



DLA Piper's Commitment to Sustainable Development Goal 16

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



The 2030 agenda for sustainable development, adopted by all United Nations member states in 2015 provides a shared blueprint for peace and prosperity. At its heart are the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The private sector has a crucial role to play in the achievement of the SDGs by 2030. As a leading global business law firm, we have the ability to make a very significant contribution to the objectives set out in Goal 16 – which include targets related to rule of law, access to justice, accountable institutions and non-discrimination. With that ability comes a moral imperative to act, and this report details some of our recent contributions towards the achievement of those targets.

In 2005, DLA Piper created New Perimeter, a non-profit affiliate that provides long-term pro bono legal assistance in under-served regions to support access to justice, social and economic development, sound legal institutions and women's advancement. Much of the work undertaken by our lawyers through New Perimeter is in furtherance of Goal 16.

At DLA Piper we believe it is incumbent upon us to exemplify

the very highest ideals of responsible business behaviours. Acting responsibly is one of our core values which is relevant to the conduct of our own operations, the advice we provide to our clients and our role in society. All of the work detailed in this report has been undertaken by DLA Piper lawyers on a pro bono basis. Over the past 5 years, our lawyers have undertaken more than one million hours of pro bono work, with a notional value in excess of GBP250 million.

We recognise and sincerely thank our partners in this work, including many governments, UN agencies, NGOs and Universities.



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SDG 16 Target 1

SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AND RELATED DEATH RATES EVERYWHERE

- With **UNICEF**¹, we have supported the protection of girls in The Gambia from abuse and exploitation in early marriage by providing technical assistance to draft legislation to end child marriage. We reviewed the Mongolian Child Protection Act to ensure it is in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and international best practice.
- With **Rainlily**, we are supporting women in Hong Kong who have been physically and sexually abused by assisting them to seek compensation and avoid termination of their employment.
- We have supported the **Center for Reproductive Rights** to advocate for access to safe and legal abortion in Asia, a denial of which is a form of torture, inhuman and degrading treatment and a cause of death of girls and women, through the preparation of shadow UPR and treaty body reports.
- Based on DLA Piper research findings and the expertise of our partner la **Fondation des Femmes**, the French government amended the domestic violence legislation and integrated a number of our proposals including more protective measures for the victims and their families.
- In France, our lawyers provide legal assistance to victims of gender based violence in collaboration with **Droits d'Urgence**, and in Italy we foster the financial inclusion

trafficked and abused women in collaboration with **BNP Paribas, MicroLab association and BeFree**.

- We assist **Reprieve** with the drafting of complaints to the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention for victims of torture and a number of prisoners on death row whose confessions were extracted through torture and who have been sentenced to death penalty.
- We conducted a global analysis of prisoner releases in response to COVID-19 in collaboration with the **Association for the Prevention of Torture**. One of the aspect of the research was to analyse death rates in custody due to COVID-19 with the ultimate goal of reducing them globally.
- **New Perimeter** teams with **Vital Voices Global Partnership** to support its work to combat gender-based violence and expand the capacity of service providers around the world. We do this by providing research and comprehensive, multi-disciplinary trainings, including training for leaders of nonprofits, judges, prosecutors, police officers and social services providers who work with domestic violence survivors globally.
- Through our collaboration with **Akilah Institute, Davis College**, the first women-only, non-profit post-secondary educational institute in Rwanda, **New Perimeter** is providing training to Rwandan women, including Akilah faculty, students and staff, on identifying, responding to, and combatting sexual harassment in society and the workplace.

- **New Perimeter** teamed with the **Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security** to research and publish a comprehensive study on how governments, civil society organisations and the private sector are responding to the increase in intimate partner violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. Our research highlights interventions that are both innovative and hold promise, including efforts to increase awareness and reporting of abuse, to ensuring access of survivors to support services, health sector responses, and reforms designed to improve the delivery of justice.

SDG 16 Target 2

END ABUSE, EXPLOITATION, TRAFFICKING AND ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST AND TORTURE OF CHILDREN

- We supported the reform of the juvenile justice system in **Bangladesh** and **The Gambia** to protect the best interests of the child and ensure detention is a last resort by providing technical assistance to draft legislation and build capacity building of law enforcement personnel.
- Since 2018, we work on an advocacy campaign in Zambia for children in remand detention with **Undikumbukire Zambia**. In 2021, we have pushed the resolution of 9 cases in which children had been subjected to protracted detention ranging from 2-5 years as progress on their cases had stalled due to administrative failures. This brings the total number of children whose stalled cases we have contributed to resolving to 44.

¹ DLA Piper has been providing pro bono support to UNICEF UK since 2013. This has included providing technical support and vital resource to UNICEF UK, which benefits UNICEF offices globally.

- We conducted a research on the access to compensation for victims of human trafficking and persons severely exploited in labour in cross border contexts for **La Strada International**.
- In the UK we run a secondment program to **Hope for Justice**, in which lawyers from our Manchester office are seconded to Hope for Justice to assist with legal research and casework for victims of modern slavery.
- For the **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights** and **UNICEF**, we prepared a report on the legislative requirements on State signatories to the Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography including its applicability to business enterprises and a detailed analysis on State current policies and individual achievements and shortcomings in relation to the Optional Protocol.
- With **ECPAT**, we assisted with the Global Study on the Exploitation of Children in the Travel and Tourism Industry which led the General Assembly of the UN World Tourism Organisation to approve the transformation of the Code of Ethics for Tourism into an international convention, known as the UNWTO Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics.
- **New Perimeter** is collaborating with a global partnership of more than 1,500 civil society organisations from over 100 countries committed to ending child marriage, to conduct comparative research on laws related to child marriage, including protocols that respond to violence against girls and adolescents.

SDG 16 Target 3

PROMOTE THE RULE OF LAW AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS AND ENSURE EQUAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE FOR ALL

- With **UNAIDS**, we developed a global scorecard on the obligations of countries to ensure strong rule of law and the provision of an enabling legal environment which aims to help end the AIDS epidemic by the removal of discriminatory and harmful criminal laws, and the introduction of new laws to protect against violence and discrimination.
- With **BABSEACLE**, we develop, test and deliver courses and workshops on client-centered lawyering, ethics, professional responsibility, access to justice and pro bono to build sound legal institutions and increase access to justice and pro bono among upcoming generations of lawyers across Southeast Asia.
- **New Perimeter** teams with **Fundación Pro Bono Colombia**, the only pro bono organization and clearinghouse in Colombia, to teach seminars to law students about pro bono and access to justice.
- We support the growth of pro bono in Mexico by teaming with **Mexico Appleseed** to create a sustainable pro bono culture and network within the legal profession. We deliver courses on pro bono and public interest topics, including access to justice, juvenile justice and domestic violence to law students.
- We expand the capacity of lawyers in Zambia by teaching practical lawyering skills to LL.M. students at the **University of Zambia**

School of Law (UNZA) and the Zambia Institute of Advanced Legal Education (ZIALE).

- **New Perimeter** teams with **Women Lawyers Joining Hands** and the **Nepal Bar Association** to provide continuing legal education to female Nepali lawyers as part of an initiative to support female lawyers in Nepal by mentoring and providing training to increase their skills and opportunities for advancement.
- Since July 2019, we partner with the **Samos Legal Centre**, set up by Avocats sans Frontières France to provide legal advice to asylum seekers living on Samos and file family reunification procedures. We have also partnered with the Greek Council for Refugees and Fenix Legal Aid to submit urgent interim measure applications before the European Court of Human Rights for particularly vulnerable asylum seekers including pregnant women and medical emergencies.
- In the UK, we use public law to challenge the government's ongoing use of military barracks and hotels to house unaccompanied asylum seeking children and asylum seekers who are victims of torture.
- We provide interactive '**Know Your Rights**' trainings to different community groups including refugees, LGBTQ+ groups, school students and homeless young people in UK, Austria, Spain, Netherlands, Luxembourg, Poland, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Australia and Thailand to improve awareness of their rights, build capacity and help reduce the demand on legal services.

- Our office in Ghana is collaborating with lawyers from **IRIS Represents** to advise **UNAIDS** on human rights impact and response to a proposed anti-LGBT+ bill in Ghana.
- Our offices in 13 African countries assisted the **Global Alliance for Legal Aid** with research on law providing for debt-default incarceration, an issue that disproportionately impacts small-scale women entrepreneurs from marginalized communities.
- Our office in Mozambique is reviewing the adequacy of Mozambique's legal framework for the domestication of international laws and guidance for internally displaced people's rights, with **UNHCR** by the removal of discriminatory and harmful criminal laws, and the introduction of new laws to protect against violence and discrimination.
- For the **Council of Europe**, we prepared a report on systemic access to justice issues for Roma and Traveller women in **Greece, Italy, Romania, Bulgaria, Turkey** and **Ireland** on the basis of data collected through the 10 JUSTROM legal clinics which provide free legal advice in ten locations across Europe.
- Through partnerships with various universities, we are teaching students, paralegals and legal professionals in **UK, France, Belgium, Italy, Myanmar, Vanuatu, Fiji, The Solomon Islands** and **Samoa** on the rule of law, access to justice and pro bono legal work.
- We have a global scholarships programme for undergraduate law students from the UN's **50 Least Developed Countries**. The program provides students with access to role models, work experience, mentoring and financial assistance and supports the students' skills development, builds capacity and promotes the rule of law.
- With the **International Center for Advocates Against Discrimination**, we are improving justice for victims of violence in **Pacific Island Nations** through an analysis over 900 sentencing decisions in relation to gender bias and advised on the development of a gender based violence sentencing handbook. We have also provided related rule of law and gender based violence trainings to prosecutors, magistrates and attorneys general in the region.
- With **Liberty Asia**, we have advocated in a white paper for increased financial regulation in Hong Kong markets and strengthened practices for identification and eliminating social risk which, in turn, will help reducing illicit money flows and exploitation of people.
- With **the Royal Foundation** of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry on behalf of the **United for Wildlife** collaboration, we helped to reduce the illegal money flows associated with the illegal wildlife trade by strengthening illegal wildlife legislation and its enforcement in a number of countries including **Vietnam, Thailand, Myanmar** and **Namibia**.

SDG 16 Target 5

SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE CORRUPTION AND BRIBERY IN ALL THEIR FORMS

- At DLA Piper, we enforce a strict anti-bribery and corruption policy which applies to all our people globally and take a zero tolerance approach to breaches. We also expect our business partners to have similar policies which apply to all dealings with, on behalf of, or involving DLA Piper and have a clause in our standard terms of business with clients which sets out our anti-bribery and corruption policy and our expectations of our clients.
- We advise business and NGOs globally on best practice anti bribery and corruption approaches, and regularly host events for companies and other stakeholders outlining and promoting best practice on this subject.
- Our Africa offices contributed to a collaboration with Standard Chartered Bank exploring uses of financial transaction data to combat international wildlife trafficking.
- We have helped the **East African Wildlife Society** and Ugandan organization Environment Shield and the **National Forestry Authority of Uganda** to challenge the grant of Uganda forest reserve land to a private sugar company at the East African Court of Justice.
- We assisted the NGO **Independent Defence Anti-Corruption Commission** in the revision of the draft of State Secrecy laws in Ukraine. We have also compared the secrecy laws of several EU countries to highlight best practices.

SDG 16 Target 4

SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCE ILLICIT FINANCIAL AND ARMS FLOWS, STRENGTHEN THE RECOVERY AND RETURN OF STOLEN ASSETS AND COMBAT ALL FORMS OF ORGANIZED CRIME

- With **Liberty Asia**, we have advocated in a white paper for increased financial regulation in Hong Kong markets and strengthened practices for identification and eliminating social risk which, in turn, will help reducing illicit money flows and exploitation of people.
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- We participated in the **International Budget Partnership** project to conduct a multi-country analysis of administrative law provisions that affect budgeting decisions and stakeholder rights to transparency and to challenge decisions.

SDG 16 Target 6

DEVELOP EFFECTIVE, ACCOUNTABLE AND TRANSPARENT INSTITUTIONS AT ALL LEVELS

- We have seconded lawyers to **Vanuatu** to help the Government with rebuilding the country following cyclone Pam. The secondees advised various Ministries on a range of business, infrastructure and foreign affairs issues, risk management and access to emergency funding during natural disasters, and build local capacity.
- We contributed to an extensive information gathering exercise organised by the **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights** to collect information about the work of state-based non-judicial mechanisms in **Guatemala, China, France, Norway, Mexico, Poland, Morocco** and Nigeria, representing all UN regional groupings, looking at how (and how well) State-based non-judicial mechanisms relevant to business and human rights issues function.
- **New Perimeter** is collaborating with **East African Development Bank** to build the capacity of public sector lawyers involved in negotiating transactions and drafting agreements to assist countries in the region to structure transactions and related policy in a manner beneficial to the host country.

- **New Perimeter** teams with **the National Center of State Courts** to provide training to enhance trial advocacy skills and best courtroom practices to police prosecutors in multiple Caribbean countries.
- We assisted **European Environmental Bureau** with the publication of a report on the protection of whistleblowers in Europe. The study explored the legal provisions and liabilities of whistleblowers and journalists when disclosing privileged official documents for the public interest.
- We provided legal advice and support to **ARTICLE 19** to advocate for the withdrawal of provisions of the French Global Security Bill prohibiting the publication of any photo or footage that identifies police in any way that is considered ill-intentioned.

SDG 16 Target 7

ENSURE RESPONSIVE, INCLUSIVE, PARTICIPATORY AND REPRESENTATIVE DECISION-MAKING AT ALL LEVELS

- With **UNESCO, UNFPA** and **UNAIDS**, we provided training to lawyers and youth activists in the **Philippines** to utilise human rights and international human rights mechanisms to push for law reform and policy change to improve protection and realisation of sexual and reproductive health rights.
- With **UNICEF**, we assessed the compliance of the **Netherlands** with the Convention on the Rights of the Child in the context of its national policy process by considering the Government's use of child impact assessments

during the legislative process and international human rights standards.

- With **UNICEF**, we advocated for stronger rights and protections for children in **Australia** through the preparation of an alternative report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child which includes and promotes the voices of children and argues for better access to justice for children in Australia.
- We conducted research on barriers for economic integration faced by female refugees post COVID-19 in collaboration with **IRC**. We have interviewed women refugees and NGOs across Europe to reflect their voices and draft recommendations to influence policies and decision-making processes concerning women refugees.
- To ensure that right holders are engaged in the designing of our projects, we hire refugees with legal background to work with our teams in the Europe, UK and Australia in order to better reflect the communities we seek to serve. Those individuals have direct involvement in the decision making and lead on our flagship projects such as **Know Your Rights**.

SDG 16 Target 8

BROADEN AND STRENGTHEN THE PARTICIPATION OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE INSTITUTIONS OF GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

- We advised **Timor-Leste** on its historic maritime treaty with the Australian Government following the successful outcome of a compulsory conciliation process in the International Court of Justice.

- We have advised the **g7+** (a voluntary association of fragile countries that have been affected by conflict, but which are transitioning to the next stage of development) to help unite conflict and post-conflict affected countries and change the way that the developed world channels its aid and development programmes.
- We are supported the strengthening and participation of **The Gambia** and **Malawi** in the UN treaty body reporting mechanisms by providing technical assistance and training to the Governments on reporting obligations.
- **New Perimeter** supports the **Government of Georgia's Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection** in its participation in international climate change negotiations, including the Conference of the Parties (COP) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- Through Legal Representation International, we advised the delegation of **Papua New Guinea** during the meetings of UNFCCC subsidiary bodies (May 2021) on whether the Green Climate Fund can be the source to fund climate related losses and damages and what arguments could be brought forward to establish a respective position.

SDG 16 Target 9

PROVIDE LEGAL IDENTITY FOR ALL, INCLUDING BIRTH REGISTRATION

- We assist stateless people in **Italy** to gain legal recognition.
- With the **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights**, we mapped the legal mechanisms used by States to

extend protection and grant status based on international human rights instruments to persons who do not qualify for protection under international refugee law, but whose removal from the territory would be contrary to obligations under international human rights law, including the principle of non refoulement.

- We have assisted gender diverse individuals in **Australia** through individual communications to the UN and strategic litigation to ensure legal recognition of their gender on identity documents and advocate for the removal of discriminatory laws.
- With the **European Network on Statelessness**, we reported on childhood statelessness in **Austria**, identifying the gaps in law & policy, and advocated for law reform to end childhood statelessness in the country.
- Since 2015, in the UK with our NGO partner **Kids in Need of Defence**, we help children from migrant families to obtain British citizenship. We have helped over 200 children to obtain British citizenship.
- We assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians with birth registration and birth certification, including in more complex circumstances of birth, as part of our National Birth Certificate Clinic. We also engage in advocacy with the relevant government offices to create systemic change by improving the process and increasing access to birth registration and certification.
- We have been assisting the **Institute on Statelessness** and Inclusion with database on statelessness and human rights. It is a first of its kind tech tool to access categorised

UN recommendations on statelessness by UN bodies. This tool has been hailed by UN experts and advocates as it will play a key role in enhancing advocacy efforts to address statelessness and ensure there is a nationality for all.

SDG 16 Target 10

ENSURE PUBLIC ACCESS TO INFORMATION AND PROTECT FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, IN ACCORDANCE WITH NATIONAL LEGISLATION AND INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS

- With **UNAIDS**, we aim to protect the fundamental freedoms of assembly and association in various countries globally through research on international standards around freedom of association and assembly in the context of shrinking space in civil society. We have also helped to remove discriminatory travel barriers for individuals living with HIV through research on legal, policy and de facto barriers to the entry, stay and residence of persons living with HIV in the **Caribbean** and **Central Asia**.
- We have seconded a lawyer to the **Center for Reproductive Rights**, to improve access to information on sexual and reproductive health in **Kenya** through a fact finding mission and development of a report for advocacy on policy change and provision of sexual and reproductive health information to the public.
- We assisted the **O'Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law of Georgetown University** regarding the development of a database they named **COVID-19 Law Lab**. It aims to gather and display all the laws and regulations that countries have implemented in response to the pandemic.

- We conducted a multi-jurisdictional comparative research looking at the human rights impacts arising from the various COVID-19 government restrictions with **the European Center for not- for profit Law**. The study aims at assessing whether sufficient checks and balances have been done by governments to ensure infringements are appropriate, necessary and for the shortest time possible.
- We developed a global mapping with the **Clooney Foundation for Justice** on the right to access court hearings and access trial information for the public interest.
- We worked with **Project Expediate Justice** in analysing Ethiopia's Draft Criminal Procedure and Evidence Code to identify the gaps from a defence procedural perspective (due process rights, etc.) and draft recommendations to the legislator.
- We worked on a research project with **Penal Reform International** on the prevalence and application of informal life sentences around the world, with the objective of drafting recommendations on an international standard around the use of life sentences.
- We conduct research on international war crimes, the looting of antiquities in armed conflicts and the liability of private sector for the Clooney Foundation for Justice.
- With **UNICEF**, we supported the drafting of a draft bill on disability rights in **The Gambia** to ensure it is in line with international best practice and prevents discrimination against people with disabilities.
- Our lawyers worked on a research project on collective redress and/or structural remedies for discrimination, including police discrimination, for the **Open Society Justice Initiative** in their strategic litigation cases.
- For the **Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights**, we have analysed the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities and the interaction between article 13 on access to justice and article 24 on inclusive education, to identify the practical difficulties, that claimants with disabilities (or their legal guardians) face in securing access to justice in the context of inclusive education.

SDG 16 Target A

STRENGTHEN RELEVANT NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, INCLUDING THROUGH INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, FOR BUILDING CAPACITY AT ALL LEVELS, TO PREVENT VIOLENCE AND COMBAT TERRORISM AND CRIME

- With **UNICEF**, we analysed the compliance of **France** with its international obligations in the treatment of minors associated with terrorist groups in the Iraqi-Syrian territories and whether the participation of said minors in terrorist groups could be excused by their potential qualification as victims of human trade.

SDG 16 Target B

PROMOTE AND ENFORCE NON-DISCRIMINATORY LAWS AND POLICIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- With **UNAIDS**, we worked to protect against discrimination in **Palau, Malawi and Myanmar** through the removal of laws that discriminate on the basis of HIV through the analysis of proposed legislation and provision of advice on ensuring the legislation is in line with human rights standards and is non-discriminatory.

