

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL
MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY OF PARTIES
November 23-24, 2015**

[CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY]

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Our Special Guests,
Members of our Board of Advisers,
Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

Let me begin by welcoming you, particularly those who have travelled a long way and at some cost to their schedule, to participate at the meeting of our Assembly of Member Parties in Rome. I would also like to express my deep appreciation to the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation for their generosity in hosting this Assembly.

From Paris to Bamako, the shocking terrorist attacks this past week were a sad reminder of the dangerous world in which we are living. The need for good laws, accountable institutions and people's access to justice have never been stronger, IDLO's mission never more relevant. The explicit acknowledgement of access to justice and the rule of law in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that the United Nations (UN) adopted in September 2015 and which IDLO strongly championed only serves to underline that point.

It is against this backdrop that my report should be seen. It should be seen also against the backdrop of IDLO's rejuvenation over the past four years. Four years ago, almost to this day in November 2011, this Assembly elected me as Director-General. I am very grateful for the trust and confidence which you placed in me.

Four years ago is a long time in diplomatic memory. So, it would be worthwhile to recall the state of IDLO in 2011: in deep financial and leadership crisis, its reserves dangerously depleted, 30% staff cuts, low morale, low profile, a handful of programs and much uncertainty about what lay ahead.

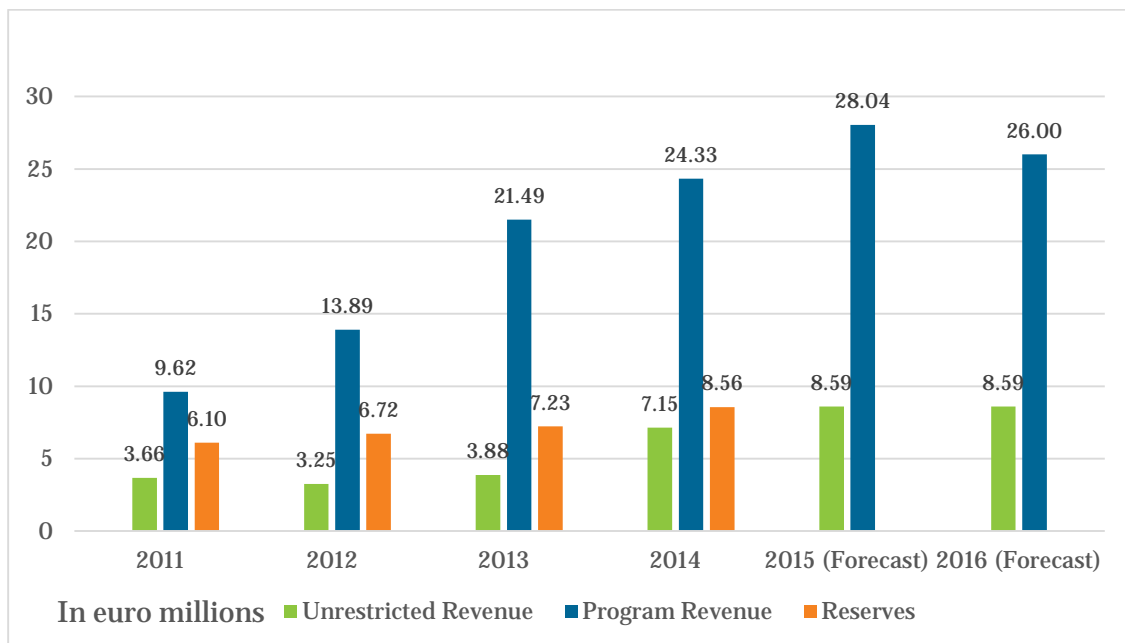
The journey from there to here was made possible by some important factors:

- The Strategic Plan 2013 – 2016, on which we consulted widely and which was adopted by this Assembly in December 2012. The Plan put IDLO on the right track as a champion of the rule of law. The following slide captures the essence of the Strategic Plan:

IDLO's Strategic Plan 2013-2016



- A generous multi-year agreement signed with the Netherlands in 2013 that allowed IDLO to invest in itself and set up its Branch Office in The Hague;
- Strong political and growing financial support of our host country, Italy, and the wise counsel of the then IDLO President, the United States, as well as the trust and confidence of our partners and donors;



- And most of importantly of all, the resilience, entrepreneurial spirit and strong commitment of my colleagues - the staff, managers and employees of IDLO - who never let an opening pass, for whom every challenge is an opportunity, who truly are the real stars in IDLO's firmament.

When I hear that "IDLO punches above its weight", I take it as a compliment that we achieve more with less – that is no mean praise in the inter-governmental sector which is often criticized for waste and sloth.

IDLO's journey has not been an untroubled one – there have been bumps, potholes, and sharp corners. My report will cover successes as well as areas for further improvement. As in past years, my report will cover **results, resources and risks**.

Let me begin first with **results**.

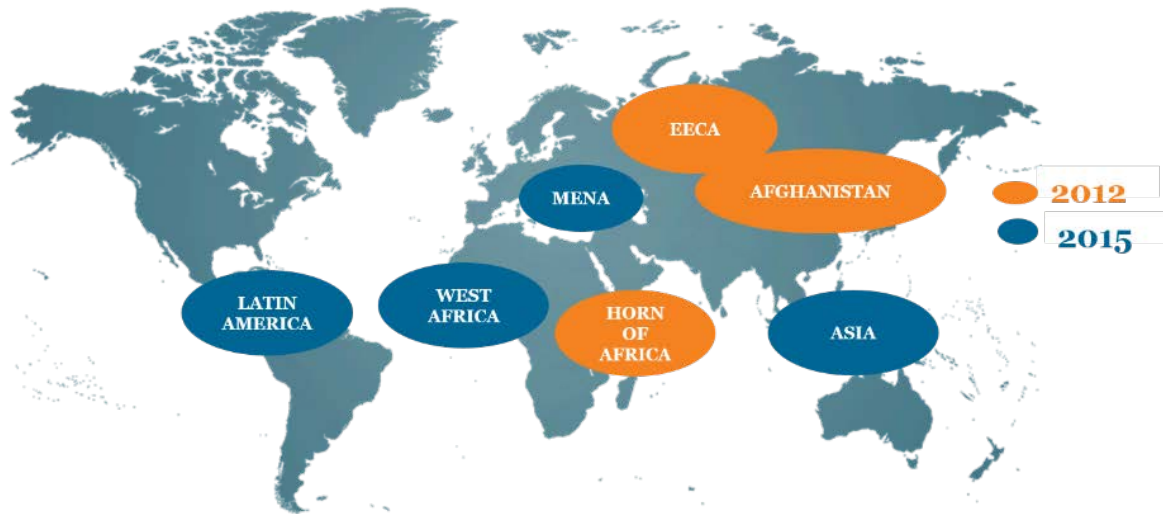
In 2012, when I began my mandate as Director-General of IDLO, we had only a few programs in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and the Horn of Africa, as the slide below shows.

Geographic distribution of major IDLO programs in 2012



Today our operations cover a wide geography: Kabul and Kyiv; Bishkek and Bamako; Tunis and Tegucigalpa; Jordan, Juba and Jakarta; Monrovia, Mongolia and Myanmar, as can be seen from the slide below.

Geographic distribution of major IDLO programs in 2015



In past years we have shown you films about what we do. This year, we have at the Assembly our Country Directors and I will ask them to tell you in their own words about the work they do, often in challenging environments marked by political volatility and growing insecurity.

As noted in the slide on the Strategic Plan, we work on three major thematic areas:

Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Institution-Building & Legal Reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Access to Justice & rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Legal Innovation for Sustainable Development and Economic Opportunity

Most of our **institution-building** work takes place in countries emerging from conflict – where re-building justice institutions is an integral part of the exercise of restoring peace and re-establishing public confidence and trust.

Fred Huston has been IDLO's Country Director in Bishkek, **Kyrgyzstan** for almost five years:

In Kyrgyzstan we are supporting judicial reform. The government is fully committed to the reforms. It has addressed significant resource gaps in the judiciary, doubling its budget in recent years. In the near future, its financial commitment will likely triple in size.

IDLO, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the Kyrgyz government are working together to enhance the integrity, competence and reputation of the Kyrgyz judiciary. For example, IDLO is assisting in the strengthening of the judiciary through the Kyrgyz Judicial Training Center. This Center has had remarkable success. When IDLO started working with EBRD in Kyrgyzstan 10 years ago, 36 applicants took part in our initial training, and today 14 of them are working as judges in the country.

IDLO is also supporting efforts to publicize judicial decisions for greater transparency, using technology. We are also working in innovative ways, for instance we are working on “a reality TV show” to raise public awareness about legal rights and access to justice.

In **Kenya** we have focused our work on strengthening constitutional reforms to deepen democratic processes. Enid Muthoni has been IDLO’s Country Director in Kenya for four years:

IDLO has contributed to legislative drafting in Kenya for the last 5 years, including on the 2010 Constitution and its implementation.

Our work in legislative drafting is complemented by our work with the judiciary. After the electoral violence in 2007-2008, the Kenyan judiciary was compromised; people mistrusted the courts. Since 2013, IDLO has been working to help strengthen public confidence in the judiciary. The results speak for themselves: 180 electoral disputes were filed in a record 6 months after the last elections. IDLO is now building on those gains. With our support a permanent committee has been set up to enhance the judiciary before the upcoming 2017 elections.

From Kenya, let me turn to neighboring **Somalia**, where Adam Shirwa Jama has been our Country Director for almost four years:

Working in Somalia is challenging given the fluidity of political transitions in the country. The Minister of Justice of

Somalia, who is present at the Assembly, is the fourth Minister of Justice IDLO has been working with in the country in as many years. Despite these challenges, we believe we have made significant contributions to peacebuilding, with support to legal drafting, capacity building of the Ministry of Justice and the judiciary, support to the Somali Bar Association and training of customary justice providers. Recently, IDLO signed an agreement to work on reforms of the penal and criminal procedural codes. Since Somalia is a country where customary justice plays an important role, IDLO is collaborating with the elders of the traditional justice systems on the proposed reforms.

Last November, I reported to you that the outbreak of conflict had compelled some donors to freeze aid to the justice sector in **South Sudan**, even though it is precisely when peace is at stake that justice sector reform is most needed. Things are slowly changing, according to Romualdo Mavedzenge, our Country Representative for **South Sudan**:

In December 2013, when the conflict in South Sudan flared up for a second time since independence, IDLO was forced to suspend programming. But unlike other organizations, we maintained a presence in-country. This meant that IDLO was able to resume work quickly in the middle of 2014 and adjust our programming to meet the country's needs.

With the independence of South Sudan, the country transitioned from an Arabic, sharia-based civil law system to an English language, common law system. The majority of justice and legal professionals were trained in the old system and worked in the Arabic language. Furthermore, formal justice institutions, even under the Sharia law, were weak. And at the same time, ordinary citizens were largely accustomed to the old system which had been in place since 1979.

IDLO is working on institution building in South Sudan and supporting the legal reform process. We have trained justice system actors in the government, private sector and civil society. And now we are starting to see a shift in practice: judges are starting to write their judgements in English, and High Court and Supreme Court proceedings are more widely available.

Our work in the Horn of Africa is well-established. By comparison **Ukraine** is a new operation for us. Barbara James is our Country Director:

IDLO is focusing its efforts on anti-corruption. The goal is to establish a transparent legal system. The work has been likened to peeling an onion: every layer that is peeled away, there are more issues to contend with beneath. Since August, IDLO has worked with the government to prepare 29 pieces of legislation for Parliamentary review and debate. We are also working on civil service reform in Odessa, as well as on reform of the prosecutor's office. Finally, we are devising an electronic procurement system to make public procurement more transparent.

Access to justice, the second stream of our work under the Strategic Plan, has been steadily growing in 2015. I am particularly proud of our work to enhance legal aid and women's access to justice, which has expanded in recent years to several countries.

Mary Lou Schram is the Chief of Party for our program on Supporting Access to Justice in **Afghanistan**, where we first began our gender work some years ago.

One of IDLO's key contributions has been to help build strong networks in the country. In 2015, IDLO set up a legal aid network by bringing together ten legal aid primary providers to discuss reform programs, share experiences and coordinate information, such as trial notifications, evidentiary issues, and relationships with the Attorney General's Office and the Supreme Court.

IDLO also supports a network of Afghan NGOs providing shelter to women victims of violence. The majority of shelter NGOs in the country belong to this network. These shelters not only care for the women, they also counsel and train women and help them to find jobs and lead independent lives after they leave the shelter. IDLO is also working with the Attorney General's Office and the Ministry of Women's Affairs, and six provincial offices around the country to combat gender based violence.

Our access to justice work is expanding— two great examples are in **Honduras** and **Myanmar**.

Andres Vazquez is our Country Director in Honduras:

With the opening of new offices four months ago, IDLO's work in Honduras is just getting off the ground. Honduras has one of the highest levels of violence in a nation not in conflict. With elections next November and campaigning starting in March, there's a real urgency to reduce violence.

IDLO's work is focused on San Pedro Sula, where 65% of all domestic or intra-familial violence cases in Honduras take place. IDLO is taking a holistic approach to violence, working not just with criminal prosecution but also at access to justice for detainees, and developing practical tools for rehabilitation and reintegration processes. IDLO is also supporting the government to introduce new concepts like restorative justice, victim-centered justice and adolescent justice.

Through this work, IDLO is bringing different actors together, sometimes for the first time, including local government and civil society. In so doing, IDLO, is bringing a bottom up approach to the rule of law. I recently spoke to one of the prison inmates and he told me he was really happy someone believed in the detainees. He was grateful that someone was listening to them and giving them a voice. Through this program, the authorities are starting to focus on the people, and not just the procedures.

Kartik Sharma is our Country Representative in **Myanmar**, where recent elections have brought new hope for democracy:

IDLO is actively participating in exciting new transformations gripping the country. The rule of law is a shared priority that crosses all political and ethnic divides. In 2015, IDLO developed four Rule of Law Centers in-country, the first self-funded programming initiative for IDLO ever. The training and community outreach activities link universal rule of law concepts like fairness and equality before the law to local justice concerns. Women's participation in the activities is particularly strong, with 35 out of 58 participants being female. Women make up 63% of project staff. IDLO also works with the Union Attorney General's Office and the Supreme Court, to identify and address training and organizational capacity needs.

As Kartik mentioned, our program in Myanmar is self-funded – that means we have financed it from unrestricted contribution – thanks to the endorsement of the 2014 Assembly to allow IDLO to use unrestricted funds to implement programs. Doing this helps us to program strategically and build better partnerships. In Myanmar we partnered with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This is a new programming model for IDLO and the 2015 Standing Committee approved the criteria for the selection of such programs in future.

The third stream of our work focuses on **economic opportunities and sustainable development**. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has

been our major partner on this theme and I am delighted to welcome the General Counsel Ms. Marie Anne Birken to the Assembly. I will now ask Hanan Rabbani, the Head of our Middle East and North Africa (MENA) programs, based in Amman, Jordan, to speak about our efforts in the MENA region to promote investor confidence and job creation:

The MENA region has gone through a year of unprecedented upheaval. Weak rule of law conditions, including a lack of accountability and economic disparity, has pushed people to the streets. This year IDLO opened an office in Amman. We developed and implemented capacity development projects with EBRD on commercial and intellectual property law in Jordan. IDLO is also conducting training in Tunisia to support Tunisia's capacity to fight financial crimes. In Kuwait we are implementing a project to translate relevant laws into English so that they may be more accessible to a wider group of foreign investors.

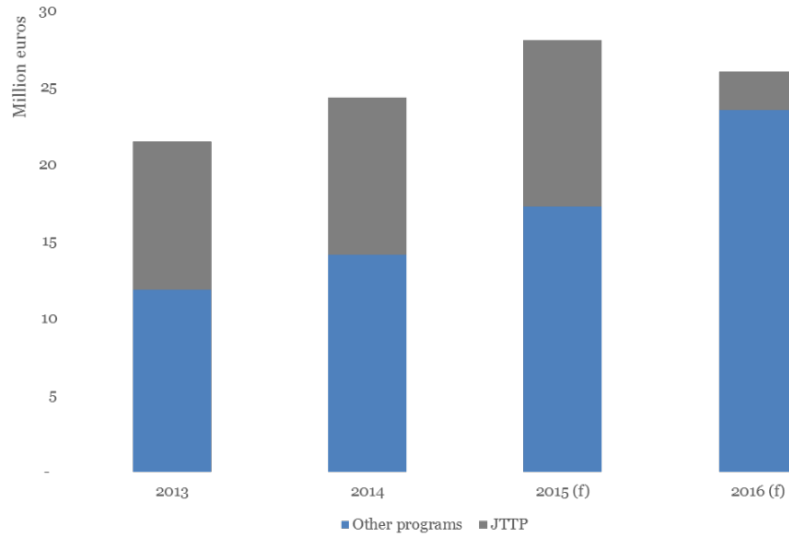
This review of our work by our Country Directors does not reflect the entirety of our programs but is a snapshot of what we are doing in the words of those closest to the ground.

Before wrapping up this tour of our programs, I should not forget to mention the Justice Training Transition Program (JTTP) in Afghanistan, our largest program to date, which will be completed in a few months' time. It has been a mammoth operation, training the entire criminal justice sector in Afghanistan and building the capacity for continuing professional legal education within the relevant institutions so that there is transition to local ownership. That has not been easy amidst political uncertainty. It has also been highly risky with growing insecurity. One of our local colleagues was injured in an incident earlier this year, and our office in Kunduz was ransacked when the Taliban overran the city in September.

I was in Kabul in May this year and had the honor of meeting with President Ashraf Ghani to discuss our programs and also was able to see for myself what my colleagues have achieved. We had good discussions with the relevant Afghan Ministries and I am pleased to report that we are on track for the completion of the program in March 2016.

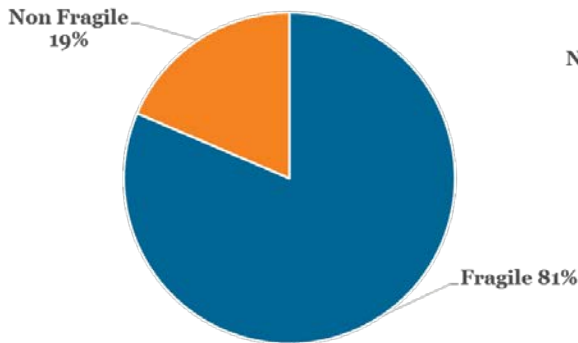
Having come so far so successfully with JTTP, I am confident that we will not stumble on the last lap, and will close down the operation as effectively as we opened it. We are now working to transition our own operation in Afghanistan to a smaller but equally effective one.

JTTP has been a great opportunity but it has also posed some challenges. One key challenge was how to manage the loss of income when JTTP comes to an end. I am pleased to report that we have overcome that. The slide below shows that we have been able to successfully develop new programs to replace the income we now derive from JTTP.

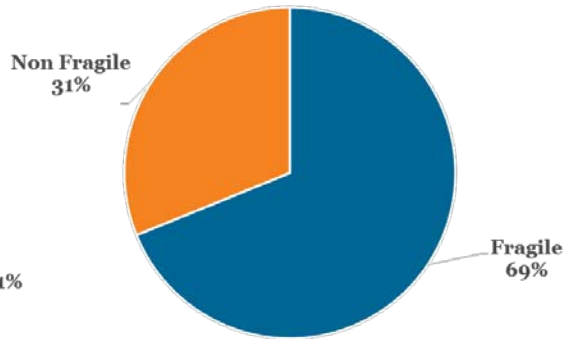


Moving from dependence on one large program in a single country to several medium sized programs in a number of countries has helped to spread the risk and has increased the stability of our program portfolio. We are stronger today going forward in terms of a balanced portfolio than we have ever been in the past three years. The geographic diversity has also reduced the risk of operating in fragile situations. As the slide below shows, our portfolio is better spread between fragile and non-fragile situations now.

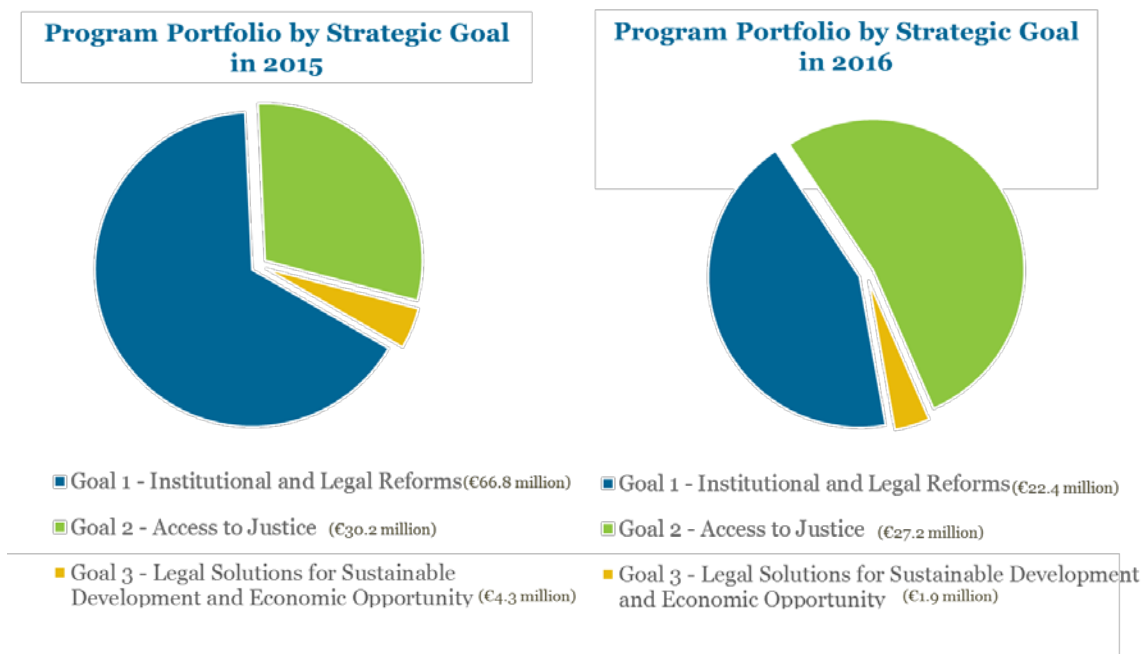
PROGRAM PORTFOLIO YEAR 2014
Breakdown by Fragile and Non Fragile



PROGRAM PORTFOLIO YEAR 2015
Breakdown by Fragile and Non Fragile



The program portfolio is getting better balanced not only geographically but also thematically, although more work needs to be carried out to strengthen our work in the area of economic opportunity.



How did we do it? Through good planning and judicious investment going back to 2014, building up our capacity to develop new programs, strengthening our field operations (our team of Country Directors are a powerful evidence of that investment), managing the operations well so that through the results we gain more confidence with the donors and program countries. It has been a painstaking, meticulous process – that of course will need to continue as we move forward to build up the pipeline going into 2017 and beyond.

Another key factor has been our investment in learning, evaluation and impact assessment. Two major achievements in 2015 were: the roll out of the gender strategy to ensure a gender perspective in all our programs and to further strengthen our work on access to justice for women and girls; and the review of IDLO’s capacity development work. We also adopted guidelines and tools to re-set our relationship with our implementing partners from grantor and sub-grantee to one centered around partnership based on mutual accountability and expectations. These are just some examples of the way in which we are seeking to enhance our program quality – and which will continue in 2016.

Earlier this year we revamped our evaluation guidelines and developed more sophisticated methods and approaches to gauge different levels of results and gain a better insight into the impact for IDLO’s beneficiaries. We piloted some evaluations and will soon be publishing the findings and recommendations. Next year we will be publishing lessons learned briefs to take the learning one step forward into broader analysis and dialogue with our peers in the sector.

In 2015, we refreshed our research strategy, linking it more closely with our programs, and then feeding the research through policy advocacy on to the international stage,

including at the UN in New York and Geneva, the World Bank, Expo 2015 in Milan, the Committee on Food Security in Rome or other fora in The Hague.

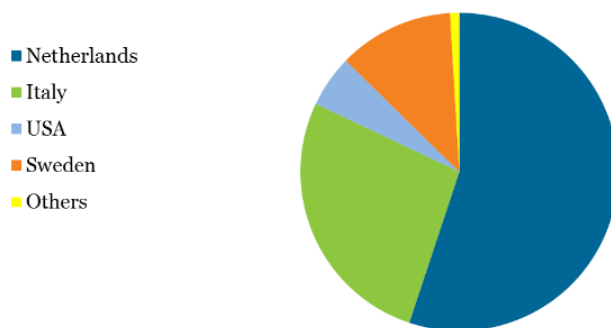
Our most important contribution to policy advocacy in 2015 was helping to build consensus on the inclusion of access to justice and rule of law in the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, explicitly in Goal 16 and implicitly across the Sustainable Development Goals.

Strong policy advocacy has given us visibility which in turn has enhanced access to donors and partners, and created openings for strategic partnerships.

Turning now to resources, it has been a “bumper year” for fundraising. Our unrestricted contributions have reached a record high, thanks to the four – year partnership agreement with Sweden, a matching grant from the Netherlands and a generous additional contribution from Italy.

IDLO’s unrestricted funding in 2015

Total 8.5 m euro in 2015



The agreement with Sweden was preceded by a full organizational assessment by SIDA earlier this year. That, I hope, will reassure our potential and current donors about the sound state of our organizational health, which we hope to enhance further in 2016.

**Sweden and IDLO signed a multi-year partnership agreement
Rome, 12 June 2015**



In the course of 2015, we laid the seeds for new partnerships which we hope to explore further next year.

Growing political support for IDLO has led to three new Member Parties – Honduras, Mongolia and Pakistan - joining IDLO in 2015. In the course of the year, we engaged with the Standing Committee to develop a strategy for enhancing the engagement of Member Parties and non-Member governments, and are looking forward to further expanding our membership.

Our success is not without challenges, our growth is not without risks. I said it last year, I repeat it again. We are doing well but there is no room for complacency. There are key vulnerabilities externally and internally that we need to mitigate and address, and I am committed to do so.

What are the **risks and challenges** going forward?

There are external risks. We operate in a highly volatile environment, operationally as well as financially. Security threats could shut down one operation or the other at any time. The demands of humanitarian aid and refugee assistance may affect the availability of development funds for rule of law assistance. The steps that we have taken to diversify our program portfolio, improve our donor base and strengthen our financial reserves are aimed at mitigating these risks.

I see our main challenge in the fourth and final year of the Strategic Plan as largely internal. It is as though having pushed through layer after layer of change we have reached the kernel: inside the organization. The task now is to push through the internal organizational reforms effectively and speedily.

Our programming model is going through transformative change. Our operations are expanding rapidly across the world, energy and enthusiasm are driving our programs,

research and advocacy results, but the internal organizational reforms to support the external work do not appear to be able to keep up with that pace.

A major program of organizational reforms, called the Continuous Improvement Plan (CIP), was launched at the end of last year. A number of projects have started, some have progressed but some have fallen behind or have been overtaken by events during the course of this year. That is why we have just launched an assessment to see where and how adjustments can be made to achieve the goals and objectives of CIP.

The key issues we are now prioritizing are the upgrade of the ICT systems with a special focus on finance, and improvements to the budgeting and reporting processes to enhance transparency and accountability.

Fast, flexible, efficient management requires us to move away from a centralized model to one with more delegation to the field and along with it, proper systems for accountability and control. As a first step, I intend to launch next year a review of Headquarters/Field delegation and accountability, and undertake changes based on good practice and lessons drawn from our established operations.

These organizational changes will have an impact on management at Headquarters. I plan to initiate, with the support of the Standing Committee, a review of our structure to strengthen coordination, collaboration and communication internally and externally and to develop a roadmap to improve the way we work.

People are our key resource. As part of our internal reforms, we launched a number of reviews on how best to reform our human resource policies and procedures. Staff want consistency and clarity. Management want flexibility to operate with limited resources in diverse situations. I am optimistic that with good will and good consultations on all sides, we will be able to agree on a new employment model that is flexible, fair and transparent.

Our people give their best to the organization. We strive for excellence. We expect high performance and don't suffer laggards easily – and that applies from the top to the bottom. I look to your support to be able to invest in our people – our most valuable resource.

As Director-General I am committed to the organizational reforms that we promised in the Strategic Plan and hold myself accountable to deliver it.

In any dynamic, growing organization, reform is essential. I have noted a growing interest among Member Parties to pursue governance reform next year. I have heard the Board of Advisers voice a similar desire. As your loyal servant, I remain at your disposal to support, advise and help you to achieve the changes you desire.

Four years ago the expectations were low, the goal was survival, and at best stability of IDLO. With four years of my first mandate now completed and a new mandate being proposed, I have taken the time to reflect on IDLO's achievements and ambitions. The progress that IDLO has made goes way beyond my own expectations. I credit the

successes to the commitment and team work of my colleagues and the support from you, the Member Parties. Where we have failed or fallen behind, I take full responsibility.

It has been an extraordinary privilege to lead this Organization through a period of great promise and some important challenges. Thank you for your trust and confidence.

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