World budget funds mission, administrative support outside North America

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Jan 03, 2012 Silver Spring, Maryland, United States...Ansel Oliver/ANN

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The denomination's nearly US$167 million world budget for 2012 allocates $38.7 million in appropriations to the 12 world divisions other than North America, with an additional $27.4 million for missionaries and employees serving in other divisions.

Operating costs for the denomination's headquarters in Silver Spring, Maryland, United States, is limited to 2 percent of world tithe, which is set this year for $40.9 million. Finance officers said headquarters consistently operates more than $2 million under that cap.

The world budget only includes items relating to the denomination's world headquarters and does not include the reported incomes or budgets for its 13 world divisions or their respective local administrative units and congregations. The world budget includes headquarters operations, Inter-Divisional Employees, departmental work worldwide, and appropriations to world divisions.

"It's the faithfulness of the members who provide support all of these programs," Juan R. Prestol, undertreasurer for the Adventist world church. "Most of the givers are not wealthy but live with other heavy financial obligations. The church is being rewarded by their faithfulness."

Receiving divisions are allocated appropriations between $1.7 million and $4.6 million. The 2012 budget also includes a 3 percent increase over 2010 appropriations levels. In previous years, that amount was given at the end of the year with supplemental budget funds. This year the 3 percent is offered at the beginning of the year as a budgeted item.

"Though the economy hasn't normalized yet, it seems to now be functioning with a certain degree of predictability, more than it did three years ago," Prestol said.

Prestol said about 65 percent of the denomination's funding is paid in the U.S. dollar, Brazilian real, Euro, Canadian dollar, Australian dollar, Mexican peso and the Korean won.

Tithe income from North America has remained steady, with an upswing in tithe and mission offerings from overseas divisions. It's estimated that 30 to 40 percent of that is affected by currency exchange rates, Prestol said.

North America remains the largest giver of mission offerings. In 2010, North America gave about $23.6 million in mission offerings, or about one-third of the total $70.9 million in mission offerings.

Other significant appropriations from the 2012 General Conference world budget include:

$9.1 million for Loma Linda University
$5.5 million for Adventist World magazine
$4.1 million for Hope Channel
$2.3 million for Ellen G. White Estate
$2.2 million for Adventist World Radio
$2 million for Andrews University
$1.4 million for the 2015 General Conference Session
$1.2 million for Oakwood University
$1.1 million for Adventist International Institute of Advanced Studies
$1 million for the Geoscience Research Institute

To see a complete copy of the 2012 General Conference world budget as an Excel spreadsheet, please send a request to the ANN editor at adventistnews@gc.adventist.org.