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FINAL REPORT
OCTOBER 1, 1991 - SEPTEMBER 30, 1992
AID GRANT NO. DAN-4193-G-00-1078-00

SUBMITTED BY INFORUM AND THE RODALE INSTITUTE

This final report is submitted as described in Section IE.2.(i) of contract grant no. DAN-4193-G-00-1078-00.

Comparison of Actual Accomplishments vs. Goals

The goal of this project was to contribute to the development of more sustainable land use systems. The project's purpose was to increase the efficiency of researchers, development specialists, and decision-makers who are developing sustainable land use systems by facilitating information exchange among the individuals and institutions involved in this process. The project's projected outputs were:

1. The quarterly publication of an International Digest in English, Spanish, and French would actively collect and synthesize information from existing sustainable agriculture (and related) newsletters and disseminate this information to institutions that are developing methodologies, technologies, and general principles needed to design, test, and promote the development of sustainable land use systems.
2. A financially sustainable institutional arrangement among co-publishing institutions in Asia, Africa, Europe, Latin America, and North America that effectively uses electronic mail and other communication technology to move information among the co-publishers and efficiently disseminates this information among the local, regional, and international institutions and networks that it serves.

The Project Implementation Plan submitted 60 days after the effective date of the grant (as described in section IE.2a of the contract) divided the project activities into three subsets: (a) assessment of needs and constraints, (b) development of institutional arrangements, and (c) project administration. A Time Frame was developed that included the key activities planned for each quarter (see Appendix I).

The project successfully developed the institutional arrangement necessary to co-publish an international digest (see project outputs described above), but the original definition of "an international digest" as conceived during the development of the workplan was substantially changed by the institutions at a workshop to develop the institutional arrangements. The potential co-publishers recommended that the concept of a printed digest compiled electronically from local newsletters should be changed. Instead, the international digest should be electronic instead of "in print"; and it should be developed from two sources: uploaded information from newsletters (as originally proposed), and information from electronic conferences that would analyze sustainable agriculture issues and "add value" to the information uploaded from the newsletters.

Key activities implemented by the project for each of the three activity subsets: (a) assessment of needs and constraints, (b) develop institutional arrangements, and (c) project administration are described below in detail.

Assessment of Needs and Constraints

INFORUM's Science Advisory Committee met in East Lansing, Michigan in October, 1991. The committee discussed and agreed upon a process for assessing constraints to information exchange among different types of Institutions. A draft contract for implementing this process was sent to the Overseas Development Institute (ODI) in the United Kingdom. ODI proposed that they would follow a methodology that included: (1) development of a preliminary classification of different types of institutions operating in different strata (local, national, regional, and international) and in different geographic regions (Africa, Asia, and Latin America), (2) development of a questionnaire that would be used to interview representatives of the different types of institutions, (3) implementation of the survey, (4) analysis of the survey results, and (4) writing a document describing the results of the assessment study.

The following types of institutions were identified: (1) local non-governmental organizations (NGOs), (2) national NGOs, (3) international NGOs, (4) local public organizations, (5) national public organizations, (6) international bilateral public organizations, and (7) international public organizations. The questionnaire was used to survey at least five institutions of each type. Analysis of the results suggested the following patterns:

1. Information flows FROM international and national public research institutions TO local non-governmental organization (NGOs) is low
2. Information flows FROM local NGOs TO international and national public research institutions is very low
3. Information flows AMONG local NGOs is better than BETWEEN international and national public institutions
4. Information flows AMONG international and national public institutions is more efficient than other types of information exchange
5. Sponsorship of an international organizations has significant effects on information flows BETWEEN local and international strata, but national and regional institutions may be by-passed.

In addition to these general patterns, preliminary results suggested that there are differences in the flows of different types of information and the communications media used. Written, oral, and visual information have different levels of importance for policy, scientific, technical or community information. This has led to interesting discussions and observations with regards to the use of electronic communication.

The negative or, at best, cautious reactions to questions about information flows has made it clear that information seldom moves among institutions within the same strata without the involvement of an institution one-level higher. Two national institutions in different countries find it difficult to exchange information without the involvement of a regional or international organization. This potential control (no matter how often denied) is strongly resented. A key issue is how to facilitate information exchange with a minimum of real or perceived external control by the facilitator and a maximum of real and perceived control by the communicating institutions.

A report describing the assessment results was submitted to Dr. Jim Bonner in the Office of Agriculture, R & D Bureau of AID.

Develop Institutional Arrangements

The Rodale Institute took primary responsibility for this set of activities. Various institutions in Africa, Latin America, Europe, Asia, and North America that actively publish newsletters on sustainable agriculture were contacted. A key criteria for consideration of potential co-publishers was that the institution view local community-based organizations and farmers as their primary clients. Using this criteria a number of organizations actively involved in publishing international newsletters, but not actively working with local organizations, were not considered.

The Institute of Environment Science and Management (IESM) of the University of the Philippines at Los Banos and the International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), also in Los Banos, agreed to co-host a workshop of potential co-publishers. Key objectives of the workshop were to: (1) develop an information exchange and "publishing" process, (2) agree upon an institutional arrangement, and (3) develop a proposal describing the next phase in the project. The workshop was held June 15-19, 1992. The following institutions sent representatives to the workshop:

NAME	GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS
1. Zimbabwe Energy Research Organization Harare, Zimbabwe Representative: Ms. Dorothy Manuel	S. Africa
2. RIMISP (Red Internacional de Metodologia de Investigacion de Sistemas de Produccion) Santiago, Chile Representative: Dr. German Escobar	Latin America
3. University of California - Davis Sacramento, California, USA Representative: Dr. Jill Auburn	N. America
4. Rural Ecosystems Division Nanjing Institute of Environment; Nanjing, China Representative: Professor Li Zhengfang	N.E. Asia
5. Institute of Environmental Science and Management; University of Philippines Laguna. Philippines Representatives: Dr. Gelia Castillo, Dr. Enrique Parcardo, Dr. Ben Malayang	S.E. Asia
6. Senegal Regenerative Agriculture Resources Center; Thies, Senegal Contact: Mr. Pape Kane Diallo	W. Africa
7. Kenya Energy and Environment Organization (KENGO) Representative: Mr. Brazille Simaro Masumba	E. Africa
8. University of East Anglia United Kingdom Representative: Ms. Heather Brown	W. Europe
9. IRRI; the International Rice Research Institute Los Banos, the Philippines Representative: Dr. Theodore Hutchcroft	Africa, Asia Latin America

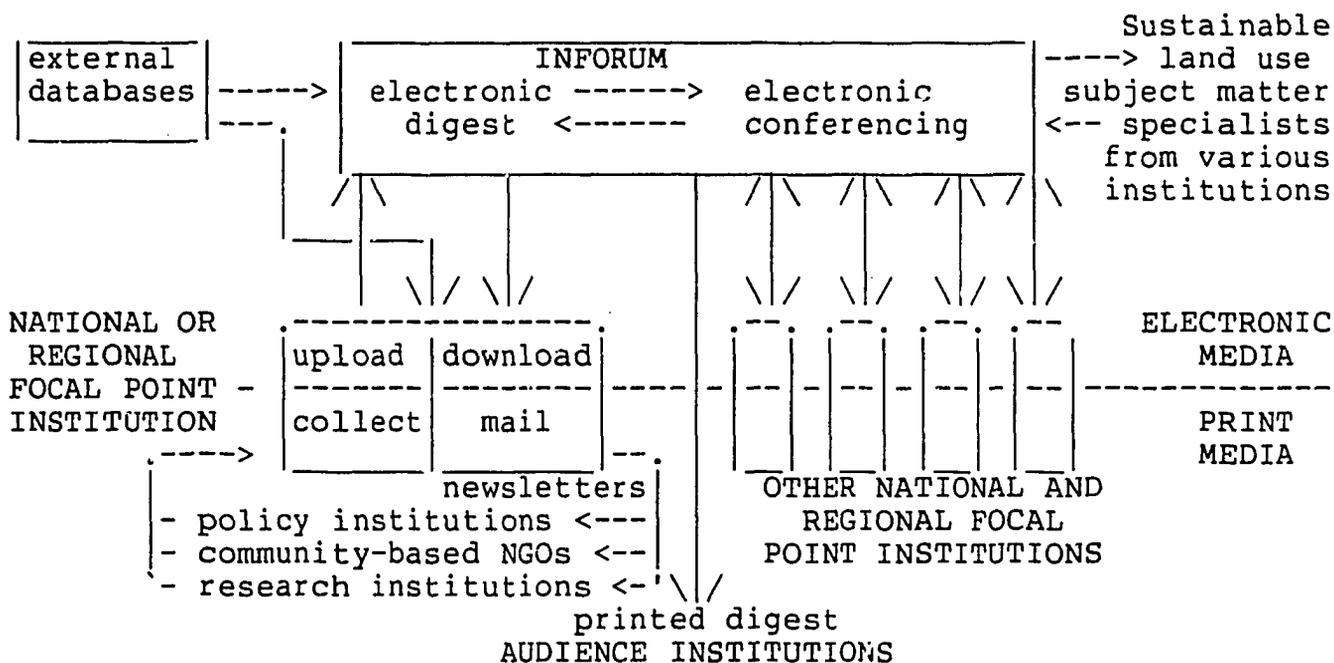
NAME (continued)

GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS

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|---|-------------|
| 10. Philippines Ministry of Agriculture
Representative: Mr. Roberto Villa | Philippines |
| 11. Philippines Rice Research Institute
Representatives: Eulito Bautista, Ronilo Beronio | Philippines |
| 11. Southeast Asia Agroecosystem Network (SUAN)
Representatives: Mariliza Ticsay-Ruscoe | S.E. Asia |
| 12. Overseas Development Institute
United Kingdom
Representative: Mr. Simon Zadec | Global |
| 13. The Rodale Institute
The United States
Representative: Ms. Virginia Hubbs | Global |
| 14. INFORUM
Representative: Dr. Robert Hart | Global |

The workshop participants recommended that a global information exchange process be set up that integrates print and electronic media and includes electronic conferences on specific sustainable land use topics to "add value" to the information that is exchanged. A draft proposal describing the institutional arrangement and workplans that would be followed to implement the process was developed by the workshop participants.

Key elements of the proposed global information exchange process are depicted below.



The proposal developed by the workshop participants was submitted to Dr. Jim Bonner in the Agriculture Office of the Research and Development Bureau of AID. This proposal was accepted and used as the basis for a two-year contract.

Project Administration

Within 60 days of signing the contract, a workplan was submitted to the AID Project Officer that included the activities outlined above and summarized in the Time Frame (see Appendix I). Robert Hart, the project coordinator and INFORUM's Executive Director, took primary responsibility for these activities. In addition to preparing quarterly and final reports and submitting a proposal for years two and three (as noted in the Time Frame), other key activities included:

1. development of the terms of reference for the ODI implemented assessment
2. development of an electronic conferencing capability to facilitate information exchange among the digest co-publishers
3. identification and selections of potential co-publishers in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe, and North America
4. organization and implementation of the workshop to develop the institutional arrangement among potential co-publishers and a proposal describing activities for years two and three
5. development of institutional liaisons with the CGIAR Centers, the institutions submitting proposals for the AID-fund SANREM CRSP, and potential future co-publishers in Central Europe

Ms. Virginia Hubbs was hired as a consultant to help identify potential co-publishers and plan the co-publishers workshop. Dr. Moses Onim, an INFORUM associate from Kenya, was hired to go to Zimbabwe to meet with representatives from ZERO (the Zimbabwe Energy Research Organization) in Harare, Zimbabwe to discuss their participation in the workshop. Dr. Onim also developed the relationship with KENGO in Kenya.

The following CGIAR Centers were visited: ISNAR, CIP, CIMMYT, and IRRI. While the International Digest will primarily serve Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and national public institutions, the CGIAR Centers can play a significant role in both facilitating information exchange among countries and in providing valuable information.

When the University of Georgia and its institutional partners were awarded the SANREM project, meetings were held with Bill Hargrove and Robert Gurevich to discuss cooperation between INFORUM and the SANREM CRSP. Two types of cooperation were discussed: (1) the SANREM CRSP could consider contracting INFORUM to provide electronic links among the institutions collaborating in Burkina Fasso, Guatemala, Honduras, and the Philippines, and (2) a pilot study could be developed in the Philippines.

Due to the increasing importance of Central and Eastern Europe it is likely that in the future associate institutions from that region will participate in the institutional arrangement developed by this project. Meeting with institutions in Poland and Hungary suggests that there is both a need and an interest. The Technical University of Budapest in Hungary has indicated a strong interest in playing a lead role in coordinating the electronic communication function of the information exchange process developed at the workshop in the Philippines.

Financial Status

This grant was for a total of \$170,800 in direct costs to be provided by AID, and for \$73,443 in indirect costs to be provided by the Rodale Institute. As of September 30, 1992 all of the funds provided by AID were spent and \$84,069 (\$10,606 more than originally budgeted) provided by the Rodale Institute were spent. Table 1 is a summary of project expenses as compared to the original project budget.

Table 1. Total Project Expenses

Line Item	Budgeted	Spent	Balance
Salaries	\$86,427	\$96,074	(\$9,647)
Benefits		\$2,830	(\$2,830)
Consultants	\$12,000	\$20,994	(\$8,994)
Communication	\$11,000	\$3,499	\$7,501
Travel	\$48,000	\$41,734	\$6,266
Equipment & Supplies	\$13,373	\$5,668	\$7,705
	\$170,800	\$170,800	0
Indirect Costs	\$73,463	\$84,069	(\$10,606)

APPENDIX I. PROJECT TIME FRAME AND WORK PLAN
 1991 1992

ACTIVITY S O N D J F M A M J J A

ACTIVITY	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A
A. Assessment of Needs and Constraints												
1. Identify strata information exchange & institution types.					***							
2. Investigate needs, constraints and opportunities within strata.					*****		*****					
3. Investigate needs, constraints and opportunities among strata.							*****					
4. Write report summarizing results											***	
B. Develop Institutional Arrangements												
1. Identify potential co-publishing institutions					*****							
2. Convene a workshop of potential co-publishers									**			
3. Identify key co-publishing personnel										**		
4. Set up communication links among co-publishers										****		
5. Compile and distribute first edition of the Digest											**	
C. Project Administration												
1. Submit Quarterly Reports					*		*			*		
2. Submit Special Report (assessment)										**		
3. Submit Second Year Proposal										**		
4. Submit Final Report											**	

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