system to be more equitable, transparent, and accessible. By doing so, we can create an ecosystem where not only businesses can thrive but also where every citizen can confidently rely on a fair and just legal system.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to all who participated in this survey. Your contributions are invaluable in our collective quest to create a legal system that embodies the principles of equality and justice. Together, we are laying the foundation for a society where freedom is not just an ideal but a lived reality for all.

Justice reform is not merely a legal or administrative challenge; it is a pathway to greater freedom.

Foreword

Justice Reform Initiative

This report, summarizing the comprehensive Justice Reform Survey conducted by PwC Philippines in collaboration with JRI, stands at the intersection of our collective aspiration for a just society and the practical realities of our justice system.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, focusing on peace, justice, and strong institutions, is particularly resonant for nations like the Philippines. Our pursuit of the targets set by SDG 16 — reducing corruption, creating effective and accountable institutions, and ensuring equal access to justice — is not just a commitment but a necessity.

This reform is more than a legal obligation; it's a stride towards liberating our people from the bonds of injustice, discrimination, and inequality. By confronting systemic issues such as corruption and inequitable laws, justice reform becomes a catalyst towards ensuring that freedom is upheld as a universal right, not a selective privilege.

In the business realm, the rule of law forms the bedrock of economic growth and investment. Its establishment guarantees a predictable and stable legal environment, a prerequisite for confident and secure business operations and planning.



Jose Jerome R Pascual III
President, Justice Reform Initiative

Foreword

Justice Reform Initiative

This legal predictability underpins not only domestic business development but also attracts foreign investment, catalyzing broader economic progress. Similarly, access to justice is vital for businesses, ensuring enforceable contractual and property rights, essential for fostering a competitive, fair market environment and investor confidence.

As we present the findings and insights of this survey, it is essential to recognize that our journey towards justice reform is aligned with both the global vision encapsulated in SDG 16 and the pragmatic needs of our business community.

**Access to justice is vital
for business and
investor confidence.**

The survey results reflect the voices of a cross-section of the private sector and their perceptions of our judicial system. It underscores the importance of a judicial system that not only upholds the rule of law but is also accessible, efficient, and responsive to the needs of all its stakeholders.

This report is a step forward in our continuous endeavor to reshape and revitalize our country's justice system. It is a call to action for all of us — legal practitioners, business leaders, policymakers, and citizens — to work together in creating a justice system that truly embodies the principles of equality, fairness, and freedom.

Shaping a Positive Perception of the Philippine Judiciary and the Legal Profession



John Locke, a prominent 17th-century English political philosopher, introduced the concept of *tabula rasa*, which posits that humans are born as blank slates devoid of innate knowledge of good and evil. In his work "Essay Concerning Human Understanding," Locke expounded on how our experiences shape our ideas and solidify them into knowledge. Essentially, our perception of something becomes descriptive of its essence.

This notion resonates with the way we perceive the pursuit of relief through the legal system in the Philippines. It raises the question of whether individuals have an appropriate avenue for seeking redress of grievances or if it is merely a frustrating process that perpetuates injustice. The arduousness of court appointments, hearings, exorbitant litigation costs, and seemingly endless procedural complexities can exacerbate the agony experienced by litigants.

Locke's philosophy reminds us that the perception of justice is crucial in shaping how the public acts. If the perception is one of inefficiency, delay, and injustice, it undermines the very purpose of seeking relief through the courts. However, if the legal system is perceived as fair, accessible, and efficient, it can instill confidence that justice may not only be sought but can also be achieved.

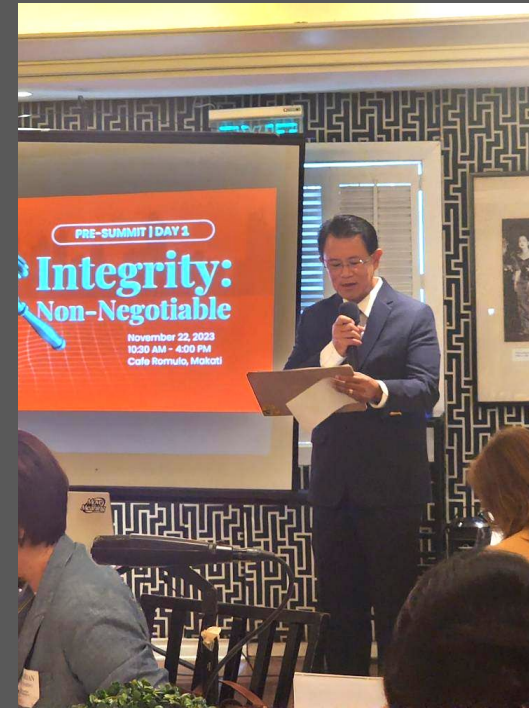
Background

The Justice Reform Initiative in the Philippines, conducted a survey that was approved by Philippine Judicial Academy, and which was implemented by Cabrera & Co, a member law firm of PwC global network. This survey project which intends to determine the baseline of public perception on the Judiciary has garnered strong support from legal practitioners, the business sector, and the Supreme Court.

From *November 2023 to January 2024*, during the focus group discussions (FGDs), the initiative received a warm welcome and endorsement from the highest judicial body in the country.

Supreme Court Associate Justice Hon. Maria Filomena Singh actively participated and relayed Chief Justice Alexander G. Gesmundo's review of the survey results, highlighting the strong points of performance, and what needs to be improved.

The FGDs were attended by esteemed justices from the Court of Appeals (CA) and the Court of Tax Appeals (CTA), as well as representatives from the Regional Trial Courts (RTCs), the Philippine Judicial Academy (PhilJA), the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP), the Philippine Bar Association (PBA), legal practitioners in private companies, and academic institutions.



Background

The purpose of these discussions was to prepare for the upcoming Justice Summit on 1 February 2024 and solicit recommendations from the esteemed participants. The Justice Summit aims to bring together key stakeholders, and present to them baseline recommendations from the survey that measured public perception on the justice system, its accessibility, and reliability based on the themes of *Integrity, Decorum, Court Processes, Competency, Reform Awareness, and Technological Upgrades*.

The Supreme Court's active involvement and support for the Justice Reform Initiative underscore this project's importance and urgency aligning with 2030 Sustainable Development Goal 16, on Judiciary, particularly to Target 3 on Equal Access to Justice for All.



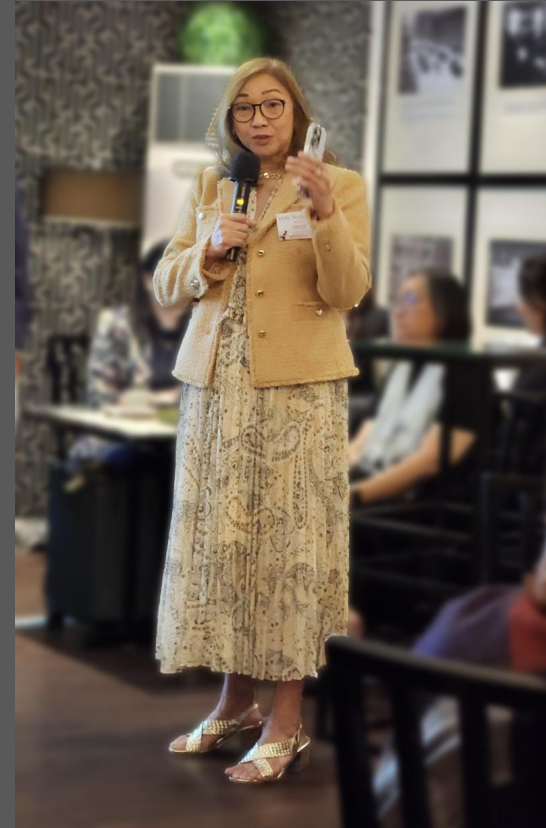
Through this collaborative effort, the Justice Reform Initiative and the Supreme Court aim to drive meaningful change, enhance the rule of law, and promote a justice system that serves the needs of all Filipinos.

Addressing the public at large

Sometimes it is not enough that the judiciary is doing the right things. It is also important for the public to know that it is doing the right things. This is because public perception plays a vital role in shaping the trust and confidence placed in our justice system.

It is essential to recognize and appreciate the dedicated efforts in the past five years - several initiatives have actually been deployed such as updates on the Rules of Procedure for Small Claims, Revised Guidelines for Continuous Trial of Criminal Cases, Electronic case management system, Supreme Court's 5-year strategic plan for judicial innovations (2022-2027).

In our report, we delve into the importance of addressing public concerns and connecting the efforts of our officers to the needs of the public. By bridging this gap, we can improve public perception and foster a stronger sense of trust in the justice system.

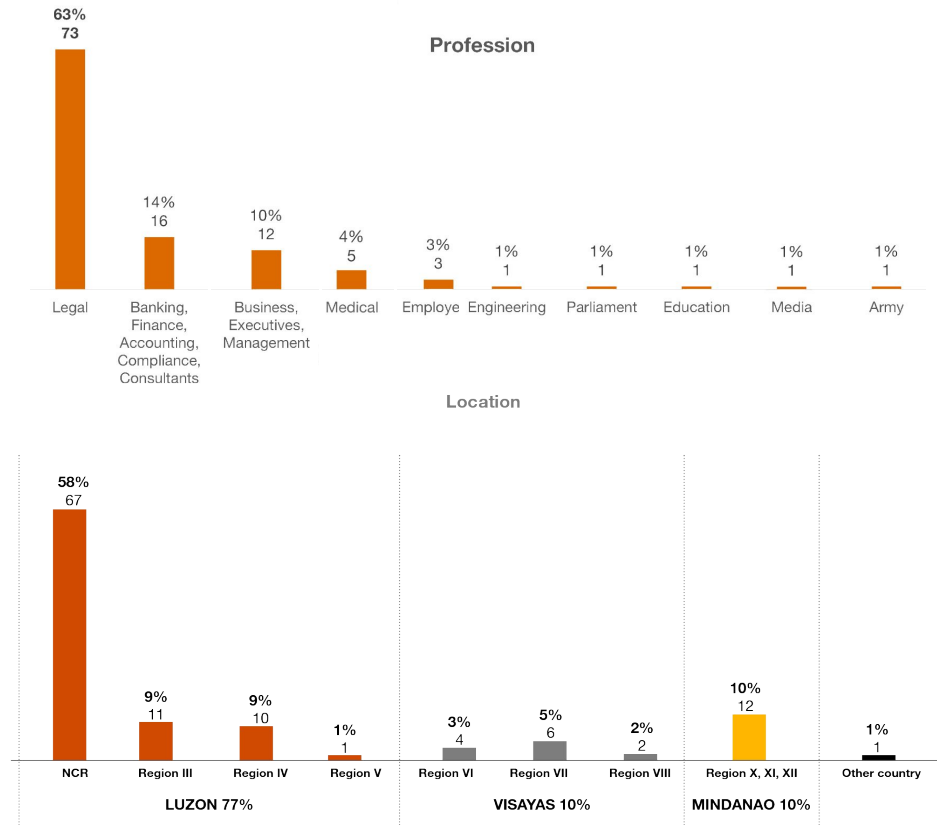
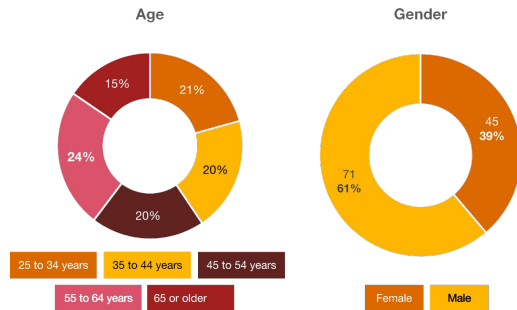


Profile

Total # of respondents: 116

The survey participants in this study primarily come from the legal profession. The gender distribution shows that 61% of the participants are male, while 39% are female. The age groups of the respondents are distributed across age brackets: young professionals with ages 25 to 34, and seasoned practitioners and professionals with ages 35 to 65 and over.

The survey was participated nationwide, with 77% coming from Luzon, 10% from the Visayas region, 10% from Mindanao.



Emerging themes

Integrity

1

Decorum

2

Competency

3

Court process
and delay

4

Reform
awareness

5

Technological
upgrade

6

Litigation cost

7

Integrity

Integrity is not merely honesty. It requires strong moral compass and steadfast commitment “to doing what is right even when no one is looking.”

Without Integrity there can be no trust in the judiciary.



Upholding the Pillar of Integrity

Fostering Trust and Confidence in the Judiciary

The judiciary holds immense power and responsibility as the guardian of justice. Upholding the rule of law, ensuring fairness, and safeguarding rights are its core objectives. However, without integrity, these objectives become hollow and justice is compromised.

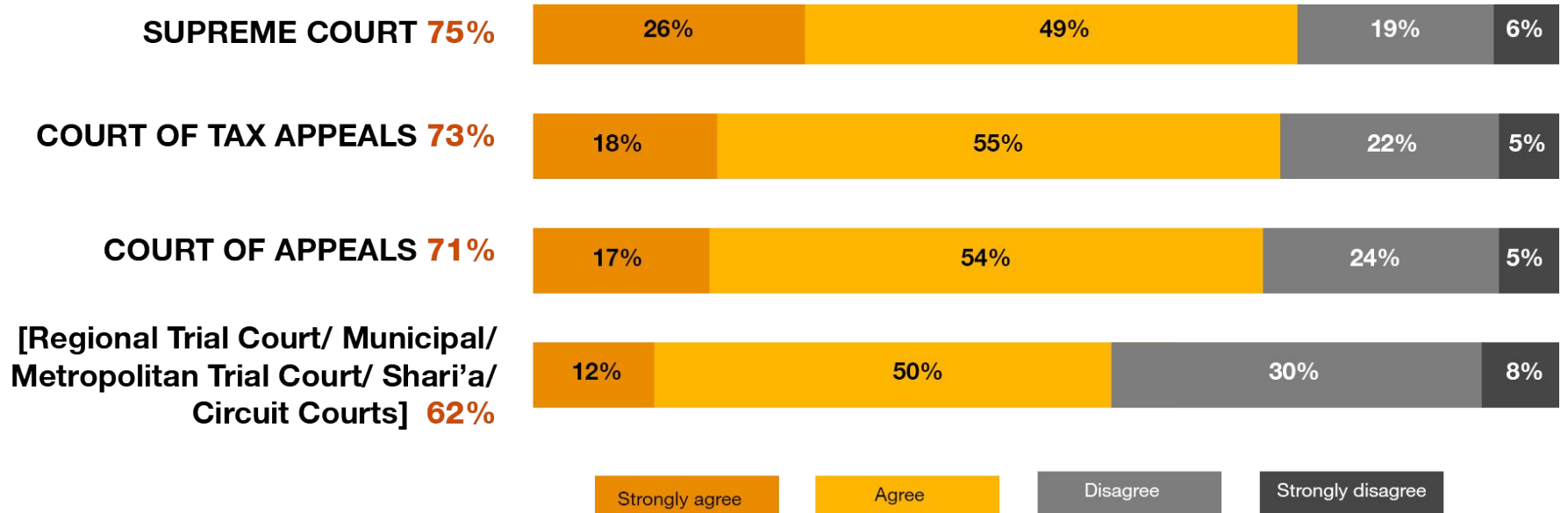
Integrity in the judiciary goes beyond following rules. It requires ethical conduct, impartiality, transparency, and accountability. When judges and court personnel demonstrate unwavering integrity, it builds public confidence in fair and unbiased decision-making.

Integrity is not for show - it is “doing the right thing when no one is looking.” In that place, true justice can reside and all well-meaning human beings, can take refuge.



Integrity

The public largely believes that the court makes **decisions solely based on the facts and the law, without any influence from external factors** such as politics, religion, personal connections, favoritism, or bribery.



Integrity

Almost half of the respondents reported personal experiences where a **judge abused his authority or did not display integrity.**

54%

We did not encounter a judge that abused his authority or did not display integrity.

32%

The judge did not display integrity (e.g., by reason of political/regional affiliation, religion, age, gender, etc.)

14%

The judge was corrupt (asked for or hinted need for material, sexual or other favors)

Integrity

44% of the respondents reported personal experiences where **court personnel (clerk of court, court staff, or sheriff) abused authority or did not display integrity.**



Integrity

Almost all of the respondents are either not aware, or claiming that the erring judge/court personnel **was never subjected to any disciplinary act.**



Integrity

Substantial majority of the respondents agreed that judges/justices acted with **respect and proper decorum during a hearing** and demonstrated an appreciation of the law. However, less than half responded that judges/justices acted with **integrity and independence**.

66%

The judges/justices act with respect and proper decorum during court hearings.

62%

The judges/justices demonstrate an appreciation of the facts of the case and knowledge of the law.

42%

The judges/justices act with integrity and independence.

9%

Other negative perceptions

Integrity

Lawyers are not faring any better in the area of **trustworthiness and integrity**.

28%

I find most to be trustworthy and act with integrity.

42%

I find some to be corrupt

36%

I find most to be very knowledgeable and competent.

47%

I find some to be incompetent

SC Statement on Integrity

The Supreme Court of the Philippines has been emphasizing the importance of integrity in the Judiciary.

Chief Justice Alexander G. Gesmundo has underscored the significance of integrity and dignity in the Judiciary, stating that the majesty of the Court does not lie in its halls or walls but in the service of justice. The Court has also ruled that integrity is simply faithful adherence to the law. In *Soria v. Villegas*, the Court emphasized that in the Judiciary, “moral integrity is more than a cardinal virtue, it is a necessity. The exacting standards of conduct demanded from judges are designed to promote public confidence in the integrity and impartiality of the judiciary.”

In summary, the Court has underscored the importance of integrity in the Judiciary and has taken actions to uphold this principle.



Integrity

Key FGD recommendations to improve integrity and decorum in the judicial system

- The Judicial Bar Council should focus on the applicant judge's track record for integrity and competence in the selection process
- Craft key performance indicators (KPIs) for integrity and decorum and a system of reward for and recognition of judicial officers and court personnel who exemplify these values
- Conduct soft/humanistic skills training for justices, judges, and court personnel, to foster a culture of ethical conduct and integrity in the judiciary
- Review the operations of the Judicial Integrity Board, as well as the Office of the Court Administrator, and Judiciary Marshals Office to make them more effective in their roles in upholding judicial standards
- Push for automation to reduce manual processes for a more efficient and transparent judicial process



Decorum

Being professional and respectful elevates public regard for the Judiciary.

Ensuring Decorum in the Philippine Judicial System

Treating people with courtesy and respect promotes humanity in a just society

In the Philippine judicial system, maintaining decorum is crucial for creating a supportive and respectful environment for all party litigants. These individuals have already experienced injustice and the challenging process of seeking redress. It is essential that they are treated with kindness, respect, and empathy by those administering justice.

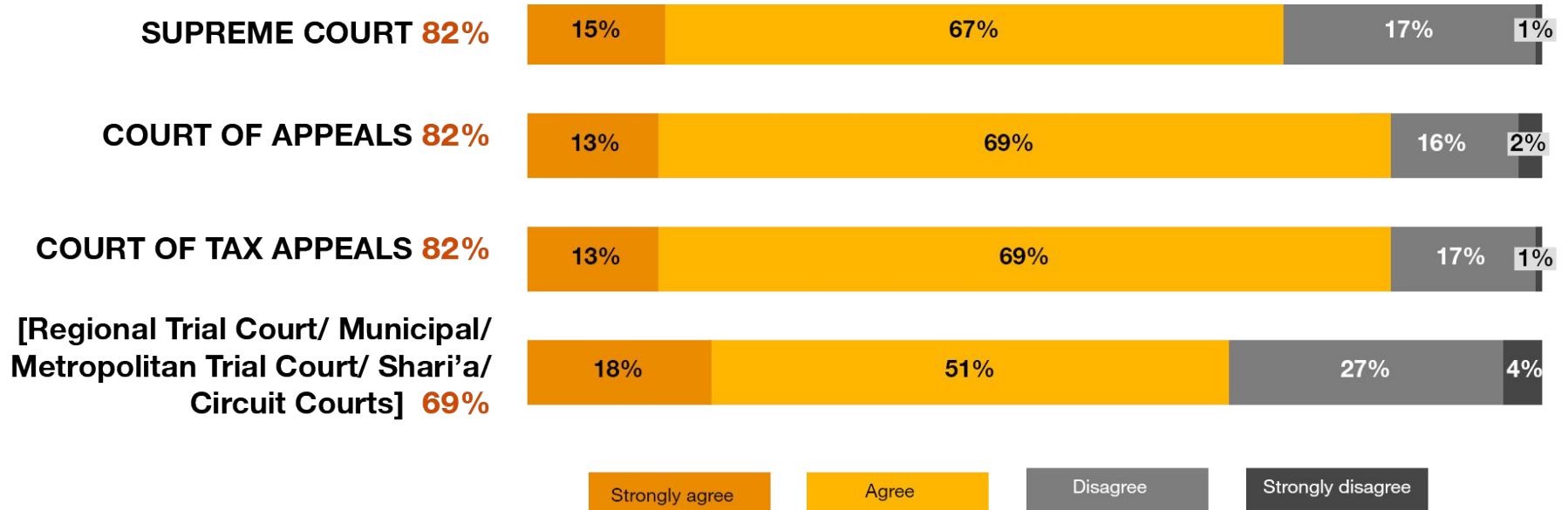
For judicial personnel, being respectful also means ensuring that party litigants and their counsels are informed and updated of case status, next steps and other requirements.

Maintaining decorum in the Philippine judicial system is also about upholding human rights and the rule of law. It signifies a commitment to fairness, equality, and access to justice for all, regardless of their background or situation. Treating people with courtesy and respect promotes humanity in a just society.



Decorum

A high majority of respondents, 82%, responded that the Supreme Court, Court of Appeals, and Court of Tax Appeals were accommodating and responsive to party litigant requests while lower courts gathered a 69% approval.



Decorum

Key FGD recommendations to improve decorum in the judicial system

- Foster a service-oriented culture through training, KPIs, and tone at the top
- Make best practices in top performing courts as standard practice



Court Processes, Services and Delays

Any delay in the disposal of cases impacts on the peace of mind and productivity of the litigants. The prompt delivery of justice is a powerful force in promoting quality of life.



Court Procedure

The Process Should Not Become The Punishment

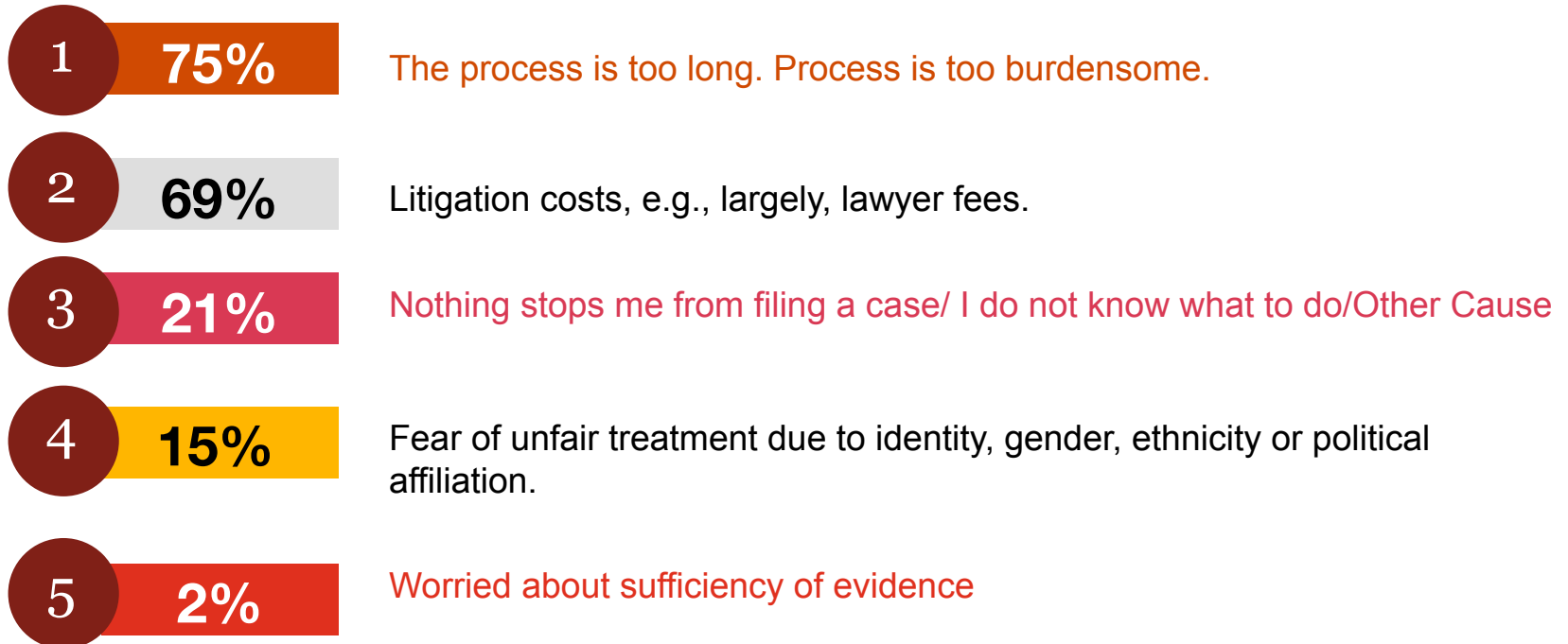
The court process in the Philippines may have become a deterrent to seeking judicial remedy as indicated by the survey responses. The findings reveal that 75% of respondents express apprehension about the length of the legal process they may encounter. Based on the FGD, the judges expressed their concern about the load they face per sala. It is worth noting, that in another branch of government, particularly the Legislative, there is an increase in government allocation for every 250,000 increase in population headcount. No counterpart exists for the courts and its attendant services.

To the complainant and respondent, to the innocent and guilty alike, when court processes become unreasonably drawn out, “the process should not become the punishment.” Yet, judges and justices are also human beings subject to human limitations. Thus, our quest for a more effective and efficient system.



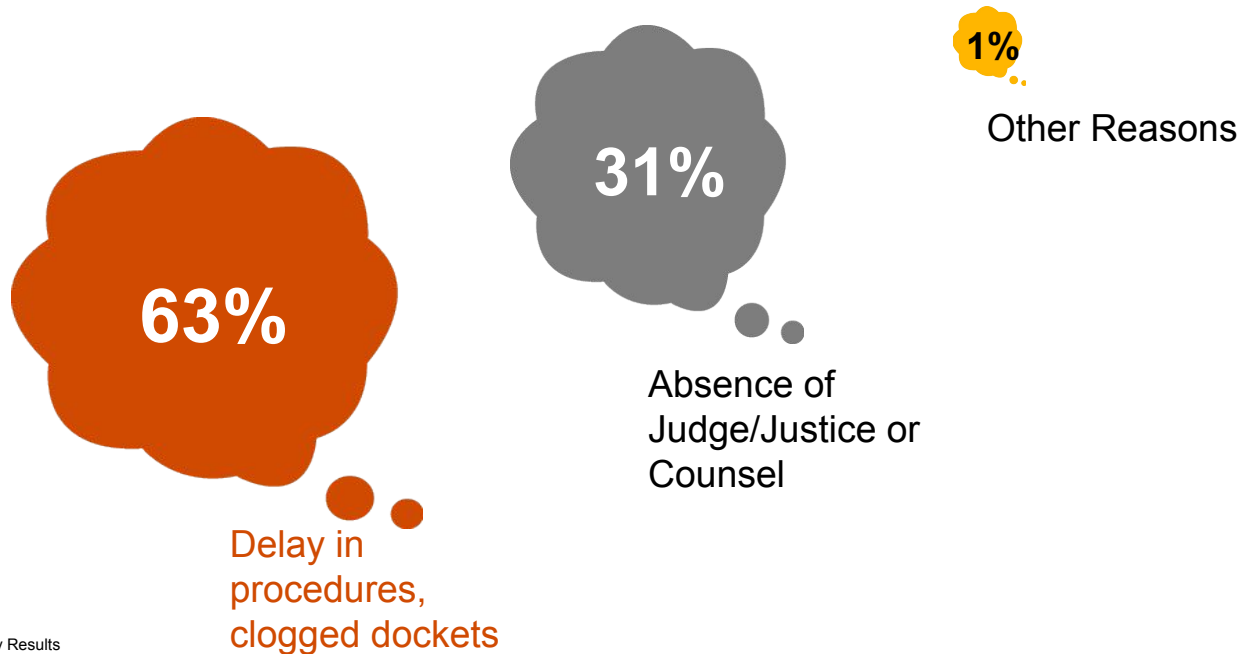
Court Processes, Services and Delays

75% of the respondent cited the **length and burdensome process** as a reason for not filing a case before the courts. Additionally, 69% mentioned the **high litigation costs**, particularly lawyers' fees, as a barrier to filing a case.



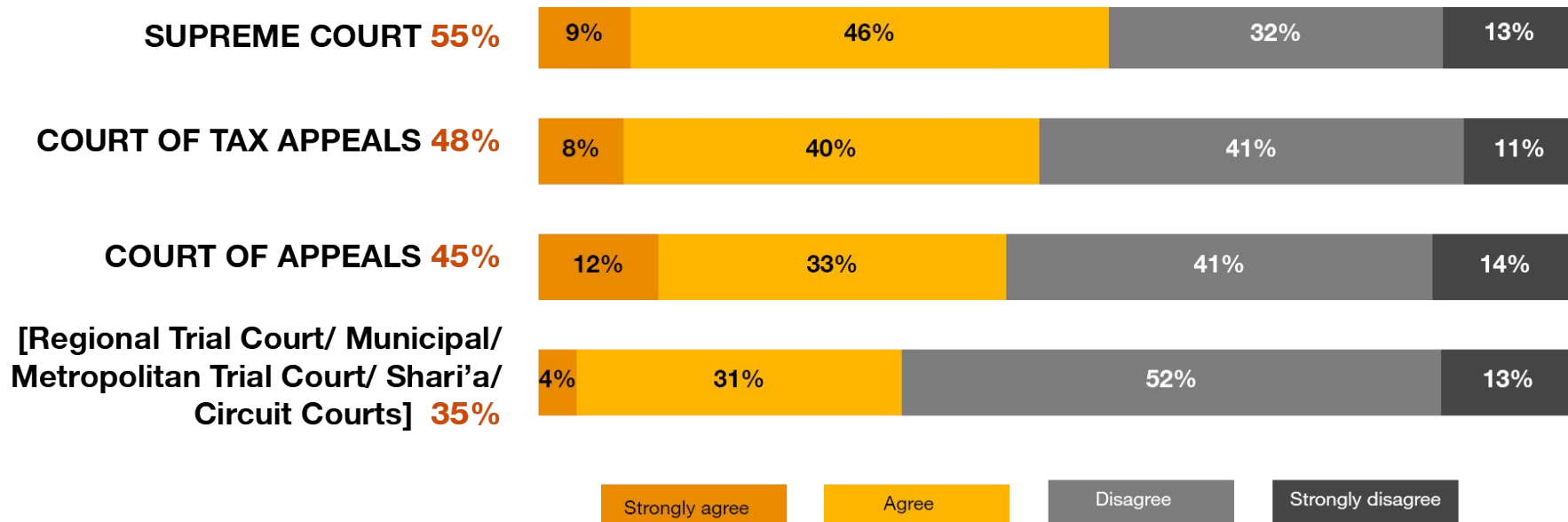
Court Processes, Services and Delays

Based on the experiences of litigants in civil or criminal cases, the usual **causes of delay** are as follows: **63%** reported **delay due to tedious procedures and clogged dockets**, while **31%** mentioned the **absence of a judge or counsel**.



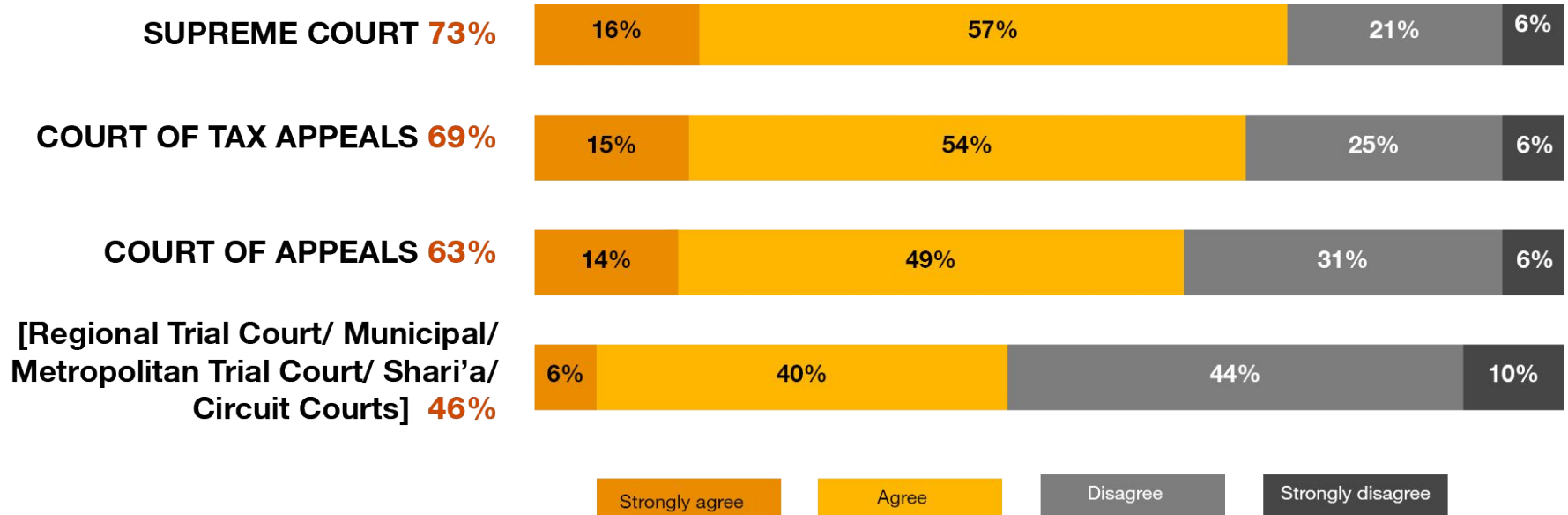
Court Processes, Services and Delays

On the topic of whether the **court effectively hears and decides the assigned case in an efficient manner**, without any unnecessary delays, approval rating is generally not high.



Court Processes, Services and Delays

Substantial majority of the respondents agree that **enforcement of court decisions/orders by court sheriffs/court officers** of the Supreme Court, Court of Tax Appeals, and Court of Appeals are carried out promptly and strictly in accordance with the court order. On the other hand enforcement of decisions by the lower courts gathered a 46% approval rating.



Court Processes, Services and Delays

47% expressed satisfaction with the **performance of the courts during the COVID-19 pandemic**. Hearings were conducted remotely and there was good progress in their cases during this time.

On the other hand, 17% of the respondents said that although hearings were conducted remotely, there were connectivity issues and there was no material progress in their respective cases.



47%

Satisfactory Rating

Hearings were conducted remotely and there was good progress in their cases during the pandemic



17%

Unsatisfactory Rating

While hearings were conducted remotely, it did not run smoothly. There was no progress in their respective cases.

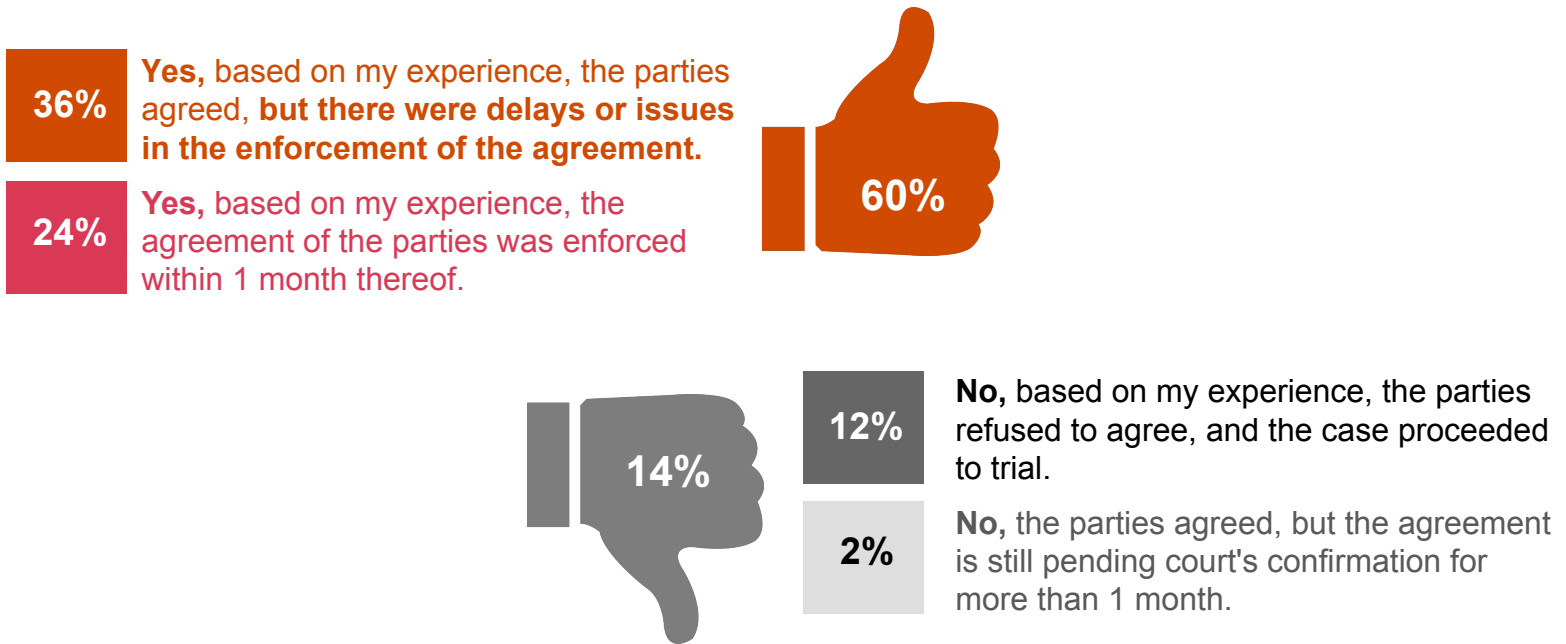


40%

Neither agree or disagree

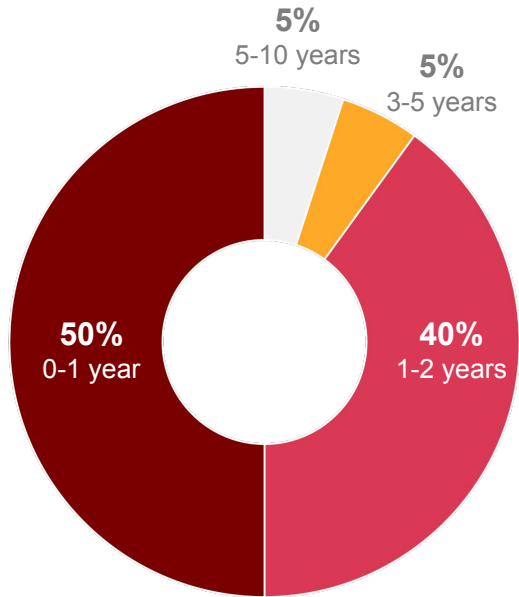
ADR / JDR

60% agree that **Alternative Dispute Resolution/Judicial Dispute Resolution and Court-Annexed Mediation** effectively reduce docket congestion.

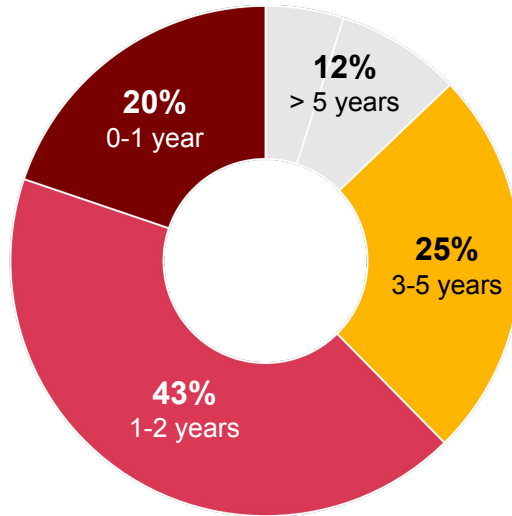


Court's Processes, Services and Delays

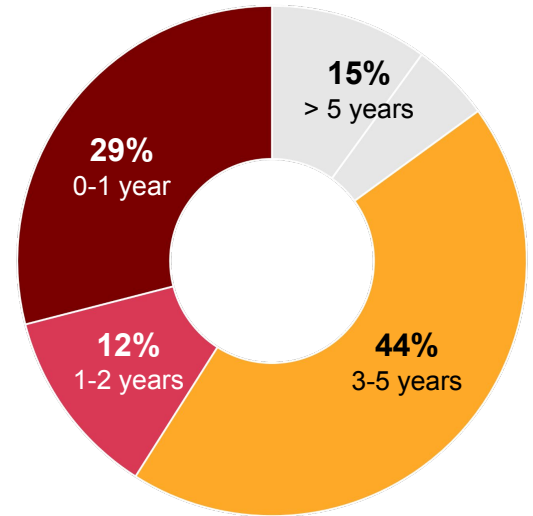
Navigating Court Processes: Enhancing Service Availability and Reducing Delay



Pre-Trial Arraignment



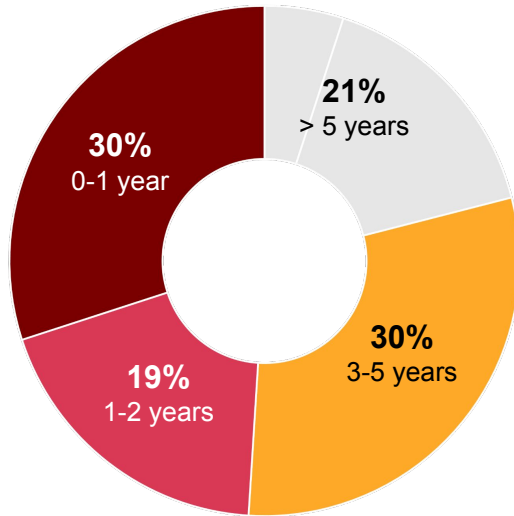
Trial Proper



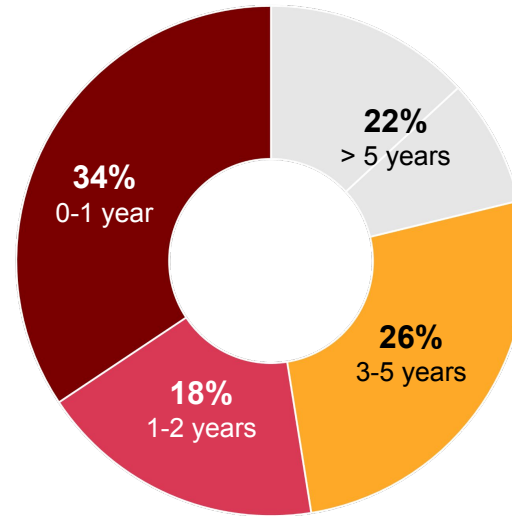
Judgment/ Sentencing

Court's Processes, Services and Delays

Navigating Court Processes: Enhancing Service Availability and Reducing Delay



MR/Appeal



Execution

Court Processes, Services and Delays

Key FGD recommendations to improve court processes

- Increase budget for the Judiciary for expansion of courts, more human resources, and digital transformation
- Adapt programs and benefits that promote the health and wellness of judges and court staff
- Limit cases that can be appealed to the Supreme Court to strategically reduce its caseload and allow it to focus on matters of greater significance or constitutional importance
- Utilize the Virtual Court Hearing (VCH) as a calendar and repository for digitized files to enhance access to case information, and to secure data
- Implement Alternative Dispute Resolution and Judicial Dispute Resolution Updates to promote the adoption of alternative methods for resolving disputes



Competencies

Competency is crucial to achieving efficient and reliable outcomes in the judicial process. Conversely, incompetency of personnel and administrators of justice can result to injustice.

Fostering Competency

The Key to Excellence in the Philippine Judiciary and its Court Employees

Clear and concise written communication enhances transparency and understanding of legal reasoning. When judges can articulate their decisions effectively, it instills confidence in the fairness of the process and assures party litigants that their case was thoroughly considered.

Conversely, if judges fail to write well and their decisions are convoluted, party litigants may question the fairness and understanding of the judgment. This erodes trust in the justice system and creates a sense of injustice.

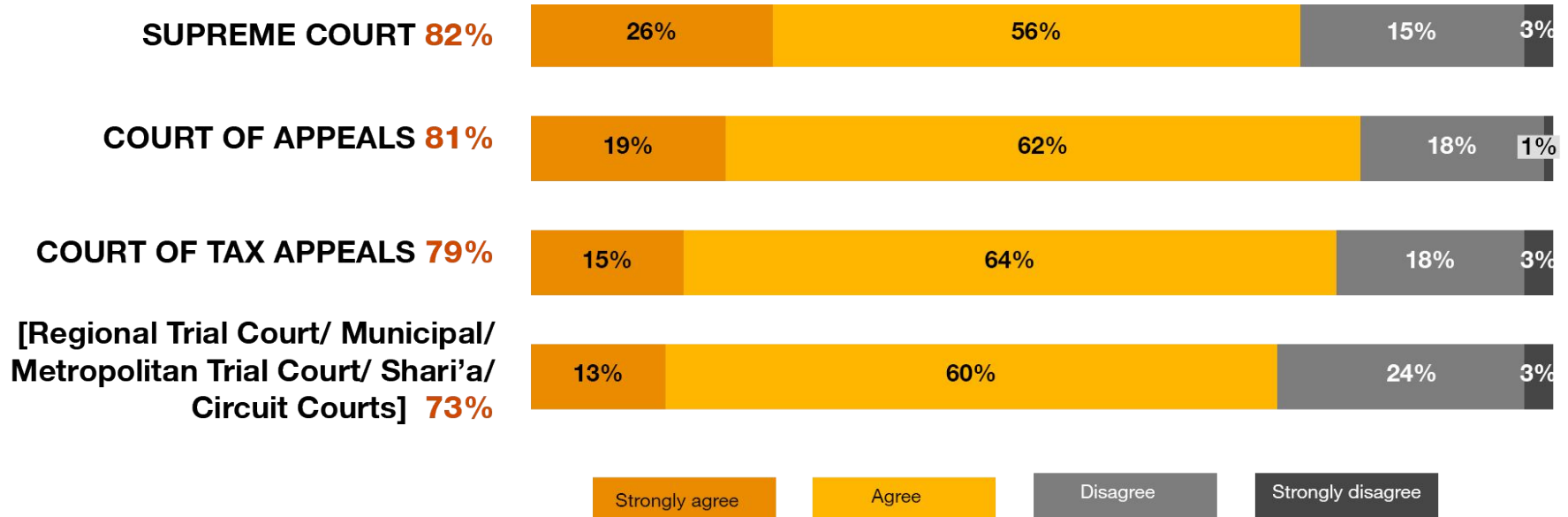
Competency of court personnel, the frontliners, is just as important as they can reflect on the judiciary as a whole.

It may be the case that there is no poverty of technical competence in the judiciary. However, for competency to be recognized, the justice system must keep up with the growing demands of an expanding nation and fresh expectations.



Competencies

The **judges' decisions are easily understood by the parties**, with high percentages of agreement across different courts: 82% for the Supreme Court, 81% for the Court of Appeals, 79% for the Court of Tax Appeals, and 73% for the lower courts.



Competencies - Judges

While certainly controversial, 38% of respondents believe they have encountered an incompetent judge. Perception of incompetence can arise from various factors, such as the judge's decision-making, communication style, or overall conduct during the proceedings. It is important to note that such claims of incompetence are subjective and may be influenced by the litigant's personal perspective or dissatisfaction with the judge's rulings or actions



38%

**Yes, some of the judge
I encountered are
incompetent.**

36%

**No, I have not
encountered any
incompetent judge.**

18%

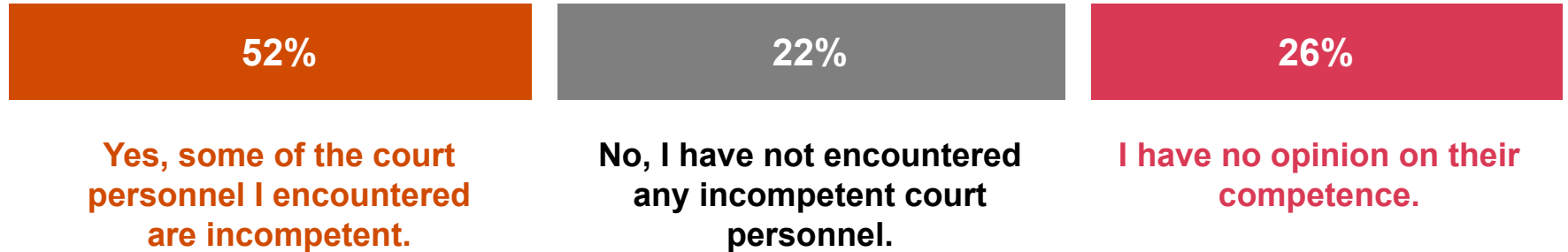
**I have no opinion on
their competence.**

16%

**I have not been a
party to a case.**

Competencies - Court Personnel

A significant number of respondents, 52%, shared their experiences of encountering court personnel who may have lacked competency.



SC Statement on Competencies

Competence is one of the virtues required of a Justice or a judge under the Philippine Constitution.

In *Department of Social Welfare and Development v. Belen*, the Court held that a magistrate should be the embodiment of, among other desirable characteristics, judicial competence. It need not be stressed that among the prime duties to which a judge of the law must ever be faithful is that of being abreast with the law and jurisprudence, since, as has so often been advanced, the administration of justice requires the continuous study of law and jurisprudence.

To develop, improve, and maintain the competence of justices, judges, and court personnel, the Philippine Judicial Academy (PHILJA) has been tasked to institutionalizing continuing judicial education. Thus, PHILJA is the Court's implementing arm and the nation's watchdog in the pursuit of excellence in the Judiciary.

Additionally, the Court has been involved in judiciary-wide process mapping and learning about new frameworks and approaches towards lean management and productivity, which can contribute to the overall improvement of judicial processes and competency.



Competencies

Key FGD recommendations to improve competence perceptions of court personnel and officials

- Relieve judges of administrative roles
- Improve the regional court management system by using regional court managers
- Utilize systemic analysis and data analytics as tools for process improvement and more informed decision-making in the judiciary
- Adapt change management strategies to help court personnel and officials adapt reforms
- Use communication tools to interact with the public and manage public perception of the judiciary



Reforms Awareness

The Supreme Court-initiated judicial reforms encourage access to the judicial system and decongests the pathway to seeking redress for grievances.

Driving Reform Awareness

Empowering Filipinos through a Transparent and Efficient Judicial System

The Supreme Court's commitment to judicial reforms is evident through its collaboration with the private sector, particularly the Judicial Reform Initiative (JRI). This partnership demonstrates the Court's willingness to listen and consider feedback from various stakeholders, showcasing its open-mindedness and dedication to improve.

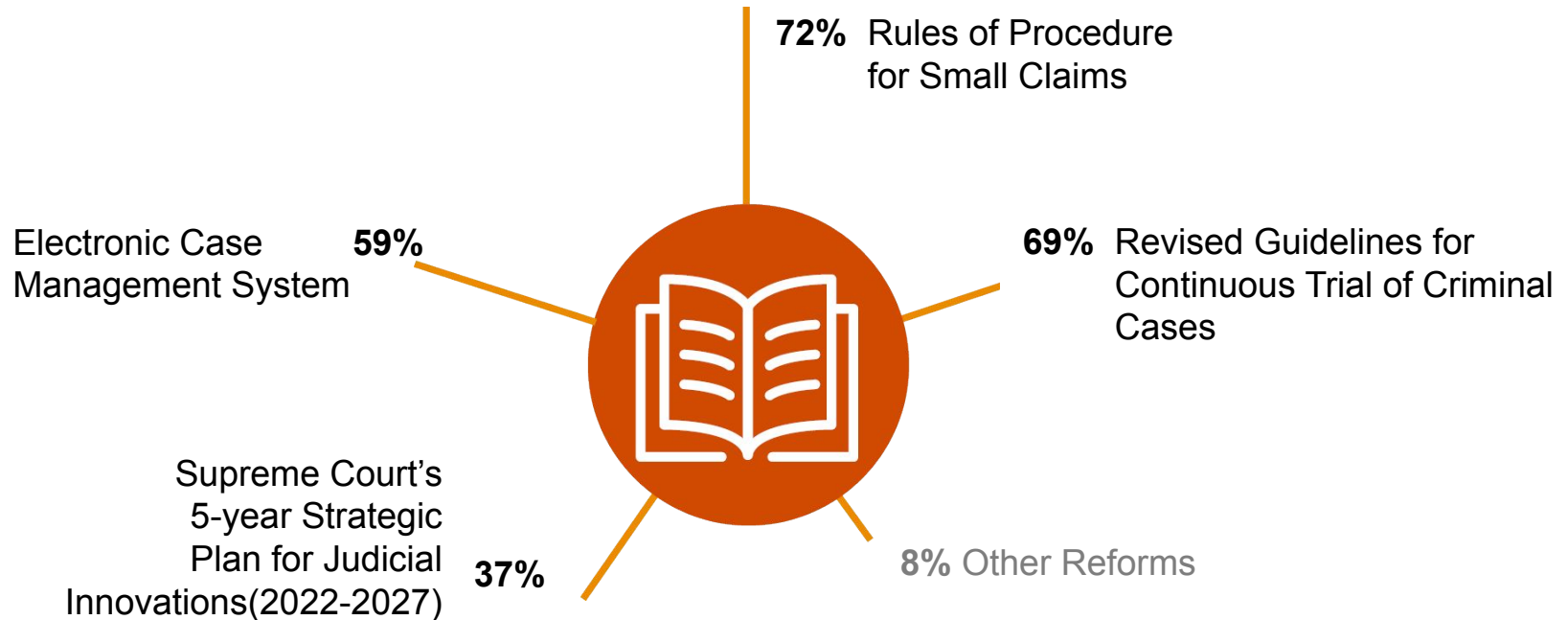
The Strategic Plans for Judicial Innovation (SPJI) spanning from 2022 to 2027, have been instrumental in driving these reforms. By prioritizing ethical responsibility, the Supreme Court aims to uphold the highest standards of integrity within the legal profession. Strengthening the Judicial Integrity Board further ensures accountability and transparency in the judiciary. During the Ethics Caravan, Justice Caguioa was quoted saying *“the unchanging call was to exercise all forms of creative problem-solving skills within the contours of what the laws allowed; to work and argue and present innovative and legally defensible routes within the system, without needing to undermine it.”*

For reforms to succeed, the public must see value in them. Then the public must also be given a venue to contribute to these reforms as follow through. In this regard, the Supreme Court is in the right path.

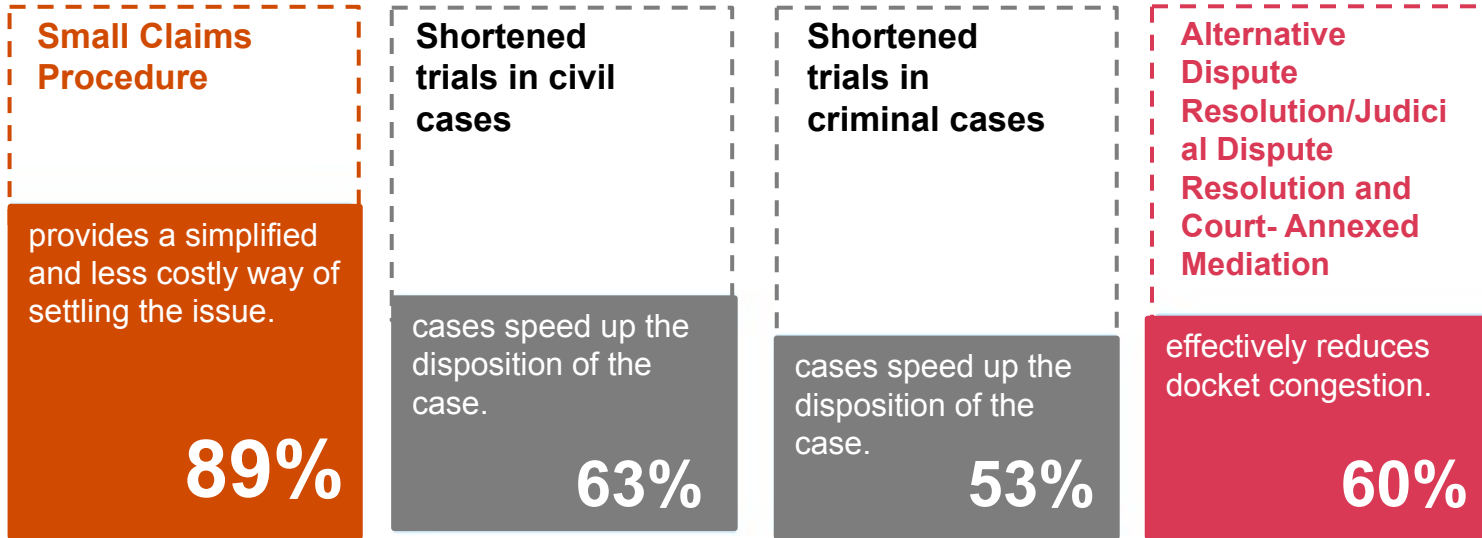


Reforms Awareness

While almost all respondents (94%) are generally aware that there are reforms, percentages vary on awareness of the specific reforms.



Reforms Awareness



provides a simplified and less costly way of settling the issue.

89%

Shortened trials in civil cases

cases speed up the disposition of the case.

63%

Shortened trials in criminal cases

cases speed up the disposition of the case.

53%

Alternative Dispute Resolution/Judicial Dispute Resolution and Court-Annexed Mediation

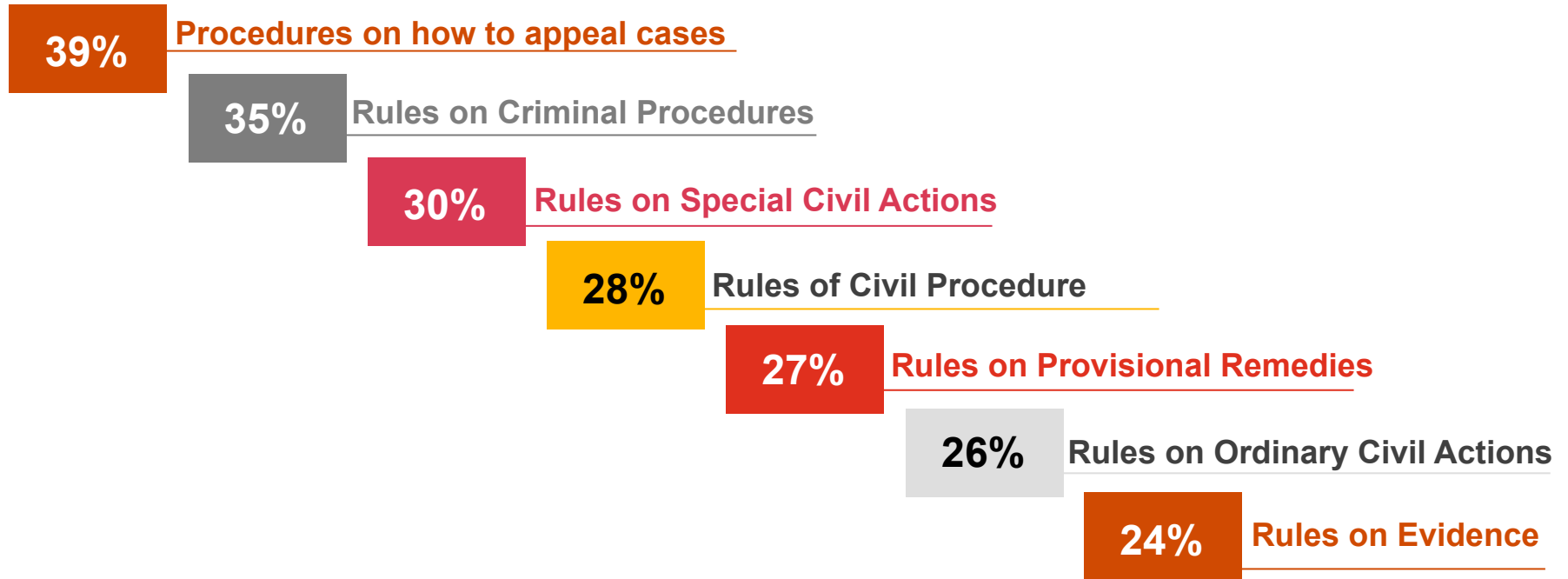
effectively reduces docket congestion.

60%

Procedures for **small claims** do not require representation of a lawyer. Increase of threshold amount to PHP 1,000,000.00, exclusive of interests and costs, significantly reduce the number of days for trial and judgment for money claims. Courts are mandated to resolve a case within 30 days from the day the statement of claim was filed. After the hearing, the court shall render its decision within 24 hours from termination of the hearing.

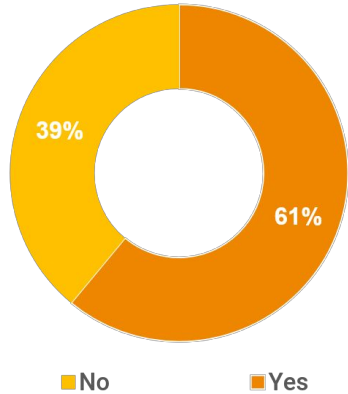
Reforms Awareness

Respondents were asked to identify which part of the existing rules of procedure should be prioritized in the amendment efforts:



Reforms Awareness

61% of respondents recommended to limit the cases that go up for review to the Supreme Court so that justices are not spread too thinly.



Factors that should be considered:

Number of precedents issued by the Supreme Court on the issue involved.	37%
Whether the decision was issued by Supreme Court en banc.	31%
Whether there have been no change in the provisions of the law and/or government issuance.	33%
Similar issues have already been previously resolved by the Supreme Court.	41%
Whether there have been no dissenting opinions issued by the Supreme Court justices on the issue involved.	24%
Others (<i>Constitutional Issues, Drug Cases, Well-settled jurisprudence on simple legal issues</i>)	3%

SC Statement on Reforms Awareness

The Supreme Court of the Philippines has been actively involved in judicial reform initiatives to address issues such as court congestion, delays in case procedures, and the utilization of electronic court systems.

The *Strategic Plan for Judicial Innovations 2022-2027 (SPJI)* outlines the Supreme Court's system-wide judicial reforms currently being implemented to address institutional challenges using various strategies, including the adoption and deployment of modern workplace collaboration solutions and the harnessing of technology for judicial empowerment. These efforts demonstrate the Court's commitment to embracing technology and introducing reforms to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the judicial system in the Philippines. Chief Justice Gesmundo has urged Justices, judges, and court employees to maintain momentum on judicial reforms and reaffirm their commitment to the Supreme Court's *SPJI*.



Reforms Awareness

Key FGD recommendations to improve Reforms Awareness

- Offer training programs for stakeholders to equip them in adapting to judicial reforms, beginning with judicial personnel, and lawyers as part of their MCLE compliance
- Form a dedicated team to manage public communication regarding judicial innovations, initiatives and plans



Technological Upgrades

A human-led, technology assisted system promotes efficiency and transparency in the administration of justice.

Advancing the Judicial System:

Unveiling the Supreme Court's Innovative IT Programs

Innovation and digital transformation can speed up access to courts and delivery of justice. The Supreme Court is embracing technological upgrades in their 5-year plan. To cite examples:

- Automation in court proceedings and transcription services
- Creation of an e-library and online learning platforms
- Development of an e-payment system for filing fees, electronic service, and digital signatures and biometric authorization of submissions
- Development of an automated court and hearing room calendars, and a system supported scheduling

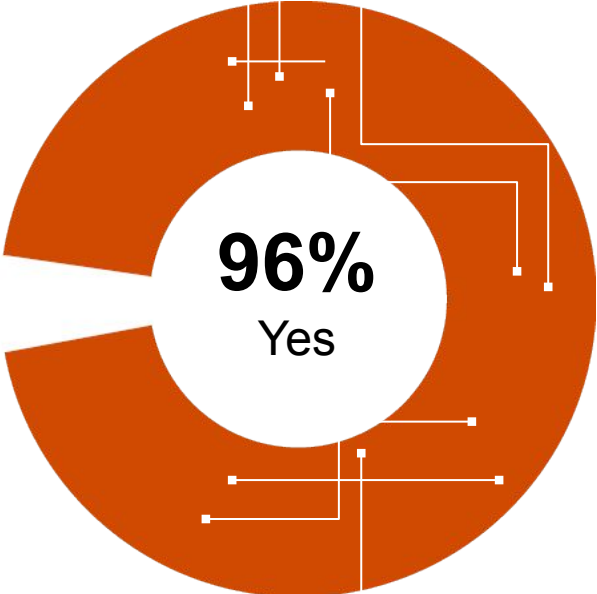
The SC will also create the Judiciary Enterprise ICT Governance framework and Network Infrastructure that will cover processes and information systems, service infrastructure and applications and develop the MIS Manual that will list all active tasks of the Judiciary with regard to ICT.

Certainly, a human-led, technology assisted system shall reimagine the court of the future.



Technological Upgrades

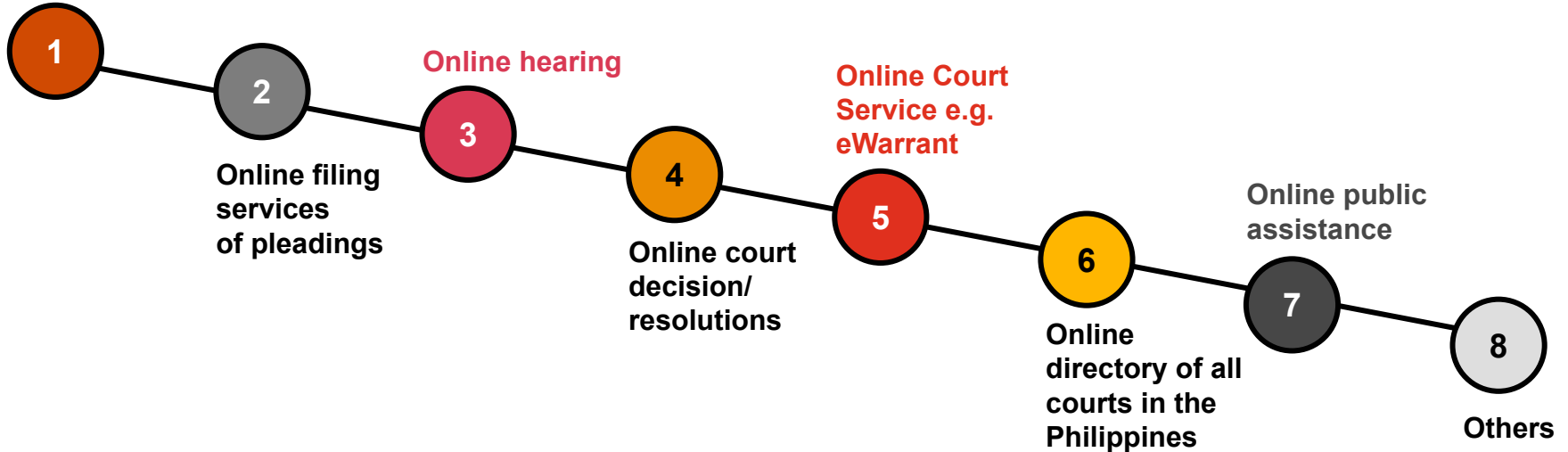
96% of respondents agree that the Courts should **adopt technology** in conducting hearings, filing pleadings and motions, and serving court notices to the parties.



Technological Upgrades

The respondents were asked to identify which area of technology upgrade should be prioritized.

Online and real-time update
on status of cases



Technological Upgrades

Respondents also gave their own suggestions on tech upgrades, as follows:

53%

Automation Of Court Process/System

Filing, payment, archiving in cloud, indexing of latest cases, public dissemination of reforms, response to queries, furnishing of copies of answers and replies, access to hearing, publication of decisions, information/assistance, posting of cases, TSN etc.

8%

Reforms on Procedures

Modes of discovery, setting of bail, execution of judgment or orders can also be done online (garnishment, etc)

3%

Online/IT Improvement

SC website/webpage improvement, invest in IT and training personnel, and speediness via technology.

3%

Notarial Commission Procedure

E-notarization/Filing of notarial books.

7%

Others

Succession and turnover issues, disciplinary actions.

SC Statement on Technological Adoption

The Supreme Court of the Philippines has shown a positive view of technology, emphasizing its role in improving the efficiency, accessibility, and transparency of the judicial system.

Chief Justice Gesmundo has highlighted the initiatives of the Supreme Court in utilizing technological advancements, such as the *eCourt System version 2.0*, *Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Court Operations*, and the development of an *Online Learning Platform for the Philippine Judiciary*. The Court has also expressed its commitment to adopting the most suitable, reliable, and modern technology to improve court service efficiency, decrease case processing and resolution delays, and strengthen judicial process collaboration.

These efforts demonstrate the Court's recognition of the potential of technology to enhance the delivery of justice and safeguard human rights.



Technological Upgrades

Key FGD recommendations on technological upgrades

- Digitalize court decisions, legal resources and information to make them widely and promptly accessible to the public and legal professionals
- Develop mandatory digital upskilling programs for judges and all court personnel
- Creating a Knowledge Management Center to manage, store, and disseminate knowledge related to judicial reforms, latest doctrines, new laws, and best practices to support continuous learning in the judiciary



“It is rare for the private sector to dedicate their time and resources to our institution, and we appreciate the support of JRI. This collaboration is one of the most significant endeavors we have undertaken together.”

Justice Maria Filomena Singh
Supreme Court (SC) Associate Justice



Thank you

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