

About IDLO

IDLO is an intergovernmental organization that promotes legal, regulatory and institutional reform to advance economic and social development in developing countries, countries in economic transition and in those emerging from armed conflict.

Founded in 1983 and one of the pioneers of justice sector reform and development assistance, IDLO's mandate is to strengthen the rule of law by supporting economic and social development that is driven by societal demand. By involving stakeholders from all levels of society in its development programs, IDLO helps develop sustainable, equitable solutions that reflect a country's broad needs.

In line with the OECD's Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda, IDLO encourages its country partners to take charge of their own development agendas. The Organization works directly with lawyers, jurists, policymakers, regulators, civil society representatives, universities, research centers, public and private institutions and government ministries, to empower them to actively contribute to their country's development.

To date, IDLO has worked with over 20,000 legal professionals in 175 countries. Its network of 46 legally established IDLO Alumni Associations around the world, with membership drawn from legal, business, academic and civil society communities, contributes to the overall impact and long-term sustainability of the Organization's work.

IDLO is based in Rome, Italy, and currently operates Project Offices in Afghanistan, Kyrgyzstan and Southern Sudan. IDLO also has a permanent observer office at the United Nations in New York and a resource development office in Seattle.

IDLO is supported by voluntary contributions from governments, multilateral organizations and private sector foundations, businesses and individuals.

The Health Law Program is supported by IDLO core funds, and multilateral, bilateral and foundation sources. Matched funding is provided by the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID), the development finance institution of OPEC member states. OFID provides financial support for socioeconomic development, particularly in low-income countries. www.ofid.org



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International Development Law Organization
Organisation Internationale de Droit du Développement

March 2011 - Cover left photo © Sheila McKinnon

IDLO International Development Law Organization



Health Law Program 2009-2012 Protecting and Promoting Health through Law



International Development Law Organization
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Legal environments affect vulnerability to HIV and other infectious and non-communicable diseases. An enabling legal environment is essential for physical, mental and social well-being.



Program context

HIV

In sub-Saharan Africa, HIV has orphaned 12 million children and reduced life expectancy in some countries by more than 20 years. The epidemic has slashed economic growth and increased household poverty. In Asia, HIV causes a greater loss in productivity than any other disease. Other regions also have concentrated epidemics among key populations at higher risk. HIV is now the leading cause of death of women of reproductive age worldwide. Unlawful discrimination against people living with HIV increases the burden on families and communities, and drives people away from HIV testing. HIV-related legal services must be part of a comprehensive service package for people living with HIV.

Public Health and Non-Communicable Diseases

Legislation governing public health is often outdated and fragmented. Many countries need tailored legal capacity building to address current and emerging public health threats. Reforms must acknowledge differences in legal systems (e.g., common law, civil law, Sharia law), as well as diverse customs, cultures, and religions.

Globally, 60% of all deaths are caused by non-communicable diseases (NCDs) such as cardiovascular diseases, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases, and diabetes. NCDs cause more than half of the deaths in transitional and developing countries. Many premature deaths are largely preventable through legal and other interventions that address four common, modifiable risk factors: tobacco use, unhealthy diet, physical inactivity, and the harmful use of alcohol.

Program Focus 2009–2012

HIV and Law

- Legal empowerment: Increase community legal awareness, and strengthen and expand HIV-related legal services.
- Law enforcement: Sensitize police, judges and other government officials to apply laws consistent with public health goals.
- Law reform: Build lawmakers' capacity for reform based on evidence, international law and best practice.

Public Health Law and Non-Communicable Diseases

- Facilitate an emerging global consensus on the role of the state in respecting, protecting and fulfilling the right to health.
- Build the capacity of parliamentarians, government public health and legal advisors, civil society, and other stakeholders to reform and implement public health laws in ways that are consistent with good science, international best practice, and international law.
- Create and sustain a vibrant network of lawyers, public health professionals, public officials, civil society representatives, and other stakeholders to share information and experience on effective public health law reform and implementation.

Sample focus areas: tobacco and alcohol regulation; maternal mortality; access to essential medicines; obesity and public health nutrition; environmental hazards; universal access to basic health care services; water and sanitation.

Program Highlights

- Toolkit: Scaling Up HIV-related Legal Services (IDLO, UNAIDS and UNDP, 2009) (Chinese, English, French; Arabic, Spanish forthcoming)
- Scaling Up HIV-related Legal Services: Report of Case Studies: Ukraine, Kenya and India (IDLO, UNAIDS, 2010)
- 'HIV and Legal Empowerment' in Legal Empowerment: Practitioners' Perspectives (IDLO, 2010) (with Nossal Institute for Global Health, University of Melbourne)

- International Consultations on HIV-related Legal Services and Rights (Rome, May 2009; Vienna, July 2010; Rome, July 2011)
- Guidelines on the Monitoring and Evaluation of HIV-related Legal Empowerment Initiatives (forthcoming)
- E-Learning course on HIV law and policy (English; French, Spanish forthcoming)
- International Consultations on Public Health Law (Rome, April 2009; Cairo, April 2010, with WHO and the O'Neill Institute)
- Manuals on Public Health Law and Non-Communicable Diseases and Law (forthcoming)
- Capacity building on intellectual property law and access to medicines (with UNDP)

Legal empowerment: strengthen and expand HIV-related legal services

- **Asia Pacific:** China, Indonesia, Nepal, Papua New Guinea
- **Latin America:** Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico, Peru
- **North Africa and Middle East:** Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco, Tunisia
- **West and Central Africa:** Benin, Burkina Faso

Example: with IDLO support, in 2010 the Benin Association for Law and Development and the Women's Lawyers Association initiated the first legal services for people living with HIV in Benin. The Association trains judges, lawyers, and police, and educates communities about rights and HIV. As a result, legal services have been added to the government HIV strategy.

Program Partners

O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law
at Georgetown University

University of Sydney

O'Neill Institute
for National and Global Health Law
Georgetown Law • Georgetown Nursing & Health Studies



Further information

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