



Joining hands across borders

International Social Service

Global Report 2011-2012

*Protecting children and uniting families across borders.
Protéger les enfants et réunir les familles au-delà des frontières.
Proteger a los niños y reunir a las familias más allá de las fronteras.*



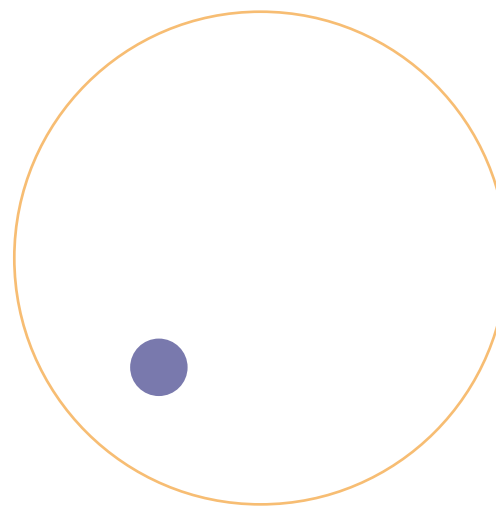
International Social Service
Service Social International
Servicio Social Internacional

General Secretariat • Secrétariat Général • Secretariado General



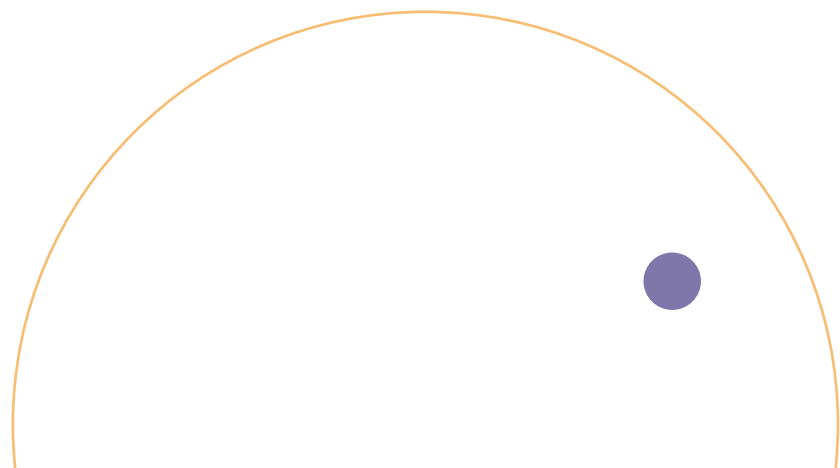
More than 72 million forced migrants face dangers in transit such as people smuggling and trafficking, and exploitation and abuse on reaching their destinations. They face serious humanitarian and human rights challenges. With their support systems removed, they are often unable to access basic health, welfare and education services. They may lose links with families and communities, and experience severe socio-economic loss and impoverishment. Detention or deprivation of freedom is widespread for those seeking asylum. Challenges such as cultural and language barriers, discrimination, exclusion and violence have to be overcome. Women, children and unaccompanied minors are at risk.

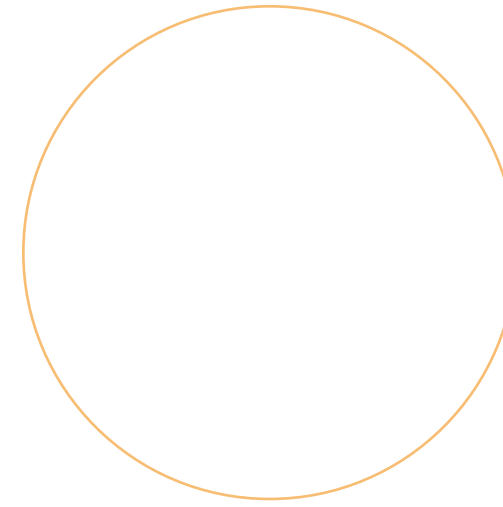
2012 World Disasters Report
International Federation of Red Cross & Red Crescent Societies



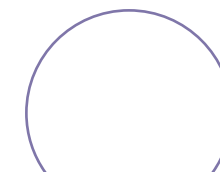
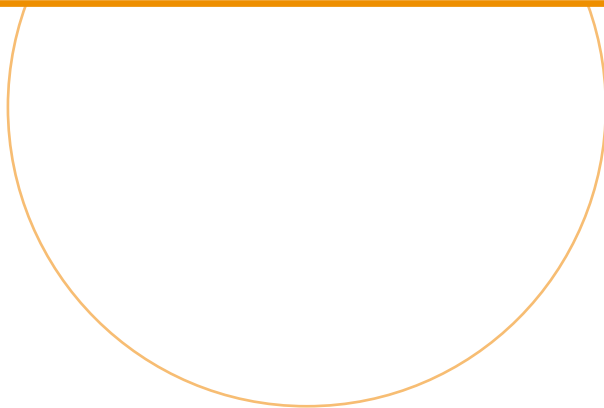
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History & Statutory Organs





History

The idea of an international service was first discussed at an international conference in 1914, when delegates from seventeen countries concluded that international action was necessary to help migrant women. It is only after the 1st World War that YWCA, recognizing the void in international protection of families and children, decided to take action.

During the massive international migration caused by the 1st World War, many men heading to the «Americas» to find work, believed that a "simple steamship ticket" would be enough to allow their family to join them; things turned out to be more complicated than that with many countries establishing an entry visa system.

Because no organization existed to respond to the needs of these migrating families, YWCA leaders realized that a new type of social services for separated families and children was needed. In 1921, this association undertook a survey about the needs of migrating people. The survey, entitled "The Welfare of Migrants", covered Germany, Poland and Czechoslovakia as "countries of origin", France and Switzerland as "countries of transit" and highlighted the whole migration process.

Following the survey, the young Women association decided to set up Services

Bureaus in several countries and several volunteers worldwide began to work together in order to connect separated families across borders. In 1924 and realizing the need to create a new organization dedicated to migration, representatives from the United States, United Kingdom, Czechoslovakia, France, Greece, Poland and Switzerland founded the International Migration Service (IMS) in Geneva, the IMS was renamed in 1946 the «International Social Service» to reflect better its global mandate.

"We became aware from this survey of the inexperience and helplessness of the great majority of emigrants, of the lack of Government protection, of the conflict between the laws of different countries regarding citizenship and domicile, of the unintelligibility of the official instructions which are often so difficult when applied to the complicated situations in individual families. We found many instances of exploitation and every sort of mishap en route. The resulting ill effects, physical, economic and moral, were seen to spread from the migrants themselves to the communities in which they became stranded."

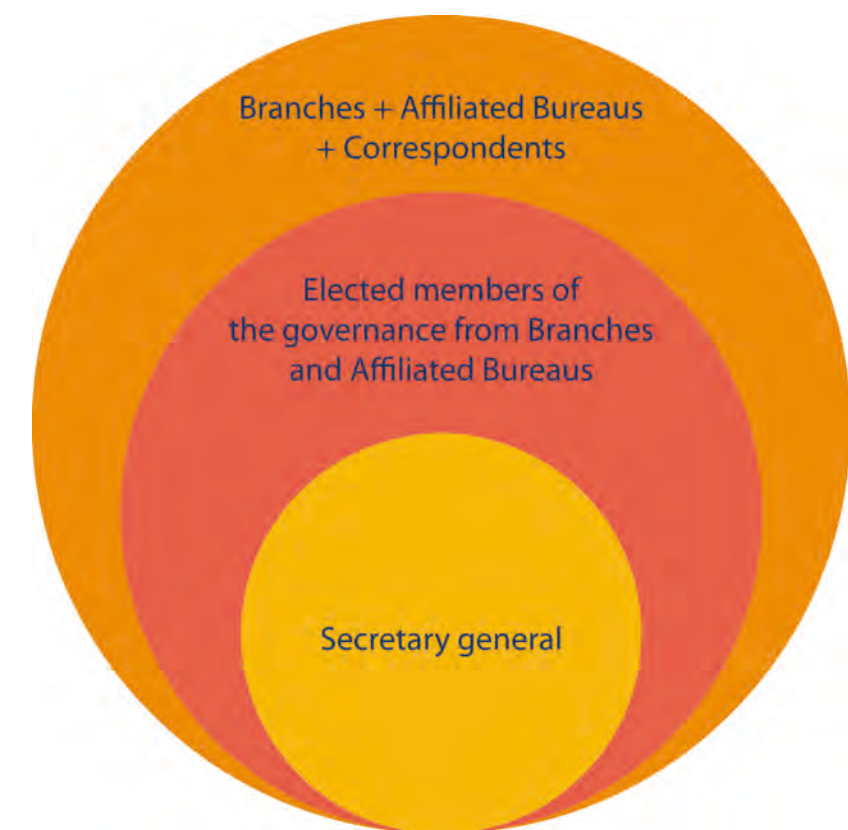
Report of the International Migration Service, Geneva 1927

Bond by common working principles and methods, various ISS offices quickly developed and were consolidated into a global network which offers today its services in over 120 countries.

Our staff and volunteers work at the grassroots level in each country and each office has experts working closely with local administrative structures. Our network offers a broad range of professional socio-legal services to local authorities and social work practitioners.

Since its creation ISS has focused on protecting children and families separated by borders as a result from voluntary or forced migration.

Statutory Organs since May 2010



■ The International Council acts as General Assembly of ISS. It establishes the broad outlines as well as develops guidelines concerning its programmes. This organ meets every 2 years.

■ The Governing Board is elected by the International Council and governs ISS between the sessions of the International Council.

■ The General Secretariat's role is to guarantee the coherence, coordinate the network's activities as well as organise the communication, share knowledge of the organisation, represent it and advocate at an international level. The Secretariat is based in Geneva, Switzerland and is a legal entity as recognised under Swiss law with its own programmes and activities.

Our Mission

"To protect, defend and assist persons, and in particular children, who as a result of migration or other circumstances have become separated from their families and are vulnerable."



Jean Ayoub
Secretary General



Douglas Lewis
Governing Board Chair

Message from the Secretary General

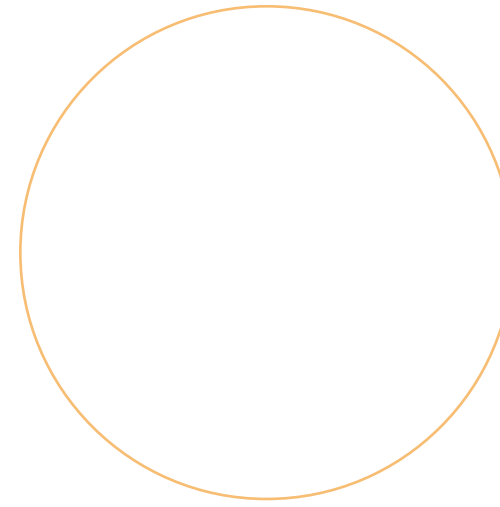
With Bulgaria and Romania joining ISS as new Branches in 2012 and with more "in the making", I would like to recall a statement by Mrs Ruth Larned (Historian) in her book "A Digest of the History of the International Social Service", published by the American Branch of the ISS in 1960:

"The story of the ISS has no end. One cannot close with "they all lived happily ever after", for the future is certain to call for efforts as strenuous and dedicated as the past. And just as certainly will the ISS respond to the call. It has developed techniques that are adaptable to changing international conditions and, with adequate financial support, will go on seeking and finding ways to relieve and to interpret the needs of transplanted people. Thirty-nine years old, with its potential still far realized, the ISS is still pioneering."

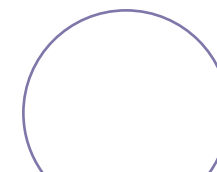
53 years down the road from those words, the statement holds today intact, additional efforts and solid dedication are still needed to steer the ISS ship towards continued professional service across the globe.

Message from the Governing Board Chair

The ISS Network has a highly distinguished past history and the potential is great for an even better future in a world that has become increasingly transnational. The challenge to all of us Members is to ensure we meet this opportunity and provide our unique specialised service to the tens of thousands of children and families who have no other salvation than ISS.



Presence





How children and families benefited from our work

ISS is an international network working together in more than 120 countries to find lasting solutions for children and families as well as adults involved in cross-border family issues.

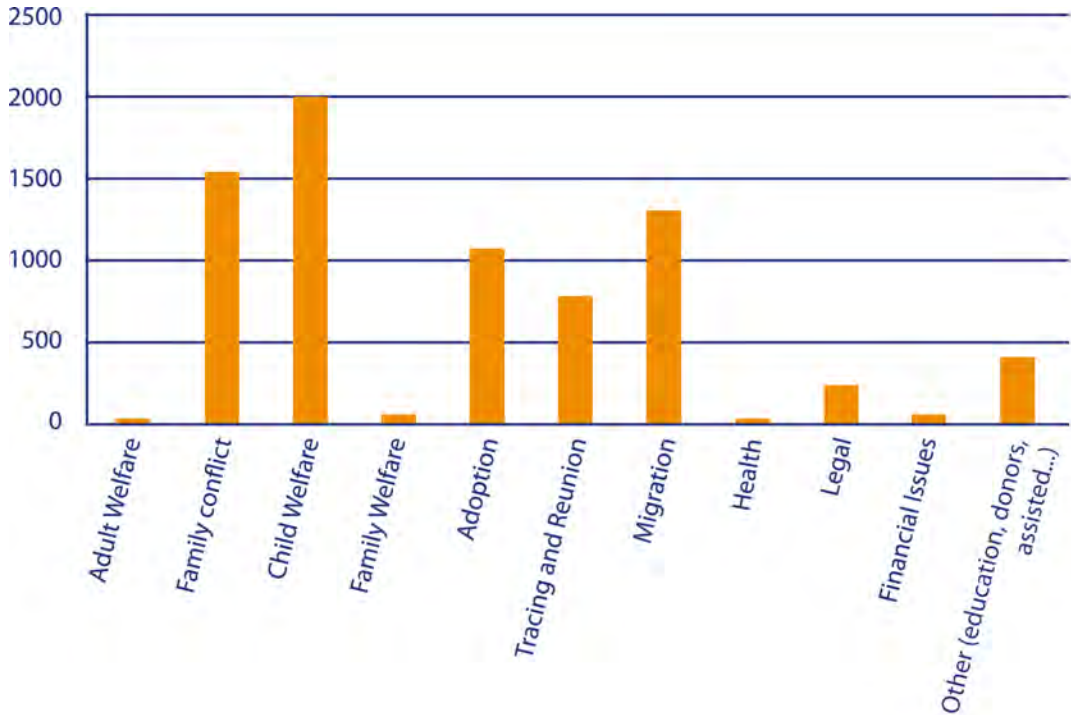
We establish links between social services in different countries and provide information enabling concerned services to resolve situations in the best interest of our beneficiaries.

Our work also includes training, research and advocacy, programme and policy support as well as development projects related to child protection.

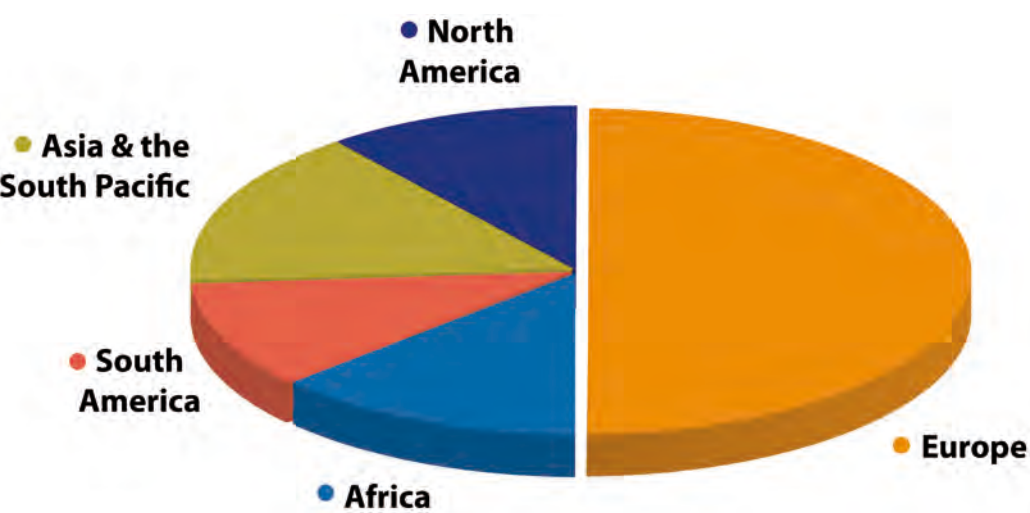
What we have accomplished in 2011 with our professional staff and volunteers:

- ISS members handled about **2'000** cases related to child welfare. This includes inter-country services or advice on issues including alleged child abuse, neglect offenses, guardianship, institutional placement, kinship placement, non-relative/foster family placement and parental responsibility cases.
- ISS members assisted in more than **1'500** situations involving a family conflict such as abducted and missing children, custody issues, parental visitation or child and family mediation.
- ISS members dealt with **1400** cases of transnational migration, **1100** cases of pre and post adoption care as well as **800** cases of tracing of origins and family reunification
- In effect, and adding **20'000** cases and more of counselling through helplines and direct enquiries, ISS network activities covered 147 countries in 2011-2012 reaching and directly assisting more than **50'000** children and families facing cross border difficulties.

ISS Case work by situation



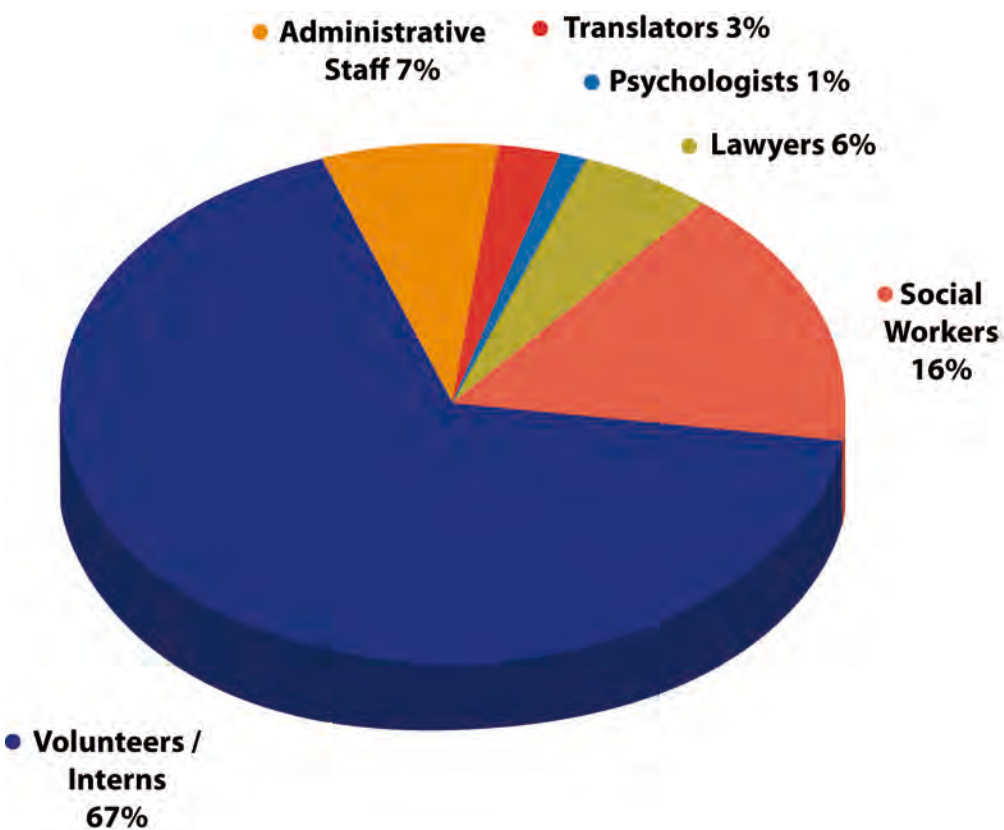
Geographical distribution of individual cases handled by ISS



In the framework of ISS' involvement in the development and the implementation of norms relating to family and child protection, ISS and its network showcased their experience and good practices working with children in the context of international migration by submitting a joint paper to the Committee on the Rights of Children for its Day of General Discussion on this topic on 28 September 2012. As a pioneer working with children facing legal, social and economic barriers across borders since its establishment in 1924, ISS network has a solidly established expertise in cross border family and child protection issues - all in line with the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children.

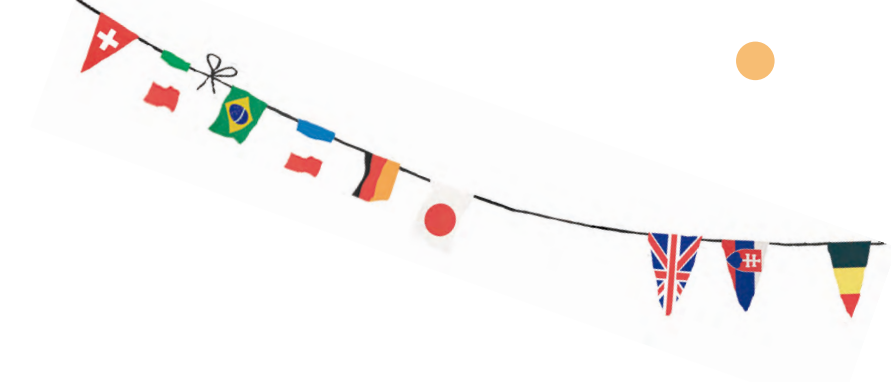
weblink: <http://www.iss-ssi.org>

ISS Staff expertise distribution by sector





SUPPORT
MEDIATE



Highlights on some of our activities



PROTECT
REUNITE



People we serve say :

"It is certain that without your competent and dedicated efforts, the decision issued in our favor would not have been possible." "Because of your efforts my mother has been granted asylum " " You helped me tremendously to get my daughter back." "After so many years, the permit I have waited for so long has finally arrived. It is a deliverance for me. Having it makes me freer and more peaceful." "You helped me. I was very pleased with your follow-up of my case." "I respect you because you have kind heart and you felt this is a man has real problem." " Our family is finally reunited " "It is incredible what you have done for our family because it was a very difficult case" "Your compassion gave us the patience we needed to see our case solved." "Thank you for keeping in touch; we value your interest in our situation." "We know much more about adoption now and we feel we are ready. Thank you for your informed advice."



Hadiya*, 8 years old

Hadiya was 8 years old when her father intervened to save her from a secret society in Nigeria that openly practiced female genital mutilation as an initiation. Hadiya's father became a target of this society who hunted him as a result of his intervention to save his daughter. With nowhere to go as local authorities seemed to close their eyes towards the mutilation practice, the father fled to Norway hoping to be reunited with his girl soon enough. Without her father's protection, Hadiya had no one to turn to and tell her story as she had no other family members and soon she became a street child.

One year later, Hadiya found by accident a newspaper's article on her father with a photograph of him and the mention "Wanted". This event was a triggering factor for the young girl: she sought assistance to find her father. ISS became involved in Nigeria and, after having made investigations through its worldwide network, was able to locate Hadiya's father in Norway, where he was granted asylum. Contact between Hadiya and her father could then be re-established and their reunification has taken place after almost two years of separation.

**Names and countries have been changed for confidentiality reasons*

"My special thank you and gratitude to you and the rest of the organisation for all what you have done in saving and helping my daughter's life."





Hadiya's father,
Letter to ISS



How we re-establish family links

The family is the natural and fundamental unit of society and requires the full protection of the State. When parents and children are living in different countries, States therefore have an obligation to facilitate contact and to respond in a humane and prompt manner to requests made to enter or leave a country for the purpose of family reunification

ISS interventions regarding family reunification can for instance include:

- the maintenance of ties between family members, facilitating direct contacts, telephone calls, exchange of correspondence, photographs, etc
 - the provision of social reports on the family situation of the parents and/or the child in the country of origin or in the host country
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Alexandru*, 17 years old

Alexandru, 17 years old left Bulgaria for United Kingdom with human traffickers, without his parents' consent. He left behind his family including 4 brothers with no information on his whereabouts.

The traffickers took advantage of the family's poor situation and promised the young boy a better life in the United Kingdom. However, once he reached host country he was forced to steal in stores. After a long period of exploitation, Alexandru was integrated within a Social Care Center and, through ISS, was able to be in contact with his family again.

Having gathered substantial information on Alexandru's situation, as well as on his family, ISS became convinced that it is in the best interest of the boy to return home and be reunited with his family; with his consent ISS workers prepared his return to Bulgaria, with him and his family.

Today, ISS still visits Alexandru and discusses with him the different educational and professional opportunities existing to develop with him a life project.

**Names and countries have been changed for confidentiality reasons*

How we assist migrants in needs

The number of children who move throughout the world continues to increase due to global migration and urbanisation. Children are mobile within their own country and across international borders both with and without their parents. Those who move independently can be particularly vulnerable to many forms of abuse, such as trafficking, and as such need to be adequately protected. ISS works to ensure the best interests of these children are safeguarded and help them realise their rights

ISS interventions regarding young migrants can for instance include:

- Assistance in defining a durable solution for the child by taking into account his/her individual situation and background
- When the return of the child in his/her country of origin has been considered as in his/her best interests, the preparation of the family in the home country in order to ensure the smooth re-integration of the child, the development and implementation of plans and arrangements to assist with the adaptation of the child into the local community, the organisation of local specialist services' support in such situations



Adriano*, 4 years old

Adriano, born in Nepal, was 4 years old when he was adopted by a Romanian couple. Soon after his adoption, he moved with his adoptive parents to the United Kingdom to live there permanently. ISS was then requested by the relevant authorities in Adriano's country of origin to provide them with a post-adoption report every 6 months for a period of two years to ensure that the little boy was fine and developing well.

From the first investigations made by ISS, it appeared that Adriano was a loving boy who was integrating well in his new family and environment. However, it came out that his adoptive parents had falsely told him that he was their biological child and had been temporarily placed in an orphanage after his birth until they came to search him to move to the United Kingdom. When Adriano was misbehaving, his adoptive parents were threatening him to bring him back to the orphanage as they had supposedly done before.

In collaboration with local social services, ISS sensitised Adriano's adoptive parents to the needs of an adopted child. The couple progressively started to explain his personal history to their son, which contributed to fully respect Adriano's right to know his origins and grow up in a friendly and reassuring environment.

**Names and countries have been changed for confidentiality reasons*

How we respond to adoption needs

Adoption is a social and legal protective measure for children in need of a family environment. The requirements and protection of the child are the priority and are the starting point for the process. While ISS has no decision-making power, its expertise in cases of intercountry adoption is usually required for a particular stage of the process

ISS interventions regarding post-adoption can for instance include:

- The counselling to prospective adoptive parents on their adoption project
- The provision of social reports on prospective adoptive parents
- The provision of follow-up reports of the adopted child's integration in his new family



Aimé*, 15 years old

Aimé was 15 years old when he decided to leave DR Congo to find a better future elsewhere. He had already faced many difficulties in his young life including being severely injured. Aimé had lost contact with his family and was growing up in a shelter with no appropriate protection and care. Young Aimé travelled by himself, crossing borders and ocean and his trip was full of dangers. Several thousand miles later, his journey ended in Argentina where he was placed into the care of local authorities as an unaccompanied minor. While Aimé integrated in his new environment very quickly, he was obviously missing his family in DRC. Aimé and his carers requested ISS services to locate his family, ISS managed to locate the boy's parents in his home country and helped him re-establish contact with them, sharing letters and photos. ISS conducted an assessment of Aimé's family situation to help authorities in Argentina formulate a decision for the boy's future and in his best interest.

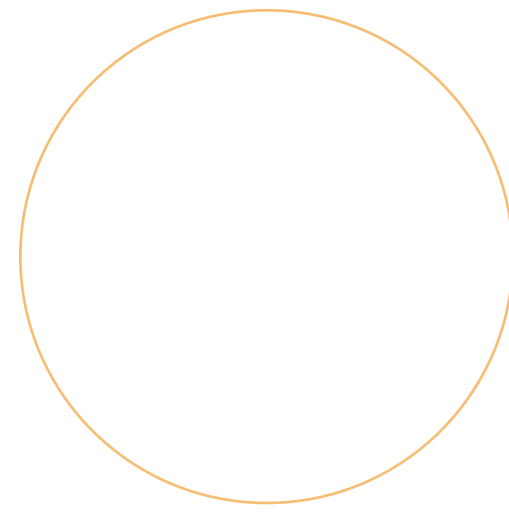
**Names and countries have been changed for confidentiality reasons*

How we assist unaccompanied and separated children

Unaccompanied and separated children are children deprived of their family environment and, as such, should be entitled to special protection and assistance by the State. Permanent care solutions that ensure the long term protection of these children should be found without undue delay. An essential element of this decision making is the tracing of family members and the provision of social evaluations in order to fully appreciate all elements of the child's situation. The child should also be given the opportunity to express his/her opinion

ISS interventions regarding unaccompanied and separated children can for instance include:

- The tracing of the child's family in his/her country of origin and assistance in re-establishing contact
- The provision of a social report on the family composition and situation with information on the child's upbringing and reasons for leaving the family home



General Secretariat



Coordinating the activities of global network

The General Secretariat of ISS is the organisation's structural backbone coordinating the different expertise available globally, providing institutional support to the network, and disseminating general information on ISS services to members, external organisations and entities in need of assistance.

The **specific mandate** of the GS is to:

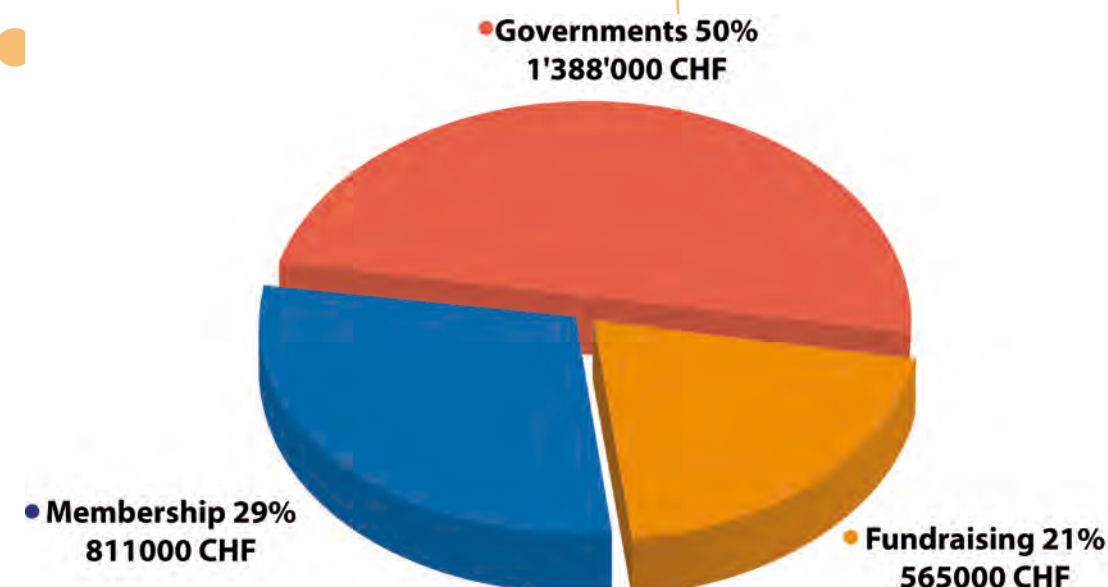
- **Guarantee the coherence** and coordination of the Network's cross-border activities.
- **Develop and strengthen** the operational capacity of the Network's members.
- **Coordinate, sustain, supervise and assess** the functions of the Network.
- **Organize all communication** and shared knowledge-base of the organization.
- **Represent the organisation and advocate** at the international level.

Financing the General Secretariat

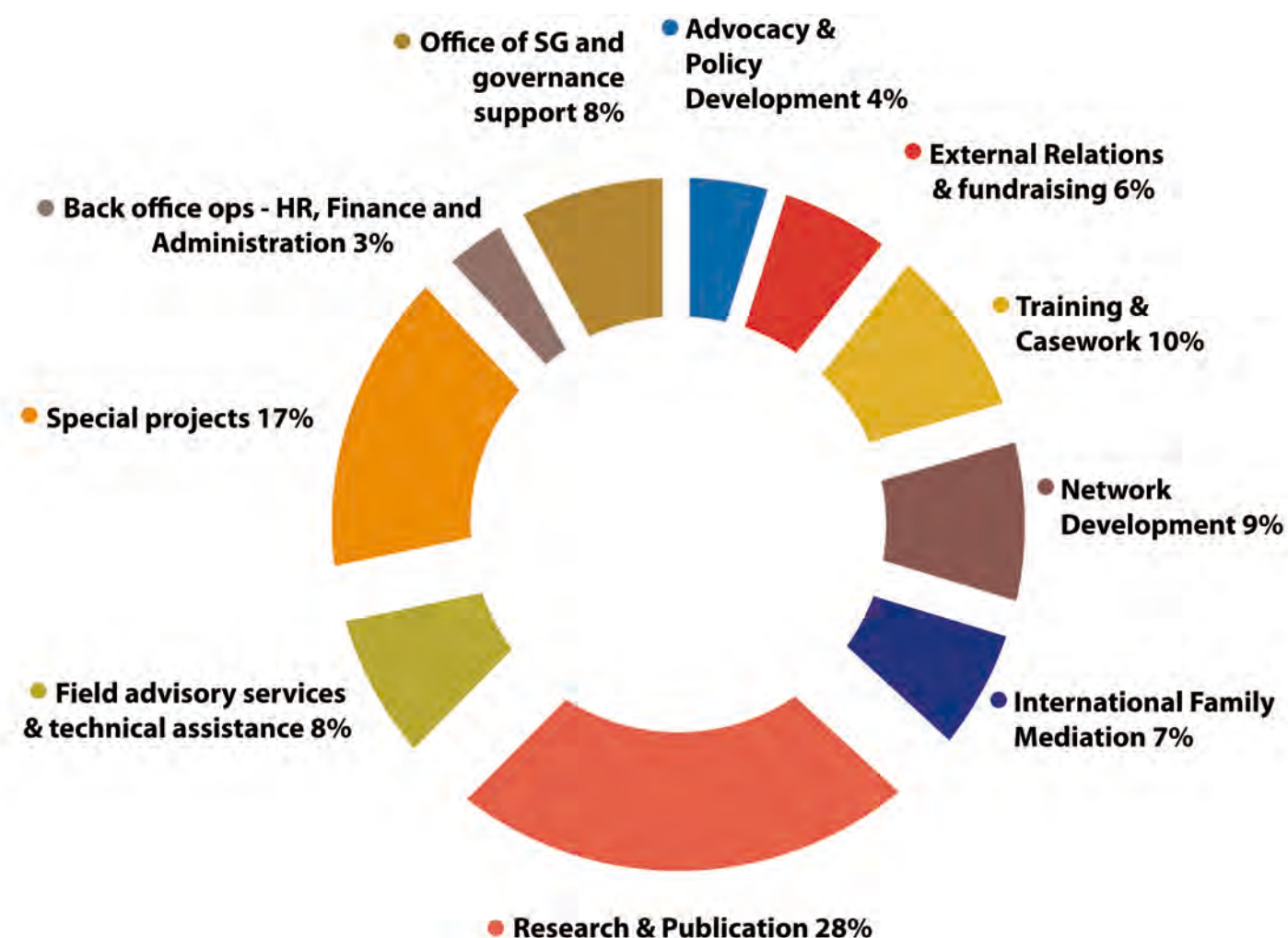
The General Secretariat is financed through direct fundraising efforts, through funding for its global projects. The General Secretariat can count as well statutory contributions from its network members.

Another source of income is the ISS International Reference Centre for the rights of children deprived of their family (ISS/IRC) which was created in 1997 and delivers today top notch reporting and situation analysis to 21 governments who contribute financially towards it; this crucial contribution enables ISS to share the same services, free of charge, across the globe with central authorities and other partners who cannot pay those services.

GS Income structure 2010-2011-2012



Spending breakdown per Service Units



Research and Publications

What we achieved in 2011-2012

- Answered more than **200 requests for information**, which relate to advice about general legislation, practices, protagonists, comparative practices, risks and standards implementation.
- Developed country specific fact sheets for the Committee on the Rights of the Child, analysing adoption and placement of children at the occasion of countries members reporting sessions.
- Disseminated circulars to facilitate **an exchange of information between Central Authorities and professionals**, both from the countries of origin and receiving countries.
- Published 20 issues of its Monthly Review, distributed to more than **4000 professionals across the world** available online for members.
- Published and updated 20 countries' profiles, added to the online database of **80 country situation documents**, focussing on adoption and child protection practices in countries of origin.
- Delivered **more than 20 lectures** in conferences and provided training and support to professionals and organisations across the world, for instance the Fifth International Policy Conference on the African Child in Addis Ababa, in May 2012.
- Expanded the Documentation Centre on Children Deprived of their Family, by **collecting publications and texts of both psychosocial and legal nature**. The database is available on line.
- Produced several articles in professional reviews and participated as **experts in different high level workgroups** (like The Hague Expert Group on the Financial Aspects of Inter country Adoption).

- Published an in-depth study "The Grey zones of Intercountry adoption", first to prepare the 2010 Special Hague Commission, and then be published in 2011 in English, with the support of ISS USA. The book investigated several dozen of case-law to demonstrate that abuses affecting intercountry adoption are happening before the adoption process starts, making them very difficult to tackle. The study proposes a number of recommendations directed to Central Authorities of both countries of origin and receiving countries.

Weblink: <http://www.iss-ssi.org/2009/index.php?id=42>



International Family Mediation

Based on its expertise and research, ISS will publish in 2013 the first family mediation guide targeting binational and migrant families.

Field Support Projects

Over the last decade, ISS has undertaken evaluation of child protection and adoption systems mission in **12 different countries of origin**. This large and unique experience positions the organisation as a world leader in the very specific field of the protection of children's rights in adoption and alternative care contexts. Two more assessments are already foreseen for the year 2013. Recently, evaluations of child protection and adoption systems were carried out in Laos (2011), Democratic Republic of Congo-DRC (2012) and Colombia (2012).

In many of the countries visited, the recommendations of ISS experts were followed by **concrete changes**. In Vietnam for instance, the whole legal system governing adoption was reformed, with a close follow-up of ISS, going together with the ratification in 2011 of the Hague Convention on Inter-country adoption by this country. In Ivory Coast and Guatemala, the adoption process was reviewed, enhancing the protection of children's rights.

Dissemination of good practices and ethical principles remain crucial for the improvement of the understanding of children's rights. ISS is putting great efforts in advocacy activities; it successfully managed to publish **a guide for prospective adopters** in English, French and Spanish, further translated into Flemish, Portuguese and Italian, and ordered by many public and private actors in several thousand of copies.

Weblink:<http://www.iss-ssi.org/2009/index.php?id=14>

« I have known the International Social Service and its programme International Reference Centre for the rights of the children deprived of their family (ISS-IRC) for many years. I used their expertise when I was at the Committee of the United Nations on the Rights of the Child: each session, ISS provided accurate and well documented information on the issue of adoption in countries presenting their report and drew the committee's attention on the issues concerning adoption. [...] More generally, I regularly follow the reports and publications of the ISS, which I appreciate the quality, ethic and relevance.

On these basis, I think the ISS team gather an important amount of expertise of very high quality which constitute an important input in the context of the reform of the system of adoption in Haiti »

Rosa Maria Ortiz,

Former member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child,
Member of the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights, rapporteur
for the rights of the child and rapporteur for Haiti.

“ISS is playing a critical role in monitoring the rapidly evolving situation of inter-country adoption at global level. ISS is a strong advocate on these issues and its views are well respected by international organizations and adoption central authorities. ISS is a key resource for providing technical assistance to governments willing to improve their system of adoption or undertake preparatory steps for ratifying the Hague Convention on inter-country adoption. This organization is a unique and valuable resource for providing guidance and technical support for addressing cross-border family conflicts with the best interest of the child as its primary concern. UNICEF's mandate does not allow our organization to get involved into individual cases and it is critical ISS be provided with the adequate resources for fulfilling this function.»

Jean-Claude Legrand,

Senior Regional Advisor Child Protection,
UNICEF Regional Office CEE-CIS

Special Projects

While conducting field missions, ISS has observed that many children with disabilities grow up in institutional care worldwide, without being offered any other form of protection. The project «Finding families for children with disabilities», initiated in 2011, aims at elaborating a permanent family life project for every child, regardless of his/her health status. A handbook for the use of professionals caring for children with disabilities in institution has been drafted by the GS, in collaboration with the NGO *Médecins du Monde* and a panel of international and multidisciplinary experts. The team is also preparing a Lifebook for children in alternative care, as a tool to accompany and prepare them to their new life plan. The project is now ready for its implementation in pilot countries, through training seminars for professionals. Assessment missions were carried out in Vietnam (February 2012) and Azerbaijan (October 2012) and first workshops are due to take place in early 2013 in selected pilot countries.



“The child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding”

(United Nations Conventions on the rights of the child, preamble)

What we achieved in 2011-2012 through this project :

- Identified 4 pilot projects in 4 continents
- Conducted 2 field missions in pilot countries
- Drafted a handbook for professionals working in institutions
- Drafted a “Life book for children” in institutions
- Prepared training and exchange workshops for professionals involved in the project

What's next :

- Organising workshops, training trainers and ensuring a follow-up in each 4 pilot countries.
- Finalising the handbook and the life book based on the field experiences in the pilot countries.
- Publishing and disseminating these tools for professionals in various languages, at least English, French, Spanish and Azeri.

“We need help with the development of the file of children growing up in institution because it is our main tool to find a family for the children who need it. I think this project will greatly contribute to support professionals in this task and thus to improve the life of many children”

Nguyen Van Binh,
Director,

Department of adoption of the Ministry of Justice in Vietnam

Advocacy

UN Guidelines on the Alternative care of Children

The unit's overarching objectives have been to advocate and lead policy development on core ISS issues with the corollary ISS network via numerous activities.

Thanks to these joint efforts, issues central to children in alternative care matters have been given the limelight, specifically at the United Nations and professionals across the globe have become better equipped – thus providing better protections for millions of children worldwide.

What we achieved in 2011-2012 through our advocacy work

ISS contributed to the drafting of a joint strategy to raise awareness of the Guideline issues at the UN as well as adopted a principal role in the development and translation of the Implementation and Monitoring Handbook. ISS has also been working with key organisations, to lobby in front of the United Nations Children's Rights Committee. (UNCRC) Specifically, ISS in collaboration with SOS Children's Villages International is undertaking treaty body mainstreaming activities to ensure that all the UN treaty bodies (in addition to the UNCRC Committee) are aware of the Guidelines. The results have been promising. Both the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights have taken on board our recommendations. Lastly, in order to showcase ISS' core business, a joint paper on behalf of the network was submitted on international migration to the CRC Committee for its Day of General Discussion.

Since 2004, ISS co-led the initiative to have International Guidelines on the issue of children in need of alternative care and since their acceptance at the United Nations General Assembly in 2009, ISS is now actively working towards their implementation. For instance, in Latin America, the ISS and RELAF presented the Guidelines to the Interamerican Court as «Amicus Curiae» and the handbook was validated by 37 professionals from Argentina, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay. They evaluated a preliminary version of the Manual and worked together with specialists invited by RELAF to have a practical tool aimed at decision makers and technicians, as well as judges, lawyers, officials from different levels of government bodies and representatives of non-governmental organizations.

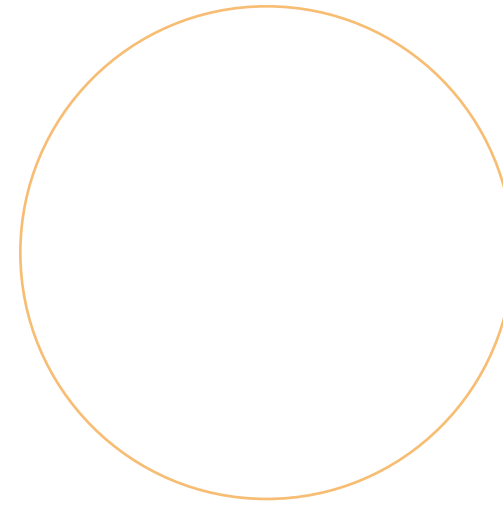
You can also consult the child and adult friendly versions developed by our NGO partner in Latin America, RELAF:

<http://www.relaf.org/aplicacion.html> and http://www.relaf.org/aplicacion_eng.html



« The Committee therefore warmly welcomes the important and vital recognition given to the Guidelines for the Alternative Care of Children by the United Nations General Assembly on the 20th anniversary of the UNCRC on November 20, 2009. They are the direct result of the call from the Committee in 2005 and of five years of work including extensive consultation and negotiation. »

Prof. Yanghee-Lee, Chairperson,
UN Committee on the Rights of the Child



ISS Members



ISS Branches, Affiliated Bureaus and Correspondents in direct contact with the network

In 2011, **ISS German Branch** has been appointed by the German government as the "central contact point for international family conflicts and for mediation". As such, the German Branch provides services such as information, conciliation and referrals to other organisations such as the central authorities, to individuals and professionals in cross-border family conflicts. The government with this decision acknowledged the conviction of a panel of experts, that ISS as an NGO, with its long lasting experience and its international network is most suitable to provide this service.



ISS German Branch
(founded 1930)
www.iss-ger.de



ISS Ireland Correspondent
(collaborating since 2002)
www.hse.ie/eng/



ISS Hong Kong Branch
(founded 1958)
www.isshk.org



ISS Greece Branch
(founded 1924)



ISS Israel Affiliated Bureau
(founded 1995)
www.molsa.gov.il



ISS Japan Branch
(founded 1959)
www.issj.org/index-e.html

Financial and human resources are scarce, however, due to the devotion of the President, the Board members, the Director and the 3 volunteers, the Branch ensured services both to ISS partners abroad and to authorities and social services within **Greece**. In 2011, it was able to handle about 50 individual cases and provided around 750 phone advice.

"All ISS members work together for the welfare of children and their family. They share a common expertise in international social work and as such are able to provide efficient intercountry casework services in their country and across borders. "

Jean Ayoub,
Secretary General



ISS Bulgaria Branch
(collaborating since 2002)
<http://www.iss-bg.org/en/>



ISS Australia Branch
(founded 1961)
www.iss.org.au



ISS Belgium Branch
(founded 2000)
www.sireas.be

In 2011, **ISS Bulgaria** provided services to 1040 children and families through the 21 public social services established and run by the Branch in Bulgaria. In addition it assisted over 150 children and families in cross-border situations.



ISS Canada Branch
(founded 1979)
www.issc-ssic.ca



ISS France Correspondent
(collaborating since 2006)



ISS German Correspondent
collaborating since 2004
www.fif-ev.de

ISS Canada cooperates with federal and provincial government departments in the development and promotion of national and international policies and conventions related to the protection of children and adults.

Other than intercountry casework in 2011 **ISS Netherlands** built a DNA-database for donor conceived children and their sperm donors. With the support of this DNA-database these donor children can find their donor and siblings.



ISS Netherlands Branch
(founded 1955)
www.fiom.nl



ISS New Zealand Affiliated Bureau
(founded 1994)
www.cyf.govt.nz



ISS Philippines Branch
(founded 1990)



ISS Romania Branch
(collaborating since 1998,
Branch since 2012)
<http://www.generatietanara.ro/en/>



ISS Portugal Affiliated Bureau
(founded in 1990)
www.appassi.org.pt



ISS Spain Correspondent
(collaborating since 2002)
http://www.cruzroja.es/portal/page?_pageid=659,12331825&_dad=portal30&_schema=PORTAL30



ISS South Africa Affiliated Bureau
(founded in 1999)
www.dsd.gov.za

In 2011 **ISS Spain** aimed to make their service known within the Public Child Protection System and Public Authorities. In doing so there was an increase in the number of cases handled and in the amount of beneficiaries, which in 2011 totals: 1202 cases and reached 4220 beneficiaries.

In 2011 **ISS Romania** worked nationally with 63 beneficiaries, victims of human trafficking and one of their major achievements was to overcome the risk of re-trafficking and to propose individualised projects to reintegrate in the community and society.



ISS United Kingdom Branch
(founded in 1955)
www.cfab.org.uk/

Children and Families Across Borders (CFAB) is a unique UK-based charity which identifies and protects children who have been separated from family members as a consequence of trafficking, abduction, migration, divorce, conflict and asylum, as well as other individuals in often desperate circumstances



ISS United States of America Branch (founded in 1926)
<http://www.cruzroja.es/portal/>



ISS Venezuela Branch
(founded in 1957)

In 2011, **ISS USA** provided 384 new intercountry services for 426 children and 97 adults. 1,500 people obtained training and an additional 857 individuals received answers to inquiries through ISS-USA. The Branch helped 720 people, including 261 children, through the U.S. Repatriation program, which was also renewed by the Federal Government for an additional five years. The American Branch also created a new initiative called Kids In Between that was kicked off during the 2011 ISS USA conference, continued to innovate and implement best practices for children in the foster care system with international connections.



ISS Switzerland Branch
(founded 1932)
www.ssiss.ch

ISS Switzerland met Besides traditional ISS activities, is engaged in West Africa region where it created a collaborative network in 12 countries, focusing mainly on child protection, prevention of child trafficking and social integration. ISS supports children by reintegrating them in their family environment complemented with education or professional training.

Lexicon

Branches and Affiliated Bureaus are ISS voting members, comply with the Statutes and General Principles of the organization, and are committed to ISS's vision and mission. These organisations are represented in the different governance bodies (International Council and Professional Advisory Committee).

Correspondents are ISS non-voting members that comply with the Statutes and General Principles of the organization, and are committed to ISS' vision and mission. These associated organisations are governmental and non-governmental entities and are represented in the International Council.

Intercountry casework represents the main activity of ISS. ISS has developed an expertise in providing assistance and counselling to families and children facing complex social situations of an international nature. The global ISS network ensures the capacity to provide coordinated international assistance by establishing links between relevant agencies in different countries and providing them with accurate and comprehensive information to enable them to propose the best solution for all protagonists involved.

International Family Mediation offers support to bi-national parents and children through family change and disruption. A family mediator(s) helps these families improve communication and to work towards agreements which are acceptable to all concerned. At the center of these discussions is the protection of the children's best interests. International family mediation can help avoid long, painful and expensive legal battles where the psychological distress on children is often overlooked.

International Reference Center for the rights of children deprived of their family (ISS/IRC) is a programme of the General Secretariat launched in 1997. Its principal goal consists of sharing, distributing and promoting good practices in the realm of intercountry adoption and more broadly the protection of children deprived of their family. The ISS/IRC advocates for the ratification and application of international conventions relating to the rights of these children.



In 2014 ISS will celebrate its 90th year of services