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EDITORIAL

2014: More projects, fewer subsidies...

For this first editorial of the year, we offer the usual brief look back at the activities carried out by the ISS General Secretariat and the prospects that lie ahead for the coming year.

Perhaps it is a sign of the evolution of our time, that non-government organisations must increasingly look for their own funding sources and rely less and less on public money. The IRC's operational record for the past year (and therefore its balance sheet) illustrates well this trend: the projects created and implemented by us are growing in importance, while it is increasingly difficult to keep fixed contributions from central authorities supporting the IRC.

"Unstable" Finances

Despite the generous support for over 20 years, for the past 3 years, the estimated budget contributions related to the central authorities who financially support the IRC do not cover more than about 80% of expenses. This decrease is mainly due to stringent budget cuts implemented in several countries, seriously affecting the administrative capacity to support the ISS / IRC. Fortunately, the continued support from other countries, which is very much appreciated, has so far helped limit some of the negative effects of this decline.

Whilst the implementation of field projects is not motivated by economic considerations, financial contributions remain important especially when planning these activities, in particular the human resources required – which was not always possible due to such constraints.

Nevertheless, 2014 saw a marked increase in our activities directly linked to different projects, which is very gratifying.

"Field support" is always necessary

An important part of the activities of ISS/IRC in 2014 has been dedicated to supporting different countries of origin: it began with the completion of the joint project with UNICEF in Ghana, as part of the efforts by the country to prepare for the ratification of the Hague Convention 1993. Likeise the ISS/IRC has undertaken an evaluation of the adoption system in Armenia, and alternative care system in Tunisia, in both cases in cooperation with the UNICEF national office. Both projects will continue this year, in parallel with a new project providing technical support to adoption authorities in Moldova.

'ISS' branded projects

The project "Another future is possible for children with disabilities in institutions" is becoming increasingly important: on one

hand, more and more countries are expressing their interest in the program being implemented in their countries, and on the other hand, increased private donations allows the project to operate and make way for its gradual expansion. Thus, training was conducted for professionals in charge of this issue in Burkina Faso and Vietnam, and two assessment missions were conducted in Mexico and Mauritius.

The study "Discovering abuses during the search of origins" commenced, and we were particularly grateful to see the enthusiasm that this project has generated among adoption associations. It turns out that this issue remains largely unexplored. To date few tools attempt to answer legitimate questions that adult adoptees may ask and it is therefore urgent to quickly provide professionals with the means to respond.

A service that is always useful

As part of its more traditional activities, the ISS/IRC published 10 issues of its monthly review, with a double issue devoted to the "International Year of the Family" and another to "biological fathers and adoptive fathers." In the interests of openness and exchange, a substantial part was left to the contributions of external authors, writing 24 articles throughout the year.

A little over a hundred various requests were sent to ISS/IRC during the year, 14 country situation analysis were drafted or updated bringing the number of countries whose analysis is available on our website to 94, fact sheets relating to child protection in alternative care and adoption were addressed to the Committee of Children's Rights at each session and to the African Committee of experts on the Rights and Well-being of the child (with other organizations), conferences and training courses were also organized. In addition, we continued our close cooperation with our partners especially in advocating for the implementation of the Guidelines (see the next Montly Review)... In short, the summary of the past year's efforts is encouraging, especially that our work is useful and appreciated.

The entire ISS/IRC team would like to take this first editorial to once again thank the various people and institutions who, through their support, make it possible to continue of our efforts.

The ISS/IRC Team
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