



# Annual Report 2024

Institute for African Women in Law



January - December 2024

[www.africanwomeninlaw.com](http://www.africanwomeninlaw.com)

# Table of Contents

**01** Message from the Executive Director

**02** About IAWL - Mission, Vision, Four Pillars  
Progress, Outcomes & Impact

**08** Program Activities  
Events, Publications

**15** Stories of Change

**17** Collaborations & Partnerships

**18** Message to our Partners and Sponsors

**18** Acknowledgments

**19** Vision 2025



# Message from the Executive Director



**J. Jarpa Dawuni Ph.D.**  
Founder, Executive Director

Leading an organization dedicated to empowering women in the legal field is an honor. Our driving force has been our mission to enhance the capacity of African women in law and create a more inclusive and equitable legal profession across Africa and beyond.

This year, we have made significant strides in achieving this mission. Our Gender Equality in Law Campaign (GELC) research has highlighted the importance of women's leadership to the legal profession, shed a light on the challenges that women face in pursuing leadership roles within the field, and has offered solutions on how we can empower women through the creation of gender-equitable institutions and work environments. We are also proud of the workshop events and webinars we have held, which have equipped legal students and professionals with the necessary knowledge needed to ascend to leadership. Professional training and mentoring are important tools for empowerment and we are committed to providing women in law with more opportunities for professional development in the coming year through the launch of our Women's Excellence in Law and Leadership Academy (WELLA).

Our advocacy efforts have been focused on creating a more gender-sensitive legal profession in which women's leadership can thrive through our Gender Equality in Law Campaign (GELC), launched on July 5, 2024. We have actively engaged with law firms, bar associations, judicial bodies and schools of law to raise awareness of the Campaign and have been blown away by the support. We also watched GELC go regional at the African Union! We are grateful for the support that GELC has received since its launch and look forward to building on the momentum in 2025.

None of these achievements would have been possible without the support and dedication of the incredible IAWL Team and our Board Members, partners and funders. We are grateful for your unwavering commitment to our cause and for standing with us in our mission. As we reflect on our accomplishments this year, we recognize that much work still needs to be done, but we remain committed. Together, we can make a lasting impact on the lives of women in law and contribute to a more just and equal society.

# About IAWL - Vision, Mission, Pillars

The Institute for African Women in Law (IAWL) is a not-for-profit, non-governmental organization established in 2015 to be a focal point for addressing issues across the legal and judicial professions. We are committed to supporting the formidable works of women in law across the continent of Africa and the Diaspora.

Since its establishment, IAWL has grown into an organization with a dynamic team of passionate individuals.



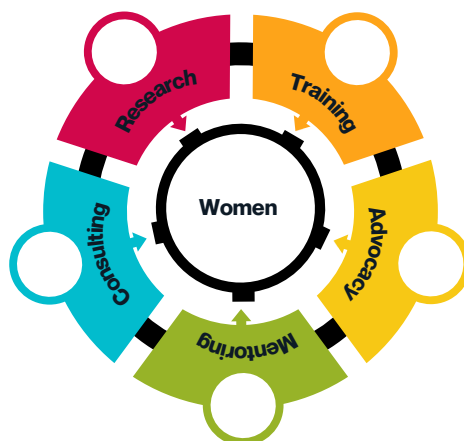
**VISION:** To build a network of legal professionals devoted to using the law for positive societal change and development.



**MISSION:** Our mission is to enhance potential, nurture leadership, create opportunities and build partnerships.



**PILLARS:** This mission is accomplished through the execution of our four pillar program areas: Research, Training, Mentoring, and Advocacy.



# Progress, Outcomes & Impact

# 183

individuals registered for our International Women's Day Celebration and 85 in attendance.

# 2

Two Continuous Legal Education (CLE) programs created and submitted for accreditation.



# 4

new members appointed to the IAWL Board of Directors



# 4

new staff members recruited



**1** High-level Convening held in Accra, Ghana to launch the Gender Equality in Law Campaign (GELC) and GELC Alliance across the continent.



8

Successful stakeholder visits with 6 Ghana law firms, the Ghana Bar Association (GBA) and the Office of the Minister of Justice and Attorney General.

10+

hours of in-person private and public stakeholder engagement.

127

lawyers engaged in dialogue during courtesy calls

208

students registered for our 'Engaging the Youth' Law Student Workshop and

180

in attendance.

1

female candidate supported for the Law Association of Zambia (LAZ) elections.

3

female presidential candidates supported for the Law Society of Kenya (LSK) elections.

**Ms Faith Odhiambo elected the second female President of the LSK.**

3

female presidential candidates supported for the Ghana Bar Association (GBA) elections. Mrs. Efua Gharthey and Mrs. Victoria Barth **elected the first female President and second female Vice-President of the GBA**, respectively.

Mrs. Isabel Boaten **elected President of the Greater Accra Regional Bar Association (GAR)**.



GELC endorsed through a Regional Consultative and Stakeholder Engagement at the African Union, in collaboration with the African Union Office of the Legal Counsel and the Office of Former Chief Justice Meaza Ashenafi.



The Gender Equality in Law Model Policy Adoption Form signed by the Pan African Lawyers' Union (PALU) (Left) and the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA) (Right).



EWLA shows its commitment to the GELC.

## Who was impacted? How?

**20+**

Ghanaian law firms in attendance at the high level convening

**3**

law firms as official partners. Media coverage from over

**15**

media houses giving the event nationwide publicity.

**Over 120**

lawyers engaged during our two-day engagement with Ghana law firms

**Over 200**

lawyers pledged to support the GELC.

**Close to 5,000**

women lawyers across the country were impacted by the presentation of the **Gender Equality Model Policy** to the Ghana Bar Association Women's Forum (GBAWF).

**3**

female candidates supported in the Law Society of Kenya's presidential election and 1 won.

**Over 100**

individuals (lawyers, judges, ambassadors, students, and more) reached through our Regional Consultative and Stakeholder Engagement at the AU.

Through Mrs. Efua Chartey and Mrs. Victoria Barth's Presidency and Vice-Presidency, the **Gender Equality Model Policy** will potentially impact

**over 10,000** lawyers through the GBA.



By signing the Gender Equality in Law Model Policy Adoption Form at the PALU Conference and during an office visit, respectively:

PALU sets an example for members of Africa's regional and national bar associations and over

**1,200** individual lawyers & **76** institutions that are a part of its network.

## Gender Equality in Law Campaign

**16**

organizations are part of the GELC Alliance

**32**

law firms have joined the GELC Alliance

**198**

individuals are part of the GELC Alliance (as of 23rd December 2024)

# Internal Program Initiatives



**‘Count Her In: Gender Equality in the Workplace’.** An International Women’s Day Celebration Webinar in collaboration with the Cyrus R. Vance Center for International Justice.



**‘Expanding Your Leadership Frontiers as a Woman in Law’.** An IAWL Leadership Webinar in collaboration with the Ghana Bar Association Women’s Forum (GBAWF).



**‘Engaging the Youth- A Law Student Workshop’.** A GELC Law Student Workshop in collaboration with the University of Ghana School of Law and the Ghana Bar Association Women’s Forum (GBAWF).



**A high-level GELC Launch & Convening in Accra, Ghana.** Uniting legal professionals and advocates to advance gender equality in the legal profession.

Courtesy calls to public and private sector actors in Ghana in which IAWL presented research findings from GELC and presented the Gender Equality in Law Model Policy.



With the Deputy Attorney General, Hon. Diana Asonaba Dapaah.



With the Ghana Bar Association Women's Forum.



Presenting the Gender Equality Model Policy to N. Dowuona law firm.



With the N. Dowuona Team.



Courtesy call on B&P Associates law firm.



Presenting the Gender Equality Model Policy to Ms. Amina Kaguah, ENS Ghana.



IAWL Presents the Gender Equality Model Policy to Mrs. Victoria Barth, Managing Partner, Sam Okudzeto & Associates.



Courtesy call on the law firm of Bentsi-Enchill, Letsa & Ankomah.



Institute for African Women in Law  
in collaboration with  
African Union - Office of the Legal Counsel  
&  
The Office of Former Chief Justice Meaza Ashenafi



# Gender Equality in Law Campaign (GELC)

*Regional Consultative & Stakeholder Engagement*

Speakers

Moderators



**Prof. Hajer Gueldich**  
Legal Counsel  
African Union



**Meaza Ashenafi**  
Former Chief Justice  
Federal Supreme Court of Ethiopia



**J. Jarpa Dawuni, Ph.D.**  
Founder and Executive  
Director, IAWL



**H.E. Amb. Fathallah Sijlmassi**  
Director General of the  
African Union Commission



**Maame Efua  
Addadzi-Koorn, Ph.D.**  
Director of Training,  
IAWL



**Lea Mehari Redae**  
Lecturer,  
Addis Ababa University  
School of Law



Sponsored by the U.S. Embassy in Ethiopia - Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL)

A Regional Consultative and Stakeholder Engagement in collaboration with the African Union Office of the Legal Counsel (AUOLC) and the Office of Former Chief Justice Meaza Ashenafi.



An office visit to the Ethiopian Women Lawyers Association (EWLA), presentation of the GELC Model Policy and signing of the Gender Equality in Law Model Policy Adoption Form.

# Program Activities (External)



Our Executive Director served as the main panelist on Voice of America “Our Voices” for an IWD celebration.



Our Executive Director moderated a UNODC panel for the International Day of Women Judges (IDWJ) in Vienna.



IAWL held a Roundtable Discussion at the Pan African Lawyers’ Union (PALU) 2024 Annual Conference: “Promoting Gender Equality in the Legal Profession Across Africa”.



Our Director of Operations represented IAWL at the African Corporate and Government Counsel Forum (ACGC).



Our Executive Director was a panelist in a mentoring session organized by Equality Now and Young Women for Awareness, Agency, Advocacy, and Accountability (YW4A) at the PALU 2024 Annual Conference.

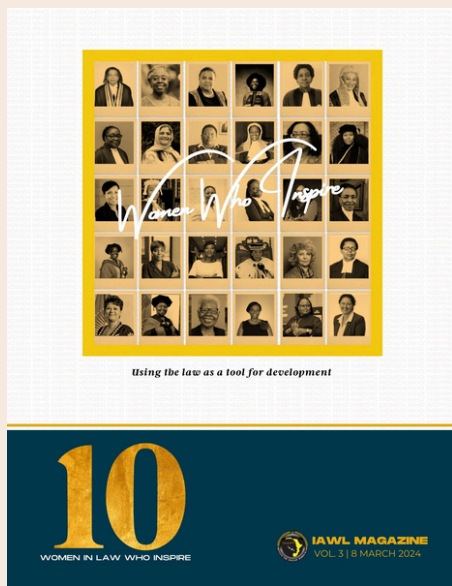


Our Executive Director participated in the 7th Annual Reykjavik Global Forum in Iceland.

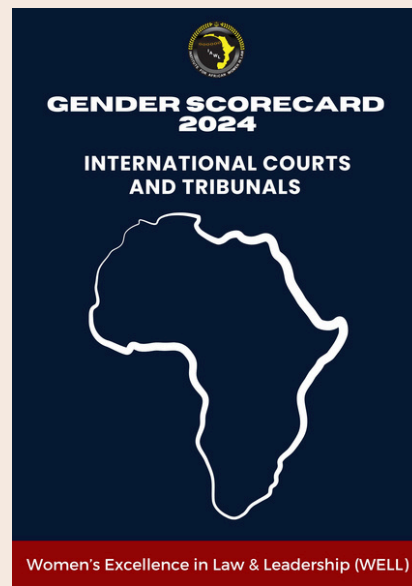


Our Executive Director participated in the United Kingdom Association of Women Judges Annual Conference 2024 in Birmingham, UK.

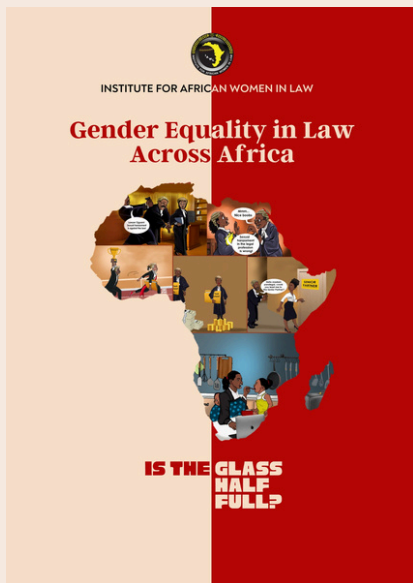
# Publications



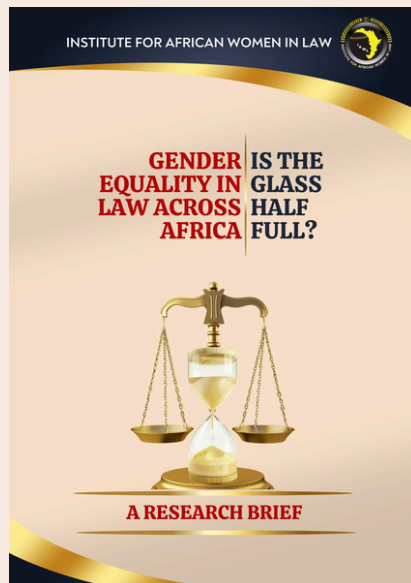
Women Who Inspire  
(Volume 3)



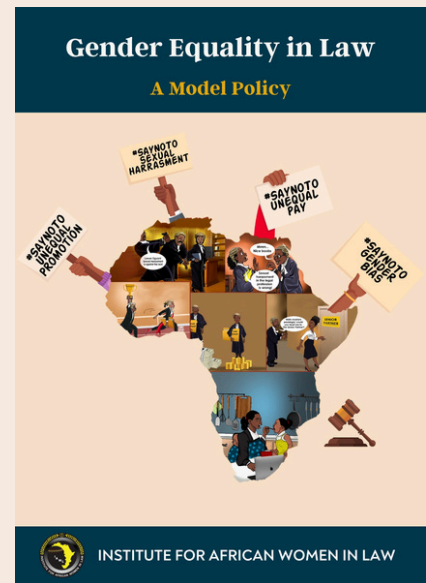
Gender Scorecard  
International Courts and  
Tribunals 2024



Gender Equality in Law  
Across Africa: Is the Glass  
Half Full? Report



Gender Equality in Law  
Across Africa: Is the Glass  
Half Full? A Research  
Brief



Gender Equality in Law: A  
Model Policy



# Stories of Change

- IAWL hosted a Professional Development training webinar in collaboration with the GBAWF on 'Expanding Your Leadership Frontiers as a Woman in Law'. We had attendees fill out a survey to inform us on how prepared they were for leadership within their work sector before and after the webinar. 15% of participants said they felt prepared before the webinar. However, after the webinar, the percentage increased to 58% of participants who said their preparedness for leadership had improved following the webinar.
- IAWL organized a GELC Regional Consultative and Stakeholder Engagement in collaboration with the African Union Office of the Legal Counsel and the Office of the Former Chief Justice Meaza Ashenafi. The event was attended by over 100 lawyers, judges, legal academics, ambassadors, students and representatives of non-governmental organizations. After the event, we received an outpour of praise from attendees. **Ms. Selsebila Abdellah**, a law student at Addis Ababa University, said:

“

**It was empowering to discuss the critical issues surrounding the importance of women in leadership. Let's continue to champion women leaders and support equal opportunities for all. Together, we can make a difference!**

”

- Additionally, IAWL conducted a gender audit of a series of documents and frameworks for the Conference of Law Deans (COLD). In response to the work done, **Prof. Raymond Atuguba**, Chairperson of COLD and Dean and Professor of General Jurisprudence at the University of Ghana School of Law had the following to say:

“

**The gender audit conducted by the Institute for African Women in Law (IAWL) marks a crucial step towards addressing gender disparities within Ghana’s legal education landscape. The Conference of Law Deans greatly appreciates the Institute’s commitment to fostering inclusivity and gender responsiveness in legal academia. We look forward to integrating these insights into the report to be submitted to the General Legal Council to drive meaningful reform within Ghana’s legal education system.**

”

# Collaborations and Partnerships



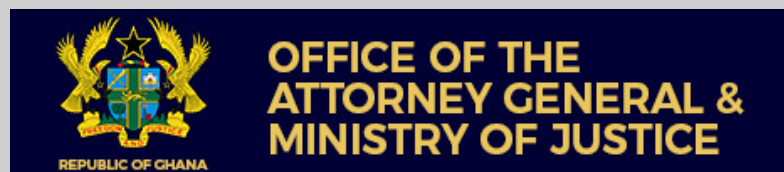
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Ethiopian Women  
Lawyers' Association



CYRUS R. VANCE CENTER  
FOR INTERNATIONAL JUSTICE





# Message to our Partners and Sponsors

## **Thank you for your generous support!**

We have had a successful and highly impactful 2024 at IAWL, and our funders have been a significant reason. We express our deepest gratitude to Co-Impact for believing in the IAWL vision and mission and partnering with us to help promote gender equality in the profession.

We also sincerely thank our partner law firms: Jones Day, AB & David, Bentsi-Enchill, Letsa & Ankomah, Benneh Prempeh and Associates, N. Dowuonah, ENSafrica and Sam Okudzeto & Associates. Your unwavering support of our activities and programs enables us to make impactful contributions to the legal community.

Our sincerest gratitude also goes to the United States Embassy - Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs for their support towards the Regional Consultative and Stakeholder Engagement in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

Your continuous contributions and support will significantly impact more African women in law through research, advocacy, training and mentoring.

## **Acknowledgments**

We would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to our network of law students, lawyers, judges and legal academics whose support and participation in our activities have shaped this Institute. Your passion and commitment to using the law as a tool for positive societal change continues to inspire us and spur us on to do more.

Our most profound appreciation goes to our esteemed board members, whose invaluable knowledge and expertise have played a central role in building this organization and guiding us toward success.

We extend our heartfelt thanks to our partners and funders for their crucial support, which has empowered us to execute our programs and initiatives successfully. Finally, we acknowledge the entire IAWL community, which has supported our programs and activities and continues to promote our work in various ways. Thank you for your unwavering support and trust in our vision for African women in law.

# Vision 2025

IAWL's vision remains the same: to enhance the capacity of African women in law. Since its inception, IAWL has evolved into a transformative hub for **Research, Advocacy, Training and Mentorship**.

In 2025, IAWL will celebrate its tenth anniversary. This milestone signifies a decade of commitment to building a network of legal professionals dedicated to using the law as a tool for positive societal change.

Our vision for 2025 is **Accelerate to Excellence (ATE)**. We look forward to rolling out engaging and impactful programs like the Women's Excellence in Law and Leadership Academy (WELLA) initiative.

Join us to move mountains in 2025!



# Here's how you can get involved with IAWL

Your financial support is greatly appreciated as it directly aids our efforts to make our innovative ideas a reality! Support IAWL by making a donation:



Join the GELC Alliance and endorse/adopt our Gender Equality in Law Model Policy:

Individuals click here



Law firms/organizations



## Join our Global Legal Networks



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join





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