

LEGAL FELLOWSHIP PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

International Lawyers Project (ILP) is a UK-based international pro-bono legal charity making a significant impact on inequality and economic justice issues globally. We support reform-minded governments and civil society - from NGOs and grassroots community groups, to investigative journalists and activists worldwide - to access justice and advance their causes.

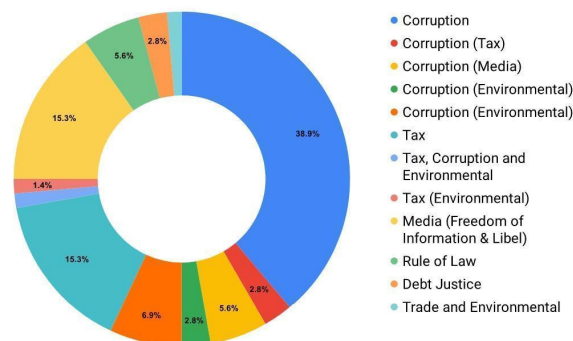
We connect our partners and the communities they support to the highest calibre of independent pro bono legal support and expertise across these themes, enabling us to strengthen citizens' voices, accelerate sustainable solutions and create systemic change in some of the world's poorest regions.

In 2020, we worked with 193 legal volunteers to deliver 2,900 hours of support to our pro bono clients at a commercial value of £2 million. **For every £1 we received in 2020, we are able to provide £11 worth of pro bono legal assistance.** This demonstrates our value and effectiveness in providing emergency, tailored legal support which would otherwise be beyond the financial reach of our clients.

In addition to our casework, in 2020 ILP organised and delivered 14 training sessions for over 300 government officials in low-income countries on tax and rule of law capacity building. Over 700 members of community groups in rural and low-income regions internationally, but particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, benefited from ILP capacity building sessions.

2021 looks likely to be a busier year than 2020, to date we have received 26 new requests for pro bono assistance and 7 capacity building requests, including from tax ministry officials in Uzbekistan. We will continue to deliver high-calibre programmes on Anti-Corruption, Tax & Public Finance Reform and Media Freedom. Furthermore, we are actively expanding our Sustainable Development programme to respond to client requests to work on economic injustice issues that overlap with environmental degradation, wildlife trafficking and climate change.

In 2020 the focus of our case requests were as follows:



Recent Impact Summary

- **Preventing looting of Ghana's national gold reserves:** ILP sourced emergency legal representation for a coalition of Ghanaian NGOs in order to postpone a listing on the London Stock Exchange (LSE) of a shell company set up to hold the country's future gold revenues, so that an investigation of potential corruption could be carried out by the UK's Financial Conduct Authority (FCA). As a result, the Solicitors' Regulatory Authority also asked for the dossier, to allow them to investigate the role of the law firms involved in this transaction.
- **Drafting trade agreements to reduce corruption:** ILP supported a group of British NGOs to negotiate with UK government trade officials and propose international best practice to restrict corruption within the UK's post-Brexit trade agreements with developing countries. As a result of the advice, government officials invited civil society and the legal experts to submit formal drafts of clauses on bribe-payments to be included in the trade agreements.
- **Ukraine defence legislative reform:** Transparency International's Independent Anti-Corruption Committee on Defense (NAKO) team asked ILP to assemble an international pool of legal experts to review, analyse and propose legislative changes concerning the privatisation of state-owned arms export companies, state secrecy, and military procurement. ILP's volunteers were then asked to present the findings to an invited group of political advisors from G7 embassies in Kiev, Ukrainian experts, and selected NGOs campaigning for reform on these issues.
- **Repatriation of stolen Congolese assets from San Marino:** ILP assisted a collective representing Congolese civil society with advice from Italian lawyers to enable the return of €19 million Euros in bribes stolen from public funds by senior Congolese political figures and held in accounts in the Republic of San Marino. The funds had been frozen and seized by the San Marino Court of Appeal after a criminal investigation, but there was no plan to return them to the citizens of the Congo. The Prime Minister of San Marino asked the taskforce for a report on international best practices and for advice on how to structure a repatriation.
- **A UK anti-corruption sanctions regime:** ILP co-chaired and facilitated detailed legal advice to the UK Anti-Corruption Coalition, a coalition of anti-corruption NGOs, on international best practice and the extension of the UK's human rights sanctions regime to include serious corruption and tax evasion.
- **Negotiating a royalty pricing agreement for the government of Liberia:** ILP provided technical expertise and completed negotiation support to the Liberian Revenue Authority on renegotiating a royalty pricing agreement. This ensures that the government and people of Liberia receive appropriate and fair market rate royalties for iron ore mining activities in their jurisdiction.
- **Supporting the UN Committee of Experts on Taxing Digital Services:** ILP's tax experts provided expert commentaries to the UN Committee of Experts on International Cooperation in Tax Matters. The advice supported more equitable taxation of digital services, by giving more taxing rights to "market" jurisdictions (where revenue is earned) rather than "residence" jurisdictions of corporations. ILP also provided technical legal support to tax authorities who are developing proposals for digital economy taxation.

- **Energy Charter in Uganda:** ILP provided support to a Ugandan NGO on the legal effect of the development of an energy charter for revenue and investment in Uganda.
- **Trainings in multiple jurisdictions:** Amongst other initiatives, ILP experts provided training to officials at the Madagascar Revenue Authority; to civil society activists in Kenya’s National Taxpayers Association; and to the African Union’s annual conference on Contract Negotiations and Fiscal Regimes in the Extractives Industry (convened by NEPAD, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development).
- **Defending the right of non-UK citizens to access Freedom of Information Act procedures:** ILP supported an appeal to the FOI Tribunal that set new legal precedent on the territorial scope of the FOI law and will enable non-UK residents to make FOI requests.
- **Providing support to investigative journalists:** ILP expert volunteers advised journalists on a variety of issues, including the due diligence requirements for Nigeria’s negotiations with a former oil minister who had unlawfully acquired oil blocks during his mandate; regulations applicable to UK Trust and Company Service Providers who set up anonymous companies; oversight obligations of the Charities Commission regarding illicit funds from Africa potentially laundered through English charities and the legislative regime on foreign finance invested in Crown Dependencies. This advice supported the publication of articles that called for institutions that enable illicit financial flows to be held to account by regulators under the relevant laws.
- **Ensuring the protection of activists who investigate financial crimes:** ILP provided expert media law advice and pre-publication libel review on reports published by the Foreign Policy Centre (FPC) that shed light on the use of the law to close down the media (via SLAPP suits¹ and “libel tourism”) and through abuse of UK jurisdiction over publication in other jurisdictions. ILP also recommended ways in which investigative journalists can be better protected.
- **Challenging illegal seizure of land in Kenya:** ILP has been supporting 700 members of three Maasai communities in their ancestral homelands in Olkaria valley, Kenya, to challenge widespread corruption in local and national government in relation to the development of geothermal energy projects. These projects threaten community members’ land rights, safety, means of food production and livelihoods. Our training and awareness raising aim to equip these communities with the knowledge, skills and resources to enable them to be more equal partners in negotiations with investors and officials.
- **Training to prosecutors in Lagos State, Nigeria:** In 2020 ILP was asked by the Attorney General for Lagos State to provide advocacy and ‘train-the-trainer’ training to 90 Lagos prosecutors, creating a sustainable training model that can be passed on to successive generations of prosecutors in the Lagos Ministry of Justice. We also provided specific training on working with vulnerable groups.

How our Legal Fellowship Programme Works

As well as the 2,000 expert legal volunteers we work with, we offer opportunities for law students at Masters or PhD level and postgraduates with an interest in developing their skills and awareness of pro

¹ A strategic lawsuit against public participation (SLAPP) or SLAPP suit is a lawsuit intended to censor, intimidate, and silence critics by burdening them with the cost of a legal defense until they abandon their criticism or opposition.

bono work and international development projects. ILP legal fellows start work immediately on cases, alongside team members, to support our clients. We have clients in 80 countries. We are client-led and respond to requests from local actors to build their capacity, whether through formal legal training sessions, workshops, legal representation, litigation and advice, or through extended engagement and mentoring for communities, government officials, and civil society representatives. To provide this assistance we draw on a bank of highly qualified lawyers who offer their services for free. As a charity, our ultimate aim is to help our clients to create long-lasting change in some of the world's poorest regions. ILP endeavours to respond to each client's needs in a respectful, solution-oriented manner.

Our interns are buddied with one member of staff (either the Executive Director, one of two Programme Directors or our two Project Managers), and stay in that thematic or regional programme for the duration of their internship to ensure continuity with clients and cases. All legal fellows at ILP:

- Work with dynamic, supportive, fun and kind lawyer-colleagues
- Work across multiple areas of the law - including criminal, civil, finance, tax, property, natural resources and international issues
- Develop project management and client interview/engagement skills
- Develop closer relationships with activists and reformist governments who seek pro bono advice to better understand how law can support their needs
- Develop legal research skills in an international context and how to apply these to development issues
- Develop an understanding of the legal governance and management of a small charity
- Work with top volunteer lawyers from barristers sets and law firms at the very peak of their profession

Our internships are arranged for three-five days a week, depending on outside work/studies, for a minimum of four months (holidays and exam breaks are not a problem!). We are a small charity with limited means, throughout the internship we provide a daily allowance of £8 per day from our core donations as a contribution to travel expenses and lunch. Interns are welcome to work from our lovely office in central London, donated by and located within Herbert Smith Freehills. Many internships are also conducted remotely and legal fellows receive the same rewarding experience. Our team and clients are diverse. The diversity of our interns has equally enriched our way of working. Since we started the virtual internship programme last year, we have received legal fellowship applications from all over the world, providing more opportunities for law students who often do not have access to the resources available in the UK.

Our support does not end when their fellowship with ILP is over. We provide career mentoring through the fellowship so that we can use our knowledge and network of contacts across the legal world to best support fellows to achieve their professional goals. We are always delighted to provide references and we love staying in contact with former interns and seeing what the future holds for them.

Testimonials

Deniz Tanyolac (Legal Fellow January 2021 - March 2021)

“From the very beginning, you are entrusted with real responsibility on fascinating projects and surrounded by a kind and supportive team. Observing the application of legal concepts to high-stakes litigation, while you are hearing about these very legal concepts for the first time in your academic studies, is a treat. It is also eye-opening, allowing you to adopt a long-term perspective to your legal education and to develop an intuition for legal problem solving that complements your academic understanding. In the end, you gain a better sense for not only what being a legal professional might mean for you but also the kind of impact you want to have.”

Quin Pau (Legal Fellow July 2019- October 2019)

“I thoroughly enjoyed my time at ILP! The small size of the office combined with the global dimension of the pro bono projects undertaken meant that I was entrusted with a high level of responsibility as an intern. At every stage of the projects carried out, I felt like my input was valued and that I was truly making a difference. This gave me the opportunity to take control of my development and learning, and feel personally accountable for the work done. In addition, I also enjoyed the varied nature of the work done at the organisation; no two projects were the same, so I truly felt like I was learning something new every single day. This, combined with the infectious enthusiasm of the team, meant that there was never a dull day in the office.”

Christopher Watkins (Legal Fellow October 2020- March 2021)

“My legal fellowship at ILP exposed me to an array of fascinating projects covering anti-corruption, tax reform, media freedom and capacity building. For example, I was able to participate in work relating to UK Magnitsky legislation whilst also helping the Maasai tribe in Kenya defend their rights against companies engaged in geothermal explorations. This has provided me with a broad knowledge of contemporary development challenges.

During my fellowship, I was able to engage with clients and legal professionals with a variety of backgrounds and expertise. This has helped me improve my verbal and written communication skills and my ability to successfully engage with multiple stakeholders spanning several projects. Additionally, I was able to research and write blog posts which further deepened my understanding of legal issues. I believe that I am now better equipped to undertake research and write in an engaging and critical manner.

ILP has also provided me with technical skills that are crucial in the modern working environment. The comprehensiveness of my experience has enabled me to further establish my motivations and core interests within the NGO and legal sector. I believe that I am now well



equipped to pursue a legal career, secure in the knowledge of my long-term goals and my desired specialisms.”