

Y'S MEN INTERNATIONAL
ISG REPORT TO MYM 06
Geneva, Switzerland, 29 January – 1 February, 2006

Implementation of the Web-based System for IHQ. A new web-based data system for Y's Men International is being developed by Y's Man Anders Bertram of Sweden. The system is being implemented in the following steps:

1. Functionality for updating information about Areas, Regions, Districts and Clubs. Member information, functions held, invoicing and distribution. This first step includes functionality available for IHQ.
2. After IHQ has worked with the system for about a month and has given feedback, the system will be adjusted so that the leaders at the Regional level can log in to the intranet and enter information, such as membership figures.
3. Archive functionality where IHQ, Areas and Regions can upload files, pictures and add texts. In this way the information can more easily be spread throughout our Movement.
4. A calendar where events for each level of the Movement can be added and edited. A forum for discussing different matters within workgroups is also included.
5. In the fourth step functions for adding and editing basic information about programmes, projects and contributions is added.
6. With the last step functions for publishing information on external homepages.

Two visits to IHQ have been made by Anders:

- The first was to talk with the staff to find out how to design the functionality of the new system to fulfil the needs of the staff as much as possible. After this, much work was done on basic functionality.
- The second was to display the system after about a month's development to the staff, and to discuss how to continue.

Adjustments will be made between Christmas and the New Year. During that time the data for chartered clubs, the names in the leaders' database, and the membership figures for October 2004, April 2005 and October 2005 will be imported to the new system. January 2nd the first step of the system is planned to be fully installed.

The plan is to implement all the steps of the system during April and May 2006. It is important to give the staff at IHQ and leaders in the Movement time to try the system and give feedback on how to adjust the system to make it better.

Leadership Training: The leadership training activities that are taking place in each of the eight Areas are creating great expectations for the strengthening and development of our Movement in the short and medium term. The training is expanding in each Area, including more and more leaders. This plan is in the first year of the second three-year term. The second LT Workshop is being planned to take place at the beginning of the second semester 05/06. This Train the Trainers workshop has as its main objective the planning with and training of the eight ASDs for LT for the 2005/08 term.

Youth Involvement: Youth participation continues to be intensively promoted by IYR Yoriko and YI Michel. Both of them, together with the International Youth Committee, are discussing and preparing the International Youth Convocation programme with the close cooperation of the Host Committee 06. The main focus of the programme will be to motivate and train the Area youth leaders as the main tool for the implementation of the Youth Plan.

Forward Plan: The implementation of the Forward Plan for the first three-year term (2005-08) suffered a setback as the IEOs did not approve the 2005/06 Workshop that should have taken place in the first semester and was to have been attended by the IP, ISG and the six ISDs responsible for the six programmatic areas included in the plan. This workshop is the cornerstone for the success of the Forward Plan during the current and next two years and I hope that the IEOs' decision can be reversed and the workshop can be held in the near future.

Club Survey: Through the Club Survey started in October 04 very interesting information was collected about our Movement. A CD with the data collected will be produced, hopefully before MYM 06, to be used by the Areas and Regions.

Membership: I estimate that the final number of reported members in October 05 will be quite close to the membership reported in April 05. At present there are still four 1 October Reports not received (Africa Northwest, Philippines, Caribbean and South Atlantic). The final figures on reported and paid membership will be reported at MYM 06, after we close the first semester balance as at 31 December 05.

Finances: Financial results are not presented in this report because they will be prepared after 31 December 05, when we close the first semester. Detailed financial statements will be presented to MYM 06.

IHQ Location: After ICM 05 approved to change the International Constitution with the objective of moving the International Headquarters to Prague, and before the Clubs vote on this issue, a new Task Force was appointed during ICM 05 with the commission "*to make in place all necessary investigations as to how to implement relocation of the IHQ to Prague and report to MYM 2006*". The Task Force did its job and its report will be circulated as soon as we received it. The report deals with practical matters in Prague and contains important information. Nevertheless, it is my responsibility as International Secretary General to make sure that the leaders of our Movement are aware of the following concerns in the event of the Clubs voting for the move to Prague.

- The efficiency of the functioning of the IHQ will be drastically diminished at least during the first two years. To lose all the knowledge and experience of the present technical staff will mean that IHQ will not be able to operate efficiently and smoothly.
- The training of the new staff in Prague must be assumed by the present staff; if not, it will be almost impossible to function. Two months' training is planned but it will be difficult in this short period of time for all the historical knowledge, experience and procedures for each activity to be passed on and retained by the new staff. There is also a risk that some of the new staff might prove unsatisfactory during the probationary period or want to resign, which would mean that new staff would have to be employed. This would mean starting again from zero in some of the office tasks.
- It will only be possible to hire Czech technical staff given the salary scale that is being considered. This has several drawbacks for the international identity of IHQ. In particular, I wish to stress that IHQ needs to have technical staff with English mother tongue, as English is the "official" language of Y's Men International. They are necessary not only to produce all communications and documents but also for the image of the movement. It is my feeling that it will be difficult to find English mother tongue technical staff in Prague willing to work at the salary scale being considered.
- The difficulties in carrying out the ISG responsibilities at the local level. The Czech language is one of the most difficult in Europe. All official documents and contacts with the local authorities and public departments must be in the Czech language. This means that ISG will not be able to understand official documents needing his signature and all local contacts will have to be done by the Czech staff.
- As the Czech Republic is a member of the European Union, it is clear that the cost of living and the operational costs for the IHQ are approaching or very similar to the costs in other European

Union countries, with one exception: the salaries. Some of these costs are, in fact, higher than in other European Union countries, such as hotels, office rent, etc. On the other hand, the salary levels are still more related to the previous time of the country and the actual adjustment of the salary scale (around 10% per year) does not keep up with the cost of living. Today the salaries in the Czech Republic do not allow a standard of living in line with that of the European Union.

- From the philosophical point of view, I am concerned because Y's Men International is planning an important saving based on the low salaries for the Czech technical staff.
- The accounting must be done in CZK currency for the official authorities; this means that it will be necessary each month to convert all the accounting into USD or CHF for the better understanding of Y's Men Leaders.
- Y's Men International has made a second request for consultative status to the UN. If IHQ moves to Prague Y's Men International will not be able to have the desired active role in different UN Committees (as the WA of YMCA has) that justified the requested consultative status.
- The isolation of the IHQ and the ISG position. The European Alliance of YMCAs has in Prague only their administrative office with two staff: an Office Manager and an Accountant. The Secretary General and five or six Executive Programme Directors live and work from their own countries.
- The isolation of the ISG and his family. Private life on the cultural, social and religious levels will also suffer greatly as a consequence of the language barrier.

IHQ Operation and Staff: IHQ staff continue to be very committed, dedicated and loyal to the Movement in spite of the uncertainty regarding their future if IHQ moves to Prague and the harsh words spoken against them by some leaders during ICM 05 based on false accusations made by IPYI.

Current YI Michel is doing an excellent job, assuming not only his responsibility in youth matters, but also supporting the office work in many areas, including making PowerPoint presentations. He gets along very well with the other staff.

I am happy to say that we again have a very warm working atmosphere in the IHQ office with very strong support and cooperation among all the staff.

Final comment: IHQ is one of the most important tools for Y's Men International to coordinate the operation of the Movement at the world level. If IHQ does not perform efficiently, many of the activities at the international level will fail. It is essential that the IHQ office and the International, Area and Regional leaders as well as the International Council Members have a good relationship, respecting each other and working smoothly in mutual cooperation.

It is sad to say that in recent years this was not the feeling that IHQ had, in particular with some of the International leaders, and this situation has been detrimental to the functioning and image of our Movement. In recent years, I have noticed a strong emphasis on conducting the Movement based on negative things instead of promoting it based on the positive aspects.

My feeling today is that we are entering into a new stage, trying to reverse the situation and promoting mutual respect and cooperation based on Y's Men principles.

I kindly invite and challenge each of you to be active participants in this new stage and promote our Movement through positive approaches and actions.

Respectfully submitted,

Rolando Dalmás
International Secretary General