

50

interpedia

1974-2024



Interpedia's
five decades



interpedia

CHILDREN OF THE WORLD

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Interpedia – already 50 years in a changing world, prioritizing the rights of the child

Even the ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus is said to have mentioned *"Everything flows, nothing stays still"*, i.e. everything is in motion and changing. Interpedia's 50-year journey has also seen many changes and upheavals, caused by both external and internal factors.

Interpedia can be considered an organization whose ultimate mission is basically to make itself redundant. Although many things in the world have changed for the better during Interpedia's existence, the last few years have also shown – as Heraclitus already told – that even positive developments are not permanent, but the world and humanity may take steps backwards. In such a world, there is still a great need for organizations like Interpedia.

While the world and the field in which Interpedia operates have changed and Interpedia has developed along with them, certain things have remained unchanged. At the center of all Interpedia's activities has always been, and still is today, the child's rights to balanced development and a safe environment to

grow up in. In addition to this vision, all activities are guided by Interpedia's values:

- Integrity – Child rights always come first in all our actions
- Reliability – We act responsibly in all our actions
- Equality – We act open-mindedly and treat everyone equally

Relying on these values and drawing from the enormous expertise that Interpedia has accumulated over the decades, this middle-aged organization continues its work for child rights – in a changing world and changing with it

Jonathan Andersin
Chairman of the Board



A good childhood is a child's right!

I started in my new position as Interpedia's executive director just before the year 2024 began, which is also Interpedia's 50th year of operation.

In 2024, Interpedia is a long-lived and traditional organization working for child rights and protection in an international setting. All our activities are guided by the principle that the child's rights to balanced development and a safe growth environment are realized. The original name of Interpedia, *Hjälp till nödställda barn* (Help for children in need), speaks of the aspirations of its founders, and that idea has carried all the way to this day.

Upon our office relocation last year, I went through our archives and gained a profound understanding of the countless children's lives we've impacted over the decades. During our anniversary year 2024, we will highlight pieces of our history in different ways. Our long history as a Finnish advocate for children's rights is truly worth celebrating.

50-year-old Interpedia has always been both Finnish and international. Our international cooperation with numerous organizations and authorities has brought unique challenges and opportunities to our work.

We cooperate with countries that occasionally experience political instability or administrative changes, which makes our work difficult to predict. However, our cooperation with the partner countries is long-term and effective. Confidential relationships and the solid expertise of our employees go a long way.

As the new executive director, I consider it important that Interpedia's values – integrity, reliability and equality – are the basis of our work in the future as well. I also want to do my part in ensuring that through our work as many children as possible could have a good childhood.

In the end, all our work can be summed up in the same core idea as already 50 years ago: A good childhood is a child's right!

Ilona Kalliola
Executive Director



Interpedia's five decades

The history of Interpedia is part of the history of intercountry adoptions and development cooperation in Finland. Already in the 1960s, awareness of the gap between poor and rich countries aroused solidarity towards third world nations in Finland as well. The desire to help especially vulnerable children appealed to more and more people.

Interpedia starts intercountry adoptions in Finland

The end of the Korean War in 1953 is considered the most significant milestone in intercountry adoption activities in the world. In Finland, interest in intercountry adoptions arose in the early 1970s based on the experiences and example of other Nordic countries.

Previously, most of the adoptions in our country had been adoptions of Finnish babies. A few hundred children were also adopted from Finland to other Nordic countries from the 1950s until the 1970s. The first child who received a home from Finland through intercountry adoption arrived in 1971, when Finland was still a country that sent children for adoption.

In 1972 families interested in intercountry adoption and helping children in developing countries had their first discussions about organizing themselves. Finally the decision to found their own organization was made in Närpiö on May 18, 1974. Hjälp till Nödställda Barn (Help for children in need), later Interpedia, was born.

Gradually more and more internationally adopted children began to arrive in Finland during the 1970s. Since the 1980s, the number of children adopted from abroad grew steadily until 2005, when 308 children got a new home in Finland. Since then, the number of adoptions has decreased until recent years. The downward trend is a global phenomenon.

From a small child sponsorship association to a professional development cooperation organization

From the early days of the association, the founders and first members of Interpedia wanted to help the children of poor countries in their own country as well. The first official child sponsorship program was established in 1978, when Agneta Glad was assigned a child to sponsor through the Canadian organization Families for Children (FFC), and she decided to organize the same opportunity for others interested in helping as well.

In 1981, the first development cooperation project supported by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs was started in Somalia together with FFC. Over the decades, development cooperation and sponsorship activities have expanded and become more professional. Currently, Interpedia's development cooperation operates in seven different countries, and there are a total of five projects funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Nepal and Ethiopia.

Global education in Finnish schools and early childhood education has been running alongside development cooperation for years. The aim of the education is to raise the awareness of Finnish children and young people about the lives of children in developing countries, children's rights and sustainable development.

The timeline of this publication compiles milestones from Interpedia's five-decade history. The volunteer organization founded by a few families has grown into a professional adult and has influenced the lives of thousands of children over the course of half a century.

The 1970s

Interpedia was founded and the association, which was initially ran by volunteers, distributed advice and contact information to families interested in intercountry adoption. International connections were created, and operating principles were refined. The child sponsorship programs began.

INTERPEDIA

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

1974

- In the 1970s, Interpedia helped families adopting from countries such as Bangladesh, Ethiopia, India, Korea, Thailand and Vietnam

- Officially, there was no development cooperation and sponsorship activities yet, but the founding members raised funds to send to India

- On 18 May 1974, a group of friends of developing countries and families interested in intercountry adoption gathered in Närpiö at the invitation of Elisabeth and Alvar Sundell and founded an organization called Hjälp till nödställda barn (Help for children in need).

QUOTE

"We must, as it says in the statutes of the Adoptionscentrum in Sweden, "work so that society perceives adoption as a natural social development", i.e. not something that is resorted to when all hope of having children of one's own is lost."

- Elisabeth Sundell
in a circular 5.7.1974



1975

- The first children from Vietnam found a family in Finland



- The association was registered

- Cooperation with the Canadian organization Families for Children (FFC) began. FFC was active in Bangladesh, India and Honduras

1976

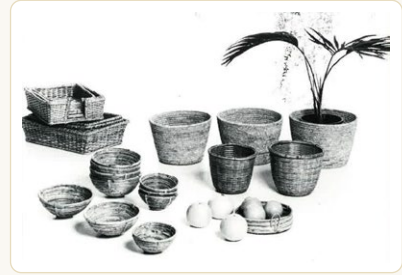
INTERPEDIA

- The name of the association was changed to Interpedia, Alla världens barn, Kaikki maailman lapset, Children of the World



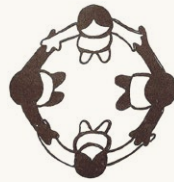
1977

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION



First order of jute items to Bangladesh. Funds were collected through the sale of jute goods until the 2000s.

1978



- The first child sponsorship program was started in India with FFC



MEMORIES

"One of Interpedia's earliest partners was the Canadian organization Families for Children, which had children's homes and child sponsorship operations. In 1978, we got our son from the organization's children's home in India. Even before he came to Finland, I contacted FFC's child sponsorship coordinator to get a child that I could sponsor, preferably at our son's children's home in Coimbatore. So we got our first child to sponsor, Babul, about 8 years old. He was found in poor condition at a bus station in a neighbouring town. He eventually got new parents and I got new children to sponsor, until after a few years I chose to become a project sponsor instead. The sponsorship has lasted for almost 47 years.

In the first years, I was FFC's sponsorship coordinator in Finland, and made sure that people paid their sponsor fee and received their sponsor post. I personally delivered mail to some sponsors in the Vasa region. At that time, Interpedia did not yet have a single employee. Pretty soon, the association took over responsibility for all child sponsorship activities."

– Agneta Glad

INTERPEDIA TIEDOTTA



The publication of Interpedia magazine began

- Interpedia participated in the meeting of Nordic adoption organizations in Denmark
- Contact person system was started

- The profits from the sale of jute products supported a children's home in Bangladesh
- The child sponsorship program in Thailand started

1979



The 1980s

The first development cooperation projects supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs were started. The child sponsorship programs grew rapidly. Interpedia did a lot of advocacy work to get intercountry adoptions into legislation. Official adoption service provider status was achieved with the law reform in 1985. Cultural groups were established, and preparatory courses for adoptive parents were developed.

INTERPEDIA

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

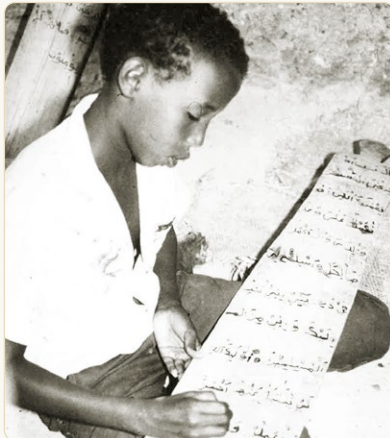
DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

1980

- Karin Luther became Interpedia's first executive director

- The adoption law entered into force at the beginning of 1980. The law did not apply to intercountry adoptions.
- Interpedia had an unofficial license to handle the documents of adoption applicants and send them abroad.
- In the early 1980s, Interpedia did a lot of advocacy work to get intercountry adoptions an official status

Children of the world
Kaikki maailman lapset
Alla världens barn
som hungrar, insjuknar och dör
Children of the world
Kaikki maailman lapset
Alla världens barn
ska vi allt mera kämpa för
undernär, fattig, föräldralös,
vilsen och olycklig
dig ska vi ta hand om,
mat och rum, skola och vättré vård
kom, lilla fadderbarn kom,
mat och rum, bättre vård
fadderbarn kom!



- Meeting of Nordic adoption organizations in Finland (in the village of Sulva)
- Preparatory courses with Folkhälsan for those considering adoption
- In Finland, the Ministry of Justice set up a working group to think about mediation of intercountry adoptions and prepare legislation – Interpedia was part of the working group

1981

- The first development cooperation project funded by the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs started in Somalia
- Child sponsorship programs in Bangladesh, India, Somalia, Honduras and Thailand

- The office moved from the Luther family home to an office space in Sulva

1982

- Adoption cooperation with Colombia began

- Support from the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs and sponsors was sent to the FFC children's home in Mogadishu, Somalia

1983

- Interpedia's summer camp in Karkku, for adoptive children, parents and applicants
- Interpedia's executive director and chairman (Karin and Michael Luther) co-founded the umbrella organization of Nordic adoption organizations in Gothenburg

- Child sponsorship activities in Ethiopia started
- Child sponsorship activities doubled when the Tholupedu Children's Village program in India was started. There were already 1200 sponsors.

1984

- Adoption cooperation with Ethiopia began

- Interpedia celebrated its first decade. Members, Nordic partners and stakeholders were invited to the party.
- A family celebration was held in connection with the autumn meeting.
- A grant was received from the Finnish Slot Machine Association to hire a secretary.



Työryy ssaat lämpä koooskoti valokuvau. Ennä ensimmitäit Interpedia-kokouksista. Päiväsi on 20 kuuun sopuudelle (iv) itoosipöytä. Sitä on di firtus Interpedia naiten.

An attempt to get the children together for a photo shoot. One of the first Interpedia meetings.

Interpedia Interpedia 10 vuotta 10 år



Interpedia loi alustavasti 1984 100 vääkättä kuu, paaatettii kokouksissa 1974. Naitta jaa kääkii otitit meenii kaiten oaa yhtiö-työryy paaatettii kaiten, otitit kymmeen vääkättä kaiten vääkättä ja vääkättä 1982.



Lapsen nimi on "tänään", sille ei voi vastata "huomenna". Barnets namn är "idag", därför kan vi inte svara barnet "i morgon".

A child's name is "today", you cannot answer them with "tomorrow"

- Provisions on intercountry adoptions were added to the new adoption law.
- On May 2, 1985, Interpedia was authorized to act as a service provider in intercountry adoptions
- The official position made it easier to make contacts. At the same time the workload increased.

- Explosive growth of child sponsorship activities – already 1,700 sponsors
- Managing some of the sponsorship programs from the office started.

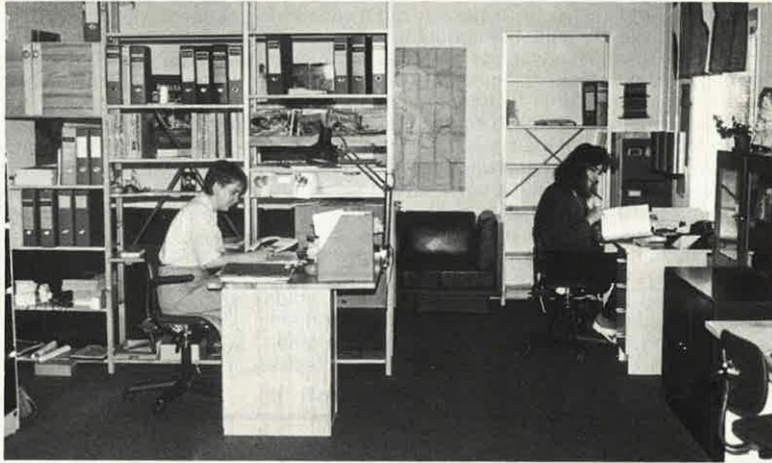
1985



1986

- Adoption cooperation in Guatemala began

- Child sponsorship activities in Guatemala began
- The first child sponsorship secretary was employed



□ Uudet hienot toimistotilat muodostavat kehukset Interpedian toiminnalle.
 □ Nya fina kansliutrymmen bildar ramen för Interpedias verksamhet.

A fine new office space



1987

- Adoption cooperation with Thailand and the Dominican Republic began
- The activities of cultural groups began, the first being Ethiopia

- In October–November, the first sponsors' trip to South India
- New child sponsorship programs: MSS in Madras and the Kookal project in South India (ICWS)

- There were already five employees in the office, and the new executive director Tarja Monto started her work.
- Interpedia's regional operations expanded.

- Cultural groups of Latin America, India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal started their activities.

1988



- Street children project in Guatemala began

INTERPEDIA

- More than 1000 members
- The UN adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

- The preparatory courses for adoption applicants started
- Discussion groups for adoptive parents

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

- Already more than 2,000 sponsors
- Cooperation with Addis Ababa School Center (GCS) begins

1989

QUOTE

"During the course, there was definitely growing and maturing towards parenthood. The waiting period is not just a frustrating passage of time, but maturation and preparation for the child that is meant for us.

We are happy that Interpedia has organized these courses for us. In our opinion, national and regional meetings, contact persons, study circles, cultural groups, Interpedia magazine – everything that connects us to each other are also of paramount importance in our opinion... Metaphorically: If adoption is a tightrope walk, Interpedia has put a safety net around us with all these joint events. It is important for parents. It is important above all for our children."

– Adoptive parents in Interpedia magazine



In the photo, students of the Addis Ababa school center

The 1990s

Benefits and financial aid for adoptive families were advocated, and together with Nordic colleagues Interpedia participated in the preparation of the Hague Convention. At the beginning of the decade the depression slowed down the growth.



INTERPEDIA r.f.

- Alla världens barn
- Kaikki maailman lapset
- Children of the world

1990

- Nine employees at the Sulva office

- An advocacy working group was established to promote equality for adoptive families concerning family benefits
- In the special session of the Hague conference on adoptions, Interpedia's chairman Michael Luther participated in the preparation of the Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption



- New child sponsorship programs in Colombia, Ethiopia and Thailand
- Interpedia initiated a seminar for child sponsorship organizations in Helsinki with funding from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

INTERPEDIA

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

1991

- Finland ratified the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

- European adoption organizations decided to establish an umbrella organization EurAdopt.
- Nordic adoption organizations compiled ethical rules. EurAdopt later approved ethical rules with similar content.

QUOTE

Child sponsorship cooperation with the Indian DCCW began:

"I am proud that Interpedia has a partner like DCCW which does high quality work with the disabled"

- Interpedia's child sponsorship secretary Tarja Ihämäki (Interpedia magazine 1/97)

- The office was moved from Sulva to Vaasa

1992

- Interpedia was active in the Nordic cooperation of adoption organizations. The group was also involved in the preparation of the Hague Convention, Michael Luther participated in the working group.
- Interpedia's first summer camp for adopted children and youth in Luhanka 2-7 August 1992
- New adoption contacts in Vietnam, Romania and China



1993

- The Hague Convention on Protection of Children and Co-operation in Respect of Intercountry Adoption was completed.



- EurAdopt was founded officially.

QUOTE

Next year is Interpedia's jubilee year. 20 years is a very short time in the course of history, but what has been accomplished during these years is not insignificant. Who dares to doubt this, let them go and look at all these children, who are living proof that even small streams can produce a great current. Alone we can do nothing, but together we are strong."

- a sponsor who visited the child sponsorship program in India in 1993



QUOTE

"We had a nice week. I felt as if we were one big family with the nicest children in the world."

- Summer camper 1993



Interpedia 20 years. The patron of the jubilee year was Minister Elisabeth Rehn.

- Events of the anniversary year: a cruise, a meeting in Yttermark, a major event Meeting of Cultures in Ähtäri and a training day in Helsinki

- Adoption cooperation with China's CCAA and India's DCCW began
- First group root trip to India
- Advocacy work to promote parental and adoption benefits for adoptive parents

- Child sponsorship activities in Vietnam began
- Sponsors' trip to Ethiopia

QUOTE

"Interpedia has determinedly carried out its adoption work by keeping quality as its guiding star: it has always pursued the best interest of the child and has always been particularly careful when choosing its foreign partners. In addition, Interpedia has willingly and seriously participated in Nordic cooperation from the beginning and contributed to its development into the current level."

– Jan Nygren, Chairman of the Nordic Cooperation Committee in Interpedia magazine's 20th anniversary issue 1/1994

Ähtäri



KULTTUURIT KOHTAAVAT

Tule Ähtärin elokuussa!

13-14.08.1994

ETT MÖTE MELLAN

KULTURER

Kom till Ähtäri i augusti!



Cultures meet in Ähtäri

1994



Kuva: Minna Uusitalo

Ministeri Elisabeth Rehnin tervehdys Interpedia-lehteen

Minister Elisabeth Rehn's greeting to Interpedia magazine

QUOTE

"In this difficult time, it is encouraging and important to meet people employed in organizations that work actively for all the children of the world.

... I myself have had the privilege of watching closely the work you are doing in Ethiopia, and I can only admire the tact with which you carry out your difficult tasks."

– Minister Elisabeth Rehn's greeting in the 20th anniversary issue of Interpedia magazine 1/1994

Päivi Leppilähti

Kaikkien maailman lasten parhaaksi 20 vuotta

INTERPEDIA EHTINYT NUOREKSI AIKUISEKSI

Vaasan lähistöllä, Sulvalla, asuvilla Michael ja Karin Lutherilla on suurperhe. Heillä on kuusi lasta, yksi biologinen sekä viisi adoptoitua. Adoptiolapsista kaksi on Suomesta, yksi Vietnamista, yksi Intiasta ja yksi Filippiineiltä. Perheen seitsemäs lapsi edustaa kaikkia maailman lapsia ja on nimeltään Interpedia.

Stundarsin idyllisen käsi-työläisjärjestön kupeessa vanhassa talonpoikaistalossa asuvan Lutherin perheen kaikki lapset ovat ehtineet nuoriksi aikuisiksi. Interpediakin täyttää tänä vuonna 20 vuotta.

Toukokuun 18. päivänä 1974 Närpiössä perustettu, kaikkia maailman lapsia edustava yhdistys, joka myöhemmin sai nimen Interpedia, on poliittisesti ja uskonnollisesti sitoutunut järjestö. Yhdistyksen toiminnan tavoitteena on YK:n lasten oikeuksien julistuksen mukaisesti edistää lapsen perusoikeuksien toteutumista. Interpedia on järjestö, joka tu-



Interpedia tukee lasta ensisijaisesti hänen omassa maassaan ja toissijaisesti adoption kautta.

logisesti ajatellen edessä on loputon työsaara, jota jotkut pitävät toivotomana urakana. Teen työtä kuitenkin sydämellä ja uskon, että jostain saadaan aikaan, pohtii Michael Luther.

Tukea ja kannustusta toiminnalleen Interpedia haki heti alkuvuosina muilta Pohjoismailta. Yhdistyksen edustajat osallistuivat Kööpenhaminassa pidettyyn yhteispohjoismaiseen kokoukseen, jonka päätteeksi perustettiin yhteistyöelin, joka on tukenut Interpediää.

– Siinä kokouksessa oli kannustavaa huomata, että muiden Pohjoismaiden adoptiojärjestöt olivat saa-

1/94

20
1974 - 1994

INTERPEDIA



Interpedia reached young adulthood. Michael and Karin Luther's role in Interpedia's history is significant

- The official name is changed to Interpedia ry / Interpedia rf.
- Action week against racism and intolerance
- The recession began to recede, growing interest in child sponsorship and adoption activities



NORDIC
ADOPTION
COUNCIL

1995

**all different
all equal**

- The umbrella organization of Nordic adoption organizations, the Nordic Council of Adoption (NCA), got an official status
- Statement in favor of parental and adoption benefits



1996

QUOTE

"I get the feeling that we're ready to go, but I'm very unsure if the kids want to go.

But suddenly it's clear, everyone packs their backpacks. Of course, let's go, we're family now!"

- An adoptive mother about her first encounter with her children on the adoption trip in Interpedia magazine



**Haagin sopimus
voimaan 1.7.97**

■ Kansainvälisiä adoptioita koskeva Haagin sopimus astuu Suomessa voimaan 1.7. Sopimus edellytti Suomen adoptioliikin joitakin, lähinnä teknisiä tarkistuksia. Myös ne tulevat voimaan heinäkuun alusta. Itse adoptiomenettelyyn ei kuitenkaan tule muutoksia nykyiseen verrattuna.

Haagin sopimus astunee lähitulevaisuudessa voimaan myös muissa Pohjoismaissa ja eräissä muissa Euroopan lapsia vastaanottavissa maissa. Pyrkimyksenä on, että mahdollisimman monet lapset vastaanottavat ja adoptioon luovuttavat maat sitoutuvat noudattamaan sopimusta. Sopimuksen toivotaan toimivan tehokkaana keinona työssä kansainvälisten adoptioiden laadun parantamiseksi maailmanmitassa.



- Finland ratified the Hague Convention
- 10th Nordic adoption conference in Vaasa – Post-adoption service as a theme



1997

The Hague Convention entered into force on 1 July 1997

- Country packages (containing objects, written and other materials) were produced for use in, for example, schools: India, Ethiopia, Thailand and Latin America
- The number of sponsors started to rise after a break of many years

1998



• Interpedia, the City of Helsinki's social welfare office and Save the Children, Finland jointly started an adoption counsellor activity (helpline), which was managed by Interpedia.

Kerstin Alalantela Suomen ensimmäinen adoptiokuraattori

■ Suomen ensimmäiseksi adoptiokuraattoriksi on nimetty psykiatrian erikoissairaanhoitaja, kouluttaja Kerstin Alalantela Nurmos-ta. Kerstin on myös kolmen ulkomailta adoptoidun lapsen äiti. Hän on työskennellyt 1990-luvun alkupuolella Interpedian toimistossa ja mm. ollut mukana käynnistämässä vanhempainvalmennuskursseja. Myös 1980-luvun alusta jatkunut vapaaehtoisuus Interpedian adoptioyhdyshen-

optoitujen ja eri ammattiryhmien tilanteen tutuksi. Ulkomailta adoptoimille perheille suunnattu adoptiokuraattori -tukupuhelinpalvelu käynnistyy 31.8. Ensimmäisenä tavoitteena on auttaa ja neuvoa perheitä ongelmatilanteissa, mutta kuraattori antaa tietoja myös eri ammattiryhmille. Kuraattorin palvelut ovat maksuttomia ja ne ovat kaikkien ulkomailta adoptoitneiden käytettävissä. RAY:n rahoittama hanke toteutetaan In-

Kerstin Alalantela is Finland's first adoption counsellor

QUOTE

"When you look at the world through the image created by the media, it may seem at first that Interpedia's child sponsorship activity is just a drop of water in the desert. However, every drop of physical and mental well-being multiplies itself. Because every person who gets out of poverty has a positive impact on their surroundings, wherever they are. This is how the chain reaction gradually expands. Thus, the thoughts and actions of each individual person have a greater meaning than we often assume."

- Interpedia's sponsor in Interpedia magazine 1/98

QUOTE

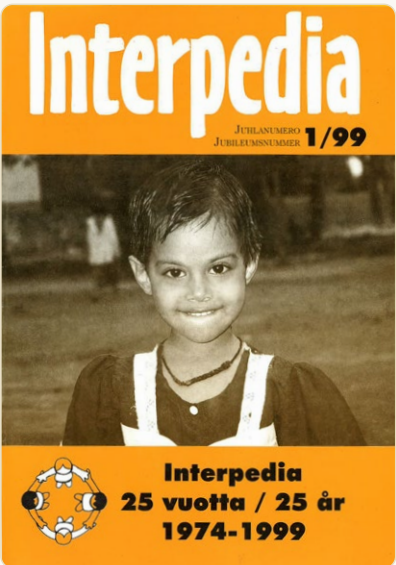
"With its activities, Interpedia has promoted the best for children and, since the 1970s, has offered Finns the opportunity for humane development cooperation in the form of child sponsorship... Interpedia has also made intercountry adoption activities known and contributed to the fact that the legislation governing adoption in Finland was reformed in 1985... On the occasion of Interpedia's 25th anniversary I offer my greetings and best wishes for success to the celebrating association and everyone involved in its activities."

Eeva Ahtisaari in her greeting in Interpedia magazine 1/99

1999

Interpedia 25 years

- The event of the jubilee year The World arrives in Ähtäri 14-15 August 1999 – about 800 children and adults participated
- Ilona Korhonen started as a substitute for the executive director
- Chairman Timo Tamminen's editorial in the magazine 1/99: "I hope that Interpedia will follow the hunches of 'the fortune tellers' and we will be able to take sustainable development and humanity into account in our everyday work, so that we would also be able to celebrate the 50th anniversary."



President Ahtisaari's spouse Mrs. Eeva Ahtisaari's greeting

The 2000s

The number of children adopted to Finland increased to a peak, especially with adoptions from China. The role as an adoption organization began to change from a family organization to an official actor along with the changes in the organization field. International child sponsorship organizations landed in Finland and received a lot of attention. The number of sponsors stopped growing and Interpedia discussed the possibilities of competing with large organizations. The decision to move the office to Helsinki was made.

INTERPEDIA

- Stable growth

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

- EurAdopt conference in Vaasa 13-16 April 2000

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

- Child sponsorship cooperation with China, Nepal and Colombia began

2000

Bravely and without prejudice to India ▶



- Laaha high school visited child sponsorship programs in India

2001

MEMORIES

- Interpedia established a regional service point in Helsinki
- 1580 members
- Tarja Monto returned to her post as executive director

"I remember when we were leaving for the adoption trip to India in 2001, when the terrorist attack happened in New York. Interpedia informed us that our trip would be delayed because the passport office in India was closed. It was quite emotional with all the uncertainty. We finally got on the road a couple of weeks later."

– adoptive father



- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' and NGOs' theme year Africa 2002: Interpedia had Same but Different theme week in October

- Adoption cooperation with South Africa began
- The adoption grant was implemented, effective 1 December 2002, more than a decade of work paid off (Interpedia presented the matter to the minister as early as 1990)
- Summer camp for adopted children and youth for the tenth time
- A thousandth child found a home through Interpedia

- Projects in Bangladesh, India and Thailand supported by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Donation to the Nepalese Loo Niva children's library, cooperation with Loo Niva begins
- A record number of more than 2,500 child sponsors

2002



THE STORY OF A CHILD IN A SPONSORSHIP PROGRAM

Pagamas's dream is coming true

Thanks to her stubbornness, talent and the support of the FFAC organization - and through them her Finnish sponsor - she was able to start her nursing studies.

Thanks to a good education and belief in her own abilities, she has a strong self-esteem. She compares herself to her peers who did not continue their studies - most of them are now housewives. Pagamas is proud of her situation and the independence it affords her, as well as the opportunity she is offered. It means a lot to her - she comes from a very poor home and her classmates at school made fun of her clothes and her family's poverty.

Although Pagamas was initially very surprised that a complete stranger in a faraway country wanted to support her, she says that without financial support, she would never have reached the position she has today. And the feeling that someone believed in her and gave extra support to her dreams and aspirations was especially important to Pagamas!

- The Helsinki regional service point trial ended

- Adoption counsellor activities continued with the support of RAY (Finnish Slot Machine Association)

- New child sponsorship program in Nepal (CWISH): education for child labourers

2003



QUOTE

25 years of Interpedia's sponsorship activities: "Each of the sponsored children you support has their own story, their own dreams and - hopes for the future." "Children grow up to be independent individuals with a good basic education. In the future, they will carry on the development of their own family, community and ultimately their country. This has been possible thanks to your loyal and valuable contribution for the benefit of the world's children - for that, a BIG THANK YOU to all of you!"

- IP development cooperation coordinators Carina Johansson and Mia Keto in Interpedia magazine 1/2003



MEMORIES

I sponsored a girl in Ethiopia

My friend suggested to me that we both sponsor a child through Interpedia. I had never heard of Interpedia before, but she assured me that they do good work there. So I got excited about it and we both decided to sponsor a child. I wanted to help a girl who comes from one of the poorest countries in the world. We both ended up with the same result and two female pupils of the German Church School in Addis Ababa were suggested to us.

So it was probably in the spring of 2003 that I became Milki's sponsor.

When I started sponsoring Milki, his father had already been in prison for a long time. The reason for the arrest was that he had worked in the school office during the time of the wrong government. Milki's father had however studied at university. When the family no longer had a decent income, the mother had to sell furniture to make ends meet.

We planned early on that we would visit our sponsored children in their own environment. We had the opportunity to go on such a trip in February 2004. At that time, Milki's situation was better already, because his father had been released from prison in December.

We thought hard about what we could take there. We ended up sewing "pencil bags" with at least a ballpoint pen and a ruler, maybe there was something else too. We probably made about 90 of them and distributed them to the students in the lower grades. In addition, I had taken with me a series of slides that showed the winter and summer in Finland. One of the teachers at the school wanted to see my presentation beforehand, which I thought was wise. The presentation passed the inspection, and I presented the pictures in English. I followed while the female teacher continued to tell the students about it. It would have been fun to know what she was talking about, because the narration was many times longer than what I had talked about. The children listened and watched in silence. Anyway, it was a pleasure to see how well the school was run and how polite the students were. We also got to listen to the lesson in the eighth grade, where the chemistry lesson was going on.

We both had the opportunity to visit the homes of the children we sponsored. Milki had two sisters and a brother who were all older than her. It was a pity that the parents were not at home then because they had to go to a funeral. All the children were in good shape, but the apartment was in a real slum. The home had been made as good as it was possible under the circumstances. There was both a common living area and a separate room for the children, which just barely fit a shared bed. We gave them some presents, talked for a while, and continued to my friend's sponsored child's home. Conditions there were much cleaner and even the houses had paint. However, the home was very small, and we wondered how the whole family could fit in there. We hadn't realized that the scissors belonging to the sewing kit were such a wonderful gift to the girl's mother that she received them on her palms and bowed deeply.

During the trip, we stayed at Fida's former children's home in Debre Ziyit. It was interesting to live further away from the capital and see the country a little more widely. A young man in a Toyota van drove us around. It was quite funny that there was a sticker in the back window of the car: Toyotalla Suomi kuljettaa! (Finland transports with Toyota!) We also flew to Lalibela and visited its famous rock churches. All in all, the trip was very interesting and enlightening.

And back to the main thing, Milki. Every year I received a letter and a photo from Milki. This way I could follow her development. She often wrote that she wanted to work hard at school, and she really did. Previously, she had told what she wanted to become when she grows up, a doctor for example. She did get into university, but in the end, she graduated as an IT engineer. You can imagine my joy when Teklu Tafesse, the Director of the German Church School, sent me a certificate of her academic performance in the summer of 2018, and a letter of thanks for being a sponsor. The highlight of the parcel was a picture of Milki in her graduation outfit.

Guess who was happy to the point of tears.

Congratulations to the 50-year-old.

Best regards, Leena Laine



INTERPEDIA

- The office relocated from Vaasa to Helsinki
- Country office was established in Ethiopia, Tedla Diressie became Interpedia's Country Manager for Ethiopia

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

- A record number of children arrived, 136
- The Adoption Board's Adoption Act 20th anniversary seminar in October

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

- Donations were collected for child victims of the tsunami in Thailand and India – for disaster relief and reconstruction
- New child sponsorship programs started: Maedot in Ethiopia, Loo Niva in Nepal, and Sabera in India
- Child sponsorship programs with the Indian MSS and ICWS ended

2005

GREETINGS FROM THE WORLD

“Loo Niva, Nepal has been working with Interpedia since 2005. During the 20 years of journey with Interpedia, Loo Niva has achieved memorable and historical experiences.

In the beginning of the cooperation with Interpedia, most of the team members of Loo Niva were very young and Interpedia built our capacity regularly. The Interpedia representatives motivated us in our advocacy and campaign for Right to Education of Child in Nepal. That's why Interpedia is an important part of Loo Niva's history.

Loo Niva and Interpedia have accomplished a number of Development projects during these years. We also got the responsibility to manage Interpedia's partners' capacity building week in Nepal in 2012. That was memorable accomplishment. Sharing a long history, Loo Niva expects to continue development cooperation partnership with Interpedia to ensure Children's Rights and their right to education in Nepal.

As Interpedia celebrates its 50th anniversary, we extend our heartfelt congratulations and gratitude for its unwavering support, guidance, and resources. Together, we have worked tirelessly to ensure that every child has access to quality education and the opportunity to thrive.”

Mr. Narendra Dangol, Founder & Executive Director
Loo Niva Child Concern Group, Nepal

- Harri Hakola as Executive Director

- Record number of new adoption applicants

- Hopottajat campaign to get new child sponsors, together with advertising agency MBE
- Sponsors' support to Thailand for children left homeless by the tsunami
- Disaster relief for flood victims in Ethiopia through the country office



2006

MEMORIES

“Hello! Here is a small memory of a long period in the life of the child we sponsored.

In 1990, we got a 4-year-old boy, Lethien, to sponsor. Over the years, we were able to follow his growth and education. We received many letters and drawings from him, and school progressed well. The best letter came in 2006, when he told us he had received a five-year scholarship to study in Switzerland. We had been able to play a small part in helping him.”

– Marja-Leena and Viljo

2007

- Nordic Meeting (NAC) in Helsinki in September
- Cooperation with All Our Children in organizing adoption preparatory courses - the courses were transferred to be managed by All Our Children in 2008.
- Summer camps together with The Summer High School Association

- Child sponsorship activities in South Africa began: SA Cares for Life - work in Mabopane
- New child sponsorship program in China (Blue Sky Loving Home)
- Sponsors for grandmas were sought with an ad: Let's give Ethiopian grandmas a good old age and their grandchildren an education!



QUOTE

"Child sponsorship activities have increased rapidly in the 21st century. In recent years, large international organizations have acquired most of the new sponsors... Interpedia is one of the first child sponsorship organizations and still one of the largest. Interpedia is also a genuinely Finnish organization. It was born at a kitchen table in Närpiö."

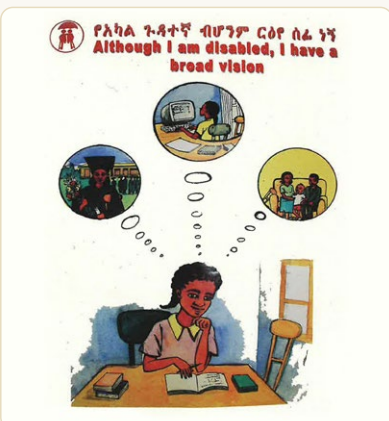
- Harri Hakola in the editorial 1/07: "Sponsorship is a possibility"

- Anja Ojuva as Executive Director

2008

- Adoption cooperation with Kenya began
- The adoption counsellor activity was transferred to All Our Children
- RAY's financial support for the post-adoption project: Support for the adoptee's self-image with high-quality post-adoption service

- Cooperation with the Ethiopian Handicap National (later Berhan Lehetsanat) began
- Development of the adoption system in Nepal with the CWISH organization



QUOTE

"In the development cooperation of NGOs, partnership between a Finnish organization and an organization in the South is the goal, but also a means to make sure that the aid is allocated correctly and that it reaches its destination.

... An empowered partner is significant, capable, autonomous, networked, and relevant. It knows its operating environment and is highly impactful. Developing countries' own powerful organizations are a force for change, which at best leads to breaking the cycle of poverty and to the prosperity of the country."

- Harri Hakola, editorial 1/08: Partnership

INTERPEDIA

- The first guest of Interpedia magazine's Ansikte mot ansikte (Face to Face) column was Karin Luther, Interpedia's first executive director

Ansikte mot ansikte

Karin Luther är Interpedias första verksamhetsledare (1980-86) och därefter långvarig adoptionsansvarig (>2003). Hon var en av grundarna av Interpedia (1974) och lade under tre decennier grunden för hela Interpedias nuvarande verksamhet. Största delen av Interpedias nuvarande adoptionskontakter är ett exempel på Karin Luthers tålmodiga arbete. Hon och hennes man Michael Luther har under årens lopp delat med sig av sin sakkunskap bl.a. i arbetet med den nuvarande adoptionslagstiftningen och vid grundandet av Nordic Adoption Council, paralytorganisationen för de nordiska adoptionsorganisationerna.

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

- Adoption cooperation with Indian organization Bal Anand begins
- Adoption cooperation ended with Colombia's Los Pisingos and Thailand's FFAC - cooperation continued with follow-up and post-adoption service

2009

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

- Child sponsorship cooperation with the Thai FFAC ended
- New child sponsorship programs in Thailand: Hallelujah Dormitory and Project L.I.F.E.

QUOTE

Sponsors for Ethiopian grandmothers:

"Through you, I have been able to support Ethiopian grandmothers for thirty years. It has given meaning to my life, having been able to help a grandmother.

Once I even visited the Debre Zeit missionary station and met the grandma from that time. It was a great trip!

Have a good jubilee year - with gratitude, Tuula Sulkunen"



- Development cooperation partners gathered for the Capacity Seminar in Finland. - A partnership seminar and a development education tour were on the program



- For years, Interpedia has participated in the World Village Festival every spring. In 2009, Muteru Njama, the director of our Kenyan partner organization LAN, had the opportunity to join our stand in addition to our volunteer Sirkka Saarinen.

The 2010s

The focus of adoptions shifted to special needs adoptions and the work of the adoption service became more individual for each child and family in the process. Large cuts in governmental development cooperation funds required adaptation measures.

INTERPEDIA

- Interpedia in Facebook (the first social media channel)

2010



INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION



Summer camps

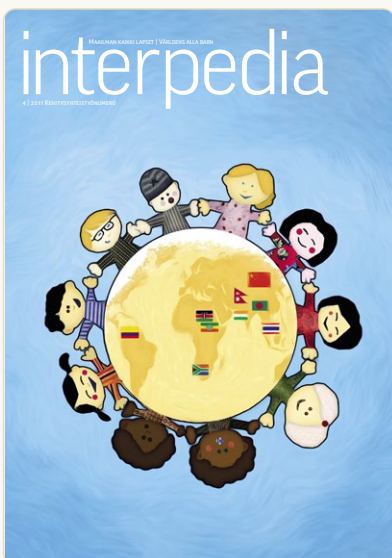
- Ethics of Intercountry Adoption seminar in Helsinki
- Work with China's Special Needs Program begins

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

- A new child sponsorship program and child protection project in Kenya
- Tej Dangol from Nepal as an Etvo volunteer in Finland - e.g. Nepal sponsors' gathering was organized
- IP's ethical gifts store was opened on the website



LAHJAPUOTI AVATTU



The last Interpedia magazine was published

- Collaboration with the Colombian La Casa de la Madre y el Niño begins
- Interpedia comments on the adoption law reform

2011

- Sponsors' trip to Ethiopia at the turn of the year
- Partnership seminar in Ethiopia



2012

- Finland's current adoption law entered into force
- The Indian adoption system changed and instead of individual organizations, the central authority in adoption affairs CARA became the partner

- The school tour of Kenyan young musicians' Nyumbani Sunshine Music Group in Finland as part of the communication and development education project "Child rights through the eyes of Finnish and Kenyan children". In addition, a Kenya event was organized in Cultural Centre Caisa and a performance at the Market of Possibilities in Tampere
- Partnership seminar in Nepal



QUOTE

"At the seminar organized in Nepal, we got a lot of strength from our competent partners who do important work in their own countries for a good childhood. Civil society does its best for the most vulnerable, i.e. children, in countries where the authorities' resources are limited."

– Executive Director Anja Ojuva's editorial in the yearbook

MEMORIES



"Years ago, I was a camp instructor at Interpedia's summer camp. My friend had been planning meetings for adopted youth at Save the Children, and somehow through that I ended up joining Interpedia's camps. Those camps were a lot of fun, I still remember them."

– Lauri

QUOTE

"Non-governmental organizations can be involved in taking care of the organization of education and highlighting the importance of education. Finns understand from their own history how important going to school is."

– Development Cooperation Minister Pekka Haavisto was interviewed for Interpedia's 2013 yearbook

- Helen Awoke started as Director of the Country Office in Ethiopia

2013



INTERPEDIA

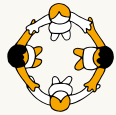
- Interpedia celebrated its 40th anniversary in August at Koli in Lieksa and in November at the Helsinki office

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

- Adoption cooperation with seven countries

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

- 16 child sponsorship programs in seven different countries,
- six development cooperation projects in Ethiopia and Nepal



Interpedia

2014



Interpedia's board and staff at Koli in Eastern Finland

- Global education project Children's everyday life in a developing country: a video and educational material "Different days" – As heard during school visits (Ylivieska, Kruunupyy and Savonlinna): "It's not fair if everyone doesn't get to go to school"
- Child sponsorship activities in China ended
- A new child sponsorship program in Bangladesh: Human Rights and Education in Bangladesh (PHREB), supported especially girls' rights and education
- Shoe designer Minna Parikka as an Interpedia volunteer in Nepal at the CWISH organization

2015

- Adoption cooperation with Ethiopia and Kenya ended
- Adoption cooperation with Taiwan and Bulgaria began

- The new government's major development cooperation cuts: the application round for new projects was cancelled
- What did I learn today? – global education project



Mitä opin tänään?

- Two big earthquakes in Nepal – humanitarian aid was sent, psychosocial support training was organized for teachers to help them support children



- Cooperation with the Colombian Fundación CRAN begins

2016

QUOTE

"When talking with the participants at the camp, it turned out that the main reason to come to the camp is definitely the friends. According to one camper, the best thing about camp is that the others understand, even without words, how it feels to be adopted. There may not be anyone else adopted in the immediate circle from whom you could get peer support. At the camps, many feel that they can be themselves."

Annariina Seppä's blog post on 11 July 2016: Interpedia's summer camp for internationally adopted children and young people

- Child sponsorship program with the Thai Hallelujah Dormitory ended
- A kindergarten in Addis Ababa was established together with Maedot



- Finland 100 years - volunteers knitted woollen socks for adopted children arriving in Finland

- Nordic Adoption Conference in Helsinki
- The last summer camps for adoptees in Finnish
- The first #adoptionilo (#AdoptionJoy) campaign

- New partner in Nepal: Patan CBR (Community Based Rehabilitation)
- The cooperation with the Indian organization Sabera ended
- Rohingya refugee crisis in Bangladesh - funds were raised to support PHREB's work with the refugees
- Woliso and Dilela kindergartens in Ethiopia were established

2017



"Through adoption we got the most wonderful child in the world"



2018

- Interpedia organized a Swedish-speaking camp for internationally adopted children and youth in Pietarsaari "Thanks to the Foundation Brita Maria Renlunds Minne, which made this camp possible."

- Interpedia's child sponsorship activities' 40th anniversary
- Interpedia started a new Frame, Voice, Report communication project - Whose voice? Perspectives on ethical development communication

QUOTE

"I met my child in the children's home's playroom on the Wednesday after May Day. Me and my husband sat on the floor in the middle of the children, and right away our own child came to us. We were nervous and the child was nervous. During that day, we laughed and cried many times.

In the evening at the hotel, the child fell asleep on my chest and slept there all night. On the next day in court, we were all moved by the beginning of a new family. As I write this, I have been a mother for five days. The five happiest days of my life."

- An adoptive mother visited Interpedia's blog on 13 May 2018 with her article "Five days as a mother"

QUOTE

"Teachers have also had a strong influence in my life. A close community gives me strength. I think everyone should give something to their community. I want the children to have a good life. My mother taught me that one does not have to be rich to help"

- Etenesh Wondmagegnehu, head of Berhan Lehetsanat, in a blog post from the #Etelänvahvatnaiset (Strong women of the South) series

2019



TIETOPAKETTI KANSAINVÄLISESTÄ ADOPTIOSTA

Interpedia
MAAILMAN KOKKO LAPSET

- The school sponsorship program begins with Loo Niva in Far Western Nepal
- Cooperation with the Bangladeshi organization PHREB ended

Henen äänellä?

Video ja oppimateriaali yläkouluille ja toisen asteen oppilaitoksille

Interpedia
MAAILMAN KOKKO LAPSET

- Adoption cooperation with China ends
- We started regular post-adoption support and feedback calls to adoptive families after their adopted child's arrival in Finland





The 2020s

The covid pandemic had a significant impact on both adoption service and development cooperation. It caused delays and special arrangements, but it also brought new and functional ways of working. The organization is celebrating its 50-year history.

INTERPEDIA

INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

- Remote work and remote meetings

2020

- The covid pandemic started, we switched to remote meetings and information seminars
- Delays and special arrangements in adoption trips
- Adoption cooperation with Taiwan ended

- When schools were closed due to the pandemic, the child sponsorship work shifted to more concrete family support and developing opportunities for learning even in exceptional circumstances

2021



- Brita Maria Renlunds Minne supported our Swedish-language work for several years



- In many countries, there was a lively discussion about the ethics of intercountry adoptions
- The covid pandemic affected the adoption activities of our cooperation countries in different ways. Strict travel restrictions, lockdowns and even curfews slowed down the work of child protection and the authorities

- The covid pandemic slowed down and changed the implementation of development cooperation projects.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' communication and global education support for 2021–2022 for the project: From Early Childhood Education to Global Citizenship: Introducing Agenda 2030 and Child Rights in Daycare and Preschools



2022



- Adoption work started to return to normal after the covid years, the root trips started again in the post-adoption service

- The year 2022 brought new global challenges after the difficult covid years. Crises and rising living costs affected people's lives in many partner countries.

INTERPEDIA

- The office relocated to Western Pasila
- Ilona Kalliola as Executive Director

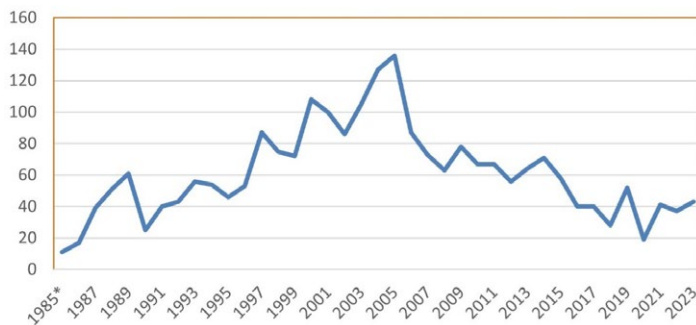
INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

- Interpedia is already one of the largest adoption organizations in the Nordic countries

DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

2023

Children who got a home from Finland through Interpedia 1985–2023



- The sponsorship program Betlehem Family Development Program in Ethiopia ended
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs' communication and global education support for the project Sustainable Development Knowledge and Skills in Daycare and Preschool Education (2023–2024)
- Nepal's volunteer program started after the pandemic.

2024

50

interpedia

GREETINGS FROM
THE WORLD



Greetings and Gratitude from India



My name is Gireeja Rajesh and I am the representative of Interpedia in India since 2013.

It gives me great pleasure and pride to see Interpedia celebrating its 50th anniversary this year.

As someone who has been associated with Interpedia for more than a decade, I can proudly say that I feel blessed to be a part of this wonderful organization. Over the past years I have enjoyed working with a professional and caring team of colleagues and have learnt a lot about various aspects of adoption, people and time sensitivity, co-ordination and respect for diversity. Interacting and meeting prospective adoptive parents from Finland and seeing children find loving homes, has strengthened my belief in the magic of destiny.

There is nothing more satisfying than to see children unite with their parents and thrive in their new homes. I feel blessed to be a part of the chain of events that brings families together.

Wishing each and everyone at Interpedia the very best for many glorious years ahead.

Congratulations!

Gireeja Seth Rajesh, Interpedia's contact person in India

"Since I started to work with Interpedia I was able to appreciate the level of ethics and commitment to the mission. I am grateful because I have learned so many things. The wonderful work we do, the many memories we share together now and the joy of seeing the children grow into their wonderful families is the most precious treasure I cherish."

Ana Maria Fernandez, Interpedia's contact person in Colombia

Congratulations on Your 50th Anniversary!

Dear Interpedia Team,

On behalf of the entire team at Abba Adoptions, I am writing to extend our heartfelt congratulations on reaching the remarkable milestone of your 50th anniversary. This momentous occasion is a testament to your unwavering commitment and dedication to making a difference in the lives of children, families, and communities around the world.

We want to take this opportunity to honour you for the incredible work you continue to do. Your steadfast efforts in advocating for children's rights and welfare are truly commendable, and we deeply appreciate the significant impact you have had over the past five decades.

Our relationship with Interpedia spans many years, and it has been a privilege to collaborate with such an experienced and like-minded organisation in Finland. From the very beginning, we have admired your hands-on and professional approach, always ensuring that decisions are centered around the best interests of the children, whether it involves their country of origin or their destination for placement.

Together, we have witnessed firsthand how your organisation has changed lives and transformed communities. The success of our collaboration stems from our shared goals and values, particularly our commitment to prioritising the well-being of children above all else. Your accessibility and dedication to our partnership have been instrumental in fostering an incredible relationship over the years.

We would like to extend a special acknowledgment to Anja, Marike, Salla, and the entire Interpedia team. Your hard work, passion, and unwavering dedication have not gone unnoticed, and we are grateful for the opportunity to work alongside such remarkable individuals.

Despite the ongoing challenges we currently face, we remain confident in the strength of our partnership, knowing that it is built on a foundation of integrity, compassion, and shared purpose. As we celebrate this significant milestone with you, we look forward to many more years of collaboration, impact, and service to communities globally.

Once again, congratulations on reaching this incredible milestone, and may you continue to inspire hope, change lives, and make a lasting difference for many years to come.

With warmest regards,

Katinka Pieterse
Director
Abba Specialist Adoption & Social Services



“Interpedia is celebrating 50 years of its establishment this year. It is a matter of great pride for us as we have been in cooperation for the last eight years. We hope to continue our cooperation for many years to come.

I have attached one congratulatory message from our students with disabilities representing congratulations from all of us.”

Loonibhah Chitrakar
Executive Director
Patan CBR Organization, Nepal

“I have worked with Interpedia, which is a very long-time partner for my organization. Together we have managed to reach many children with disabilities. The interaction between the two organizations and staff members was and is still very close and friendly.

My organization and staff have learned a lot from Interpedia like working together, demonstrating the real nature of partnership, not donor and recipient relationship. The trust built between the two organizations made it possible to grow the area of involvement and increase the number of children reached.

I have so many memories also as a person. I will not forget also the presence of Interpedia in our 15 years anniversary of Berhan Lehetsanat held in Addis Ababa.

I expect to expand and nurture our partnership for further and reach as many children with disabilities as possible.

I would like to thank Interpedia and all the staff the opportunity given to Ethiopia in general, to Berhan Lehetsanat in particular, in child development in general and education in particular. I wish this continues also in future.”

Etenesh Wondmagegnehu
Founder and Chief Executive Officer of
Berhan Lehetsanat (former Handicap National)
Ethiopia

"Interpedia visited CWISH in 2000 and the joint journey on child rights movement of CWISH and Interpedia started. In 2000, we secured a sponsorship program for Nepalese children, marking the initial stage of our partnership.

Our collaboration has significantly contributed to the nation's quality education and child protection efforts through various programs.

With the support of Interpedia we were able to establish national level network named National Child Protection Alliance (NCPA) of civil society organizations working on child protection. We have also organized National level conference on child labor. One significant achievement of our partnership is the development of the Child Rights Monitoring Software. This software has proven to be highly effective in addressing issues of child protection at the national level.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the personnel at Interpedia with whom we have had the privilege of working. Your unwavering support and contributions have been instrumental in enhancing the child protection system in Nepal. We are delighted to hear about Interpedia's celebration of its 50-year journey, and we are honoured to have been a part of it. Being part of Interpedia's mission fills us with pride, and we pledge our continued commitment to supporting more children in the days ahead. Wishing Interpedia all the best for its future endeavours."

Pramod Acharya
Administrative Finance Manager of CWISH, Nepal

"Interpedia and its supporters, board members, members and employees deserve a huge applaud for its successful 50 years on supporting children to realize their rights and protection at the community and with the family.

Though Interpedia is a relatively small organization; it has wide arm to embrace multicultural, south and north solidarity and common aspirations.

I met Interpedia first in 2004 through a sponsorship program, which later on expanded to development cooperation. The efforts were successful due to the support from people of Finland and the government of Finland along with the esteemed sponsors of Interpedia.

In future Interpedia must strengthen its actions to preserve child's right to family through strengthening alternative care practices for children, community care and protection system as well as strengthening domestic adoption and foster care.

Solidarity with Interpedia and its team."

Thank you.

Milan Raj Dharel
South Asia Regional Coordinator
Global March Against Child Labor, Nepal



We are happy to share 50 years of tireless work with Interpedia. Congratulations and many more years of this great work.

El Jardín de la Niña María has been working alongside Interpedia for more than 22 years. During these years they have come to visit us in Colombia several times and we have had a very close relationship. Interpedia's financial support during these years has been the most important we have. Together we have managed to make a change in many girls who have been beneficiaries during these years.

Interpedia has been an example for us, the girls have had a very beautiful relationship with their sponsors, through letters they send them messages and photos, they tell each other about many events in their lives and on several occasions they have met.

El Jardín de la Niña María and on my own behalf as director for the last 20 years we hope to be able to receive help from Interpedia. Having this sponsor program has been an open world for the girls' dreams and invaluable financial support.

I have enormous gratitude because Interpedia helps the unprotected population worldwide and we have been fortunate to be part of these privileged people,

BLESSINGS AND LONG LIVE INTERPEDIA.

Mónica Echandia
Directora Jardín de la Niña María
Colombia

Jubilee message from the German Church School!

50 years is a milestone worth celebrating. It is a special age of experience and wisdom: an adult, not yet too old to learn even more fresh and full of power. It is the age one proves getting over midlife crisis and so is it with Interpedia.

For GCS, these years stand for decades of great support and care from so many Interpedia families to thousands of children in Ethiopia. GCS is an integral part of that history.

So, we as the GCS hereby would like to say “congratulations!”

The GCS is happy and proud to have Interpedia as a reliable partner for nearly 40 years now. That is more than three quarters of Interpedia’s fifty years of exemplary service. About forty years of unrelenting support have let the school grow over the years and become what it is now, a full primary school with a model inclusive education for children with disabilities. These years stand for generations of children from destitute families getting the chance for a better education, raised self-esteem and a better future which wouldn’t have been realized without the support of Interpedia and our other donors.

We are grateful particularly to all Interpedia sponsors, members, schools, clubs and different institutions that relentlessly provided support to see visible changes in the life of the children and their families. We also thank you for entrusting this responsibility to our German Church School.

As we celebrate this jubilee from far off, we would like to appreciate and congratulate those daring and visionary individuals that made that small beginning possible. That seemingly small beginning didn’t go in vain. Those visionaries and their families and all who followed their footsteps have more than a very good reason to celebrate the impact it is making in the lives of millions of children and families around the globe. The GCS belongs to them.

It was only a year and a half ago that the GCS also celebrated its 50th anniversary and the school is still in that same spirit with lots of wonderful memories. Yet, of course, our two institutions are not merely related only by being nearly the same age, but through mutual and longstanding fruitful cooperation. This is a beautiful part of the history of our school and social centre, and this is more than a coincidence.

As the director of the school, I am honoured and proud to work with Interpedia and the different sponsorship and development coordinators, sponsorship officers as well as the board and staff members for the past 27 years now. It has been a real blessing indeed to observe its silver and gold jubilees with all the visible marks it has been making in the lives of hundreds of children in GCS alone to say the least.

Honestly the GCS would love to see the continuity of this fruitful partnership in the years ahead and the school with its entire staff is determined to do its level best to live up to Interpedia’s expectation and the community at its disposal. We also wish to see Interpedia climb to another greater height by proving to be a glimmer of hope for those in dire need and desperation which unfortunately is more so than ever be it in Ethiopia and many parts of the world. We wish you to continue the good work!

We once again congratulate you all on Interpedia’s special 50th jubilee celebration!

Respectfully presented,

Teklu Tafesse Barki
Director-GCS
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia



The cooperation with Interpedia was very good from the beginning. All the child sponsorship coordinators have been really dedicated to their work, it was a pleasure to work with them.

Your sponsorship work was a great help, first in the lives of the boys in the children’s home, and then came the families and their children. So it is a large group that has received help through Interpedia.

Many thanks for everything you have done to improve the lives of our disadvantaged fellowmen!

With warm regards and thanks,
Briitta Pietikäinen, contact person of the
Bethlehem Family Development project in Debre Zeit, Ethiopia



An expert non-governmental organisation working for child rights and protection in an international setting

Interpedia is a politically and religiously unbound Finnish NGO founded in 1974. Its activities are based on the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Hague Convention. Interpedia has more than 600 members.

The aim of Interpedia is to promote the child's rights to balanced development and a safe growth environment through **intercountry adoption and development cooperation**.

As an adoption service provider, we work uncompromisingly for the best interest of the child and make sure that each adoptive child will have a well-prepared family that suits their individual needs.

As a development co-operation organization, we promote children's rights to education, protection, and adequate standard of living in our co-operation countries on a long-term basis.

Interpedia has long experience in intercountry adoptions and extensive connections abroad. Interpedia is working on adoptions with Bulgaria, Colombia, India, South Africa and Thailand.

Interpedia implements development cooperation projects in Ethiopia and Nepal supported by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs together with its partner organizations. In addition, the association's 850 monthly donors and sponsors support approximately 4,000 children annually in Bangladesh, Ethiopia, South Africa, India, Colombia, Nepal and Thailand.

Through its **global education work**, Interpedia encourages Finnish children and young people to become active global citizens and increases their understanding of the reality of children and young people in developing countries. The global educational material produced by the association can be used, for example, in schools.

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