

Rule of Law

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What is the Rule of Law?

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The Four Universal Principles

The World Justice Project's definition of the rule of law is comprised of the following four universal principles:



1. Accountability

The government as well as private actors are accountable under the law.



2. Just Laws

The laws are clear, publicized, stable, and just; are applied evenly; and protect fundamental rights, including the security of persons and property and certain core human rights.



3. Open Government

The processes by which the laws are enacted, administered, and enforced are accessible, fair, and efficient.



4. Accessible & Impartial Dispute Resolution

Justice is delivered timely by competent, ethical, and independent representatives and neutrals who are accessible, have adequate resources, and reflect the makeup of the communities they serve.

These four universal principles constitute a working definition of the rule of law. They were developed in accordance with internationally accepted standards and norms, and were tested and refined in consultation with a wide variety of experts worldwide.