
REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY OF PARTIES 30 November 2022

This report is submitted by the Standing Committee to the Assembly of Parties for its Annual Meeting on 30 November 2022, in accordance with Article VI (2) of the Establishment Agreement and Articles II (2) and XIV of the Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee.

The report provides an overview of the decisions taken by the Standing Committee at its meetings held in 2022, as well as highlights of the activities and management of the Organization and the implementation of the annual budget and the management plan, as reported to the Committee by the Director-General.

COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

In 2022 the Standing Committee was composed of:

- Pakistan as President of the Assembly;
- Italy as *ex-officio* Vice-President of the Assembly;
- The United States as Vice-President of the Assembly;
- Ecuador as *ad hoc* member of the Standing Committee;
- Kuwait as *ad hoc* member of the Standing Committee;
- Philippines as *ad hoc* member of the Standing Committee; and
- Senegal as *ad hoc* member of the Standing Committee.

MEETINGS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

Article VI (1) of the Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee provides that the Committee shall hold at least three regular meetings annually at the invitation of the President.

In 2022, the Standing Committee held regular meetings on:

- 6 April 2022
- 27 July 2022
- 12 October 2022



During 2022, the Director-General participated in all meetings of the Standing Committee, providing detailed reports and presentations on IDLO's work and answering questions on specific issues related to the Organization.

The first two Standing Committee meetings held during 2022 were chaired by the President, the Ambassador of Pakistan to Italy, H.E. Jauhar Saleem. At the request of the President, who was unable to attend the October meeting, the third meeting was chaired by H.E. Bruno Archi, Permanent Representative of Italy to the UN Agencies in Rome, representing Italy as the Vice President of the Assembly of Parties and Acting Chair of meeting. The Chair of the Audit and Finance Committee, Mr. Filippo Alessi, members of the AFC and the Chair of the Board of Advisers, Mr. Stefano Manservigi, attended meetings as observers. Representatives of the IDLO Staff Association also attended each meeting in an observer capacity and presented a statement on behalf of the Association.

The President was supported by the IDLO Secretariat in relation to the organization of the Committee's meetings, the preparation and circulation of relevant background documentation, and summaries of each meeting. The Standing Committee acknowledges with gratitude the efforts of the Director-General and staff of IDLO for the smooth and effective running of the meetings.

IDLO'S RESPONSE AT A TIME OF GLOBAL INSECURITY AND INSTABILITY

At each meeting, the Director-General opened her report to the Committee noting the interconnected challenges of economic, military and climate crises that had impacted the Organization's work and highlighted how IDLO had responded with an integrated approach, grounded in the rule of law.

The Director-General provided the Committee with regular updates on IDLO's contribution to the global response to COVID-19, with a focus on strengthening enabling legal and policy frameworks for managing COVID-19 and the recovery; mitigating the impact of the pandemic on justice systems and justice seekers; and advocating for continued support and investment in justice and the rule of law.

In all her reports the Director-General reiterated that staff safety was her utmost priority and that IDLO Management continued to monitor the situation closely in all countries of operation, particularly those in conflict or emerging from conflict. She paid tribute to IDLO's staff, who had worked with dedication around the world.

Given the gravity of the situation following the invasion of Ukraine and the impact on IDLO's staff and operations, the Director-General addressed this as a stand-alone item on the agenda of the first Standing Committee meeting and provided regular updates at subsequent meetings. The Director-General reported that a number of scoping missions had been sent to Ukraine to assess the situation. Subsequently, she reported that IDLO had redirected its work to support partner institutions, such as the Office of the Prosecutor General, to address their priority needs in relation to investigating and prosecuting violations of international humanitarian and criminal law. The Director-General underlined that IDLO's efforts are closely coordinated with other international actors, including through partnership with the joint US-UK-EU Atrocity Crimes Accountability Group.

With regard to Afghanistan, IDLO's largest country operation, the Director-General reported that IDLO's operations had resumed, in Kabul in May 2022, and that IDLO had been successful in negotiating with the de facto authorities the return to work of IDLO's

staff, including female staff. She further reported that the focus of IDLO's work in Afghanistan was shifting towards support for civil society, in particular organizations working with women and girls. For example, IDLO had developed a detailed mapping of civil society organizations working in the justice sector in Afghanistan, held focus group discussions with lawyers on the formation of an advocates' union, and held a roundtable with religious experts on improving legal aid services in the country.

IMPLEMENTATION OF IDLO'S STRATEGIC PLAN AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

Throughout 2022, the Standing Committee provided oversight on behalf of Member Parties on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2021-2024, Management Plan 2021-2022, and annual operating budget 2022, informed by reports from the Director-General and the Audit and Finance Committee.

2022 was the second year of implementing IDLO's Strategic Plan 2021-2024, representing the half-way mark in the Plan. At each meeting of the Standing Committee the Director-General provided updates on progress made in relation to IDLO's two Strategic Goals, six Strategic Objectives and four Enablers.

The Standing Committee considered a number of IDLO's achievements during the year, in addition to work in Afghanistan and Ukraine, including:

- Progress in implementing IDLO's regional programme in the Sahel to rebuild trust in the justice system by strengthening the criminal justice chain. IDLO launched the *Cadres de Concentration*, innovative platforms to bring together criminal justice professionals, traditional leaders and civil society organizations, to identify priority justice concerns and find solutions. Following a regional conference organized last May in Mali to strengthen coordination among partners – in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, IDLO was asked to develop interregional consultation frameworks and organize national conferences to implement future action plans.
- The Director-General's visit to Liberia in March 2022 where she had met with IDLO partners and witnessed first-hand the work being carried out by IDLO to help strengthen the response to trafficking in persons (TIP). Several of IDLO's key partners from Liberia also joined the April Standing Committee meeting online from Monrovia to provide concrete examples of the work being carried out with IDLO's assistance, including the key role IDLO played in helping draft the country's new law on TIP, in developing a case management system, a mobile app and a web page for TIP, and in promoting the role of women in the justice sector.
- A special presentation made to the July meeting on IDLO's programming, research and policy advocacy on the topic of customary and informal justice (CIJ). Several of IDLO's partners from Kenya joined the discussion online to provide examples of their engagement with IDLO in this area.
- A shift in IDLO's operations in Myanmar, following the coup, to focus on providing support to civil society through training, peer-exchange and mentorship. IDLO completed two inception studies during the reporting period – one examining the ability of lawyers and paralegals to provide legal assistance to defendants, and another for women and vulnerable groups to understand and claim their rights.

- IDLO's growing portfolio of programmes in the area of anti-corruption, with activities to support anti-corruption efforts in several countries including Ukraine, Armenia, The Bahamas, Indonesia, Moldova and the Philippines, as well as an increasing engagement in multilateral processes and global dialogues on anti-corruption, such as the ninth session of the Conference of States Parties to the UN Convention Against Corruption. In this context the Director-General expressed IDLO's thanks to Italy for facilitating the Organization's participation in the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group under Italy's Presidency, an engagement which continued during 2022 under the Indonesian Presidency. In these global forums, IDLO emphasized the central role of the rule of law in combatting corruption.
- Continued emphasis on gender as both a cross-cutting theme and as a focus of dedicated programming, research and advocacy. IDLO's expanding body of work to reduce the justice gap for women and girls ranges from training frontline legal aid providers in Mongolia who help survivors of domestic and gender-based violence to helping promote gender justice through formal and informal mechanisms in Uganda.
- Updates on IDLO's Generation Equality commitments in the area of gender-based violence; economic justice and rights; feminist action for climate justice; and feminist movements and leadership.
- Launch of new publications, including the report *Survivor-Centred Justice for Gender-Based Violence in Complex Situations*, developed by IDLO, in partnership with the Global Women's Institute at George Washington University. The report is informed by country case studies in Afghanistan, Honduras, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, South Sudan and Tunisia.
- Growth in IDLO's programmes to advance inclusive economic development, with activities implemented in countries including Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Jordan, Moldova and Uzbekistan, as well as several initiatives under the Investment Support Programme for Least Developed Countries (ISP/LDCs), including in The Gambia.
- Progress in IDLO's research, programming and policy advocacy in the area of climate justice and sustainable use of natural resources, with self-funded projects being implemented in East Africa and the Horn of Africa to address land conflicts, and in the Philippines and Burkina Faso to equip women and girls to promote and protect environmental rights and shape climate action through law. The Director-General briefed the Standing Committee on her participation in several high-level global fora to advocate for climate justice, including: the 66th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, focusing on gender and climate; COP26 in Glasgow in November 2021, where she highlighted the important role played by rule of law in mitigating effects of climate change; and the Stockholm +50 conference convened by the UN General Assembly and hosted by the Governments of Sweden and Kenya.
- Strengthened engagement with Rome-based agencies in the field of food security. This included IDLO's joint project with FAO on food security, a dialogue on "Governance as a means of implementation for National Pathways for Food System Transformation" jointly organized with the UN Food Systems Coordination Hub, a Solutions Dialogue on "Strengthening governance for more just, inclusive, and effective food systems transformations", co-organized by IDLO and FAO and participation as observer at the annual session of the Committee on Food Security.

- IDLO’s project on “Pandemic Preparedness and Response: Strengthening National Legal and Policy Frameworks to Address Public Health Emergencies, Including COVID-19” designed in consultation with WHO, and the launch of the second phase of the Global RECAP project, being implemented in partnership with WHO and the Canadian International Development Research Centre, which aims to strengthen national regulatory and fiscal environments to promote healthy diets and physical activity.
- Increased visibility for IDLO in international policy fora through the Director-General’s participation in the Human Rights Council in Geneva, where she chaired the third edition of the Forum on Human Rights, Democracy and the Rule of Law; in the Sixth Committee of the UNGA in New York; and in the High-level Political Forum in July, where IDLO organized a side event on *Justice for Survivors of Gender-based Violence in Complex Situations*, in partnership with the Global Women’s Institute at George Washington University and with the support of UN Women and the Governments of the Netherlands and the Philippines.
- Successful organization of several global events, in particular the third Global Conference on SDG16, organized in Rome in hybrid modality, in collaboration with UNDESA and the Government of Italy, which brought together high-level speakers from multilateral and government agencies and representatives of civil society to discuss how to prevent conflict and sustain peace in an increasingly fragile world. Other major advocacy engagements organized by IDLO in partnership with key stakeholders were the World Justice Forum, held in The Hague as part of the Hague Justice Week and the East Africa Justice Week, held in Kampala, which included a High-level Regional Conference on Land and Conflict in the East and Horn of Africa, co-organized with the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), as well as support to the meetings of the International Association of Women Judges and the East African Chief Justices.
- Growing partnerships to leverage IDLO’s impact, including the approval by the World Health Assembly in May of an agreement between IDLO and WHO, granting Observer Status to IDLO in all future Assemblies.
- The first U.S.-IDLO Strategic Dialogue, which took place in Washington. D.C., in October, bringing together different geographic and thematic State Department bureaus, as well as USAID and other departments and offices, to review progress and explore opportunities for increased engagement with IDLO.
- The first in-person meeting of the IDLO Board of Advisors since 2019, which took place at IDLO headquarters in Rome in September, during which the Board discussed with the Director-General and members of IDLO senior leadership ways in which they can support the Organization.
- Implementation of the Strategic Results and Resources Framework (SRRF), aimed at strengthening results-based management across the Organization; introduction of new Monitoring Guidelines and updating of Evaluation Guidelines.
- The 14% increase in programme revenue, the return to almost pre-COVID levels of programme implementation, and ongoing efforts to continue strengthening and diversifying IDLO’s resource base.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

IDLO's financial status and the implementation of the 2022 budget were closely monitored by the Standing Committee through financial updates provided by the Director-General, as well as reports and minutes of Audit and Finance Committee meetings. Additionally, the AFC Chair and members of the AFC participated in all Standing Committee meetings.

2022 DECISIONS AND ENDORSEMENTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

1. Approval of appointment of external auditors for the period 1 August 2022 – 31 July 2024

The Standing Committee approved by consensus the appointment of PricewaterhouseCoopers as IDLO's external auditors for the period from 1 August 2022 to 31 July 2024, with the possibility of a further two-year extension.

2. Approval of audited Financial Statements 2021

The Standing Committee approved the IDLO 2021 audited Financial Statements after review and based upon recommendation for approval by the Audit and Finance Committee. Since 2019 IDLO's audited financial statements have been compliant with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS).

3. Approval of proposed Management Plan 2023-2024 and Operating Budget 2023

At its meeting in October, the Standing Committee discussed and approved for onward transmission to the Assembly of Parties the proposed Management Plan 2023-2024 and draft Operating Budget 2023. The Budget had been previously endorsed and recommended by the AFC at its meeting on 22 September.

In the days immediately following the Committee's October meeting, IDLO was informed of additional core funding of 1.7 million euro to the Organization in 2023. A revised draft Operating Budget for 2023 incorporating this additional revenue was shared with the AFC and discussed at a special meeting of the AFC on 20 October; the AFC agreed to recommend to the Standing Committee the approval of the revised Proposed Operating Budget 2023.

The revised draft Operating Budget was shared with the Standing Committee on 24 October for a decision to be taken in writing within 14 days, pursuant to Article IX of the Rules of Procedure of the Standing Committee. No objection was received by the deadline of 7 November 2022, and the revised draft Operating Budget was adopted by consensus and approved for onward transmission to the Assembly of Parties.

4. Approval of draft resolutions for the 2022 Assembly of Parties meeting

At the meeting on 12 October, the Director-General briefed the Standing Committee on three draft resolutions to be submitted to the Assembly. All three resolutions were approved by consensus by the Standing Committee for transmission to the Assembly of Parties for consideration and adoption at its meeting on 30 November.

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