

IHRP SUMMER INTERNSHIP – FINAL REPORT

Organization: International Development Law Organization (IDLO)

Location: The Hague, The Netherlands (Branch Office)

Website: <http://www.idlo.int>

From May 12th to August 4th, 2015, I completed my IHRP summer internship with International Development Law Organization (IDLO) at their Branch Office in The Hague. IDLO is an intergovernmental organization dedicated to promoting the rule of law. IDLO works to enable governments and empower people to reform laws and strengthen institutions to promote peace, justice, sustainable development and economic opportunity. I interned with IDLO's Research Unit, part of IDLO's Department of Research and Learning, which is responsible for research program development and implementation, knowledge generation, and impact assessment. Over the course of my internship, I had the opportunity to contribute to a variety of projects, attend internal and external meetings, and integrate into the social fabric of the workplace.

Main Work Projects:

Lessons Learned Brief

IDLO's Lessons Learned Program is designed to draw lessons from its own programming and disseminate these lessons within the organization for learning and future program development. My primary task was to support the preparation of a 'Lessons Learned Brief' on the organization's work in Kenya related to judicial preparedness for electoral disputes. The 2007 Kenyan elections were heavily contested and the ensuing violence claimed over 1,100 lives. In the lead up to and following the 2013 elections, IDLO provided technical and capacity-building support to the judiciary to implement the new Constitution and improve its preparedness to handle electoral disputes.

I worked closely with the Lead Researcher to find, map, and summarize relevant literature, both Kenya-specific and international, on the role of the judiciary in preventing violence, the lessons learned on judicial engagement with electoral disputes, and on how to engage effectively with the judiciary in post-conflict environments. I also worked with the Lead Researcher to connect with colleagues in IDLO's Kenya Country Office to collect detailed information on [IDLO's projects in Kenya](#), their experiences with program implementation, and outcomes. The results of the international literature review and the IDLO project document review were then mapped and incorporated into a comprehensive synthesis report.

Research Memoranda

In addition to the Lessons Learned Brief, I also supported additional projects and answered discrete research questions. IDLO currently has a project in [Afghanistan](#) supporting women's access to justice, which has a legal aid component. In May 2015, I drafted a supporting research memo on the use of sliding scales to charge for legal aid services by identifying relevant research, providing examples of how and where sliding scales are being used, and outlining how successful this approach has been in expanding access to justice. I also conducted a review of a meeting Summary Report related to the '[Consultation on Overweight, Obesity, Diabetes, and Law](#)' co-hosted by IDLO in Manila, Philippines, in April 2014. Finally, I compiled relevant research on the development of freedom of religion or belief and the surrounding international human rights framework.

Document Review

In June 2015, I reviewed and suggested edits for a multi-country IDLO [research](#) report on the promotion of diversion and alternative measures to detention for children in conflict with the law in several countries in the Middle East and North Africa region. I also reviewed footnotes for a report on sustainable development and energy investment laws.

Compilation of Research Resources

Over the course of my internship, I compiled a list of key online research resources related to law and development. This list was organized into twelve categories that are relevant to IDLO's work, such as peace and conflict, rule of law, gender and development, and human rights. The final product is meant to serve as a comprehensive and user-friendly research guide for IDLO staff members and will be disseminated through the organization's intranet.

Internal and External Meetings:

During my time at IDLO, I had the opportunity to support and attend a number of external meetings and events hosted by the organization, such as a public briefing on the rule of law in [Myanmar](#) and a presentation by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) on strengthening the rule of law.

In addition to weekly Research Unit meetings, I also attended internal presentations on various IDLO projects and participated in workshops. This allowed me to connect with visiting IDLO colleagues from Regional and Field Offices, such as Jordan, South Sudan, Myanmar, and Kyrgyzstan as well as colleagues based at IDLO Headquarters in Rome, Italy. In August 2015, I visited IDLO headquarters in Rome, and had the opportunity to work directly with research colleagues based there, learn about

the projects led by other departments, and become more familiar with IDLO's administrative and organizational layout.

Overall Experience:

This internship was a great learning opportunity for me, thanks in large part to the excellent support and mentoring I received from my supervisors and colleagues at IDLO. I was trusted with substantive work assignments and received regular feedback. I was also invited to key meetings and events, and was given the opportunity to connect and work with IDLO colleagues based around the world.

Furthermore, The Hague has a well-deserved reputation as the International City of Peace and Justice. It is the seat of the Dutch government and hosts over 150 international organizations and academic institutions, such as the International Court of Justice, the International Criminal Court, the Permanent Court of Arbitration, and The Hague Academy of International Law. I enjoyed being a part of the vibrant international law community in The Hague and visited many of these institutions to learn about their work. I also met other law students and interns who were working with different organizations and tribunals in the city through formal and informal social events.

This internship was a highly positive and rewarding experience for me, both personally and professionally, and I would like to thank IHRP and my colleagues at IDLO for making it possible.