

## **REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ASSEMBLY OF PARTIES 26 November 2024**

This report is submitted by the Standing Committee to the Assembly of Parties for its Annual Meeting on 26 November 2024, 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 2024, 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 2024 the Standing Committee was composed of:

- United States as President of the Assembly;
- Italy as *ex-officio* Vice-President of the Assembly;
- Mongolia 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 2024, the Standing Committee held regular meetings on:

- 12 April 2024
- 24 July 2024
- 29 October 2024



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 two Standing Committee meetings held during 2024 were chaired by the President, represented by Mr. Rodney Hunter, Deputy Permanent Representative and Deputy Chief of Mission, U.S. Mission to the UN Agencies in Rome. At the request of the President, who was unable to attend the October meeting, the third meeting was chaired by Ms. Stefania Costanza, Deputy Permanent Representative, Permanent Mission of Italy to the UN Agencies in Rome, representing Italy as the Vice President *ex officio* of the Assembly of Parties.

The Chair of the Audit and Finance Committee (AFC), Ms. Eman Alabdulrazzaq, 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 statements on behalf of the Association.

During 2024 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 2024, the Standing Committee provided guidance on behalf of Member Parties on the implementation of IDLO's current Strategic Plan 2021-2024, Management Plan 2023-2024, and the annual Operating Budget 2024, informed by reports from the Director-General and the Audit and Finance Committee.

2024 was the fourth and final year of implementing IDLO's Strategic Plan 2021-2024 and the second 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.

The Director-General and Standing Committee members paid tribute at each meeting to IDLO's staff, particularly those working in challenging environments in the field.

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

- IDLO's work to promote people-centred solutions to the specific justice needs of partner countries including in challenging environments, including Afghanistan, Myanmar, Ukraine, Somalia and the Sahel.
- IDLO's growing portfolio on anti-corruption and good governance, with programmes ongoing in a number of countries, including The Bahamas, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guatemala, Honduras, Moldova, Mongolia, Peru, the Philippines, and Ukraine. In addition, IDLO continued to engage in multilateral processes and global dialogues on anti-corruption, in particular the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group and the 12th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations

Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime in Vienna. IDLO was also invited to join the G7 Anti-Corruption Task Force (ACT) for Ukraine, hosted by the Government of Japan.

- Highlights of IDLO's extensive body of work on gender equality, which is mainstreamed throughout the Organization and which aims to protect women's rights through the promotion of gender-responsive legal, regulatory, and policy frameworks; the elimination of discriminatory laws and barriers to the full participation of women in society; combatting gender-based violence (GBV); and the empowerment of women professionals in the justice sector. During 2024 IDLO was also invited to participate as observer at the meetings of the G7 Working Group on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.
- Increased emphasis on enabling environments for inclusive economic growth by supporting legal frameworks, building capacity and promoting fair and speedy resolution of commercial disputes. The Standing Committee was updated on the achievements of IDLO's successful Investment Support Programme for Least Developed Countries and the need for continued support for this important work.
- IDLO's growing work related to climate justice and food security, and nutrition, including through advocacy at multilateral forums, knowledge products and country level programming in partnership with the UN system, including Rome-based Agencies.
- In the area of health law, expansion of IDLO's Global RECAP project, carried out in partnership with WHO and the Canadian International Development Research Centre, to five new countries: Ghana, Indonesia, Mauritius, Nepal and Thailand.
- Strengthened engagement with regional organizations, in particular ASEAN, including through a briefing hosted at IDLO headquarters by the Director-General for Ambassadors of the ASEAN countries based in Rome, as well as her participation during UNGA High-level week in a side event co-organized by the ASEAN Secretariat, UN Women and the Government of Thailand.
- Ongoing efforts to secure recognition of IDLO's legal status in the countries where it operates, through the negotiation of Host Country Agreements. During the year IDLO continued its HCA efforts with The Gambia, Moldova and the Philippines, and closely monitored progress on Cabinet approval of a recently negotiated HCA with Kenya, as well as the status of the HCA with Tunisia, which was finalized in 2022 and is pending signature.
- The fifth edition of the global SDG16 Conference, co-organized by IDLO, the Italian Government and UNDESA, which was held for the first time at the United Nations in New York and opened by H.E. Sergio Mattarella, President of the Republic of Italy. Once again, the key messages of this year's Conference were shared by the Secretary-General with all UN Member States as a joint General Assembly and ECOSOC document.
- IDLO participation in a range of high-level policy advocacy events during the year, including the 4th International Conference on Small Island Developing States in Antigua and Barbuda; the 77th World Health Assembly in Geneva; the World Bank's Land Conference and the Global Forum on Justice and Rule of Law in Washington,

D.C.; the FAO Council in Rome; UNFCCC’s Climate Change Conference in Bonn; the Ukraine Recovery Conference in Berlin; the 56th session of the Human Rights Council and the UNAIDS Programme Coordinating Board in Geneva; the International Anti-Corruption Conference in Vilnius; the Commission on the Status of Women, the High-Level Political Forum, United Nations General Assembly, and the Summit of the Future in New York.

- Following the granting of permanent observer status at the Inter-Parliamentary Union, IDLO further strengthened its engagement with parliamentarians – an important stakeholder group for the Organization – through participation at both IPU Assemblies in Geneva and the IPU Global Assembly of Young Parliamentarians in Yerevan.
- Several new research publications, including two legal assessments, one on “Strengthening Gender Equality in Law: Mapping Discriminatory Laws against Women and Girls in Kenya” and one on “Advancing Gender Equality in Climate Action: Gender Assessment of Climate and Environmental Laws in the Philippines”; several Issue Briefs, including “Inclusive Practices in Alternative Dispute Resolution: Delivering People-centred Justice in Somalia”, “Making Laws and Institutions Work for People: IDLO’s Work in Enhancing Anti-corruption and Transparency” and “Safeguarding the right to adequate food during pandemics and emergencies: lessons from COVID-19”, the latter developed in partnership with FAO; and a Policy Brief on “The Right to Adequate Food as a Cornerstone of the G20 Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty,” co-authored by IDLO in its advisory role to the Group of Friends of the Right to Food, coordinated by FAO.
- IDLO’s four Organizational Enablers, through which the Organization is investing in people, capacities, and systems to optimize the implementation of the Strategic Plan. Examples of progress included the finalization and validation of the 2023 results from the Strategic Results and Resources Framework (SRRF); enhanced arrangements for programme development, monitoring and reporting; continued implementation of IDLO’s Human Resources Strategy; issuance of an updated policy on sexual harassment and a new Policy on the Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse; and roll-out of a new automated sanctions search platform.

## MANAGEMENT ISSUES

During 2024 IDLO conducted widespread consultations as part of the process to develop its new Strategic Plan 2025-2028. The first of these consultations was organized with the members of the Standing Committee, in a special session held after the first regular meeting on 12 April 2024.

At the July meeting, the Director-General shared an update with the Standing Committee on the development of the Plan, while in October she provided a detailed presentation of the draft Plan, together with the proposed Management Plan 2025-2026, and Operating Budget 2025.

The Director-General briefed the Committee on a misappropriation of funds which had occurred in an IDLO Country Office. The DG informed the Committee of the many actions taken by IDLO to address the situation, and to prevent recurrence. IDLO worked closely with the programme donor throughout, and programming is ongoing. The Standing

Committee recognized the actions taken by IDLO and its commitment to transparency, accountability, and the continued strengthening of internal controls.

IDLO's financial status and the implementation of the 2024 budget were monitored by the Standing Committee through reports from the Audit and Finance Committee (AFC), as well as financial updates provided by the Director-General.

## **2024 DECISIONS AND ENDORSEMENTS OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE**

### **1. Approval of audited Financial Statements 2023**

Since 2019 IDLO's audited financial statements have been compliant with International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS). The Standing Committee approved the IDLO 2023 audited Financial Statements after review and based upon the recommendation of the Audit and Finance Committee.

### **2. Endorsement of IDLO's Strategic Plan 2025-2028**

At its meeting on 29 October, the Standing Committee discussed and endorsed the draft Strategic Plan 2025-2028 and approved its onward transmission to the Assembly of Parties, for endorsement at its annual meeting on November 26.

### **3. Approval of Draft Management Plan 2025-2026**

At its October meeting, the Standing Committee discussed and approved for onward transmission to the Assembly the draft Management Plan 2025-2026.

### **4. Approval of proposed Operating Budget 2025**

At its October meeting, the Standing Committee approved for onward transmission to the Assembly of Parties the proposed Operating Budget for 2025, which had been previously endorsed by the AFC at its meeting on 10 October.

### **5. Approval of amendments to IDLO's Employee Rules**

At the October meeting, the Director-General presented to the Standing Committee a proposal to update IDLO's rules on parental leave, specifically to increase maternity and paternity leave, in order to promote greater equity and employee well-being, enhance the Organization's ability to attract and retain talent, and bring the Organization closer in line with general trends in international practice. The amendments were approved by consensus by the Standing Committee.

### **6. Approval of draft resolutions for the 2024 Assembly of Parties meeting**

At the October meeting, the Director-General briefed the Standing Committee on preparations for the Assembly of Parties meeting and provided an overview of the five draft resolutions to be submitted to the Assembly, including the resolutions related to elections. All resolutions were approved by the Standing Committee for transmission to the Assembly of Parties for consideration and adoption at its meeting on 26 November.

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