

# Annual Report and Accounts 2025

Anchored on solutions



Dedicated to people-centred justice



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## **List of abbreviations**

**CJC:** Community Justice Centre

**CSO:** Civil Society Organisation

**EU:** European Union

**FCDO:** Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland acting through the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

**IDLO:** International Development Law Organization

**JNS:** Justice Needs and Satisfaction [survey]

**MENA:** Middle East and North Africa

**MFA:** Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands

**mSMEs:** micro, small and medium-sized enterprises

**OECD:** Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

**OSF:** Open Society Foundations

**RNE:** Registre National des Entreprises

**SJIP:** Syria Justice Innovation Process

**UNDP:** United Nations Development Programme

**WJP:** World Justice Project

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Justice Matters conference,  
May 2025, The Hague, the Netherlands



Justice Matters  
Opening  
Session 1

1

**Hiil**  
Dedicated to  
people-centred  
justice

**JusticeMat**  
Building better justice for everyone  
8 May 2025

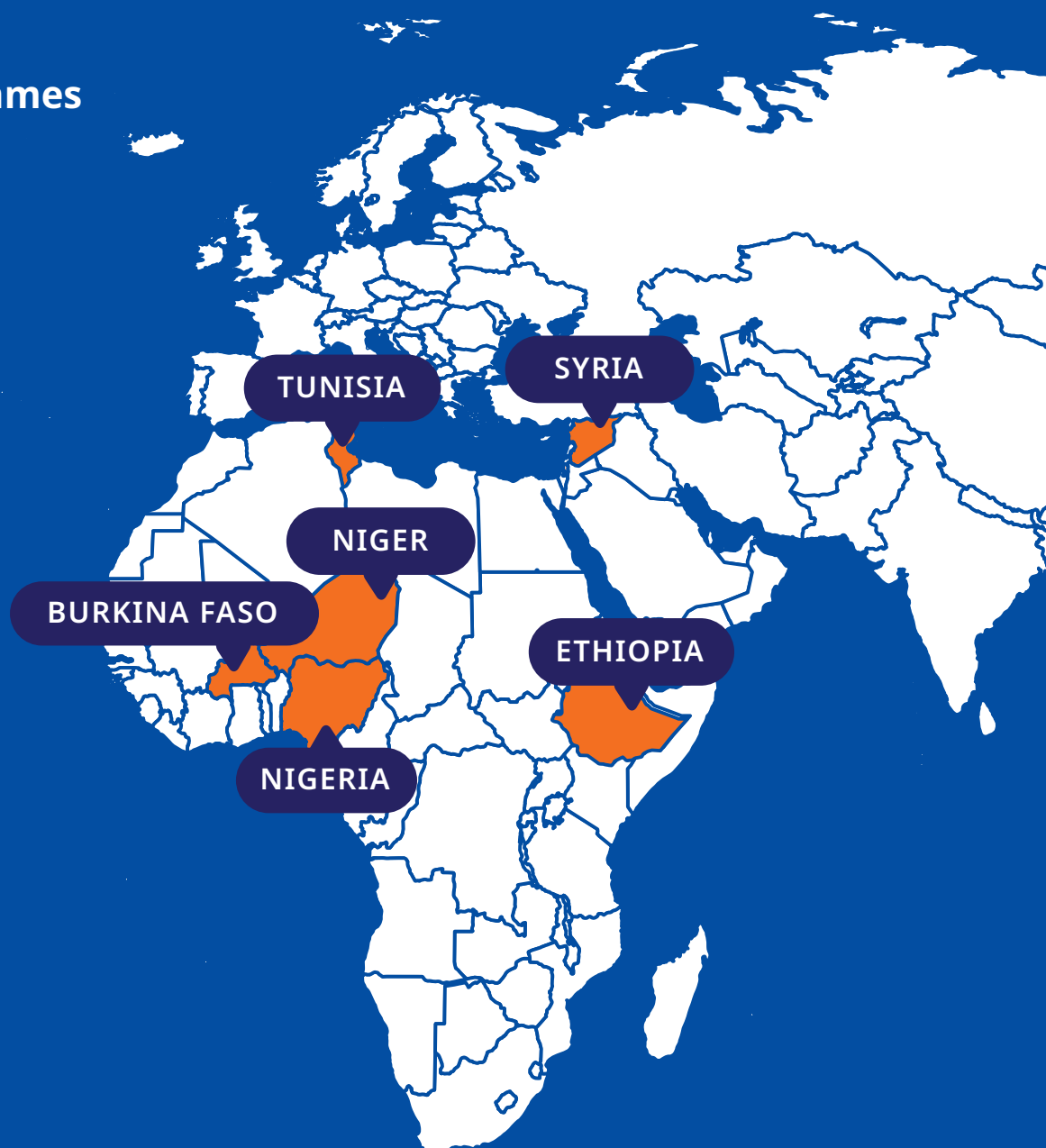
# Introduction

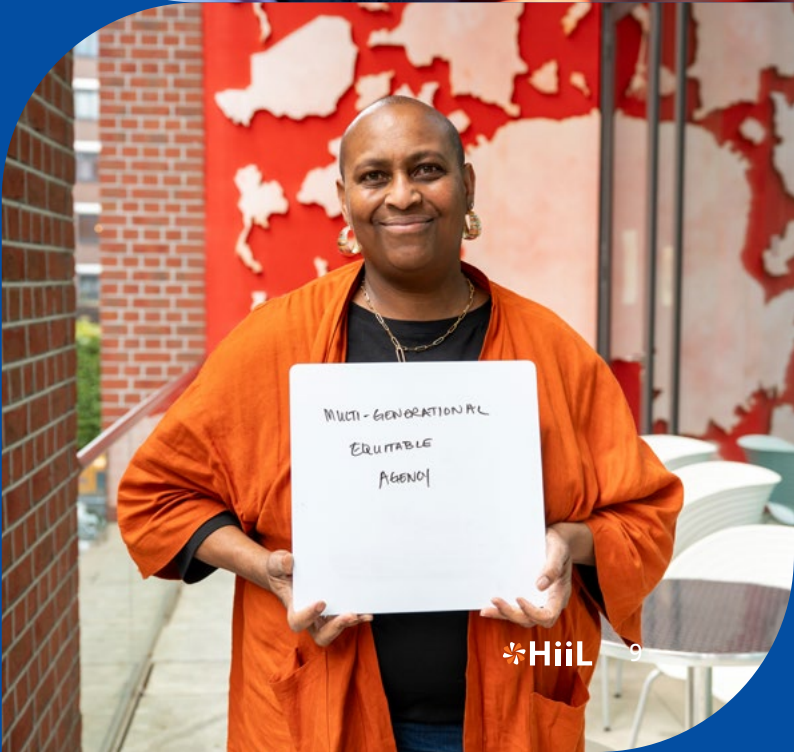
# About HiiL

The Hague Institute for Innovation of Law (HiiL) works to make justice accessible, affordable, and easy to understand for everyone. Through a people-centred justice approach, we collaborate with governments, justice providers, civil society, and international partners to design and deliver solutions that help individuals and businesses prevent and resolve their most pressing justice challenges. Combining data, innovation, research, and implementation, we contribute to stronger justice ecosystems that support peace and security, economic development, and social resilience.

Active across Africa and the Middle East, with programmes in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Niger, Nigeria, Syria and Tunisia, we continue to advance practical justice reforms while strengthening global momentum toward people-centred justice as a foundation for peaceful and prosperous societies.

## Our programmes





# From the CEO

I am excited to share with you the story of our work in 2025. On a personal level this is a unique moment for me. I have just completed one year as the CEO of HiiL - an honour of a lifetime. It has been a year of learning for me, and I am very grateful to my colleagues and our partners who have made this journey lighter.

After nearly 20 years of operations, 2025 was a year of deep introspection for HiiL as we embarked on designing a new strategy. We analysed the state of people-centred justice, consulted with our partners and listened to the field. It became clear from this process that for ordinary people, the world is becoming increasingly insecure and unstable, and that gaps in access to justice are contributing to these pressures. The global rule of law recession deepened for the seventh consecutive year; 68% of countries showed an overall decline<sup>1</sup>. Autocracies (91) now outnumber democracies (88)<sup>2</sup>. What is more, not a single indicator of Sustainable Development Goal 16 on access to justice is on track.<sup>3</sup>

In this year marked by upheaval, HiiL has remained anchored in what matters most: delivering people-centred justice. We kept listening, learning, and acting together with the people whose justice journeys define our mission.

In May at the Peace Palace, together with our partners, we told a story of justice at the Justice Matters conference. It was a story that connected the self-immolation of Mohammed Bouazizi in the winter of 2010 in Tunisia to the immigration challenges in Europe following the Arab Spring. It was a story of resilience: of women seeking to protect their right to inheritance in Nigeria, and of young Syrians chasing life-saving identity documentation. We connected everyday justice needs to wider questions of peace, security, and our collective

resilience. Throughout the year, we worked hard to ensure that we continued to tell this justice story at major conferences and global forums. From the Munich Security Conference to the FT Africa Summit in London; from the World Justice Forum to the OECD Global Roundtable on Access to Justice; in webinars and policy briefs we highlighted how justice underpins stability and economic prosperity. We emphasised that investment in justice is an act of enlightened self-interest both for donor nations and for countries grappling with weak justice infrastructure.

Across our programmes, these insights have taken on real meaning.

In **Niger**, still stabilising after the 2023 coup, we supported the Ministry of Justice's people-centred justice strategy. Customary chiefs spoke of land disputes falling dramatically when dispute resolution guidelines we developed together were put into practice.

In **Burkina Faso**, a fact sheet on women's access to justice sparked a national conversation, bringing police, traditional leaders, civil society, and government together to discuss how to modernise justice without losing what matters culturally. It also highlighted the need to ensure women's daily struggles are no longer treated as peripheral, in a context where social cohesion is under pressure.

In **Ethiopia**, where many organisations withdrew during conflict, our established local implementation partnership enabled us to stay. Our work helped shape the Justice Sector Transformation Plan and reaffirmed something we see everywhere: when justice feels local, people trust it. As one elder in Shishinda put it, as traditional mechanisms returned, "God has come down".

<sup>1</sup> World Justice Project (WJP) [Rule of Law Index \(2025\)](#).

<sup>2</sup> Nord, Marina, David Altman, Fabio Angiolillo, Tiago Fernandes, Ana Good God, and Staffan I. Lindberg. 2025. [Democracy Report 2025: 25 Years of Autocratization – Democracy Trumped?](#) University of Gothenburg: V-Dem Institute.

<sup>3</sup> OHCHR, UNDP and UNODC (2025). [Global Progress Report on Sustainable Development Goal 16: Indicators on Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies](#).

In **Syria**, the Syria Justice Innovation Process continues to show how local solutions play an important role in delivering justice in a context shaped by conflict and insecurity: AI tools for labour disputes, mobile legal clinics, mediation mechanisms, and services designed for women and youth have now reached more than 200,000 people. The courage and creativity of Syrians continue to show that even in the hardest places, justice can grow from the ground up.

Increasingly, technology is helping us close the justice gap in very practical ways: in **Tunisia** and **Niger**, AI pilot initiatives - chatbots, voice assistants - are tools that help people and small businesses navigate the legal challenges of daily life.

Our commitment in 2025 was to also spend more time learning and documenting how our work impacts people and communities. We conducted surveys in **Nigeria** and **Burkina Faso** to understand how practitioners are using dispute resolution guidelines to guide their service delivery. The signals are strong. In **Nigeria**, 87% of practitioners we spoke to are routinely applying recommendations in their land or family justice work. In **Burkina Faso**, 93% of our partners have used our Justice Needs and Satisfaction data to adjust programmes, inform reforms, or ground advocacy in people's lived realities. Programme implementers and funders alike consistently highlight how our data helps them "understand the realities on the ground".

When justice practitioners have access to usable, evidence-based tools, they are enthusiastic about using them. Scale comes through repeated practice, widening trust and cooperation between formal institutions and informal service providers and an enabling policy, regulatory and governance environment.

Looking ahead, our 2026-2029 strategy is shaped by disruption yet grounded in delivery and clarity of our goals. It is our response to the challenges of our time. We are keenly aware that we need a solidarity network for justice stakeholders to help to bridge the justice gap. We need to find a new language that clearly shows how justice contributes to peace, security, and economic prosperity. Guided by a new urgency for innovation, we are building creative solutions that are affordable, accessible and reliable. We are optimistic about the future of justice.

Almost 60 years ago, Dr Martin Luther King said "The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice." We are steadily bending this arc towards justice but we need your support and partnership to strengthen our arms.

Udo Jude Ilo



# 2025 in focus

8,263

Justice practitioners used our guidelines in Nigeria and Uganda.

7,863

Respondents to our JNS: mapping the justice needs of people and mSMEs.

5

Justice Innovation Lab pilots being integrated into national justice strategies and state systems.

Our work shows that when justice is designed around people's lived experiences, and anchored in data, it can support peace and security, strengthen social cohesion, and contribute to economic resilience.

By increasingly focusing on context-specific outcomes rather than rigid implementation processes, we are moving closer to a reality where justice is accessible, affordable, and effective for everyone. In 2025, we delivered programmes valued at €7.7 million in 6 countries<sup>4</sup>, reflecting our capacity to deliver solutions where they are most needed.

<sup>4</sup> Additional limited activities in a seventh country, Uganda.



*Participants share their perspectives on people-centered justice at the Justice Matters conference in The Hague, the Netherlands*



## Justice as an economic driver

In 2025, we began to more closely examine the links between justice and the economy. Legal problems such as disputes over land, employment, or contracts often have economic consequences for families and small businesses. However, these connections are complex and not yet fully mapped. Our new strategy includes further investment in better understanding how resolving everyday justice problems contributes to economic stability and opportunity.

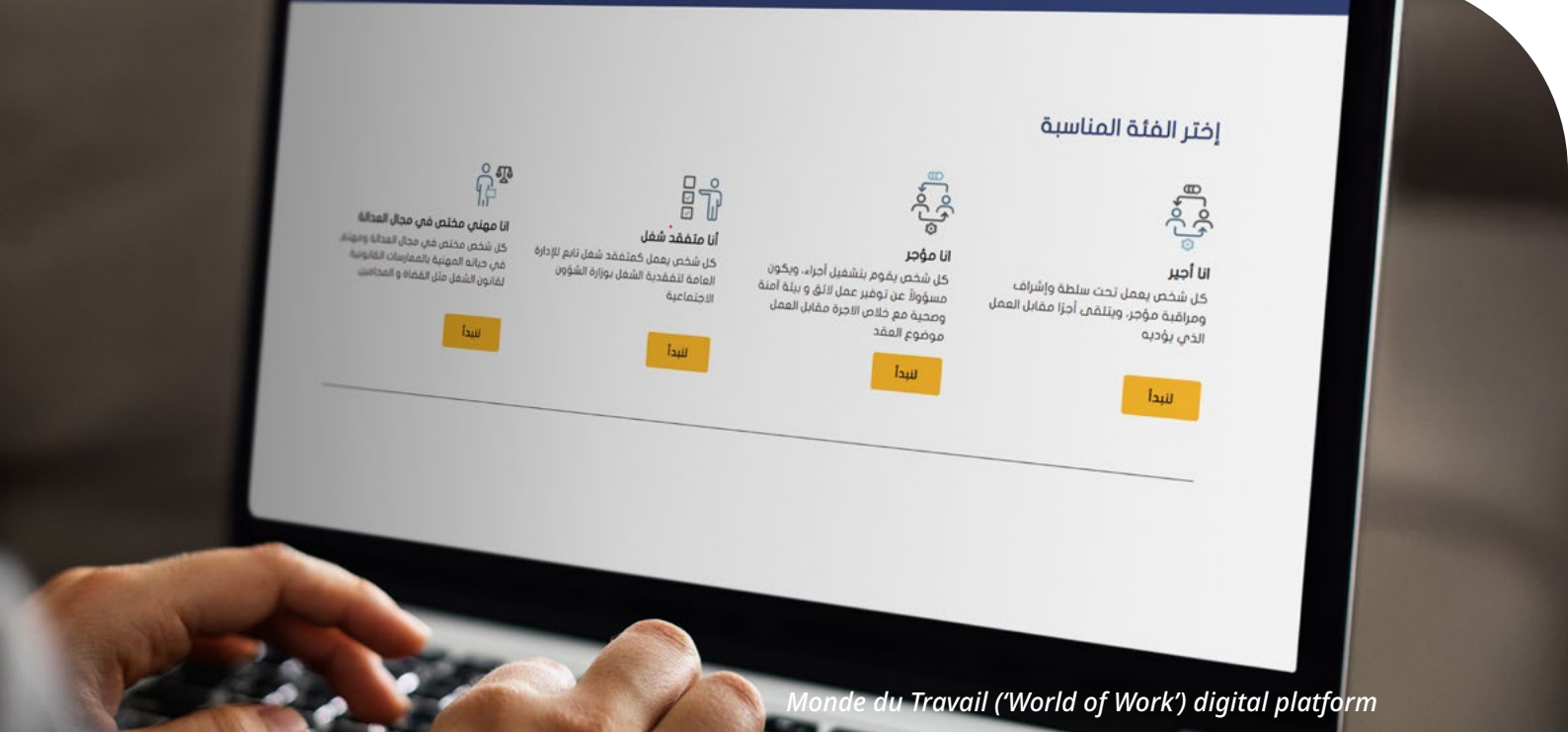
In **Tunisia**, *Monde du Travail* ('World of Work') was developed to make employment rights and procedures easier to understand and act upon. Created through a Justice Innovation Lab, the web-based service guides employees and employers through common workplace issues, such as contracts, wages, and termination, using clear and practical language. Developed in collaboration with the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Labour Inspection, the platform is aligned with Tunisia's labour inspection system and supports inspectors in delivering more consistent guidance. By promoting early understanding and resolution of disputes, it aims to make labour justice more accessible and responsive.

Similarly, our work within the **Syria** Justice Innovation Process addressed the needs of those in the informal economy. We co-designed *Haki Bi Idi* (حقي بايدي), a digital channel for women working in informal sectors, and piloted it over a short implementation period. The platform offers rights-based information, legal consultations, and referrals. This year, the focus was on piloting the concept, gathering user feedback, and assessing its potential for further development.

## Connecting formal and informal justice systems for lasting change

A recurring challenge in the justice sector is the gap between formal state institutions and the informal or customary systems that many people rely on. In 2025, we worked to bridge this divide by connecting customary authorities, state institutions, and civil society to strengthen coordination and support.

In **Burkina Faso**, we supported the implementation of the Faso Bu Kaoré law and contributed to the development of the country's first customary land charter, helping provide greater legal certainty for rural communities. In **Niger**, we supported a first-of-its-kind structured dialogue between customary leaders and state justice institutions through the launch of a national people-centred justice strategy and the inaugural *Forum de la Chefferie*. In **Ethiopia**, we consolidated our efforts into a unified community justice programme, a partnership between the Ministry of Justice and traditional elders, ensuring that justice solutions are built with communities rather than delivered to them. In **Nigeria**, we refined the Community Justice Centre model and developed practical guidelines jointly with formal and informal justice practitioners. The centres provide mediation and community-based dispute resolution, while referring cases to courts when formal adjudication is required. The model also includes courts referring appropriate cases back to Community Justice Centres where mediation or traditional dispute resolution can resolve disputes more quickly and effectively.



Monde du Travail ('World of Work') digital platform

## Digital public goods on the path to scale

Technology can expand access to justice when it is practical and widely accessible. In 2025, alongside *Monde du Travail* in **Tunisia**, we advanced digital platforms in **Burkina Faso** and **Niger** as digital public goods. These platforms bring together legal information, data, and customary practices in one place, making them accessible to citizens and justice practitioners. They are designed to connect formal legal systems with community realities.

In **Niger**, the *Hadin kai-bani fondo* service ('The Path for Cohesion') was developed to address land disputes, one of the country's most common justice problems. The service

uses voice technology: users call a free number, ask questions in their own words, and receive step-by-step guidance. It is designed for rural areas where internet access and literacy levels are limited. The system draws only on information validated by national experts. The service was co-created and is governed through collaboration led by the Ministry of Justice and the National Legal Aid Agency, together with the Permanent Secretariat of the Rural Code and the Association of Traditional Chiefs of Niger. It does not replace local authorities. Instead, it supports chiefs and mediators by providing consistent, nationally aligned guidance.

Global convening on strengthening customary and informal, pathways to people-centred justice, June 2025, Warsaw, Poland





*Training enumerators for the Justice Needs and Satisfaction survey on mSMEs in Tunisia*

## Global thought leadership to grow the movement

In 2025, we worked to broaden the way people-centred justice is understood. We moved beyond framing it only as a rule of law issue, and showed how it contributes to security, stability, and economic resilience. This included engaging at forums beyond the justice sector, such as the Munich Security Conference and the World Forum on the Future of Democracy. The Justice Matters conference was our main platform for this shift, convening global leaders and using data and partnerships to demonstrate how people-centred justice strengthens governance.

We also translated research into practical policy insights on land governance, responsible use of artificial intelligence, justice financing, and protection for small and medium-sized enterprises. Through our work with Team Europe Democracy, we co-chaired a working group advocating for the integration of people-centred justice into the European Union’s Global Gateway strategy.

We continued building a global ecosystem of partners. We became a founding member of the African Alliance on People-Centred Justice, leading its data and financing workstreams and co-organising the African Regional Forum. We also engaged in the Ibero-American Alliance to support cross-regional exchange.

In collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme and Pathfinders at the Open Government Partnership Global Forum, we further demonstrated the role of people-centred justice in accountable governance, transparency, and service delivery.

## Researched people’s justice needs, and what works

Advancing people-centred justice requires evidence that is grounded in practice. In 2025, our knowledge and research work focused on strengthening that evidence and applying it to improve delivery. We continued to generate data on how justice systems function for individuals and businesses, while documenting what helps services become more responsive and effective.

We completed three Justice Needs and Satisfaction studies: two general population panel surveys in **Tunisia** and **Nigeria**, and a legal needs survey focused on micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (mSMEs) in Tunisia. The mSME study is the first of its kind in the **MENA** region; we conducted 30 minute in-person and telephone interviews with over 2000 owners and representatives of formal and informal businesses across the country. This evidence is informing initiatives aimed at reducing the legal obstacles that affect small business growth.

With our partners, we contributed to the development of two new methodologies for evaluating the people-centredness of justice services, and outcomes for justice users. We also looked inwards, developing case studies on the innovation, design and piloting processes behind digital platforms and Community Justice Centres. We also embarked on projects due to be delivered in 2026: one to measure the economic impact of legal information portals in **South Africa** and **Tanzania**, and another tracing the justice journeys of domestic violence survivors in **Uganda**.

# What we learned

Delivering innovative justice programming in complex and conflict-affected settings is demanding. We set high standards, but not everything goes to plan. People-centred justice remains an emerging field, with limited consolidated evidence on what works. We therefore adapt our approach based on programme data and feedback. At a time when global investment in justice is stalling, it is important to course-correct quickly. When results fall short of expectations, we examine why. When outcomes are stronger than anticipated, we analyse what can be replicated.

In 2025, we deepened our understanding of how to secure multi-level institutional ownership when integrating formal and informal justice systems. We also navigated the practical challenges of establishing local offices in programme countries and reflected on how to structure timelines more realistically. Finally, we continued operating in fragile and post-conflict contexts, including in Syria, adjusting our approach to shifting political realities.

## Multi-level institutional ownership

Over the last five years, our approach to co-developing new justice services with institutional partners has expanded from the original “design and drop” approach; now, we are walking alongside our partners on the journey of piloting and planning for regional and national-scale roll-out. This has been a steep learning curve. Our experience in **Tunisia, Niger and Ethiopia** in 2025 reinforced that effectiveness and long-term sustainability

depend on multi-level institutional ownership. High-level endorsement alone is not enough to ensure that new justice services are implemented and maintained over time.

Even public, formal adoption of a co-designed solution does not automatically translate into full implementation. Implementation depends on commitment at both leadership and operational levels to prevent hurdles and delays, especially during leadership transitions. To ensure solutions last, the future institutional owner (for example, a Ministry or its IT team) must be engaged to lead on content and platform development from the outset. Institutional procedures and decision cycles can be slow. A dual-track approach that combines high-level dialogue with practitioner-level pilots allows technical progress to continue even when formal decision-making slows.

In volatile or politically sensitive contexts, we have learned to avoid relying solely on government buy-in for implementation. We develop resilient alternatives, such as private-CSO governance models, to keep services running when institutional support wanes.

## Coherence strengthens sustainability

It is important to avoid multiplying solutions. As we saw in **Burkina Faso**, prioritising coherence by uniting civil society organisations around a single, shared solution can simplify processes, strengthen collective ownership, and support long-term sustainability.

## Adaptive programming in post-conflict conditions

With experience has come increased confidence in continuing to operate in conflict settings, including during regime change. In **Syria**, our adaptive programming approach has matured. We have learned to shift from output-driven plans to prioritising the safety and individual support of stakeholders. Taking a people-centred approach to these relationships resulted in deeper group cohesion, even across political lines, and a renewed local commitment to mission continuity. In **Ethiopia**, when many other organisations withdrew during the conflict, our longstanding delivery partnership with Destiny Ethiopia enabled the programme to continue.

*“This year’s lessons learned underscore a core truth: innovation in justice is also rooted in honest reflection. We must look critically at what worked and, more importantly, what didn’t. Being transparent about these challenges enables us to adapt, build resilience, and strengthen the role of justice in supporting peace and security in complex environments.”*

– Shekhar Pula, HiiL COO

*Justice Matters conference in The Hague, the Netherlands*





# Work in countries

*To protect the privacy of our participants, pseudonyms and representative photography have been used throughout stories in this chapter.*

# Tunisia

1

National Employment Platform, co-created with 25 key justice stakeholders, including 15 regional labor inspectors

70+

young tech innovators attended Hack4Justice

3,817

People surveyed through 2 Justice Needs and Satisfaction studies

2

flagship startups launched via Venture Growth Hub (E-Tafakna & Contractzlab)

## Donors:

- Dutch MFA: *Activating the Power of PCJ*
- Dutch Embassy in Tunisia: *PCJ for mSMEs the People Behind Them*
- OSF: *Towards An Accountable, Just And Inclusive Democracy For All In Tunisia*
- FCDO: *Building People-Centred Justice Capacity In Tunisia*

## Thematics:

- Legal problems of mSMEs
- Employment

HiiL has been active in Tunisia since 2012, working with institutions across the justice and labour ecosystem. Our long-term partners include the Presidency of the Government, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Tunisian Bar Association. In 2025, we implemented four projects nationwide. Our work focused on generating and sharing data on people's justice needs, strengthening collaboration among justice actors, improving employment justice services, and supporting micro, small and medium enterprises (mSMEs) to resolve legal problems more effectively.

Access to justice in Tunisia remains limited and uneven. Our Justice Needs and Satisfaction data shows that, over a three-year period, 58% of Tunisians experienced at least one legal problem. Half of the problems reported in 2023 were abandoned by 2025. Among mSMEs, more than half faced legal issues, and around 80% of these problems were unresolved or abandoned. This has direct consequences

for business stability and growth. We used findings from the two 2025 Justice Needs and Satisfaction surveys to identify priority problems and convene stakeholders around practical responses.

Building on the mSME survey, we organised a high-level Stakeholder Dialogue with 34 senior officials from the Presidency of the Government, key ministries, public agencies, professional bodies and civil society organisations. The dialogue informed a Justice Innovation Lab, where public institutions, justice professionals, business support organisations and entrepreneurs co-designed a single digital entry point to support business creation, regulatory compliance and dispute navigation. As mSMEs make up 97% of the national economy, institutional anchoring was essential. We therefore adapted our 2025 work plan to prioritise the co-design and early partnership with the *Registre National des Entreprises*, with a pilot planned for 2026.

## A student's solution to Tunisia's business registration challenge

For aspiring entrepreneurs in Tunisia, guidance on business registration can be fragmented and hard to navigate. This uncertainty costs time and money.

At Hack4Justice, a team including Karim, an AI engineering student, designed an app that centralises business registration guidance. The app is technically complete and awaiting final administrative and funding approvals for public rollout. The team also saw potential beyond business registration; the same tool could help universities manage repetitive student information requests.

Karim explains: *"Just at my university, the administrative office receives 10 requests of information per day on average. This is just one example but gives you a sense of how many Tunisians can be helped when our app is deployed."*

With Hack4Justice, we created a space where public institutions and young innovators worked side by side. The experience also highlighted how administrative processes remain complex. A student building a tool to simplify registration still faced hurdles with registering and contracting *himself*. For us, this confirmed that the challenge is real and that sustained collaboration is needed to turn innovation into reform.

*Hack4Justice event focusing on AI solutions for mSMEs*



## Early ministerial buy-in is necessary, but not sufficient

Early engagement with public authorities shaped our justice innovation work in Tunisia. We partnered with ministries, justice actors, local organisations and startups in a complex and shifting institutional landscape. Formal endorsement gave us legitimacy, but implementation exposed a need to connect high-level vision with day-to-day operations. Approval timelines stretched due to procedural requirements and periodic leadership transitions, particularly within the Ministry of Social Affairs, requiring adjustments to planning and pacing despite continued interest in the work.

We learned that early buy-in is necessary but not sufficient. High-level support must be matched by named focal points, clear mandates and technical ownership within institutions. We shifted to a dual-track approach, combining institutional dialogue with practitioner-level pilots and coalition support. This meant pilots could test and refine solutions while formal approvals

moved through internal processes. We sequenced activities differently, running technical work in parallel to administrative steps, and escalated specific bottlenecks to senior officials when required.

In practice, this more deliberate sequencing kept momentum in a volatile political context. Close collaboration with local partners and developers improved usability, grounded solutions in everyday legal practice and enabled faster iteration. Despite delays, pilots progressed and working-level engagement within the Ministry increased, strengthening institutional ownership.

In the future, we will better align programme timelines with institutional decision cycles and formalise operational ownership from the outset. The core lesson is clear: secure buy-in at multiple levels, define roles early, and design implementation tracks that can move even when formal systems slow down.

# Syria

2,869

reached via three specialized legal aid and mediation initiatives for labor and entrepreneurship

1

national innovation ("Haki Bi Idi") launched to provide women in the informal sector with secure, AI-assisted legal pathways and rights-based information

57%

women's representation across a core network of 30 Syrian stakeholders dedicated to co-creating local justice solution

1

Justice Innovation Lab convened with 11 cross-sector experts to tackle structural barriers to employment justice for SMEs and women

## Donor:

- EU NEAR: *Syria Justice Innovation Process (SJIP)*

## Thematics:

- Right to work in the private sector, with a focus on mSMEs and women

The Syria Justice Innovation Process (SJIP), launched in 2018 and facilitated by HiiL with European Union support, brings together Syrian stakeholders to address priority justice needs, including personal documentation, violence against women and access to work for SMEs and women.

Operating mainly from Lebanon and neighbouring countries, we have supported Syrian-led justice initiatives despite a volatile regional context. In 2024, most activities took place online. In 2025, as conditions allowed, we resumed in-person engagement. This marked the second year of the third EU-funded phase of SJIP. Our focus remained consistent: to strengthen the capacity of Syrian innovators through technical assistance, coaching and seed funding, and create opportunities for them to test solutions that respond to people's justice needs.

We worked with a diverse stakeholder group of Syrian justice actors to identify the priority issues for justice. In 2025, they selected the right to work in the private sector, with a focus

on SMEs and women, as a pressing concern. The fall of the regime and the resulting legal vacuum made this focus more urgent. We adapted our approach to reflect the shifting political context. We created more spaces for dialogue and enabled justice actors to reflect collectively on the implications of this major change for access to justice. Our work continues at the invitation of this stakeholder group, who sees people-centred justice as a practical way to respond to urgent legal needs.

In 2025, we organised a Justice Innovation Lab bringing together Syrian justice actors to design solutions around the right to work in the private sector. The Lab generated three concrete concepts. One was selected for piloting and presented to potential donors and partners at the closing event in October. In parallel, we provided technical and financial support to promising initiatives to strengthen their reach. The next phase will focus on nationwide data collection, continued dialogue and scaling viable solutions, alongside a gradual transition of activities into Syria.

## Um Khaled's story: from vulnerability to advocacy for domestic workers' rights

Um Khaled, a displaced woman from Homs, fled to rural Damascus after losing her home. With her husband unable to work, she spent five years as an informal domestic worker. She endured withheld wages, long hours and no contract or legal protection. She felt vulnerable and afraid to speak up.

Through our Justice Innovation Lab, local partners developed and piloted the "Haki Be Eidi" initiative. It created a safe channel for legal advice, including a digital assistant offering preliminary guidance and referrals to a legal team. This is how Um Khaled first accessed support.

With legal guidance and practical assistance, she learned how to protect her rights and work with greater confidence. She now shares her experience with other domestic workers. Her daughter, who witnessed these struggles, has since become a programme facilitator, extending support to more women in her community.

*"The initiative helped informal domestic workers understand their rights, and now there's a place where they can speak up and get heard. Today, they don't have to face their problems alone anymore."*



## In a volatile transition period, protect relationships first; formal outputs second

After the post-2024 political transition, power shifts and uncertainty affected how safely stakeholders could participate in the Syrian Justice Innovation Process. Assumptions about stable engagement no longer held. Meetings were postponed, responses slowed and previously agreed timelines became unrealistic.

With the donor's support, we decided to pause planned outputs and focus on maintaining the network. The Justice Innovation Lab and subgrant call were temporarily suspended. We scheduled regular one-to-one check-ins with stakeholder team members, maintained weekly contact across borders and actively connected peers to support one another. Within days of the transition, the SJIP Secretariat convened an ad hoc stakeholder dialogue to assess risks, clarify priorities and agree on immediate next steps. We revised timelines, documented new

risk assumptions and adjusted the workplan to reflect the political reality rather than continuing as planned.

Output-driven planning was not workable in the immediate aftermath. By acting early, naming the uncertainty and reallocating time to relationship management, we kept stakeholders engaged without compromising their safety. The Stakeholder Team remained unified and committed. Trust held and the process continued despite a highly volatile context.

We will restart paused components in phases, maintain structured check-ins and build contingency buffers into future planning cycles. The core lesson is clear: in moments of transition, protect relationships first, formal outputs second.

# Nigeria

856

trained justice stakeholders on guidelines

4,046

people surveyed through a JNS

97%

of surveyed justice practitioners use our guidelines daily in their work

1

JNS published closing the 3 year cycle of mapping justice needs in Nigeria

## Donors:

- Dutch MFA: *Activating the Power of PCJ*
- FCDO: *Strengthening Frontline Justice Services To Prevent And Resolve Land Dispute Between Farmers And Herders In Kaduna, Benue, Katsina And Plateau States*

## Thematics:

- Land justice
- Family justice
- Gender-Based Violence

Hiil has worked in Nigeria since 2015 with support from the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Under the Activating the Power of People-Centred Justice programme, we have built a convening role at federal level and implemented activities in Imo, Ogun and Kaduna states. At the end of 2025, in partnership with FCDO, through the Strengthening Peace and Resilience in Nigeria programme, we began new work in Benue, Katsina and Plateau, while continuing in Kaduna. Our focus is to expand tested justice practices and scale community-based pilots, including Community Justice Centres, so that more people can prevent and resolve disputes closer to home.

Our three-year longitudinal Justice Needs and Satisfaction study followed the same respondents between 2022 and 2025. Ninety percent experienced at least one legal problem during that period; land disputes accounted for 24% of long-term unresolved cases, neighbour disputes made up 23% of cases and domestic

violence was reported by 30% of respondents. As problems persisted, their impact deepened. Long-lasting disputes were linked to stress, illness and financial hardship. We expected that people would turn more to formal justice actors over time. Instead, many moved away from courts and lawyers and relied increasingly on direct negotiation or community and traditional leaders. This shift informs our strategy.

In 2025, we launched the third wave of the survey with the Federal Ministry of Justice, National Judicial Institute, Nigerian Bar Association, Legal Aid Council and Nigerian Law School, with the aim of embedding the tool in national systems. We continued Community Justice Centre pilots in Imo and Ogun with state Ministries of Justice, Women Affairs and Health, and trained 856 justice actors on new land, family and intimate partner violence guidelines. Under the FCDO SPRiNG programme, we began work on farmer-herder conflict guidelines in four additional states, with completion planned for 2026.

## Preventing escalation in a land debt dispute in Ogun State

A land sale in Ogun State was escalating into a dispute. The buyer had missed payment deadlines, and the landowner threatened to resell the plot. What began as a civil disagreement risked becoming a police case or violent confrontation, with costs neither family could afford.

A local ADR practitioner intervened, drawing on Hiil's Family & Land Justice Guidelines. Instead of allowing the dispute to reach the police, he used structured dialogue to calm tensions and refocus both parties on practical solutions. The discussion shifted from punishment to realistic repayment.

The parties reached an amicable agreement without police or court involvement. The landowner accepted a revised payment schedule and recognised earlier instalments. The buyer retained rights to the land. The community avoided a costly legal battle and the breakdown of neighbourly relations.

*"I normally use the guidelines to settle rifts that could have aggravated to Police matters. I used them here to settle the rift amicably. The landowner agreed to the postponed time."*

– Justice Practitioner / Survey Respondent

## Pro bono is valuable, but justice services need paid infrastructure

In 2025, we partnered with stakeholders in Imo State to pilot a Community Justice Centre addressing land and family disputes. A local steering committee brought together traditional leaders, the Nigerian Bar Association, CSOs and community actors.

The original design assumed a government-led model, with public provision of office space and staffing, and pro bono legal services for justice seekers. In practice, services remained centralised in urban courts, cases moved slowly and pro bono proved unsustainable. Lawyers could waive fees, but transport, filing costs and other expenses still had to be covered. Many justice seekers understood "pro bono" to mean completely free, creating tension and drop-off.

We adjusted on two fronts. When government commitments on space and staffing did not come through on time, we partnered with Nkemjika Development Foundation who provided premises and operational support. Hiil

renovated and equipped the office and financed core staff. We moved from reliance on volunteers to a part-time in-house lawyer and a staff psychologist, and clarified that the Community Justice Centre offers free counselling, mediation and pre-legal support, with discounted referrals where court action is required.

This shift made the pilot operational and financially viable. It also strengthened the focus on alternative dispute resolution and recognised the link between legal problems and psychological stress.

The Community Justice Centre resolved 76% of 126 cases in its first year. Stakeholders endorsed the hybrid model and community trust increased. In 2026, we will expand rural outreach and radio programming to increase intake and track monthly results.

The core lesson is practical: secure government buy-in, and design alternative governance and staffing models early to keep services running.

*Community Justice Centre in Imo State*



# Ethiopia

3

Community Justice Centres in Addis Ababa, Afar, and Sidama

339

cases registered in 3 CJs, of which 281 resolved

160

multi stakeholder training participants

200

business community participants in an awareness creation workshop

## Donor:

- Dutch MFA: *Activating the Power of PCJ*

## Thematics:

- Land justice
- Family justice

HiiL has worked with partners in Ethiopia for seven years. Our engagement began at national level and, since 2024, has focused more strongly on regional states. In 2025, the fifth year of our programme with the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, we supported Community Justice Centres in Afar, Sidama and Addis Ababa, and started developing family justice guidelines in Amhara, Sidama and Addis Ababa. Working with the Ethiopian Ministry of Justice and our implementation partner Destiny Ethiopia, we piloted centres that link informal and formal justice systems, with a focus on land and family disputes. From 2026, the programme will also receive support from JAC/ UNDP.

The justice gap remains significant. Forty percent of the population faces serious legal problems every four years. Of 7.4 million legal issues, 5.2 million remain unresolved. Land, family and domestic violence disputes are common. In practice, 43% of disputes are handled through customary mechanisms, often led by village elders. These systems are accessible and widely used, but they face challenges around enforcement, human rights

compliance, and lack outcome monitoring. Since 2022, regional states have been issuing proclamations to formally establish traditional dispute resolution systems, such as customary courts. This legislative process is ongoing. Our approach responds to this reality. At the invitation of the Ministry of Justice, which has prioritised community-level justice in its five-year transformation plan, we support closer integration between informal and formal systems.

In 2025, we consolidated the three Community Justice Centre pilots. We strengthened the capacity of staff and elders, increased engagement with police, legal clinics and universities, and embedded data collection and learning into daily operations. In parallel, we facilitated the development of family justice guidelines across three regions. We adapted our work to regional differences, including migratory populations in Afar and coordination gaps in Addis Ababa and Sidama. We also began preparatory work to open three additional centres in 2026 and are developing a scaling plan to guide national oversight and future expansion.

## Elder-led mediation reconciling neighbours in Addis Ababa

Amredin, 42, was installing utilities in an apartment owned by his client when a neighbour blocked his workers. The dispute escalated into a physical assault. His work stopped, cutting off income for his family. Amredin first tried neighbourhood mediation, but the neighbour did not attend.

After a police referral, the case went to the Addis Ketema Community Justice Center. Amredin chose an elder-led (“shimglina”) alternative dispute process, instead of court. HiiL-trained shimagiles convened both parties via a consent form. After hearing the case, they issued a binding proposal allowing work to resume and requiring future

objections to follow legal channels. Within six days, an apology and family consultations led to agreement on terms that allowed work to resume.

Amredin returned to work and restored stability at home. Relations between the neighbours improved. Satisfied with the outcome, he began referring others in his area to the Community Justice Center, where they too accessed timely, local dispute resolution.

*“The Community Justice Center helped us resolve in a couple of days what could not be resolved in the two months before. Once we agreed to make use of the services offered by the shimglina, the process was clear, fast, and led to real reconciliation.”*

Session held at the Addis Ketema Community Justice Center



## High-tech solutions still require low-tech coordination and ownership

In Ethiopia, the Ministry of Justice, supported by HiiL and Destiny Ethiopia, is establishing Community Justice Centres to bridge informal and formal systems. A core component is a digital platform offering self-help information, referrals and practice guidance on land and family disputes in Afar, Sidama and Addis Ababa.

Although commitment to reform was strong, the platform was initially deprioritised. We assumed its value would be self-evident. Instead, local stakeholders questioned how it supported day-to-day mediation and case handling. Different institutional logics and timelines across systems slowed progress and affected data consistency.

We responded by stepping back from pushing features, and instead, invested in a structured coordination and Ministry ownership. We convened a technical retreat to clarify roles and expectations, and introduced a fixed weekly

working session between the Ministry as platform owner, the developer and Community Justice Centre representatives. This created a structured space to resolve bottlenecks, align federal and regional perspectives and take practical decisions on functionality. We also secured additional developer input to address gaps that had delayed progress.

As a result, development accelerated again – and this time, together. A case management function tracking users from intake to resolution was integrated, and periodic data submissions from all centres improved reporting quality. Next, we will refine features, translate content and prepare a phased rollout.

The core lesson is clear: for digital innovation in traditional justice systems, technology must be coupled with sustained coordination, clear ownership and agreed value.

# Niger

3,500+

beneficiaries received direct support and personalised justice solutions

75

stakeholders trained on using guidelines

4

groups participating in CSO accelerator

376

callers voice assistant

## Donor:

- Dutch Embassy in Niger: *Programme d'Innovation de la Justice au Niger (PIJN)*

## Thematics:

- Women's access to justice
- Land justice

HiiL has worked in Niger since 2021. The current programme, *Programme d'Innovation de la Justice au Niger (PIJN)* (2022–2026) operates at the national level, with activities across key regions including Dosso and Tillabéri. Funded primarily by the Dutch Embassy in Niger, we work with national and regional institutions to strengthen fair prevention and resolution of land and rural disputes, with particular attention to rural populations and women.

Justice Needs and Satisfaction data shows strong reliance on customary mechanisms. However, access to justice remains limited due to structural barriers such as distance, cost, low legal awareness and weak coordination. In 2025, we combined data, institutional engagement and practical innovation to address land disputes and women's access to rural land. At the request of the Ministry of Justice, we aligned with evolving legislative priorities, including supporting the review of the law on rural land tribunals. We adapted sequencing in response to political and

civic space constraints, including a national regulatory measure requiring NGOs to regularise their legal and financial status.

In 2025, we disseminated justice data through workshops and institutional exchanges, in partnership with the National Institute of Statistics and academic institutions. We finalised the guideline *Accès des femmes au foncier rural au Niger : cas des régions de Dosso et Tillabéri* and supported a Strategy Monitoring Committee, which met twice and validated the annual action plan. We mapped justice-focused CSOs to inform the 2026 Accelerator and delivered training with the *École de Formation Judiciaire* and the Faculty of Agronomy. With the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, Code Rural, ANAJJ, the Association of Traditional Chiefs and other partners, we piloted Justice Innovation Lab solutions, including *Hadin kai-bani fondo*. We also conducted diagnostic research to prepare the second Lab cycle.

## From fear to hope: Saouda regains her land

Saouda, 45, is a widow and mother of five in rural Doutchi. After her husband's death, her in-laws claimed his farmland, leaving her without resources to feed her children. Illiterate, isolated and living in extreme poverty, she had no means to defend her land rights.

Through our CSO Accelerator, we supported REPPAD to raise awareness of women's land rights. The organisation held community sessions with traditional authorities and broadcast radio messages explaining remedies in land disputes. Over three months, women learned what rights they have and how to claim them.

With the support of traditional leaders and REPPAD, Saouda regained access to part of her land. She can farm again and provide for her children. REPPAD also assisted her in securing formal tenure, including steps to obtain an individual land title in her own name.

*"Thanks to the technical and financial support of HiiL, the NGO REPPAD raised awareness among many women in the localities of Gaya, Loga and Doutchi. These women gained knowledge about the available avenues for recourse in cases of land disputes, thereby strengthening their ability to defend their rights." – Hamadou Ali, Project Manager, REPPAD*

## Technical teams must be at the table from day one in multi-ministry initiatives

In Niger, land disputes are the second most common conflict. Customary leaders, formally recognised under Law No. 2015-01, must attempt conciliation before cases reach the courts in Dosso and Tillabéri.

Many customary authorities have limited access to, and knowledge of, the formal legal framework. This affects the consistency and quality of conciliation and weakens alignment with national law. During the innovation lab, participants identified a clear need for reliable, accessible legal information.

Together, they designed *Hadin kai-bani fondo*, a hybrid solution combining a digital platform and voice service to guide land dispute conciliation using validated legal texts. The prototype was launched in Dosso and Tillabéri.

We initially assumed that partnering with one ministry and engaging traditional leaders would be sufficient. In practice, three ministries had to be involved. This slowed coordination and delayed decisions on governance and operational ownership. We responded by establishing a steering committee, formal coordination meetings and an extended memorandum of understanding. We also expanded outreach to justice seekers at the request of the Minister of Justice. An operational committee was created, but the IT department was engaged late, limiting early capacity building for the needed long-term management.

Customary leaders now tell us that they value access to validated legal texts and refer to the platform during conciliation. The tool also supports community awareness of the legal framework. An outreach campaign is underway, and the platform will migrate to a Ministry-managed server to strengthen sustainability.

The lesson is clear: define operational ownership and governance early, and involve technical teams from day one to build lasting institutional capacity.

*Photo: Regional launch workshop for the Hadin kai-bani fondo digital platform, Birni N'Gaouré.*



# Burkina Faso

1

national law enacted and implemented with our support (Faso Bu Kaoré)

15

CSOs joined the platform we developed

93%

of surveyed practitioners have used at least one of our data products since its publication

1

national platform adopted as the official state tool for legal assistance and information (Justice-SIRA)

## Donor:

- Dutch MFA: *Activating the Power of PCJ*

## Thematics:

- Land justice

HiIL has worked in Burkina Faso since 2021. The programme operates at national level, with activities in regions affected by land disputes and limited access to formal justice services, including Boussouma and surrounding areas. In 2025, we worked with the Ministry of Justice, customary justice actors, civil society organisations (CSOs) and technical partners to strengthen people-centred justice. Our focus was on generating and using justice data, supporting innovation, improving coordination among CSOs, and strengthening links between customary and formal systems, particularly on land disputes and for vulnerable populations.

Justice Needs and Satisfaction data shows limited use of formal justice mechanisms. Only 4% of people go to court and 1% consult a lawyer. Insecurity and land disputes drive reliance on customary mechanisms. In 2025, we focused on working where people already seek justice. We disseminated data, supported land-focused solutions with the

Observatoire National du Foncier (ONF), advanced the Boussouma local land charter, and strengthened the Justice-Sira platform. This approach is pursued at the request of the Ministry of Justice, the Centre pour la Gouvernance Démocratique (CGD), ONF and justice CSOs, reflected in joint reform efforts and validation of findings with national stakeholders.

In 2025, we analysed justice data with CGD and the Association des Femmes Juristes du Burkina Faso (AFJ) to guide priorities. With ONF and the Chieftaincy of the Kingdom of Boussouma, we developed a land conflict management solution. We initiated a Justice CSO platform, later institutionalised by the Ministry as a permanent coordination framework, and strengthened CSO capacities, including support to the justice-sira.bf information platform. Due to political uncertainty and capacity constraints, we rephased activities and relied more heavily on national partners to ensure continuity.

*Information session in Boussouma for elaborating a land charter based on customary law*



## From oral tradition to written charter in Boussouma

Thérèse inherited land from her father in Ouahigouya. After she told a cousin about it, she discovered he had secretly sold the land. When she challenged the sale, village elders ruled against her, stating that women cannot inherit land. She had never heard that this rule was law.

This experience reflects a broader problem. In rural Burkina Faso, land conflicts are common and often handled by customary authorities. Decisions rely on oral traditions that are rarely written, traceable or contestable. For families who depend on land, this creates legal insecurity and a strong sense of injustice.

Through a Justice Innovation Lab, we worked with the ONF and traditional leaders in Boussouma to examine how these disputes are handled.

Together, we developed Burkina Faso's land profile and co-designed a local solution.

The result is a local land charter that codifies customary rules previously based on oral and sacred traditions. Communities can now understand the rules applied to their cases, opening a system that was once closed and strengthening legal certainty. Thérèse is still awaiting a decision from the formal justice system.

*"... we visited Ghana, Ivory Coast, and even Ethiopia; what stands out is that what these kings were asking for was exactly what we are doing now... it has been thought about for more than 10 years, but no one had the courage to do it." – Traditional chief, Boussouma Kingdom.*

## From four tools to one platform: coherence enables government uptake

In Burkina Faso, access to justice remains limited and CSOs are emerging as important service providers. Through the justice accelerator, we supported CSOs to turn ideas on land, family and labour law into practical solutions that could reduce the justice gap.

The initial result was four separate tools developed by four CSOs. While each responded to real needs, fragmentation risked limiting scale. Only solutions recognised and led by the Ministry of Justice can be deployed nationally. Multiple parallel platforms would have made institutional uptake complex and unlikely.

We therefore made a deliberate shift. Instead of advancing four distinct products, we facilitated their merger into a single web platform, Justice SIRA, covering legal information and assistance across the three domains. Ministry involvement was built into the process from the start through the Terms of Reference and structured dialogue.

A committee chaired by the Ministry was established to oversee development. Crucially, the Directorate of Information Systems decided to develop the platform internally rather than outsource it, anchoring technical ownership within the Ministry.

The pivot was not technical but institutional. CSOs agreed to entrust their ideas to a shared solution under public governance. By consolidating innovation and clarifying ownership, we made Ministry leadership possible. Justice SIRA was officially launched by the Ministry. The governance committee remains active, CSOs provide content and services, and the Directorate manages maintenance, with HiiL in a supportive role.

The lesson is clear: design for scale early. Consolidate solutions where possible and secure technical ownership within public institutions to enable lasting impact.



# “Digital growth and competitiveness”

**Hortigüela**

President of AMETIC (employers' association representing the digital industry sector in Spain)

**Smiltēna**

Secretary on Law Policy  
of Justice of Latvia

**Midori Watanabe**

Attorney of the Civil Affairs Bureau,  
Ministry of Justice of Japan

**Udo Jude Ilo**

Chief Executive Officer of HiIL



Galería  
de las  
Colecciones  
Reales



# Global work

# Knowledge & Research

Advancing people-centred justice requires evidence that is grounded in practice. In 2025, our knowledge and research work focused on strengthening that evidence and applying it to improve delivery. We continued to generate data on how justice systems function for individuals and businesses, while documenting what helps services become more responsive and effective.

## Measuring outcomes that matter

A key priority was improving how justice outcomes are measured. In collaboration with the OECD and the World Justice Project, we co-created a framework to measure the outcomes of justice systems. This marks a step toward justice systems that focus not only on cases, institutions and procedures, but on whether people's problems are resolved fairly and efficiently. A prototype of the framework was presented at the OECD Global Roundtable on Access to Justice in 2025.

We also developed a methodology to assess the people-centricity of specific justice services in their design and delivery. The approach looks at user experience, accessibility, fairness, and institutional responsiveness. Validation across selected projects is planned for 2026.

## Learning from implementation

In 2025, we completed three case studies to document how people-centred justice works in practice. In **Tunisia**, we analysed the process behind the Employment Justice Platform, developed with national stakeholders using a

human-centred design approach. In **Nigeria** and **Ethiopia**, we examined the design and implementation of Community Justice Centres, focusing on process and early outcomes.

Across all studies, we centred the perspectives of participants and practitioners. The findings highlight practical lessons on institutional ownership, design choices, and delivery pathways. Insights are shared internally to inform adaptive programming and externally to contribute to sector-wide learning. The **Ethiopia** case study will be released as a documentary in 2026.

## Sharing knowledge and strengthening the field

Knowledge exchange remained an important part of our work. We hosted four webinars for justice practitioners on priority topics, including land justice, outcome-based measurement, human-centred design, and generative artificial intelligence in legal aid.

We also collaborated with partners to extend the reach of people-centred justice. With the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit* (GIZ), we delivered a workshop for rule of law experts on applying people-centred approaches in programming and began joint research on the economic impact of open access to digital legal information. With Team Europe Democracy (TED), we initiated empirical research in **Uganda** on the justice experiences of survivors of domestic violence.

Together, these efforts strengthened the link between evidence and delivery, helping justice actors improve services in ways that respond to people's real needs.

# Policy & Advocacy

In 2025, rising conflict, democratic backsliding, and shifting donor priorities forced justice to increasingly compete with security, infrastructure, and technological transformation for political attention and funding. Our advocacy focused on demonstrating how people-centred justice contributes to stability, accountable governance, and economic resilience.

We also engaged in forums beyond the justice sector, including the Munich Security Conference and the World Forum on the Future of Democracy, Technology, Artificial Intelligence, and Humankind. We brought justice into conversations often dominated by security, innovation, and geopolitical risk, arguing that accessible justice prevents instability and reinforces social contracts.

## Evidence as leverage

Our advocacy built directly on evidence from Justice Needs and Satisfaction surveys and programme experience. Our inaugural Justice Matters conference was central to this work. We convened high-level stakeholders across sectors and together explored, through data, country experience, and partnerships, how people-centred justice strengthens governance, economic resilience, and social cohesion. It also reinforced our role in connecting evidence, policy, and practices

We translated research into policy insights on land governance, responsible use of artificial intelligence, justice financing, and protection for mSMEs. These themes helped frame justice as part of the enabling environment for investment and service delivery.

## Policy integration and economic framing

Our collaboration with Team Europe Democracy (TED) reflects this approach. As co-chair of Working Group 1.1 on rule of law and access to justice, we contributed to advocating for the integration of access to justice within the European Union's Global Gateway strategy. The focus was on positioning rule of law and access to justice as foundational elements of the enabling environment for infrastructure and investment.

## Alliances and shared leadership

Influence depends on collective effort. As a founding member of the African Alliance on People-Centred Justice, we led the data and financing workstreams and co-organised the African Regional Forum in Banjul, as well as contributing to a side event at the PILnet Global Forum in Rome. Engagement in the Ibero-American Alliance on People-Centred Justice supported cross-regional exchange between Africa and Latin America.

Collaboration with the UNDP and Pathfinders for Peaceful, Just and Inclusive Societies at the Open Government Partnership Global Forum demonstrated how people-centred justice contributes to accountable governance, transparency, and improved service delivery.

## Strategic communications

We refined our communication approach to bring lived experience more clearly to the forefront. We translated complex justice issues into accessible narratives through a redesigned website, practitioner blogs, and opinion pieces. This helped us engage more consistently with partners and practitioners. Our social channels, particularly LinkedIn, saw significant growth in followers and professional engagement.

# Special feature: HiiL strategy 2026-2029

The HiiL 2026–2029 strategy - a cornerstone of our work in 2025 - sets out how we will move from advancing the idea of people-centred justice to delivering it at scale in a rapidly changing global context. Developed through organisation-wide reflection on the basis of guidance from programme evaluators, funders and partners, the strategy builds directly on years of groundwork. The progress made in 2025 and prior years provided the evidence and partnerships needed to pave the way for this next phase. It responds to a deepening global governance and trust crisis, shrinking development funding, and growing demand for justice systems that deliver tangible outcomes for people and businesses.

Our vision remains clear: fair and effective justice systems are essential for stability, economic development, and lasting peace. Our new strategy positions justice not only as a right, but as a practical foundation for resilient societies. Building on nearly two decades of experience, HiiL will focus on translating people-centred justice from theory into action by combining evidence, innovation, and partnerships to close the justice gap.

A central shift is the move from a “design and drop” approach to a “design and deliver” model. Rather than stopping at innovation or policy advice, we will accompany justice solutions through piloting, implementation, and institutionalisation within national systems. This reflects lessons learned from previous programmes, where strong solutions often struggled to move beyond early stages without sustained delivery support.





The strategy also strengthens localisation, giving country teams greater leadership in shaping programmes tailored to local realities. Partnerships become the primary route to scale, expanding collaboration with governments, civil society, regional networks, and non-traditional actors such as the private sector and social investors.

Five strategic objectives guide our work:

- advancing the global people-centred justice movement through research and advocacy;
- strengthening justice ecosystems;
- improving connections between formal and informal justice systems;
- supporting governments to deliver people-centred justice at scale, especially in fragile contexts;
- and demonstrating what works in priority areas including land, family justice, gender-based violence, and legal problems affecting small businesses.

Together, these priorities position HiIL to help governments and partners deliver accessible, affordable, and effective justice services, contributing to more stable, inclusive, and prosperous societies worldwide.





# Our team, our network

# Our team

HiIL in numbers in 2025, as at 31 December:

HiIL team total

**69**

Number of nationalities

**25**

Gender ratio male/female

**45/55**

Gender ratio male/female leadership

**73/27**

*Justice Matters conference, May 2025, The Hague, the Netherlands*



# Our board members

## Our Executive Board



**Udo Jude Ilo**  
CEO



**Shekhar Pula**  
COO

## Our Supervisory Board



**Ingrid van Engelshoven**  
Chair of the Supervisory Board, Former Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science



**Leoni Cuelenaere**  
Member of the Supervisory Board and Chair of the Programmes and Impact Committee, Former Special Advisor on Access to Justice at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and former Dutch Ambassador to Bangladesh, Rwanda, Yemen and Sri Lanka



**Priscilla Schwartz**  
Member of the Supervisory Board, Principal Consultant and Legal Counsel, Schwartz Advisory Limited



**Christof Maetze**  
Vice-Chair of the Supervisory Board, Chair of the Finance and Organisation Committee



**Patricia (Patty) Mira Hunter**  
Member of the Supervisory Board. Global strategic leader advancing human rights, anti-trafficking, rule of law, and security interventions worldwide, with experience across the private sector, United Nations, and academia, and as a former U.S. diplomat.

# Funders

## Government



Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands



Kingdom of the Netherlands

Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Tunisia



Kingdom of the Netherlands

Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Niger



Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland acting through the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office



European Union



Netherlands Enterprise Agency

Netherlands Enterprise Agency



Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management of the Netherlands

Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, the Netherlands



United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees



United Nations Development Programme

## Foundations and Private

**OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATIONS**

Open Society Foundation

NYU | CENTER ON INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION  
CIC

University of New York



Mott Foundation



Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)



American Arbitration Association

## Income in return of delivery of performance of services and / or goods



Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)



Tetra Tech



Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)



Impact Investment Exchange Global



Stichting Klachten en Geschillen Zorgverzekeringen



Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Netherlands



National Centre for State Courts



*Justice Matters conference,  
May 2025, The Hague, the Netherlands*

# General cooperation



Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)



Stichting Klachten en Geschillen Zorgverzekeringen



Pathfinders



Co-funded by the European Union



United Nations Development Programme



Team Europe Democracy



Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)

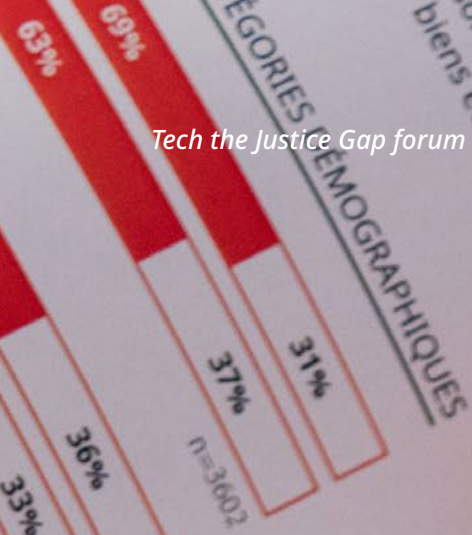
#TEAMEUROPE

*Memorandum of Understanding between The National Business Register and HiiL, signed during the Tech the Justice Gap Forum in Tunis, Tunisia*



*Memorandum of Understanding between OECD and HiiL,  
signed during the World Justice Forum in Warsaw, Poland*





endance est conforme aux  
visions générales de Hill dans  
ces pays les populations plus  
ont plus de problèmes de  
justice car ce nombre de problèmes  
est lié à la vie de famille.



**PROBLÈMES PAR PERSONNE**

28% de personnes sont confrontées à plus d'un problème. Le nombre de problèmes par personne a diminué en rapport à la JNS 2022, où il était de 1,4. Cela peut s'expliquer par la présence d'un problème plus court utilisé dans l'enquête, étant donné que...

# Finance and administration

# Executive Board report

## General

The Hague Institute for Innovation of Law (HiiL) is an organisation dedicated to people-centred justice. This means justice that is affordable, accessible and easy to understand. We collaborate with justice providers, including ministries of justice and judiciaries, to develop solutions and improve systems so that more people can effectively prevent or resolve their justice problems. This does not only benefit individuals; it also contributes to societal well-being, economic growth and lasting peace and stability

Based in The Hague, the City of Peace and Justice, we work with governments and partners worldwide on people-centred justice programmes that are data-driven and evidence-based and that use innovative approaches to enhance the delivery of effective justice services to more people.

HiiL is an international employer, based in The Hague in the Netherlands. As of 31 December 2025 The Executive Board is formed by Udo Ilo (Chief Executive Officer) and Shekhar Pula (Chief Operating Officer), overseen by a Supervisory Board of five members. We operate with a multi-level presence across four continents, maintaining a primary focus on the MENA region, West and East Africa, and the Sahel to bridge the global justice gap

## Risk policy & management

Operating in complex, politically challenging environments, including an increasing focus on fragile and conflict-affected settings, requires us to navigate a variety of external, operational, and integrity risks. To manage these effectively, we maintain strict controls and enforce ethical standards across our engagements with partners, suppliers, and donors. These protections are grounded in our Articles of Association, Code of Conduct, and broader governance framework to prevent conflicts of interest and ensure transparency.

While our strategic ambitions for 2026-2029 are high, we are committed to fostering a supportive work culture and a healthy working environment for our workforce. Our financial health is underpinned by rigorous monthly monitoring of budgets, forecasts, and cash flow projections. We thoroughly evaluate risks before committing to new programmes, addressing IT security, fraud, and project-related challenges through a regularly updated Risk Register reviewed by the Supervisory Board.

In our international operations, we manage currency exposure, primarily in US dollars, without the need for formal hedging facilities. Credit risks remain minimal, as our receivables are typically tied to grants from reputable institutions and established partners. Risks are promptly addressed in Executive Board meetings, and an annual joint assessment by the Supervisory and Executive Boards ensures our programming remains adaptive and resilient in an evolving global landscape.

## **Organisational support**

Shared Services is a cross-cutting department designed to enable our programmes with essential and efficient processes, which includes Finance, IT, HR, Security, Procurement, Travel, Legal, Office Management, and Executive Office Assistance.

## **Financial position and liquidity**

Despite a challenging start of the 2025 financial year, the organisation has maintained a resilient financial and sustainable liquidity position. As of December 31, 2025, our solvency ratio stood at 0.22, reflecting a healthy and stable financial structure.

The position is anchored by the nature of our liabilities, which primarily consist of advance payments from donors for future project implementation rather than traditional financial debt. Furthermore, the current ratio of 1.28, which was 1.77 in 2024, underscores the organisation's financial strength to meet both short- and long-term obligations through a prudent, risk averse approach to financial management.

## **Continuity reserve**

The continuity reserve is designed to create a financial safeguard. This ensures that we can operate for several months without income in the event of being forced to immediately suspend activities. Our target is to build a continuity reserve that covers fixed costs for a six-month period if income is drastically reduced or if the organisation has to be dissolved. Therefore we decided to increase the continuity reserve by the 2025 positive result of €52,134. The continuity reserve for 2025 of €2,293,308 is a reasonable financial safeguard.

## **Budget**

The budgeted income for 2025 was €7,971,000, which includes both secured and unsecured income. However, not all the expected funding from proposals materialised as anticipated. In some cases our operations were impacted by a freeze on funds and delays in implementation caused by local and international political situations.

## **Income**

The income mainly consists of grants from our funders. These grants consist mainly of multi-year funding of projects.

<b>INCOME</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Government</b>				
Ministry of Foreign Affairs The Netherlands	3,829,113	50%	5,322,309	61%
Dutch Embassies (Niger, Tunisia)	2,505,947	33%	1,910,952	22%
European Union	572,946	7%	311,215	4%
Netherlands Enterprise Agency	15,892	0%	283,152	3%
Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Waterstaat	2,000	0%	42,865	0%
Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office	7,995	0%	-	0%
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	23,752	0%	344,307	4%
United Nations Development Programme	880	0%	-	0%
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	-131	0%	106,661	1%
USAID	-537	0%	13,376	0%
<b>TOTAL Government</b>	<b>6,957,857</b>	<b>90%</b>	<b>8,334,837</b>	<b>96%</b>
<b>Foundations and Private</b>				
Open Society Foundation (Tunisia and Core funding)	277,989	4%	106,360	1%
University of New York	191,740	2%	31,718	0%
Mott Foundation	134,380	2%	55,841	1%
Deutsche gesellschaft für internationale zusammenarbeit	30,669	0%	-	0%
American Arbitration Association	1,754	0%	0	0%
Chemonics International	-	0%	156,775	2%
<b>TOTAL Foundations and Private</b>	<b>636,532</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>350,694</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Income in return of delivery of performance of services and / or goods</b>				
Deutsche gesellschaft für internationale zusammenarbeit	25,564	0%	-	-%
Tetra Tech	41,146	1%	-	-%
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	5,212	0%	-	-%
Impact Investment Exchange	16,880	0%	10,120	0%
Stichting Klachten en Geschillen Zorgverzekeringen	1,689	0%	27,491	0%
Ministry of Internal Affairs The Netherlands	546	0%	-	-%
National Centre for State Courts	3,702	0%	2,532	-%
<b>TOTAL Income in return for delivery of performance of services and / or goods</b>	<b>94,739</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>40,143</b>	<b>-%</b>
<b>TOTAL Income (€)</b>	<b>7,689,127</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>8,725,674</b>	<b>100%</b>

The 2025 fiscal year was defined by a volatile global funding landscape, characterised by the direct and indirect impacts of the dissolution of USAID and the freezing of several UN-agency projects. While these systemic shifts led to a significant contraction in the global aid sector, HiiL mitigated the impact through a doubling down on our fundraising efforts. As a result, we limited our total income decrease to 12% when compared to 2024. Our goal is to convert the resilience shown in 2025 into long-term financial sustainability.

**Operational costs**

Throughout 2025, HiiL maintained rigorous oversight of its operating result compared to the budget to ensure institutional stability. Beyond our intensified fundraising efforts, we took decisive action internally to protect our financial health, achieving a total expenditure reduction that mirrored the shift in income. This was driven primarily by a 8% reduction in employee costs, as a direct result of recalibration of our workforce. On average HiiL employed 37.9 FTE in 2025, compared to 42.2 in 2024.

By aligning our cost base with the 2025 funding reality, we have ensured that HiiL remains lean, agile, and focused on delivering justice innovation through 2026

**Operating result**

Despite a significant contraction in global aid, HiiL maintained a balanced operating result for the 2025 fiscal year. This result demonstrates that our internal cost-mitigation strategies were effectively aligned with the 12% decrease in total income. By adapting our operations we successfully balanced our budget and avoided an operating deficit.

**Budget 2026**

In 2026, we are projecting a zero net result. This consists of an income of €8,939,000 (€7,850,000 from ongoing projects and €1,089,000 from weighted proposals). This is a projected increase of 16% compared to the 2025 income. The corresponding expenditures also total €8,939,000 (with a breakdown including €7,781,000 allocated to total spent on objectives and €1,158,000 designated for organisational costs).

**Subsequent event**

NA

# Financial statements

## 1 BALANCE SHEET AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2025

(after appropriation of result)

	December 31, 2025		December 31, 2024	
	€	€	€	€
<b>ASSETS</b>				
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>				
<b>Tangible fixed assets</b>	(1)			
Inventory		12,114	21,437	
Automation		14,162	25,161	
		26,276		46,598
<b>Financial fixed assets</b>		-		24,894
		26,276		71,492
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>				
<b>Receivables, prepayments and accrued income</b>	(2)	365,729		823,990
<b>Cash and cash equivalents</b>	(3)	9,824,991		4,144,958
		10,190,720		4,968,948
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		10,216,996		5,040,440

	December 31, 2025		December 31, 2024	
	€	€	€	€
<b>EQUITY AND LIABILITIES</b>				
<b>RESERVES AND FUNDS</b>				
Continuity reserve	(4)	2,293,308		2,241,174
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	(5)	7,923,688		2,799,266
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		10,216,996		5,040,440

## 2 STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2025

		Realisation 2025	Budget 2025	Realisation 2024
		€	€	€
<b>Income</b>				
Government	(6)	6,957,856	7,497,000	8,334,837
Foundations and Private	(7)	636,532	474,000	350,694
Income in return of delivery of performance of services and/ or goods	(8)	94,739	-	40,143
<b>Total income</b>		<u>7,689,127</u>	<u>7,971,000</u>	<u>8,725,674</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>				
<b>Spent on objectives</b>				
Project activity costs		3,001,637	3,308,000	3,659,187
Personnel costs		3,616,826	3,610,000	3,965,042
		<u>6,618,463</u>	<u>6,918,000</u>	<u>7,624,229</u>
<b>Organisational costs</b>				
Employee expenses	(9)	515,550	540,000	548,310
Amortisation and depreciation	(10)	29,563	20,000	20,812
Material costs	(11)	499,275	493,000	512,001
Total organisational costs		<u>1,044,388</u>	<u>1,053,000</u>	<u>1,081,123</u>
<b>Operating result</b>		<u>26,276</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>20,322</u>
Financial income and expenses	(12)	25,858	-	10,904
<b>Net result before participation result</b>		<u>52,134</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>31,226</u>
Result participating interests		-	-	-24,172
<b>Result</b>		<u>52,134</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,054</u>
<b>Appropriation of the results</b>				
Continuity reserve		52,134	-	30,976
Designated reserve		-	-	-23,922
		<u>52,134</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>7,054</u>



## Change in estimates

### Useful life of automation assets

During the financial year, management reassessed the expected useful life of the Property, Plant and Equipment category "Automation". Based on technological developments, increased pace of innovation and the actual usage patterns of the related assets, management concluded that the previously applied useful life of five (5) years no longer appropriately reflects the expected economic life of these assets.

As a result, the estimated useful life of automation assets has been revised from five (5) years to three (3) years. This change has been applied prospectively as a change in accounting estimate. Accordingly, the carrying amounts of the relevant assets are depreciated over their revised remaining useful lives as from December 1st, 2025. The effect of this change is an increase in depreciation expense for the current financial year of EUR 9,238.

## 4.2 General accounting principles for the preparation of the financial statements

The financial statements are drawn up in accordance with the generally accepted accounting principles in the Netherlands (Guideline 640 of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board, the guideline for non-profit organisations).

Valuation of assets and liabilities and determination of the result, is performed under the historical cost convention. Unless presented otherwise, assets and liabilities are presented at nominal value.

Income and expenses are accounted for on accrual basis. Profit is only included when realised on the balance sheet date. Losses originating before the end of the financial year are taken into account if they have become known before preparation of the financial statements.

### Foreign currencies

#### Transactions, receivables and liabilities

Cash and cash equivalents, receivables, liabilities and obligations denominated in foreign currency are translated at the exchange rates at balance sheet date. Transactions in foreign currency during the financial year are recognised in the annual accounts at the exchange rates at transaction date. The exchange differences resulting from the conversion at balance sheet date, taking into account possible hedge transactions, are recorded in the profit and loss account.

### Leasing

#### Operational leasing

The company has lease contracts whereby a large part of the risks and rewards associated with ownership are not for the benefit of nor incurred by the company. The lease contracts are recognised as operational leasing. Lease payments are recorded on a straight-line basis, taking into account reimbursements received from the lessor, in the income statement for the duration of the contract.

## 4.3 Principles of valuation of assets and liabilities

### Tangible fixed assets

Tangible fixed assets are presented at acquisition price less cumulative depreciation and, if applicable, less impairments in value. Depreciation is based on the estimated useful life and calculated as a fixed percentage of the acquisition price, taking into account any residual value. Depreciation is calculated from the date an asset comes into use.

### Financial fixed assets

#### Participations

Participating interests where extensive influence is exerted on the business and financial policies, are valued based on the nett capital value that is, however, not less than zero. This net capital value is calculated based on the principles of Stichting The Hague Institute For Innovation Of Law (Hiil).

Participating interests with a negative net asset value are valued at nil. If the company (fully or partially) guarantees the debts of a participating interest, a provision is formed, which is primarily deducted from the receivables from this participating interest. If the negative net asset value exceeds the receivable from the participating interest, a (other) provision is recognised on the balance sheet for the amount in excess of the receivables from the participating interest or the amount of the expected payments by the company for this participating interest.

#### Other receivables

Receivables are valued at amortised cost (nominal value). Upon initial recognition amortised costs equals the fair value. Provisions deemed necessary for the risk of bad debts are deducted from the receivables. These provisions are determined on the basis of an individual assessment of the receivables.

### Receivables and deferred assets

Receivables are valued at amortised cost (nominal value). Upon initial recognition amortised costs equals the fair value. Provisions deemed necessary for the risk of bad debts are deducted from the receivables. These provisions are determined on the basis of an individual assessment of the receivables.

### Cash and cash equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents are recognised at nominal value. Current account debts with banks are stated under current liabilities.

### Current liabilities

Short-term liabilities are valued at amortised cost (nominal value plus any premium, discount or transaction costs). Upon initial recognition amortised costs equals the fair value.

## 4.4 Accounting principles for the determination of the result

### Determination of the result

Result is determined based upon the difference between the revenues and the project activity costs plus other expenses taking into account the aforementioned valuation principles. Profits are recognised in the year goods are delivered. Losses which originate in the financial year are taken into account once they are foreseeable.

### Government

Subsidies that are received to carry out projects or programmes, have been accounted for separately in the income statement. Operating grants are accounted for as income in the statement of income and expenditure in the year in which the subsidised costs are incurred or revenues foregone, or when a subsidised operating deficit occurs.

## **Foundations and Private**

Income from private donors of foundations consists of donations on projects or programs. Direct donations are accounted for as income in the statement of income and expenditure in the year in which the subsidised costs are incurred or revenues foregone, or when a subsidised operating deficit occurs.

## **Income in return of delivery of performance of services and/ or goods**

Revenue from service transactions is recognised as the service is performed.

## **Spent on objectives**

The spent on objectives costs are the portion of a grant intended to fund project activity costs that include both costs specific to individual projects and those shared organisational costs from which a project directly benefits. We here define 2 subcategories:

1. Specific Project costs: These are specific costs to a grant-funded project. This includes any identified time spent by an employee on the grant funded project.
2. Shared Project costs: These are costs that benefit multiple projects or programmes and can be assigned or allocated across projects in a reasonable, consistent and accurate way. These are essential costs of supporting and maintaining the project until final realisation of its objective of a project. This includes a portion of Shared services, Finance, IT, acquisition costs and RD costs. As an example of these costs, we include the costs of the software implemented to keep track of time spent by our personnel on each project. Another example is the time spent by the financial controller to close the project and finalise the reporting to the donor. Indirect costs are allocated between spent on objectives and organisational costs using an average FTE allocation key.

Indirect costs are costs of activities or services that support the organisation as a whole. These costs include Management costs, Business Development costs and the remaining portion of Shared services, Finance, IT and RD costs. Examples of such costs include Management costs, Finance and Accounting support to Management, compliance costs, Human Resources, board governance meetings.

In order to allocate in a consistent way the Shared Services, Finance, IT and costs between spent on objectives and indirect costs, we used the FTE average allocation key.

## **Amortisation and depreciation**

Depreciation on tangible fixed assets is based on the estimated useful life and calculated as a fixed percentage of the acquisition price, taking into account any residual value. Depreciation is calculated from the date an asset comes into use.

If a change in estimate is made of the future useful life, the future depreciations will be adjusted.

Book profits and losses from the incidental sale of property, plant and equipment are included in the depreciations.

## **Financial income and expenses**

### Interest income and interest expenses

Interest income and expenses on loans (issued and received), bank accounts and exchange differences during the current reporting period.

### Currency translation differences

Currency translation differences arising upon the settlement or conversion of monetary items are recognised in the income statement in the period that they are realised.

## **Result participating interests**

The financial result of participating interests in which significant influence can be exercised, comprise the share of the company in the result of these participating interests. This result is determined based on the accounting principles of Stichting The Hague Institute For Innovation Of Law (HiiL).

#### 4.5 Principles for preparation of the cash flow statement

The cash flow statement has been prepared using the indirect method.

The funds in the cash flow statement consist of cash and short-term debt to financial institutions. Cash flows in foreign currencies are converted at the exchange rate at balance sheet date. Exchange rate differences concerning finances are shown separately in the cash flow statement.

Income and expenses related to interest, are included in the cash flow statement for operational activities.

## 5 NOTES TO THE BALANCE SHEET AS AT DECEMBER 31, 2025

### ASSETS

#### FIXED ASSETS

##### 1. Tangible fixed assets

	Inventory	Automation	Total
	€	€	€
<i>Carrying amount as of January 1, 2025</i>			
Purchase price	56,132	45,514	101,646
Cumulative depreciation and impairment	-34,695	-20,353	-55,048
	<u>21,437</u>	<u>25,161</u>	<u>46,598</u>
<i>Movement</i>			
Investments	1,898	7,343	9,241
Disposals	-	-8,171	-8,171
Depreciation disposal	-	8,171	8,171
Depreciation	-11,221	-18,342	-29,563
	<u>-9,323</u>	<u>-10,999</u>	<u>-20,322</u>
<i>Carrying amount as of December 31, 2025</i>			
Purchase price	58,030	44,686	102,716
Cumulative depreciation and impairment	-45,916	-30,524	-76,440
Carrying amount as of December 31, 2025	<u>12,114</u>	<u>14,162</u>	<u>26,276</u>
<i>Depreciation rates</i>			%
Inventory			20
Automation			33

	31/12/2025	31/12/2024
	€	€
<u>Other receivables</u>		
Deposit	-	24,894

## CURRENT ASSETS

### 2. Receivables, prepayments and accrued income

Other receivables, deferred assets	365,729	823,990
------------------------------------	---------	---------

#### Other receivables, deferred assets

#### *Prepayments and accrued income*

Amounts to be invoiced	142,353	698,122
Other receivables	53,973	61,740
Deposit	32,046	2,775
Advanced payments	105,803	46,353
Interest receivable	31,554	15,000
	<u>365,729</u>	<u>823,990</u>

### 3. Cash and cash equivalents

ABN AMRO Savings Accounts	8,024,518	3,309,518
ABN AMRO Bank Guarantee Account	20,000	20,000
ABN AMRO Cash management Accounts	1,779,448	813,618
Cash in hand	1,025	1,822
	<u>9,824,991</u>	<u>4,144,958</u>

The guarantee account consists of € 20,000 for the corporate credit cards. All other cash and cash equivalents can be withdrawn upon demand.

## RESERVE AND FUNDS

### 4. RESERVES

	2025	2024
	€	€
<b>Continuity reserve</b>		
Carrying amount as of January 1	2,241,174	2,210,198
Movement	52,134	30,976
Carrying amount as of December 31	<u>2,293,308</u>	<u>2,241,174</u>

The continuity reserve is designed to create a financial safeguard. This ensures that Hiil can operate for several months without income in the event of being forced to immediately suspend activities. Our target is to build a continuity reserve in order to overcome a 6-month period of fixed costs if limited income or if the organisation is forced to dissolve.

	31/12/2025	31/12/2024
	€	€
<b>5. CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Trade creditors	150,548	134,823
Taxes and social securities	246,069	301,708
Accruals and deferred income	7,527,071	2,362,735
	<u>7,923,688</u>	<u>2,799,266</u>

#### **Taxes and social securities**

VAT	16,715	20,716
Payroll tax	188,726	228,579
Pension premiums	40,628	52,413
	<u>246,069</u>	<u>301,708</u>

#### **Other liabilities and Accruals and deferred income**

	31/12/2025	31/12/2024
	€	€
<i>Accruals and deferred income</i>		
Holiday accruals	229,577	298,413
Payable personnel costs	86,580	61,450
Still to be spent on the objective	7,131,053	1,939,270
Other liabilities and accruals	79,861	63,602
	<u>7,527,071</u>	<u>2,362,735</u>

### **ASSETS AND LIABILITIES NOT RECOGNISED IN BALANCE SHEET**

#### **Contingent liabilities**

##### *Investment commitments*

HiiL entered investment commitments for a total amount of € 106,542 relating to a move to a new building in 2026.

#### **Long-term operational lease obligations**

##### *Housing*

During the financial year 2025, HiiL entered into a long-term lease agreement for the rental of its new office premises located at Benoordenhoutseweg 46, 2596 BC The Hague, the Netherlands. The lease term commences on 1 March 2026 and expires on 28 February 2031. The total lease commitment under this agreement amounts to €420,000, of which €70,000 is payable within one year after the balance sheet date. The remaining balance relates to payments due after more than one year.

Furthermore the organisation has entered into an agreement for renting office space in Niger. The contract is until 8 August 2026. The monthly fee is approximately € 1,720 excluding VAT. Therefore, the total obligation amounts to approximately € 12.384 for 2026.

## 6 NOTES TO THE STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE 2025

	Realisation 2025	Realisation 2024
	€	€
<b>6. Government</b>		
European Union	572,946	311,215
Ministry of Foreign Affairs The Netherlands	3,829,114	5,322,309
USAID	-539	13,376
Dutch Embassies	2,505,947	1,910,952
United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	23,752	344,307
United Nations Development Programme	880	-
United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	-131	106,661
The Netherlands Enterprise Agency	15,892	283,152
Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office	7,995	-
Netherlands Ministerie van Infrastructuur en Waterstaat	2,000	42,865
	<u>6,957,856</u>	<u>8,334,837</u>

Additional information related to the Government Income:

As part of the donor reporting requirements, additional information is provided below with respect to the Income and Expenditure from Governments:

Name of project:	Building people-centred justice in Tunisia
Running period:	1 April 2025 till 31 March 2026
Granting partner:	Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO)
Amount grant:	GBP 69,873
Funds received in 2025:	€ -
Expenditure	€ 7.995
<b>Balance per 31-12</b>	<b>€ 7.995</b>

## 7. Foundations and Private

Mott Foundation	134,380	55,841
University of New York (Center on International Cooperation)	191,740	31,718
Chemonics International	-	156,775
Open Society Foundation	277,989	106,360
American Arbitration Association	1,754	-
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit	30,669	-
	<u>636,532</u>	<u>350,694</u>

	Realisation 2025	Realisation 2024
	€	€
<b>8. Income in return of delivery of performance of services and/or goods</b>		
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit	25,564	-
Tetra Tech	41,146	-
Impact Investment Exchange	16,880	10,120
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	5,212	-
Ministry of Internal Affairs The Netherlands	546	-
Stichting Klachten en Geschillen Zorgverzekeringen	1,689	27,491
National Centre for State Courts	3,702	2,532
	<u>94,739</u>	<u>40,143</u>
<b>9. Employee expenses</b>		
Wages and salaries	367,014	385,153
Social security charges	67,321	55,601
Pension costs	44,174	53,356
Travel expenses commuter traffic	2,771	3,509
Indirect personnel costs	34,270	50,691
	<u>515,550</u>	<u>548,310</u>
<u>Wages and salaries</u>		
Gross wages	3,047,812	3,303,551
Sick pay received	-13,228	-153,460
Allocated labour costs to spent on objectives	-2,667,570	-2,764,938
	<u>367,014</u>	<u>385,153</u>
<u>Social security charges</u>		
Social charges	446,817	464,573
Allocated social charges to spent on objectives	-379,496	-408,972
	<u>67,321</u>	<u>55,601</u>
<u>Pension costs</u>		
Pension costs	354,079	445,829
Allocated pension costs to spent on objectives	-309,905	-392,473
	<u>44,174</u>	<u>53,356</u>
<u>Travel expenses commuter traffic</u>		
Travel expenses	22,210	29,318
Allocated travel expenses to spent on objectives	-19,439	-25,809
	<u>2,771</u>	<u>3,509</u>

	Realisation 2025	Realisation 2024
	€	€
<u>Indirect personnel costs</u>		
Temporary workers	194,013	234,887
Education allowance and training costs	20,001	48,117
Recruitment	35,270	103,012
Other indirect labour costs	25,403	37,525
Allocated indirect expenses to spent on objectives	-240,417	-372,850
	<u>34,270</u>	<u>50,691</u>

### Staff

The organisation employed on average 38 full-time equivalent employees in 2025 (2024: 42 FTE).

	Realisation 2025	Realisation 2024
	€	€
<b>10. Amortisation and depreciation</b>		
Tangible fixed assets	29,563	19,765
Book result	-	1,047
	<u>29,563</u>	<u>20,812</u>

### 11. Material costs

Housing costs	154,566	144,098
Travel costs	28,045	25,488
Office expenses	86,791	86,532
Sales & Marketing	26,471	56,063
General expenses	193,586	180,029
Costs Supervisory Board and PSB	9,816	19,791
	<u>499,275</u>	<u>512,001</u>

The general costs consist mainly of costs for outsourcing administrative support, auditor costs, subscriptions and insurances.

	Realisation 2025	Realisation 2024
	€	€
<b>12. Financial income and expenses</b>		
Interest and similar income	31,554	15,000
Interest and similar expenses	-5,696	-4,096
	<u>25,858</u>	<u>10,904</u>

## 7 OTHER DISCLOSURES

### WNT-verantwoording 2025 Stichting The Hague Institute For Innovation Of Law (Hiil)

Due to the fact that more than 50% of the total gross income of Stichting The Hague Institute For Innovation Of Law (Hiil) in 2025 is granted by the Dutch government, the Dutch Act "Wet normering bezoldiging topfunctionarissen publieke en semipublieke sector (WNT)" applies for Hiil.

The applicable maximum remuneration for Stichting The Hague Institute For Innovation Of Law (Hiil) is € 246.000 in 2025. The reported maximum amount per person and function is calculated based on the full-time equivalent in the labor agreement or the contract of the executive involved.

The Supervisory Board receives no remuneration.

#### Executive Board

	Executives		
	S. Muller	S. Pula	U. Ilo
	€	€	€
<b>Function information</b>			
Function	<i>Chief Executive Officer</i>	<i>Chief Operating Officer</i>	<i>Chief Executive Officer</i>
Period in function in 2025	01/01 - 30/04	01/01 - 31/12	01/02 - 31/12
Full-time equivalent during this year	0,33	1,00	0,92
Employee contract	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>Remuneration</b>			
Remuneration including taxable expenses	59.511	179.620	152.312
Future payables	-	-	-
Provisions remuneration due	7.631	22.892	20.958
Other receivable non-remuneration	-	-	-
<b>Total remuneration 2025 for WNT</b>	<b>67.142</b>	<b>202.512</b>	<b>173.270</b>
Applicable maximum in 2025	82.000	246.000	225.500
Exceeded amount	Na.	Na.	Na.
Outstanding receivable	Na.	Na.	Na.

**Comparable figures**

	Executives	
	S. Muller	S. Pula
	€	€
<b>Function information</b>		
Function	<i>Chief Executive Officer</i>	<i>Chief Operating Officer</i>
Period in function in 2024	01/01 - 31/12	01/01 - 31/12
Full-time equivalent during this year	1,00	1,00
Employee contract	Yes	Yes
<b>Remuneration</b>		
Remuneration including taxable expenses	164.515	173.049
Future payables	-	-
Provisions remuneration due	23.200	23.200
Other receivable non-remuneration	-	-
<b>Total remuneration 2024 for WNT</b>	<b>187.715</b>	<b>196.249</b>
Applicable maximum in 2024	233.000	233.000
Exceeded amount	Na.	Na.
Outstanding receivable	Na.	Na.

**Signed on behalf of the Executive Board:**

The Hague, March 30, 2026

C.S. Pula

J.U. Ilo

## **OTHER INFORMATION**

### **1 INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT**

## INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To: The Supervisory Board and Executive Board of Stichting The Hague Institute for Innovation of Law

### A. Report on the audit of the financial statements 2025 included in the annual report

#### Our opinion

We have audited the financial statements 2025 of Stichting The Hague Institute for Innovation of Law based in The Hague, The Netherlands, on page 48 up to and including page 66.

In our opinion, the financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial position of Stichting The Hague Institute for Innovation of Law as at 31 December 2025 and of its result for 2025 in accordance with the Guidelines for annual reporting 640 'Not-for-profit organizations' of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board and the Policy rules implementation of the Standards for Remuneration Act (WNT).

The financial statements comprise:

1. the balance sheet as at 31 December 2025;
2. the profit and loss account for 2025; and
3. the notes comprising of a summary of the accounting policies and other explanatory information.

#### Basis for our opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Dutch law, including the Dutch Standards on Auditing as well as the Policy rules implementation WNT, including the Audit Protocol WNT. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the 'Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements' section of our report.

We are independent of Stichting The Hague Institute for Innovation of Law in accordance with the Verordening inzake de onafhankelijkheid van accountants bij assurance-opdrachten (ViO, Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants, a regulation with respect to independence) and other relevant independence regulations in the Netherlands. Furthermore we have complied with the Verordening gedrags- en beroepsregels accountants (VGBA, Dutch Code of Ethics).

We believe the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

#### Compliance with rule against overlapping pursuant to the WNT not audited

In accordance with the Audit Protocol under the Standards for Remuneration Act (WNT), we have not audited the rule against overlapping as referred to in section 1.6a of the WNT and section 5 (1) (j) of the WNT Implementing Regulations. This means that we have not audited whether an executive senior official exceeds the norm as a result of any positions as executive senior at other institutions subject to the WNT, and whether the explanation required in this context is correct and complete.

### B. Report on the other information included in the annual report

In addition to the financial statements and our auditor's report thereon, the annual report contains other information that consists of the Executive Board's report.

Based on the following procedures performed, we conclude that the other information is consistent with the financial statements and does not contain material misstatements.

We have read the other information. Based on our knowledge and understanding obtained through our audit of the financial statements or otherwise, we have considered whether the other information contains material misstatements.

By performing these procedures, we comply with the requirements of the Dutch Standard 720. The scope of the procedures performed is substantially less than the scope of those performed in our audit of the financial statements. Management is responsible for the preparation of the other information, including the Executive Board's report in accordance with the Guidelines for annual reporting 640 "Not-for-profit organisations" of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board.

### **C. Description of responsibilities regarding the financial statements**

#### **Responsibilities of the Executive Board and the Supervisory Board for the financial statements**

The Executive Board is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the Guidelines for annual reporting 640 "Not-for-profit organisations" of the Dutch Accounting Standards Board and the Policy rules implementation of the Standards for Remuneration Act (WNT). Furthermore, the Executive Board is responsible for such internal control as the Executive Board determines is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

As part of the preparation of the financial statements, the Executive Board is responsible for assessing the organisations ability to continue as a going concern. Based on the financial reporting framework mentioned, the Executive Board should prepare the financial statements using the going concern basis of accounting, unless management either intends to dissolve the foundation or to cease operations, or has no realistic alternative but to do so.

The Executive Board should disclose events and circumstances that may cast significant doubt on the organisations ability to continue as a going concern in the financial statements.

The Supervisory Board is responsible for monitoring the financial reporting process of the organisation.

#### **Our responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

Our objective is to plan and perform the audit engagement in a manner that allows us to obtain sufficient and appropriate audit evidence for our opinion.

Our audit has been performed with a high, but not absolute, level of assurance, which means we may not detect all material errors and fraud during our audit.

Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements. The materiality affects the nature, timing and extent of our audit procedures and the evaluation of the effect of identified misstatements on our opinion.

We have exercised professional judgement and have maintained professional skepticism throughout the audit, in accordance with Dutch Standards on Auditing as well as the Policy rules implementation WNT, including the Audit Protocol WNT, ethical requirements and independence requirements. Our audit included among others:

- identifying and assessing the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error, designing and performing audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtaining audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not

detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control;

- obtaining an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control;
- evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the Executive Board;
- concluding on the appropriateness of management's use of the going concern basis of accounting, and based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the organisations ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial statements or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause an organization to cease to continue as a going concern.
- evaluating the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial statements, including the disclosures; and
- evaluating whether the financial statements represent the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the supervisory board regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant findings in internal control that we identify during our audit.

The Hague, March 30, 2026

HLB Den Hartog  
Accountants & Consultants

Signed on original by:

S.T.M. ten Hagen RA



Dedicated to people-centred justice

The Hague Institute for Innovation of Law

+31 70 762 0700

[info@hiil.org](mailto:info@hiil.org)

[www.hiil.org](http://www.hiil.org)