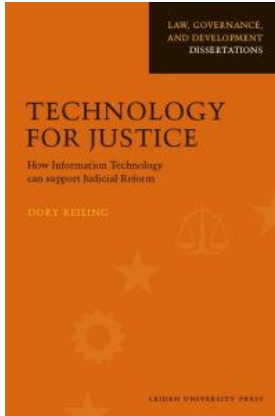**Dory Reiling**
Technology for Justice
How Information Technology can support Judicial Reform

Technology for Justice examines impacts of information technology on the administration of justice. It contributes to knowledge of information and IT in court processes. World wide, court users complain about long delays, lack of access to justice and court corruption. This study examines how IT can help remedy these complaints. It is relevant for courts and court reform, for the IT industry and for legal aid.

Its methodology for each of the complaints is as follows: After an overview of existing knowledge, it examines actual court practice, drawing on a broad variety of sources: comparative studies, statistics, case law and jurisprudence, studies on IT use and court user satisfaction surveys. The study uses a matrix visualizing court case loads, disposition times and groups of court users, relevant for targeting IT development. The matrix sorts cases according to the level of unpredictability of their outcome and the extent to which parties can contribute to the outcome by cooperating. It then draws conclusions on information use, and corresponding IT needs. It shows how court automation has mainly impacted speed by standardization, and how cooperation between parties can be supported by adequate information service in the Internet.

The study's main conclusions:

•	Office technology, while improving accuracy, has mainly supported the courts' paper processes. Automated case registration systems, however, have revolutionized thinking about case management. This shift has significantly reduced court disposition times.

•	Internet technology's potential for increasing access to legal information, predicted by Richard Susskind in 1996, holds promise for self-help with settlement and support for court access. Adequate information service can help justice seekers in various ways: to support self help, access to court and to increase the chance for a fair decision by reducing information disadvantage.

•	World wide, levels of corruption differ significantly. These differences are relevant in its reduction. In many cases, introducing IT can be an incentive to reducing corruption by improving court processes. It can increase transparency, and thus the chance of corruption being discovered. Shorter disposition times and reducing complexity also reduce opportunities for corruption, as does information on the Internet. In other situations, increased transparency induced by the Internet may be the only option available in reducing court corruption. Information about access to court and about ways in which judiciaries ensure their integrity can also be a factor to reduce corruption.

The study concludes by examining how new IT developments will impact courts, and how governance and processes for judiciaries will require major changes to make those impacts work to improve the administration of justice.

Dory Reiling, judge at the Amsterdam first instance court, was formerly the IT policy officer for the Dutch judiciary and a senior World Bank judicial reform expert. Her previous publications include Doing Justice with IT (2006) and Justice Sector Assessments Handbook (2007).