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REPORT BY THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL OF THE INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF COMMUNICATION (IPDC) ON ITS ACTIVITIES (2004-2005)

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 report on its activities to the General Conference of UNESCO at each of its ordinary sessions.

Purpose: The present report gives an overview of the IPDC activities during the current biennium period (2004-2005) as well as its financial situation.

Decision required: No decision is required on this document.

INTRODUCTION

1. IPDC is a major forum in the United Nations system designed to mobilize support to develop free and pluralistic media in developing countries and countries in transition with a global approach to democratic development. Since IPDC's inception in 1980, more than 1,000 projects have been implemented in 137 countries thanks to multilateral financial assistance channelled through the Programme. The multilateral modality of financial assistance provided by IPDC is unique and important because it does not compromise the integrity and independence of the recipient media organizations, which are particularly sensitive to the credibility they have among the audience/readers.

2. The resolutions "Information in the Service of Humanity" (55/136, 56/64, 57/130) adopted by the United Nations General Assembly respectively at its 55th, 56th and 57th sessions in 2000, 2001 and 2002, urge 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".

3. According to the resolution of the 32nd session of UNESCO's General Conference, IPDC Intergovernmental Council's (39 members) sessions are now organized every two years. The IPDC Bureau (eight members) meets annually and assumes full responsibility for project selection, approval and allocation of funds from the Special Account.

4. In 2004-2005, IPDC fruitfully accomplished the second phase of wide-ranging reforms undertaken over the last four years with a view to increasing better efficiency in programme administration, funding and implementation of projects: 119 regional and national projects were approved and financed for US \$2,932,000 in more than 70 countries.

24th SESSION OF THE IPDC INTERGOVERNMENTAL COUNCIL

5. The 24th session of the Intergovernmental Council of IPDC was held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris from 31 March to 2 April 2004 under the Chairmanship of Mr Torben Krogh (Denmark). All the Intergovernmental Council Member States attended the session along with observers from various governmental and non-governmental organizations.

6. At this session, the renewal of members of the Bureau was achieved by consensus. The composition of the Bureau is as follows:

Chairperson:	Mr Torben Krogh (Denmark)
Rapporteur:	Ms Barbara Gloudon (Jamaica)
Vice-Chairpersons:	Republic of Korea, Qatar, United Republic of Tanzania
Members:	Peru, Portugal, Russian Federation

7. The **thematic debate**, held during the 24th session, was devoted to the **promotion of pluralism and good governance through media development**. The theme was selected with reference to the global debate on the role of the media in society. Five eminent specialists were invited to contribute to the Council's reflection: Mr Valdas Adamkus, President of the Republic of Lithuania; Ms Nasim Zehra, journalist and independent analyst (Pakistan); Ms Kubashini Rama, Deputy Director of the Gender Links, (South Africa); Mr Jeff Lovitt, Director of Communications Transparency International; and Mr Narasimhan Ram, Editor-in-chief of the newspaper, *The Hindu* (India).

8. The UNESCO Advisers for Communication and Information (ACIs) were invited to take part in the debate on media development in relation to the four priority areas defined by the IPDC, namely:

- Promoting the freedom of expression and media pluralism;
- Development of local media;
- Human resource capacity-building;
- Promoting the creation of international partnerships.

The following concerns were outlined in the debate with regard to the implementation of the IPDC activities:

9. **Freedom of expression and media pluralism** were often confronted in some countries with attempts indirectly or directly to restrict or muzzle their development. These included various forms of repression of the free exercise of the profession; controls over distribution of government advertisements, restrictions on information sources, attempts by governments to take control of journalists' unions and associations. The obstacles facing **community media development** had to do with the lack of needed capital for investment, the absence of a legal framework with independent bodies to issue licences, the lack of interest on the part of several governments – which have a tendency to monopolize the official media to the detriment of independent community media – and lastly, the lack of broadcast frequency plans recognizing community broadcasting as a vital sub sector.

10. The **capacity-building of media professionals** continues to remain a vital necessity in the developing countries. The ability of media organizations to investigate, verify and report requires not only basic journalistic skills, but also educational opportunities that improve the cognitive knowledge on the subjects they have to deal with. Therefore, the needs identified in human resource capacity-building far exceed the existing funding possibilities. The lack of public and private training investments make IPDC support imperative, particularly in the development of professional vernacular media. The need for **international partnerships** is therefore all the more necessary as the influence of media on the major development goals are more clearly articulated in the multilateral approach.

11. The **IPDC-UNESCO Prize for Rural Communication** (\$20,000) was awarded during the session to Radio Toco, the first and only community radio station of Trinidad and Tobago. With news programmes, educational broadcasts and interviews, Radio Toco contributed to community development by reaching over 80,000 listeners throughout the north-eastern part of Trinidad and part of Grenada. All of Radio Toco's programmes are underpinned by a cultural approach that is clearly in line with the expectations of the listening public on social, health and environmental issues. Radio Toco has also set up a centre for basic IT training, established a monthly magazine and is working on the establishment of a multimedia centre.

47th AND 48th MEETINGS OF THE IPDC BUREAU

12. The quality and relevance of projects is a major concern for the IPDC Bureau. In accordance with its new functions, the Bureau proceeded during its two meetings (March 2004 and March 2005) with the examination of 196 project proposals having a potential impact on the promotion of media pluralism in the given country or region. On the basis of funds available at the IPDC Special

Account, \$2,524,000 were allocated to 111 projects approved for financing from the IPDC Special Account and eight projects were approved and received \$408,000 under funds-in-trust arrangements. Projects from LDCs, landlocked and small island countries were given priority during the Bureau meetings over projects from other developing countries and countries in transition. It should be noted that in many instances, IPDC financing constitutes **seed capital** aimed to facilitate the start-up of a project, to enhance its credibility, to encourage other donors to lend their support, and thus making it possible for the project, with increased funding, to expand and broaden its scope beyond what was initially envisaged.

13. Among 119 projects, the following could be mentioned as a sample of projects implemented in the different regions:

AFRICA	US \$
Post-production and professional training centre in East Africa	50,000
Burundi: women using media for peace in Burundi (<i>dushirehamwe</i> “let’s reconcile” peace documentation centre and CMC)	25,000
Cameroon: Meiganga community multimedia centre	70,000
Cape Verde: media law reform	25,000
Central African Republic: rehabilitation of the technical and human capacity of Radio Centrafrique	50,000
Chad: capacity-building of the Chadian media	25,000
Gambia: archiving for GRTS Radio	40,000
Mali: learning about newspapers and citizenship	24,000
United Republic of Tanzania: capacity-building for TVT	76,000
ASIA AND THE PACIFIC	
Newspaper management for women journalists in Asia	25,000
Pacific television programming for community development	30,000
Afghanistan: women’s community television	60,000
Bangladesh: youth community multimedia centre (cable radio)	22,000
Cambodia: establishment of the local radio station of Rattanakiri	20,000
East Timor: national community radio documentary production training programme	30,000
Fiji: community broadcasting development project	25,000
Micronesia: modern radio management and broadcasting for the Federated States of Micronesia	25,000
Mongolia: media for transparent governance	40,000
Pakistan: freedom of expression monitoring project	25,000
Solomon Islands: media training for peace and reconciliation	81,000

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN	
Latin American communication network for children's rights	31,000
Ethical practices, journalism training and management of freedom of the press in the Caribbean region	20,000
Belize: reinforcement of Hamalali Garifuna community radio	20,000
Brazil: Brazilian network for press freedom	25,000
Grenada: Grenada community multimedia centre	20,000
Guatemala: training of journalists in freedom of expression and indigenous rights	18,000
Guyana: training in multimedia production for community radio	23,000
Haiti: establishment of community multimedia centres	25,000
Honduras: national training programme for journalists	20,000
Jamaica: building mobile, multimedia capacity for rural youth	20,000
Paraguay: young correspondent net for Jaku'éke Paraguay - information agency	25,000
St Lucia: training for the digital newsroom at Radio St Lucia	15,000
ARAB STATES	
Capacity-building, training, and monitoring support for groups campaigning for free expression	25,000
Training of journalists	50,000
Modern broadcasting management in the Arab countries	20,000
Mauritania: strengthening the operating capacity of L'Agence Mauritanienne D'Information (AMI)	25,000
Palestine: literary audio library for radio, education and blind persons	25,000
Palestine: studio for children's programmes at the Palestinian Broadcasting Corporation (PBC)	33,000

EXPERTS' MEETING

14. IPDC, sponsored by the Government of Qatari, organized its first **Experts' Meeting on Media Development in the Arab Region** (Doha, Qatar, December 2004) in collaboration with Al Jazeera network. Priority projects focusing on the promotion of media pluralism and capacity-building were identified and recommendations elaborated in order to guide IPDC in its future action in the Arab States. The meeting helped to reinforce IPDC's role as an international forum to promote media environment for free pluralistic expression as well as to raise the visibility of IPDC's catalysing function.

IPDC REFORMS

15. The IPDC Council decided to organize an independent evaluation of the Programme's activities in light of the serious criticisms about the Programme's working methods, particularly regarding its decision-making and financing procedures, which were considered slow and

cumbersome. At the same time, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs commissioned an evaluation covering the same scope as the one planned by the Council. The latter study was therefore implemented and its findings were instrumental in guiding the Council decisions on what reforms were needed and on how they should be implemented.

16. The Programme is currently reaping the benefits of a new working rhythm achieved thanks to the reforms implemented by the Intergovernmental Council:

- all projects submitted for the Bureau's consideration are identified and processed by UNESCO's field-based Advisers for Communication and Information and Programme Specialists;
- funds can now be allocated to projects immediately upon their approval by the Bureau;
- the time lag between the submission, approval and the execution of projects has been considerably reduced;
- regular programme activities can now be linked to those of IPDC, in line with the priorities defined by the Intergovernmental Council, thus increasing and enhancing synergies between the regular programme and extra budgetary activities;
- steps have been taken to increase the transparency of the Programme: all project proposals submitted to the IPDC Secretariat are now posted on its website;
- implementation reports are prepared and published to facilitate follow-up of the status of projects;
- funds received in the Special Account were allocated solely for project implementation, while the operating costs of the IPDC Secretariat were met by the Communication Development Division. (This made it possible not only to reduce staff costs but also to create new synergies with the Division throughout the various stages of project development and implementation.)

IPDC FINANCIAL SITUATION

Special Account and Funds-in-trust contributions to the projects approved and financed by the 47th (March 2004) and 48th (March 2005) IPDC Bureau meetings (in US \$)		
	Special Account	Funds-in-trust
Australia (new donor)	81,000	
Denmark	1,143,831	
Egypt	5,000	
Finland	177,453	
France	94,813	
Germany	46,833	39,000
Greece	34,882	
Japan (new donor)		209,000

	Special Account	Funds-in-trust
Luxembourg	168,275	160,000
Norway	713,580	
Portugal	8,200	
United Kingdom (new donor)	25,000	
United States of America (new donor)	60,000	
Sub total	2,477,867	408,000
Total:	2,885,867	

17. During the debates on the financial situation of IPDC that took place at the Council session and Bureau meetings, it was agreed that the future of IPDC depended mainly on the capacity to urgently strengthen financial contributions to the Programme.

18. The underlying aim of the reforms was to regain the confidence of donor partners in light of the critical cash flow situation. Despite all the continuous efforts undertaken by the Chairperson and the Secretariat to sensitize potential donors, the Programme's possibilities for intervention are stretched to the extreme limit. A number of donor countries, whether traditional or potential, no longer have the same modalities for financial assistance, which could lead them to reconsider their continued collaboration with the Programme. The future of IPDC therefore remains in the hands of the donors: if the volume of contributions to the Programme does not increase during the course of the year, its very existence could well be in jeopardy.

Special Account contributions to the projects to be approved and financed by the 49th IPDC Bureau in February 2006 (in US \$)	
Greece	20,000
Israel (new donor)	25,000
Jamaica	2,500
Total (as at 1 June 2005):	47,500

CONTRIBUTIONS IN KIND (TRAINING COURSES) IN 2004-2005

Country	Title of training	Participants	Implementing agency
Republic of Korea	Television programme production 30 days x 2 (\$160,000)	38	KBS and KOICA