

EDUCATION

INDEPENDENT MEDIA

INTERNET DEVELOPMENT

CIVIL SOCIETY



IREX Annual Highlights 2004

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IREX PROGRAMS IN 2004

- ARMENIA MIDDLE SCHOOL-LEVEL TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAM
- ASSISTANCE TO RUSSIAN ORPHANS 2
- CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN MEDIA INTERNSHIPS
- CIVIL SOCIETY SUPPORT INITIATIVE
- COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
- CONTEMPORARY ISSUES
- CORE MEDIA SUPPORT PROGRAM FOR ARMENIA
- CULTURAL AND RELIGIOUS PLURALISM IN UZBEKISTAN AND THE UNITED STATES
- CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT FOR PRE-SERVICE EDUCATION IN ARMENIA
- CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR LEADERSHIP TRAINING IN ARMENIA
- DOT-EDU
- DOT-ORG
- EDMUND S. MUSKIE GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM
- EDUCATION INFORMATION CENTERS
- ELEMENTARY-LEVEL TEACHER TRAINING IN ARMENIA
- EURASIA PROFESSIONAL EXCHANGES AND TRAINING PROGRAM FOR TAJIKISTAN
- EURASIAN UNDERGRADUATE EXCHANGE PROGRAM
- GLOBAL CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTHENING PARTNERSHIP
- HIGH SCHOOL SOCIAL SCIENCE DEVELOPMENT AND TEACHER EDUCATION PROJECT FOR ARMENIA
- THE HAGUE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL TRIBUNAL COVERAGE PROJECT
- HUANG HSING FOUNDATION CHUN-TU HSUEH LECTURE SERIES
- HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRATIZATION INITIATIVES IN CENTRAL ASIA: INDEPENDENT MEDIA PROGRAM FOR KYRGYZSTAN, TAJIKISTAN, AND UZBEKISTAN
- INDIVIDUAL ADVANCED RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES
- INTERNET ACCESS AND TRAINING PROGRAM
- THE JOHN J. AND NANCY LEE ROBERTS FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM
- KOSOVO INDEPENDENT MEDIA PROGRAM
- MEDIA INNOVATIONS PROGRAM FOR GEORGIA
- MEDIA SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE IN ALBANIA
- MIDDLE EAST PARTNERSHIP INITIATIVE US BUSINESS INTERNSHIP PROGRAM FOR YOUNG MIDDLE EASTERN WOMEN
- MOLDOVA CITIZEN PARTICIPATION PROGRAM
- MONTENEGRO INDEPENDENT MEDIA PROGRAM
- PARTNER
- POLICY-CONNECT PROGRAM
- PRE-SERVICE EDUCATION CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROJECT IN AZERBAIJAN
- PROMEDIA ALBANIA
- PROMEDIA BULGARIA
- PROMEDIA CROATIA
- PROMEDIA MACEDONIA
- PROMEDIA REGIONAL
- REGIONAL EDUCATIONAL ADVISING COORDINATION
- REGIONAL EMPOWERMENT INITIATIVE FOR WOMEN
- REGIONAL LIBRARY INFORMATION CENTERS
- REGIONAL POLICY SYMPOSIUM
- RUSSIAN INDEPENDENT PRINT MEDIA PROGRAM
- RUSSIAN PARLIAMENTARY WORKING GROUP ON AIDS
- RUSSIAN YOUNG LEADERSHIP FELLOWS FOR PUBLIC SERVICE
- SCHOOL CONNECTIVITY FOR UZBEKISTAN
- SHORT-TERM TRAVEL GRANTS PROGRAM
- SHORT-TERM US EMBASSY POLICY SPECIALIST PROGRAM
- SOUTH ASIA REGIONAL INITIATIVE/EQUITY (SARI/Q)
- SOUTHEASTERN EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES AGAINST TRAFFICKING
- SWIFT II
- TRAFFICKING PREVENTION AND INFORMATION DISSEMINATION
- U-MEDIA
- UKRAINE MEDIA PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM
- UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION SUPPORT PROGRAM
- US-RUSSIA VOLUNTEER INITIATIVE
- WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT (WID)
- WORKING TO HEIGHTEN AWARENESS THROUGH MEDIA IN AZERBAIJAN (WHAM)

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Disabled Russian Children

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Engaging citizens in community development



American Volunteer Fights HIV/AIDS among Russian Youth

Daniel Winetsky went to Samara to combat HIV/AIDS among Russian youth. As part of the USAID-funded US-Russia Volunteer Initiative, Winetsky was part of a group of American and Russian volunteers who traveled to each other's countries to work with community organizations on HIV/AIDS education and information and communication technologies.

Winetsky served at the Center of Social Development and Information in Samara, where he worked directly with young people, many of whom knew very little about HIV/AIDS or held only faulty assumptions and stereotypes. By regularly holding discussions with local university students on how to prevent HIV/AIDS and lead healthy lives and by conducting outreach at local clubs and other spots frequented by young people, Winetsky shared a vital message with at-risk youth. "My experience here," he observes, "has greatly underscored for me the important role that social networks play in the progression of diseases such as HIV/AIDS."

And though his volunteer assignment is now complete, Winetsky plans to continue to fight HIV/AIDS in Russia through advanced study of Russian language and public health. He intends to use the networks he created in Samara as a launching board for this fight.



Kosovo Teachers, NGOs Join to Bring Trafficking Awareness to Students

The Southeastern European Communities against Trafficking (SECAT) program, funded by the US Department of Labor, developed a series of trainings to help civic education teachers meet new responsibilities in discussing human trafficking in the classroom, a subject recently added to the required eighth- and ninth-grade curriculum by Kosovo's Ministry of Education. Working with the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, the training project's leaders chose 60 rural and urban civic education teachers as their target group to initiate new lesson plans.

The project bridged a significant gap between government ministries and community groups as they collaborated with local and international NGOs to design and implement their training. Participants cited development of the trainings as a valuable opportunity to network and learn from the practices of other organizations.

Civic education teacher Sebahate Marevci said: "My knowledge about trafficking was just from newspapers. After this training I will be in a position to understand the scope of trafficking in Kosovo and to share my knowledge with my pupils."

Engaging citizens in community development



Art Therapy Festival Helps Cognitive Development of Disabled Russian Children

Beyond the puppets, performances, music, and crafts that awaited more than 200 children in Smolochkovo, Russia, at the Wandering Stars International Art Therapy Festival lay a technical agenda. The festival, put on by the Kovcheg school, a grantee of the USAID-funded Assistance to Russian Orphans Program (ARO), helped introduce art and integrated education to help the cognitive development of disabled children.

The festival embodies the Kovcheg educational model—novel in Russia—holding that the best way to teach tolerance and understanding is through practical learning and cooperation. Children with and without disabilities lived, learned, and worked together in activities therapeutically designed to engage the talents of participants with differing abilities, limitations, and gifts.

The festival also aided parents through meetings with therapists, psychologists, and counselors to discuss challenges in raising children with disabilities and receive specialized training on integrative education.

And government administrators and educational specialists from three Russian regions observed the festival to explore implementing similar activities in their regions to lower child abandonment and neglect.



NGO Skill-Building Puts a Roof over Students' Heads

The community of Vorukh in Tajikistan's Sugd Oblast' faced a problem: with winter only months away, the roofs of local schools required immediate and substantial repairs, but local government support was not sufficient.

So representatives of the local NGO Vorukh attended project development trainings provided by a local support center through IREX's USAID-funded Civil Society Support Initiative (CSSI). Vorukh then conducted a community needs assessment that prioritized roof repairs for School No. 53. On the basis of the CSSI trainings, the NGO next developed a project proposal entitled "School—the Cradle of Our Civilization" to repair the school buildings.

The support center also encouraged Vorukh to apply for small grants through IREX, and thanks to the trainings, Vorukh produced a strong proposal and was awarded grant funding to repair the school roofs.

Through combined grant support, local government funds and materials, and a 15% community contribution, the school buildings have been repaired, and the school's students are studying under a new roof this winter.

Making education accessible for all



IREX Teacher-Trainer Is Named Armenia's Teacher of the Year

Every year the Ministry of Education and Science of Armenia designates a Teacher of the Year. In 2004, the Ministry chose Anush Grigoryan, vice principal of Yeghegnadzor Middle School no. 4. She is also an IREX teacher-trainer for the State Department-funded Middle School Curriculum Development and Teacher Training Program (MLT).

For the competition, Grigoryan presented her “teacher’s portfolio”—an MLT requirement and a novel concept for Armenia—which evaluates effectiveness, knowledge, and skills in teaching across disciplines with MLT’s innovative, interactive, and student-centered methods.

Grigoryan’s portfolio presented lesson plans, graded student work, and work with colleagues and students on the theme “Vayotz Dzor: Tourist Guide,” including student-created booklets, recipes, handmade souvenirs, tourist maps, and a regional economic profile. “The group work helps me to identify what knowledge the students have gained and where the gaps are,” said Grigoryan.

Grigoryan is one of over 3,000 Armenian teachers and administrators from over 500 schools that have participated in IREX trainings. The teacher-trainers corps works at seven hubs to disseminate the program’s methods and handbooks nationwide.



Russian Education Student Gives (and Gets) Help with Head Start

At a small Kansas preschool where she volunteers providing low-income children with Head Start services, Victoria Elguina observes differences in early childhood education between the United States and her native Russia. “Children seem to be more independent and free to make their choice... They are taught to think critically and easily cope with their ‘problems’ by themselves,” she notes.

Elguina came to the United States as one of 31 participants in the State Department-funded Russian Young Leadership Fellows for Public Service Program (YLF). The program provides both a university study fellowship—for Elguina, education policy studies at the University of Kansas to help her foster cross-cultural approaches in Russia’s educational system—as well as a volunteer service component.

“It was interesting for me to know the differences in the educational approaches in the USA and in Russia,” said Elguina, who now brings not only broadened methodological perspectives, but also a new spirit of volunteerism, to strengthen education in her Siberian hometown of Irkutsk.

Making education accessible for all



Nationwide Internet Festival Makes Connections in Uzbekistan Schools

To celebrate one year of operation on September 18, the State Department-funded School Connectivity for Uzbekistan Program, which brings Internet access to schools in underserved areas of Uzbekistan, conducted a nationwide Internet festival that demonstrated for local communities the creativity and potential of the Internet as an educational tool.

More than 15,000 people took part in this 12-hour event conducted at the program's 60 educational Internet centers (EICs), where school administrators, teachers, and students alike demonstrated the use of the Internet to a broad public audience.

Notable festival guests included US Ambassador to Uzbekistan Jon R. Purnell, whose participation in a live forum on US-Uzbekistan relations attracted a record of over 100 simultaneous users on the connect.uz site. Other online guests included five officials from the Ministry of Public Education, who participated in a forum with more than 90 participants on plans for educational reform, and Bahram Ismailov, the director of the State Testing Center,

who discussed the university entrance exams with teachers and students.

Students and families took part also. School clubs presented their ongoing collaborative projects to parents and community members, and Web design clubs presented the more than 100 sites created through the program. Live hourly events hosted on the program's sites included meetings with US exchange alumni from educator and student programs, a discussion with parents on uses of the Internet for the family, and a forum where Internet Bake Sale participants posted their favorite recipes.

A live forum on student life between more than 40 students in the United States and Uzbekistan concluded and summarized the festival: Lea Savard-McNicoll of Montgomery Blair High School in Silver Spring, Md., noted, "The conversation with the Uzbekistan students was awesome. It was so much more realistic to actually be speaking with people our age than just being taught the information."

Nurturing youth and building democracy



Business Program Empowers Young Middle Eastern Women

Rabab Mustafa Abdullah has set her sights on establishing a business of her own someday, but opportunities for studying Western business practices are limited in the Middle East, particularly for women.

So Abdullah applied for the State Department-funded Middle East Partnership Initiative Small Business Internship Program for Young Middle Eastern Women, which brought her and 40 other beginning businesswomen and entrepreneurs to the United States for four weeks of intensive MBA-level academic study and a three-month internship at Fortune 500 as well as medium and small companies.

Abdullah studied at Duke University's Fuqua School of Business and performed her internship at Nike Corp. in Beaverton, Oregon, where she learned about Nike as well as the local community. "Above all," she commented, "being in Oregon gave me the pleasure of meeting small business owners to share their experiences and learn the techniques and approaches they used to achieve their dreams. These people don't believe in giving up, and their key to success is to keep trying and not say 'hope' or 'wish' but to say 'I will do it!'"



Eurasian Students Share Volunteer Spirit

By design, Tatiana Boytsova's fellowship yielded not only academic education at Hamilton College, but also practical lessons on the power of volunteerism. "It is just four hours of a weekend morning," said Boytsova as she helped winterize the windows at a local youth center, "but if everybody does at least a little bit, it makes a huge impact."

Over the past three years, the State Department-funded Eurasian Undergraduate Exchange Program (UGRAD) has provided Boytsova and more than 700 other participants from Eurasia with one year of undergraduate coursework as well as an integrated introduction to American volunteer service organizations. Fellows have performed service at well-known organizations such as Habitat for Humanity, The Salvation Army, American Red Cross, and Boys and Girls Club as well as with local groups like the Hamilton Action Volunteer Outreach Coalition in Utica, New York, where Boytsova repaired windows.

And when Boytsova and her colleagues return to Eurasia, they bring with them not only the academic rigors of university study, but also assorted repair skills and a new appreciation of the ability of volunteers to make a difference.

Nurturing youth and building democracy



IREX Helps Ukrainians Prepare for Presidential Elections

Only months before it happened, Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko's inauguration was inconceivable even to many of his supporters. But with critical training and support from IREX media, Internet, and education programs, Ukraine's media and civil society played key roles in ensuring free and transparent election results.

Throughout 2004, the IREX-administered Internet Access and Training Program (IATP), funded by the US State Department, organized specialized events ranging from online discussion of election ethics to Internet video conferences. With local NGOs, IATP helped organize the Presidential Day Conference from October 31 to November 1, during the election's first round, and broadcast it as a video conference. At the gathering, IATP Internet access sites nationwide hosted more than 400 participants, including journalists, presidential contenders, candidates' representatives, political scientists, writers, and other public figures. Election observers and sociologists from different regions presented results of independent exit polls and reported about the progress and alleged violations during voting. The NGO Committee of Voters of Ukraine even announced results of its parallel vote count. Altogether, IATP conducted more than 25 seminars and seven video conferences related to the election.

Meanwhile, dozens of newspapers carried special supplements—prepared by the Ukrainian Newspaper Publishers Association and supported by IREX under the USAID-funded U-Media program—that informed read-

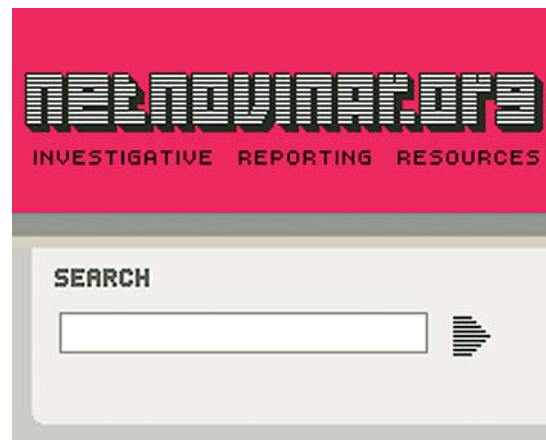
ers of the candidates' views and spelled out the rules for voting. Local newspapers asked their readers what topics they wanted the candidates to address and then found and printed the candidates' answers. Lawyers, trained and backed by IREX, defended newspapers that were sued or harassed as a result of their coverage.

Many of these journalists and other professionals benefited from long-standing IREX media development programs in Ukraine, which date to 1996. Those programs have brought American and European journalists to cities across Ukraine for workshops and discussions on political and election coverage, and dozens of Ukrainian journalists visited media outlets in the United States during election periods to observe campaign coverage.

Alumni of the State Department-funded Contemporary Issues Program, which provides fellowships for independent policy-oriented research in the United States, likewise played prominent roles. As director of the Penta center of political analysis, Volodymyr Fesenko's political analysis appeared in media and on television nationwide, while roundtables organized by Olha Kulish on problems of the election's first round provided in-depth insight on the Volyn Regional TV Company. Other alumni served as official election observers, campaign coordinators, voter education specialists, and international journalists covering the elections for media worldwide.

Together, these professionals and programs ensured the once-inconceivable results of free elections.

Cultivating new voices through independent media and technology



IREX/Europe Helps to Develop Resource Center and Enact Reforms for Liberian Media

IREX/Europe, as a member of the Partnership for Media and Conflict Prevention in West Africa, has helped reestablish the Press Union of Liberia (PUL) and reform media legislation ahead of critical national elections in October 2005. IREX/Europe Development Director Mike de Villiers worked with the partnership and PUL in Monrovia, providing key consultation on the organizational development of the PUL.

The Liberian journalists at the PUL—whose new resource center will incorporate modern computers and a professional staff—were eager to learn from the successes of their colleagues elsewhere in the world. Liberia, one of the poorest countries in the world, is struggling to overcome a decade of civil war that ended in 2003.

De Villiers also took part in a Partnership-sponsored media conference at which draft reform legislation was presented. The upcoming national elections present a challenge for which Liberia's media is poorly equipped, particularly due to weak legal infrastructure. Altogether, IREX and the Partnership hope to have new resources and reformed legislation enacted in time for Liberia's October 2005 elections.

Investigative Journalism Website Links Reporters Across Europe and Eurasia

When a journalist from Serbia investigated crime in Southeast Europe, his best sources—linked to criminal groups—were dangerous: like many reporters, he did not know colleagues or experts in neighboring countries. This information gap hinders reporting on cross-border issues such as corruption, trafficking, and crime.

To overcome this, the USAID-funded IREX Pro-Media Program helped two local organizations establish a website specifically for investigative journalists, www.investigativejournalism.org. The site provides directories of over 300 regional and global investigative journalists and experts, articles and links to training materials, and a searchable archive of recent and past investigative reports from the region's top journalists.

The website has already been instrumental in helping journalists collaborate. "When a Ukrainian victim of human trafficking died in Bosnia-Herzegovina," said site editor Sasa Lekovic, "a Croatian journalist who just joined our network asked for help in connecting with Ukrainian journalists. Through our network, he was able to obtain the right contacts and expand his story."

The site has expanded rapidly, drawing interest from as far as Nigeria and Australia and allowing journalists to pursue stories they could not have covered before.

Cultivating new voices through independent media and technology



IREX Training Helps Disabled Armenians Gain Jobs

New information technology skills acquired by four disabled trainees through the Internet Access and Training Program (IATP) so impressed Mayor Vanik Asatryan of Spitak, Armenia, that he agreed to open a computer service room at the town's main cultural center and to employ the trainees.

A local IATP volunteer conducted a training from May 24 to June 9 for the group at the IATP Spitak site. During the first week they learned to use standard computer programs. The next week, the participants learned Internet basics and advanced uses. They were introduced not only to Internet browsers and computer networks but also to e-mail services. Then the participants continued their study of typical computer software.

Once the participants had completed their extended course, the IATP Spitak site administrator introduced the mayor of Spitak to the trainees and their skills. "In 1988 when I was 16 years old," said trainee Marine Asatryan, "the Spitak earthquake happened, after which I became disabled. I participated in many programs organized by different international and local organizations, but only thanks to IATP did I find a job and become integrated into the community."



Trafficking Ringleader Arrested Thanks to Investigative Report

Prosecutors in Tajikistan reopened a criminal investigation and rearrested an alleged trafficking ringleader after broadcast of a television documentary supported by IREX through a State Department-funded anti-trafficking training program for media professionals. The ring lured young men to Russia to be kept as virtual slave laborers.

The men, from a poverty-stricken region, thought they would earn legitimate wages to support their families. Instead, their passports were stolen, and they were forced to work in a landfill, told that they had to repay transportation debts, regularly beaten, and denied promised accommodation and food.

The men escaped and launched a campaign to bring the ringleaders to justice. The scam's local organizer was arrested but subsequently released amid a wall of silence from authorities, suggesting corruption.

Reporter Adiba Umarova recorded the victims' graphic accounts, but when she tried to interview the Isfara chief of police, she was told to leave. Undeterred, she requested an interview with the prosecutor in the regional capital, Khujand, leading the deputy regional prosecutor to reveal for the camera that the alleged local ringleader had been rearrested and the investigation reopened.

Reinventing public policy



Abu Dhabi Workshop Focuses on Middle East Media Development

IREX organized and hosted a State Department- and USAID-funded workshop, “Strategies for Sustainable Media Development for the Middle East and North Africa,” in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) in October. The workshop brought together media professionals and donor representatives from the Middle East and North Africa, the United States, and Europe to discuss cooperative strategies to develop independent media in the region.

The Honorable Michelle Sison, US ambassador to the UAE, opened the conference by stressing the importance of free media and the United States’ willingness to provide support to political, economic, and social reforms. She underscored that reform ultimately must come from within the region itself. Participants also had the opportunity to meet the UAE Minister of Information, His Highness Sheikh Abdallah Ben Zayed AlNahyan.

Workshop participants stressed the importance of true partnership between donors, implementers, and the media and indicated that projects must demonstrate a long-term commitment to the region, support local capacity, take account of gender, and couple media assistance with political support for reform.



Montenegro Announces First Open Broadcast Tenders

In December 2004, Montenegro’s independent Broadcasting Agency, established under a reformed media law that was drafted with IREX support, announced the country’s first open tender for broadcast frequency allocation, offering 136 TV and 126 radio frequencies. The tender, whose implementation plan IREX helped the Agency to develop, marks the first time in the 15 years since the emergence in Montenegro of nascent independent media that any frequency will be allocated on the basis of publicly announced rules.

State broadcasting during the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s, observed Ranko Vujovic, director of the Union of Independent Electronic Media, became “a war propaganda machine, promoting hate and racist speech against other nations.”

But today, thanks to the new frequency tender and reformed laws, notes IREX advisor Joe Raffelburg, “the Montenegrin ‘open skies’ approach, which is unparalleled in the Balkans, has helped pave the way for Montenegro’s accession to the Council of Europe.”

Reinventing public policy

IREX at a Glance



Combating Terrorism: Russia's Domestic and Foreign Policy Approach

In September 2004, IREX celebrated the 10th anniversary of the State Department-funded Contemporary Issues (CI) Fellowship Program with alumni reunions in each region of Eurasia, focusing on key policy issues. In Russia, when the regional theme—Combating Terrorism: Russia's Domestic and Foreign Policy Approach—was chosen, it was impossible to predict the extent to which the tragic school shootings in Beslan, occurring just a few weeks prior to the event, would increase the gravity of this topic. The urgency of the situation was unanimously reflected in participants' comments, including those of US Ambassador to the Russian Federation Alexander Vershbow, well-known and widely quoted terrorism expert Alexey Malashenko of the Carnegie Moscow Center, and the 80 alumni attending.

Many CI alumni have served in government positions and therefore have significantly affected their communities and countries. CI alumnus Soslan Khadikov of the Republic of North Ossetia's Ministry of Nationalities and External Relations, for example, opened the panel on Russia's domestic policy approach to terrorism with a compelling presentation. Khadikov, who spent many days at the scene in Beslan, provided an insightful analysis of the complex political situation in the North Caucasus.

Founded: 1968

Legal status: Nonprofit, charitable 501(c)(3) organization

Staff: 55 US-based professionals and more than 500 field staff overseas

Programs: More than 40 programs in over 50 countries

International presence: IREX offices are located in 125 cities in 17 countries in Europe, Eurasia, the Middle East and North Africa, and the United States.

2004 Budget: \$48 million

Mission: IREX (the International Research & Exchanges Board) is an international nonprofit organization specializing in education, independent media, Internet development, and civil society programs. Through training, partnerships, education, research, and grant programs, IREX develops the capacity of individuals and institutions to contribute to their societies. For more about IREX, please visit our website at www.irex.org.

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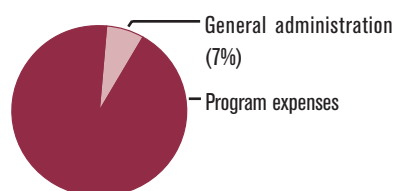
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Financial Report

Fiscal Year 2004

Program and Administrative Costs



This information represents unaudited financial statements.

Statement of Financial Position (thousands of dollars)

Assets	
Cash, cash equivalents	240
Other current assets	3,600
Fixed assets, net	360
Investments	<u>6,300</u>
Total assets	10,500
Liabilities and net assets	
Total liabilities	4,800
Total net assets	5,700
Total liabilities and net assets	10,500

Statement of Activities (thousands of dollars)

Revenue and support	
Grants, contributions, and other	41,350
In-kind support	<u>7,000</u>
Total revenue and support	48,350
Expenses	
Program activities	38,100
General administration	3,100
In-kind expenses	<u>7,000</u>
Total expenses	48,200
Investment income	650
Change in net assets	800

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