

STATEMENT OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL

Meeting of the Assembly of Parties

November 6, 2014
Rome, Italy

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

Let me begin by welcoming you, especially our special guests and those who have traveled a long way and at some cost to their schedule to be here with us today.

Let me also at the outset pay tribute to my colleagues, who are working with great courage and commitment in the most difficult, deprived and insecure parts of the world.

Standing in this beautiful Renaissance room - for which we are, of course, deeply grateful to the City of Rome - the world in which IDLO works seems very far away. The rule of law too seems an obscure, academic concept. So, I hope the short film has helped to give you a sense of the complex and compelling nature of what we do to make justice real, transparent, accessible and affordable for all - for women victims of violence and small shopkeepers, as well as investors and entrepreneurs. Working "top down" with governments and institutions, and "bottom up" with the legal community and the "end users" of justice, our aim is to make laws and institutions meaningful in people's lives.

Effective institutions are key to providing justice and upholding rights. Institutions in turn function better when citizens are empowered. Together they provide an essential framework for equitable and sustainable development. That is why IDLO's Strategic Plan, which this Assembly endorsed two years ago, calls on us to work simultaneously on three fronts: to strengthen the institutions of justice, to enhance people's access to justice and rights, and to support institutional and legal reform to promote sustainable development. To achieve these substantive goals, the Plan asks us also to reform and redesign the organization, and expand our political and financial support.

IDLO's Strategic Plan 2013-2016



It is an ambitious Plan but I am pleased to report that two years down the road, we are making steady progress. IDLO is flourishing, enjoying the strong tailwinds generated by the growing realization of the international community that the rule of law is an essential building block for advancing peace and stability, improving the economy, building inclusive societies and promoting sustainable development.

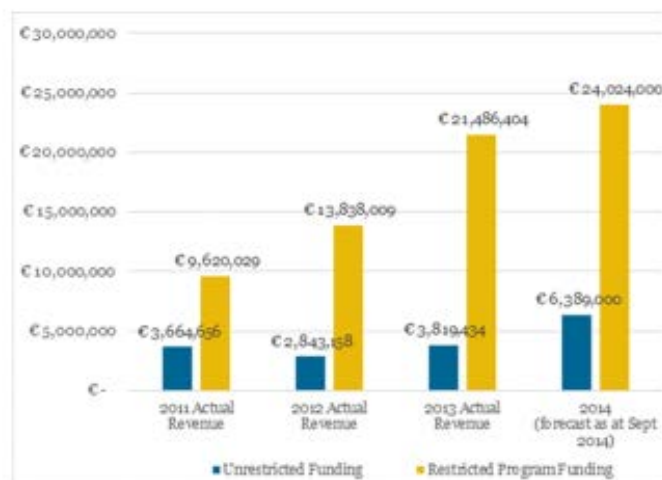
IDLO's program portfolio



My statement will focus today on results, reforms and risks. Our programs show good results and our research is of high quality. We are being recognized as a credible champion for the rule of law at international and national levels. Our growth trajectory remains impressive. Our financial health is good. Our organizational changes are broadly on track, including the setup of our Branch Office in The Hague, which is a valuable addition to IDLO.

IDLO'S FINANCIAL HEALTH

Trend in Unrestricted and Restricted Revenue 2011 - 2015



But our success is not without its challenges; our growth is not without risks. We remain too heavily dependent on a small number of donors and members. Our portfolio is too heavily concentrated on a few large projects in a few countries with fragile security. These risks were identified in our 2014 Management Plan. We have worked intensively to mitigate them in 2014 and will continue to do so in 2015.

So in one brief sentence: we are doing well, but there is no room for complacency. We need your political and financial support.

You have before you today a document that gives a detailed account of the outputs we promised in our 2014 Plan. It describes what we have managed to deliver during 2014 and are in the process of delivering in the last quarter of this year. You will see that much has been accomplished. This is the first time that the Secretariat has produced such a document for the Member Parties, demonstrating our commitment to transparency and accountability.

Moving from outputs to outcomes, you will recall that in our 2014 Plan we set out five critical strategic initiatives – or priority outcomes – that we would aim to achieve in 2014. How well have we fared in relation to them?



I would like to share with you some highlights on these Critical Strategic Initiatives.

Let me start with the first initiative: deepening and diversifying our portfolio.

As the film so amply demonstrated, legitimate, effective and responsive institutions are key to breaking the cycle of violence and laying the foundations for political stability, economic recovery and social development in post-conflict countries. In our 2014 Plan, which you approved last year, we acknowledged the importance of our peace-building work and our commitment to continue it. During the year, we deepened our work in Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Afghanistan and Somalia.

As we heard from the Kenyan Permanent Secretary, we have played a part, with support from DANIDA, SIDA and USAID, to help maintain the momentum of reform and assist Kenya in the

implementation of the new and potentially transformative Constitution, including by ensuring that gender is mainstreamed in the devolution process and in the judicial system.

Inclusion brings legitimacy to institutions. So, do transparency and integrity.

In Kyrgyzstan, IDLO has been working for several years to strengthen the integrity and performance of the courts. Earlier this year, with our support, the Kyrgyzstan Judiciary successfully lobbied Parliament for more funds and greater independence for judges. With additional support from USAID, we are implementing a program of 'e-justice', using information technology to make proceedings and decisions more transparent to the public, including innovative measures such as reality TV. As the judge in the film said, it has generated great public interest in the work of the courts and boosted their performance - a great example of the top down/bottom up theory of change.

Creating legitimate institutions takes time. IDLO has been a partner in Afghanistan's justice sector development for more than a decade. Today, with US and Dutch support, we are one of the largest providers of justice sector development assistance in Afghanistan. Growing insecurity is a major concern, as courts, judges, prosecutors and lawyers are being targeted by extremist violence from those who do not want to see an effective state justice system. Earlier this week, another attack in Kunduz killed nine people, including two prosecutors who were our program participants and the brother of one of our staff members. But despite the attacks, with the support and encouragement of Afghan participants of our program, we have maintained the pace of training, completing over 200 courses for nearly 4,000 judges, lawyers, prosecutors and other officials across the country. A mid-term program review confirmed the quality and timely delivery of the training component. The key challenge now is transition: building the capacity of the Afghan institutions to take over the program by the end of 2015. We look forward to working with the new government so that Afghans can take full ownership of the professional development of their criminal justice sector.

Insecurity is also hampering us in Yemen, where we have successfully completed a program of judicial training funded by Italy, but we find that new donors are hesitant to make a commitment under the current circumstances.

It is in South Sudan that we faced our greatest setback in 2014. It was our second largest operation until the outbreak of conflict late last year. The subsequent suspension of donor funding compelled us to retrench staff but we kept our office in Juba open, serving as a link between the judiciary and donors who had left the country. Eventually, with one donor restoring its funding, we are now carrying out a modified program.

We worked intensively for five years in South Sudan, building the capacity of the judiciary - training every single High Court judge in the country. How should we now measure that achievement in the light of what has happened? When I put that question to our former country director, he reminded me of the trials of the 11 political opponents of the government earlier this year. The judges had displayed integrity, authority and independence, conducting the trials in accordance with the law and opening the courts to the public, the media and the international community. Justice was both done and seen to be done. For me, that's a true key performance indicator. We are right to persist. That should give some food for thought to justice sector donors.

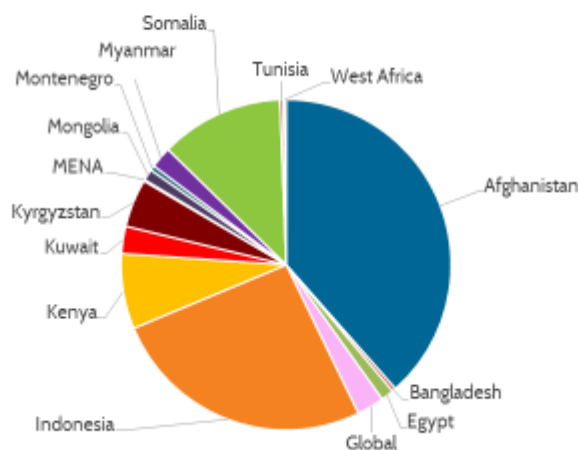
It is precisely when peace is under threat that the rule of law is most needed. That is why in 2014, IDLO has committed itself to deepening its engagement in post-conflict countries, but at the same time, as a measure of risk mitigation, has also sought to expand its geographic and thematic coverage within the parameters of the Strategic Plan.

Here you see graphically the “new” countries and new programs that we opened in 2014.

IDLO'S PROGRAM EXPANSION



COUNTRY PROGRAM EXPANSION 2014 - December 1, 2013 - November 4, 2014



We have expanded our work in Somalia dramatically in the past year, as we carry out a range of projects with the Ministry of Justice, the Judiciary and civil society – from legislative drafting to traditional dispute resolution and combatting gender-based violence.

We are just launching our first program in Mali and actively exploring other opportunities in West Africa, including national capacity building for prosecution of international crimes. Using the resources of our Branch Office in The Hague, we have reached out to the International Criminal Court and jointly organized regional consultations on criminal justice in Dakar last month.

We are also expanding in the Arab region, especially Egypt, Tunisia and Jordan, and in that context, welcome warmly the decision of Jordan to allow us to open a small office in Amman to cover North Africa and the Middle East.

We are making further inroads in Asia, building on the work we have done this past year on legal development in Myanmar, seeking to strengthen the capacity of the National Human Rights Commission in Bangladesh, and launching, with Dutch support, a Rule of Law Fund in Indonesia.

Alongside geographic balance, we have also sought greater thematic diversity of work, within the parameters of the Strategic Plan, on access to justice, sustainable development and economic opportunity.

Institution-building is state centered, access to justice is people centered. Experience shows that laws and institutions by themselves do not always provide equitable results. Laws can discriminate against women and minorities. Institutions can exclude the poor and the marginalized. That is why our work on access to justice is deeply embedded in human rights principles and standards.

As the Tunisian State Secretary emphasized in her keynote address, access to justice is essential for women. It has been the corner stone of our program to combat gender-based violence in Afghanistan, where, since 2010, with support of the US, we have supported the Attorney General's Office to prosecute gender crimes, built a legal aid program and helped Afghan NGOs to provide

shelter to victims of violence. Starting with just one Elimination of Violence Against Women Unit in 2010, today there are 11 units, with 1200 new cases registered. Two months ago, we successfully completed the program and have signed a new agreement with the US for a similar program to extend the work to other parts of Afghanistan.

While access to justice for women has been receiving substantial attention globally, access to justice for children is often overlooked. Partnering with UNICEF, IDLO has opened a new portfolio of work on children's access to justice in both Central and Eastern Europe, and on juvenile justice issues in the Arab region.

Our health law program has also added diversity to our portfolio, empowering people living with HIV to fight discrimination and gain access to services, and building awareness about the legal dimensions of tackling non-communicable diseases. Earlier this year I signed an agreement with Dr. Michel Sidibe, the Executive Director of UNAIDS to collaborate on programs to fight discrimination against people living with HIV.

As part of the EUROsociAL initiative funded by the EU, in seven countries of Latin America we helped governments to bring justice services closer to poor and marginalized people. Although this program will be completed this year, we look forward to greater engagement in Latin America in other ways. With that in mind, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding for cooperation with the Constitutional Court of Ecuador. Today, we will sign a similar agreement with the President of the Constitutional Court of Peru.

We have also sought to diversify our program portfolio with work in the area of economic opportunity and sustainable development.

Our commercial law program has expanded in Mongolia, bringing both geographic and thematic diversity to our portfolio. In partnership with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, we are supporting the full spectrum of business dispute resolution, from setting up mediation centers to building the capacity of the judiciary and strengthening the system for enforcing judicial decisions.

Energy poverty is widely acknowledged to be holding back inclusive economic and social development in Sub-Saharan Africa. With support from the OPEC Fund for International Development, a Member Party of IDLO, IDLO undertook a pilot project, analyzing Kenya's legal reforms to show how the law plays a major role in shaping the incentives for growth in the energy sector. We are now discussing with OFID the possibility to expand this work elsewhere in Africa.

In 2014 our sustainable development work covered projects on sustainable land use in Africa, legal preparedness for climate change in Latin America and legal preparedness for achieving the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. As all three programs will be successfully completed this year, we are now assessing how best to take forward our work on these issues.

Let me now turn to the Critical Strategic Initiative on thought leadership and strategic partnerships. Over the past the year I believe we have amply demonstrated the added value we bring by linking our research to programming, and underpinning both with policy advocacy and cutting-edge communications. We have successfully managed to raise our visibility as the world's only intergovernmental organization with an exclusive mandate to advance the rule of law. The most successful example of that in 2014 has been our active participation in Post-2015 Development Agenda discussions at the UN.

As we diversify and expand our work, partnerships have taken on new meaning. In 2014, we strengthened our relations with partners in the UN system, especially UNDP, UNICEF, UNAIDS and WHO. Through our presence in The Hague, we are developing closer relations with institutions based in the Netherlands, and through our office in Geneva, with human rights and health agencies there, while our work on sustainable development, gender and food security has brought us closer to the Rome-based agencies.

We are increasingly taking our voice to where our work is – one example of that in 2014 being the launch in Kabul of our report on women’s participation in the justice sector. Our message: justice by women produces better outcomes of justice for women.

Now let me say a few words on the two Critical Strategic Initiatives to improve our programming and strengthen the Organization.

The success of our programming, research and advocacy is due in large part to the improvements we launched under our Strategic Plan two years ago. Thanks to the generous contribution of flexible funds from the Netherlands, which began to flow into our coffers at the beginning of this year, we were able to significantly improve our capacity and expertise in 2014.

The opening of our Branch Office in The Hague in March this year was an important organizational milestone. We are building it up as the central repository of our research, learning and legal expertise, as well as program development capacity, which we will use strategically to pursue new programs and initiatives globally.

With a view to improving the quality of our field operations, I initiated IDLO’s first ever field office management assessment earlier this year in Afghanistan, and made the report available to all colleagues in Afghanistan and to our donor. We are now in the process of implementing those recommendations.

We are now proceeding to establish a small regional office in Amman and will seek to expand our office in Nairobi into a regional operations hub as soon as our host country agreement is finalized.

We have strengthened our program development capacity and processes – and that is already beginning to bear fruit. This year to date, we signed new contracts worth 24 million euro, comfortably assuring our programmatic survival into 2016. At the other end of the program cycle, we have strengthened our capacity for monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment.

Under the leadership of our Chief Operating Officer, Mira Bacelj, we will be launching a comprehensive and well-paced internal reform process to revamp our financial processes, our human resources policies and our information technology infrastructure. You will hear more about that when I present the 2015 Management Plan.

Now I come to the Critical Strategic Initiative on expanding our political and financial support.

Political support through the expansion of our Membership is important to IDLO and so, I would like to congratulate Yemen for concluding its membership procedures for joining IDLO.

On the financial side, IDLO is in a healthy state with a good prognosis. We are very grateful to Italy for its consistent support, to the Netherlands for its generous multi-year agreement and to the US for making us their program partner of choice.

Our program revenue has grown steadily and consistently. We expect it to be higher in 2014 than in 2013, but because of insecurity and other conditions affecting a number of our programs

operating in high risk situations, the actual revenue is likely to be lower than the budget approved by the Assembly last year. However, I want to reassure you that we will still end up with a balanced budget and a good surplus.

The uncertain external environment in which many of our programs are implemented makes it all the more important that we increase significantly our unrestricted revenue. Our donor base is too narrow and we have worked hard this past year to broaden it.

I am very pleased with the progress we have made with Sweden, which has just completed an organizational assessment of IDLO, and we look forward to hearing the positive results soon. I will be travelling to Bern in late November to explore the possibility of future partnership and support from Switzerland. I am grateful to the Netherlands for its offer of matching funds which is a motivating factor for potential new donors. But along with that, our performance record, our readiness to reform ourselves and our positive profile have also helped to put us in a strong position with emerging donors and partners.

I promise you that my colleagues and I will do everything possible to continue to make this organization worthy of your trust and confidence. I promise you we will pursue new partnerships and potential Members with evangelical fervor. But to do this successfully we need the support of our Member Parties. Nothing would be a more eloquent sign of your support than a financial contribution, especially from our OECD Member Parties, but also a token contribution from other Member Parties. As someone who goes knocking on the doors of donors, I feel that my hand would be immensely strengthened to push open those doors if I could say that IDLO's own Member Parties see this Organization as being worthy of their investment.

I cannot end my remarks without paying a special tribute to you, Mr. President, for your guidance and leadership through some exciting but also turbulent times, as we sought together to put this ship called IDLO on a steady keel. I want also to thank Vice-President Nawaf al Mahamal, as he steps down from his current position. He has been a long-standing and strong friend of IDLO and I am very grateful for all that he has done to encourage us and support me personally.

Mr. President, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, we see around us, across the world, a dangerous deficit of public trust in institutions - a global crisis of the rule of law. People are calling for justice - not the kind that lawyers seek in courts but the kind of justice that people instinctively recognize. With both development and law embedded in our name, we know the value of the rule of law for creating equitable and inclusive societies. With your support we remain committed to making our contribution to that global endeavor.

Thank you.

The International Development Law Organization (IDLO) enables governments and empowers people to reform laws and strengthen institutions to promote peace, justice, sustainable development and economic opportunity.