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REPORT BY THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION (IPDC) ON ITS ACTIVITIES (2002-2003)

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 twenty-first session, which stipulates that the Council shall report on its activities to the General Conference of UNESCO at each of its ordinary sessions.

Purpose: The present report covers the IPDC activities during the current biennium period (2002-2003). It gives an overview of the reforms of IPDC working methods and decision-making processes as well as its financial situation.

Decision required: No decision is required on this document.

REFORMS OF THE IPDC WORKING METHODS

1. The Intergovernmental Council launched during the current biennium wide-ranging reforms of the working methods and the decision-making processes of IPDC, as it has been facing over the last four years a net decline in voluntary contributions from UNESCO Member States.

Phase one:

2. The IPDC Council, during its 22nd session (April 2002), reviewed and unanimously approved the reforms (proposed by the Ad Hoc Working Group) on IPDC working methods that are designed to ensure greater efficiency and transparency of the Programme and to encourage further financial assistance from traditional and potential donors. The Council members agreed to follow stricter procedures for screening and approving new project proposals and to concentrate on a limited number of professionally prepared, innovative projects that clearly promote freedom of expression and media pluralism, that concern development of community media and human resources and that promote international partnership.

3. Since the approval of the recommendations at its 22nd session and up to the 23rd session, the following steps and actions were undertaken:

- abolition of the moratorium for the submission of new projects, as the budgetary problems pertaining to the backlog of approved projects pending financing were overcome;
- introduction of a new format for project presentation reflecting development-based objectives and monitoring aspects;
- introduction of a professional, comparative discussion on projects presented by media categories rather than regions;
- preparation of proposals for modifications of IPDC basic texts for submission to the forthcoming General Conference;
- improvement of the implementation rate of projects and closure of operationally terminated projects;
- elaboration and use of a new methodology for presenting the IPDC Special Account status, by providing information on the exact state of IPDC financial resources in general and on each ongoing project;
- abolition of all temporary posts financed from the Special Account and elimination of all costs not directly related to IPDC project activities;
- preparation of all project proposals was undertaken in close cooperation with Advisers for communication and information and programme specialists in accordance with IPDC new priorities;
- submission to the Bureau and Council implementation reports on 100 recent IPDC projects on the basis of which the Bureau established a tentative list of projects to be evaluated by independent evaluators.

Phase two:

4. In accordance with the decision made at the 23rd Council Session of IPDC (March 2003) and as a follow-up to the Evaluation Report on IPDC, prepared by the Department of Media and Communication of the University of Oslo, at the request of the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Bureau held its Extraordinary Meeting on 11 June 2003 at UNESCO Headquarters in order to consider new proposals for the reforms of the IPDC working methods.

5. As a result of the meeting, the following new set of proposals was adopted and communicated to all Council members for their perusal and possible comments, which will be used to finalize a draft resolution for the General Conference concerning the modifications of the IPDC statutory documents and the Council’s decisions with regard to the new working methods of IPDC:

The IPDC Bureau confirmed the following definition of the main objective of the Programme:

IPDC is designed 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, by giving the highest priority to national, regional and interregional projects in the following areas:

- Promotion of freedom of expression and media pluralism,
- Development of community media,
- Human resource development,
- Promotion of international partnership.

Periodicity of IPDC Council session and IPDC Bureau

- Subject to the approval by the General Conference, Council sessions could be organized every two years;
- Bureau meetings should be organized at least once a year for project selection, approval and allocation of funds.

New redistribution of main functions between the IPDC Council and the IPDC Bureau

Council functions:

- Policy making, guiding the planning and implementation of the Programme;
- Approving priorities of the Programme;
- Reviewing and assessing achievements on the basis of implementation and evaluation reports on the projects and defining the basic areas requiring increased international cooperation;
- Reviewing ways and means whereby Member States might participate more effectively in the International Programme for the Development of Communication;
- Approving an appropriate system of financing for the Programme in order to secure the necessary resources for the benefit of those requesting assistance from the Programme;
- Awarding of the IPDC-UNESCO Prize.

Bureau functions:

- The Bureau assumes full responsibility for project selection, approval and allocation of funds from the Special Account;
 - It proposes and plans the organization of work of the Council session;
 - The Bureau acts as jury for selecting the winner of the IPDC-UNESCO Prize for Rural Communication.
 - The Bureau discharges such duties as the Council may lay upon it;
- IPDC Council members and in particular IPDC donor countries should be invited as observers to the IPDC Bureau meeting.
- Professional organizations/institutions, the United Nations and specialized agencies, which actively cooperate with the Programme should also be invited to the IPDC Bureau meeting.

New procedures of project approval and implementation

- Starting from the Bureau meeting in December 2003, the period from project submission to funds allocation will be reduced from 15 to four months. (Already this year, some projects submitted to the IPDC Secretariat before the deadline of 1 September 2003, will receive funds in December 2003 and be ready for implementation in January-February 2004).
- The period of implementation of IPDC projects will not exceed two years from the moment of allocation of funds. After two years, any unspent amounts should be returned to the Special Account and/or funds-in trust donors, following a decision by the Bureau.

New proposals in view of project preparation, selection and financing

- In order to improve the quality of IPDC projects, the involvement of ACIs in project identification and preparation should be strengthened. (Necessary funds for project preparation and implementation should be put at the disposal of ACIs under the regular programme budget).
- During the project preparation, funding capacities of IPDC at a given period should be taken into consideration in order to avoid the great disparity between requested and approved budgets and to proceed with project implementation according to their original objectives.
- Before the Bureau meeting, IPDC project proposals could be, if necessary, examined/commented upon by recognized professional organizations/institutions and United Nations and specialized agencies (willing to cooperate on a voluntary basis).
- The Bureau will proceed with allocation of funds to the projects in the presence of ACIs, and by taking into account any comments received from professional organizations/institutions and United Nations and Specialized Agencies. Project proposals could be revised accordingly.
- During the preparation and selection process, the document “All IPDC projects by region and by country” should be taken into consideration in order to assure a more “fair rotation” of IPDC beneficiaries.
- Projects from LDCs, small island and land-locked countries should be given priority over projects from other developing countries and countries in transition.

- In order to increase cooperation, mutual information should be reinforced between the Secretariat, ACIs and donor agencies. Donors should be encouraged to inform the Secretariat on their media development activities/projects.

IPDC promotion and fund-raising

- IPDC should strengthen its informational and publicity activities whereby emphasis is placed on projects that make a difference in a given communication or media situation. (Example: Cambodia and Nepal where small IPDC funded projects snowballed respectively into a fully fledged media institution now attached to the university, and a nation-wide community radio network.)
- Improved communication and permanent dialogue should be ensured with Council members and donor agencies (between the Council sessions) by using traditional and Internet facilities.
- Objectives of the IPDC projects, in addition to the four main priorities, should reflect the Millennium goals.

Evaluation of terminated projects

Due to limited funds available for evaluation activities and the high cost of evaluation missions, special attention should be given to the selection of the projects to be evaluated in order to identify those which can potentially provide the most useful information (lessons drawn) for identification, designing, selection and implementation of future projects.

IPDC Intergovernmental Council sessions and Bureau meetings

6. Two sessions of the Intergovernmental Council of the IPDC and four Bureau meetings were held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris under the Chairmanship of Mr Torben Krogh (Denmark).

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

7. At the twenty-second session elections were held to elect new members to the Bureau of the Council, comprising the chairperson, three vice-chairpersons, rapporteur and three members. By the consensus of the Council and by acclamation, the Bureau was elected as follows:

Chairperson	Mr Torben Krogh (Denmark)
Vice-Chairpersons	Yemen, Malaysia and Uruguay
Rapporteur	Mr Nacer Mehal (Algeria)
Members	Luxembourg, Malawi and the Russian Federation

IPDC financial situation

8. Since the submission of the last report to the General Conference, the following contributions were provided to the Programme:

Special Account and Funds-in-trust contributions

(June 2001 – June 2003)

in US dollars

Denmark	1,196,000
Finland	177,452
Egypt	5,000
France	110,000
Germany	100,000
Greece	8,500
India	60,000
Luxembourg	298,788
Netherlands	333,812
Norway	500,350
Portugal	65,300
Total	2,855,202

9. During the debates on the IPDC financial situation that took place at the IPDC Council sessions and Bureau meetings, Members of the Council agreed that the future of the IPDC depended mainly on the capacity to strengthen urgently financial contributions to the Programme. IPDC needs a larger number of donors who are able to provide the Programme with financial contributions to the Special Account and funds-in-trust in order to assure a total budget of \$2 million to \$2.5 million for adequate funding of at least 40 to 50 projects annually.

10. At the closing meeting of the 23rd session of the Intergovernmental Council, the Director-General of UNESCO, Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, appealed to decision-makers and donors – in particular, Member States, foundations, business enterprises, professional associations – to support IPDC in the way they deem most fitting and to give their backing to the Programme in the reforms it is undertaking.

11. Contributions in kind (training courses)

Country	Title of training	Number of participants	Implementing agency
Republic of Korea	Television programme production (2)	36	- Korean Broadcasting System (KBS) in Seoul - Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA)
Russian Federation	New media technologies (2)	40	- ITAR-TASS - Moscow University

IPDC projects

12. Forty projects were funded by the Bureau meeting in December 2002. Among the projects financed: “Community radio in the service of local development” in Mali; “FM ‘Sans Voix’ the radio of vulnerable groups” in Senegal; a regional project “Cyber journalism for Women broadcast journalists” in Asia; “Human resources development for media” in the Marshall Islands; a regional project “Eastern Caribbean Internet paper” in the Caribbean; and an interregional “Journet” Global training project.

13. Thirty-nine projects were preliminarily approved by the 23rd session of the Council (March 2003). Final approval of projects and financial allocations will be made by the Bureau in December 2003 on the basis of the amount of voluntary contributions provided to the IPDC during the 2003 financial year. Among the projects approved:

Radio broadcasting: MALAWI: Capacity-Building for Private and Community Radios, FIJI: Community Broadcasting Development Project;

Television broadcasting: TANZANIA: Capacity-building for Televisheni Ya Taifa (TVT); BOLIVIA: Development of a mobile training unit for rural community television centres;

Print media: CAMEROON: Strengthening the independent newspaper “Le Messenger”; MONGOLIA: Sustainability and Empowerment of the Ezegtei women’s magazine;

Multimedia: TAJIKISTAN: Resource Centre for Tajikistan Journalists; DOMINICAN REPUBLIC: Strengthening and promotion of freedom of expression and of the press;

Community Multimedia Centres: BURUNDI: Women Using Media for Peace – Peace Documentation Centre and Community Media Centre; DOMINICA: Reinforcing the capacity to produce and disseminate local content mass media material;

News Agencies: Afghanistan: Bakhtar Information Agency Reform and Afghan Journalist Training Project; Regional project for LATIN AMERICA Latin American Communication Network for Children’s Rights.

Thematic debates

14. The main conclusion to be drawn from the thematic debate conducted during the 22nd session on the following theme: “Is there still a need for IPDC – and if yes, why?” **is that IPDC remains a relevant institution that addresses initiatives to further develop media infrastructure and resource personnel in developing countries.**

15. The 22nd Council session decided to change the periodicity of thematic debates and to organize them during the session which follows the UNESCO General Conference, in order to brief the new members of the Council on the most important issues in the field of media development as a whole.

The IPDC-UNESCO Prize for Rural Communication

16. The Prize of \$20,000 was awarded to the Huanacache radio network which brings together a dozen schools and communities in the north-eastern Lavalle Desert of Argentina’s Mendoza province and to Radio Quispillaccta which broadcasts in the Quechua language from the town of Ayacucho (Peru). The award ceremony took place during the 23rd session of the IPDC Council.