

IFLA Committee on Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (FAIFE)

ANNUAL REPORT 2003

SUMMARY

The focus of FAIFE's professional activities in 2003 has been in such noticeable area as: The development of the second IFLA/FAIFE World Report *Intellectual Freedom in the Information Society, Libraries and the Internet* that was launched at the IFLA World Library and Information Congress in Berlin and covers now 86 countries; Implementation of IFLA policies, the FAIFE programme and other FAIFE activities at the IFLA World Congress in Berlin August 2003; working relations with former East European countries; and establishing stronger bonds with Africa.

In August Professor Paul Sturges of Loughborough University, the UK was appointed new Chair of the IFLA/FAIFE Committee and a new Advisory Board was likewise appointed in August. In November IFLA sent a call for nominations for the IFLA/FAIFE Committee 2004-2007 - this call is open for Association and Institutional members.

A new strategic plan covering 2004 and 2005 has been developed. Identifying three key areas and prioritising related activities, the plan has become a more manageable tool for FAIFE.

All IFLA Core Activities are to be evaluated. FAIFE has agreed to start the process with a self-assessment and function as pilot project. The process stated in November 2003 and the Governing Board of IFLA will discuss the self-assessment in March 2004 followed by a peer review that will be ready for the Governing Board meeting in Buenos Aires August 2004.

Our PhD project entitled: and co-sponsored by the Royal Danish School of Library and Information Science, will be completed by the end of October 2004.

FAIFE's involvement in the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) process had to slow down in 2003 due to lack of resources.

Also in 2003, the Office had to concentrate many resources on funding activities. We have been seeking financial support to cover the costs of administration, a full time investigator/editor and special projects such as the World Report. Members of the FAIFE Committee, IFLA Headquarters as well as other supporters have been very helpful identifying possible sponsors and we are immensely grateful for all their support.

This report will discuss the past year's achievements on basis of priorities and resources available. For further information see also the FAIFE office report to the Committee August 2003.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

FAIFE is an initiative within IFLA to defend and promote the basic human rights defined

in Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The FAIFE Committee and Office further free access to information and freedom of expression in all aspects, directly or indirectly, related to library and information services.

FAIFE monitors the state of intellectual freedom within the library and information community worldwide, supports IFLA policy development and cooperation with other international human rights organisations, and responds to violations of free access to information and freedom of expression.

MISSION

The IFLA Core Activity Free Access to Information and Freedom of Expression (IFLA/FAIFE) derives directly from the IFLA Statutes in addressing intellectual freedom and barriers to freedom of access to information and freedom of expression. The main objective is to ensure that library users around the world may *"seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers"*.

IFLA/FAIFE's mandate is consequently drawn from Article 19 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Everyone has the right to freedom of expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

IFLA/FAIFE operates independently and does not support any specific political, economic or other special interests except the promotion and defence of intellectual freedom through unrestricted access to information regardless of media.

ORGANISATION

As an IFLA Core Activity, FAIFE is organised with a Chair, Advisory Board and Committee. The IFLA Executive Board appoints Chair and members for a period of three years with the possibility of re-appointment for a second term.

ADVISORY BOARD

The Advisory Board is to advocate the work of IFLA/FAIFE, assist in fund-raising activities, and act as an executive committee. The Advisory Board works mainly through e-mail correspondence, meets twice during the IFLA congresses, and holds another two meetings during the year. In August 2003 at the IFLA World Congress in Berlin, the Governing Board appointed Professor Paul Sturges as new chair of FAIFE. A new FAIFE Advisory Board was also appointed and the Office wish to thank the former Chair and Board for excellent cooperation and commitment: Alex Byrne, Marianna Tax Choldin, Winnie Vitzansky and Borge Sorensen. The members of the new Advisory Board are: Paul Sturges (Chair) of the United Kingdom, Frode Bakken of Norway, Barbara Schleihagen of Germany, Bob McKee of the United Kingdom and Ellen Tise of South Africa as IFLA Governing Board representative. Susanne Seidelin provides the secretariat. The new Advisory Board had its first meeting in December 2003 in The Hague and decided to hold its future meetings at the time of the IFLA Governing Board meetings in The Hague.

COMMITTEE

Presently, the IFLA/FAIFE Committee has 23 members. In November IFLA issued a call for nominations for the period 2004-2007. The Governing Board decided that the call should be open for both Association and Institutional members of IFLA. The term of office will be three years, renewable once. Members can thus serve on the Committee for six years. Members are expected to take part in the business and professional meetings of the Committee during IFLA congresses, to report authoritatively on the state-of-the-affairs in their own country, actively promote freedom of access to information and freedom of expression issues and be willing and able to contribute to the work of the committee in between congresses.

The Committee holds two annual business meetings during IFLA Congresses. Further to this, the new Advisory Board has decided to hold a mid-term meeting as well. Although this may not be financially feasible for all members, it would help advance the cooperation within the committee.

The success of FAIFE depends on close working relations between Committee, Chair and Office. To further relations and advance some of our major projects, work teams have been established to cover the following tasks: IFLA/FAIFE World report Series; FAIFE programme development for IFLA general congresses; and development and implementation of the IFLA Internet Manifesto and future guidelines. This working method helps improve the involvement of members and allows interested colleagues from outside of FAIFE to join our work. Like the committee, the teams communicate mainly through email but in addition to this, all work teams have face-to-face meetings during the IFLA congresses.

OFFICE

The Office is responsible for the daily operation of FAIFE. Besides administrative issues, economy, fundraising and strategic development and action plans, the office operates within the three key areas of attention identified by the Committee in August 2003: Education, Advocacy and Intervention.

The development of the IFLA/FAIFE World Report Series, the FAIFE programme at IFLA congresses, submission of articles, papers and other special reports are examples of activities connected to the educational aspects of FAIFE's work.

These activities are also connected with the second key area of attention, advocacy, which involves the development of IFLA policy related to freedom of access to information issues, including advocating for the adoption, translation and implementation of these policies by national library associations and other bodies. The sharing of interim PhD results is another example.

Chair and Office, members of the Committee and PhD student represent IFLA/FAIFE - or IFLA - at conferences and meetings on issues relating to intellectual freedom. The third area of attention, intervention, concerns responding to violations of intellectual freedom and libraries. To respond to reported incidents, the Chair, Office and IFLA Headquarters work closely together.

FINANCIAL VIABILITY

By end of the year, FAIFE received a response regarding our 2003 application from

DANIDA. Apologising for the late response, the agency stated that the projects FAIFE is engaged in are interesting but DANIDA grants to support organisations and projects such as FAIFE are limited. Therefore it would be difficult for DANIDA to grant future applications. Consequently, it would not be possible for the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs to support FAIFE.

In 2003 FAIFE received grants from the following donors: The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA); the Swedish Library Association; the Danish IFLA97 Committee; the Dutch library community: Bibliotheek der Rijksuniversiteit; Overijsselse Bibliotheek Dienst; Dutch National Association of Public Libraries (NBLC); and Universiteitsbibliotheek Nijmegen; and IFLA. All these initiatives have been very helpful and encouraging.

The agreement with SIDA expired at the end of 2003. It has been prolonged until the end of 2004 and the remaining part of the 2001-2003 grants will be made available at the beginning of 2004. FOBID, the Dutch Library Umbrella has generously decided to contribute to FAIFE in the form of an annual amount of EUR 10.000 over five years commencing on 1 January 2004. However, the grant would not be sufficient to safeguard economy and activities at the present level. At its first meeting on 2 December 2003, the new Advisory Board debated the financial situation of FAIFE at length; concluding that without additional funding the economic resources would run out around August 2004. In a letter to the Executive Committee of IFLA, the Chair has been informed of the economic situation. The letter states that, based on income that can definitely be anticipated, the most reliable estimate of the income of FAIFE from all sources during 2004 is close to 100,000 EUR; whereas the minimum of expenditure is close to 140,000 EUR. The Chair concludes that unless new sources of finance are made available for 2004, FAIFE will no longer be able to meet its financial obligations from about the time of the World Congress in Buenos Aires onwards. However, the remaining SIDA grant was smaller than expected so the estimated income for 2004 is around 56,000 EUR and the budget has been revised accordingly to estimated expenditures close to 128,000 EUR. Only by spending all core activity funds will FAIFE be able to meet its obligations in 2004.

The Secretary General of IFLA and the director had a meeting with SIDA in December 2003. The result was that SIDA expects a joint application from the ALP and FAIFE Core Activities in May. If the outcome of the application is positive, a new contract may be signed and made effective from August 2004.

A possible a new agreement with SIDA together with the FOBID and IFLA contributions would hopefully safeguard the activities at the present level but it is unsure whether SIDA's possible contribution would make room for the most needed new activities such as an investigation and monitoring unit and editorial help for the World Report Series.

Loosing a main sponsor such as DANIDA has placed FAIFE in a very vulnerable position. Instead of the anticipated safeguard of finances and professional achievements 2001-2003, much time has been devoted to funding activities - so far with no substantial results that would match the former DANIDA contribution. The newly established IFLA Blue Funding Ribbon Committee would propose a broader strategic funding approach for IFLA, including the Core Activities, but realistically results in terms of a substantial grant for FAIFE cannot be immediately expected. As per February 2004 FAIFE's economy is fragile and the lack of adequate funding is the main threat to

FAIFE's existence, or rather to IFLA's active engagement in intellectual freedom issues.

ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Most of the resources available in 2003 were reserved for current expenses. Neither economic or staff resources allowed for as high a level of activities as we would have wished for. The lack of DANIDA or other substantial additional funding has affected otherwise needed initiatives and actions. Funding initiatives and an increasing number of administrative tasks, such as the new half-yearly returns, require resources that could have been devoted to professional activities - especially in the light of only one full time position being available to run the office and undertake projects and actions.

WORLD REPORT 2003

The development of the second IFLA/FAIFE World Report *Intellectual Freedom in the Information Society, Libraries and the Internet* was made possible by the invaluable help of our PhD student. For the last three years, a FAIFE publication has been launched at the IFLA world congress providing excellent opportunities to advocate freedom of access to information issues during congress and at the press conferences. This was also the case at the IFLA World Library and Information Congress in Berlin where the good news was that the World Report now covers 86 countries compared to 46 in 2001 - the number of countries submitting to the report has almost doubled.

A questionnaire that allows for follow up on specific topics in future reports has been developed and gradually the World Report Series will become the important information source we intend it to be. The questionnaire was submitted to IFLA membership organisations in 157 countries and the report is based on their contributions. It discusses the digital divide, filtering and blocking of information, user privacy, financial and other barriers to Internet access as well as intellectual freedom and professional ethics and codes of conduct. It took two and a half years to produce the first report, now FAIFE manage to publish a world report every second year and a theme report in interim years. A plan to support development, sales, and marketing will be developed and is likely to recommend that the series becomes part of the IFLA green series publications. Though not yet a landmark achievement, the world report series has become a flagship.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Like many other organisations IFLA is facing the challenge of how to implement new policies efficiently. For that reason, another focal point of the *World Report 2003* is the adoption and implementation of The *IFLA Internet Manifesto* and the *Glasgow Declaration*. Over the years, FAIFE has contributed to the development of IFLA policy papers. Furthermore, FAIFE has also discussed how best to further the implementation of new policies. The Section of Management of Library Associations (MLA) was identified as the body to address in this connection. On the initiative of Winnie Vitzansky, the issue was discussed at the MLA meeting in March 2003. The view was that library associations should more directly be involved in the promotion and advocacy of IFLA politics implementation. However, the IFLA/FAIFE World Report 2003 addresses the issue as well. Questions on the status of national library association implementation of

the IFLA Internet Manifesto and the Glasgow Declaration are included. The result covers 79 of the 88 contributing countries. 24 countries have adopted and another 36 intend to adopt the Internet Manifesto in the next two years. The result regarding the Glasgow Declaration covers 82 countries, 20 of these have adopted while another 44 intend to adopt in the next two years. To date the declaration has been translated into eight languages, including the Danish and Serbian translations in 2003.

Considering that the survey only covers 58% of IFLA membership countries we are facing a challenge on how best to promote and further the implementation process. The next World Report will follow up on this issue. More translations of the IFLA Glasgow Declaration and The Internet Manifesto have been published in 2003, and we have noted an increasing interest in intellectual freedom issues and codes of ethics from the international library community. Reference: <http://archive.ifla.org/faife/faifenews.htm>

FAIFE IN BERLIN

FAIFE has become a very active part of IFLA World Congresses and through an engaging programme we have been able to raise our profile. Considering our resources, FAIFE programmes and other activities are extensive and attract much attention and many participants.

This was also the case in Berlin: The FAIFE open session debated the issue: *The Information Society in the Aftermath of 11th September*. Kay Raseroka, Alex Byrne and Stuart Hamilton presented papers that inspired the more than 250 participants in a lively debate. Further to this, IFLA's Editorial Committee for Publication has recently selected Stuart Hamilton's paper for publication in IFLA Journal in September 2004. Stuart Hamilton also held two Round Tables to discuss Internet accessibility issues providing input to his PhD project. FAIFE and the Libraries for Children and Young Adults Section arranged a joint workshop entitled: *Children's' libraries ensuring access to information and creating a culture of understanding in a world of violence and conflict* - the majority of participants gave very positive feedback whereas others regarded both papers and debate as too emotional and of too low quality. Our joint full day workshop with LTR: *The librarian - the key to open and closed collections: Issues on ethics and librarianship* proved a very interesting day with highly qualified speakers and papers. More information on <http://archive.ifla.org/faife/papers/conf/conf.htm>

At the IFLA press conference, the World Report 2003 was launched and freedom of access to information issues debated and reported in the media afterwards. During congress the impact of the US Patriot Act was debated both within and outside of the USA. At the FAIFE Committee meeting a resolution on the issue was debated, and at the Council meeting Al Kagan submitted a resolution on National Security Legislation for adoption. To this end IFLA has requested that national association members take steps to implement the resolution and in particular report on the actions taken and any outcomes to FAIFE. We are sorry to report that to date only a few members have done so. For the second time in three years, FAIFE was invited to report at the Nordic Caucus. Apart from the Committee, Advisory Board and work teams meetings, meetings on issues such as the SCECSAL Internet Manifesto workshop, cooperation with British Council, the proposed Israel/Palestine mission, WSIS Pre Conference III were arranged and further to this the office met with the incoming Chair and other key persons.

In Berlin we also departed with the Chair of the Committee and Advisory Board Alex

Byrne and with the FAIFE Advisory Board. For six years Alex dedicated his time, energy and commitment to FAIFE and so did our strong supporters in the Advisory Board: Marianna Tax Choldin, Borge Sorensen and Winnie Vitzansky. The office would wish to thank them all for their hard work.

INCIDENTS AND MISSIONS

Also in 2003 many office resources were concentrated on funding activities. For this reason, our investigation and monitoring capacities have been lower than intended. During 2003, FAIFE has responded to six reported incidents and violations of freedom of access to information including further work on the proposed mission to Israel and Palestine and a special meeting for the interested parties in Berlin. Once again Cuba and the USA were in focus but also the situation in Turkey has proved worrying. To this end FAIFE and International Publishers Association (IPA) have been working together - and a student at Loughborough University in the UK is currently investigating Internet accessibility in the country.

More information on <http://archive.ifla.org/faife/faifenews.htm>

For the second year in a row, there is no progress to report with regards to the joint IFLA/UNESCO library mission to Afghanistan. In 2002, FAIFE formulated a project proposal on the re-construction and development of public, school and university libraries and library services in Afghanistan. The project was accepted by the Afghan government but still no funding has been made available. The project included a mission to the country, and two IFLA/FAIFE experts have been willing to join an UNESCO Team Mission on Education since March 2002. IFLA, UNESCO and the Nordic library organisations involved further debated the project proposal regarding the proposed mission to Israel and Palestine at a meeting in Berlin August 2003. The proposal includes a general assessment of the situation for libraries in the area, proposals for any immediate action, which may be required, and recommendations to IFLA and UNESCO on longer-term actions. IFLA is currently awaiting a response from UNESCO.

NEW BONDS

2003 offered excellent opportunities to establish closer working relations with Eastern European countries. Both Stuart Hamilton and Susanne Seidelin gave papers at an international conference discussing intellectual freedom and libraries in Belgrade. The conference will assumedly be followed-up by two workshops in 2004. Also the contact with colleagues in Kosovo has been re-established and a cooperation programme is under development.

A workshop at the African SCECSAL conference is planned for July 2004 and provides opportunities to further our relations with the region. The aim of the workshop is to discuss and give input to the possible development of IFLA/UNESCO Internet Manifesto Guidelines.

FAIFE is receiving more requests for help and consultation on intellectual freedom matters as well as a growing interest from university students who intend to write theses on subjects relevant to the work of FAIFE. This development is very encouraging and proves that - despite a lack of resources - FAIFE is gaining more internal attention.

Chair, office and our PhD student have participated in meetings and conferences around

the world to discuss and promote freedom of access to information and freedom of expression issues.

STRATEGIC PLAN 2004-2005

The new strategy and action plan 2004-2005 was debated at the Committee meeting in Berlin and at the Advisory Board meeting in December 2003. It has been submitted to the Professional Committee and Governing Board of IFLA. The plan identifies three key areas of attention - Advocacy, Education and Intervention - and under these headings related actions to take are listed and prioritised, such as the establishment of a monitoring and investigation capacity and more research projects as a first step. Those capacities would provide invaluable information regarding the state of intellectual freedom and libraries - only a small portion of incidents and violations come to our knowledge whereas the list of countries where violations of human rights including that of freely accessing information is long. Also the implementation of the alert manual would further a more strategic approach to responses to violations. The plan is available on <http://archive.ifla.org/faife/faifenews.htm>

EVALUATION OF FAIFE

The evaluation of FAIFE is the first of its kind and is therefore considered a pilot project that is supposed to provide input into methodology and the evaluation process in general. As the first period of the self-assessment concentrated on methodological considerations and development of tools for the evaluation, the Governing Board of IFLA decided to prolong the self-assessment period until 25 February 2004 and the peer review is to be discussed at its meeting in Buenos Aires.

Evaluation themes

Given the importance of the web as communication tool an evaluation of the Core Activity web pages of IFLANET should be considered essential and included in the Core Activity evaluations - either as part of the individual evaluations, or as a project of its own. It is likely that such evaluations would also add valuable input to the general development of IFLANET. A professional evaluation of the web presentations would be preferable but few Core activities would have the economic means to contract a consultant, which may point to a broader IFLA project paid for by central funds. However, other solutions are at hand. In the case of FAIFE, we have been able to establish cooperation with Corina Possee of Loughborough University, the UK, who has submitted an independent evaluation of FAIFE's web site presentation as part of her Final Year Dissertation. We have supported the development of the project description but have otherwise stated that a totally independent review is required.

Evaluation tools

To evaluate "the extent to which FAIFE has fulfilled the expectations held for it in terms of completion of planned actions, outcomes against Activity goals, financial viability, impact within IFLA and impact beyond IFLA", no specific method has been suggested. Assuming that IFLA would prefer compatible evaluations of Core Activities, FAIFE has developed a questionnaire that includes a SWOT analysis and the most essential strategic questions facing the Core Activity. The Core Activities have been in operation for periods of varying length, therefore a specific period of time should be identified for the evaluation - long enough to provide a reliable picture of activities and results to decide for the future, but otherwise excluding history unless it is necessary for the

understanding of the present. The Advisory Board has therefore suggested a time frame of three years to be appropriate.

The evaluation process provides a most welcome opportunity for IFLA to debate and prioritise its engagement in intellectual freedom issues.

WORLD SUMMIT ON THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

Being involved in the UNESCO World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) preparatory meetings and activities, FAIFE has helped advocate the role of libraries in the information society and the inclusion of Article 19 of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights as a core value of the WSIS declaration. The Chair and Director have worked closely together with the IFLA Secretary General and the Coordinator of Professional Activities to prepare papers for submission to the WSIS preparatory meetings. To further advocate IFLA core values, FAIFE undertook the role of moderator and reporter of one of the UNESCO online Discussion Forum teams. A general report on the forum's recommendations to the WSIS general statement and action plan was submitted to the WSIS Executive Secretariat in Geneva in January 2004. Two key IFLA policy statements both prepared by FAIFE: The Glasgow Declaration and the Internet Manifesto are referred to in IFLA's WSIS contributions underlining the federation's commitment to intellectual freedom. FAIFE Chair and Director have further contributed to the WSIS process as members of the official IFLA delegation in Geneva. However, following a year where many resources were spent on WSIS activities, the office in 2003 had to slow down its engagement as a member of the official IFLA delegation and as representative at WSIS meetings. The office now provides inputs to the delegation via email correspondence and has limited its direct participation to activities in the Danish WSIS network that includes the Danish UNESCO National Committee.

THE INTERNET AND FREEDOM OF ACCESS TO INFORMATION

FAIFE's investment in the PhD project has been very beneficial in terms of quality research work and new international contacts both in and outside the international library community. In 2003 Stuart Hamilton presented his project at various international conferences and seminars raising awareness of the important role of libraries in providing Internet accessible information - often to an audience unfamiliar with the capacity of libraries. Within the library community his presentations have likewise been an eye opener in regard to global access in general and implementation of the Internet in libraries. The project entitled: To what extent can libraries provide free equal and unhampered access to Internet accessible information resources on a global scale? will be completed on time by the end of October 2004.

In December 2003, we got permission to publish a research project in a related area: *Internet and Freedom of Expression - a European master degree in human rights and democratization* - by Ms Rikke Frank Jorgensen.

As mentioned in the paragraph on the World Report 2003, national library associations have adopted the IFLA Internet Manifesto. Also more translations of the document were submitted in 2003 including Arabic, Chinese, Danish and Serbian. The English version has at present been translated into 14 languages.

As earlier indicated, a workshop at the African SCECSAL conference July 2004 will

discuss the manifesto and provide input to the possible development of IFLA/UNESCO Internet Manifesto Guidelines.

CONCLUSION

As we are close to the deadline of the FAIFE self-assessment that will be handed over to the Governing Board of IFLA by 25 February 2004, we will refer to this evaluation regarding further conclusions of the 2003 achievements. The self-assessment will evaluate our activities and achievements over the last three years. More importantly though, it will discuss the strategic challenges that FAIFE is facing, including a possible move of activities to IFLA Headquarters, and describe our visions. The over all challenge is, of course, the frail economy that prevents not only the tasks and activities already identified from being carried out, but more significantly the most needed developments that must happen if we are to go deeper into our core objectives.

As said on many occasions, after nearly six years of operation, FAIFE has demonstrated that it plays a necessary and growing role within IFLA but also that currently available resources are insufficient. As FAIFE activities become more widely known, and expectations, commitments and workload tend to grow.

The self-assessment and the following peer evaluation provide the opportunity for IFLA to consider its priorities in regard to this work. It is time to restate what we mean by claiming that freedom of access to information is at the heart of IFLA objectives.

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