

Introduction

The Center for International Legal Cooperation (CILC) is an international projects organisation founded in 1985. CILC is a foundation according to Dutch Law, with a mission of bringing together legal experts from different countries to find solutions for a variety of challenges related to international legal cooperation and promoting a rule of law in developing countries, countries in transition and countries within and around the European Union.

Social responsibility is part and parcel of how CILC operates on a day-to-day basis, that is to say of how we organise ourselves internally and externally in implementing our projects around the world. Social responsibility is ingrained in our mission of contributing to the rule of law worldwide, as well as to the benefit of societies of the countries we work in.

CILC social responsibility policy

As an organisation and a team, we believe it is our duty to embrace social responsibility and to strive to make a positive impact on our stakeholders, on the communities we work in and on our natural environment. This document sets out the principles underpinning our commitment to social responsibility and the concrete actions we take towards fulfilling this duty. In taking action, we are guided by the CILC core values and by the ISO 26000 framework for social responsibility. We recognize the importance of our stakeholders and take their interests into account in our social responsibility policy.

CILC core values

CILC is guided by four core values in our daily operations, in project implementation across the globe and the cooperation with our stakeholders. They reflect the type of working culture we as an organisation appreciate the most. These values have been identified and adopted by the CILC team. We have formalised them in the CILC [Code of Ethics](#) and the “Words We Live By” document, which supplement the [Partos Code of Conduct](#) that we continue to adhere to.

CILC core values:

- * Integrity, transparency and safety in our daily operations
- * Equal and fair treatment
- * Respect for different background and opinions
- * Zero-tolerance for inappropriate behaviour or misconduct

ISO 26000

CILC recognises ISO 26000 as an international voluntary standard for CSR. We use it as a guide to further integrate social responsibility into our values and practices. We reflect regularly on the Seven Key Principles advocated as the roots of socially responsible behaviour, and we review periodically how we promote these in our work and our relationships with all our stakeholders.

Key principles:

- * **Accountability**
 - CILC is accountable for the use of donor funds received and for the delivery of project results. We report on and audit our projects, and we publish our financial statements in the annual report, including an accountability statement.
 - We have clear financial guidelines for partners as part of our contracts.
 - Greater availability of historical, current and future information on aid flows.
 - More detailed information on projects (improved comprehensiveness).

- Broader coverage and participation (beyond Official Development Assistance and beyond traditional donors).
- Improved timeliness and more frequent updates of development financing information.
- * **Transparency**
 - We comply with the transparency guidelines of the Dutch Central Bureau on Fundraising (CBF).
 - We share evaluations of our projects with partners.
 - We are in regular policy dialogue with the ministries of Justice and Foreign Affairs, and are open about the choices of CILC in ongoing work.
 - Our projects are presented in detail on our webpage and regularly updated.
- * **Ethical behaviour**
 - We uphold the Partos Code of Conduct and have adopted our own Ethics Code. The rules therein apply to CILC staff, experts and anyone we work with, and include clear complaints procedures.
 - We have a procedure in place to report a suspected case of misconduct or inappropriate behaviour.
 - We procure based on fair and ethical principles.
- * **Respect for stakeholder interests**
 - As announced in our [policy plan 2018-2020](#), we take pride in supporting project beneficiaries and stakeholders to really own change. At the same time we aim to be a trusted and reliable partner for the Netherlands (public) legal community, European (semi) public international legal cooperation agencies and NGOs operating in international legal cooperation or related policy areas.
- * **Respect for the rule of law**
 - Our mission is to support the rule of law at home (in the Netherlands and the EU) and abroad (in countries in transition and development whose institutions seek our support for international legal cooperation with the Netherlands).
- * **Respect for international norms and behaviour**
 - We avoid working with parties that do not respect international norms.
 - We follow the [Partos Code of Conduct](#) and the [CILC Code of ethics](#).
 - We procure ethically, and we respect the rules of public tenders organised by our donors.
- * **Respect for human rights**
 - We acknowledge the universal human rights, both civil and economic, social and cultural and promote the respect for their upholding in our operations and partnerships.

The section below outlines how the CILC values and ISO 26000 principles are translated into concrete socially responsible actions, within the Seven ISO 26000 Core Subjects. These actions are based on consultation with and understanding of the social responsibility needs and expectations of the various stakeholders of CILC.

Organisational governance

In accordance with the Dutch code for good governance (Wijffels Code), CILC has a separation between the governance of the organisation, its supervision and an externally organised audit. This is laid down in the status of the organisation. In view of accountability and transparency, CILC publishes its annual reports and accounts on the website.

CILC is a non-profit organisation that pursues a statutory mission. Economic growth is only relevant to the extent it gives us financial stability and ensures the continuity of the organisation. CILC undergoes a yearly verification of accounts on organisational level by an independent auditor. In addition, many of our projects are audited separately in line with donor requirements.

CILC wants to be a reliable link in the ever-growing network of development organisations that apply the principles and tools of effective aid delivery and aid transparency. Since 2014 we publish information about our projects on our website in an accessible manner. For us this was a first step in the direction of becoming a contributor of development work information in open data format. The process on which we have embarked for this includes: opening our data (by providing information about both past and ongoing projects, by including as a standard approach more details about the projects on our website, and by regularly updating the information, in addition to what is required by our donors), monitoring quality and adjusting procedures internally. While CILC has a publisher account with IATI, we have not yet published any

of our results onto the website. There are currently no concrete plans to do so, however it is something we hope to work towards.

Human rights

In our projects we acknowledge and promote the importance of human rights and respect for the rule of law. We work on issues related to, inter alia, access to justice, alternative dispute resolutions, as well as building strong and fair justice institutions. These issues are in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

CILC adheres to and promotes international legal norms. CILC also complies with the Dutch legislation due to being registered in the Netherlands. When implementing projects, CILC takes into account the local context to the extent possible. It is important for us to promote the ownership of the project and this requires our projects to be adapted to the context we work in.

When considering the criteria for choosing to work on projects CILC is guided by respect for human rights. For those countries in which the adherence to human rights is not as strong, CILC designed tailor-made projects to improve this situation. We have an interest in participating in projects which diminish discrimination of marginalised groups. CILC engages in projects which promote equal access to civil, political, economic. We hope to expand our portfolio to include also projects on social and cultural rights.

Labour practices

CILC not only has a responsibility to acknowledge and promote human rights in our role as project implementers, but also as an employer.

CILC wants to be a transparent and trustworthy employer with clear and transparent rules. CILC has a remuneration policy in place, which aims at ensuring equal and transparent compensation and at preventing large disparities between staff members in the same position.

CILC is an equal opportunity employer and as such does not discriminate based on age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, language, religion, mental or physical disability, political or other beliefs, and national or social origin. The same applies for interactions with associates and stakeholders of our organisation.

CILC complies with domestic Dutch laws on working conditions. In its headquarters, CILC ensures a safe and healthy working environment for its staff in a number of ways. These include: an easily accessible first aid kit, presence of a trained safety officer and posted evacuation plans. CILC staff also receive travel security trainings every five years. Furthermore, staff are encouraged to bring to the attention of management any questions and concerns they may have for their own or others' safety. CILC has a Travel Policy in place which outlines a number of principles and practical arrangements related to security policy for business travel and living abroad of permanent CILC staff, as well as CILC contracted international short-term and long-term experts.

CILC fosters an open and non-hierarchical working environment with respect for different background and opinions. We favour a collegial approach where people feel safe and free to raise any issues before they can escalate. We have a zero-tolerance policy towards inappropriate behaviour or misconduct. To that end, CILC has developed a Code of Ethics including a procedure to report any suspected violation of the CILC core values. CILC also adheres to the Partos Code of Conduct. CILC also has a "Words We Live By" document outlining the list of shared principles we have agreed on through past team building exercises. This document is guiding in the office culture we want to embrace. CILC organises each year team building events to actively contribute to an open and safe collegial working environment.

Environment

CILC tries to follow a 'green' approach at reducing our carbon footprint, though we acknowledge that we still have a long way to go. We currently have some energy saving solutions in place in our office: for example limiting the use of lighting and moderating thermostat usage through an automated system. We promote to the extent possible a paperless office, opting instead to digitise as many as possible of our procedures. CILC also works towards reducing its food waste by engaging with an eco-friendly, organic company to cater our events.

Our biggest carbon footprint comes from international travel by plane. This is unfortunately part and parcel of our work and cannot be avoided completely. However, in the future we hope to try to engage more local stakeholders to implement our projects. For our headquarters in the Netherlands we promote teleworking arrangements for the staff.

In the future we hope to install the following 'green' measures to further continue reducing our carbon footprint:

- * Using energy star labelled appliances
- * Further incorporate the 3R concept 'reduce, reuse, recycle' (using recycled paper when printing is necessary, using environmentally friendly cleaning supplies)
- * Engaging more local stakeholders to reduce international travel by plane
- * Separating waste

Fair operating practices

The concept of fair operating practices is ingrained in our overall mission to promote the rule of law. Our projects promote integrity and lawfulness. We respect the laws of the Netherlands and the countries we work in and we seek to minimise detrimental effects on society in our area of activity.

Fair operating practices are also embedded in the CILC Code of Ethics which includes the procedure to report a case of misconduct such as fraud or corruption. The Code of Ethics applies to all staff but also experts and any other entity with whom we enter into a contractual agreement. We respect the rules of fair competition in public tenders we participate in and we work only with organisations who do the same. We commit to determine and explain the causes and communicate about corrective actions in situations where we should be found responsible of failure to comply.

In response to the new General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) that entered into force in 2018, CILC took the necessary measures to update its [Data Protection/Privacy Policy](#) to ensure that our storage and use of personal data comply with the GDPR. The Data Protection/Privacy Policy provides clear information on how we handle and use personal data, and is accessible online.

Consumer issues

CILC does its best to deal with consumers responsibly by:

- * Taking into account the health and safety of people participating in our project activities (for example trainings)
- * Being transparent about what can be expected from our services (for example what people travelling on study visits can expect)
- * Respecting privacy of people we work with (experts and clients)
- * Establish (and learning from) the reasons for insufficient compliance and what corrective actions are taken if we are held accountable by donors or partners for insufficient compliance with agreements

Community involvement and development

The nature of CILC's work in promoting the rule of law improves the quality of life of communities that we work both directly and indirectly, namely by:

- * Giving back – financial reporting and fiscal responsibility
- * Supporting local economies/sourcing locally (goods, services, expertise)
- * Contributing to the economic system – we advocate with donors and governments for improving policies on aspects falling under our range of influence