
2024 ECOSOC PARTNERSHIP FORUM

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Statement of Henk-Jan Brinkman, Permanent Observer of the International Development Law Organization to the United Nations

Madame President, Excellencies

Thank you for the opportunity to take the floor. Let me reflect on IDLO's 40 years of experience in promoting the rule of law to advance sustainable development and peace with a people-centered approach to justice.

Partnerships with diverse stakeholders have been an integral component in IDLO activities that operate at the intersection of multiple SDGs, including SDGs 1, 2, 13 and 16, which are all being reviewed at the HLPF in July, as has utilizing data and research to inform decision-making at the state and other levels.

For example, IDLO developed an Investment Support Programme for LDCs in cooperation with OHRLLS, which is an innovative public-private partnership that supports governments in negotiations with foreign investors, which received strong support in the Doha PoA. This EU-funded programme, which relies on the pro bono services of a global roster of law firms and other experts from private and public institutions and academia, has been cost effective and demand for its services has grown. So much so that IDLO is exploring expanding the programme to include SIDS.

In addition, Burkina Faso and the Philippines, IDLO has conducted gender assessments of climate-related legal and regulatory frameworks to ensure principles of gender equality are mainstreamed into climate and environmental legislation.

In the Sahel, IDLO has supported access to justice through strengthening the capacity of customary and informal justice mechanisms to convene stakeholders in the criminal justice chain, including prosecutors, law enforcement officials, courts, prison administrators, traditional leaders and women-led organizations. These platforms have facilitated the peaceful settlement of land disputes often exacerbated by climate change.

In Honduras and Uganda, IDLO has partnered with the Food and Agriculture Organization to enhance legal protections for food security and nutrition for vulnerable groups, especially women and girls. These efforts have informed national guidance on guaranteeing food security in both countries.

And in Afghanistan, IDLO strengthened partnerships with local civil society, pivoting away from the state after the Taliban takeover. In partnering with legal aid providers, CSOs and individual legal practitioners, IDLO has maintained its access to justice support in a myriad of ways, including through training and capacity development and using new technology to monitor justice sector developments.

Let me offer the following three recommendations borne from the length and breadth of IDLO's expertise in implementing such activities that are particularly pertinent to the SDGs under review:

Firstly, strengthen partnerships in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda to include civil society and customary and informal justice actors to promote the rule of law and access to justice at the local level, which could also mitigate the impacts of climate change on poverty reduction and food security.

Secondly, recognize the link between food security and the rule of law. The right to food needs to be protected in national legislation. This requires ensuring that legislation and corresponding reforms are people-centered and respond to the needs, and have the buy-in, of the people they are intended to serve.

Lastly, utilize the rule of law to address the intersecting crises of climate change, food insecurity and conflict. SDG16 is a foundational element and accelerator, which should be spearheading our efforts as a means in which to achieve gains with other SDGs. It is also a reason why SDG16 should be reviewed annually, with the HLPF collating lessons learned and good practices on how SDG16 can be utilized to strengthen progress on the 2030 Agenda and why Member States should be encouraged to focus on these interlinkages in their VNRs.

Thank you