



Annual Report 2009

International Service for Human Rights

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Introduction

On the heels of the previous year's efforts to reduce costs while providing a robust level of services to human rights defenders, 2009 marked a year of continued consolidation for the International Service for Human Rights (ISHR) in which a number of investments of time and resources were made to enable us to move ahead boldly in the years to come. We undertook a major evaluation of the *Strategic and Action Plan, 2006-2009* with the feedback of former participants of our training programmes. Forty percent responded, out of hundreds approached. Eighty-one percent declared they used ISHR publications in their work; 65.5% the website; 40% the UN human rights system (very shortly after an ISHR training). Thus, the practical nature and success of ISHR in encouraging the engagement by human rights defenders of the UN human rights system was clearly demonstrated.

The lessons learned from this evaluation informed our reflection and development of the new *Strategic and Action Plan 2010-12*. Copies of this forward-looking document are available upon request.

While continuing to monitor almost all sessions of the UN Human Rights Council, the treaty monitoring bodies, the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), and the General Assembly's Third Committee, ISHR moved away from exhaustive reporting on events and towards more timely, targeted, and analytical reporting on developments within the UN human rights system. This decision was made in answer to the expressed wishes of human rights defenders for information which would better enable them to make interventions and, more generally, effectively use the UN human rights system to address the actual needs of the victims they represent. ISHR also continued to refine and improve the long-standing Advanced Geneva Training Courses (anglophone and francophone), as well as one for defenders from East Asia.

ISHR's ongoing commitment to provide practical trainings and workshops to hundreds of human rights defenders in Asia and Africa on how to effectively engage the UN human rights system continued unabated. The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and the Asia Pacific Forum on National Human Rights Institutions remain the main fora for ISHR's work at the regional level. ISHR also sent staff to contribute to the training of defenders at regional workshops in the Middle East and South America. ISHR continued its robust support for the UN Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders and the African Commission's Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders, while working to increase access of defenders to these useful mechanisms.

On 31 December 2009, ISHR's Director, Ms Isabelle Scherer, left the organisation. We wish to thank her very much for the many contributions she made to ISHR and, more broadly, to the human rights movement.

We also wish to thank you for your continued support for ISHR. Without it, our mission to support the engagement of human rights defenders with the UN and regional human rights systems and, in turn, to make these systems more effective, more accessible to human rights defenders, and more responsive to their concerns would be not be possible.

International Service for Human Rights

Background

ISHR Strategic and Action Plan

In 2009, ISHR was in the fourth year of implementation of its *Strategic and Action Plan, 2006-2009*. The plan set six strategic priorities for the four years, to:

1. Contribute to the empowerment of human rights defenders and to promote the development, use and effectiveness of international, regional and national mechanisms for their protection;
2. Promote the use and effectiveness of international, regional and national mechanisms for their protection;
3. Promote the use and effectiveness of regional human rights law and mechanisms and the cross-fertilisation of experiences across international and regional human rights systems;
4. Collaborate with national human rights institutions in strengthening and building their capacity, especially in effectively protecting human rights defenders, and in enhancing their use by human rights defenders and their links with international and regional human rights mechanisms;
5. Facilitate strategic collaboration among human rights non-governmental organizations and their participation in international and regional mechanisms;
6. Carry out advocacy and develop policy on issues that affect human rights protection systems and the work of human rights defenders where there is an identified need and our participation adds value.

To pursue these strategic priorities the Plan identifies the following five activity areas:

- Information;
- Education and training;
- Human rights defenders;
- Internships;
- Liaison, coordination and advocacy.

Each year, ISHR formulates an annual Activity Plan that more specifically implements the *Strategic and Action Plan, 2006-2009*. This 2009 *Annual Report* should be read in conjunction with the *Strategic and Action Plan 2006-2009* and the *Activity Plan 2009*. It describes the specific activities of the fourth and final year of implementation of the four-year Plan by activity and administrative area. It also sets forth, for each activity area, some of the lessons we have learned in implementing the Plan.

International Human Rights Defenders Programme, Geneva

Information

Main activities and achievements

In 2009, ISHR continued to monitor the meetings of all main UN human rights mechanisms in Geneva and New York, including the Human Rights Council, the Universal Periodic Review, the Human Rights Council Advisory Committee and the treaty bodies. However, ISHR streamlined its reporting in 2009 following continuing evaluations and an internal assessment of the best use of resources. The results of these changes are explained in each case below. Evaluations continue to show that ISHR is improving the quality of its publications by moving away from descriptive or narrative reporting towards a more analytical model, focusing on the relevance of developments in the UN human rights system to NGOs and national human rights institutions.

ISHR continued to monitor the sessions of the UN **Human Rights Council** (the Council) in detail in 2009, although it was decided that ISHR would discontinue its Daily Updates in favour of shorter reports by thematic items under discussion. These reports were also accompanied by timely news updates distributed by email. Other forms of reporting included a Council Alert, which was circulated to our email distribution list in order to highlight in advance the issues that were likely to be discussed at upcoming sessions and the opportunities for NGO engagement; and a final critical analysis of the sessions which focused on the outcomes of the session and their impact on the promotion and protection of human rights.

In 2008 ISHR embarked on an exhaustive monitoring of the new **Universal Periodic Review** (UPR) mechanism of the Council. By the end of 2008, however, it was clear that the summary of discussions contained in the official UPR reports were sufficiently comprehensive and that there was therefore little added value in ISHR producing mainly narrative reports of all reviews. It was thus decided that ISHR would continue to monitor all reviews in 2009, but would only report on a number of reviews (nearly 50%) on the basis of set criteria, including membership to the Council of the State-under-review, an identifiable civil society that has engaged in the process and ISHR partnership in the country. The format of reporting has also shifted from the previous narrative style to a more critical assessment of the review and could be used as an advocacy tool by civil society.

ISHR continued to monitor the examination of all States before the core **human rights treaty monitoring bodies** in 2009, with the exception of the Committee on the Rights of the Child as it is adequately monitored by the NGO Group on the Rights of the Child. This amounted to over 100 examinations in 2009. However, it is in relation to treaty body reporting that ISHR undertook the biggest departure from previous practice. Firstly, the same practice was employed as to the UPR in selecting particular treaty body examinations for analysis (to date over 50%) on the basis of NGO engagement, primarily in the Global South. Secondly, the format of narrative thematic summaries of the examination of States before the treaty bodies was replaced with a focus on a number of concluding observations for each State examined. Each report assesses how these topics were addressed in the examination, including the initial views of the State, questions, comments and responses provided.

Concluding observations are chosen on the basis of time that the Committee dedicated to the issue, whether they requested follow-up on implementation and whether the final recommendation was specific and implementable within a certain timeframe.

The purpose of this approach is to assist national NGOs and national human rights institutions in seeing how the Committees arrived at their recommendations and to be aware of the views that the State has already expressed. It is hoped that this will serve as an additional advocacy tool for pursuing implementation of these recommendations at the national level. The individual treaty body reports were circulated to all stakeholders at the national level and have been published on the ISHR website.

In early April 2009, we finalised an update to our *Simple Guide to the Treaty Bodies*.

The 2009 *Human Rights Monitor* will be released in April 2010 and will analyse the main developments in the work of the above-mentioned UN bodies. The *Human Rights Monitor* is intended to assist civil society and other stakeholders in understanding the main outcomes, patterns and trends and how this may affect their engagement with the UN system. The number of people receiving the print copy of the *Human Rights Monitor* by post is currently 1820.

In terms of the distribution of our reports, the information needs assessments carried out in 2009 were key in increasing the number of subscribers to the *Council Monitor* and the *Human Rights Monitor*. During ISHR trainings in countries and in Geneva, evaluation questionnaires are distributed and, when in Geneva, a session on the information needs of participants is carried out. As a result, the number of people receiving our *Council Monitor* reports (which includes, inter alia, the *Council Alerts*, the *Council Updates*, and the *Analytical Overviews*) has reached approximately 1500 recipients at the end of 2009.

Through a major evaluation of the engagement of more than 200 former training participants with the UN system, ISHR also learned that 81% of respondents used ISHR publications and 65.5% used ISHR's website in their work.

Lessons learned

Following extensive evaluations and lessons learned in 2008, it was decided that in general terms ISHR should move away from exhaustive narrative reporting on events. It was decided that reporting would in future be more targeted and analytical, and that attempts would be made to move away from unnecessarily technical language. It was also decided that an 'alert' style of reporting would be adopted for all publications.

Among the lessons learned in 2008 was that there is a strong demand for dissemination of timely and basic practical facts and figures on upcoming events, countries that are soon to be examined, opportunities for NGO participation etc. Changes in our publications to suit this need, and continuing evaluations and needs assessments carried out over the past year, have allowed ISHR to continue to respond and adapt to what our users, readers, and potential readers need in terms of information on the UN human rights system.

While these evaluations have confirmed that many of our reports (treaty body reports and reports on the Council) generally meet the needs of our audience, internally we have spent

considerable time in 2009 conceiving how we could best use ISHR's access to information and institutional expertise.

In 2009 evaluations continued in response new formats of reporting, as described, including the distribution of news by email, targeted UPR reports and treaty body reporting focusing on analysis of concluding observations. Feedback has been very positive, although within ISHR and among a number of respondents it is still felt that, while the annual *Human Rights Monitor* provides a good critical overview of international developments, other publications are not organised in a way that present timely overviews of the UN and regional human rights systems so that national civil society organisations have a composite view of international developments.

In this regard, among the key lessons learned in 2009 was that the publication of ISHR's various reports on an ongoing basis did not provide a holistic picture of developments across the international system, so that civil society could be provided with an understanding of the interrelationship between various UN human rights mechanisms and between UN and regional mechanisms. While the annual *Human Rights Monitor* provides such an exhaustive analysis, by appearing only once per year it is not regular enough to be considered timely. On this basis, ISHR is in the process of putting in place a quarterly publication for 2010 to replace the *Council Monitor*, *UPR Monitor* and *Treaty Body Monitor* series. It will also contain a section previewing upcoming events, with the purpose of informing civil society of opportunities for engagement, and explaining ISHR's work in this regard.

Trainings in Geneva

Main activities and achievements

In 2009, ISHR organised its annual Advanced Geneva Training Course on the UN human rights system (AGTC) in English from 3 to 13 March and in French from 8 to 19 June. The respective courses took place parallel to the 10th and the 11th sessions of the Human Rights Council. ISHR also organised a training course for human rights defenders from East Asia from 14 to 24 September for 16 participants aimed at strengthening their engagement with the UN human rights system.

The two AGTC's promoted the understanding and use of international human rights instruments and mechanisms. They were designed for experienced human rights activists in at least middle management positions or higher with decision-making responsibilities in their organisations. This year, the trainings were held over a two-week period. Presenters included highly regarded experts, such as special procedures mandate holders, members of Geneva Permanent Missions, senior staff of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and representatives of international, regional and national non-governmental organisations (NGOs) with expertise in engaging with the international human rights system.

In its selection of participants, ISHR aimed to ensure regional and gender balance, although this proved difficult for the French course, which comprised of four women and 12 men. For the AGTC English, there were 13 women, one transgender and ten men. The 24 participants represented 23 nationalities: Belgium, Brazil, Burundi, China, Colombia, Egypt, Fiji, France, Germany, Guatemala, Iran, Kenya, Lebanon, Malawi, Malaysia, Nepal, Netherlands, Peru, Tanzania, Thailand, Uzbekistan, and Zambia.

For the AGTC in French, the focus remained on developing capacity for civil society from Francophone Africa. The 16 participants were from the following countries: Burkina Faso, Burundi, Congo (Brazzaville), Democratic Republic of Congo, Haiti, Ivory Coast, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Togo.

The courses were conducted using interactive training methodologies throughout such as workshops, role play, case studies and personal testimonies outlining participants' specific experiences relevant to working at the international level. Time was allocated in the programme for participants to attend and follow the sessions of the Council on a daily basis. It also provided them with opportunities for advocacy and engagement in order to ensure that the issues and needs of human rights defenders are being heard and addressed by the Council. This also allowed for networking with a variety of political actors, including diplomats, UN personnel, independent experts, academics and people from other sectors such as civil society from around the globe.

Drawing from the knowledge and practical skills gained during the course, participants were required to develop their own specific action projects to follow up on the training courses and put the knowledge to practical use. This action project is to be completed by participants in the coming 12 months once they return to their workplaces. One of our main follow-up activities throughout the year is the monitoring of the implementation of the action project. Many of them include the organisation of a 'cascade training' to empower and work with other members of their network or national coalition.

The action project was based upon the participant organisation's area of interest and expertise. The action projects consisted mainly of:

- Advocacy at the international level
- Submission of a communication to a special procedure
- Engaging with the universal periodic review (UPR) mechanism
- Use of international human rights standards/obligations in domestic advocacy strategy
- Organisation of national/local trainings on the international human rights system
- Contributing to standard setting at the international level.

The programme also included a full day of 'train-the-trainer' methodologies to develop confident and effective approaches to training. At the end of the training, participants were divided into groups and took part in a role play which consisted of an oral presentation and a peer review of the action projects with each member of the group playing the role of donors and fundraisers.

The AGTC courses enabled participants to:

- Develop their knowledge of the role and functions of UN human rights mechanisms, their special mechanisms and other key actors within the international human rights process
- Build their capacity to access, use and produce effective submissions to these bodies

- Increase their awareness on the role of NGOs, NHRIs and governments in using the international human rights system
- Develop strategic advocacy for lobbying at the international level and for aiming to ensure the implementation of relevant resolutions/recommendations at the national level.

There was on-going evaluation throughout the course supported by one formalised evaluation session at the end of the course. Interactive activities were organised to provide participants with an opportunity to give oral feedback on the training every morning. The training team adapted the course, whenever feasible, to accommodate the needs and wishes of the participants.

For the AGTC English, evaluation showed that 98% of the participants found the course very valuable. Seventy-seven percent expressed that their expectations were met. Eight-six percent of the participants felt that the course was well organised. The training material was considered accessible and relevant. A large part believed they were now in a better position to interact with the UN system and its processes. Sixty-three percent of the participants expressed their satisfaction with the issues covered by the sessions, which they stated were useful and relevant to their future work. With regards to the French AGTC, the evaluation showed that the 16 participants found the course valuable, 57% of which found it very valuable. Eighty-three percent of the participants also considered that the course considerably developed their capacity to use and interact with the UN human rights system and its processes.

Many trainees also transmitted their appreciation for the opportunity to attend the Council and observe, listen and directly engage with States. They also stressed the importance of the diversity of speakers and points of view.

Four-year survey of previous participants

ISHR is presently conducting an extensive survey to evaluate if our former participants have been using the UN system in their work. A questionnaire was sent to over 200 participants to our Geneva training courses from 2006 to 2009.

The main questions of the questionnaire related to:

- Advocacy at the Human Rights Council
- Involvement in the UPR
- Submission of reports or communications to treaty bodies
- Monitoring implementation of recommendations from the treaty bodies, UPR and special procedures at the domestic level
- Participation in national consultations with government before or after State examination at international level
- Application of international human rights standards/obligations to domestic advocacy strategy

- Engagement with special procedures as part of country mission; submission of communications to special procedure or meetings with mandate holders
- Organisation of national/local trainings on the international human rights system or parts thereof
- Implementation of the 'action project' developed during the course.

The main objective of this survey was to assess how former participants have used the knowledge acquired during the training course and to what extent they have engaged with UN human rights bodies.

One hundred and four former participants replied to the questionnaire, and at least 40 had actively engaged with the UN system. Those that had not engaged with the UN mechanisms identified language barriers, lack of human and financial resources, difficult political situations and effective national or regional mechanisms as the main reasons. They also explained that additional training and follow up including through logistical and technical support would assist them in engaging with the UN system.

Drawing from the results of the survey, ISHR followed up with a second questionnaire to a group of participants who have used the UN system in order to identify a small number of participants who will be invited to attend a ISHR training course in 2010 with a focus on sharing international advocacy strategy as national civil society actors, as well as sharing experience on follow-up and implementation of international recommendations. These former participants will also take part in a short pilot 'train-the-trainer' course to develop their skills as trainers.

Lessons learned

Lessons learned in 2008 were largely implemented in 2009. Recognising the difficulties that a month of absence can represent for many participants, the AGTC course in English was shortened to two weeks in 2009. In order to address the density of the course, it was decided to narrow the 'thematic focus' component of the course and to gear all presentations towards practical engagement with the international human rights system. More space was also given to drawing from the national experience of participants by providing space for 'testimony' presentations. ISHR also restructured its internal organisation for trainings to ensure that there is one fixed coordinator throughout the course, assisted by one rotating staff.

A major lesson learned in 2009 was the value in drawing more from the relative national advocacy experience of participants, and how this can be applied in international advocacy and in compiling best practices for national advocacy in follow-up to implementation of international recommendations. In the past, ISHR has focused on international advocacy without giving full consideration to its vantage point in being able to draw from national best practice.

On this basis, ISHR will provide more space to national follow-up in its training, drawing from present and past participants. In this way, ISHR seeks to be able to provide a more complete training on the process of engagement from beginning to end.

Stemming from ISHR's extensive evaluation of its trainings from 2006-2009, another lesson learned is the need to strengthen partnerships with participants in being able to bring them back to Geneva for Human Rights Council, UPR or treaty body sessions.

On this basis, and linked to the focus on participant-led trainings with a focus on follow-up, ISHR will seek to bring back previous participants who are actively engaged with the international system, who can share their experience with new participants, and who can at the same time make use of the opportunity for advocacy in Geneva.

The year 2009 also saw consolidation of enhanced coordination between ISHR's programmes. This resulted in the selection of four participants from partner organisations at the national/regional level for the AGTC course in English and five participants for the French AGTC. This constitutes significant institutional progress on previous years and will contribute to a greater impact of our work through better follow-up.

The training course for human rights defenders from East Asia was positively evaluated by the participants. As this was the fourth year of the training, and following the four-year evaluation of other Geneva-based trainings, it was agreed that there was a need to undertake an in-depth evaluation of the previous East Asia courses. It was also agreed that the outcome of such an evaluation (now underway) would result in a redesign of the training course in 2010 to better meet the identified needs of participants.

Liaison and advocacy

Main activities and achievements

The main focus of our advocacy work during the year was on safeguarding and enhancing NGO participation in the work of the Council, the UPR and the treaty bodies; strengthening the system of special procedures; human rights defenders; and on continued attention to issues of sexual orientation by the Council.

We have participated in a large number of meetings with States, OHCHR and NGOs on the following topics:

- Addressing country situations
- Sharing strategies with NGOs in preparation of Council sessions
- Improving time management and NGO participation in the work of the Council
- Sexual orientation and gender identity and strategies for advancing the issues at the Council and through the UPR
- NGO brainstorming on how to improve the Council
- The complaint procedure and how to improve NGO engagement.

At the 12th session we organised a panel discussion with ten other NGOs to evaluate the Council's progress so far in fulfilling its mandate and key challenges still to be addressed. The Ambassadors of Nigeria and Chile were among the panellists.

We also co-sponsored an event at the same session on the protection of human rights defenders with Frontline and Human Rights First.

In relation to the reform of treaty bodies, we participated actively in the Inter-Committee Meeting of treaty bodies together with a coalition of NGOs concerned with treaty body reform and improving engagement with civil society across the treaty body system.

Therefore, the main focus of our advocacy around the treaty bodies was on the harmonisation of working methods of the different treaty bodies, as well as on opportunities for NGO engagement in general. Together with the coalition, we made joint and individual submissions to the Inter-Committee Meeting in June and December. A small number of its recommendations were taken up by the ICM. Despite this renewed engagement, there was still limited focus on the reform of the treaty bodies over the year, and we expect that this advocacy priority will receive more focus in 2010 as the discussions on this topic gains momentum.

ISHR assisted in organising a high level panel discussion on sexual orientation and gender identity at the Council's 11th session where the High Commissioner made a keynote address.

Along with Amnesty International, ISHR co-hosted in October a one-day briefing session for experts of the newly created Arab Human Rights Committee on key substantive and methodological aspects they should take into account while finalising the rules of procedures of the Committee and for their future work. Amnesty International and ISHR had invited some ten key NGOs to participate in this meeting that took place at the UN.

We participated in the Colloquium organised by Conectas Direitos Humanos in Brazil and presented information on NGO participation in the Council to the participants from the Global South.

ISHR also took part in a one-day seminar on challenges to NGO participation in the Human Rights Council, hosted by the Irish Department of Foreign Affairs in Dublin in November 2009.

Other support provided to human rights defenders

Since the beginning of 2009, we have instituted a new system for tracking the various informal services we are providing to human rights defenders. During the year we provided advice on the international human rights system to 51 stakeholders including, NGOs, OHCHR, and governments. The advice concerned parallel events during sessions of treaty bodies, UPR or the Council; NGO participation in the Council; engagement in the UPR process; engagement with the treaty bodies; on two occasions how to work with the Council; and the special procedures. Other requests concerned training materials on human rights defenders and information about the International Coordination Committee of National Human Rights Institutions. The advice was provided to NGOs in Australia, Austria, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Denmark, Fiji, Germany, India, Iran, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Thailand, UK (i.e. Northern Ireland), Vietnam, and Zimbabwe.

International Human Rights Defenders Programme, New York

Although both staff members in the New York Office (NYO) were on maternity leave in the middle of 2009, the office continued to operate and was able to monitor and report on all of the key human rights developments at UN Headquarters, as it has in recent years. Further streamlining of our reporting methods meant that this period was not overly burdensome on staff and contributed to the production of more concise and timely outputs.

One of the areas where the office was particularly active in the later half of the year was the General Assembly's (GA) consideration of the controversial theme of sexual orientation and gender and identity (SOGI). The publication of our *Alert* at the beginning of the GA's 64th session drew the attention of LGBT NGOs to a particularly controversial report from one of the special procedures, and helped to galvanise them into action to minimise its impact. These events led to the office working more closely with these NGOs and several Missions, thereby strengthening our outreach and improving our general visibility.

Information

Although the office continued the practice of issuing an *Alert* at the beginning of the session and writing the analytical chapter in the *Human Rights Monitor*, there was broad agreement that it was neither possible (due to the staffing situation) nor desirable (due to the large volume of material generated) to continue to also produce detailed thematic reports on human rights developments at the GA. These changes enhanced the timeliness of information to our readership and the manageability of reporting demands on staff and interns.

For ISHR's flagship publications, the *Human Rights Monitor*, the NYO contributed analytical reports of the developments and outcomes related to human rights at the GA and the Security Council. The NYO also distributed an *Alert* and posted eight analytical news stories on the website during the session to highlight noteworthy developments during the interactive dialogues. This meant our readership received analytical information in the lead up to, during and after the GA session. Key human rights developments in other bodies, including the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Peacebuilding Commission, were also reported on in the *New York Monitor*.

For the *Treaty Body Monitor*, the NYO monitored and reported on the summer session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, and the March session of the Human Rights Committee. In addition to our regular country-focused reporting, we reported on the Committees' working methods, a key area of interest to ISHR and its constituents given the linkages to treaty body reform issues in general, and also because of an increasing focus by members on reviewing and articulating the role of the Committee in light of the Council's Universal Periodic Review process.

All content was published by the NYO on the ISHR's website.

During 2009, nine interns assisted the NYO in its information work.

Liaison and advocacy

The NYO maintained an active presence as part of the international NGO community in developing strategic initiatives and responses to strengthen the human rights protection system, including participation in and contribution to various initiatives through dialogue and advocacy. We also continued to offer strategic advice to human rights defenders on navigating the UN system.

The *General Assembly Alert* proved a particularly important and influential publication this year. It drew the attention of LGBT NGOs to the likelihood that the report of the Special Rapporteur on counter-terrorism (Mr Martin Scheinin) would not be well received at the Third Committee, and could spill over into the consideration of related resolutions. This proved to be an accurate prediction, and helped to strengthen our already established relationship with these NGOs. It also resulted in the office liaising more closely with several of the Missions (EU and the Group of Latin American States) that were sponsors of the related resolutions, which will benefit our ability to work cooperatively with them in future years.

This year also saw the NYO open more direct lines of communication with human rights NGOs involved in the HRC-Net (a cross-regional NGO network aimed at strengthening the Human Rights Council) to provide timely updates on developments at the GA that were relevant to their work in Geneva and in capitals. This information flow was warmly welcomed and several encouraged its expansion during future sessions.

The NYO also worked on the following matters:

- Responsibility to Protect: contributed to other NGO strategic information-sharing discussions on the responsibility to protect in the lead-up to the GA's consideration of the Secretary-General's first report on the matter in July 2009 (Jan-May)
- ISHR evaluation: contributed to the evaluation process with the external consultant to familiarise her with the role and functions of the NYO. Contributed to the subsequent organisational strategic planning process
- 2011 Review of the Human Rights Council: Liaised with other NY-based human rights organisations to work collaboratively on the GA's review of the status of the Human Rights Council. Groups met to share information and coordinate on future initiatives to ensure NGO involvement and input into the process. ISHR met with Mr Walter Kalin to contribute to his concept paper on the Review for the Swiss Mission (October - ongoing)
- New Assistant Secretary-General (ASG) post in OHCHR: Worked with NGOs to advocate for a new ASG post to head the New York Office of OHCHR, which was eventually approved (November - December)
- Discrimination on the basis of SOGI: Participated in a strategy discussion with LGBTI groups in New York and provided strategic advice and information about working on sexual orientation and gender identity at the GA in future years (September - December)
- Human Rights Defenders: Organised (with Human Rights First, and the Permanent Mission of Norway) a parallel event at the GA featuring the Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders, Ms Margaret Sekaggya, and a panel of human rights defenders (October). Provided input to the Norwegian Mission during the negotiation of the GA resolution on human rights defenders to strengthen language (November)

- NGO participation at the UN: Joined an NGO working group on 'NGO access and participation at UNHQ' following a series of concerning developments at UNHQ that reflect a winding back of NGO access in physical and political terms. The working group met with the NGO Branch of DESA, UN Security and NGLS to begin addressing existing problems, and to avoid serious problems associated with the complete renovation of UNHQ over the next five years (September - ongoing)
- Relationship building and research: Interviewed Missions, NGOs and OHCHR in the process of researching and writing ISHR reports on the GA and the Security Council (November - December). Interviewed Missions, NGOs and the Secretariat in relation to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (May)
- Security Council: Participated in meetings with Ambassadors of States on the Security Council through the NGO Working Group on the Council (Jan-Dec).

Regional and National Human Rights Defenders Programme

Africa

Engagement with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights

In May and November 2009 ISHR participated in the 45th and the 46th session of the **African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights** (ACHPR) held in Banjul, the Gambia, and the NGO Forum prior to the session. ISHR provided financial support to 11 human rights defenders from across Africa, including representatives of sub-regional human rights defenders networks from East, West, and Central Africa. As in the past, ISHR contributed to two Bulletins of the ACHPR Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders issued in May and November. The May Bulletin focused on the issue of protection of Human rights defenders in Africa while the November Bulletin discussed the topic of freedom of association and expression and its importance for defenders. As well as substantive articles for each edition, ISHR contributed technically and financially to the production of the two Bulletins.

At the May and November sessions of the ACHPR, ISHR actively contributed to discussions at the NGO Forum on how to strengthen the mandate of the ACHPR Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders and also organised two workshops with her. The May workshop discussed strategies for and obstacles to developing an optional protocol on human rights defenders in Africa. The November workshop gave defenders the opportunity to share best practice on the security and protection of defenders. ISHR organised one parallel event at each session. The event in May focused on freedom of association and the right to receive funding. In November, the theme was freedom of expression in Africa. Both parallel events helped ISHR raise the visibility of defenders' rights and the challenges they face to enjoy these rights. ISHR monitored the 45th and 46th session, further producing an Analytical Overview of the 46th session to keep defenders informed on what happened at this session. At both sessions ISHR also issued statements on the situation of human rights defenders in Africa and participated in the interactive dialogue with the ACHPR Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders. As in past years, ISHR used the opportunities presented by the ACHPR and NGO Forum to strengthen links with partners in the region

Building defenders' capacity to engage with international and regional human rights systems

From 20 to 23 April, human rights defenders from around Africa held a conference entitled 'Jo'burg +10' in **Kampala, Uganda**, which aimed at providing defenders from around the continent with the opportunity to review the effectiveness of existing protection mechanisms for human rights defenders at the national, regional, and international levels. This conference gave participants the chance to create a platform for African defenders to share their experiences relating to challenges to their working environments and their security. ISHR supported the participation of human rights defenders from West and Central Africa and ISHR staff also served as resource persons during the meeting. The main outcomes of this conference were the adoption of an action plan to strengthen collaboration among human rights defenders' networks and the recognition of the need to have a binding regional instrument for the protection of human rights defenders.

ISHR organised a workshop in **Conakry, Guinea** from 20 to 24 July. The main objective was to continue to support the efforts of the West Africa Human Rights Defenders Network to build the capacity of its members to engage with UN and other regional mechanisms. The workshop also aimed at sharing best practices and developing strategies on specific thematic issues relevant to human rights defenders in the region, including the role of defenders during election periods and women human rights defenders. The workshop provided a platform to analyse issues affecting defenders across West Africa and to assess obstacles and opportunities to engage with UN and other regional mechanisms. ISHR trained a set of network members that have the capacity to engage with UN and other regional mechanisms so that they may develop their expertise in this area to provide continuity to the work with these mechanisms.

As a follow-up to its activities in the Great Lakes region, ISHR organised a training workshop in **Kigali, Rwanda** from 24 to 28 August 2009 on the international and regional human rights systems and the protection of human rights defenders, in partnership with the Ligue des Droits de l'Homme dans la Région des Grands Lacs (LDGL). This workshop is the 6th activity organised by ISHR in the region since 2004. The main focus of the workshop was to evaluate the progress made in the implementation of the activity plan formulated with ISHR in Burundi in October 2007, and also to facilitate NGO preparation for Rwanda's examination under the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) by the Human Rights Council in February 2011.

From 20 to 23 October 2009 ISHR organised a three-day workshop in **Togo** in collaboration with the Togolese Human Rights Defenders Coalition, the Togolese National Human Rights Institution (NHRI), and the Office of the High Commissioner on Human Rights (OHCHR). The main objective of this workshop was to strengthen the collaboration between the National Human Rights Institution of Togo and human rights defenders, and to enable the NHRI to better protect human rights defenders. Thirty participants attended this workshop including Commissioners, NGOs working on different human rights issues, representatives of trade unions, and journalists. This workshop was followed by a one-day round table on the measures taken by the Government of Togo to ensure the participation and protection of human rights defenders during the March 2010 presidential election, especially since this period is a critical time for the protection of rights of human rights defenders. ISHR facilitated the round table and used this opportunity to highlight the need to protect defenders rights' during election periods in accordance with international human rights standards.

Americas

The UN Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders, Ms Margaret Sekaggya, carried out a country visit to **Colombia** from 7 to 18 September. ISHR provided financial and technical support to the *Coordinacion Colombia Europa Estados Unidos* (CCEEU) in collaboration with the Colombian Commission of Jurists, a national platform of human rights defenders from the country, to support their preparation for and participation in the Special Rapoprtreur's visit through several activities. The CCEEU, in partnership with over 218 Colombian human rights organisations, organised a number of activities from 8 to 17 September in order to raise specific issues in relation to the situation of human rights defenders in the country before the Special Rapporteur.

Such activities included: organising meetings with the Special Rapporteur to highlight the general situation of human rights defenders in Colombia, including identifying patterns of violations and highlighting symbolic cases; organising round tables and public events where human rights defenders representing different groups at high risk (such as women human rights defenders) as well as different regions of the country could provide testimonials of their experiences working in the country; and regional meetings between defenders and the Special Rapporteur in Cali, Barranquilla, Medellin and other parts of Colombia, among others. The CCEEU also used the occasion of the Special Rapporteur's visit to launch a campaign on human rights defenders in Colombia. In subsequent meetings with representatives of the CCJ, we learned that CCEEU and CCJ were happy with ISHR's support for the country visit and with the outcome of the visit itself. The Special Rapporteur's report on the visit will be presented to the Human Rights Council in 2010.

In November, ISHR participated in the 9th Colloquium organised by Conectas Direitos Humanos in **Sao Paulo, Brazil**. It was an opportunity to discuss the challenges and opportunities presented by the current reform initiatives in the UN human rights system. ISHR also gave a presentation on opportunities for NGO engagement with UN human rights mechanisms. In November, ISHR also contributed together with OHCHR to a training course on the UN human rights system organised in collaboration with the Instituto de Desenvolvimento e Direitos Humanos (IDDH) in Joinville, Brazil. The course was attended by around ten participants working for NGOs and academic institutions or as public defenders from Brazil. Following the training course we have had discussions with IDDH about the future of the course, which both IDDH and ISHR would like to reshape to benefit human rights defenders in the region and not just Brazil. ISHR is still exploring how the course could better meet our objectives.

Asia

From 13 to 19 June 2009, ISHR in partnership with the Asia Pacific Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (APF) conducted a five-day training in **Kathmandu, Nepal**, with representatives of national human rights institutions from across South Asia on the protection of human rights defenders in this region. This was the third such training ISHR has conducted with the APF (the first two having been held in Thailand and Qatar in previous years) and was based on the training manual developed by ISHR and the APF in 2006. The training in Kathmandu in June 2009 was attended by 27 representatives of NHRIs from India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Nepal, and a representative from the Ministry of Human Rights of Pakistan. The programme ran over five days and covered a general introduction to international human rights law, the concept of human rights defenders and relevant international standards for their protection; an overview of the Paris Principles and of how national institutions can make effective use of their domestic functions to ensure the protection of human rights defenders; and how national institutions can engage with international mechanisms and use them effectively to contribute to the protection of human rights at the national level as well as the protection of human rights defenders. Throughout the course, participants were asked to consider and develop activities in order to practically implement their learning once they returned to their commissions and organisations. Feedback from the participants as well as the APF Secretariat indicated a highly satisfactory training, and activities for 2010 are under discussion with the APF.

In August 2009, ISHR continued to coordinate with its traditional partners in the Asia Pacific, FORUM ASIA and IWRAW Asia Pacific, to support NGO participation and input in the 14th annual meeting of the APF in **Amman, Jordan**, by organising and facilitating the annual NGO Forum. The NGO Forum was held back-to-back with a one-day Arab-Asia NGO meeting in order to expand our collective networks with human rights activists from the region and to encourage them to engage with both the APF as well as the international human rights system. The NGO meeting allowed discussion of many different issues such as the situation of defenders and women defenders in the region, and developments within the UN system, in particular the UPR. In 2009, as in the past, the Forum also provided the opportunity for strategic planning and coordination among NGOs regarding their contributions to the annual meetings of the APF and resulted in targeted interventions by attendant NGOs on institutional as well as thematic issues (such as women human rights defenders, migration, and sexual orientation). Additionally, continuing ISHR's leadership in using the Advisory Council of Jurists (ACJ) as an additional mechanism of the APF to raise issues relating to human rights defenders, ISHR organised and participated in a panel with members of the ACJ to look more closely at the role of this body in advancing human rights defenders' issues among APF member institutions. The Annual meeting also decided that the APF will now meet biannually

Following these changes to the working methods of the APF, ISHR redefined its **strategy in the Asia Pacific**, which we hope to implement in 2010-2011. Having secured a one-year grant to work in the Asia Pacific for 2010, ISHR has been consulting with different stakeholders (OHCHR, APF, and NGOs from the Pacific) in order to develop the content, implementation, and follow-up of a first sub-regional training with human rights defenders from the Pacific. Additionally, ISHR has undertaken an independent evaluation on how to strengthen its engagement with the APF. This independent evaluation was completed in March 2010 and the results will be used mainly to review our engagement with the APF in 2011, but also to inform the nature of some of our activities in the region in 2010. This evaluation will be shared with key partners in the region and with relevant donors.

Activities on Women Human Rights Defenders

Following ISHR's participation in the APF Annual Meeting in Amman, Jordan, ISHR used the opportunity of its presence in the region to carry out two specific meetings on women human rights defenders (WHRDs), in addition to bringing a number of WHRDs from the region and members of the International Coalition on Women Human Rights Defenders to participate in the APF itself.

ISHR, in collaboration with IWRAW Asia Pacific, as a part of the International Coalition on Women Human Rights Defenders (ICWHRDs) organised a **one-day regional seminar (7 August 2009) for women human rights defenders** from Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Iran, Syria, and Palestine.

The seminar was designed to bring visibility and recognition to the work of women human rights defenders and the particular risks and violations of their rights which they face in the course of carrying out their work. It examined the commonalities in the environments in which women human rights defenders in the region work, and focused on the effects of cultural and religious factors which have affected their ability to act as human rights defenders.

The meeting also aimed to expand our network in the region by drawing in WHRDs who have not previously been a part of the discussions of the Coalition, of which ISHR and IWRAW are a part.

Following this one-day seminar, ISHR in collaboration with IWRAW Asia Pacific, also organised a **two-day expert workshop** to continue development of the training manual on documenting violations against women human rights defenders (initiated by ISHR in Colombia in 2008). ISHR has since continued to coordinate the production of the Manual, which is expected to be finalised for publication by December 2010 in collaboration with members of the Women Human Rights Defenders International Coalition. ISHR has been taking the lead in liaising with members of the WHRDIC to identify and develop some of the main areas of focus of the Manual. For example, how to document the contexts within which women human rights defenders work, including developing a strategic focus on WHRDs working contexts of fundamentalisms; WHRDs facing violations from non-State actors such as family and the community, businesses and trans-national corporations; and violations against WHRDs working on issues of gender identity and sexual rights, etc. ISHR has been liaising with expert women's rights NGOs on the above topics so as to ensure that these issues receive adequate focus in the development of this Manual. Additionally, ISHR has been developing its own contribution to the Manual, focusing on how documentation can be used to strategically advance analysis of WHRD issues within the international human rights mechanisms such as the UN treaty bodies, the UPR mechanism, and the special procedures of the Human Rights Council.

Other activities

Contributions to other trainings

ISHR prepared and conducted a workshop in Baku, Azerbaijan from 27-29 April, at the request of and in collaboration with the Human Rights House Foundation, Norway. ISHR has carried out similar workshops in collaboration with HRHF on several prior occasions (Azerbaijan, 2005; Lithuania/Belarus 2006; Geneva, 2009).

The three-day training was attended by 21 human rights defenders from different parts of Azerbaijan and focused on key issues of concern to defenders in the region, such as violations to freedom of expression, association and assembly, in addition to opportunities for Azeri defenders to use the international human rights system.

Two positive outcomes of this training were a critical discussion of Azerbaijan's review under the UPR and potential follow-up actions, as well as potential coordinated NGO interventions in preparation of Azerbaijan's examination before the Human Rights Committee in June 2009.

In July, ISHR also took part in a training session on the UN human rights system organised by the Cairo Institute for Human Rights Studies (CIHRS) in Egypt, and attended by Arabic-speaking participants from all across the region. It was the second year that ISHR had been invited by CIHRS to contribute to its training course.

Technical advice and support to defenders

After a UPR workshop carried out earlier in 2009 in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), on the engagement of NGOs in the review of the country under UPR mechanism,

ISHR continued to provide technical advice and financial support to defenders from this country on how to engage with this mechanism during the review in December 2009, and the adoption of the outcome report in March 2010.

ISHR is following up the August 2009 workshop in Rwanda on NGO participation in the review of Rwanda by the UPR in 2011, by providing technical advice and financial support to defenders to enable them to submit information on the situation of human rights in Rwanda.

Research and training materials

Following the completion of its research project on the jurisprudence of the UN treaty bodies and the Special Rapporteur on human rights defenders on rights essential for the work of human rights defenders, the Programme continued to launch several of the Briefing Papers this year, namely those on right to freedom of association, freedom of expression, and access to funding. The series contains detailed and practical information on the scope and extent of rights instrumental to the work of human rights defenders, such as the right to freedom of assembly, freedom of association, freedom of expression and opinion, access to funding and access to international bodies. They have been widely disseminated both electronically and in the form of publications, by ISHR directly and through partners, in addition to being incorporated into ISHR training programmes.

In November 2009, ISHR reactivated its ongoing research on the development of the jurisprudence of the African human rights system on issues relating to human rights defenders. This research aims to serve NGOs who engage with the African human rights system on defenders' issues to better understand the approach of this mechanism towards human rights defenders and therefore strategically inform their work. ISHR aims to use this research to identify gaps in the protection of defenders by this mechanism and to focus our advocacy on addressing these specific areas. This research will be carried out and finalised in the first quarter 2010.

To help defenders to better understand and use the European Union Guidelines on human rights defenders (the EU Guidelines), ISHR will shortly finalise a training module on the content and scope of the EU guidelines and how defenders can use them.

The feasibility of other ongoing research projects will be reassessed according to the availability of resources.

Internship Programme

Main achievements

In 2009, ISHR's Geneva Office managed to recruit 38 extremely committed and high caliber interns from a variety of countries across the world. Throughout 2009, the majority of the interns were involved in the work of the UN monitoring team, with four interns assisting the Communications Manager, three interns helping with the preparation and delivery of Geneva-based training courses, two in the Regional and National team and two helping ISHR's Finance Officer.

Throughout 2009 ISHR continued to provide professional development and training on the United Nations system as well as guidance on careers and developing practical skills. ISHR continually sought to improve the programme by taking interns' comments and suggestions into account. A comprehensive induction programme and ongoing training sessions were modified in order to include a more participatory approach based on peer-learning whereby interns are given assignments to prepare to present to the group. Research assignments were also given to the UN monitoring team interns in order to develop their research skills and help ISHR carry out its activities.

This year ISHR worked with Indonesia Australia Legal Development Facility (IALDF) which funded two interns from Indonesia to participate in a joint internship programme in Geneva for six months. ISHR was responsible for the co-ordination of this joint internship programme and received funding from IALDF for assuming this role. We are also continuing our relationship with the University of Michigan which sends one intern a year to work at ISHR.

ISHR received more applications than ever before (amounting to over 300 applications) from young activists seeking to further their experience in a human rights NGO as well as gaining access to the UN system. This has meant that gaining an internship at ISHR has become more competitive and as a result an increasing number of interns are committing to a longer internship of six months in order to gain a place on the programme and get the most out of their time in Geneva.

The intern coordinator was in frequent contact with over 75 former interns. She was regularly consulted on professional development issues and was often asked to provide references and career advice. She kept up-to-date on their professional activities after leaving ISHR and compiled the information for a 'success stories' section on the ISHR website. It is hoped that a former intern forum can be launched at some point in the future in order to facilitate networking and share job opportunities.

Challenges

ISHR still receives most of its applications from interns from mainly Western countries who can afford to take up the unpaid internship. In 2009 ISHR developed a plan to try to secure funding for future interns, especially for those coming from less developed countries. In order to ensure a more equitable geographical representation, ISHR has developed an internship brochure which will be used as a fundraising tool. It will include success stories of former interns who have gone on to work in the field of human rights.

Communication and Outreach

Online publications and news

The English version of the *Human Rights Monitor* was published online in March 2009 and the full French translation by June. In August, we created a new and expanded 'Links' section, which allows visitors to connect with NGOs, educational and research institutions, and human rights bodies that may help them in their work. In September, we created a 'News Archive' which allows users to see all the former news stories that were published on our homepage, since the pace at which news stories are released can be quite high. Starting at the September session of the Human Rights Council, we activated a system that ensured that our *Council Monitor* subscribers automatically received all Council-related news and publications soon after they were uploaded. We were also active on Twitter during the session, which was a first for ISHR.

Through the website, we also continued to publish and advertise regular news articles and publications on the Treaty Bodies, the UPR, the Advisory Committee, the General Assembly, and the Security Council as well as publications specific to the rights of human rights defenders such as the *Human Rights Defenders Briefing Papers*. The website was also actively used to launch calls for applications for our trainings and general ISHR announcements.

Main achievements

We continue to use a web interface to allow people to sign up for all our online publications for free. Through this webpage, subscribers can pick and choose specifically which type of information and/or publications they wish to receive, and which ones they do not. This customised approach seems to satisfy our target audiences since the overall e-mail database comprised 1,500 members at the end of 2009, a **15% increase** compared to end 2008.

Evaluation and implementation of social media tools

In 2009, our evaluations sought to explore new ways in which to maintain communication and information flows with our training participants after the training ends. In March and June 2009, sessions were carried out with participants in order to explore their interest in using Internet-enabled communication platforms, otherwise known as Web 2.0. or social media, such as blogs, forums, Facebook, Twitter, etc. Through open discussions, questionnaires and focus groups, we were able to identify opportunities to keep in touch and share knowledge with former participants, which they seemed to relate to and be keen to use, namely an ISHR Facebook page and an online discussion forum.

Lessons learned

In line with the results of the evaluations mentioned above, we had hoped to build, implement, and moderate these two new communication tools between the end of 2009 and the beginning of 2010. The second part of 2009 turned out to be very time-demanding in terms of the drafting of the *Strategic and Action Plan 2010-2012*. Given that there is only one staff dedicated to Communication and Outreach, we also realised that updating, developing, and moderating an online forum for defenders would represent too large a burden for us to handle in 2009. At the beginning of 2010, the forum for exchange of best practice and provision of key information was again deemed by relevant staff but postponed to 2011 given other priorities.

Main achievements

Given new trends and best practice in the use of social media tools observed in other NGOs and UN organisations, ISHR did however set up an ISHR page on Facebook in April 2010. After five days we had gathered over 100 fans already. This platform will complement and drive traffic to the ISHR website. We will use it to promote our trainings, deliver news on key developments at the UN or simply link to the ISHR website. Most of all, it allows us to reconnect with defenders we have been working with over the past years. Also in April 2010, we created an ISHR YouTube channel, where we have published ISHR's statements at the latest Human Rights Council session. The channel will soon feature videos on success stories of former ISHR training participants and on ISHR's training programme.

Visual identity and branded publications

In August 2009, we started working with a new Communications intern who is a professional graphic designer. She developed an innovative layout and design for ISHR's *Strategic and Action Plan* and in parallel she designed ISHR's first-ever visual identity guidelines in close consultation with the Communication Manager. These guidelines include a new and revamped logo, an 'ISHR 25th anniversary' logo and a set of branding guidelines and templates to ensure that all of ISHR's publications and communications are coherent, professional-looking, and highly recognisable.

Main achievements

By the end of 2009 and increasingly so in 2010, the new ISHR logos, templates, and stationery are being used by staff and our new logo has gained much prominence and visibility since it can now be found on all our publications, presentations, web/social media sites and collateral. We are expecting full implementation of the new visual identity by the end of May 2010.

Information Technology (IT)

In 2009, we strengthened the security of our network by installing a firewall setting up a back-up system for our server memory. We did however identify a number of challenges to the smooth functioning of the Geneva Office such as slow computers, an ineffective printer, digital projector, and fax machine, and the lack of sufficient capacity for backing up the server. At the end of 2009, ISHR recognised that it was time to budget for new desktops, extra hard drive capacity and a new beamer. This material will be acquired and installed by mid 2010. In July 2010 we will acquire a printer which also performs as fax and scanner to replace the now old and unsatisfactory machine. This new IT equipment will allow staff to work in a more fluid manner, increasing our efficiency, reducing the need for trouble-shooting and ultimately decreasing costs for ISHR.

Development and fundraising

In 2009, ISHR had 21 donors, consisting of 11 foreign ministries, development cooperation agencies or other governmental bodies and ten foundations or development NGOs. In June 2010, a Manager of Development and Fundraising was hired to increase ISHR's support base by diversifying donors, strengthening income and improving the reliability and management of cash flow. Despite the worldwide economic crisis, ISHR averted liquidity shortfalls and implemented its activities unabated.

The Director requested an *ISHR Development and Fundraising Strategy 2010-12* to coincide with the *ISHR Strategic and Action Plan 2010-12*. Writing the report involved research on current developments within the world of philanthropy; a conservative, forward-looking approach and conversations with financial experts; consultations with grant-makers and peers working for other NGOs, as well as much historical inquiry into ISHR's fundraising from 1984 – 2009.

With notice given by Isabelle Scherer in October 2009 that she would leave her position as Director in December 2009, the primary focus for ISHR's fundraising in the fourth quarter shifted from developing new prospective donors and reactivating lapsed donors to a strong emphasis on securing sufficient cash in order to have adequate resources to effectively handle the transition. This goal was achieved.

Finance

The accounts are managed internally by a Finance Officer and are subject to quarterly review by a consultant accountant, who provides technical expertise to complete monthly and quarterly statements. Our efforts to strengthen our internal financial policies and procedures have continued. Our financial system software has been upgraded with a budget control device. This upgrade allows us to ensure a better control and monitoring of our budgets and expenses by grant and by donor. ISHR submits its annual accounts to the independent external auditors, PriceWaterhouseCoopers. A copy of the 2009 audited report is available upon request.