JOURNEYS to SCHOOL

A Global Human Concern
Every day students from around the world make their way to school with the hope of attaining a better life through education. Many of them endure very difficult conditions and dangers on their way. Some travel many miles on foot, by bus or rickshaw, and even by canoe and on horseback. Others cross mountains and thick forests, or pass through very poor and dangerous neighborhoods.
To bring attention to the challenges millions of students face in getting to school, and increase awareness of the importance of transportation in ensuring access to education, Veolia Transdev partnered with UNESCO (United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organization) and SIPA Press to create a groundbreaking exhibit, “Journeys to School.”

“Journeys to School” showcases the incredible resolve and resilience that students around the globe demonstrate to get to school each day, often in very difficult conditions.

Together, the United Nations, Veolia Transdev and SIPA Press engaged 18 of SIPA’s leading photojournalists in 13 countries to document the challenges faced by children simply trying to reach their classrooms. For two months, these 18 photojournalists followed in the footsteps of students around the world to bring a new perspective on the often-difficult experiences of many schoolchildren, while paying tribute to their tenacity, courage and joy in living.

The moving and often startling images reveal the daunting obstacles that must be overcome by millions of children. Poverty, urban violence, political conflicts, lack of public or school-provided transportation, religious tensions, gender inequality and natural disasters all affect children’s journeys to school in a very real way.

Countries represented in the exhibit include India, Thailand, Kenya, Brazil, Libya, Nigeria, France, Japan, the U.S. and more.

The exhibit currently includes three stories from the U.S. — a boy in New York, a girl and her brother in Los Angeles and children from a Native American community in Alaska. As we take the exhibit to other U.S. cities, we will additionally profile a student from each host city.

Veolia Transdev is a driving force behind the “Journeys to School” initiative because it conveys two of our key goals: Promoting access to education through public transportation and improving mobility and quality of life for people living in cities.

“Journeys to School” showcases the incredible resolve and resilience that students around the globe demonstrate to get to school each day, often in very difficult conditions.
The photo essays in “Journeys to School” reveal the striking resilience of children and the adults in their lives, and their collective determination to build a better future. These powerful and haunting montages —from the Arctic Circle to Southwest Australia, from Japan to Mexico, South America, Europe, Africa and Asia— make a formidable case for access to education to be placed at the top of the international development agenda.

Through more than 150 photos, “Journeys to School” illustrates the children’s indomitable spirit amidst poverty, gender inequality, discrimination, disability, distance from school and exposure to violence, conflict or natural disasters, which stand in the way of attending school and remaining there.

Intimate and inspirational, “Journeys to School” takes the viewer on an excursion into the lives of children who gamely struggle to achieve what many of us take for granted —an education.

While these children face innumerable challenges, the fact that they have a school to attend counts them among the lucky.
Welcome to “Journeys to School.”
A series of panels contain photo montages of the children's journeys.
Children of the Roma gypsy population of France face great difficulties in attending school as they move their home frequently.
A family who fled violence in their native Timbuktu attend school in a refuge camp near the Malian border.
Nine students commute to school by boat from their island home of Hoëdic off the coast of Brittany in France.
The Fulani people of Nigeria are nomadic pastoralists. Of the 35 million nomadic children in this populous country, only about 450,000 have access to education.
The children of Sertao, Brazil commute across a drought-stricken desert by horse, donkey or wagon.
The Tarahumara Amerindian people travel through a rough terrain of canyons, steep trails, forests and barbed wire fences as they walk to school.
In Guiana, France, the children cross borders in a canoe on their way to school.
Selected Individual Stories From The Exhibit
Mae Sot has a substantial population of Myanmar refugees and economic migrants, as it is the main land gateway between Thailand and Myanmar. As a result, it has also gained notoriety for its trade in gems and teak, as well as black market services such as human trafficking and drugs. Wai Wai Htun lives in a shanty neighbourhood of Mae Sot with other migrant families from Myanmar. She walks 40 minutes to and from the somlot (motorcycle rickshaw) stop. Without the somlot, Wai Wai Htun would not get to school.
Thi Ha drives the first group of children to school. Ei Sanda Soi (5) is part of this group as she and her brother live far north of the city. Without the somlot, Sanda Soi would not be able to get to school. The ride is not the safest with many children piled on to the bike. Thi Ha has to keep a close watch on the students. “One day a boy jumped off the back of the bike as I was pulling up to the school, he fell and hurt himself,” recounts Thi Ha, who spent the next three days at the clinic looking after the boy, who recovered and returned to school.
Thirty-year-old Thi Ha works as a teacher at “One Dream, One World,” a school for Myanmar migrant children. He is also the somlot school bus driver. Everyday he drives the somlot to pick up children from poor neighbourhoods. Without Thi Ha, not many children would show up for school. "If I can't get the kids, only 50% would attend class," he says.
Mines and unexploded weapons are a threat to children in countries with armed conflict. In Misrata, children go to school in an environment which reflects this conflict. It is increasingly recognized that education must be a major part of humanitarian responses in conflict-affected regions. Communities themselves prioritize the provision of education for their children, often before material needs. Education can save and sustain lives, restore routine and serve as a channel for meeting other basic needs and communicating vital messages that promote safety and well-being.
Amal, Nawal and Salem pass bombed-out houses on the way to school. Salem (9), Amal's brother, found a round object like a ball behind the house. He played with it until it exploded, killing his cousin Ali and her big sister Omasad. Nawal (12), Amal's and Salem's sister, received shrapnel in the arm. Operated on in Misrata, it will take Nawal over six months to be able to write again.
Every morning at 6.45, the school bus comes to pick up Amal, Nawal and Salem in front of their house as well as their cousins, who live in the house next door.
Eight-year-old Paban Mondol lives in the street with his mother Puohka, a housemaid, and his two brothers. His alcoholic father is a rag-picker and does nothing to support the family.
Like Paban, 13-year-old Barna Momdol, who lives in a shack on Chetla Road abutting the train tracks of Alipur train station, attends Model school. Every morning she walks the 40 minutes to school with her friends.
Despite being 15-years-of-age, Nafisa is obligated to attend one of the two primary schools in Mentao refugee camp, because there is no secondary school there. Nafisa wants to become a doctor, but when she graduates from primary school next year, it could be the end of her education. Her family cannot afford the transportation to send her to secondary school in the nearest town, Djibo, and they worry for her safety.
On the Maroni river, at the heart of the *Parc amazonien de Guyane*, Maripasoula is situated along the border with Suriname. The town is the meeting point between various peoples of the region: Indian, Brazilian, Creole, and "metropolitan" French. The principle means of transportation on the river is by canoe.
In New York City, Santiago Muñoz travels 2 to 2.5 hours each way across the city to get from his home in Far Rockaway to the prestigious Bronx School of Science. He takes 2 trains and 2 buses and multiple transfers to get to and from school each day. His commute used to take 1.5 hours each way, but was further lengthened by the damage Hurricane Sandy wrought on the transit system that serves where he lives. He is an exemplary student who is very capable and humble.
Jhai Menefee (13) waits for the bus on Slauson Avenue in south Los Angeles to get to her school in Ladera Heights, a more affluent neighborhood on the west side. In her neighbourhood of South Park, which she often refers to as the ghetto, crime and gang activities are frequent in the streets and the schools. When older girls started bullying her at her last school, Jhai transferred to Frank D. Parent Middle School, a 40-minute bus ride away, with one transfer and a one mile walk.
In the region of Sertão, children go to school by horse, mule or wagon in a desert landscape which is affected by the worst drought recorded in over 40 years. The use of horses, in the tradition of the mythical figure of the cangaceiro, or independent horseman, symbolizes the pride of Brazilian farmers defending their land and adapting to harsh living conditions.
The inauguration ceremony of the opening of the exhibit at United Nations Headquarters took place on Monday, March 4, 2013 in New York. The event was very well attended by UN dignitaries, leaders in education, public and social policy, and the media.

**Key attendees included:**

Mr. Ban Ki-moon, *UN Secretary-General*
Ms. Irina Bokova, *UNESCO Director-General*,
Mr. Jean-Marc Janaillac, *Veolia Transdev Chairman and CEO*
Mr. Olivier Mégean, *CEO of SIPA Press*
Mr. Mark Joseph, *CEO Veolia Transportation*

*Plus Veolia managers and employees from area locations*  
*Leaders in education and public, social policy and government*  
*New York and international media*  
*Local schoolchildren*
“Journeys to School,” currently on display at the United Nations through April 29, 2013
Jean-Marc Janaillac, Chairman and CEO of Veolia Transdev, addresses the attendees at the opening of the “Journeys to School” exhibit at the United Nations in New York as Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations and Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, look on.
The Partners in “Journeys to School:” (left to right) Mark Joseph, CEO Veolia Transportation; Jean-Marc Janaillac, Chairman and CEO of Veolia Transdev; Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, and Olivier Mégean, President of Sipa Press.
Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, addresses the attendees at the opening ceremony of “Journeys to School” (center) while Jean-Marc Janaillac, Chairman and CEO of Veolia Transdev (left) and Olivier Mégean, CEO of Sipa Press look on.
Secretary General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, greets a guest at the opening ceremony of “Journeys to School.”
A view of the attendees and press during the inaugural comments.
Jean-Marc Janaillac, Chairman and CEO of Veolia Transdev, shares the vision of the “Journeys to School” exhibit with the crowd.
Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations, addresses the inaugural audience.
The crowd expresses its admiration for the “Journeys to School” exhibit. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General of the United Nations, and Irina Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, are in front.
Media coverage for “Journeys to School” comprised traditional print and electronic media in some of New York City’s most prestigious and widely read publications, including print and online coverage in The New York Post, New York Daily News, and Newsday. WABC-TV’s video coverage aired on the 11:00 p.m. newscast and when posted online remained among the top viewed all week long, topped only by coverage of a major winter storm and ending the week as the third most viewed story of the week.

NY 1, which airs on Time Warner cable systems throughout New York City and the metropolitan area, also provided video coverage on its evening newscast. Additional coverage included UPI, MSN.com, AM New York, YouTube and pickups in print and online across the nation. At press time, media outreach continues.

Media strategy included the identification of a local New York City student to include in the exhibit. Fourteen-year-old Bronx High School of Science student Santiago Muñoz travels close to 5 hours daily to get to school from his home in Far Rockaway, in the New York City borough of Queens. The subway line Santiago counts on to transport him across New York City was heavily damaged in Hurricane Sandy in October 2012, adding two buses and an additional hour each way to his daily commute. While there are many public schools closer to his home, Bronx High School of Science educates the most intellectually gifted students in New York City. The Muñoz family cannot afford private school.

A local student will be identified and photographed in each subsequent host city for inclusion in the local exhibit.
Queens teen has worst school-commute time in the world

by JENNIFER FRANKO
Travel Reporter

A Bronx HS of Science student living in Queens officially has one of the longest school commutes in the world — a journey of 85 miles that starts with a 2-hour and 40-minute bus ride from his home in the Bronx through city streets to suburban Long Island and then a transfer to a train, before finally arriving at school.

Santiago Múñoz's two-hour, two-transfer trip is one of many students' journeys that will be featured in a new exhibit at the New York Transit Museum in Brooklyn, which opening next week. The exhibit will highlight the stories of students facing extraordinary school commutes because of where they happen to live.

Many of the kids highlighted in the exhibit are from developing countries, including a girl in Kenya who waits two hours to catch her bus, and a 13-year-old with a 75-minute bus ride to school.

Santiago, 18, takes the B12 bus from his home in the Bronx to a bus transfer point in Brooklyn, then takes a train to school.

He leaves his house at 6:30 a.m. and arrives on time, but he's never late.

Santiago Múñoz takes the subway to school, but he barely has time to change his clothes before he has to start his day at school.

It's wild outside the five 'burros'

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New York Post
Teen commutes 5 hours a day to school

Monday, March 04, 2013

NEW YORK (WABC) -- The ticket to the future. That's what education is especially for kids where the future sometimes doesn't look all that bright.

One young man travels five hours a day to get to his future.

He travels from near the Atlantic Ocean in Queens all the way to the Bronx and back every day.

The sun is never up yet in Far Rockaway when Santiago Munoz starts his long trip to school.

For the next two and a half hours, he will sit, stand, and doze and finally walk the final blocks.

Santiago leaves his home in Far Rockaway at 5:00 a.m. and catches the Q22 bus. A few minutes later, he transfers to the Q22 or Q83, and at 6:51 he goes underground.

The A train at Rockaway Boulevard takes him to Fulton Street, where, at around 7:30, he transfers to the number 4 train which gets him to school around 8:30.

"My son is strong, intelligent and he's going to go very far," his father Julio says, and in fact, he already has.

Santiago's story is part of an exhibit at the United Nations this week that chronicles the journeys to school of children around the world.

They walk in heavy boots in Alaska or barefoot in Kenya, by donkey or bicycle or
New photo exhibit at United Nations highlights difficulties students around the world have just getting to school

*Journeys to School* opens March 26, and is a joint project of UNESCO, Sipa Press and France’s Valeria Tranadev

BY EMILY GOLDBLUM / NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

PUBLISHED FRIDAY, MARCH 1, 2013, 5:12 PM

UPDATED THURSDAY, MARCH 7, 2013, 11:20 AM

Children, in particular, and schools are on the front line of armed conflicts. Mines and unexploded weapons are a daily threat to children, including on their journey to school. In Libya, Amal Al Torchani, 11, goes to school in an environment marked by such a conflict.

For 14-year-old Santiago Muñoz, the trip to school takes up to two hours and includes two buses and two subways. After Superstorm Sandy, the commute from his Far Rockaway home to the Bronx High School of Science nearly doubled.
Beyond the School Bus: How Children Around the World Get to School

By Kate Hinds I 03/05/2013 – 4:09 pm

For thousands of children worldwide, the toughest part of getting an education is getting to school.
New York teen found to have one of the longest commutes to school in the world

Published March 5, 2013 / New York Post

A Bronx HS of Science student living in Queens officially has one of the longest commutes on the planet—a journey of more than five hours each day that taps the trips of everyone from a Brazilian kid on a donkey to a Thai girl in a rickshaw.

Santiago Munoz’s two-bus, two-subway trip to one of the country’s premier high schools will be featured in a photo exhibit tonight at the United Nations detailing the hardships children face getting to school.

“The trip I do every day to get to school everyone should be willing to do to get a good education,” he said.

Santiago Munoz wakes up in his Far Rockaway home and prepares for his long daily commute to the Bronx High School of Science.

Many of the kids highlighted in the exhibit are from developing countries, including a girl in Kenya who walks two hours to school.

But 14-year-old Santiago’s daily journey from a Far Rockaway housing project to the tip of Manhattan, then up the top of the Bronx—and back again—stands out for its extreme duration. The one-way trip runs between 2 hours, 20 minutes and 2 hours, 40
You'll be astonished at this teen's dedication to getting an education

Santiago Munoz, a student at the Bronx High School of Science, lives in a housing project in Far Rockaway, Queens. This means he has the worst school commute in the world, according to a United Nations exhibit about education. Munoz's two-bus, two-subway, five-hour round-trip commute bests that of a girl from Kenya who walks two hours to school and a Brazilian boy who must ride a donkey to school, among other students. Munoz's story is part of a photo exhibit at the United Nations showing how difficult it can be for children to get to school. But he is remarkably good-natured about his daily journey, for which he wakes up at 5 a.m. every day. "The trip I do every day to get to school everyone should be willing to do to get a good education." This kid is going places. [Source]
Odd News
Queens student has worst school commute

NEW YORK, March 4 (UPI) -- A 14-year-old student from New York City is being featured in a photo exhibit Monday night at the United Nations for his more than 2-hour commute to school.

Santiago Munoz, who lives in a Far Rockaway housing project in Queens gets up as early as 3 a.m. to take a bus to the subway to get to the Bronx School of Science every morning, the Post reported.
A look at "Journeys to school", around the world
In the 8 weeks prior to the inauguration of “Journeys to School” at the United Nations, Veolia conducted an extensive campaign to promote the event and the exhibit. A comprehensive list of invitees was compiled that resulted in a strong showing of diplomats, government officials, business leaders, educators and the media from the city, state and region.

More than 450 people attended the event. Other special guests included a group of Veolia Transportation employees accompanied by a school aged child, students from the East Harlem school, a year-round middle school that teaches children from low-income families; and the family of Santiago Muñoz, the New York City student featured in “Journeys to School.”

**Support materials included:**

- Save the Date *(electronic)*
- Invitation *(predominantly electronic—and hard copy where required)*
- Press Release
- Press Kit
- Sample of Photos
- Commemorative Book
- Extensive Outreach to Media and Invitees
request the pleasure of your company at the inauguration of a photographic exhibition

JOURNEYS to SCHOOL

on Monday, 4 March 2013 at 6.00 p.m.
at the United Nations (Visitors Lobby)
in the presence of Mr Ban Ki-moon
Secretary-General of the United Nations

RSP
Enquiries Public Relations, UNESCO
Email recap@unesco.org | Phone 617 447 1713

Due to current security restrictions, responses are mandatory by 4 March. This invitation must be presented with a valid ID at the United Nations Headquarters' Visitor 1st Floor at 40st St., New York, NY 10017.

Inauguration Invitation
PRESS RELEASE

"Journeys to school", a photo exhibition by UNESCO, VEOLIA TRANSDIV and SIPA PRESS, as part of the "Journeys to School" book project, was made possible by a grant from SIPA PRESS.

As many as 57 million children learn without a proper path to school taken daily by children in the least developed countries. This project will be the subject of a special photo exhibition in New York, March 4, 2013 - A photographic journey to school taken daily by children in the least developed countries. This exhibition was made possible by a grant from SIPA PRESS.

Eighteen photographers in 12 countries were faced with the daunting obstacles that must be overcome by children daily in order to attend school. Poverty, lack of public transportation, political instability and gender inequality are vividly revealed in the children's daily struggle to get to school.

To make the point, "Journeys to School" is the largest of its kind and the first of its kind in the world. It has been a great success in France and will travel around the world. The book will soon be published by SIPA PRESS.

Despite the evident hardship visible in the photos, there is actually a school in the photo that is currently open. In 2012, 61 million children did not go to school.

There are several ways to change this. Improved schools can be set up close to the homes of those children who are currently still in school. Improved teacher training can be improved. The stories in this exhibition reveal the impact that NGOs and a collective determination to make sure that education is placed at the top of the international agenda.

The "Journeys to School" book project features 18 photographs, along with data on access to education worldwide. The book will be sold online from the UNESCO website and will be available for pre-order. Pre-order copies will be available at the event.

Major photographic exhibition:

Journeys to School
Inauguration on March 4, 2013 at 6.30pm

United Nations (Gallery), New York, NY

jointly organized by

UNESCO
VEOLIA TRANSDIV
SIPA PRESS

Press contacts:

UNESCO
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

VEOLIA TRANSDIV
world leader in public transportation solutions

SIPA PRESS
international news and photo agency

Getting to school is still a challenge for millions of children...

"Journeys to School"

A photographic exhibition by
UNESCO
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international news and photo agency

Media kit

Contact Information:

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Due to security restrictions, VIPs and a valid ID will be mandatory to attend.
Local government plays an important role in a successful “Journeys to School” road show, both in terms of venue selection and assistance with the local schools and student population.

As we did in New York with high school student Santiago Muñoz, Veolia would like to spotlight a Boston area student on his or her own “journey to school,” arranging for a Sipa Press photographer to document that student’s home and academic life. The Boston school system would be instrumental in creating a pool of area students of all grade levels for consideration.

We would additionally like to work with a selected middle school and high school to have students there document their own “journeys to school” in words, photographs and personal art for an additional display that will be part of the Boston exhibit.

What physical requirements does the exhibit demand?

The installation of the exhibit requires 373 linear feet of space. Set up requires two people and takes approximately 2 1/2 days. To dismantle and bubble wrap the exhibit, it is estimated that it would take 2 people about 1 1/2 days.

How long will the exhibit run?

We recommend a showing of 6-8 weeks to enable the community at large, as well as school and other groups to visit.

Who is the audience for the exhibit?

The exhibit is targeted to be of interest to a general audience of school-aged children and adults of all ages, including but not limited to educators, public policy makers, leaders in city government including school, public transportation and housing, families and tourists.
EXHIBIT LAYOUT

- Bike
- Donkey Kids
- Boat

Kenya 
Nigeria 
Essonne France 
Alaska 

Brazil 
Burkina Faso 
Mexico 

France 
Britany Morroco 

Australia 

Thailand 

Japan

India

Expo title 1

Expo title 2

PANELS DESCRIPTION:
- (1) Mobility
- (2) M. Ban Ki Moon on Education
- (3) Ms. Bokova presentation
- (4) M. Janaillac presentation
- (5) Partners presentation board
- (6) Journeys to School Book
What is the origin of the project “Journeys to School?”

“Journeys to School” was conceived from an 2010 article, “Road deaths among children spiralling in poorest nations” reported in the British newspaper The Guardian. The article brought to light a shocking and disturbing statistic: Traffic accidents that occur between the school and home kill more children in the world than epidemics such as cholera, malaria and tuberculosis.

For a transport company with our values, engaging on critical issues such as this is part of being a responsible corporate citizen; we felt that Veolia must play a role in alerting society to this little known reality about the extent to which precious children are at risk.

In addition to this photo reporting and the accompanying visibility, we are reviewing together with our Human Resources department tangible actions that we could propose to our employees who would like to become involved in an initiative to support these children.

Why involve UNESCO in this process?

It was essential that our approach had a strong institutional base and included a well-recognized international leader that possessed undeniable legitimacy in the area of access to education for children. At UNESCO, we found immediate and strong support for the project as it directly supports its “Education for All” initiative.

How was Sipa Press chosen for the photography?

Through its network of correspondents around the world, Sipa Press enabled us to find highly experienced and talented photographers for this project. We wanted this exhibition to testify to the courage of the children whose everyday lives we have followed. Who better to fulfill this dual role of reporter-journalists from all nationalities, than those living in each country, closest to the reality and the lives of these families? The intimacy and cultural sensitivity conveyed through these photographs reflects this proximity.
Veolia Transdev is a leader in operating public transportation in 27 countries around the
globe and is under contract to some 5,000 city governments and transit authorities. Veolia is
a leader in improving public and school transportation, providing efficient operations that
deliver safe, reliable, comfortable transportation and state-of-the-art passenger information.

The “Journeys to School” project communicates Veolia’s mission: Providing mobility services
that serve the public interest and improve quality of life. The company is dedicated to
improving the daily commutes and travel for city inhabitants and provides 3.3 billion trips
per year in 27 countries.

Veolia is keenly aware that in both the city and the countryside, lack of mobility remains a
key source of inequality, denying some access to work, school, essential services,
healthcare, and more. In many places, for millions of children, the lack of access to public
transportation or school-provided transportation is a major challenge for students, teachers
and parents.

Our goal is to contribute to making the right to education for all a reality.

Veolia Transportation is the largest private operator of multiple modes of transportation in
North America including bus, bus rapid transit, light rail, commuter rail, streetcars,
paratransit, shuttle, and taxi services.

We have 200 contracts with North American cities, counties, airports, companies, school
districts and universities to manage and operate one or more modes of their transportation
systems. Every year, from coast to coast, more than 400 million passengers travel with Veolia
Transportation on their way to work, study, shop or play.

The On-Demand division of Veolia Transportation manages those businesses that respond
directly to consumer requests for transportation, including Super Shuttle, ExecuCar, Compass
Transportation and Golden Touch Transportation.
Since its foundation in 1945, UNESCO has been at the forefront of global education efforts. The Organization is firmly committed to education as a human right and the key to sustainable human development. UNESCO leads the Education for All movement, a global commitment to provide quality basic education for all children, youth and adults.

As a global benchmark in sustainable mobility, Veolia Transdev offers efficient mobility solutions that promote balanced growth throughout countries and regions. As a driving force behind this initiative, Veolia Transdev is proud of this project which conveys one of its key goals: promoting access to education through public transportation.

The project also reflects Veolia Transdev's approach to the industry: providing mobility services that are in the general interest and help forge social ties.

Created in 1973 by Göksin Sipahioglu. Sipa Press is one of the most prestigious photo agencies in the world. Sipa Press covers global current events with a staff of photographers, a global network of more than 600 correspondents and exclusive distribution agreements with overseas agencies.