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REPORT BY THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION (IPDC) ON ITS ACTIVITIES (2002-2007)

OUTLINE

Source: Article 11 of the Statutes of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC).

Background: The Intergovernmental Council of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) submits this report to the General Conference of UNESCO in accordance with 21 C/Resolution 4/21 and in pursuance of Article 11 of its Statutes adopted at the 21st session, which stipulates that the Council shall submit reports on its activities to the General Conference of UNESCO at each of its ordinary sessions.

Purpose: The present report covers IPDC's activities during the current Medium-Term Strategy period (2002-2007). It provides an overview of recent IPDC projects, of the reforms of IPDC working methods and decision-making processes, as well as of its financial situation.

Decision required: No decision is required on this document.

INTRODUCTION

1. The objective of the International Programme for the Development of Communication (IPDC) is to contribute to sustainable development, democracy and good governance by fostering universal access to and distribution of information and knowledge through strengthening the capacities of the developing countries and countries in transition in the field of electronic media and print press.

2. Developing a responsive media system is an essential part of building democratic societies. IPDC provides sustained support for media development in the developing countries each year by financing appropriate projects from local media organizations aimed at expanding opportunities for free and pluralistic media.

3. During the current Medium-Term Strategy period (2002-2007), out of 499 project proposals submitted, the IPDC Bureau decided to support 269 media development projects in more than 90 countries to the tune of US \$6.6 million. The funds contributed to the IPDC are utilized solely to finance the project proposals examined and approved by the Bureau of the IPDC Intergovernmental Council.

Distribution of IPDC financial support by region (2002-2007)

Regions	Number of projects approved and financed	Total funds (in US\$)	Percentage of funds by region
Africa	89	2,422,800	36.7
Asia and the Pacific	95	2,127,700	32.2
Latin America and the Caribbean	63	1,426,300	21.6
Arab States	19	527,200	8.0
Europe	2	45,000	0.7
Interregional	1	50,000	0.8
GRAND TOTAL	269	6,599,000	100

REFORMS OF THE IPDC WORKING METHODS

4. During the Medium-Term Strategy period (2002-2007), the Intergovernmental Council launched and completed wide-ranging reforms of the working methods and decision-making processes of the IPDC, designed to ensure greater efficiency and transparency of the Programme, and to encourage further financial assistance from traditional and potential donors.

5. The outcomes of these reforms are as follows:

- Projects are now considered only when they fall under one or more of the four priorities set by the Intergovernmental Council, namely: (i) promotion of freedom of expression and media pluralism; (ii) development of community media; (iii) training of media professionals; and (iv) promoting international partnership.
- The projects are prepared by the beneficiary media organizations guided by UNESCO Communication and Information Advisers (ACIs) based in UNESCO field offices. All project proposals are submitted exclusively through CI professionals in UNESCO field offices and Headquarters in order to ensure the quality of the projects and their relevance to the IPDC priorities.

- The IPDC Bureau, composed of eight members, examines and approves projects, and decides on the respective financial allocations to them, on the basis of the amount of voluntary contributions available on the IPDC Special Account. When approving funds for projects, the Bureau takes into account the media situation in the country concerned and the progress made through previous support. Donors are invited to attend the Bureau's project selection meeting.
- Project implementation reports are submitted for consideration to the IPDC Bureau and Council. On the basis of these reports, the IPDC Bureau makes a selection of completed projects to be evaluated by external evaluators.
- All the project proposals, IPDC Bureau decisions, and project implementation and evaluation reports are now available on the IPDC website. Financial reporting on project implementation is prepared by UNESCO's financial services and can also be viewed on the IPDC website. A project database which provides comprehensive information on each project is accessible online.
(www.unesco.org/webworld/ipdc)

EVALUATION OF THE IPDC AS A PROGRAMME

6. During the current Medium-Term Strategy period, the IPDC as a programme was subjected to two external evaluations. The first one was conducted in 2002 at the initiative of the Government of Norway to examine ways in which the Programme and its efficiency could be improved. The University of Oslo, which conducted the evaluation, made a number of recommendations to change the project submission and examination procedures, as well as to improve the efficiency of the Programme. In 2006, at the invitation of the IPDC Bureau, the same team of external evaluators conducted a follow-up evaluation to determine the extent to which the recommendations had been implemented and assess their impact. The overall conclusion of the 2006 evaluation was as follows:

“Significant and impressive changes have taken place within the IPDC since the 2002 evaluation. All the recommendations that were proposed have been implemented. It is our impression that the IPDC has taken the 2002 recommendations very seriously and has put a remarkable effort in implementing the reforms of the working methods. Notable changes have been carried out in a relatively short period of time.”

7. The 2006 evaluation report highlighted the significance of the IPDC in the following manner:
- IPDC can be described as a catalyst with the possibility to produce significant change using relatively small amounts of money.
 - The Programme does not stand alone, but provides continuity and sustains processes of development as well as offering moral support by being part of UNESCO. This is particularly important in situations where authorities clamp down on independent media.
 - IPDC emphasizes the need for free and pluralistic media that are as independent as possible from both government and private interests.
 - IPDC is an important tool for increasing the local media's investigative capacity, which is a central aspect of the development of good governance and transparency.
 - IPDC reaches countries that are not necessarily in the limelight, and hence often forgotten by major strategic development projects. In many ways, it serves as an instrument for channelling needs that otherwise would not have come to the fore.
 - IPDC represents a good and important alternative to bilateral support to free media.

- The Programme has the potential of being central as far as empowerment, democratization and human rights are concerned.
- Many of the IPDC community projects are innovative and contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by focusing on providing communication arenas for local communities, and contributing to the empowerment of poor people by offering them information on their situation and giving them a voice.

8. The 2006 evaluation concluded that:

“IPDC offers a quite unique combination of emphasizing both the role of media for democratic practices and a rights-oriented development strategy, combined with an understanding of the need for a communication for development approach.”

“The IPDC operates in a simple and efficient manner, compared to many other funding mechanisms. The IPDC represents an easy method for initiating communication projects compared to other organizations that appear unnecessarily bureaucratic in their demand for expertise and resources.” “Its good reputation in the field is unquestionable.”

IPDC’S ROLE AS A FORUM FOR DISCUSSION AND DEBATE

Thematic debates

9. The IPDC Intergovernmental Council plays an important role in encouraging debate and discussion on major media-related challenges and issues. At each of its sessions, the Council organizes a thematic debate on a specific theme, involving Member States, experts and professional organizations.

10. In 2006, at its 25th session, the IPDC Council organized thematic debates on the following topics:

- (i) Giving voice to local communities: from community radio to blogs:
 - Community Radio and Community Voice: a case for appropriate policies;
 - Community Media and Technologies in a Communicative Ecology;
 - Community Voice, Multilingualism and Blogs;
 - Freedom of Information and Legislative Provisions.
- (ii) Follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society: Action line No. 9: Media:
 - Safety of Journalists;
 - Outcomes of the Second Meeting of the World Electronic Media Forum.

DEFINING MEDIA DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

11. At its 25th session, the IPDC Council launched a broad consultation among media experts, professionals and donors, as well as representatives of relevant United Nations agencies, to define indicators of media development in line with the priority areas of the Programme. The purpose of these indicators is to enable development agencies, policy-makers, project proponents and other stakeholders to determine the level of media development in a given country and identify the areas in which assistance is most required. A first discussion on this subject was organized during the

51st meeting of the IPDC Bureau. Once finalized, the proposed list of indicators will be submitted to the 26th session of the IPDC Intergovernmental Council.

INDICATORS FOR DEFINING POTENTIAL CENTRES OF EXCELLENCE IN TRAINING

12. A unique mapping of 96 African media/journalism training institutions, a database, and a set of criteria and indicators for defining potential centres of excellence were submitted by UNESCO to the IPDC Bureau Meeting in 2007. The report proposed to mobilize international support for training institutions that have the potential to meet the agreed criteria of excellence within the next five years. Such initiatives can help the IPDC to engage in a well-defined strategic approach to building the capacities of media training institutions.

UNESCO-IPDC PRIZE FOR RURAL COMMUNICATION

13. The UNESCO-IPDC Prize for Rural Communication is intended to recognize a meritorious and innovative activity in improving communication in rural communities, chiefly in the developing countries. The IPDC Bureau acts as the Jury of the Prize.

2005: Winner: Malayala Manorama (India)

Malayala Manorama is a daily newspaper with a circulation of 1.4 million copies, published in Kerala, India. It was awarded for its imaginative communication campaign aimed at raising awareness among the people of Kerala on the importance of water conservation as a solution to the problem of droughts in the region.

2003: Winner: Radio Toco (Trinidad and Tobago)

Radio Toco 106.7 FM, the first and only community-based radio station in Trinidad and Tobago, was established in 1997 under the UNESCO Women-speaking-to-Women Programme in collaboration with the local NGO T&T/CAN Citizens' Agenda. It is recognized as an outstanding FM medium for information sharing and exchange among the rural communities of North-Eastern Trinidad.

IPDC COUNCIL AND BUREAU MEETINGS

14. Four sessions of the Intergovernmental Council of the IPDC and nine Bureau meetings were held **under the Chairmanship of Mr Torben Krogh (Denmark)**, Chairman of the IPDC Intergovernmental Council:

22ND COUNCIL SESSION AND 44TH BUREAU MEETING:	10 - 12 APRIL 2002
45TH BUREAU MEETING	11 - 13 DECEMBER 2002
23RD COUNCIL SESSION AND 46TH BUREAU MEETING	26 - 28 MARCH 2003
EXTRAORDINARY BUREAU MEETING	11 JUNE 2003
47TH BUREAU MEETING	29 - 30 MARCH 2004
24TH COUNCIL SESSION	31 MARCH - 2 APRIL 2004
48TH BUREAU MEETING	7 - 9 MARCH 2005
49TH BUREAU MEETING	27 FEBRUARY - 1 MARCH 2006
25TH COUNCIL SESSION AND 50TH BUREAU MEETING	21 - 23 MARCH 2006
51ST BUREAU MEETING	27 - 29 MARCH 2007

EXPERTS' AND DONOR MEETINGS

15. IPDC held its first **Experts' Meeting on Media Development in the Arab Region** in Doha, Qatar, in December 2004. The meeting was aimed at examining the specific media development needs of the Arab region.

16. A Strategic Donor Meeting was organized in April 2006 at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, to discuss with existing and potential donors the funding needs of the Programme.

17. **FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE IPDC IN 2002-2006**

Donor countries	US\$	Comments
ANDORRA	29,904	Special Account
AUSTRALIA	81,000	Special Account
CZECH REPUBLIC	87,594	Special Account
DENMARK	1,588,766	Special Account
EGYPT	5,000	Special Account
FINLAND	552,170	Special Account
FRANCE	138,813	Special Account
GERMANY	213,983	Special Account + FIT projects
GREECE	73,449	Special Account
INDIA	60,000	Special Account
ISRAEL	50,000	Special Account
JAMAICA	2,500	Special Account
JAPAN	370,000	FIT projects
LUXEMBOURG	417,275	Special Account + FIT projects
NETHERLANDS	333,812	Special Account
NORWAY	1,188,412	Special Account
SPAIN	508,906	Special Account + Associate expert
PORTUGAL	8,250	Special Account
SWITZERLAND	246,130	Special Account
TANZANIA	1,938	Special Account
UNITED KINGDOM	25,000	Special Account
USA	365,000	Special Account + FIT projects
Interest earned	241,324	
TOTAL	US \$6,589,226	

18. In 2006, IPDC received a total of US \$2,435,332 from 15 donor countries. Both the number of donors and the size of contributions have increased. The main contributors were Denmark, Finland, Norway, Spain, Switzerland and the United States of America. Other donors included Andorra, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Greece, Israel, India, Japan and United Republic of Tanzania. This increase in donor confidence can be attributed in part to the recognition that IPDC is “a catalyst with the possibility to produce significant change using relatively small amounts of money”, as underlined by the independent evaluation of the Programme.

19. The recent resolution 61/121 A-B adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its sixty-first session in December 2006 urges all countries, organizations of the United Nations system and all others concerned “to provide full support for the International Programme for the Development of Communication of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, which should support both public and private media”.