

**REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE
ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY OF PARTIES
28 November 2023**

This report is submitted by the Standing Committee to the Assembly of Parties for its Annual Meeting on 28 November 2023, 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 2023, 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 2023 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;
- Egypt as *ad hoc* member of the Standing Committee;
- Kuwait as *ad hoc* member of the Standing Committee;
- Paraguay as *ad hoc* member of the Standing Committee; and
- Philippines 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 2023, the Standing Committee held regular meetings on:

- 5 April 2023
- 27 July 2023
- 11 October 2023

At each meeting, the Director-General provided comprehensive reports and presentations

on IDLO's work and answered questions on specific issues related to the Organization.

The first Standing Committee meeting held during 2023 was chaired by the President, the Ambassador of Pakistan to Italy, H.E. Ali Javed. At the request of the President, who was unable to attend the July and October meetings, these meetings were chaired by Mr. Rodney Hunter, Chargé d'Affaires, a.i. of the U.S. Mission to the UN Agencies in Rome, representing the United States as the Vice President of the Assembly of Parties.

The Chair of the Audit and Finance Committee (AFC), 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 meetings in an observer capacity and presented a statement on behalf of the Association.

Although meetings held during 2021 and 2022 had been organized remotely due to restrictions linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, during 2023 all Standing Committee meetings were held in person at IDLO headquarters.

The Chair 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.

IMPLEMENTATION OF IDLO'S STRATEGIC PLAN AND MANAGEMENT PLAN

Throughout 2023, the Standing Committee provided guidance on behalf of Member Parties on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2021-2024, Management Plan 2023-2024, and annual operating budget 2023, informed by reports from the Director-General and the Audit and Finance Committee.

2023 was the third year of implementing IDLO's Strategic Plan 2021-2024 and the first year of IDLO's Management Plan 2023-2024. 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 Organizational Enablers.

In each of her reports, in light also of the instability in a number of IDLO's countries of operation, the Director-General underlined the importance of safeguarding IDLO staff, describing it as her utmost priority and reporting that enhanced security measures were being put in place in IDLO's more volatile countries of operation. She paid tribute to IDLO's staff, particularly those in the field, who continued to work with dedication to carry out IDLO's mandate.

The Standing Committee considered a number of IDLO's achievements and challenges during the year, including the following:

- An in-depth presentation and discussion on IDLO's work in Ukraine, included as a separate agenda item in the April meeting of the Standing Committee. At the meeting the Prosecutor General of Ukraine participated online from Kyiv and gave the Committee an overview of the crucial and timely support being provided to his Office by IDLO, including supporting efforts to investigate and prosecute alleged violations of international humanitarian law (IHL) and international criminal law (ICL);

advising his office on responses to sexual and gender-based violence crimes and helping to achieve anti-corruption and public integrity reforms.

- Regular updates on IDLO’s operations in Afghanistan, which have pivoted to focus exclusively on supporting non-state actors in the justice sector. The Committee learnt that in May 2023, following consultations with the UN, other partners, and staff, IDLO’s female national staff were able to return to work in person and IDLO’s office in Kabul is providing assistance on a range of issues to justice seekers, especially women and vulnerable groups.
- IDLO’s expanding portfolio in the area of anti-corruption and good governance, with initiatives in a wide range of countries, including Armenia, The Bahamas, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Honduras, Indonesia, Moldova, Mongolia, the Philippines, Somalia, and Ukraine. In parallel IDLO continued to engage in multilateral processes and global dialogues on anti-corruption, in particular the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group, which had begun under Italy’s G20 Presidency in 2021 and continued under the Indonesian Presidency and the current Indian Presidency, including participation in select Ministerial meetings.
- Continued emphasis on justice for women and girls as both a cross-cutting issue, mainstreamed throughout IDLO’s work, and as a dedicated area of IDLO programming, research and advocacy.
- In the context of its work to promote inclusive economic development, IDLO’s Investment Support Programme for Least Developed Countries (ISP/LDCs) helped beneficiaries in a number of countries such as Ethiopia, The Gambia, Liberia, Malawi, Mauritania, Mozambique, Myanmar, Rwanda, Senegal, Somalia and Uganda. The Committee was also informed however by the Director-General that funding for this highly regarded programme is coming to an end and Member Parties are encouraged to suggest ideas on potential sources of funding to support its continuation.
- Progress in the implementation of IDLO’s Global RECAP project, being carried out 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 in Bangladesh, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda, with plans to expand to several more countries.
- On the important topic of securing proper legal status in its countries of operation, during 2023 IDLO was successful in signing new Host Country Agreements with the Bahamas, Democratic Republic of Congo, and Ukraine, and in making progress in negotiations with several others, including The Gambia and the Philippines.
- The fourth edition of the global SDG16 Conference, co-organized by IDLO with UNDESA and the Italian Government on the topic: “SDG16 as a compass for navigating intersecting crises”. Importantly, the key messages of this year’s Conference were also shared as a joint General Assembly and ECOSOC document ahead of the SDG16 Summit in New York. As part of its advocacy efforts, to ensure the rule of law is kept high on the global agenda, IDLO also provided several submissions to ongoing multilateral processes, including with respect to the SDG Summit; the New Agenda for Peace; the Declaration on Future Generations; the Global Digital Compact; and Pandemic Prevention, Preparedness and Response.

- Other high-level advocacy events in which the Director-General participated, including the United Nations General Assembly; the Human Rights Council; COP27; the UN LDC5 Summit; the UN Food Systems Summit +2 Stocktaking Moment; Tashkent Law Spring; and the OPEC Fund Development Forum. During 2023 IDLO also participated for the first time as an observer, in the 76th World Health Assembly, and the 43rd session of the FAO Conference.
- Several new research publications, including a policy brief on “Rule of Law for Food Systems Transformation”; an issue brief on “Women’s Participation and Leadership in Customary and Informal Justice Systems”; Toolkits on “Regulatory approaches to noncommunicable diseases: healthy diets and physical activity”; and issue briefs on “Preventing Pandemics through the Rule of Law: Strengthening Countries’ Legal Preparedness for Public Health Emergencies”, “Enabling Access to Justice for Survivors of Gender-based Violence Against Women in Somaliland” and “Strengthening Climate Justice in Somaliland: The Role of ADR Centres”.
- IDLO’s four Organization Enablers, through which the Organization is investing in people, capacities, and systems to optimize the implementation of the Strategic Plan. Examples of progress on the latter included the completion of data collection for IDLO’s Strategic Results and Resources Framework for 2022; the development of country strategies to support IDLO’s transition to a more integrated approach to programmatic work; the further implementation of the Human Resources Strategy; and the conclusion of a long-term lease and launch of a long-planned refurbishment project for the Rome headquarters building.

FINANCIAL MATTERS

IDLO’s financial status and the implementation of the 2023 budget were monitored by the Standing Committee through reports from the Audit and Finance Committee (AFC) and minutes of its meetings, as well as financial updates provided by the Director-General. At the October meeting, when presenting the proposed Operating Budget for 2024, the Director-General underlined how IDLO had managed to prepare a balanced budget, despite the challenges posed by an unexpected decrease in core funding experienced during the year.

The AFC Chair and members of the AFC participated in all Standing Committee meetings as observers.

2023 DECISIONS AND ENDORSEMENTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE

1. Approval of audited Financial Statements 2022

Since 2019 IDLO’s audited financial statements have been compliant with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). The Standing Committee approved the IDLO 2022 audited Financial Statements after review and based upon recommendation for approval by the Audit and Finance Committee.

2. Approval of proposed Operating Budget 2024

At its meeting in October, the Standing Committee approved for onward transmission to the Assembly of Parties the proposed Operating Budget for 2024, which had been previously

endorsed and recommended by the AFC at its meeting on 21 September.

3. Approval of draft resolutions for the 2023 Assembly of Parties meeting

At the October meeting, the Director-General briefed the Standing Committee on preparations for the Assembly of Parties meeting and the IDLO General Counsel provided an overview of the seven draft resolutions to be submitted to the Assembly. All resolutions were approved by consensus by the Standing Committee for transmission to the Assembly of Parties for consideration and adoption at its meeting on 28 November.

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