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missio

**INTERNATIONALES
KATHOLISCHES MISSIONSWERK E.V.**

MISSIO aids the local Churches in Africa, Asia and Oceania in the areas of pastoral work. MISSIO's priority is the basic and advanced training of Church personnel (e.g. lay leaders, sisters and priests). The means of social communication play a significant role in today's pastoral. This is mirrored in MISSIO's project policy, which promotes a comparatively high percentage of media projects.

It is not the number of projects nor is it a projects (financial) extent which gives a conclusive answer to the question of its importance in the field of media and communications. For example, relatively small projects such as Bible translations can be most important in that they may be the first step from the oral to the written language for many ethnic minorities. Such Bible

translations are often the first texts to serve as a basis for learning to read and write. Thus their influence on social development cannot be overestimated. Financial aid for the translation and distribution of the Bible, therefore, has priority at MISSIO because they are the basis for the preaching of the Good News of Christ. In a very practical way MISSIO supports the demands of Vatican Council II: "Access to sacred Scripture ought to be open wide to the Christian faithful" (Dei Verbum, 22).

MISSIO promotes media projects at varying levels (parochial, diocesan, regional, national, continental, global), whereby it is not usually possible for MISSIO to bear the running costs of these projects. CAMECO is usually asked to provide their opinion, and their inspection of media projects ensures that the project in question is adapted to the requirements of the respective culture. Media projects range from providing the parish with media equipment (TV, video recorder, slide projector etc.) to the promotion of street theatres and the building of radio stations. The range of projects corresponds to the diversity of situations and cultures.

The promotion at continental level, for example at Radio Veritas and UCAN, the Catholic News Agency, has central significance for MISSIO. Again, at global level MISSIO has accompanied the work of OCIC and UCIP critically, constructively and financially.

Critical inspection of project applications means, for example in the case of radio programmes, that special importance is attached to the balanced relationship between vital commercial interests and the task of preaching the Gospel. MISSIO does not promote individual interests. It is also important to avoid the double promotion of initiatives. Media projects are only suitable when they build up the community or communities.

Media projects can, of course, be badly planned due to a prestige-orientated mentality. This usually occurs when a partner of MISSIO makes a wrong assessment of his or her own capacities. The evaluation of the results is the joint task of partner and promoter, a task which is seldom tackled – for whatever reason.

Good co-ordination and co-operation are all-important. It is important to make a correct assessment of the educational background of the course participants when planning basic and advanced training which is relevant to the media. If need be the subject matter of training courses has to be planned much more in line with general cultural, political and economic matters and less connected to particular media affairs. In the case of the training of journalists it is important to take into account that these persons can also find employment later with the secular press. The (political) effects which they can indirectly have on social development are significant. The location of basic and advanced training courses near the living and working context of the participants is usually a guarantee that the persons being supported will work effectively and successfully at grass-roots level. Courses abroad, however, as in the case of Crec Avex in Lyon/France, are only subsidised by MISSIO if appropriate training courses are not available in the home region of the respective candidate.

MISSIO knows how important it is "to use them solely for the good of humanity, for its fate becomes more and more dependent on their right use" (Inter Mirifica, 24). Especially in the area of Human Rights work – an issue of ever-increasing importance to MISSIO – the electronic media which allow a rapid transmittance of data (TV, radio, Internet, e-mail, fax) play a significant role. It is essential to utilise them.

MISSIO Aachen, September 1999