

ADVOCATES FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (A4ID)

ORIGINS

Advocates for International Development (A4ID) grew out of the Oxfam 1000 City Lawyers Initiative, the response of a small group of UK lawyers to the Asian Tsunami. Initially it focused on lawyers pledging to support the eradication of poverty. Today, A4ID has a broader purpose: to use legal skills to further the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Law is fundamental to every aspect of international development. As has recently been recognized by the Commission on the Legal Empowerment of the Poor, at present, over 4 billion people are unable to benefit from the law and so cannot realize their economic, social and cultural potential.

A4ID enables lawyers to use their core skills to provide access to justice for the world's poorer and more vulnerable communities. A4ID supports a wide range of actors, partnering those working in development in need of advice and assistance with lawyers from a variety of leading international and local law firms.

INTERNATIONAL PRO BONO

A4ID's reach spans across Africa, Asia and Latin America, in more than two dozen countries. Recipients of assistance range from street children in Tanzania to government lawyers in the Caribbean engaged on trade issues, from the legal profession in Laos through to nomadic pastoralists in Burundi and global civil society organizations based in Europe.

(a) Brokerage

A4ID partners those working in development (its Development Partners) with lawyers willing and able to assist pro bono (its Legal Partners).

A4ID works cross profession involving lawyers from law firms, in-house teams and academic institutions. It provides opportunities for lawyers of all levels of seniority and areas of expertise to use and develop their skills. A4ID receives requests for legal advice and assistance from local and international NGOs, IGOs, social enterprises and a range of developing and less developed country governments.

Development Partners

Development Partners benefiting from A4ID's services include ACEVO, ActionAid, Africa, Caribbean & Pacific country governments, Global Witness, Mkombozi, Oxfam, Plan International, Peru Support Group and Womankind Worldwide.

Legal Partners

A4ID's Legal Partners include Allen & Overy, Brooks World Poverty Institute, British Institute of International & Comparative Law, Clifford Chance, Dechert, Linklaters, Orrick, Oxford Pro Bono Publico, Freshfields, Reed Smith and Weil, Gotshal & Manges

Requests for legal assistance, or 'projects,' are circulated by A4ID to its network of lawyers on a weekly basis. A4ID offers projects that can be completed by a lawyer at his/her desk as well as those that require longer term engagement in country.

A4ID's work spans a broad range of practice areas and includes both litigation and transactional work. Examples of projects brokered by A4ID include:

- **Advising the ACP Countries:** Through A4ID, leading Trade lawyers from Washington and Brussels have provided legal training to government officials and lawyers from the Africa, Caribbean & Pacific regional bloc on their negotiation of Economic Partnership Agreements with the European Union.
- **Assistance on new legislation in Afghanistan:** A4ID lawyers advised Womankind Worldwide on how proposed legislation on women's rights in Afghanistan could achieve the social goal of empowering women whilst at the same time being culturally relevant and acceptable. It is estimated that over 85% of women in Afghanistan are affected by domestic violence and at least 60% of marriages in the country are forced. The A4ID team included experts on a range of legal topics including sharia law.
- **Supporting Street Children in Africa:** Through A4ID, lawyers from the UK partnered with Tanzanian lawyers and local NGO Mkombozi to mount a constitutional challenge in the Tanzanian High Court against a government policy relating to the round up of street children. In two cities alone, it is estimated that 1346 children live on the street and as a result, are subject to forced removal by the government. A4ID's role is part of a multi track strategy developed with civil society in Tanzania to improve child rights in the country.
- **Legal Research on Education Rights:** Lawyers through A4ID advised ActionAid on the layperson's international guide to The Right to Education. This has been distributed to education activists worldwide as a tool for them to use in working to achieve greater educational opportunity. The legal analysis of international standards and best practice provided a strong tool for activists engaging with governments.
- **Intellectual Property and Corporate Support to Business Development Initiative:** Lawyers through A4ID have provided legal assistance to Pepal, a new initiative launched by the International HIV/AIDS Alliance working in conjunction with leading business school INSEAD. Pepal coordinates strategic partnerships between international businesses and developing country NGOs working to support those suffering from HIV/AIDS. The aim of the partnership is to improve management, leadership and professionalism within developing country civil society

and to increase the sharing of knowledge and skills across professions. Lawyers through A4ID are advising on appropriate legal structures to ensure effective delivery and the protection of the new Pepal idea.

In all areas A4ID provides a professional service, carrying out all necessary due diligence, allowing lawyers to focus on the provision of legal expertise and support the UN Millennium Development Goals.

Lawyers providing legal services through A4ID abide by the UK pro bono protocol and the UK Attorney General's Statement of Principles in International Pro Bono Work ensuring that all work is of the same standard as that done for paying clients.

(b) Project Management

In addition to its brokerage services, A4ID also project manages a number of longer term projects in partnership with development organizations. Some examples are given below.

In the summer of 2008, A4ID facilitated the training of senior journalists from Liberia and Sierra Leone in partnership with the International Center for Media Studies and Development in West Africa Inc (INCEMSADWA) to promote objective reporting of international legal issues. A particular focus of the training was the Charles Taylor Trial.

A4ID has partnered with the International Institute for Sustainable Development and the UN Economic Commission on Latin America to provide free legal training in Chile to Government officials from Central and South America on the drafting and negotiation of International Investment Agreements. This program will be run for a second time in 2009 for government officials in Africa.

In 2007, a team of lawyers from A4ID worked with the Lao Bar Association and the United Nations Development Program to deliver alternative dispute resolution training to Lao lawyers.

EDUCATION AND AWARENESS RAISING

(a) Annual Law & International Development Training Program for Lawyers

To support the development of lawyers in international pro bono work and to ensure that they are better able to effectively meet the needs of their clients in the developing world, A4ID offers an annual Law & International Development Training Program. The Training Program provides a comprehensive introduction to key issues in law and international development covering a range of topics from trade & investment, debt and microfinance to corruption and transplantation of legal systems to gender, health and migration. At the end of this, its 3rd year, A4ID will have provided training to over 130 lawyers engaging academics from 11 institutions together with a range of development professionals and legal experts.

(b) Legal Seminars for Development Professionals

A4ID also recognises the need to transfer learning to beneficiary groups and operates an active education program for development professionals through the delivery of training seminars and production of subject specific guides.

Examples of seminar topics include the use of *amicus curiae* briefs in international arbitration, defamation and freedom of information and negotiation skills training. A range of ‘At a Glance Guides’ to areas of law of interest to the development profession can be found on A4ID’s website.

(c) Working Groups

A4ID also works more generally to raise awareness amongst lawyers of the role that they can play in international pro bono and the need for them to act. Through its Working Groups, lawyers are able to meet with development professionals and identify how they can best use their skills to support the achievement of the MDGs.

A4ID runs working groups in the following areas:

<p style="text-align: center;">Trade & Investment</p> <p>The T&I team focuses upon global trade, international investment, competition law and intellectual property.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Debt & Finance</p> <p>The D&F team works in the areas of sovereign debt, microfinance and financial issues generally.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Governance</p> <p>The Governance Team has a particular emphasis on rule of law, transparency and accountability.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Development Rights</p> <p>The Development Rights Team considers a range of issues such as women’s rights, the right to education, land rights and the environment.</p>

4. MANAGEMENT

A4ID is a company limited by guarantee and a UK registered charity. It is a membership organization with 350 members at the time of writing. Membership is open to lawyers, development professionals or those with specialist skills who have an interest in development. All members are able to stand as trustees at A4ID’s Annual General Meeting. In addition, they can take part in working groups, mini-secondments in developing countries, attend A4ID’s Annual Training Program and receive weekly updates on opportunities for getting involved.

The executive management of A4ID is carried out by its Core Team. The Board of Trustees, comprised of lawyers from a range of backgrounds, decides upon strategy and development of the organization. The Board of Trustees is guided by an Advisory Council of senior lawyers and development professionals.

The core business of A4ID's Legal Partners is economic advancement of their clients through the provision of legal services. A4ID has taken this core business together with its Legal Partners' willingness to undertake pro bono work and has developed a new realization amongst the legal community: because of their skills lawyers are uniquely positioned to help achieve the MDGs.

Contact Information and Links

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Speaker Biographical Information

Katie Hutt is A4ID's Executive Officer, overseeing the work of A4ID's Core Team. Katie is also responsible for the charity's projects, education and events programs. She works with the Board of Trustees to develop and implement strategy, business development and relationship management. Before joining A4ID, Katie worked at Reed Smith. Katie is a qualified lawyer.