



EDUCATION



MEDIA DEVELOPMENT



CIVIL SOCIETY

IREX HIGHLIGHTS

CELEBRATING 40 YEARS OF INNOVATION IN DEVELOPMENT





IREX is an international nonprofit organization providing leadership and innovative programs to improve the quality of education, strengthen independent media, and foster pluralistic civil society development.

Founded in 1968, IREX has an annual portfolio of more than \$50 million and a staff of over 500 professionals worldwide. IREX and its partner IREX Europe deliver cross-cutting programs and consulting expertise in more than 100 countries.



A LETTER FROM THE CHAIR OF IREX

Forty years have passed since IREX was established to develop academic exchanges with the USSR and the Eastern Bloc. In that summer of 1968, with Soviet tanks rolling into Prague there was pressure to halt all exchanges, but a nascent IREX pressed forward, determined to develop a dialogue between cultures, and to keep it as free as possible from political influence. And in this it succeeded.

In the years since then, IREX has further developed its capacity to meet the needs not only of the higher education sector, but also of community members seeking to improve their societies through education. A network of alumni and broad regional expertise have enabled IREX to expand its activities from developing a bilateral scholar dialogue to coordinating directly with communities on the ground in a variety of countries and a variety of fields. Today, IREX projects draw on multiple tools—education at all levels, independent media, NGO development, and information technologies—to strengthen the power of civil society.

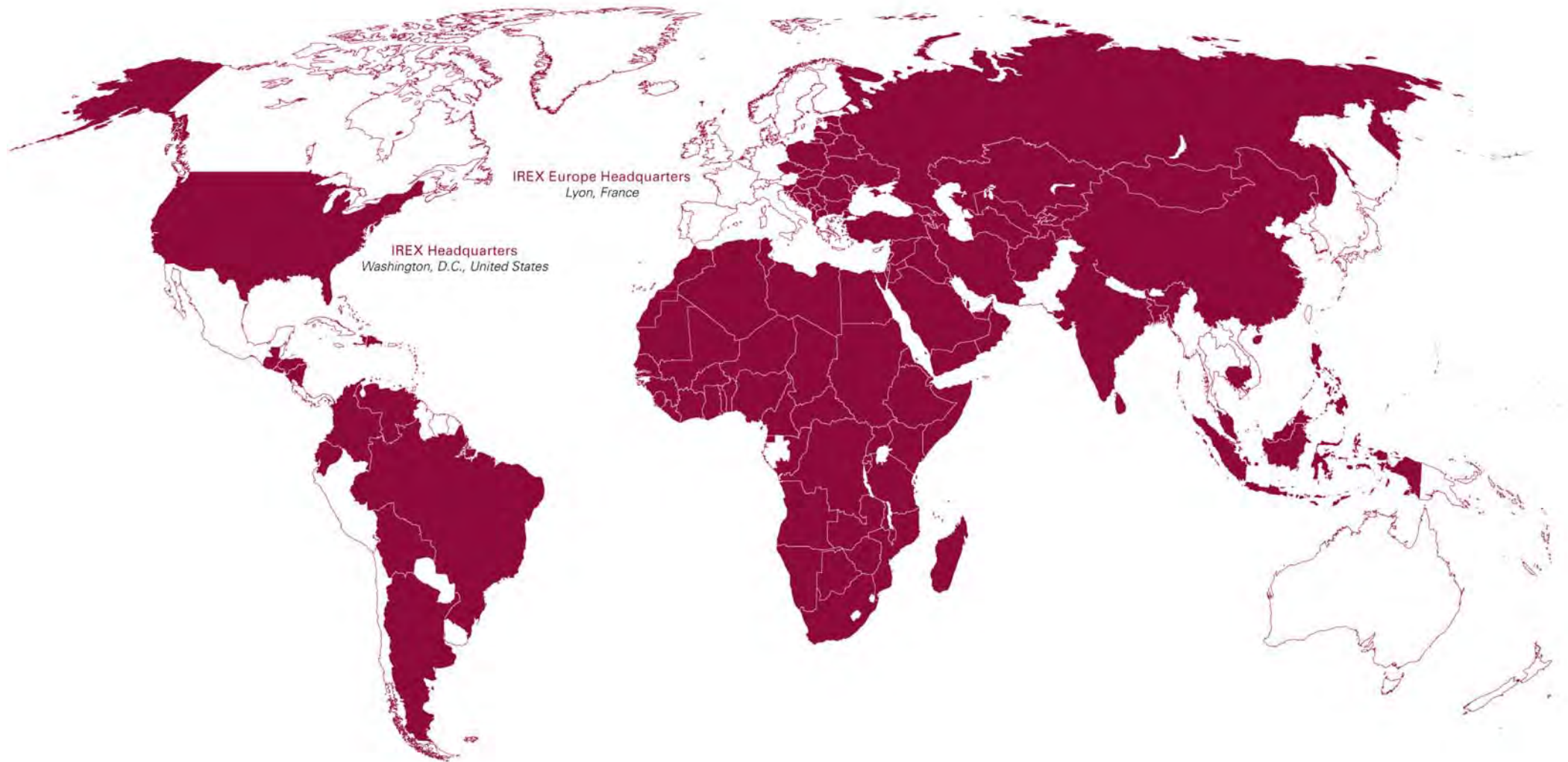
IREX has been successful because of this mutually reinforcing approach. Its current portfolio has grown to over \$50 million. It is active in well over one hundred countries. Among its other successes in the past year alone, IREX has collaborated with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in planning the development of Global Libraries IT projects in Romania and Ukraine, published the first Media Sustainability Index for Sub-Saharan Africa, and expanded its portfolio of teacher programs to Asia, Africa, and Latin America, making IREX a truly global organization.

The world has grown much smaller in the 40 years since IREX was founded, but the need and relevance of IREX's work has not diminished. As the highlights presented here attest, IREX and its partner IREX Europe manage a diverse array of high-impact projects. Although the examples shown here are necessarily only a small portion of the total, they give some idea of the many thousands of lives IREX has touched through its work. Each individual story symbolizes IREX's dedication to making the world a better place through enhanced knowledge and understanding.

Sincerely,

Avis T. Bohlen
Chair of the IREX Board

IREX GLOBAL



Americas

Argentina; Bolivia; Brazil; Colombia;
Dominican Republic; Ecuador; El Salvador;
Guatemala; Haiti; Honduras; Nicaragua;
United States of America; Venezuela

Sub-Saharan Africa

Angola; Benin; Botswana; Burkina Faso;
Burundi; Cameroon; Central African Republic;
Chad; Democratic Republic of the Congo;

Republic of the Congo; Côte d'Ivoire;
Djibouti; Equatorial Guinea; Eritrea;
Ethiopia; Ghana; Guinea; Gambia;
Kenya; Liberia; Madagascar; Malawi;
Mali; Mauritania; Mozambique; Namibia;
Niger; Nigeria; Rwanda; Senegal; Sierra
Leone; Somalia; South Africa; Sudan;
Tanzania; Togo; Uganda; Zambia;
Zimbabwe

Middle East & North Africa

Algeria; Bahrain; Egypt; Iran; Iraq;
Israel; Jordan; Kuwait; Lebanon; Libya;
Morocco; Oman; Qatar; Saudi Arabia;
Syria; Tunisia; United Arab Emirates;
West Bank/Gaza; Yemen

Europe & Eurasia

Albania; Armenia; Azerbaijan; Belarus; Bosnia
and Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Croatia; Czech
Republic; Estonia; Georgia; Hungary;

Kazakhstan; Kosovo; Kyrgyzstan; Latvia;
Lithuania; Macedonia; Moldova; Montenegro;
Poland; Romania; Russian Federation; Serbia;
Slovakia; Slovenia; Tajikistan; Turkey;
Turkmenistan; Ukraine; Uzbekistan

Asia

Afghanistan; Bangladesh; Cambodia; China;
India; Indonesia; Malaysia; Mongolia;
Philippines; Sri Lanka; Timor-Leste



EDUCATION

Education supports economic development, social reform, and civic participation within a society and provides the foundation for tomorrow's leaders. IREX works with individuals, institutions, and governments to expand access to and improve the quality of education worldwide.

IREX takes a comprehensive approach to educational development—designing programs and providing consulting to support lifelong learning starting at the primary and secondary levels, through higher education, and continuing into professional training.

Program areas include educational institution development, pre- and in-service teacher and faculty training, curriculum development, international research and professional fellowships, undergraduate and graduate study abroad, support for youth development, and technology for education.

“I feel that the training has inspired me to spread my wings. I have a real goal now, and, even more importantly, I know how to reach it.”

—Participant in an IREX-designed volunteer-management training in Russia

Indonesian Teacher Passes New Skills to Thousands of Peers

Shortly after completing an IREX teacher training program in the United States, Indonesian English teacher Yuna Kadarisman set out to share her newfound knowledge with her peers in Indonesia’s South Sulawesi province. Yuna, along with other internationally trained teachers, led a series of training workshops on teaching methodology and best practices. The first two workshops alone attracted 1,800 K–12 teachers. Sessions focused on how to motivate students and develop learning tools with limited resources. Content was drawn largely from Yuna’s internship experience at Groves High School (GHS) in Georgia as a fellow on the **International Leaders in Education Program (ILEP)**.

Universities from Eurasia, China, Egypt, and the US Share Best Practices

IREX supports and trains university managers across Russia and its neighbors. Over 100 university and Ministry of Education representatives from nine countries came together in Moscow to discuss models in university quality assurance and faculty development, as part of IREX’s **University Administration Support Program (UASP)**. Participants from Armenia, China, Georgia, Egypt, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Ukraine, and the United States examined important issues in higher education globally.

New Media Resources Modernize Tajik School for the Blind

IREX helps alumni help their communities. Nisso Rahmonova-Stanley, an alumna of the **Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship Program**, coordinated with a Dushanbe school for the visually impaired to improve their resources. Rahmonova, who holds a master’s degree in education from California State University—Chico, developed a project to establish a resource center at the school that would provide audiobooks, CDs, and educational materials printed in Braille. Through an **Alumni Small Grant** and contributions from a Russian publishing house for the blind, Tajik citizens, and the Tajik Embassy in Russia, Rahmonova made the project a reality. She also obtained access to a vast collection of recorded Tajik fairytales, which are played for the children before bedtime.

US Scholars Inform Policy Discussion on Frozen Conflicts

Throughout IREX’s 40 years, it has always facilitated the dialogue between academia and the policy community. The **Regional Policy Symposium on Frozen Conflicts and Unrecognized States in Southeast Europe and Eurasia** brought together American scholars in Washington, DC to engage in discussions and help inform policy recommendations. Addressing tensions on Abkhazia, Kosovo, Nargorno-Karabakh, South Ossetia, and Transnistria, the scholars presented extensive research on regional security, economic trends, and cross-border ethnic issues.



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1 The International Leaders in Education Program (ILEP) brings outstanding secondary teachers from the Middle East, South and Southeast Asia, Africa, and Latin America to the United States to further develop expertise in their subject areas, enhance their teaching skills, and increase their knowledge about the United States.

2 Youth groups in Russia teach peers from other regions how to adapt and develop support services for their local communities.

3 Pre-primary and primary school teachers learn how to integrate lessons on citizenship, civic engagement, human rights, justice, and equality into their classroom as part of the Egypt Civic Education Project.

1958

President Eisenhower and Premier Khrushchev formally agree to scholar exchanges, laying the groundwork for IREX's predecessor, the Inter-University Committee on Travel Grants.

1968

The International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX) is established to consolidate the management and development of exchanges. Support is provided by the Ford Foundation, the American Council of Learned Societies, the Social Science Research Council, and the US State Department.

Initial countries include the Soviet Union, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Romania. Poland and East Germany are added over the next seven years.

The Soviet Union invades Czechoslovakia; IREX remains apolitical and continues conducting exchanges.

1969

IREX manages over 550 exchanges in its first two years.

1979

The USSR invades Afghanistan and the US-Soviet exchange agreement is not renewed. IREX continues programs without a formal agreement.

1983

Following the Soviet downing of a Korean passenger airliner and ensuing diplomatic repercussions, the Soviets recall exchange participants from the United States.

1986

Aleksandr Yakovlev, a 1959 exchange participant, is the first exchange alumnus to be appointed to the Soviet Politburo.

IREX expands regional program activities to include China, Japan, and Mongolia.

1988

Overseas alumni of IREX exchange programs play prominent roles in the struggle to reform social structures.

1989

IREX opens its first field office in Moscow.

1990

IREX links Soviet partners to the American BITNET system, an early network that connects approximately 2,500 computers.

1991

IREX initiates the Modems for Democracy program, providing free internet and e-mail access in Russia and Ukraine.

1994

IREX's presence reaches 16 field offices. Its alumni network includes over 3,000 foreign scholars.

IREX launches the USAID-funded Institutional Partnerships Project (IPP), connecting US universities and NGOs with counterparts in Russia and Ukraine.

1995

IREX begins implementation of the USAID-funded independent media development program ProMedia.

1996

IREX begins administration of US Information Agency's Internet Access and Training Program (IATP).

1997

IREX hosts a training program for senior managers of state-owned enterprises in Shanghai, China.

2001

IREX publishes the first annual Media Sustainability Index for Europe and Eurasia.

2002

IREX holds a conference in Moscow on the freedom and regulation of the internet in Russia, bringing together leading US and Russian policymakers.

IREX assumes administration of the US State Department's FREEDOM Support Act Undergraduate (UGrad) program.

2003

IREX begins administration of the US State Department's US Business Internship Program for Young Middle Eastern Women, its first major program in the region.

2004

IREX Europe is founded.

IREX assumes administration of the US State Department's Edmund S. Muskie Graduate Fellowship program.

IREX begins management of the US State Department's Promoting Transparency through Journalism Education project, its first media program in the Middle East.

2006

IREX publishes the first Media Sustainability Index for the Middle East & North Africa.

2008

IREX begins collaboration with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in planning the rollout of Global Libraries IT projects in Romania and Ukraine.

IREX releases the first Media Sustainability Index for Sub-Saharan Africa.

The IREX-managed Teaching Excellence and Achievement and International Leaders in Education programs expand to Latin America and Africa.



MEDIA DEVELOPMENT

Media informs and engages citizens through the free flow of information, advancing democratic and economic development. A professional media sector builds more transparent and effective governance, promotes fair and open economies, and generates responsible discussion of social and political issues.

IREX works with local partners to advance the professionalism and long-term economic sustainability of newspapers, radio, television, and new media. Working in transitional, conflict and post-conflict, and repressive environments, IREX uses specialized training, tailored consulting, and small grants to build skills for comprehensive and in-depth reporting, better media management, and advocacy for press freedom.



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1 An Iraqi journalist conducts an on-site interview as part of IREX's Support for Independent Media in Iraq (SIMI) training, hosted by the Erbil Technical Institute. Practical, hands-on training is crucial to improving journalism skills.



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2 IREX works with professionals in radio, television, print, and internet media for the Media Sustainability Index. Sophisticated commercial and state radio stations are a major source of news and information for Africans.



3

3 Bahraini blogger Mahmoud Al-Yousef vlogs part of his presentation on creating a dynamic and interesting blog at the Citizen Journalism Workshop in Morocco, organized by IREX.

"It is not so much whether you speak in Serbian or Albanian. It is how you use the language that counts, whether it brings you closer together or splits you apart."—Milan Joksimovic, participant in an interethnic journalism training for Serbs and Albanians

New Media Reshaping Journalism in the Middle East

New media has been reshaping the journalism landscape in the Middle East. IREX provides assistance to media outlets, bloggers, and journalists to enhance their use of these new methods to advance the professional quality of information that citizens receive, and interact with, through blogs and vlogs, microblogs, social networking sites, and online video and audio. IREX has conducted citizen journalism workshops, journalism and blogging trainings, and support for Web TV initiatives under the **Media Development Program (MDP)** and the **Partnership Program for Democracy and Governance (PPDG)** in Egypt, the **Jordan Media Strengthening Program (JMSP)**, and the **MENA MEDIA** project.

Media Sustainability Index Documents Challenges Facing African Media

Covering 37 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, the inaugural edition of the Media Sustainability Index (MSI) for Africa represents the most comprehensive study of African media available. First launched by IREX in 2001 as a tool to assess the state of media in any country, the three most recent MSI editions (Europe & Eurasia, Middle East & North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa), together cover more than 80 countries. The Africa study revealed some common findings across countries, such as a relationship between professional journalism and the financial and managerial footing of media outlets. In particular, a lack of financial strength at media outlets results

in low (and sometimes no) pay for journalists, in turn resulting in news and information that is vulnerable to political or business interests.

Russian Journalism Professors Strive to End Media Isolation of Disabled

To address the lack of media coverage of the disabled in Russia, Varvara Kapatsynskaya, professor of journalism at Nizhny Novgorod University, and her colleagues have added social journalism courses to one school of journalism and plan to do so across Russia. The faculty has looked abroad for guidance, with the assistance of the **International Media Partnerships Program (IMPP)**. Following an online conference with a leading US media and disability expert, four professors from Russia visited City University of New York's (CUNY) disability studies and journalism programs to learn teaching strategies firsthand.

Innovative Website Creates Online Election Center for Armenia

The **Core Media Support Program for Armenia (CMSPA)** helped Armenian journalists develop a website as a clearinghouse for quality elections articles and photos, coverage guidelines, and elections information in Russian, Armenian, and English. Utilizing this content, IREX also produced a voter's guide and election supplement for Armenian newspapers. Both products contained articles and info-graphics from the website, a comparison of candidates' platforms, and information on voters' rights and obligations.



CIVIL SOCIETY

Civil society development engages citizens, nongovernmental organizations, and government bodies to work in partnership to improve their communities and foster good governance.

IREX adapts its approach and training to meet the specific local needs of a community, integrating targeted activities for underrepresented populations, including youth, ethnic minorities, individuals with HIV/AIDS, and people with disabilities. Program areas include citizen participation and advocacy, community and social development, association building and networking, organizational capacity building, technology access and training, and women's empowerment.

“I now understood that the issue of tolerance is not about trying to be alike, but about learning from each other’s differences.”—15-year-old Sasha, Participant in an interethnic summer camp in the North Caucasus

Sunni and Alawite Lebanese Youth Come Together to Improve Local Governance

In Tripoli, Lebanon, IREX conducted a community accountability and good governance workshop that attracted 40 Sunni and Alawite youth. The **Youth and Civil Society Leadership (YCSL)** program’s ability to bridge sectarian divides in one of the most violent areas of Lebanon caught the attention of national media. YCSL provides small grants and advocacy training to support youth activism, empowering local youth to create sustainable mechanisms to monitor local government and advocate for improved governance. By supporting collaborative projects that cross religious and ethnic boundaries at the local level, IREX is working to help repair both the physical and political damage of recent conflicts.

Sports Camp Unites Youth in North Caucasus

Over 100 young men and women from 25 ethnic groups gathered in Stavropolski Krai, Russia to build tolerance and foster cross-cultural communication. The camp was organized by IREX as part of the **Youth Initiative for Promoting Peace in the North Caucasus (YIPP)**. IREX recruited participants from villages in six regions: Chechnya, Dagestan, Kabardino-Balkaria, Karachaevo-Cherkessia, Adygeia, and Stavropolski Krai. The schedule included workshops on community leadership, volunteering, and communication; sports tournaments; and recreational activities such as cultural performances that allowed delegates to share their traditions.

Bosnian Imam Gains Interfaith Understanding in US

Religion teacher and Imam Haris Gorak of Bosnia & Herzegovina notes his two greatest experiences in the US were the opportunity to share his beliefs through delivery of Friday prayers and the interfaith understanding he acquired as an exchange participant on the **Faith & Community: a Dialogue** program. The program provides opportunities for religious youth leaders (clerics, educators, community leaders) of Bosnia & Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, and the United States to promote religious tolerance and understanding through exchange visits, online activities, and micro-grants for community projects. Haris was part of a delegation that discussed tactics for interfaith understanding with each other and American groups that promote religious tolerance.

Turkmen Girls Strengthen IT and Leadership Skills in Peers

Jennet and Maya, two Turkmen college students, volunteered to train Ashgabat-area youth in computer graphics and leadership, skills they acquired through IREX’s **Tech Age Girls (TAG)** project. TAG utilizes technology to identify and develop future leaders in places where girls often do not have the same opportunities as boys. Many TAG alumni lead trainings themselves, introducing practical IT skills from basic word processing to advanced graphic design, as well as life skills that build their self-confidence and leadership abilities. Originally begun in Uzbekistan in 2005, TAG has since expanded to Azerbaijan, Moldova, Turkmenistan, and Ukraine.



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- 1 IREX’s Egyptian partner works on an action plan for opening a community computer center in Minya as part of the Young Women’s Leadership Program (YWLP) in Egypt. YWLP builds the professional and leadership skills of young women, empowering them to play active roles in the private, public, and civil society sectors.
- 2 Pensioners and other citizens of Sulina, Romania learn IT skills at an internet center established in the local library as part of the Global Libraries project, which is establishing similar centers throughout the country.
- 3 Youth from across the North Caucasus participate in a team-building exercise during an interethnic summer camp.

IREX EUROPE

Founded in 2004, IREX Europe is registered in France and derives its founding principles from IREX. IREX Europe and IREX share resources and skills for the benefit of people striving to live in fairer, freer, and more prosperous societies. IREX Europe draws from an extensive pool of development professionals and consultant experts for its training, partnership, education, research, and grant projects in Africa, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East.

Yemeni Factory Worker Becomes Influential Teacher

Young women are securing professional, economic, and leadership opportunities that were unobtainable before their participation in the **Young Women's Leadership Program (YWLP)** in Yemen. One of them, Enas Nathier Kalusi, was tired of working in a factory and dreamed of becoming a teacher. When rejected for a teaching position, she applied to YWLP, a rigorous two-year program. Enas now says that the courses on communication, leadership, English, and NGO operations changed her life and empowered her to envision greater options for her future. After completing the program, she was awarded a job managing a virtual exchange program at the very school that originally declined her teacher's application.

Mobile Cinema Brings Constructive Dialogue to Bangladesh

The **Bangladesh Mobile Documentary Cinema on Democracy and Islam** project produced a film featuring young Bangladeshis describing what drives young people toward extremism. The documentary was taken around the country and shown outdoors in public areas to capacity crowds, reaching more than 90,000 villagers in rural communities. Each presentation of the 45-minute film was followed by a moderated discussion. Following the success in Bangladesh, IREX Europe adapted the film for a British Bangladeshi audience and showed the film across Britain.



Young Bangladeshis participate in a moderated discussion about democracy and Islam, after viewing a documentary on the topic. IREX Europe produced the film and showed it in villages throughout the country.

CORPORATE INFORMATION

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Larry Birch
Director of Development

Robert P. Cronin
Director of Civil Society Development Programs

Joyce Warner
Director of Education Programs

Mark Whitehouse
Director of Media Development Programs

IREX EUROPE

Michael de Villiers
Director

Drusilla Menaker
Associate Director

Dalen Todd
Finance Director

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IREX

2121 K Street, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20037
Tel: (202) 628-8188
Fax: (202) 628-8189
E-mail: info@irex.org
www.irex.org