



LAWYERS FOR LAWYERS

**Strategic Plan 2024-2028**

## Introduction

Lawyers play a vital role in the protection of the rule of law and human rights. To fulfil their professional duties effectively, lawyers should be able to practise law freely and independently, without any fear of reprisal. Around the world, however, lawyers are harassed, threatened, attacked or even worse, for simply doing their job.

Lawyers for Lawyers is an independent, non-profit organisation, based in the Netherlands. Established by lawyers in 1986, Lawyers for Lawyers has more than 35 years of experience in providing support to lawyers in danger and creating awareness of the importance of the independent functioning of the legal profession to protect citizens' rights.

Lawyers for Lawyers' Strategic Plan for 2024 – 2028 is an updated version of our original Strategic Plan 2022-2025. It builds on our experience in supporting lawyers to protect them from risks and reprisals, strengthen their international recognition and legal protection, and empower them to fulfil their role as essential agents of the administration of justice.

Our ongoing work to support lawyers and to protect the universal right to effective legal representation, continues to be vital. We are deeply concerned by the unabated rise in reprisals against lawyers, and the chilling effect these attacks have on the protection of fundamental rights and freedoms.

The increased risks for the legal profession should be seen in the context of a global decline of the rule of law in both established democracies as well as in less free states, and in every region of the world, including Europe. This decline has been exacerbated during the Covid-19 pandemic, as governments around the world have used the pandemic to tighten restrictions on fundamental freedoms and protections of citizens. At the same time, the world is also grappling with other global challenges such as climate change, increased migration flows, terrorism, and organised crime, rising authoritarianism, and digital transformation, that raises human rights concerns. In 2023 there seems to be a decline in respect for international law in diplomatic relations and accountability. In this year the world witnessed the ongoing war in Ukraine including possible human rights violations; ethnic cleansing in Nakorno Karabach; probable mass murder and fear for genocide in Darfur, Sudan; terrorist deadly attacks on civilians in Israel and massive bombing and possible war crimes in Gaza. .

Lawyers for Lawyers is the only independent non-political organisation of lawyers that supports their colleagues on the basis of solidarity, in the world. More and more lawyers reach out to us for our support. 126 lawyers in 2023. The growing demand for our support and the global trend of continued pressure on the Rule of Law in general and the position of lawyers in particular, has led to the conclusion that our organisation needs to grow in size to be able to continue its work.

Over the last three decades, Lawyers for Lawyers has professionalised and has steadily grown in scope. The organisation is financially healthy, successful and ready to expand. In 2022 Lawyers for Lawyers received a sizable grant that enables the organization to take the next step and dream about how we can best address the challenges of the future. Lawyers for Lawyers has always worked from a small office in the Netherlands, supported by dozens of volunteer-lawyers. The limited size of the organisation prevented us from realising our ambition to support and empower all lawyers who ask for our support. This strategic plan looks at how Lawyers for Lawyers can grow and internationalise in the coming five year period and reach more lawyers at risk, grow the impact of our activities and realise our dream.

## 1. Looking back and looking forward

In 2023 Lawyers for Lawyers decided to update the Strategic Plan 2022 - 2025 and adjust it to Strategic Plan 2024- 2028. In Part I Lawyers for Lawyers shares the basics that gave input into our strategic plan. This Part I starts with an overview of the kind of violations of the rights and privileges of lawyers that we have documented. Part I contains our mission, vision and guiding principles. It includes a short analysis of global trends that have affected our thinking about the strategy of the coming years. We end this part I with the outcomes of our evaluation of the previous strategic plan and our ongoing conversations without stakeholders. We have captured these outcomes in “lessons learned”. Detailed information about Lawyers for Lawyers can be found at the end of the document.

### 1.1 Infringements on the rights and privileges of lawyers

A group of Dutch lawyers founded Lawyers for Lawyers in 1986 because they were alarmed by a declining protection of lawyers. In the past decades Lawyers for Lawyers documented increasingly frequent attacks on the independence of lawyers, in particular threats, intimidation and interference in the discharge of their professional functions.

Infringements on the rights and privileges of lawyers come in many forms and shapes. From violent and even lethal attacks on lawyers to breaches of lawyers-client confidentiality. All are violations of national or international law and limit the access to justice for civilians. Here follows a list of some examples of the kind of violations that Lawyers for Lawyers had documented in the past years: breaches of lawyer-client confidentiality; (digital) observation; lack of access to clients; arrest and persecution of lawyers based on bogus charges or broad anti terrorism laws; lawyers who unlawfully lost their membership to the bar or their licence to practise; new laws that make it hard to impossible to take on lgbt clients under “gay propaganda laws”. Intimidation and harassment included: threats to lawyers and to their family members; raids on law firms; online death threats; a car bomb found under a lawyer’s vehicle; smear campaigns; cases of violence against lawyers and murder of lawyers.

### 1.2 Mission

**Our dream** is that all lawyers are able to execute their roles independently and safely. Because justice, rule of law and democracy can only be protected if lawyers are able to play their vital role. Always and everywhere.

The founders of Lawyers for Lawyer were Dutch lawyers who believed that: *every lawyer must be able to practise their profession freely and independently*. To provide people the legal assistance they are entitled to. To uphold the rule of law. And to protect human rights.

We still uphold their mission today. We are committed to defending a free and independent legal profession. In every corner of the world. Whenever the rights and freedoms of lawyers are under pressure, we take action. Always independent: for lawyers, by lawyers. The rights of lawyers are protected through the United Nations Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers. The Basic Principles are the guiding principle in everything we do.

### 1.3 Vision

#### **Every lawyer can practise law independently without fear of reprisal**

We strive for a world where lawyers can practise law freely and independently to effectively fulfil their role in upholding the rule of law and the protection of human rights. Lawyers should be able to do their job without improper interference or fear of reprisal. Always and everywhere.

We envision a global network of lawyers that supports each other on the basis of collegial solidarity. A global network of lawyers supported by professional offices around the globe. We see Lawyers for Lawyers as the global expert on violations of the professional rights and privileges of lawyers.

Lawyers for Lawyers protects the independent role of lawyers within our legal systems by Empowering our colleagues around the world, so that they can better protect themselves; by Influencing policy makers, diplomats and international institutions that protect our global Rule of Law and by Defending individual lawyers that need our protection today.

In the coming five years we will increasing our impact by supporting more lawyers and continue to improve our Empower and Defend program and by more effective awareness raising and improved advocacy which will lead to more impact within our Influence program. To be able to realise our vision, we will need to grow. This strategic plan shows how we envision this growth in the coming five years.

## 1.4 Guiding Principles

### Put lawyers under threat at the heart of our work

In 2023 Lawyers for Lawyers formalised its five guiding principles. These principles guide us in our planning, our evaluation and in our activities.

**Solidarity** - We are lawyers who stand with our colleagues, collegial solidarity is our origin. We act in coordination and solidarity with other actors working toward common goals.

**Needs Based** - We Put lawyers under threat at the heart of our work. We provide support to meet expressed needs by lawyers whose professional guarantees, immunities and privileges are violated. We analyse why lawyers face reprisals, guided by local lawyers and other stakeholders.

**Fact based** - We analyse root causes of why lawyers face reprisals, guided by local lawyers and other stakeholders. We fact check all our reports and publications and only publish with consent of the affected lawyers. We identify the most effective ways to achieve tangible impact and lasting progress. We use the methodology of Theory of Chance and follow a cycle of evaluation that allows us to adjust and improve our methodologies over time.

**Independent** - We identify the most effective ways to achieve tangible impact and lasting progress. We act independently, objectively, professionally, and with integrity. We are not part of a bar-association, we adhere to strict rules on government funding and restricted funding.

**Inclusive and welcoming work environment** - The values we have and maintain in supporting lawyers at risk also guide our daily practices and relationships, including how we interact with our staff, legal fellows, volunteers, board, funders, and other stakeholders. We value integrity, accountability, collaboration, responsibility, sustainability, trust, and quality in the workplace, and strive for a diverse and inclusive environment which fosters personal and professional development and where people feel empowered to meaningfully contribute to our mission.

In the next chapter we share how our experiences of the last years, conversations with stakeholders and our close relations with lawyers at risk, have shaped our strategy.

## 1.5 Global Trends Affecting Lawyer Independence

*Lawyers for Lawyers acts within a broad field and collaborates with many stakeholders, partners and lawyers. In this chapter we share some of the global trends that impact our activities.*

## ***Challenges affecting lawyer independence***

The declining protection of lawyers has been documented by the UN Human Rights Council and others. During its 44th session (from 30 June – 17 July 2020), the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on the independence and impartiality of the judiciary, jurors and assessors, and the independence of lawyers, condemning the increasingly frequent attacks on the independence of lawyers, in particular threats, intimidation and interference in the discharge of their professional functions.

The 2021 World Justice Project study revealed that more countries declined than improved in overall rule of law performance for the fourth consecutive year. It showed the worst decline in the factor ‘constraints on government powers’, which measures the extent to which government powers are limited, e.g., by a legislative oversight or by an independent judiciary.

This global decline has been exacerbated during the Covid-19 pandemic, as governments around the world have used the pandemic to tighten restrictions on fundamental freedoms. Other global challenges such as climate change, armed conflict and mass violence, increased migration flows, terrorism, and organised crime, rising authoritarianism, and digital transformation, all impact the protection of lawyers.

### *Increase in volume and complexity of support requests*

Lawyers for Lawyers noted a significant increase in the volume and complexity of requests and demands on Lawyers for Lawyers from lawyers at risk. On average, we supported 180 lawyers each year from 2018-2021, compared to 140 lawyers each year from 2014-2017. A higher percentage of support requests related to lawyers operating in extremely challenging circumstances, such as armed conflict, martial law, authoritarian regimes, health crises, or a combination of these circumstances, which added to the complexity of meeting these requests.

### *Increase in the number of different countries in which we support lawyers*

Lawyers for Lawyers received an increased number of support requests from lawyers and lawyers’ organisations based in countries new to Lawyers for Lawyers, including European countries such as Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Serbia. On average we supported lawyers in 37 different countries per year from 2018-2021 compared to 28 per year from 2014-2017.

### *Forms of attacks and infringements*

Attacks on lawyers continued to remain the direct consequence of the identification of lawyers with their clients or their clients’ causes. Lawyers for Lawyers has documented many forms of harassment including: attacks on their reputation, arbitrary arrest, prosecution and detention, and groundless suspension or disbarment. We have seen an increase in the use of invasive surveillance of lawyers, including through their phones, smear campaigns (both offline and online), and the public labelling of lawyers as ‘enemies of the state’, a practice that according to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) “has proved extremely dangerous”. In various countries, governments have also increased their efforts to control the disciplinary system for lawyers as well as the entry into and continued practice within the legal profession, enabling them to prevent lawyers from practising law on arbitrary or fabricated grounds, and use legal reforms to increase control or weaken the independent functioning of professional associations of lawyers.

### *Targeted lawyers and nature of support requests*

We have seen an increase in requests in support of lawyers dealing with cases related to climate change and the environment, freedom of expression and association, free and fair elections, and asylum and migration. In many countries, there is also an increased risk for lawyers taking part in public debates about legal issues and human rights. In addition, we have seen an increased interest from lawyers at risk in getting support to enhance digital safety and use sanction regimes to drive change.

## ***Opportunities for enhancing Lawyer Independence***

The following developments offer opportunities to enhance lawyer independence. Examples include the following.

### *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*

Sustainability Development Goal 16 in which the Member States of the United Nations acknowledged the centrality of the right to access to justice, continues to create opportunities to act in collaboration and coordination with other actors to work towards promoting and protecting the vital role of lawyers in ensuring the right to access to justice and other fundamental human rights and freedoms.

### *Proposed new legal instrument on the Profession of Lawyers*

The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe acknowledged that the minimum standards set out in its Recommendation [Rec\(2000\)21](#) on the freedom of exercise of the profession of lawyer may no longer provide the necessary level of protection for lawyers in today's society. A committee of experts will now be instructed to prepare a draft legal instrument aiming at strengthening the protection of the profession of lawyer. Based on the draft legal instrument prepared by this committee of experts, the CDCJ will then propose to the Committee of Ministers the nature of the legal instrument, i.e., binding, or non-binding.

### *Critical theory on aid*

In the past years critical theory on “decolonizing aid” has impacted the methodologies of NGO's. Discussions on the topic of Decolonizing Aid have put a spotlight on patriarchal and colonial structures within the aid and NGO sector. In essence decolonization means an analyses of power dynamics within the relationship between the often Europe based NGO and the “victims” in the “global south”. In our sector it is very common that the decisions are made by the people least affected. Fundamentally, decolonization means **decision-making is in the hands of the people directly impacted by aid and development programs**. Several NGO's have embarked on a journey to decolonize and this has led to new methodologies, new power balances and new relationships between board, staff, volunteers and affected people. Giving more power to affected communities.

### *Old methodologies return to the stage*

In the past decades many Dutch based NGO's like Greenpeace, Milieudefensie, Amnesty and PAX changed from volunteer driven organisations to “professional” organisations. In the past years these organisations realised that their relationships with their original basis of supporters and volunteers had diminished. NGO's started to experiment with methodologies like organising and working campaign-driven to re-engage with the general public. In recent years Extinction Rebellion has shone the huge possibilities of volunteer lead organising around campaigns.

### *Guidelines for lawyers in support to peaceful assemblies*

During the 47<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council, June 2021, Clément Voule, UN Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Assembly and Association (FoAA) presented a report on '[Access to justice as an integral element of the protection of rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and association](#)'. With his report, the Special Rapporteur published '[Guidelines for Lawyers in support to peaceful assemblies](#)'. These guidelines provide a set of key principles on the role of lawyers in upholding the rights to freedom of assembly and association as well as a non-exhaustive list of practical recommendations for lawyers, aimed at supporting them in their work facilitating access to justice in the context of peaceful assemblies.

## **1.6 Lessons Learned**

Our evaluation of our Strategic Plan for 2018 – 2021 was based upon ongoing consultations with lawyers at risk; conversations with stakeholders; our analyses of global trends affecting the legal profession and an evaluation of our achievements in this period. This evaluation can be read in the Strategic Plan 2022-2025. 2022 was the year that we gradually came out of the lock down and were finally able to start our regular activities. In 2022 we worked with a donor who offered to support our ambitions for the coming future, this led to a generous donation that allows us to execute a growth strategy, starting in 2023. In 2023 our director had to take a longer leave of absence and the board worked with an acting director on the further professionalisation of the office, fundraising and on the development of this new strategic plan for 2024-2028.

Based on the evaluation Lawyers for Lawyer identified four key take aways that helped to shape our new strategy:

### **Work Needs Based**

Continue to live our Core Value to work Needs Based, on the basis of the ongoing conversations with lawyers at risks. This means that we aim to be flexible and able to adjust our strategies and activities on the basis of the outcomes of these ongoing conversations.

### **Enhance our Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning approach**

Improve our impact by working from an impact focused Theory of Change. Establish a quarterly evaluation and reporting cycle that will enable us to better evaluate our impact and adjust our activities on the basis of these evaluations. This will enhance our ability to make informed choices, put lessons learned into practice, be accountable and transparent about our results, and explain why our work is effective.

### **Position Lawyers for Lawyers as the global expert on our issue**

To increase the impact of our advocacy for (adherence to) laws and regulations that protect lawyers we need to improve our reach and the impact of our activities. Lawyers for Lawyers will invest in better communication to be able to reach more people and will better position itself globally in the role as expert on our topic.

### **Grow our global solidarity networks to keep up with demand**

Our decades of experience shows that independent international solidarity networks of lawyers are a decisive tool in the protection of individual lawyers and in the protections of our joined rights and privileges. To realise our mission we have to create more networks to be able to reach more lawyers.

## 2. Theory of Change

The evaluation of our previous strategic plan, our analyses of global trends and our experiences of the past two years have helped us to write our Theory of Change. A Theory of Change is a methodology that allows idealistic organisations to focus on their dream and to evaluate impact. It enables NGO's to show societal change as a collaborative effort. This methodology fits well with our collaborative way of working. This chapter is based on our Theory of Change and Theory of Action. In our strategic plan we share our Dream, the conditions that we have identified that are required to realise the dream and we show how our programs are related to these conditions.

**Our dream** is that all lawyers are able to execute their professional activities independently and safely. Because the rule of law and human rights can only be protected if lawyers are able to play their vital role. Always and everywhere.

**Lawyers can execute their roles independently and safely when:**

### **The rights and privileges of lawyers are protected**

The adequate protection of human rights requires that every citizen has effective access to justice. Legal assistance can only be provided effectively in a judicial system where lawyers are free to carry out their professional duties independently of the government and political pressure. Governments should respect the United Nations Basic Principles on the Role of Lawyers (Basic Principles), which provide a concise description of international standards relating to key aspects of the right to independent counsel, within the framework of its national legislation and practice. Adherence to the Basic Principles is considered a fundamental precondition to fulfilling the requirement that all persons have effective access to independent legal assistance.

### **Lawyers understand their special role within the administration of justice AND are able to act accordingly**

Quality legal education and training for lawyers are essential so that they may be properly equipped to represent their clients independently, adequately, effectively and in full compliance with their ethical duties - in other words, that they are aware of their vital role in the administration of justice. But even if they are, lawyers cannot act upon this knowledge if they are vulnerable to pressure, harassment or attacks by authorities or third parties. Connections with other lawyers, solidarity among colleagues, public profile and visibility can increase the protection of - and enable lawyers.

### **Independent Bar Associations protect lawyers**

Bar associations have a crucial role to play in a democratic society to enable the free and independent exercise of the legal profession and to ensure access to justice and the protection of human rights, in particular due process and fair trial guarantees. They protect individual members of the legal profession, particularly in situations where they are not able to adequately defend themselves; elaborate and implement requirements and procedures to gain access to the legal profession; develop codes of professional conduct; and handle disciplinary proceedings against lawyers.

### **Society and civilians understand and support the special role that lawyers take in the protection of the rule of law, the administration of justice and human rights**

If society understands the role of lawyers, this will decrease the threats against lawyers, from both the authorities and third parties.

These four conditions are connected and interrelated. All conditions show the importance of a better understanding of the role of lawyers within the administration of justice, the rule of law and the protection of human rights. And the importance of the protection of the independence of lawyers. There is a global increase in practices that undermine, limit, restrict and hinder the practice of law. This is

especially true for lawyers whose activities are focused on the fight against corruption, the defence of human rights or the protection of groups in vulnerable situations. This directly impedes universal right to fair trial and access to justice for all.

We know that lawyers are often individualistic in their approach. But only if they act together they will be able to stand to protect their rights and privileges. Global solidarity can empower lawyers to continue their important work in the most difficult circumstances.

### **Assumptions:**

#### **Rights and privileges of lawyers are protected by the state.**

The rights and privileges of lawyers are well documented in international standards. Additional, binding, standards have been proposed to further enhance the protection of the rights and privileges of lawyers. However, authorities often fail to respect and protect the rights and privileges of lawyers.

ICJ reports regularly on violations of the rights and privileges of lawyers. Publications can be found here: <https://www.icj.org/category/publications/reports/> Lawyers for Lawyers publishes statements and reports on the situation of lawyers in over forty countries. These can be found here: <https://lawyersforlawyers.org/nieuws/>

If these rights would be respected and protected by all states, then lawyers would be able to play their vital role in our justice systems. This would contribute to maintaining the legal system and the rule of law, and ensuring that justice is served. See the report: Protection of lawyers against undue interference in the free and independent exercise of the legal profession -

*Report of the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Diego García-Sayán, 22 April 2022, A/HRC/50/36.*

#### **Independent Bar Associations protect lawyers**

Bar associations play a crucial role in the protection of the rights and privileges of lawyers. Without the protection provided by an independent bar association, lawyers are extremely vulnerable to attack and to restrictions on their independence, especially from State authorities. Even worse, in places where bar associations are controlled by the State, lawyers often become the target of attacks from the very organizations that should be protecting them. It is therefore pivotal that bar associations can fulfill their tasks independently for them to be able to protect their members.

*See thematic report on Bar Associations by the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers, 05 September 2018, A/73/365 - in particular the concluding observations.*

#### **Lawyers understand their special role within the justice system AND are able to act accordingly**

Quality legal education and training for lawyers are essential so that they may be properly equipped to represent their clients independently, adequately, effectively and in full compliance with their ethical duties - in other words, that they are aware of their vital role in the administration of justice. This is not always the case.

But even if they are, lawyers cannot act upon this knowledge if they are vulnerable to pressure, harassment or outright violence from the state or society. Connections with other lawyers, solidarity among colleagues and a public profile can help to empower and enable lawyers.

*See report Defending the Defenders: Attacks on Lawyers- A Problem in Search of Solution, Authors: Gill Boehringer, Stuart Russell, Kristian Boehringer, Julio Moreira, Athens Institute for Education and Research, SOC2015-1763, January 2015. Furthermore, see the recommendations from the report by the Report of the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Monica Pinto, A/71/348\*, 22 August 2016.*

**Society understands and supports the special role that lawyers take in the protection of rule of law, justice and democracy**

If society understands the role of lawyers in the protection of their own rights, this will decrease the threats against lawyers, from both the authorities and third parties. .

*Bewijs: In Nederland komt een overgroot deel van bedreigingen vanuit cliënten, de maatschappij en andere third parties. See the report 'Agressie, bedreiging en intimidatie bij advocaten', I&O Research, Rapportnummer 2022/definitief, augustus 2022, Opdrachtgever Nederlandse orde van advocaten. See furthermore the report: Protection of lawyers against undue interference in the free and independent exercise of the legal profession - Report of the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Diego García-Sayán, 22 April 2022, A/HRC/50/36 - Chapter C: defamation in the media*

### 3. Programs and Activities

The Theory of Chance leads to a Theory of Activities. In this chapter we share an overview of the most important activities within our programs. Lawyers for Lawyers developed a log frame to define outcomes, output and activities. The below text is based on the more extensive logframe.

Lawyers for Lawyers executes three programs:

1. **Empower:** We **empower** lawyers to safeguard the independent functioning of the legal profession in their home countries.
2. **Influence:** We **advocate** for laws, regulations, and practices that provide or reinforce effective protections for the independent functioning and security of lawyers in accordance with internationally recognized laws and standards at global, regional, and national levels. Condition
3. **Defend:** We **defend** lawyers around the world whose professional guarantees, immunities, or privileges are violated and **demand accountability** where such acts occur.

#### 3.1 Empower

**Empower:** We **empower** lawyers to safeguard the independent functioning of the legal profession in their home countries. The activities in this program focus mainly on condition 3 and to a lesser extent on condition 1 and 4.

In the coming five years we will focus on improving and enlarging this program so that we can reach more lawyers. Currently Lawyers for Lawyers supports 200 lawyers in 40 countries. Five years from now Lawyers for Lawyers envisions to support 275 lawyers in 50 countries.

The outcome of this program is that more lawyers are empowered and enabled to stand up for their rights. Output of this program includes: Lawyers are trained to be able to train others; lawyers are part of local, regional or international networks that empower and protect them; and lawyers have acquired crucial knowledge that allows them to better support their clients and themselves against violations of their rights. Knowledge that is vital for lawyers includes: Training on international law and international or regional mechanisms; training on advocacy; training on digital security; and access to networks.

Examples of activities within our empower program:

- Every year Lawyers for Lawyers organises at least two (online) trainings and trains at least 25 lawyers
- Train the trainer
- Lawyers for Lawyers publishes online toolkits that is regularly updated
- Lawyers become part of national and international solidarity networks of lawyers
- Enlarge our network of volunteers to realise our goals
- Improve our communications and develop a communication strategy focused on affected lawyers to reach more lawyers

#### 3.2 Influence

**Influence:** We **advocate** for laws, regulations, and practices that provide or reinforce effective protections for the independent functioning and security of lawyers in accordance with internationally recognized laws and standards at global, regional, and national levels. Condition 1, 2, 3 and 4

The outcome of the Influence program is that the issue of the protection of lawyers is high on the agenda of international policy makers, diplomats and decision makers. To achieve this, Lawyers for Lawyers needs to raise its profile as a centre of expertise on the topic and needs to open offices in key capitals like Geneva.

Examples of activities within our Influence program are:

- Publication of an annual expert report on attacks on lawyers in the world
- Regular publications, statements and recommendation, including within the UPR process
- International fact finding mission
- Fact based advocacy with international fora like the European Parliament and Brussels, with governments and (international) bar associations
- Impactful social media presence to support advocacy

### 3.3 Defend

**Defend:** We **defend** lawyers around the world whose professional guarantees, immunities, or privileges are violated and **demand accountability** where such acts occur. Condition 1, 3 and 4

The outcome of the defend program is that International attention for lawyers results in a reduction acts of harassment. The output focusses on an increase of the number of lawyers that we can support; by raising the public profile of the lawyers (where this is helpful); and in increasing and professionalising our trial monitoring program.

Examples of activities within our Defend program are:

- Publish reports, statements and recommendations about harassment of specific lawyers
- Trial monitoring and submissions of amicus briefs in cases where lawyers or bar associations are prosecuted
- Raise the public profile of lawyers under threat
- Bi-annual Lawyers for Lawyers Award

#### **4. Our plans 2024 - 2028**

In the coming five years Lawyers for Lawyers will work toward realising our dream. All our actions and strategies are aimed to positively affect outcomes that will allow us to contribute to impact and real change. In this part we share our plans for the coming years.

#### **2024 - Get ready to grow**

- Finalize professionalization trajectory
- Focus on SMART goals & Quarterly feedback loops
- Hire Manager Fundraising and Comms

Lawyers for Lawyers aims to grow significantly in the coming five years. 2024 is the year to get ready to roll. In 2024 the team of Lawyers for Lawyers will finalize its current professionalization trajectory. Lawyers for Lawyers has always been a very informal and flat organization. This has allowed the organization to be able to jump on opportunities, to respond quickly and to be flexible. These are qualities that the organization cherishes. At the same time, roles and responsibilities between staff members and between staff and board have not been well defined. An opportunity driven culture can also be a culture that lacks planning and that strives on limitless energy of its colleagues. Lawyers for Lawyers is well aware of its strengths and weaknesses and in 2024 the main goal is to finalize the current professionalization trajectory.

#### **Activities within our core programs in 2024**

Reach 200 affected lawyers in 40 countries, supported by 75 volunteers.

#### **Empower**

- 2 training, including 1 train the trainer, online or live
- Revise existing toolkit
- Create new materials for online toolkits
- Engage lawyers in (inter)national solidarity networks
- Terminate the online database, as this tool is not being used

#### **Influence**

- Advocacy on the recommendations in the Environmental Lawyers Report jan-may 2024
- Advocacy on the Lawyers-Client confidentiality Report
- 6 written UPR's with advocacy follow up
- 4 written Treaty Bodies statements with advocacy follow up
- Fact based advocacy with international fora, with governments and (international) bar associations

#### **Defend**

- Further professionalization of the Trial Monitoring program in Turkey. Earmarked funding has been realized in 2023 as well as earmarked reserves from 2023 and before.
- Access to Justice Campaign will be launched in May 2024
- Lawyers for Lawyers speakers tour
- 50 statements about specific issues and lawyers

#### **Main events on our calendar in 2024**

Jan: Day of the Endangered Lawyers

May: Speakers tour and event with Amsterdam Bar Association

June: International Fair Trial Day

June: Side event lawyer-client confidentiality in Geneva

September: Dam to Dam run and bike event

September: Event on Eurasia at the OSCE  
October: Event on Turkey Indictments with PEN Norway  
November: Young Bar Conference  
November: Partner Event  
December: International Human Rights Day  
December: Volunteer X-mass breakfast

## Board

The Board will finalize its steps in professionalizing HR policies and practices. In 2024 Irma van den Berg will step down as chair and will be succeeded by Jeroen Brouwer. Currently the board has two vacancies that will be filled in 2024. At the annual June meeting the board will discuss the end or renewal of the terms of two board members.

### Board Agenda in 2024

- Four meetings per year
- Annual meeting June
- Adopt directiestatuut: documents to describe the role of the director and the role of the board
- Fill 2 vacancies
- HR - salarishuis (pay structure)

## HR

In the strategic plan Lawyers for Lawyers shared its intention to improve as an employer and made ***Inclusive and welcoming work environment*** one of the guiding principles. To realise this objective some important steps will be made in 2024.

1. Create clarity in roles - Employees will know what their tasks and responsibilities are and will feel empowered and in charge to execute those roles.

To achieve this Lawyers for Lawyers will work with a transparent overview of roles and responsibilities. These will be used in annual performance reviews. Staff members will submit their personal annual plans to the director for approval. Goals will be SMART and planned per quarter. Every quarter the staff will jointly evaluate progress. Lawyers for Lawyers provides a budget for learning and development of staff members

2. Lawyers for Lawyers will grow in FTE. With a bit more staff members it will be possible for the staff member to focus on their core tasks and realize more goals. Lawyers for Lawyers will hire a Manager Communications and Fundraising and will engage a communication consultant to support the online presence of Lawyers for Lawyers

In 2024 the staff of the office will consists of:

- Director
- Manager Communication and Fundraising
- 2 program officers
- 1 program assistant
- 1 rotating intern
- 1 volunteer
- 1 consultant on comms

## Office

- Lawyers for Lawyers will relocate to Utrecht
- Implementation of Teams and Office as online working environment

### **MEL - Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning**

In 2024 Lawyers for Lawyers will implement working with a Theory of Change, working with SMART goals and a quarterly evaluation cycle.

Lawyers for Lawyers has always worked with very limited staff resulting in limited time for evaluation, adjustment of plans and learning and collegial exchange. In line with the guiding principles, Lawyers for Lawyers will implement a cycle of evaluation, learning and collegial exchange.

Staff members write their own annual plan with SMART goals. The annual goals are then planned in quarters and months. The director composes the annual plan for Lawyers for Lawyers as a whole. Every staff member understands what her responsibilities are, for the coming quarter.

Every quarter starts with a **kick off meeting**. In this meeting the staff members discuss their planning for the coming quarter. The director checks if responsibilities are clear and if SMART goals are feasible. The director checks the activities with the budget.

Before the last week of the quarter, all staff members write a short report about the past quarter. This report looks at the SMART goals and the budget. The reports focus on how results relate to envisioned impact. The reports are discussed in a **quarterly evaluation meeting**. All successes are celebrated.

Based on the evaluation, staff members adjust their annual plan and prepare for the kick off meeting for the new quarter. The director writes the quarterly report for the board. At the end of the year the staff meet for a day-long meeting to evaluate impact in the past year and to start the process for creating a new annual plan.

### **Communication and Fundraising**

In 2024 Lawyers for Lawyers will hire a Manager Communications and Fundraising. The new manager raises additional funding and will boost social media presence which will increase the impact of Lawyers for Lawyers. The director will be much less involved in communication, fundraising and relationships with the Dutch stakeholder, which allows her to focus on strategy and creating impact.

In 2024 the manager will develop a communication strategy for the coming years. In 2024 Lawyers for Lawyers will launch a new logo and a new website. This year the focus will be on a sub-strategy focused on the Dutch legal community.

The Manager will develop a fundraising strategy inline with the multi-year budget.

Budget target is 370.000 euro. Budget to raise before the first of November of 2024.

### **Volunteers**

In 2022-2023 Lawyers for Lawyers evaluated the role of volunteers in realizing its objectives. Several pilots were tested to see how to improve the collaboration with lawyer-volunteers. These pilots included: Facilitating a group of lawyers from one firm to work jointly on one project; having two lawyers from one firm jointly work on one country (buddy); create backup twinning where lawyers are responsible for their country and are back-up for one other country; workshops and support for chairs. In 2023 two staff members started an *organizing* course. In 2024 Lawyers for Lawyers will continue to test different methodologies and will decide on a new course from 2025.

## **2025 - Get ready to internationalize**

- Finalize plan to open a second 'office'
- Improve impact through advocacy in Brussels and The Hague
- 2 new staff members

Lawyers for Lawyers aims to open a second office in Geneva in 2026. This year the organization is preparing itself for this step. Some of the key related activities are a feasibility study, identifying partners including several Geneva based law firms and fundraising. Working with a ToC and a logframe for this specific project to make sure the focus stays on the WHY. It could be that these activities will take longer than one year, in which case the director will need to adjust the multi-year planning. Quality over hurry.

### **Activities within our core programs in 2025**

In 2024, with the arrival of a Manager Fundraising and Communication, the Director of Lawyers for Lawyers was able to focus more time on strategy and advocacy. The Theory of Change shows the importance of enlarging the advocacy activities of Lawyers for Lawyers within our Influence program. In past years the focus was very much on output of statements and reports, there was limited time and no staff to develop and execute long term advocacy strategies. This year Lawyers for Lawyers will hire an Advocacy Officer with a focus on Geneva, Brussels and The Hague. A second hire is for an officer to support the Manager Fundraising and Communications. This is needed to allow for the continued growth of the budget to finance the next steps in 2025 and 2026.

Reach 215 affected lawyers in 43 countries, supported by 80 volunteers.

### **Empower**

- 2 training, including 1 train the trainer, online or live
- Annual update of existing toolkits
- Engage lawyers in (inter)national solidarity networks
- Translating and disseminating recommendations from international mechanisms in the countries concerned - pilot in 2025 (local and regional advocacy by affected lawyers)

### **Influence**

- New advocacy strategies for The Hague, Brussels and Geneva are developed
- Advocacy on report produced in 2025
- Hire of an Advocacy Officer
- 8 written UPR's with advocacy follow up
- 6 written Treaty Bodies statements with advocacy follow up
- Publication of the first annual expert report on attacks on lawyers in the world
- Fact based advocacy at international fora like the European Parliament and Brussels, governments and (international) bar associations
- In collaboration with partners, start a European Rule of Law Amicus Clinic, monitoring emerging cases before the European Court of Human Rights, and drafting and submitting amicus interventions. Pilot In 2025

### **Defend**

- Feasibility study into trial monitoring in new countries
- Continue trial monitoring program in Turkey
- Second year Access to Justice Campaign
- Research into new campaign
- 55 statements about specific issues and lawyers
- International fact finding mission 2025
- Lawyers for Lawyers bi-annual Award

## **Main events on our calendar in 2025**

Jan: Day of the Endangered Lawyers  
May: Lawyers for Lawyers Award in collaboration with Amsterdam Bar Association  
June: International Fair Trial Day  
June: Side event in Geneva  
September: Dam to Dam run and bike event  
November: Young Bar Conference  
November: Partner Event  
December: International Human Rights Day  
December: Volunteers X-mass breakfast

## **Board**

The board will prepare for the opening of a second branch of Lawyers for Lawyers in 2025. A working group will advise the board on governance. The board will decide if this is the time to internationalise the board.

### Board Agenda in 2025

- Four meetings per year
- Annual meeting June
- Working group on governance and internationalisation

## **HR**

In the strategic plan Lawyers for Lawyers shared its intention to improve as an employer and made ***Inclusive and welcoming work environment*** one of the guiding principles. In 2025 the Lawyers for Lawyers will evaluate the steps taken in 2022-2024 on professionalization of HR policies. Lawyers for Lawyers will start with an bi-annual review of health and happiness of staff members.

In 2024 Lawyers for Lawyers started to work with clear and transparent roles and responsibilities. In 2025 the roles and responsibilities will be evaluated. Does theory and practice still match? Have roles and responsibilities shifted? This will become an annual exercise.

Staff members will submit their personal annual plans to the director for approval. Goals will be SMART and planned per quarter. There will be a focus on how action can lead to realizing the dream. Every quarter the staff will jointly evaluate progress. Lawyers for Lawyers provides a budget for learning and development of staff members

Lawyers for Lawyers will grow in FTE. In 2025 Lawyers for Lawyers will hire an Advocacy officer or manager. This person will be responsible for advocacy in The Hague and Brussels. This will allow an increase in impact. Lawyers for Lawyers will hire a fundraising and communications officer to support the Manager and to allow for continued increase in visibility and income.

In 2025 the staff of the office will consists of:

- Director
- Manager
- Advocacy person Brussels / The Hague /Geneva
- 2 program officers
- 1 Project assistant
- 1 fundraising/comms officer
- 1 rotating intern
- 1 volunteer

**Office**

- Feasibility study for office Geneva
- Identify donors and partners (law firms) who can provide funding for the new office
- Engage 3 law firms as partners, one can host work space
- Start search for a manager in Geneva

**Quarterly MEL**

The MEL cycle was first implemented in 2024. In 2025 Lawyers for Lawyers will evaluate the cycle and will implement desired adjustments.

**Communication and Fundraising**

In 2025 Lawyers for Lawyers will hire a Communications and Fundraising Officer to support the Manager. Together the officer and the manager will continue to raise additional funding and will boost social media presence which will increase the impact of Lawyers for Lawyers.

In 2025 Lawyers for Lawyers will develop communications strategies for three different target groups, One strategy is focused on reaching affected lawyers, the other strategy will be development with the Advocacy officer and will focus on how to reach policy makers, diplomats, NGO's and other possible advocacy targets. The third strategy is on how to engage with donors.

In 2025 Lawyers for Lawyers will focus on more fundraising in Geneva.

Budget target is 480.000 euro. Budget to raise before the first of September of 2025.

**Volunteers**

In 2023 and 2024 Lawyers for Lawyers experimented with different ways to collaborate with our lawyer-volunteers. In 2025 Lawyers for Lawyers will evaluate past experiences and release a new volunteer policy for the coming years.

## **2026: L4L goes international**

- Open first international office in Geneva
- Grow in Netherlands to be able to be truly global in reach
- Impactful social media presence to support advocacy - comms strategy focused on advocacy targets

This year Lawyers for Lawyers will open its office in Geneva to enable the network to realise more impact by more successful advocacy. The Advocacy officers will focus on the social media strategy to create a bigger advocacy impact.

### **Activities within our core programs in 2026**

Many activities of Lawyers for Lawyers are focused around the UN Human Rights Council and the diplomatic corps in Geneva. A local hub will allow the organisation to build relationships that will enable the network to be more successful in its advocacy. The creation of a new circle of volunteers in Geneva will allow the support of more affected lawyers, especially in the Francophone world. The office in Geneva will also allow for international fundraising. The Dutch based Advocacy Officer will now focus on Brussels and The Hague and on a social media strategy to support the Advocacy at large. Lawyers for Lawyers will hire a Geneva Manager.

In 2025 Lawyers for Lawyers launched a pilot to enable lawyers to be advocates in their own country and circle of influence. This is a project where the affected lawyers are in the lead. In 2026 Lawyers for Lawyers and the stakeholders will evaluate this project and see if it can be tested in other countries.

Reach 225 affected lawyers in 45 countries, supported by 90 volunteers.

### **Empower**

- 2 training, including 1 train the trainer, online or live
- Annual update of existing toolkits
- Engage lawyers in (inter)national solidarity networks
- Translating and disseminating recommendations from international mechanisms in the countries concerned in two countries (local and regional advocacy by affected lawyers)

### **Influence**

- New advocacy strategy for Geneva is developed
- Adjustment of the strategies for The Hague and Brussels
- Advocacy on report produced in 2025 and 2026
- 10 written UPR's with advocacy follow up
- 6 or more written Treaty Bodies statements with advocacy follow up
- Publication second annual expert report on attacks on lawyers in the world
- Fact based advocacy at international fora continues. Geneva intensifies
- Evaluation of the European Rule of Law Amicus Clinic, monitoring emerging cases before the European Court of Human Rights, and drafting and submitting amicus interventions.

### **Defend**

- Pilot trial monitoring in second country
- Continue trial monitoring program in Turkey
- Start new campaign
- 60 statements about specific issues and lawyers
- Lawyers for Lawyers Speakers Tour in Amsterdam and Geneva

### **Main events on our calendar in 2026**

Jan: Day of the Endangered Lawyers

Jan: Launch of Geneva Partner program for Law Firms  
May: Speaker Tour in collaboration with Amsterdam Bar Association and Geneva Partner  
June: International Fair Trial Day  
June: Side event in Geneva  
September: Dam to Dam run and bike event  
September: Opening of Geneva office  
November: Young Bar Conference  
November: Partner Event  
December: International Human Rights Day  
December: Volunteers X-mass breakfast

## **Board**

.Board Agenda in 2026

- Four meetings per year
- Annual meeting June
- Mid term evaluation of five year strategy

## **HR**

Lawyers for Lawyers will grow in FTE. In 2026 Lawyers for Lawyers will hire a Geneva Manager. This person will be responsible for all Geneva based activities. This will allow an increase in impact as well as in fundraising. The onboarding of this Manager will demand time and energy of the director. It is challenging to have colleagues in different countries. Dutch based staff will travel regularly to Geneva to support the Geneva Manager. The Geneva Manager will spend time in the Lawyers for Lawyers office to get to know the organization and its stakeholders.

Staff members will submit their personal annual plans to the director for approval. Goals will be SMART and planned per quarter. Every quarter the staff will jointly evaluate progress. Lawyers for Lawyers provides a budget for learning and development of staff members

In 2025 the staff of the offices will consists of:

Utrecht

- Director
- Manager
- Advocacy person Brussels / The Hague
- 2 program officers
- 1 fundraising/comms officer
- 1 rotating intern
- 1 volunteer

Geneva

- Geneva Manager

## **Office (Geneva)**

- Hire a Geneva Manager

## **MEL**

The MEL cycle was first implemented in 2024 and evaluated in 2025. In 2026 Lawyers for Lawyers will run the adjusted MEL Quarterly methodology.

Mid 2026 Lawyers for Lawyers will start a mid evaluation of the five year strategy

## **Communication and Fundraising**

In 2026 Lawyers for Lawyers will grow its international fundraising and will focus on larger institutional donors and endowment funds in the world. In 2026 the Geneva office should be 100% covered by local funding.

In 2026 Lawyers for Lawyers will look into the need for a communication strategy for the Geneva based stakeholders and funders.

The Fundraising and Communication Manager will start conversations with our anonymous donor about a possible new gift.

Budget target is 600.000 euro. Budget to raise before the first of June of 2027.

### **Volunteers**

In 2026 Lawyers for Lawyers will start the onboarding of Geneva based volunteers. Lawyers for Lawyers will evaluate the volunteer strategy implemented in 2025

## **2027: Time to reflect and to adjust**

- Do we take enough time to reflect and adjust?
- Are we still working impact led?
- Have we been able to adjust on the basis of our mid-term evaluation?
- What is our next step?

This year Lawyers for Lawyers will reflect on the launch of the Geneva office. What are the lessons learned and where are we in the process of realizing a successful Geneva presence? What are the unexpected side effects? And how much time is needed for the launch of a third office?

The organization will take stock and evaluate with the staff and stakeholders what pace is suitable for the remaining two years of the five year plan. And will implement the outcomes of the midterm evaluation.

In 2027 Lawyers for Lawyers will engage with one of our larger donors about the end of a five year gift. The Geneva Manager will hire a part time associate.

### **Activities within our core programs in 2027**

Lawyers for Lawyers will monitor the impact of the growth in advocacy impact. How does this relate to our Influence activities? The organization will probably adjust some of the below listed activities based on the successes and failures of the past two years. The midterm evaluation will probably also impact the below listed activities.

Lawyers for Lawyers has now adjusted, tested and possibly multiplied the trial monitoring program, the annual report on the situation of lawyers and the possibilities for local and regional advocacy led by local lawyers. The outcomes of the experiences will influence the list of activities.

Reach 225 affected lawyers in 45 countries, supported by 90 volunteers.

### **Empower**

- 3 trainings, including 1 train the trainer, online or live
- Annual update of existing toolkits
- Engage lawyers in (inter)national solidarity networks
- Translating and disseminating recommendations from international mechanisms in the countries concerned in multiple countries (local and regional advocacy by affected lawyers)

### **Influence**

- Develop strategy and training for affected lawyers with these lawyers for local advocacy
- Advocacy on report produced in 2026 and 2027
- 10 written UPR's with advocacy follow up
- 6 or more written Treaty Bodies statements with advocacy follow up
- Publication third annual expert report on attacks on lawyers in the world
- Advocacy strategies for The Hage, Brussels and Geneva are evaluated
- Fact based advocacy in The Hague, Brussels and Geneva continues
- European Rule of Law Amicus Clinic, monitoring emerging cases before the European Court of Human Rights, and drafting and submitting amicus interventions.

### **Defend**

- Evaluation of trial monitoring in second country
- Continue trial monitoring program in Turkey
- Second year campaign
- 65 statements about specific issues and lawyers
- Lawyers for Lawyers Award in Amsterdam and Geneva
- International fact finding mission

### **Main events on our calendar in 2027**

Jan: Day of the Endangered Lawyers

May: Speaker Tour in collaboration with Amsterdam Bar Association and Geneva Partner

June: International Fair Trial Day

June: Side event in Geneva

September: Dam to Dam run and bike event, Amsterdam

September: Geneva event

November: Young Bar Conference, Netherlands

November: Partner Event in Geneva and The Netherlands

December: International Human Rights Day

December: Volunteers X-mass breakfast in Geneva and in The Netherlands

### **Board**

At the annual June meeting the board will discuss the end or renewal of the terms of two board members.

#### Board Agenda in 2027

- Four meetings per year
- Annual meeting June
- Evaluation of launch Geneva Office
- Workgroup on launch third office

### **HR**

Lawyers for Lawyers will grow in FTE. In 2027 Lawyers for Lawyers will hire a Program Officer to support the Geneva office.

Staff members will submit their personal annual plans to the director for approval. Goals will be SMART and planned per quarter. The focus will be on how actions relate to our shared dream. Every quarter the staff will jointly evaluate progress. Lawyers for Lawyers provides a budget for learning and development of staff members

In 2027 the staff of the offices will consists of:

#### Utrecht

- Director
- Manager
- Advocacy person Brussels / The Hague /Geneva
- 2 program officers
- 1 fundraising/comms officer
- 1 rotating intern
- 1 volunteer

#### Geneva

- Geneva Manager
- Program Officer, part time

#### **Office (Geneva)**

- Hire a Program Officer

### **MEL**

The MEL cycle was first implemented in 2024 and evaluated in 2025. In 2026 and 2027 Lawyers for Lawyers will run the adjusted MEL Quarterly methodology.

In 2027 Lawyers for Lawyers will implement the outcomes of the midterm evaluation.

Lawyers for Lawyers will evaluate the launch of Geneva office

### **Communication and Fundraising**

Lawyers for Lawyers now has different communication strategies for different target groups. These include: Advocacy targets, the network of lawyers, lawyers at risk, donors, other stakeholders.

Lawyers for Lawyers will continue to grow its income base.

The Fundraising and Communication Manager will start conversations with our anonymous donor about a possible new gift.

This is the last year of the large five year gift. Lawyers for Lawyers will need to renew this gift, or find new donors to replace the gift.

Budget target is 695.000 euro. Budget to raise before the first of September of 2027. This target includes 20.000 for 2028 when the multiannual 75K gift ends.

### **Volunteers**

In 2027 Lawyers for Lawyers and the Geneva based volunteer will evaluate the first year and adjust accordingly.

## 2028 Getting Ready for the next step

- Finalize plan to open a third office
- Feasibility studies, choose location, raise funding. focus on WHY

In 2028 Lawyers for Lawyers enters the last year of this five year period. In this year Lawyers for Lawyers will decide if the organization sees the need to open a third office in 2029. If so, the organization will focus on getting ready for this next step. Some of the key related activities are a feasibility study, identifying local partners including law firms and fundraising. Working with a ToC and a logframe for this specific project to make sure the focus stays on the WHY.

### Activities within our core programs in 2028

Lawyers for Lawyers will continue its activities, focused on impact. In this year the organization will also decide what the main purpose should be for opening a new office. This could be fundraising; local, regional or international advocacy; empowering affected lawyers; or any other factor that will enlarge the impact of the activities. It is also possible that the organizations decide it will not open a third office.

Reach 250 affected lawyers in 50 countries, supported by 100 volunteers.

### Empower

- 3 trainings, including 1 train the trainer, online or live
- Annual update of existing toolkits
- Engage lawyers in (inter)national solidarity networks
- Translating and disseminating recommendations from international mechanisms in the countries concerned in multiple countries (local and regional advocacy by affected lawyers)

### Influence

- Implement new strategy and training for lawyers for local advocacy
- Advocacy on report produced in 2027 and 2028
- 10 written UPR's with advocacy follow up
- 6 or more written Treaty Bodies statements with advocacy follow up
- Publication fourth annual expert report on attacks on lawyers in the world
- Fact based advocacy in The Hague, Brussels and Geneva continues
- European Rule of Law Amicus Clinic, monitoring emerging cases before the European Court of Human Rights, and drafting and submitting amicus interventions

### Defend

- Possible growth of the monitoring program
- Continue trial monitoring program in Turkey and second country
- Develop and start new campaign
- 70 statements about specific issues and lawyers
- Speakers Tour Award in Amsterdam and Geneva

### Main events on our calendar in 2028

Jan: Day of the Endangered Lawyers

May: Speaker Tour in collaboration with Amsterdam Bar Association and Geneva Partner

June: International Fair Trial Day

September: Dam to Dam run and bike event, Amsterdam

September: Geneva event

November: Partner Event in Geneva and The Netherlands

December: International Human Rights Day

December: Volunteers X-mass breakfast in Geneva and in The Netherlands

## **Board**

### Board Agenda in 2028

- Four meetings per year
- Annual meeting June, possible renewal of terms
- Workgroup on launch third office

## **HR**

Lawyers for Lawyers may grow in FTE depending on the needs.

Staff members will submit their personal annual plans to the director for approval. Goals will be SMART, focused on impact and planned per quarter. Every quarter the staff will jointly evaluate progress. Lawyers for Lawyers provides a budget for learning and development of staff members

In 2028 the staff of the offices will consists of:

### Utrecht

- Director
- Manager
- Advocacy person Brussels / The Hague /Geneva
- 2 program officers
- 1 fundraising/comms officer
- 1 rotating intern
- 1 volunteer

### Geneva

- Geneva Manager
- Program Officer, part time

## **Office**

- Get ready for opening a third office
- Identify the right location
- Feasibility study for third office
- Identify donors and partners (law firms) who can provide funding for the new office
- Engage 3 law firms as partners, one can host work space
- Start search for a Manager for the new office

## **MEL**

The MEL cycle was first implemented in 2024 and evaluated in 2025. In the following years Lawyers for Lawyers will run the adjusted MEL Quarterly methodology.

In 2028 Lawyers for Lawyers will start the evaluation of this five year plan to be able to start the writing of the next five year plan.

## **Communication and Fundraising**

Lawyers for Lawyers will continue to improve and professionalize its communication and fundraising. This year the manager will evaluate the current communication strategies and start with the evaluation of the five year fundraising strategy. The manager will support the director in the creation of a new five year strategy.

Budget target is 750.000 euro. Budget to raise before the first of February of 2028.

## **Volunteers**

Volunteers, as well as many other stakeholders will join the evaluation process for this five year strategy

## **5 Organisational development**

### **5.1 Office**

#### ***Staff***

In the years 2020 - 2023 Lawyers for Lawyers has professionalised its HR policies and practices. Lawyers for Lawyers strives for an inclusive and welcoming working environment which fosters personal and professional development and empowers people to meaningfully contribute to our mission. We have developed policies and practices to enhance the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) across the organisation. As part of these efforts, we have developed new policies and guidelines outlining the core ethical values of our organisation applicable to everyone involved. This professionalisation was possible due to increased income which enabled the board to hire more staff to execute the ambitions.

We have increased the number of FTEs from 0,7 in 2018 to 2,4 in 2023. Our ambition is to grow to 8 fte by 2028. This growth is needed to allow us to better fulfil our strategic goals as set in this strategic plan.

#### ***Interns***

Since 2019, we have run an internship program. Lawyers for Lawyer believes that the close collaboration with universities and students is beneficial for the organisation and contributes to the education of the new generation of legal professionals. Lawyers for Lawyers hopes to inspire students to consider future employment in the NGO sector. In 2024 the internship program will be adjusted on the basis of our experiences. Instead of hiring many students for very limited hours, we will start a pilot in 2024 with less interns who work more hours. Lawyers for Lawyers believes that this will allow for a better learning experience for the interns.

#### ***Volunteers***

Volunteers are essential to fulfil our mission. The basis of Lawyers for Lawyers is the solidarity between lawyers. We have always been a volunteer-organisation. Our volunteers are lawyers (with a few exceptions). In the last years, we have been able to attract and retain highly motivated and qualified lawyer-volunteers to help us manage the increased workload. We currently have over 70 volunteers actively contributing to our mission, compared to 50 during 2014-2017. In the coming five years we will grow our number of volunteers to 100.

### **5.2 Board**

The board of Lawyers for Lawyers consist of committed volunteers. The statues were updated in 2022. Diversity and inclusion continues to be a priority for the board. The 2023 board composition represents a better mix of expertise, experience, geographical diversity, and networks needed to serve our mission successfully. One board member is now specifically tasked with human resources in line with the objectives in our Strategic Plan 2018-2021. In 2023 the board worked on succession planning and to continue to improve the board composition. Two new board members will start in 2024 to succeed board members who reached the end of their legal terms.

The Board of Directors of Lawyers for Lawyers currently consists of six members:

Irma van den Berg	President, until april 2024
Maaïke de Jong	Secretary
Jan de Koning	Treasurer
Vacancy	Member

Jeroen Brouwer            Member, vice president

Sander Oudenhoven    Member

### **5.3      Funding and Financial Resources**

In the past years the diversification of income was a key priority for Lawyer for Lawyers. In 2019, a professional fundraiser developed a fundraising plan for Lawyers for Lawyers, with the aim of expanding and diversifying our funding sources and in-kind support to safeguard our financial sustainability, be able to do long-term planning, and reach our full potential. This plan was implemented successfully.

Lawyers for Lawyers seeks to attract different types of donors including individual donors, mostly lawyers; law firms; related businesses and organisations including bar associations; institutional donors; endowment funds; government and EU funding.

In the past years Lawyers for Lawyers launched a partner network for Law Firms. This network now includes 15 partners who together donate over 100.000 euro per year. Since 2023 Lawyers for Lawyer is part of a consortium of NGO's that seeks to apply for government and EU funding. In 2024 a Fundraising and Communication Manager will join the Lawyers for Lawyers team. This will be the first time that Lawyers for Lawyers has a dedicated staff member on fundraising.

At the end of 2022 Lawyers for Lawyers received a multi-year donation that allows the organisation to work on a sustainable growth plan for the coming five years.

Bij 2028 we aim to have raised our budget to 700.000 euro. We will realise this goal by first growing our donor base in the Netherlands followed by internationalising our fundraising, in line with our international ambitions.

Lawyers for Lawyers is tax-exempted under Dutch law. It qualifies as a Public Benefit Organisation (ANBI status). Lawyers for Lawyers has also been recognized as a charity by the Central Bureau on Fundraising (CBF), i.e., "*CBF-erkend goed doel*". The reserves of Lawyer for Lawyers are at a level that is justified by the Herkströter Committee (Commission on Capital Standards for Charities), i.e., a continuity reserve of a maximum of one and a half times the annual turnover.

### **5.4      Communication**

Lawyers for Lawyers always had a very limited communications budget and great ambitions when it came to fundraising, awareness raising and reaching out to lawyers around the world.

In the past years Lawyers for Lawyers enhanced its external and internal communication and engagement strategy, including developing its social media. Through a cooperation with '*Nieuwe Gevers*', Lawyers for Lawyers has expanded the use of visual communications, such as design icons and infographics. Lawyers for Lawyers invested in photo stock material and increased the use of video to ask attention for lawyers at risk. This has resulted in improved brand recognition, an increased # of visitors to our website and followers on social media, and enhanced accessibility and impact of our messages, tools, and resources.

The current website dates from 2018 and will need to be updated in 2024. This will also be the moment for a new look and design.

### **5.5 Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning**

In small organisations evaluation and learning often follows informal structures. Lawyers for Lawyers has always strived to formalise evaluation and learning and to engage its stakeholders. In the coming five years Lawyers for Lawyers envisions to take a new step in formalising and monitoring, evaluation

and learning methodologies. For a small organisation with limited staff and limited budget it is necessary to strike a balance between what is desired, what is needed and what is possible. For this five year cycle we aim to invest at minimum 8 working days per 1 fte per year in dedicated time for monitoring evaluation and learning.

In 2024 Lawyers for Lawyers starts with an adjusted planning and evaluation methodology. For this strategic plan the methodology of Theory of Change was used. On the basis of the Theory of Change the Theory of Actions and a log frame was developed including actions and smart goals. In 2024 the staff members in the office will work with a detailed annual plan. This plan includes clear goals per quarter. At the start and end of each quarter the office staff will organise Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning days. The outcomes of these meetings will be incorporated into a quarterly report to the board. Until 2023 the board only received quarterly financial reports and annual reports. From 2024 the quarterly reports will include a financial report and an update on how the organisation is doing on realising its mission.

The quarterly reports allow the director to advice on adjustments of the annual of multi year strategic goals. The board can make decisions on the basis of the quarterly reports and the advice of the director.