Follow-Up Report & Summary Notes

The Design Lab for Creating Limited License Practitioner Pilot Projects

From the Eighth Annual Dean's Forum on Access to Justice and Dispute Resolution, March 10, 2020

Elaine Selensky Haley Stearns Everhett Zoerb

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Overview

The Dean's Forum on Access to Justice and Dispute Resolution ("Dean's Forum"), held on March 10, 2020, focused on two initiatives: (1) The Design Lab for Creating Limited Licence Practitioner Pilot Projects ("Design Lab"); and (2) Next Steps in Exploring Family Justice in Saskatchewan ("Family Justice Innovations"). This summary report outlines insights, themes, and outcomes arising from the Design Lab, which aimed to develop frameworks for implementing a new group of legal service providers in Saskatchewan. For the purposes of this project, these service providers are referred to as Limited Licence Practitioners ("LLPs"). However, feedback at the forum suggests that the term Limited Legal Service Providers ("LLSPs") may be a better descriptor.

The Design Lab was facilitated by student researchers, Elaine Selensky, Haley Stearns, and Everhett Zoerb, and it involved key stakeholders with a range of perspectives and expertise. These stakeholders reviewed the student researchers' policy paper, attended a morning presentation, contributed to an "idea wall," and participated in "breakout sessions."

The remainder of this report briefly summarizes the authors' policy paper and the Dean's Forum meeting day before highlighting outcomes of the design lab and making recommendations for next steps regarding LLPs in Saskatchewan. The report's appendices include a copy of the morning's presentation slides, a listing of the design lab participants, and a copy of the materials and questions given to the breakout sessions attendees.

1.2 Summary of Policy Paper

The student researchers authored a policy discussion paper that offers solutions for efficiently designing and implementing a new framework for limited legal service providers in Saskatchewan. More specifically, the students' paper balances innovation with risk mitigation by suggesting a "regulatory sandbox" approach. It recommends continuous needs-assessment and evaluation through the lens of the Access to Justice Measurement Framework created by Access to Justice BC ("A2JBC").

The policy paper also outlines three potential pilot projects, developed with input from consultees, that could serve as starting points for a regulatory sandbox initiative: (1) the Legal Designation, which would allow people working in human service agencies or non-profit organizations to obtain a limited license to provide legal advice in a specific area related to their work; (2) the Court-worker or Tribunal-worker, which would be an expansion of the Aboriginal Courtworker Program and would involve an LLP providing advice regarding legal processes; and (3) the Private Sector Limited Licence Practitioner, which would allow LLPs to provide legal services in the private sector in a limited capacity.

1.3 Summary of the Meeting Day

This year marked a first for many aspects of the Dean's Forum. The day began with general introductions followed by an early coffee break. During that break, participants contributed to an idea wall focused on potential technology solutions relating to family law or LLPs. The idea wall was facilitated by Melissa Craig and Allyse Cruise, presenters at the seventh annual Dean's Forum and student researchers focused on technology in the legal profession. Following the coffee break, the LLP Design Lab and Family Justice Innovations groups each gave a brief presentation providing an overview of its respective topic.

In the afternoon, the discussion moved to the Education building where the Dean's Forum attendees participated in breakout sessions. The LLP Design Lab had participants break into smaller groups to imagine an LLP pilot project using the key principles of a regulatory sandbox and to evaluate that project using the performance measurement framework from A2JBC. This small-group work was followed by a large discussion that included all groups sharing their pilot projects, the main risks associated with them, and how those risks could be mitigated in the regulatory sandbox. To debrief, participants voiced their impressions of the activity and their opinions of the sandbox and measurement framework.

2.0 Design Lab Results

2.1 Sample of Participant Responses

During the design lab, participants were separated into five groups and asked to conceptualize an LLP pilot project and how that project would look when put through a regulatory sandbox. This process involved a high-level design of the pilot project, brainstorming potential risks, creating potential risk-mitigation strategies to test within the sandbox, and evaluation using the performance measurement framework indicators provided. Summarized below are the discussions of each of the five groups.

Group 1:

<u>Overview</u>: This group explored the potential for LLPs as volunteers. Volunteer LLPs could help self-represented litigants with court forms and other procedural needs. <u>Location</u>: Libraries could be a good starting place. There could also be volunteers at the courthouse or other public locations.

Risks: The main risks identified relate to liability and insurance—the extent of

insurance coverage and how to insure. There are also risks related to the use of

volunteers, such as regulation of volunteers, the potential of an unstable or unreliable

supply of volunteers, and privacy considerations.

<u>Mitigation strategies</u>: There would need to be training for volunteers. Volunteer

requirements—for example minimum ages, educational requirements, and criminal

record checks—would also be important.

Other considerations: Oversight and infrastructure would be needed for a volunteer

program.

Group 2

Overview: LLPs available in Small Claims Court to assist with documentation, forms,

and processes.

Location: Small Claims Court.

<u>Risks</u>: Recourse for low quality work—the order is final, and appeals are onerous and

expensive if the LLP makes a mistake.

<u>Mitigation strategies</u>: Specific requirements for people to be accepted into the position

as an LLP.

Other considerations: How much need is there for this position? When looking at the

A2JBC measurement framework, it might not meet many of the access to justice

indicators.

Group 3

Overview: LLPs assisting with the entire Small Claims Court process.

Location: Small Claims Court.

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<u>Risks</u>: Competency, ethical codes, and licensing, specifically who issues licenses, costs and insurance of licensing, accreditation, conflicts and security of client information and data security, and financial transactions with clients.

<u>Mitigation strategies</u>: Entrance restrictions and having ethical standards for LLPs <u>Other considerations</u>: Is there need for an LLP in Small Claims Court, or is the answer to simplify the process and make self-representation easier?

Group 4

Overview: Publicly funded court navigator.

<u>Location</u>: Start with tribunals and work towards having LLPs available in courts.

<u>Risks</u>: Up-front costs—establishment of the program would need an initial large input of government funds.

<u>Mitigation strategies</u>: Start with one small area and demonstrate the economic viability in that area before expanding the program.

Other considerations: There would need to be a licensing program approved by the Law Society to ensure competency and quality control.

Group 5

<u>Overview</u>: Private sector LLP that would have the main responsibilities of basic interviewing and helping fill out forms. There would be minimal lawyer supervision. <u>Location</u>: Private law firms, or perhaps the LLPs will work on their own.

<u>Risks</u>: Fees—would the fees actually be lower than paying for a lawyer? Other risks include insurance considerations, effective oversight, and discipline procedures.

<u>Mitigation strategies</u>: Require the firms to advertise the rate for LLP services, potentially using mentorship as a way to prevent mistakes.

Other considerations: There is potential that lawyers will charge their high rates but have the LLPs do all the work. This would lead to clients paying more than needed for the services they are receiving.

2.2 Common Themes of the Day's Discussions

Some of the common themes that came out of the discussions at the Forum are highlighted below.

Flexibility

Saskatchewan is a large and diverse province with unique geographical challenges. Because of this, no one model will be able to meet all of the province's needs. Recognizing that not all LLP models will look the same and that multiple models are needed, explored frameworks and regulations must be flexible.

Balance

Given the potential for harm to the public, there is a **need to consider seriously the risks** of expanding the pool of legal service providers. However, the access to justice crisis **demands that justice stakeholders explore new ways of meeting the needs of users**. A way to balance the need to

One of the things we will need to do as lawyers is assess our risk adverse nature.

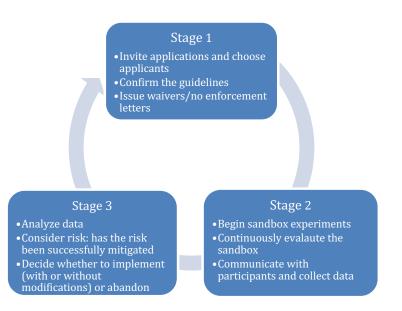
Dean's Forum
Participant

protect the public from harm with the need for innovation is the regulatory sandbox. This space creates the leniency needed for innovation while including necessary public protection mechanisms.

There is also a need to balance regulation: there must be **enough rules and requirements to ensure public safety but not so many as to create onerous barriers** for those wishing to enter the LLP profession. This need applies equally to paid employees or volunteers.

Continuous Improvement

When the students first introduced the regulatory sandbox at the Dean's Forum, they presented the sandbox process as a linear concept. However, after the breakout sessions, it became clear that the sandbox must be a circular process. Each individual pilot project within the sandbox will follow the linear three stages, but



The regulatory sandbox reimagined as a circular process

the use of the sandbox is circular. Upon completion of the initial evaluation, it will be necessary to circle back and continuously monitor previous sandboxes projects as well as continue to innovate with new pilot projects.

Several breakout groups conceptualized a pilot project in the sandbox only to realize that the project did not meet the provided objectives. This demonstrates the importance of starting with the end in mind. Using the A2JBC measurement framework at the beginning of the sandbox means that all sandbox pilot projects are designed specifically to meet the goals that the regulator sets. Choosing the A2JBC indicators and designing backwards reduces the chance of expending time and resources on a sandbox that does not address access to justice goals.

3.0 Recommendations and Next Steps

Out of the post-presentation discussions in the morning and the design lab discussions in the afternoon, the authors offer four recommendations and next steps. It is important to recognize that the creation of a class of legal paraprofessionals in Saskatchewan is a complex task that must involve an ongoing and flexible process. As the needs of justice users in Saskatchewan change, the regulations

Sometimes you need to slow down to go faster. Instead of viewing it as a barrier, view it as a hurdle. For any justice reform, this model has more potential than any other model I've seen over the past twenty years.

> Dean's Forum Participant

and frameworks for LLPs must adapt to meet those needs. As such, the recommendations and next steps laid out below focus on process: the process for implementing LLPs in Saskatchewan but also ways to encourage an innovative thought process.

- Embrace the A2JBC Measurement Framework Determine which indicators
 are most important and design regulatory sandboxes around those indicators.
 For an example of how this framework can be used, see the presentation slides
 at page 19, below.
- Embrace the regulatory sandbox Achieving public protection and innovation is a delicate balance that the sandbox can accomplish. Given the unique challenges faced in Saskatchewan, the sandbox offers the flexible tool needed to create a diverse new category of legal professionals.
- Think big and creatively about the participants and partnerships that could be explored in a sandbox – There are many groups and people innovating in roles that could fall under an LLP. It would be beneficial to draw on existing comparable models, such as the Aboriginal Courtworker Program, to inform key components of new pilot projects.

Assess the need – Part of choosing the indicators is exploring the available data
to determine the highest areas of need and identify what further data are
required to assess need accurately.

We want to thank the people who consulted with us, the attendees of the Dean's Forum, and Brea Lowenberger for all the support and assistance that made the eighth annual Dean's Forum possible.

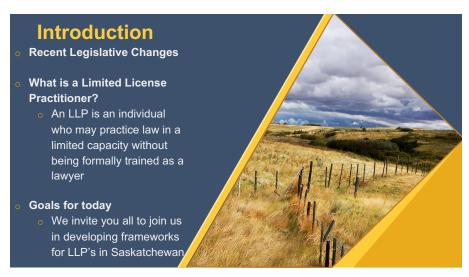
- Elaine Selensky, Haley Stearns, Everhett Zoerb

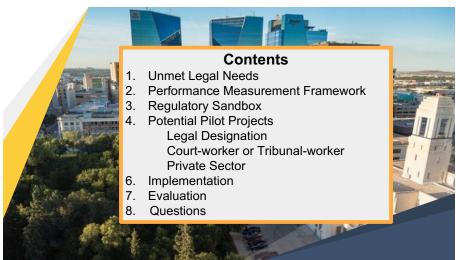
Appendix A: Presentation Slides

The Design Lab for Creating Limited License Practitioner Pilot Projects

By Elaine Selensky, Everhett Zoerb, and Haley Steams

Supervised by Brea Lowenberger







48.4% of Adults

in Canada will experience one or more everyday legal problem within a given three-year period that they consider to be serious or difficult to resolve.

10-80% of litigants In Canada are self-represented,

In Canada are self-represented, depending on the level of court and the nature of the claim.

After a single legal problem, people experience non-legal costs as follows:

65.2%

had increased use of **medical** system

41.2%

had increased use of mental health services

20.9%

had increased social, family, or personal problems

CFCJ, "Everyday Legal Problems and the Cost of Justice in Canada: Cost of Justice Survey Data" (2018)

Unmet Legal Needs

- (1) Many people simply cannot afford a lawyer; and
- (2) Large *rural and remote populations*, particularly in Saskatchewan, present a unique challenge for access to services.



 See pages 11-12 of the Discussion Paper for existing organizations in Saskatchewan seeking to address legal needs

Our Approach to Developing Pilot Project Frameworks

Methodology

- 1) Literature Review reviewed academic literature and reports
- 2) **Environmental Scan** reviewed existing LLP programs and regulatory frameworks
- 3) **Consultations** consulted with various stakeholders to gather information on areas of opportunity for LLPs
- See pages 7-9 of Discussion Paper for Methodology and Project Limitations

Our Approach to Developing Pilot Project Frameworks



Regulatory Sandbox

- Creates an environment for testing ideas and fostering innovation
- Addresses the regulatory hurdles to the suggested frameworks



Performance Measurement Framework

- Serves as a tool for determining current needs.
 Identifying justice gaps, and evaluating innovative solutions
- Selected indicators from this framework based on the unique needs in Saskatchewan

Performance Measurement Framework

- We synthesized the needs identified and chose five key indicators from the Access to Justice Measurement Framework introduced by A2JBC
- The indicators can help us to visualize what a successful LLP program would look like and will be applied to potential pilot project models that we propose
- See pages 13-14 of Discussion Paper and "Appendix C" for more on the A2JBC Framework

Performance Measurement Framework

- (1) Mitigation of impact of legal problems
- How can the LLP model mitigate the impact of legal problems in Saskatchewan across different problem and service types?
- (2) Voice and participation
- How can the LLP model help users play an active role in resolving their own legal problems?
- (3) Need for legal advice
- How can the LLP model make legal advice available to more users?

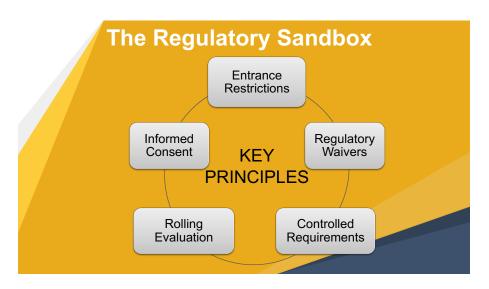
Performance Measurement Framework

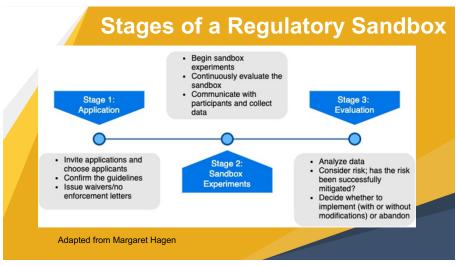
- (4) Accessibility of justice system
- How can the LLP model increase access to the justice system for all people, including rural/remote, Indigenous, or marginalized groups?
- (5) Social and economic costs
- How can the LLP models work to reduce social and economic costs of unmet legal needs

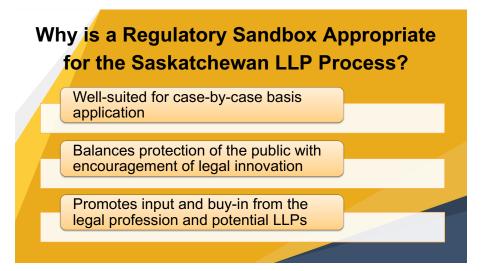
The Regulatory Sandbox

- An experimental space where rules and regulations are relaxed, but not removed, so that new ideas can be tested
- Involves feedback with participants, resulting in data-driven and well-informed policy and regulatory decisions
- The sandbox is only *temporary* it offers a space to test, collect data, and refine innovations.
- > See pages 16-19 of Discussion Paper









Potential Pilot Projects

Legal Designation

 Allows for those working in community service or human service organization to provide legal services in a limited and highly specialized area that relates to their work

Court-worker Program

- · Building off of the Aboriginal Courtworker Program already in place
- Proposes the expansion of this framework to be available for all residents and to cover a broader area of legal needs

Private Sector Framework

 This framework would allow LLPs to practice law in a limited capacity in law firms, as sole practitioners or in other organizations

Legal Designation

The Framework

- Staff or volunteers within these organizations would be able to obtain a legal designation allowing them to assist individuals with problems that have legal aspects
- o Providing services directly related to their public purpose
- They would be specialists in depth rather than breadth
- Existing models: Immigration Consultants of Canada Regulatory Council and the Utah LLP Program

For discussion on existing models, see pages 23-24 of Discussion Paper

Court-worker or Tribunal-worker

The Framework

- A court-worker or tribunal-worker program would be modelled on the success of the Aboriginal Courtworker Program and would provide assistance to selfrepresented litigants ("SRLs")
- Focus on procedural guidance, triaging legal needs, creating action plans, translating proceedings, and giving information regarding forms
- Room for this role in the administrative law context

Existing models: The Aboriginal Courtworker Program, Office of the Workers' Advocate, and Court Navigator Programs in Nova Scotia and New York

For discussion on existing models, see pages 25-28 of Discussion Paper.

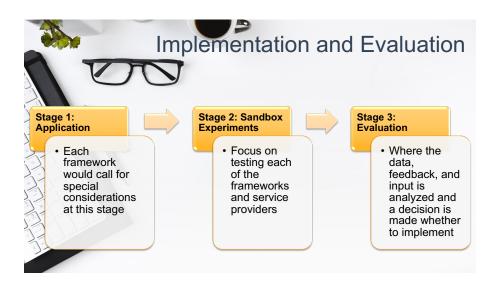
Private Sector Model

The Framework

- o These professionals could be seen in three distinct areas:
- 1) Working in law firms
- 2) Working for other private organizations
- 3) As stand-alone businesses
- Defining the scope of the LLP in the private sector is particularly important. In Saskatchewan, given the smaller *population* and *geographical considerations*, focusing on areas of law would likely not be viable. Instead focusing on industries in which LLPs can practice would be beneficial

Existing models: Washington paralegal, Ontario paralegal, and property assessment agents

For discussion on existing models, see pages 36-37 of Discussion Paper



Stage 1: Application 🕍

- o LSS is already taking steps that would fall under this stage
- At this stage of implementation, we would be inviting and choosing applications, confirming the guidelines, and issuing waivers/no enforcement letters

Legal Designation	Court-worker	Private Sector
 Non-profits and 	Consult with the	What private law firms
community	courts	would be interested
organizations as	 Volunteer or non- 	What size of firm
participants	volunteer?	would be appropriate

Stage 2: Experimentation Phase <a>



- o Focus on testing each of the framework and service providers
- o Continuous evaluation, communication, and data collection
- o Testing administrative and risk mitigation strategies at this

Court-worker	Private Sector
Paid public sector	Minimum size of firm or
workers or volunteers?	organization required
	for participants
	Paid public sector

Stage 2: Experimentation Phase Strategies

Organizational Översight

- LLPs as part of law firms or larger organizations could lower the risk of LLPs going beyond their scope
- Internal oversight structures, insurance coverage, and support system for LLPs

Clear **Boundaries**

- · Help mitigate risk and define scopes of practice
- · Two possible boundary options for LLPs are representation and document preparation

Built-in Support System

- Benefit to having an established support system which could allow LLPs to contact the LSS without fear of discipline
- See pages 33-35 of Discussion Paper

Stage 3: Evaluation 🞹



- o Data, feedback, and input gathered during Stage 2 is analyzed
- o Consider risk and whether the risk has been successfully mitigated
- o Decide whether to implement of abandon the program
- We have adopted the access to justice measurement framework as our primary method of analysis

	Evaluating Pilot Projects with the A2JBC Measurement Framework			
Indicator	Legal Designation	Court Worker	Private Sector	
(1) Mitigation of impact of legal problems	Early intervention in a specific field	Reduce procedural aspects of legal problems	Option between pro bono and full lawyer services	
(2) Voice and participation	Early intervention allows users to exercise legal rights	Procedural knowledge increases ability to	Consumers can choose the level of participation and	

meaningfully participate in the

legal process

throughout the

process

	Evaluating Pilot Projects with the A2JBC			
	Measurement Framework			
Indicator	Legal Designation	Court Worker	Private Sector	
(3) Need for legal	Provides advice for	Provides procedural	Provides more	
advice	legal problems	advice for courts and	affordable and	
	related to human	alternative dispute	possibly appropriate	
	service agencies	resolution options	option than full	
	when the problem is		representation when	
	identified		users need advice	
(4) Accessibility of	Able to reach a	Available wherever	More accessible	
justice system	wider range of the	courthouses are and	option for urban	
	population through	no requirements for	centres—can relieve	
	the organization they	who can access the	pressure on public	
	work with	services	on non-profit sector	

Evaluating Pilot Projects with the A2JBC Measurement Framework

services that is right

for them

Indicator	Legal Designation	Court Worker	Private Sector
(5) Social and economic costs	Intervenes early, reducing social and economic impact	Reduces procedural issues and moves users through the process more efficiently	Provides a cost- effective option so users can choose when and what services they need

"Like every other human institutional endeavour, justice is an ongoing process. It is never done, never fully achieved."

- Former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, Beverly McLachlin

Appendix B: Breakout Session Attendees

- Melanie Hodges-Neufeld (Director of Legal Resources, Outreach and Access, Law Society of Saskatchewan)
- Beth Bilson, Q.C. (Professor, College of Law)
- Wanda Wiegers (Professor, College of Law)
- Joel Janow (Executive Director, Public Legal Education Association)
- Shannon Williams (Executive Assistant to the Deputy Minister, Ministry of Justice)
- Gerald Tegart, Q.C. (President, Law Society of Saskatchewan)
- Carly Romanow (Executive Director, Pro Bono Law Saskatchewan)
- Craig Goebel (Chief Executive Officer, Legal Aid)
- Heather Heavin (Associate Dean, Research and Graduate Studies, College of Law)
- Lionel McNabb (Executive Director, Family Justice Services Branch, Ministry of Justice)
- Tim Brown, Q.C. (Executive Director, Law Society of Saskatchewan)
- Tom Baldry (Executive Director, CLASSIC)
- Rhonda Hueser (Director, Aboriginal Court Worker Program)
- Leah Howie (Director, Law Reform Commission of Saskatchewan)
- Martin Phillipson (Dean, College of Law)
- Johanne Blenkin (Director, UVic Access to Justice Centre of Excellence)
- Beau Atkins (Lawyer, Edge Family Law)
- Charmaine Panko (Vice President, ADR Institute Saskatchewan Branch)
- Chief Judge Plemel (The Provincial Court of Saskatchewan)
- Kim Newsham (Senior Crown Counsel, Family Justice Services Branch, Ministry of Justice)

Appendix C: Breakout Questions and Materials

Exploring the LLP
Regulatory Sandbox and
A2JBC Measurement
Framework

The Dean's Forum on Access to Justice and Dispute Resolution

INSTRUCTIONS

This exercise is to be done as a group. This booklet serves as a tool for writing notes and fostering discussion.

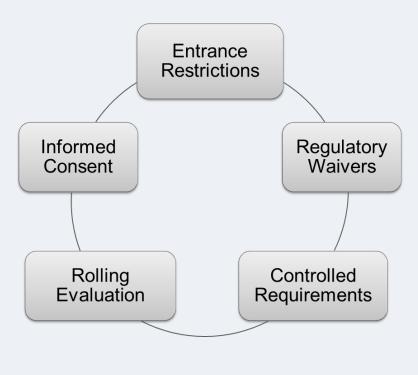
(1) As a group, either pick one of the proposed pilot projects or come up with an idea for your own LLP pilot project. Why did you pick this project? (10 minutes)

(2) Next, list the main risks that you think correspond to your pilot project. (10 minutes)

(3) Now consider how the identified risks could be mitigated with the regulatory sandbox model, keeping in mind the key principles of: (1) Entrance Restrictions (2) Regulatory Waivers (3) Controlled Requirements (4) Rolling Evaluations and (5) Informed Consent. See page 4 for a description of these key principles. (15 minutes)

(4) Each group is assigned two components from the Access to Justice BC Measurement Framework that are different from the indicators discussed earlier today (see pages 5-6 for the components assigned to your group). How do you think that your pilot project performs with respect to these components? (10 minutes)

The Regulatory Sandbox Key Principles



- (1) **Entrance Restrictions** the regulator decides who enters the sandbox through an application process. The participant should be required to specify their innovation and how it meets the regulator's goals (public interest, access to justice, ethics, etc.).
- (2) **Regulatory waivers/no enforcement action letters** the regulator specifies that if the participant stays within the structure of the sandbox, then the participant can take some controlled risk without being punished. However, the regulator can maintain the ability to act if the public is harmed or the participant goes outside of the sandbox parameters.
- (3) Controlled lists of requirements that can be relaxed or maintained the regulator should specify what rules are waived, altered, relaxed, or kept.
- (4) **Rolling evaluation** the regulator should formally and continually evaluate throughout the sandbox, giving the participant the broad metrics and letting the participants have input on the specific evaluation of their program.
- (5) **Informed consent** can require consumers understand and consent to using the sandbox service.

Access to Justice BC Measurement Framework Components

Group 1

- (1) Timeliness of Access to Justice: People's experience of delays in accessing the justice system. Some measures of this would be the time to conclude court cases, delays in accessing court, delays in accessing a consensual dispute resolution, and other delays in accessing the justice system. Consider whether this project would improve timeliness and how.
- (2) Cultural appropriateness of process: The extent to which users perceive that the justice services they accessed were delivered in a *culturally appropriate* and *linguistically useful* manner.

Group 2

- (1) Justice for Indigenous people: The extent to which changes in the level of access to justice by Indigenous people are translating into real improvements in the daily lives of Indigenous individuals and families.
- (2) Post-resolution support: The extent to which people with legal problems are supported following a resolution of their legal problems.

Group 3

- (1) Public confidence in the justice system: The extent to which changes in the level of access to justice by the population affects that population's confidence in the justice system. Confidence in this way, is related to perceptions of an institution's ability to perform its duties.
- (2) Compliance with court orders, judgments, and mediated agreements: Consider the extent to which these and other commitments resulting from the justice process are enforced or complied with.

Group 4

- (1) People's choice of path to justice: The decisions people make about how to address legal problems (by type of problem). Consider what decisions are made by people with a legal problem in terms of their path to justice. Does this project create a new pathway or impact the available pathways to justice?
- (2) Limits to the assistance received: The extent to which the scope, coverage, and quality of the services provided (or that could be accessed by an individual or a group) prevented the legal needs to be fully met.

Group 5

(1) Gender equality: The extent to which changes in the level of access to justice by the population are translating legal guarantees of gender equality into real improvements in the daily lives of women.

(2) Enhanced legal capability: Whether people's experience of access to justice services system empowered and enabled them to manage their legal needs or resolve legal problems beyond the legal problem they were initially concerned with (self-confidence in resolving legal problems or disputes).

Group 6

- (1) Prevalence of unaddressed legal needs in the population: The extent to which the population is experience legal needs that remain unaddressed.
- (2) Quality of legal advice: Whether meaningful and credible legal advice about a legal problem received by people with legal problems is delivered *competently*, tailored to a *specific case*, and useful in *providing direction* about how to proceed in addressing that problem.