

GO 'UNDERGROUND' WITH MEDIAMATIC!



'Guerilla in Budapest'. 'Lost in Lima'. 'Truly Tehran'. With names like these, Mediamatic Travel entices keen travellers to pay unusual visits to world metropolises. The Hivos-NCDO Culture Fund supports this virtual alternative cultural travel agency. "It's a fantastic digital network for sharing between North and South!", says fund manager Christine Wagner.

Mediamatic Travel is a project of Mediamatic, a Dutch cultural organisation that organises exhibits, workshops, salons and other projects involving new media, art and culture. "In the first place, this project is a worldwide network for professionals in the cultural sector", says Martine Posthuma de Boer of Mediamatic. "But any traveller who is interested in art and culture can make use of it." How does it work? It's simple. Go to the website, click on your destination and send an e-mail to the local guide. When you arrive, you will meet your guide for an introductory chat. The guide will then put together a programme and acquaint you with his or her favourite culture spots and local artists – often the 'underground' scene in their city. Price: EUR 45 an hour, to be paid directly to the guide. The project started at the beginning of this year and the website will have its official launch in October. Hivos is calling on its culture partners around the world to suggest local experts and guides. Several organisations – LOT from Peru, Theertha from Sri Lanka and Kuona Trust from Kenya – are already taking part.

Mediamatic Travel is looking for local experts and guides. Register them at www.travel.mediamatic.net!

STAFF CHANGES

Until recently she was director of the Hivos regional office in Zimbabwe. Now Corina Straatsma represents Hivos in Bolivia. She has succeeded Ria Hulsman, who will start working as coordinator of the Hivos Office for Donor Relations in the Netherlands. Margreet van Doodewaard, former officer of the Hivos Culture, ICT and Media programme, is the new regional director in Zimbabwe.

NEW STEPS TOWARDS THE RAINBOW COALITION

Hivos was again part of the Gay Pride parade which enlivened the canals of Amsterdam on 31 July. Amidst boats bustling with people celebrating their sexual freedom, the Hivos craft was filled with gays and lesbians protesting against homophobia and exclusion. It was not the only time in recent months that Hivos has championed the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals (LGBTs).

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STEPS IN THE HAGUE

As part of the large-scale gay festival 'Pink Saturday', on 20 June of this year, Hivos called attention to the vulnerable position of LGBTs in many countries. Its banners, folders and speakers reached out to the thousands of visitors. The central organisation of this annual Dutch event was in the hands of the local gay rights organisation COC Haaglanden, with Hivos as one of its main partners. On the day before the event, COC Haaglanden, capitalising on both the festival and

its location (The Hague, international city of Peace and Justice), joined Hivos in organising an international LGBT rights conference entitled 'Towards an International Rainbow Coalition'. Here, policy makers and activists discussed how to strengthen the worldwide rainbow coalition: an international collaborative alliance for LGBT rights.

STEPS IN COPENHAGEN

These talks continued in Copenhagen in July. The Danish capital formed the backdrop for the second World

Outgames, a sporting event for LGBTs. Alongside a cultural programme and festive activities, an important part of the World Outgames was the international LGBT human rights conference. Thanks to Hivos, twenty-five of its LGBT partner organisations came to share the results of their work with the other 475 participants in the conference. At the gathering, which lasted from 27 to 29 July, Hivos organised five workshops on how to ensure that gay rights are both legally acknowledged and socially accepted as human rights. <<

CONFERENCE IN THE HAGUE

Michael Guest, senior adviser to the Council for Global Equality and in the early 1990s the first openly homosexual American ambassador, was one of the speakers at 'Towards an International Rainbow Coalition'. He gave his view on the international struggle for gay rights, with specific attention to the role that can be played by US embassies. Renato Sabbadini, secretary-general of the International Gay and Lesbian Association, stressed the fact that the best results are achieved by a mixture of strategies, keeping in mind the local statutory and cultural context. Activists from Indonesia, South Africa, Palestine, Serbia and Sri Lanka presented a vivid and moving picture of their daily lives and explained how they contribute to a better position for LGBTs.

To read more about the conference 'Towards an International Rainbow Coalition', go to: www.hivos.nl/eng/lgbt.

CONFERENCE IN COPENHAGEN

Marijke Haanraads was one of the Hivos staff members who attended the Human Rights Conference in Copenhagen. "Three important points came forward again and again. First of all, the need to decriminalise homosexuality and thus to continue putting pressure on countries where homosexuality is still punishable by law. International solidarity is essential for this. Second, the importance of enlisting local activists and organisations for the social acceptance of LGBTs and different sexual identities. Sharing information and knowledge amongst organisations is important here. And third, the need for broadly based collaboration in an International Rainbow Coalition, both amongst LGBTs and between them and the women's movement, human rights organisations and other groups of excluded people, such as people without a country and ethnic minorities. Inclusive thinking is the key to respect for diversity. In the end it is about everyone's freedom and right to self-determination."

To read more about the 'LGBT Human Rights Conference', go to: www.hivos.nl/eng/lgbt.

NEW FUND FOR WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION



Millions of South African women are still weighed down by HIV/AIDS, poverty and gender-based violence (violence specifically aimed at women). Local civil society organisations tackle these problems. To support them, Hivos recently founded the Joint Gender Fund together with development organisations Irish Aid and the Ford Foundation. "The cooperation between organisations on the themes of HIV/AIDS, poverty and gender-based violence is unique", says Joint Gender Fund officer Linda Diedericks. "What is more, it is a highly innovative perspective that these three problems exacerbate each other and form an obstacle to joint emancipation and therefore need to be tackled simultaneously."

If you would like to request a grant or learn more about the Joint Gender Fund, go to www.jointgenderfund.co.za or send an e-mail to: linda@hivos.co.za.

Hivos and SNV join hands once more

BIOGAS PROGRAMME ALSO OPERATING IN INDONESIA

Farmers in Indonesia will soon have access to sustainable energy. Last May, Hivos and the SNV Netherlands Development Programme started a four-year biogas programme in this country.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE

“The Indonesia Domestic Biogas Programme revolves around biogas installations”, says Robert de Groot, manager of the programme. “They convert biomass, such as plants and manure, into combustible biogas. This gas contains methane, an efficient energy transporter suitable for a wide range of uses, from simple gas stoves to lamps.” De Groot goes on to explain that, although CO₂ is released upon combustion, this is not detrimental to the environment. “This type of energy production is CO₂-neutral. When it is burned, biomass loses just as much CO₂ as it absorbed from the air earlier.” Fossil fuels such as oil, firewood and coal lose more CO₂ than they have absorbed.

FARMERS AND COWS

The target group of the programme is farmers who keep at least two cows. “Two cows produce enough manure to provide a farmer’s family with enough energy for its daily cooking and lighting needs”, says De Groot. Some 75 to 150 biogas units will be installed in at least three Indonesian provinces before the end of 2009. By 2012 there will be around eight thousand, two thousand of them outside of Java. Hivos manages and implements the programme, SNV provides technical support. Hivos and SNV will work with local NGOs, dairy cooperatives, the agricultural information service and small-scale contractors. Through the enlistment of training courses, consultancy and contracts, the two partners intend to develop an entire economic sector: from builders, bricklayers and makers of gas stoves to suppliers of sand, cement and gravel. Thanks to this, not only does the programme create jobs, it assures the end users of maintenance, parts and expertise.



COWS LIKE THIS ONE PRODUCE THE MANURE TO PROVIDE INDONESIAN FAMILIES WITH ENERGY.

PRODUCTION AND SCHOOLING

“We have learned lessons from pilot projects with small biogas installations in Indonesia”, says De Groot. “We came across construction errors and defective quality control, for example, and became aware of the high initial costs of building these installations.” Construction of one biogas installation now costs from EUR 400 to 600, depending on its size and location. De Groot: “The installations will be operational for at least fifteen years; they need little maintenance, and all that time they supply clean energy.” Women and children in particular will benefit. “They will no longer need to gather firewood, will not have to inhale harmful smoke and can spend their time on different production activities or on schooling.”

If you would like to learn more about Hivos’s work for energy and climate, go to www.hivos.nl/eng/climate.

To learn more about the work of SNV for energy and climate, go to www.snvworld.org > ‘Our work’ > ‘Renewable Energy’.

MORE BIOGAS PROGRAMMES

The Indonesia Domestic Biogas Programme relies heavily on previous SNV experiences with biogas production in countries such as Nepal, Cambodia, Bangladesh and Vietnam. It also shares knowledge with the biogas programme started at the end of last year by SNV and Hivos in Africa (see the previous Hivos International). SNV is organising an international conference in November 2009 to which representatives of both the African and the Indonesian programme have been invited.



TURKISH HEAD CURATOR BERAL MADRA (R) AND NAZIRA ALIMBAYEVA, A CURATOR FROM KIRGHIZSTAN, POSE IN FRONT OF A WORK OF PHOTO ARTIST JAMSHED KHOLIKOV.

ENJOY CENTRAL ASIAN ART AT THE BIENNALE!

There will be a Central Asia pavilion again this year at the world's largest and most renowned visual arts manifestation: the 53rd Venice Biennale. The pavilion will house exhibits by artists from Kazakhstan, Tadzhikistan, Uzbekistan and Kirghizstan. "Right now Central Asia lacks the financial means to present its art and culture on its own account", says Hivos employee Tanja Vranic. "This is why we are financing the pavilion." Hivos wants to show the world the art and culture of developing countries – especially from areas that are artistically and culturally isolated, such as Central Asia. It was decided to exhibit only modern Central Asian art, such as works by Ermek Jaenisch, Jamshed Kholikov and Oksana Shatalova.

Hivos advises all art lovers to visit the Central Asia pavilion at the Biennale! Thanks to the Turkish head curator Beral Madra, who has much experience at the Biennale, the pavilion is in a beautiful location along the Canale Giudecca. It is open until 22 November. For more information, visit www.centralasiaart.org.

"MUSLIMS NEED A SECULAR STATE TO BE MUSLIM"

The report on the spring conference 'Promoting Pluralism through Civic Reason' is now online! Read how keynote speaker Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im, a humanist Muslim and human rights activist, defends the need for a secular state that respects human rights. And how he does not shun the Islamic religious law of Shari'a, the concept of 'faith' or the influence of religion on politics. As the Sudanese says: "Muslims need a secular state to be Muslim". The conference was part of the Hivos

Knowledge Programme 'Promoting Pluralism' and was organised in the Netherlands by Hivos and the Kosmopolis Institute of the University for Humanistics.

Read more about the Hivos Knowledge Programme 'Promoting Pluralism' at www.hivos.net/pluralism, download the report and take part in one of the online discussions. Click on 'regions' to see the debates and studies backed by the Hivos Knowledge Programme.

SCHOOL FOR AFRICAN ARTISTS

Africa has a lot to offer, surely when it comes to art and culture. African art networks can ensure that more people – both on the African continent and elsewhere in the world – are aware of this. The ARterial Network contributes to the formation of such networks. For instance, from 31 May to 9 June it brought together artists from seventeen African countries for a 'Winter School' in Cape-town. Here they learned skills such as networking, advocacy, business operations and digital media. The ARterial Network was founded in 2007 and receives support from Hivos and the EU.



Hivos is a development organisation which stands for emancipation, democratisation and poverty alleviation in developing countries. For this purpose financial and political support is given to more than 800 local private organisations in 30 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The seven policy spearheads of Hivos are financial services and enterprise development; socially and ecologically sustainable production; human rights and democratisation; HIV/Aids; arts and culture; gender, women and development; ICT and media. Part of the work has been decentralised to four regional offices in Zimbabwe, India, Indonesia and Costa Rica.



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