

**AN ASSESSMENT OF
THE PERFORMANCE OF
THE USDA/USAID
TECHNICAL INQUIRIES GROUP (TIG)
AND A.I.D.'S FUTURE NEED
FOR SUCH SERVICES**

Final Report

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Table of Contents

	<u>Page</u>
PREFACE	i
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	ii
 SECTION ONE: OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY	
A. Evolution of the Information Services Program of the USDA'S Technical Inquiries Group (TIG)	1-1
B. Objectives and Scope of the Assessment	1-5
C. Assessment Methodology	1-6
D. Organization of the Report	1-7
 SECTION TWO: THE EFFECTIVENESS, VALUE AND IMPACT OF TIG SERVICES	
A. TIG Clients and Their Basic Information Use Practices	2-1
B. The Benefits of TIG Information: Its Uses, Quality and Impact	2-6
 SECTION THREE: EFFICIENCY AND THE TIG INFORMATION SERVICES PROGRAM	
A. The TIG Request Processing System	3-1
B. The Absolute Efficiency of the TIG Program	3-7
C. The Relative Efficiency of TIG services	3-8
 SECTION FOUR: THE ROLE OF TIG SERVICES IN A.I.D.'S FUTURE	
A. Earmarking Resources for Sectoral Information Services	4-1
B. Funding for Information Services that Focus on Agriculture, the Environment and Natural Resources	4-3
C. Alternative Uses for Funds Currently Dedicated to Financing TIG	4-4
D. Options for Financing and Managing Specialized Information Services in A.I.D., and TIG in Particular	4-5
 SECTION FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
A. General Conclusions	5-1
B. Recommendations	5-2
 ANNEXES:	
A. Scope of Work	
B. Evaluation Methods	
C. User Comments on TIG Services	
D. Stories About the Impact of TIG Information	

PREFACE

The assessment of the USDA/USAID Technical Inquiries Group (TIG) discussed in this report was carried out by an MSI team which consisted of Molly Hageboeck, Team Leader, Douglas Daniell, Roberta Warren and Joseph Gagnier. The team wishes to thank Ms. Margaret Pope of CDIE/DI for her assistance throughout the course of this effort. The team also wishes to acknowledge and thank the TIG staff for the courtesy and spirit of cooperation they displayed to the team as this assessment was carried out.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of this assessment, which was carried out for A.I.D. by Management Systems International (MSI), was to examine the effectiveness, efficiency and potential future role of the information services provided to A.I.D. by the USDA's Technical Inquiries Group (TIG). Information services provided under this arrangement are currently available to A.I.D. personnel stationed in Washington and throughout the developing world.

The assessment was carried out using three data collection and analysis approaches: (a) a user survey, through which MSI gathered general impressions as well as detailed comments concerning specific requests from 51 respondents; (b) a time utilization study, which examined both the "real" and elapsed time associated with the preparation of nine randomly sampled TIG responses and (c) a series of interviews with key informants in A.I.D.'s regional bureaus, as well as its central technical and policy offices.

Assessment findings indicate that TIG answers inquiries on a much broader range of topics than might be expected. Inquiries on policy issues and environmental questions are today as routine as are questions on agricultural production, processing and marketing. With TIG's productivity, the data suggest that TIG now answers around 1,000 inquiries a year, and that this level is double what it was five years ago.

User survey data about TIG users indicate that 80 of T.I.G.'s primary users are A.I.D. staff members, the majority of whom work in either agricultural or environment-related assignments. While TIG is not the only information resource upon which these users depend, many of them are repeat users of the service who characterize it as being very valuable to them. Most users report that the key stages of the A.I.D. programming process which are supported by TIG products are program design and implementation. The impact of TIG's products, they report, tends to be most visible during implementation. The main secondary users for TIG products are the host country officials with whom A.I.D. users share the answers they receive from the TIG service. By and large, TIG users gave this service high marks for quality and considered its responses to be timely.

MSI's examination of questions which focused on TIG's efficiency and the continuing demand for its services indicated that TIG is at least as efficient and cost-effective as other similar services, and may be more efficient and cost-effective than most. With respect to the question of continuing demand for TIG's services, MSI's interviews with A.I.D. staff, paired with a review of recent Congressional documents and early statements from Clinton Administration officials suggest that both agriculture and environment will continue to have an important place in A.I.D.'s portfolio.

Based on the findings of this assessment, MSI concluded that the TIG program provides A.I.D. with high value products for which there is a continuing demand. It should, if financially feasible, be continued.

In addition to reaching these conclusions concerning the TIG program, MSI made a series of observations based on data it had collected during the assessment about A.I.D.'s oversight of the many different topical and general information services it funds. MSI's conclusion in this area was that improvements in the way A.I.D. manages such services are warranted. Absent an appropriate management mechanism, A.I.D. has inadequate documentation concerning, or control over, the full range, depth, cost and quality of such services. Unnecessary duplication is a possibility under such circumstances. It is also highly probable that many of the intended users of such services are unaware of their existence. The assessment report provides both TIG and A.I.D. with suggestions concerning improvements that can be made in TIG and in A.I.D.'s oversight of such programs.

SECTION ONE

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this assessment is to examine the effectiveness, efficiency and potential future role of the information services provided to A.I.D. by the USDA's Technical Inquiries Group (TIG), under a RSSA arrangement. Information services provided under this arrangement are currently available to A.I.D. personnel, stationed in Washington and throughout the developing world, as well as, at times, to their host country counterparts and the contractors, university staff and voluntary agency personnel who work with A.I.D. to implement development programs and projects.

This section examines the history and scope of the USDA-A.I.D. information services RSSA. It also presents the specific questions which this assessment was asked to address.

A. Evolution of the Information Services Program of the USDA'S Technical Inquiries Group (TIG)

A.I.D.'s arrangement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture for the provision of information services was initiated in 1966, as part of a broad agreement that established a cooperative framework for joint efforts in support of A.I.D.'s foreign assistance mandate. Under this agreement, technical consultation and support services which USDA would make available were defined to include "the furnishing of technical information and advice." The information service that evolved out of this early agreement is reportedly the oldest of A.I.D.'s information service arrangements. Responsibility for its management, within A.I.D., lies with the Office of Development Information (DI) in the Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE), within A.I.D.'s Policy Directorate (POL). This management arrangement has been in effect since shortly after DI was formed in the early 1970s as a part of what was then A.I.D.'s Program and Policy Coordination Bureau (PPC).

The topical scope of the USDA's information services program initially focused on agriculture, and to some extent on questions about nutrition. Over the years the range of topics on which TIG provides information has evolved to match A.I.D.'s changing portfolio and meet its emerging demands. Table 1-1 presents a listing of the topics which the TIG program has addressed in responses to inquiries from A.I.D staff and, occasionally, host country counterparts, contractors, etc., over the past two and a half years.¹

¹ The list in Table 1-1 was derived empirically from MSI's review of TIG responses during this period. Topics were organized into clusters and these clusters were subsequently used as the basis for drawing the sample of cases that were followed-up as part of the assessment's survey of users.

Table 1-1

Technical Areas in Which TIG Prepares Responses to User Inquiries

I. Policy

- Agricultural policy analysis and planning
- Land tenure/agrarian reform
- Environmental policies for sustainability

II. Production, Processing and Marketing of High Value Crops

- Fruits and vegetables
- Specialty crops
- Spices, nuts, flowers and ornamentals
- Oilseeds
- Other crops

III. Production, Processing and Marketing of Other Crops

- Forest products
- Fish and shellfish
- Livestock
- Specialty livestock
- Other commodities
- Fisheries

IV. Competitiveness

- Market analysis and trade data for crops
- Agribusiness development
- Country and regional studies
- Research and extension
- Economics and agricultural economics
- U.S. agriculture
- U.S. regulations
- Technology transfer and appropriate technology

V. Environment

- Sustainable agriculture
- Global climate change
- Waste management
- Soil and water conservation
- Parks and protected areas

- Resource conservation
- Toxins and health
- Plant/livestock diseases and integrated pest management
- Water management/irrigation
- Sustainable forestry
- Agroforestry
- Resource Economics

As to the level of service A.I.D. receives, TIG statistics indicate that, over the last five years, there has been a steady increase both the number of inquiries received and the number of information packages sent in response to such requests. Statistical reports for FY88 through July of FY92 which were reviewed by the evaluation team indicate that the volume of information requests and responses has doubled during this period.² Table 1-2, which shows the number of information packages sent out by TIG in response to user inquiries between the beginning of FY88 and the middle of FY92, illustrates this doubling in volume.

Table 1-2. Information Packages Sent by TIG, FY88 - FY92

FY	AFR	LAC	ASIA/NE (ENE)	AID/W	OTHER (Non-AID)	TOTAL
1988	130	151	148	18	9	456
1989	235	187	115	15	11	563
1990	174	191	177	154	10	706
1991	182	341	96	80	10	709
1992 (thru July)	112	779	110	64	13	1,078

Source: Annual TIG Statistics.

- ² TIG utilizes several approaches to reporting on its workload. Its annual statistical reports present data on:
- (a) Requests received, or more specifically the number of information "work units" or separate tasks associated with requests that have been received. A typical request may consist of two to three or more of these information "work units". The resulting statistic tends to be relatively large, e.g., for FY91 the figure 1,824 was reported;
 - (b) Searches requested, i.e., a subset of all requests. "Work units" in this subset tend to involve data base searches. A total of 1,114 were reported for FY91;
 - (c) Information packages sent, i.e., the number of response mailings put out by TIG in response to inquiries. While this figure comes the closest to serving as a simple measure of the number of requests/responses TIG handles, it too may be somewhat inflated because TIG often sends users interim packages containing that portion of a response that is readily available. Follow-up packages are sent when more information becomes available. Both of these kinds of packages are included in TIG's annual statistics. The total for this category, for FY91, was 709.

With respect to the distribution of services on a geographic basis, Table 1-3 indicates what percentage of TIG information packages went to each geographic region, or to AID/W, in each of these years. The percentage of TIG information packages delivered to non-AID personnel is also shown in Table 1-3. The large share of information packages going to Latin America and the Caribbean in both FY91 and FY92 is reportedly linked to a trip taken by the TIG Director and that region's increased familiarity with TIG's services.

Table 1-3. Distribution of Information Packages by Region and Fiscal Year

Clusters of Users	FY88	FY89	FY90	FY91	FY92 (thru July)
LAC	33%	33%	27%	48%	72%
AFR	29%	42%	24%	26%	10%
ASIA/NE (ENE)	32%	20%	25%	14%	10%
AID/W	4%	3%	23%	11%	6%
Other (Non-AID)	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%
Total by fiscal year	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The USDA Technical Inquiries Group (TIG) currently consists of a staff of four full time personnel. The Group's Director is hoping to increase the staff level to five full time personnel by filling behind a vacancy which arose in the middle of FY92. Financial support for the TIG operations come from several sources within A.I.D. Over the years, CDIE/DI has provided a core level of funding covering most of the staff costs of this operation. Discussions with the TIG Director suggest that funds from other A.I.D. bureaus complement CDIE/DI's financing by paying supplementary staff costs; the cost of books and other materials provided to missions; and limited equipment costs, e.g., a fax machine.

By way of example, TIG's Director has indicated that the service's FY92 operating budget drew upon a range of sources and applied the funds involved to specific purposes. CDIE/DI provided roughly \$261,000 which was applied to the salary and benefit costs associated with 3.5 employees. The salary and benefit costs of one additional employee, as well as some equipment costs, were covered by funding from the Research and Development (R&D) Bureau's Office of Agriculture of roughly \$81,000. Travel to missions in the Latin America and Caribbean Bureau (LAC) as well as a "book fund", which covered the cost of books sent to LAC staff members in response to their inquiries, were supported by funds on the order of \$112,000. Other regional bureaus as well as some of A.I.D.'s regional offices overseas, e.g., ROCAP, the Central America regional office, also provided TIG with resources in the form of "book funds" which TIG used to purchasing publications for missions in connection with inquiries it received. Overall funding for FY92, from these multiple sources, came to an approximate total of \$463,000.

B. Objectives and Scope of the Assessment

This assessment of the effectiveness, efficiency and potential future role of A.I.D.'s information services RSSA with USDA responds to A.I.D.'s requirements for the periodic evaluation of all Agency-funded programs and projects. It has been just over 10 years since the TIG service has been subjected to such a review. In 1982, this service was one of three information services covered by an evaluation carried out by an in-house A.I.D. evaluation team with the assistance of an independent consultant, who served as the team chairman and principal author of the evaluation report. This earlier evaluation judged TIG services to be useful and worth continuing. This judgement was based on the findings of a survey of clients that yielded 53 responses to a relatively open-ended inquiry letter sent to 220 then current users of the service.

The scope of work for this second assessment of the TIG service is presented in Annex A. The questions raised in that scope of work are listed below:

1. "Identify the primary and secondary audiences for this services.
2. Evaluate the need for this service by these audiences.
3. Assess the value of the Technical Inquiry Services, i.e., how important are the services provided under this activity to A.I.D. Mission and Bureau Agriculturalists.
4. Evaluate the quality of service -- how effective has the Technical Inquiry Services team's performance been in fulfilling its mandate under the current scope of work?
5. Determine if the TIG team has performed in the most cost-efficient manner when responding to requests.
6. Evaluate the impact and the appropriateness of the services provided to A.I.D. Missions and AID/W audiences.
7. Identify the benefits derived from this activity.
8. Given the level of funding resources for this activity, determine if the Agency is receiving the maximum benefits from these resources.
9. Measure the impact of this activity on overall Agency programs and initiatives and analyze how this use of Agency resources impacts on other Agency initiatives.
10. Evaluate whether earmarking this level of Agency resources for the agriculture sector is the most cost-effective use of Agency resources.
11. Assess various program options including whether (1) CDIE should continue to provide complete funding of this activity or (2) CDIE should provide core funding and Missions and/or bureaus participate in financing in accordance with their use

of these services or (3) this activity should be transferred to another A.I.D. unit for full funding support but coordinated by CDIE or (4) the services for Missions and/or Bureaus should be handled as buy-in's but managed by CDIE or (5) this activity should be discontinued.

12. Identify and make recommendations for alternative uses of these resources.
13. Explore the following question: independent of TIG performance: Should this level of Agency resources be earmarked for any one sector?"

C. Assessment Methodology

The broad range of questions and tasks included in the scope of work summarized above called for a mix of methodological approaches.

- In order to address the questions of TIG effectiveness, MSI designed a user survey, in accordance with expectations set forth in the assessment's scope of work. MSI's approach to the user survey and its sampling procedure derived from its review of descriptions of TIG information packages which had been sent out over the past two and a half years. These descriptions were clustered into five groups which focused on: policy issues; high value crops; other crops and commodities; competitiveness; and the environment. Sample inquiries were drawn from each of these clusters, and questionnaires were sent to the individuals who had made these inquiries. As a function of this approach, some individuals who received the questionnaire were asked about one inquiry they had made while others were asked about several of their inquiries.
- Questionnaires were forwarded to a set of 147 individuals who, collectively, had made 236 inquiries. The assessment's analysis was carried out on 64 questionnaires which were received and the 118 inquiries with which they dealt. The return rate for this user survey was, as the above figures suggest, roughly 43% in terms of questionnaires received and 50% in terms of the specific inquiries those questionnaires addressed. While this level of response is lower than MSI had hoped for, it is nevertheless higher than the norm for written questionnaires. It is quite probable, but not absolutely certain, that the answers received from user survey respondents represent the views of all TIG users.
- To answer questions about the efficiency of the TIG service, a "time utilization" sub-study was carried out to ascertain average time, as well as the range of real and elapsed times, required to respond to the types of inquiries TIG receives. Random sampling was used in this sub-study to select three inquiries handled, during the preceding six months, by each of TIG's three full time information analysts, for examination. In addition to this sub-study, MSI reviewed the findings of evaluations of other A.I.D.-funded information services.

- To gain a fuller understanding of assessment questions that pertain to the potential future role and placement of TIG services within the A.I.D. context, MSI conducted a series of interviews with technical and policy personnel in A.I.D.'s regional and central bureaus.

A more detailed review of the methods used to gather information for this assessment is presented in Annex B. This annex contains several exhibits, including: a copy of the user survey instrument and a listing of those A.I.D. officers who participated in assessment interviews.

D. Organization of the Report

The remainder of this report is organized into four sections. The first of these sections, Section Two, presents the finds of the assessment's user survey with respect to TIG effectiveness. Section Three presents the findings of the assessment's review of the efficiency of TIG services. Section Four examines questions that relate to the potential future role and placement of TIG services in the A.I.D. context. Section Five moves from these specific discussions to a summary of the assessment's conclusions and the presentation of its action recommendations.

SECTION TWO

THE EFFECTIVENESS, VALUE AND IMPACT OF TIG SERVICES

This section examines the findings of the assessment's survey of TIG users, emphasizing in particular those survey questions which focus on the effectiveness and value of TIG services. Comments made by A.I.D. staff in regional and central bureaus during assessment interviews are also drawn upon in this Section.

A. TIG Clients and Their Basic Information Use Practices

One of the first questions raised in the assessment's scope of work asked: Who are the primary users of TIG services. As part of the user survey MSI carried out, it asked several basic questions about individuals who seek answers from the TIG program. Answers extracted from the user survey suggest that:

- 80% of TIG's primary users are A.I.D. staff members. Results of the user survey suggest that the remaining 20% of TIG's primary users include both contractors who are working with A.I.D. to implement programs and projects as well as host country nationals. Of the two, contractors accounted for the vast majority, 92%, of the non-A.I.D. users among the respondents who returned their questionnaires.
- Within the A.I.D. staff, 55% of TIG's primary users are individuals who A.I.D.'s personnel system classifies as agriculturalists, i.e., backstop code 10. The second largest group of primary users within A.I.D. are individuals whose focus is on natural resources and the environment, i.e., backstop code 30. Thirty-one percent (31%) of the user survey's respondents were members of this second group. Other categories of primary users suggested by the composition of the survey's respondents include program management personnel, i.e., backstop code 12; individuals who are working on private sector issues, i.e., backstop code 21; and an occasional Mission Director.

As to the geographic distribution of TIG's primary users, different answers emerge when survey data on the current posting of respondents is compared to a listing of the posts from which the inquiries on which the sample was drawn originated. These differences are largely a function of the way in which A.I.D. rotates its staff into Washington for tours in its central bureaus, as well as among its geographic bureaus.

Data on the current location of survey respondents indicates that most of the A.I.D. respondents to the user survey, roughly 70%, are evenly distributed among missions in Latin America and Africa, and in offices in A.I.D.'s Washington headquarters. The remaining 20% are posted in Asia, the Near East and Europe, as Table 2-1 illustrates.

Table 2-1

Current Location of A.I.D. User Survey Respondents

Current Posts of Respondents	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Asia	9	18%
Near East	5	10%
Europe	1	2%
Latin America/Caribbean (LAC)	12	24%
Africa	12	24%
AID/Washington	12	24%
Total Number of Respondents	51	100%

An examination of the geographic origin of the 100 specific requests for information on which the questionnaires returned by these 51 A.I.D. staff members indicates that while a number of respondents may currently be located in Washington, many more individual inquiries come from field missions than from AID/W offices. This data, which is presented in Table 2-2, suggests Asia and Near East missions are both more active users of TIG services than an examination of the current posts of survey respondents would suggest.

Table 2-2

**Geographic Origin of Information Requests
Examined Through the User Survey**

Geographic Origin of Inquiries	Number of Inquiries	Percentage
Asia	25	25%
Near East	13	13%
Europe	---	---
Latin America/Caribbean (LAC)	31	31%
Africa	22	22%
AID/Washington	9	9%
Total Number of TIG Inquiries Examined	100	100%

Table 2-2's examination of the geographic origin of the sample of TIG inquiries examined through respondent questionnaires indicates that missions in the LAC bureau have sent in more inquiries to TIG, over the past two and a half years, than have missions in other bureaus. This finding is consistent with the annual statistics the MSI team received from the TIG office, which were summarized in Table 1-2 and which show that requests from Latin America dominated the TIG portfolio during the years examined through the user survey. As already noted, there has been a surge in the number of requests for information coming from LAC missions, in part explained by visits of the TIG Director to missions in that region. Factoring out what is perhaps a temporary surge in LAC requests, both the TIG statistics and the results of the user survey offer a similar picture. Field requests are high relative to AID/W requests, and requests from LAC and Africa Bureau missions outpace those of Asia and Near East Bureau missions. A.I.D.'s European Bureau is new, and its usage patterns are not yet well established.

With respect to the 13 user survey questionnaires received from non-A.I.D. personnel, patterns of inquiry on a geographic basis are similar to those of A.I.D.'s own staff. Most contractor queries came from countries in the LAC and Africa Bureaus. The majority of these inquiries focused on basic agricultural questions; none of them focused on policy. Due to the small number of contractor and host country responses to the user survey questionnaire, no effort is made to analyze them further in the remainder of this Section. Emphasis is placed instead, where it more obviously belongs, i.e., on the 80% of the responses that came from the A.I.D. personnel who clearly constitute the primary audience for TIG services.

Awareness of the TIG services is high among A.I.D. users. The vast majority, 73% of the A.I.D. respondents had been aware of TIG services for more than 5 years, as Table 2-3 indicates.

Table 2-3

Awareness of TIG as an Information Resource

Length of Time	Number of A.I.D. Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Respondent had not heard of TIG before	None	---
Less than 1 year	1	2%
1 to 5 years	13	25%
Over 5 years	37	73%
Total	51	100

In addition to being knowledgeable about TIG services, most survey respondents were also recent users. Over 50% respondents reported that they had last used these services in FY92. This figure supports the idea that users tend to avail themselves of TIG services more than once. Many of the survey respondents were selected based on inquiries they had made in FY91, not FY92. Survey data which focused directly on the frequency of use confirms that most users are repeat users, and some use the service quite frequently. Table 2-4 provides this data.

10

Table 2-4

Frequency with Which A.I.D. Staff Use TIG Services

Frequency of TIG Use	Number of A.I.D. Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
1 time	2	4%
2 - 5 times	19	37%
6 - 10 times	15	29%
11 - 20 times	7	14%
Over 21 times	8	16%
Total	51	100%

Frequent use of an information service such as that provided by the TIG program is perhaps the best indication of the need for and value of such services. This is particularly true where a "market" for information exists, i.e., where people have options. It is important, in this sense, to know whether the customers of a particular information service can and do have access to a variety of information resources. In a context where information users have options, and yet return, time and again, to a particular information service there exists reasonably good *prima facie* evidence of both the need for such a service and its value. This is particularly true if the cost of using alternative information resources is equal, or close to equal. Another measure of the value TIG users place on this service is to be found in their testimony in this regard. Annex C to this report presents the unstructured, and strongly positive comments of survey respondents on TIG services.

In order to place user reports on the frequency with which they use TIG services in context, MSI included a question in the questionnaire that asked about the range of information resources upon which survey respondents draw as they carry out their work. On this question, 55% of the A.I.D. respondents described themselves as moderate, as opposed to frequent or infrequent, users of TIG services. Moderate use, as defined in the questionnaire was described as 3 to 10 times a year. Only 4% of the A.I.D. respondents described themselves as frequent users of TIG services, i.e., over 10 requests per year.

Comparing their responses concerning use of the TIG service to the use A.I.D. staff makes of other information resources, MSI found that 31% of the respondents considered themselves to be moderate users of their missions libraries, while 16% described themselves as frequent users. Regional and central bureau offices were also frequently cited as key sources of information. In contrast, U.S. embassy libraries, USIS libraries, the libraries of other donors and host ministries as well as local academic libraries were used much more infrequently, or never, by many respondents. Table 2-5 provides data on this question.

Perhaps the most interesting finding the assessment's question on alternative data sources elicited was the fact that 61% of the respondents considered themselves to be users of

11

Table 2-5 Frequency of A.I.D. Staff Use of Various Information Sources

Information Sources	Mission Does Not Have This Resource	Resource is Available; Never Used	Resource is Used Infrequently (1-2 times/year)	Moderate Use Level (3-10 times/year)	Frequent Use (Over 10 times/year)	Total Responses on This Question/ Percent
Mission Library	9 (18%)	1 (2%)	16 (33%)	15 (31%)	8 (31%)	49 (100%)
Embassy or USIS library	3 (6%)	27 (58%)	15 (32%)	1 (2%)	1 (2%)	47 (100%)
Other donor libraries	7 (14%)	22 (45%)	14 (29%)	6 (12%)	---	49 (100%)
Local government libraries	8 (17%)	21 (44%)	13 (27%)	6 (12%)	---	48 (100%)
Local university libraries	5 (11%)	28 (60%)	10 (21%)	4 (8%)	---	47 (100%)
Regional/Central Bureau offices		11 (24%)	20 (43%)	11 (24%)	4 (9%)	46 (100%)
USDA Technical Inquiries Group (TIG)		4 (7%)	17 (33%)	28 (55%)	2 (4%)	51 (100%)
Other		3 (7%)	6 (13%)	9 (20%)	28 (61%)	46 (100%)

information services that were not provided as questionnaire choices, and 20% of the respondents indicated that they were moderate users of "other" sources of information. Data from an open-ended questions about such "other" sources revealed that a wide array of networks are being accessed by A.I.D. staff when they need information. Table 2-6 illustrates the range of information options to which A.I.D. staff referred when they selected "other" as a questionnaire response category.

Table 2-6
Other Sources of Information Used by A.I.D. Staff
Personal networks
Personal libraries
Project libraries
Office libraries
University libraries (in Washington)
Ad hoc university contacts
Technical consultants and local experts
Project reports from contractors and grantees
The Forestry Support Program
Contractors
Direct calls to agribusinesses
PVOs
Colleagues
Donor experts
The National Agricultural Library
A.I.D.'s own documents
U.S. Government Agencies

Turning from the question of who are the primary users of TIG information services and what are their basic information resource use patterns, MSI reached through its survey respondents to try to identify the secondary users of information provided in TIG responses. This approach used took the form of a question that asked primary users to identify the people with whom they shared the information they received from TIG.

Data from this question indicate that frequent secondary beneficiaries of information provided through TIG include the A.I.D. staff who work in the same office as a questioner; the PVO, contractor and university staff who work with A.I.D. to implement projects; and Host Country Ministry personnel. Since all of these secondary users can be expected to have a common understanding of and interest in a particular subject matter, the sharing of TIG information in these ways appears logical. In contrast, information provided by TIG was rarely shared with Mission Directors; Program Office staff; other donors; staff in other mission offices; private firms, or students. Table 2-7 presents the data on this question.

B. The Benefits of TIG Information: Its Uses, Quality and Impact

Questions about the benefits of an information service in a development context, while easy to ask, are somewhat difficult to answer. Information is never the only element in a development equation. The kinds of programs and projects that A.I.D. undertakes in developing countries succeed and fail for myriad reasons that have nothing to do with the availability, quality or actual use of technical information.

Recognizing that the role of information in development work cannot be easily isolated from other aspects of those efforts, MSI included questions in the survey instrument that focused on when in the programming cycle A.I.D. staff tend to request information from the TIG service. Data on the timing of requests for information from TIG relative to A.I.D.'s programming cycle potentially offer important insights about the "expected" benefits of this information. The survey instrument also asked respondents to assess the quality of the information they had received from TIG; its applicability to particular aspects of the programming process, and the way in which it was actually used, i.e., its impact on that cycle. Findings from this series of questions are discussed below.

The first question in this series focused on the purpose for which respondents generally requested information from TIG. Response options included various points in A.I.D.'s program and project development and implementation cycle. What answers to this question revealed was that TIG information supports A.I.D.'s work at a number of points in the programming cycle, while at other points it is of little use. Table 2-8 summarizes the responses to this question.

As Table 2-8 indicates, requests for TIG information to support annual planning exercises, evaluations and audits were quite rare. Much more frequently TIG information was sought in connection with the design or implementation of a project or program. With surprising frequency, A.I.D. staff also appeared to seek TIG information to facilitate a policy dialogue with the host government, or to assist host country counterparts in addressing program and project issues and other matters. The linkage between requests for TIG information and interactions with host country counterparts on policies, programs and project is consistent with the finding that a good deal of TIG information is shared with Ministry personnel. Together, these two pieces of information, frame a reasonably strong case for viewing host country counterparts as the most important secondary users of this service's products.

In addition to asking respondents about the purposes for which they sought information from the TIG program, MSI asked respondents to identify the purpose for which they made one or

Table 2-7 Frequency with Which A.I.D. Staff Share TIG Information with Other Parties

Parties with Whom Information from TIG is Shared	Never		Infrequently (Only Occasionally)		Moderately often (about half the time)		Frequently (most of the time)		Number of Responses to this Question/ Percentage	
Staff within the respondent's office	1	(2%)	9	(18%)	13	(25%)	28	(55%)	51	(100%)
Staff in other mission offices	2	(4%)	28	(57%)	15	(31%)	4	(8%)	49	(100%)
Program office staff	16	(32%)	20	(40%)	10	(20%)	4	(8%)	50	(100%)
The Mission Director or Deputy	17	(34%)	24	(48%)	7	(14%)	2	(4%)	50	(100%)
Other Donors	11	(22%)	23	(46%)	13	(26%)	3	(6%)	50	(100%)
Ministry personnel	5	(10%)	13	(26%)	15	(29%)	18	(35%)	51	(100%)
PVOs, contractors, etc., involved in analysis/implementation	1	(2%)	8	(16%)	20	(40%)	21	(42%)	50	(100%)
Private sector firms: local, U.S. or third country	11	(22%)	18	(36%)	11	(22%)	10	(20%)	50	(100%)
Local universities and research institutes	9	(18%)	17	(33%)	17	(33%)	8	(16%)	51	(100%)
Students and other individuals who have asked for information	11	(22%)	24	(47%)	9	(17%)	7	(14%)	51	(100%)
Others	1	(14%)	2	(29%)	4	(57%)	---		7	(100%)

Table 2-8 Frequency of A.I.D. Staff Use of TIG Information for this Purpose

Purposes for which Information from USDA TIG is Used	Never		Infrequently (Only Occasionally)		Moderately often (about half the time)		Frequently (most of the time)		Number of Responses to this Question/ Percentage
To support or facilitate a policy dialogue with the host country	9	(19%)	14	(29%)	16	(33%)	9	(19%)	48 (100%)
To support the development of sector assessments for CDSSs, etc.	16	(33%)	17	(36%)	13	(27%)	2	(4%)	48 (100%)
To support annual planning, e.g., ABSs, and performance reporting	30	(62%)	14	(28%)	4	(8%)	1	(2%)	49 (100%)
To facilitate the pre-design or design of a project or program	9	(18%)	12	(23%)	20	(39%)	10	(20%)	51 (100%)
To facilitate project or program implementation	10	(20%)	10	(20%)	14	(27%)	17	(33%)	51 (100%)
To facilitate project or program evaluation	20	(40%)	24	(48%)	5	(10%)	1	(2%)	51 (100%)
To address issues raised in an audit	45	(90%)	5	(10%)	---	---	---	---	50 (100%)
To help host counterparts with program/project related matters	3	(6%)	16	(31%)	17	(34%)	15	(29%)	51 (100%)
To help host counterparts with other matters	13	(26%)	18	(36%)	9	(18%)	10	(20%)	50 (100%)
To address office/mission issues outside of a program context	10	(21%)	25	(51%)	6	(12%)	8	(16%)	49 (100%)
Other	1	(10%)	3	(27%)	4	(36%)	3	(27%)	11 (100%)

more specific inquiries on which the assessment focused. Data from this question, which is summarized in Table 2-9, confirm and reinforce the answers provided to the previous question. For specific cases, as well as in general, project and program design and implementation and interactions with host personnel on policy dialogue issues or program and project related matters generate the majority of requests for TIG information.

In terms of assessing the quality of the information TIG provides to its clients, the first question the survey asked was about the applicability of this information to typical A.I.D. uses, i.e., to the basic stages in the programming cycle. High marks in this regard closely paralleled the main purposes for which such information is requested, as Table 2-10 indicates. Thus, TIG information was viewed as being highly applicable to project and program design and implementation as well as to a policy dialogue and to the provision of *ad hoc* assistance to host country counterparts. Linked together these pieces of information suggest that many A.I.D. users have a good sense of the kinds of information TIG can provide as well as its most logical uses in the A.I.D. context.

Approaching the question of the utility and quality of TIG information packages from a somewhat different angle, the survey instrument sought information on whether these packages tended to contain experiential information as well as technical data. From CDIE/DI's perspective, A.I.D.-funded information services have a special responsibility for including information on developing country experience, and more particularly A.I.D.'s own experience, whenever it provides technical and advisory information services to missions. This responsibility falls most heavily on CDIE/DI itself, and on the information services which are directly linked to that office. In this context, separate questions were asked to determine whether TIG information packages tended to contain information about developing country experience and, more particularly, information about A.I.D.'s experience abroad with whatever happened to be the subject of a specific inquiry. On both of these questions, survey respondents indicated that more than half of the time TIG information packages do contain such information, as Table 2-11 indicates.³

³ While this survey answer suggests that experiential information is included in many of the information packages users receive, it does not definitively answer the question as to whether the majority of information packages that could include experiential information actually do so. To make that determination, a sample of TIG information packages would need to be examined in detail. A detailed examination of TIG information packages from this perspective was not undertaken as one of the assessment tasks, given the assessments level of effort and the many other analytic tasks to be performed; it is a task which CDIE may still want to undertake.

Table 2-9 Number and Percentage of Inquiries Examined through Respondent Questionnaires that Identified Various Inquiry Purposes

Purposes for Which Information from USDA TIG is Used	Number of Inquiries	Percentage of Inquiries
To support or facilitate a policy dialogue with the host country	13	13%
To support the development of sector assessments for CDSSs, etc.	3	3%
To support annual planning, e.g., ABSs, and performance reporting	None	---
To facilitate the pre-design or design of a project or program	17	17%
To facilitate project or program implementation	17	17%
To facilitate project or program evaluation	None	---
To address issues raised in an audit	None	---
To help host counterparts with program/project related matters	19	19%
To help host counterparts with other matters	8	8%
To address office/mission issues outside of a program context	10	10%
Other	4	4%
Multiple Purposes	9	9%

Table 2-10 Applicability of TIG Information to A.I.D. Information Use Categories

A.I.D. Information Use Categories	Very Applicable	Somewhat, but not totally Applicable	Not Generally Applicable	Responses to this Question/Percentage
Policy dialogue with a host country	23 (50%)	14 (30%)	9 (20%)	46 (100%)
Sector assessments or CDSS/CPSP preparation	12 (28%)	15 (35%)	16 (37%)	43 (100%)
Annual planning or performance reporting	7 (16%)	13 (30%)	23 (54%)	43 (100%)
Project or Non-Project Assistance (NPA) design	24 (51%)	18 (38%)	5 (11%)	47 (100%)
Project or NPA Implementation	29 (62%)	9 (19%)	9 (19%)	47 (100%)
Project or NPA Evaluation	5 (11%)	22 (50%)	17 (39%)	44 (100%)
Assessing issues raised by audits	1 (2%)	5 (11%)	38 (87%)	44 (100%)
Ad hoc assistance to host country counterparts	32 (65%)	15 (31%)	2 (4%)	49 (100%)
Ad hoc requirements of the requesting mission or office	30 (62%)	12 (25%)	6 (13%)	48 (100%)

19

Table 2-11

The Inclusion of Information on A.I.D. and Developing Country Experience in TIG Responses

Frequency With Which Experience is Included in TIG Responses	LDC Experience		A.I.D. Experience	
	Number of Respondents	Percentage	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Never	1	2%	2	4%
Infrequently (only occasionally)	8	17%	6	13%
Moderately often (about half the time)	15	33%	18	39%
Frequently (most of the time)	22	48%	20	44%
Total	46	100%	46	100%

When asked specifically about the quality of the information the TIG program provides, A.I.D. respondents rated the products of this service highly, as Table 2-12 indicates. When survey responses were examined on a geographic basis, no difference was found by region with respect to the kinds of quality scores given to TIG products. There were slight differences, however, when the survey data was sorted by topic. On a topical basis, i.e., with respect to the specific information inquiries within several large topical clusters on which respondents were asked to comment, TIG services were more frequently rated "highly responsive" for information packages dealing with high value crops (81%), other crops and commodities (88%), and competitiveness (79%) than was the case for responses on environmental issues (73%) or policy related questions (58%).⁴

Table 2-12

The Quality of TIG Responses

Rating	Number of Raters	Percentage
Exceptional	25	51%
Highly responsive	23	47%
Generally responsive	1	2%
Unresponsive	None	---
Total	49	100%

⁴ Unlike the general question on quality, which is reviewed in Table 2-11, a rating of "exceptional" was not an option available to respondents as they answered questions on specific inquiries they had made. "Highly responsive" was the most positive rating possible on this question.

A second question posed in user survey asked respondents to rate the quality of TIG responses for one or more specific inquiries they had made. The responses on this question were virtually identical to those shown in Table 2-12, where questions on quality were posed in a more general way.

Subjective assessments of the quality of information can offer a strong indication of whether or not a response has provided a user with the kinds of answers the user wanted and expected. Two other aspects of quality that such ratings may not address were raised in interviews conducted during the course of this assessment. They are presented here not to deflate the generally high quality scores given to the TIG service by its users, but rather to ensure that both CDIE/DI and the TIG staff are aware of other dimensions of the quality issue that are on the minds of some of A.I.D.'s more senior technical and policy staff.

One of the things that subjective quality assessments may not reveal is whether information packages include materials that deal with the most recent developments in a field, or work in progress. Interviewee suggestions for addressing this aspect of information package quality, particularly for information packages that address environmental questions, included having such packages reviewed by the staff of the A.I.D. centrally funded project that is most closely linked to the subject matter of an information request.

The second aspect of quality that subjective ratings could tend to miss was suggested by an assessment interviewee who raised the question of whether such services, TIG being only one of a number of A.I.D. information services, provided information that is truly objective, i.e., information that suggests conventional as well as unconventional solutions and presents the pros and cons of any suggestion fully and fairly.

An example used to describe this aspect of a high quality response was offered from the population field where an information service that was used to presenting "conventional" responses might provide only information family planning, thus overlooking important evidence which shows that girl's education and general economic growth are also closely associated with declines in fertility.

Given the programmatic deadlines A.I.D. officers face, the timeliness of information is an important element of its value. For that reason, the survey included two questions on this subject. The first of these sought information on the number of weeks that clients must wait to receive responses to the inquiries they make of the TIG program. Table 2-13 presents the findings in this regard. As the table indicates, most responses arrive within 2-5 week of the time an inquiry is made. In rating the timeliness of these packages, 30% of the respondents scored them as being exceptional and another 52% rated them as being highly satisfactory from a timeliness perspective, as Table 2-14 illustrates. Examined on a geographic basis, ratings on the timeliness of TIG responses were found to be slightly higher in the Africa Bureau missions than elsewhere. This finding may be attributable to Africa's relatively more difficult transportation and communication circumstances, and the TIG program's ability to deal with them.

Table 2-13

The Elapsed Time Required to Obtain TIG Responses

Rating	Number of Raters	Percentage
Less than 2 weeks	3	6%
2-5 weeks	35	70%
More than 5; less than 12	12	24%
More than 12 weeks	None	---
Total	50	100%

Table 2-14

The Timeliness of TIG Responses

Rating	Number of Raters	Percentage
Exceptional	15	30%
Highly responsive	26	52%
Generally responsive	9	18%
Unresponsive	None	---
Total	50	100%

Turning to the question of whether and under what conditions information provided by the TIG program has a discernable impact, the survey instrument asked respondents to indicate, both in a general sense and for specific inquiries they had made, the impact of TIG information. Two approaches were taken to eliciting information in this regard. The first was a question which asked how information was actually used, i.e., to what processes was it applied. Table 2-15 presents respondent answers to the survey's general question about impact and Table 2-16 presents respondent answers to that same question when it was posed in terms of specific inquiries they had made. What is noteworthy is that in both instances, respondents indicated that the greatest impact of TIG information was on program and project implementation. Contrasting this response with earlier answers concerning the timing of requests for TIG information, which indicated that information was sought at both the design and implementation stages, it may be that, irrespective of when information is requested, survey respondents view TIG information as having its true impact once a project or program has begun -- rather than in the planning stage. With roughly 45% of the respondents citing implementation as the key aspect of development work on which TIG information has an impact, this answer far outstripped all of the other impact options that were presented to respondents.

Table 2-15 Frequency with Which TIG Information Has a Discernable Impact

Focus and Timing of the Use of TIG Information	Never	Infrequently (Only Occasionally)	Moderately often (about half the time)	Frequently (most of the time)	Number of Responses to this Question/ Percentage
For USAID Programs/Projects					
Information was used to develop a PID or PAIP (i.e., in pre-design)	11 (23%)	21 (44%)	11 (23%)	5 (10%)	48 (100%)
Information was used to develop a PP/PAAD (i.e., design)	13 (27%)	22 (46%)	8 (17%)	5 (10%)	48 (100%)
Information was used between design and implementation	15 (33%)	18 (39%)	9 (20%)	4 (8%)	46 (100%)
Information was used after implementation was underway	3 (6%)	8 (17%)	16 (33%)	21 (44%)	48 (100%)
Information was obtained and used following an evaluation	21 (45%)	19 (40%)	7 (15%)	---	47 (100%)
For Host Country Programs/Projects (Not A.I.D. Funded)					
Information was used to develop a project/program design	21 (49%)	14 (33%)	7 (16%)	1 (2%)	43 (100%)
Information was used during implementation	13 (30%)	14 (33%)	9 (21%)	7 (16%)	43 (100%)
At the Policy Level					
Information was used to modify host country policies	19 (43%)	11 (25%)	12 (27%)	2 (5%)	44 (100%)
In the Academic/Training Environment					
Information was used to develop a curriculum or as a teaching aide	20 (46%)	12 (28%)	9 (21%)	2 (5%)	43 (100%)

Table 2-16

Impact of TIG Information in Specific Situations

Focus and Timing of the Use of TIG Information Generated Through Specific Inquiries	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
For USAID Programs/Projects		
Information was used to develop a PID or PAIP (i.e., in pre-design)	8	9%
Information was used to develop a PP/PAAD (i.e., design)	7	8%
Information was used between design and implementation	5	5%
Information was used after implementation was underway	44	48%
Information was obtained and used following an evaluation	2	2%
For Host Country Programs/Projects (Not A.I.D. Funded)		
Information was used to develop a project/program design	8	9%
Information was used during implementation	2	2%
At the Policy Level		
Information was used to modify host country policies	8	9%
In the Academic/Training Environment		
Information was used to develop a curriculum or as a teaching aide	3	3%
Multiple Impacts		
More than One Answer Selected	5	5%

In addition to asking a structured question about the impact of TIG information, the survey instrument asked respondents to provide up to two stories that describe the impact that information from the TIG program had on their work or the work of their counterparts. The stories provided in response to these questions are provided in Annex D at the end of this Section. In addition to stories about the way in which TIG information had an impact on technical decisions and on the implementation of A.I.D.-funded programs and projects, these unstructured answers also suggest that TIG information is having an impact on policy reform efforts.

24

SECTION THREE

EFFICIENCY AND THE TIG INFORMATION SERVICES PROGRAM

This section of the assessment report focuses on the efficiency of the TIG information services program. As posed in the assessment scope of work the question of efficiency is asked in both an absolute sense, i.e., how productive is the service and at what cost, and in a more abstract way, i.e., is A.I.D. getting the maximum benefit out of the money it spends on the TIG services or is there a higher value use to which these funds might be applied. The section is organized to deal with the first of these questions. Section Four considers other factors that pertain to A.I.D.'s investment in this service in the future.

A. The TIG Request Processing System

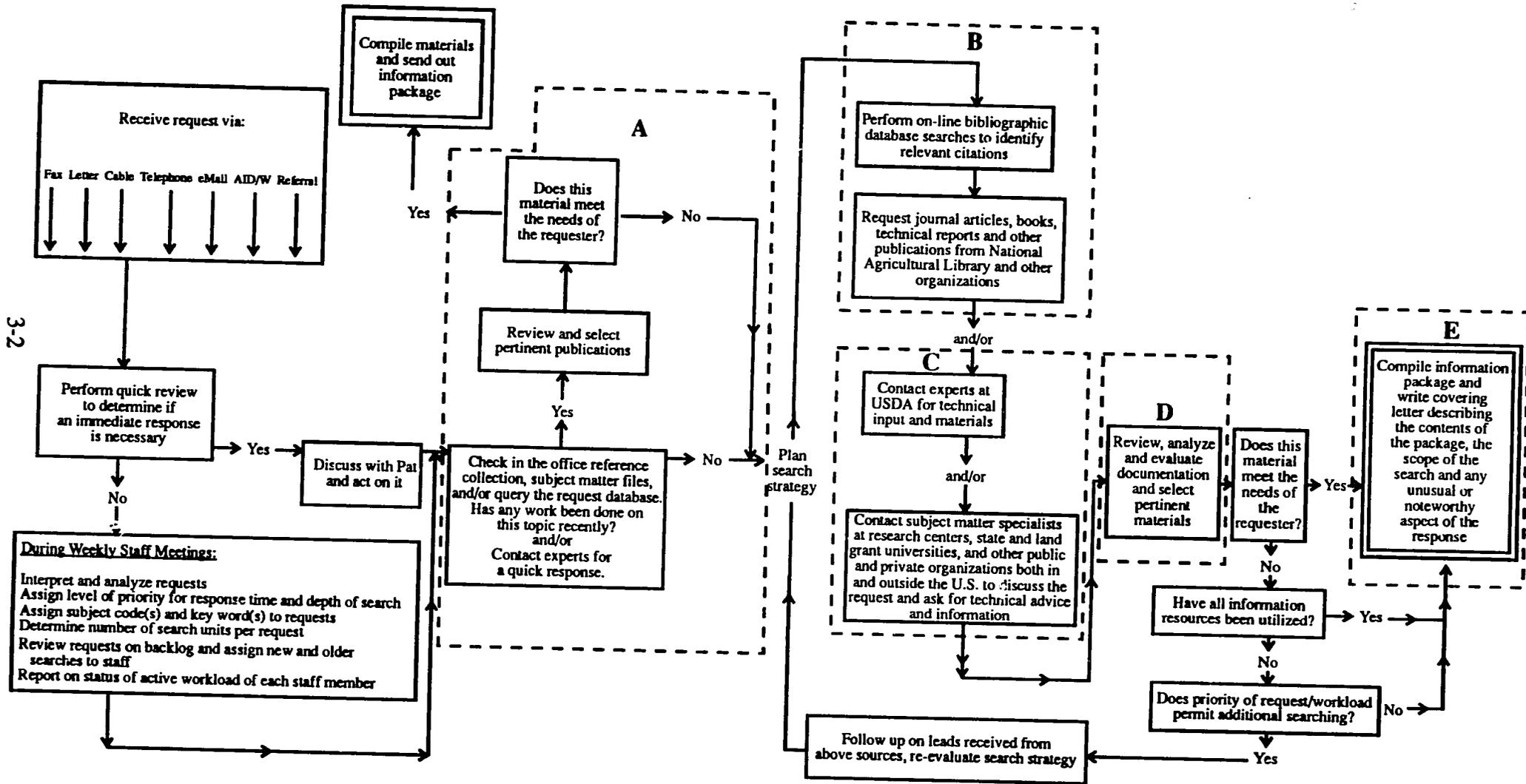
As noted in Section One, MSI carried out a sub-study to answer questions about the efficiency of TIG services. The objective of this sub-study was to ascertain the average time, as well as the range of real and elapsed times, required to respond to the types of inquiries TIG receives. Random sampling was used in this sub-study to select for examination three inquiries handled, during the preceding six months, by each of TIG's three full time information analysts for examination.⁵ Findings of this sub-study concerning the process TIG uses and the time it devotes to preparing responses are reviewed below.

The system that TIG personnel use in processing requests is summarized in Figure 3-1. Inquiries are received by fax, e-Mail, cable, telephone, or mail. Most requests go directly from the requestor to TIG. Some requests, however, go first to CDIE or another division of AID and are forwarded to TIG.

When requests are received, a quick evaluation is made by the receiving staff member who then either logs in the request for review at the weekly TIG staff meeting or decides that it should be acted upon immediately. Requests are given first priority when the requester's deadline is short or if the requested information can be obtained quickly without impeding major work in progress. Most requests, however, are discussed in the weekly staff meetings. There they are analyzed for content and level of difficulty, classified by subject for entry in the office data base, given a second- or third-level priority, and either assigned to a specific staff member, or placed "on hold" until a staff member is available to respond. For each assigned request, initial search strategies and sources of information are discussed, drawing on the collective skills, background and experience of the TIG staff. Requests from A.I.D. direct hire staff, the majority of whom are posted overseas, are generally assigned first, followed by those from cooperators, contractors and PASA/RSSA staff.

The sample used for this sub-study was very small. Thus, while the sub-study findings seem to represent the range of responses the TIG staff handles, i.e., the sample contained some responses that took only a short time as well as some that took much longer, it cannot be said that the sub-study's sample cases, and therefore its findings, are truly representative, in a statistical sense. A much larger sample would have been required for that purpose.

Figure 3-1. Basic Overview of the USDA/OICD/TIG Response Process for Literature Search Requests



3-2

According to the TIG staff, the priority given to a request is the most important determinate of the speed with which that request is handled. Other important determinants are the difficulty of researching the request, the workload of the staff member to whom the request is assigned, and the extent of the backlog of unassigned requests.

The process of tailoring a response varies with almost every request, as specific approaches and methodologies differ. However, a general pattern can be seen in the way TIG staff systematically research literature and data.⁶

- The process begins with an extensive and critical search for useful sources of information, both within and outside USDA. The subject-matter files and texts in the office reference collection are usually consulted first, as these contain results of past searches and leads on useful information sources and literature.
- Searches are next performed in other primary and secondary information sources including on-line bibliographic data base files. Citations are reviewed and relevant titles are requested from the National Agricultural Library and/or other source.
- The documents (technical journal articles, books, conference proceedings, and reports from worldwide sources) are then analyzed and evaluated for authoritativeness, timeliness and relevance to the specific topic or problem at hand. Typically, a TIG staff member will examine scores of documents, selecting and rejecting many, until the most useful information is found.
- Experts are then identified and consulted for technical input, information on research-in-progress, and any additional publications they may be able to contribute or recommend. TIG searches for and locates experts at a diverse range of institutions including USDA, private and public research centers, colleges and universities, private firms, and other organizations in the U.S. and abroad.
- Once consultations are completed, a final selection of the most pertinent documents and data is made, and a response packet is prepared and sent out, with a letter explaining sources utilized, experts consulted, and a summary of findings.

This process can range in complexity from the relatively straightforward, e.g., locating a key document or expert, to the very difficult and involved, e.g., performing a series of data base searches, interpreting conflicting data and research results, analyzing literature in complex and controversial fields, contacting organizations and individuals throughout the world, reevaluating material already collected in light of new information, etc.

⁶ It is worth noting, as did a senior A.I.D. staff member, that neither the process steps listed below, nor Figure 3-1, identifies a step or decision point where TIG considers whether it would be appropriate to include information on A.I.D.'s experience on a particular topics, e.g., the results of evaluations of previous similar projects, in a response package for a particular inquiry. In A.I.D.'s view such a decision step would be a useful addition to the TIG process, as it would trigger the need for communication and interaction between the TIG staff, CDIE/DI's in-house staff and A.I.D.'s automated data base on its experience.

To examine this process at a detailed level, MSI randomly selected a small sample of inquiries. It then conducted interviews with the analysts who responded to each of these inquiries. These staff members were asked what they had done, how they had done it and how long each step had taken, both in elapsed time and work time. While the MSI sample was far too small to be statistically representative, TIG staff members remarked that it accurately characterized range of requests they had worked on for that time period.

Table 3-1 summarizes the findings from these interviews with respect to the average amount of "real" time and elapsed time spent on the nine requests in the sub-study sample.

Table 3-1

"Real" and Elapsed Time Dedicated to Preparing TIG Responses

Time Used	Average Amount	Response that Required the Most Time	Response that Required the Least Time
"Real" Time: Actual number of hours spent preparing a response	8.3 hours	21 hours	1.5 hours
Elapsed Time: Number of work days from the time a request was received and the completion of a response	50 days	131 days	2 days

This table requires some elaboration to be useful. First, it is important to understand that work time was estimated by staff members and is only indicative. Staff members typically work on a large number of requests at once and therefore find it difficult to determine how long they spend on a given request. In order to maximize their efficiency, staff members also process similar requests together. Thus, for example, the request that took only 1.5 hours to process was one of seven sustainable agriculture and communications requests that were processed simultaneously. These seven were estimated to have taken 10.5 hours to process and 10.5 divided by 7 is 1.5. It is also worth noting that the average for elapsed time between request receipt and response may have been inflated by these same seven sustainable agriculture and communications requests. Collectively, these responses were processed in 131 days. Three complex third priority requests that took an average of 97 work days to process also had an impact on the elapsed time average. The remaining five requests included in MSI's sample took an average of only five and a half working days to process.

It is not possible to reconstruct the number of working days spent on each request processing step. Staff members simply do not remember and TIG internal monitoring systems do not collect information at this level of detail. However, it is fair to say that most of the process is quite efficient. Materials available in TIG are well organized and easily accessible.

78

The on-line database searches are performed quickly and the National Agricultural Library is usually able to supply requested documentation in 24 hours or less. USDA experts are easy to consult. What takes time is tracking down information and documents from non-USDA and foreign sources and then having documents sent to TIG. Table 3-2 breaks down the response process, showing, on average, as well as for the extreme cases in the sample, how many hours tend to be expended on each segment of the response process.

Table 3-2

“Real” Time Used at Various Stages of the TIG Response Process

Time Used	Average	Response that Required the Most Time	Response that Required the Least Time
Office reference collection check	45 minutes	2 hours	---
Database searches and requests for documents	1 hour and 30 minutes	5 hours	---
Contacting and consulting experts	2 hours	5 hours	---
Analysis of documents	3 hours	10 hours and 30 minutes	30 minutes
Compilation of packet	1 hour	2 hours	30 minutes

It is important to emphasize, with reference to Table 3-2, that these figures represents a analysis of estimates. Table 3-3, which presents the estimates for each of these process steps for all nine cases in the sample, further illustrates the variable nature of this work. At the same time, it is noteworthy that, even with estimates, a clear pattern emerges. Staff members usually know or find out quickly what is available in the office reference collection. They then spend an average of about an hour and a half on database searches and two hours consulting experts. Analysis of documents takes longer, about three hours. Final preparation of the response packets takes about an hour.

69

Table 3-3. "Real" and Elapsed Time Estimates for Nine Sample TIG Cases
(Time in Hours)

Steps in Process	Sample Cases									Average
	Ecuador: Sustainable & Organic Agriculture*	Philippines: Rural Electrification	Belize: Communications Techniques for Sustainable Agriculture	RDO/South Pacific: U.S. Export Standards for Rice Exports of Chicken	Ecuador: Cypsophila Probation	Honduras: Garlic Marketing	Belize: Mangroves	Niger: Dalbergia melanoxylon	Nepal: Wild Boar, Deer & Rabbits	
A: Review office reference collection & Select Materials	0.25	0	1	0	1	0.25	2	1	1	.7
B: On-line database searches & requests for reference materials	0.25	1.5	1	0	1	1	2	2	5	1.5
C: Contact USDA experts & other subject matter specialists	0.75	1	2	2	0	2	2	5	2.5	1.9
D: Review and evaluate assembled materials	3	.5	4	.5	1	1	7	1	10.5	3.2
E: Prepare & send information packages	0.25	1	1	1.5	1.5	1	1	1	2	1
Total "Real" Time Used	4.5	4.0	9	4.0	4.5	5.25	14.0	10.0	21.0	8.3
Elapsed Time Used	60	4	131	2	6	2	193	37	15	50

* One of seven similar requests processed together. Figures in the chart represent 1/7 of the total time spent.

250

B. The Absolute Efficiency of the TIG Program

As a first step in its effort to measure the efficiency of the TIG program, MSI calculated the program's productivity, i.e., the number of program "outputs" produced per day -- which in the case of TIG means information packages. One method MSI used was the sub-study described above. The productivity answer yielded by that study was that TIG produces just under one information package per day, per staff member, i.e., each package takes, on average, 8.3 hours.

The second method MSI used to calculate productivity relied on TIG's annual statistics on information packages sent and the information it provided to the assessment team on TIG staffing levels. Table 3-4 shows the number of work days TIG utilized, on average, to prepare information packages between FY88 and FY92. There are two important points to be drawn from this table. First, it appears that TIG's productivity has risen during the period covered by this table. Second, the average amount of time devoted to preparing an information packages, which, according to this method of calculation is 1.0 work days, is very similar to the answer of 8.3 hours yielded by the MSI sub-study. Convergence between these answers yielded by these two methods tends to strengthen the case for asserting that, on average, TIG produces one information package per day, per staff member.

Table 3-4. Estimated Productivity of the TIG Service

FY	Total # of Information Packages Sent*	Total # of Staff Months Used	Total # of Staff Work Days Used	Average # of Work Days Used Per Information Package
1988	456	48.5	1051	2.3
1989	563	48	1040	1.8
1990	706	48	1040	1.5
1991	709	37.5	812	1.1
1992	1078	48.5	1051	1.0

* Source: Annual TIG Statistics and TIG Staffing Pattern Records.

Moving from productivity to efficiency, or price per unit of program "output", MSI used the TIG Director's estimate that CDIE/DI's FY92 funding level, of \$261,000, paid the salary and benefits costs for roughly 3.5 people, or 88% of TIG's staff costs. Working with TIG data on information packages produced in FY92, MSI made the following calculations. The number of information packages produced through July 1992 was 1,078 according to TIG statistics. Assuming that TIG maintained that same pace in sending out information packages through the end of the fiscal year, a total of about 1,294 information packages would have been sent out. Eighty-eight percent (88%) of this figure is 1,138. Dividing \$261,000 by 1,138 suggest that the

unit cost for information packages from TIG, during FY92, would have been \$229.00 per package.⁷

C. The Relative Efficiency of TIG services

At a unit cost of \$229, or roughly one work day, per information package, the costs of the TIG program seems reasonable, given the broad range of fields on which TIG provides responses and the complexity of many of the questions raised by users. MSI's review of the summary descriptions of the 236 specific inquiries on which its user survey followed-up strongly suggests that TIG is doing well to average one package per day. Strong skills and a significant amount of practice would seem to be necessary for the productivity level TIG achieves.

Under ideal circumstances, MSI would be able to compare the unit cost of an information package produced by the TIG program to comparable packages produced by similar services. Unfortunately, the data required to make a credible comparison were not available. MSI's examination of a number of evaluations of other A.I.D.-financed information services yielded virtually no information on this topic. Informal inquiries, on the other hand, produced comparative estimates -- but failed to provide the raw data needed to verify these estimates. It is worth noting, however, that informal and undocumented estimates of the average unit cost of information packages developed through (a) CDIE/DI's "in-house" information service, which provides comparable packages in a number of technical fields, and (b) a commercial service located in New York were both higher than the average unit costs MSI calculated for the TIG program.

⁷ This cost figure represents the staff cost of preparing packages. It does not include books purchased in connection with the development of information packages, which are financed primarily through separate "book fund" contributions from regional bureaus.

SECTION FOUR

THE ROLE OF TIG SERVICES IN A.I.D.'S FUTURE

This section of the assessment report moves beyond an evaluation of TIG's performance to examine questions about the role of specialized information services in A.I.D. In its Scope of Work for this study, CDIE/DI asked that the assessment determine, "irrespective of TIG's performance":

- Whether a particular level of A.I.D. resources should be earmarked for information services in any one sector, and
- What are the various options for financing and managing information services, and TIG in particular?

A. Earmarking Resources for Sectoral Information Services

A.I.D. does not formally earmark a particular level of funds for sectorally-oriented information services in its annual budget process. A.I.D. does, however, finance a wide variety of such services and has done so for many years.

MSI's examination of A.I.D.'s practices in this area pointed out what many of its staff already know, i.e.:

- A.I.D. funds sectorally-oriented information services in most of the sectors in which it has significant programs, i.e., not only agriculture and the environment, but also health, population, education, etc.
- Some of these services are dedicated to answering technical questions from A.I.D. staff around the world, while others focus on the collection of information from A.I.D. missions and the preparation of reports on achievements, e.g., the Agency's annual report to Congress on its Child Survival program.
- Irrespective of sector, information services that provide answers to questions from mission staff tend to share a common justification, i.e., without such services A.I.D. project and programs would not adequately reflect technical advances nor would they reflect the lessons of experience.
- Some of A.I.D.'s information services, are funded as distinct projects, while others are elements of larger technical support projects.
- In some technical fields there appears to be one dominant information service from which users in A.I.D. missions can request information, while in other technical fields there are a number of centrally-funded projects, as well as an occasional geographical bureau project, from which subject-specific information

can be requested. In addition, CDIE/DI itself has an on-site contract staff that responds to questions from the missions on a reasonably wide range of topics.

- The majority of A.I.D.'s sectorally-oriented information services are funded by technical offices in A.I.D.'s Research and Development Bureau (R&D).
- In this context, the locus of TIG, as a sectorally-oriented information service in CDIE/DI, which is part of the Policy Directorate, is something of an anomaly. The same is true for sectorally-oriented information services funded and managed by geographic bureaus.

While these facts did not come as a surprise to those A.I.D. staff members with whom the MSI team discussed them, another set of related findings appeared to be more problematic for the Agency. Specifically, MSI found that:

- No one in A.I.D. has an up-to-date inventory that identifies:
 - (a) All of the information services A.I.D. finances,
 - (b) What services these programs provide, and to whom,
 - (c) Whether and to what degree such services duplicate or complement each other's technical coverage, or
 - (d) What A.I.D. is spending on information services, in aggregate, or for any particular sector.

While the absence of such an inventory has management and financial implications, its most important implications may have to do with users, particularly A.I.D. staff located overseas.

MSI's interviews with AID/W staff¹ suggest that, even within sectors, some confusion may exist with respect to the kinds of information services that particular projects provide and about the relative strengths of multiple information services in the same field. Absent an up-to-date catalogue of such services, many of A.I.D.'s field staff may be unaware of services which are intended to support them. This is likely to be particularly true for field staff whose current duties demand that they reach beyond the sectors in which they were initially trained as they design and implement projects and programs. Thus, for example, agricultural officers who are trying to deal with the implications of population pressures and environmental issues may be familiar with TIG, but unaware of parallel information resources dealing with population issues.

Returning to CDIE/DI's question about whether A.I.D. should dedicate resources to support sectorally-oriented information services, it may be that this issue is moot. A.I.D. has invested in a broad web of such services and shows no signs of reversing its course. Taken in context, it appears to MSI that a more pragmatic question for A.I.D. is how it can do the best

¹ Annex B-4 provides a list of these interviewees.

possible job of ensuring that such services are high in quality, low in unproductive duplication, and fully and effectively utilized. This question is of particular importance for CDIE/DI, given its role as A.I.D.'s primary technical office in the field of information services operations.

B. Funding for Information Services that Focus on Agriculture, the Environment and Natural Resources

While it seems clear that, in principle, A.I.D. can justify investments in sectorally-oriented information services to support mission staff, this does not mean that major investments are equally appropriate in every sector. Over the course of its history, A.I.D.'s sectoral focus has changed a number of times. Some of these changes have involved shifts in focus within sectors that continue to be important for A.I.D. In addition, A.I.D. has moved out of some sectors, and begun work in other, new fields. As a result, information services which are justified in one era may cease to warrant investment in another. In this context, it is important to understand the current and projected role of agriculture and the environment, the two broad topics on which TIG focuses, in A.I.D.'s portfolio.

Over the last several years, A.I.D.'s budget for agriculture and related work has hovered around \$900 million, dropping below and rising above this level slightly on an annual basis. The Agency's expenditures on the environment rose sharply over this period, consistent with programmatic efforts to meet A.I.D.'s earmark requirement at the level of \$650 million in this area. While these two figures can be separated conceptually, in practice a number of A.I.D. projects count against both. MSI interviews with A.I.D. staff in technical offices, as well as in the Agency's legislative and policy offices, suggested that A.I.D. spending levels for both of these areas would probably stay much the same. While one or two interviewees voiced a concern about a decline in the agriculture budget, the majority seemed convinced that these levels would be maintained. One or two felt that both might increase.

Discussions with A.I.D. staff suggest that shifts in the agricultural sector toward a concern for policy reform as well on the processing and marketing of non-traditional crops will continue to affect the design of programs over the near term. At the same time, several interviewees commented upon a recent Africa Bureau study which indicates that there have been high returns to A.I.D.'s agricultural research efforts, suggesting that more work in this area might be warranted. With respect to the environment, key differences noted in the interviews were between bureaus, rather than about program trends. The Africa Bureau's environmental program is closely related to its agricultural program, while conditions in Asia require more attention to industrial pollution and costal resources management, and in Latin America's concerns focus more heavily on biodiversity and forestry management issues.

Future demand for TIG services, from the point of view of users, will remain at the same level for some topics and shift for others, as indicated below:

- Topics on which users indicated that they are less likely to make inquiries in the future as they were in the past include the production, processing and marketing of fruits and vegetables; oilseeds; forest products; and land reform.

- Topics on which users indicate that they are just as likely to make inquiries in the future as in the past include the production, processing and marketing of spices and nuts; ornamentals and flowers; fish and shellfish; livestock; pest management and diseases; and soil and water management.
- Topics on which users indicate that they are more likely to make inquiries in the future than they were in the past include the production, processing and marketing of specialty high value crops, e.g., mushrooms; agribusiness; domestic, U.S. and third-country markets; trade policy; sustainable agriculture; agroforestry; coastal resources; pollution and waste management; biodiversity; resource economics; environmental policies; global issues; policy planning tools and other policy issues; and country and regional data.

Support for A.I.D.'s prognosis concerning the stability of its agriculture and environment budgets was found in several passages in Congressional documents from FY92, all of which stressed the point that agriculture is fundamental to development. A good deal of the literature on development supports this contention, while increasingly stressing the importance of market-oriented policies and trade. In addition, early Clinton Administration testimony from Secretary of State Warren Christopher and Deputy Secretary Clifton Wharton, Jr. underlined the importance of sustainable development, implying, at minimum, a continuing concern for environmentally sound practices of developing countries, many of which are heavily dependent upon agriculture.

In addition to information which suggests that agriculture, the environment and natural resources will all continue to play important roles in the A.I.D. portfolio, several other factors may contribute to a continuing high demand for TIG services including:

- Changes in the way in which A.I.D. programs its agriculture resources have already led to an increase in the number of inquiries TIG receives about such topics as agribusiness and third-country markets. As these changes continue, and the program enters still other new areas, A.I.D. staff predict that the demand for TIG services will rise.
- Shifts in A.I.D.'s programmatic emphasis within the field of agriculture are reportedly bringing new kinds of implementing agents into this field, e.g., private voluntary organizations. A.I.D. staff believe that as these new implementing agents come on board, they will begin to discover and use TIG.
- A.I.D.'s technological revolution, i.e., the introduction of fax machines and E-mail both of which bring the missions into close contact with Washington, will lead to a greater demand for TIG services, according to A.I.D. staff.
- A.I.D. staff also suggest that travel by TIG staff members to missions, and other actions that increase A.I.D. staff awareness of TIG services, will increase the demand for them.

What this interview data, together with the positive responses received in the assessment's user survey, suggest is that A.I.D. has more than enough reason to continue to provide information services in the fields of agriculture, natural resources and the environment for the foreseeable future.

C. Alternative Uses for Funds Currently Dedicated to Financing TIG

As suggested above, that there appears to be a continuing justification for the provision of information services in the fields of agriculture, the environment and natural resources.

In light of this prognosis, CDIE/DI's scope of work question about alternative uses resources now dedicated to TIG seems to be less relevant than it originally appeared. Were A.I.D.'s commitment to the sectors TIG covers projected to decline, serious consideration of alternative uses of these funds might have been warranted, but this is not the case.

As to the question of whether A.I.D. should continue to provide information services through TIG in the future, rather than through some alternative vendor, MSI's assessment offers no justification for such a change. The TIG service received very high marks in the assessment's user survey. None of the survey's respondents had anything negative to say about TIG, which is striking. Moreover, such "soft" data as MSI was able to gather on the relative cost effectiveness of TIG versus other vendors suggested that TIG was similar in cost to, if not less expensive than, other options A.I.D. might want to consider. Given these findings, a more thorough analysis of the alternatives to TIG as A.I.D.'s provider of information services in its specialized areas did not seem warranted.

On a more aggregate basis, the questions about the share of A.I.D.'s total investment in information services that now goes to agriculture, environment and natural resources versus other key program areas such as health and population versus new fields such as democracy/governance and new areas, including Eastern Europe and Russia, clearly warrant investigation.

Although this task lies outside of MSI's scope, it is worth noting that the primary impediment to such an investigation, at the present time, is A.I.D.'s lack of knowledge about the information services resources it now dedicates to each of the sectoral and geographic areas in which it works. Without better expenditure data in this area, it will continue to be difficult for A.I.D. to determine whether any one sector is spending money for information on a basis that is proportionate to its importance in the Agency's overall portfolio.

D. Options for Financing and Managing Specialized Information Services in A.I.D., and TIG in Particular

While the locus of TIG in CDIE/DI, which is part of A.I.D.'s Policy Directorate, is something of an anomaly, as noted above, this location is not necessarily an inappropriate one. The characteristics which make TIG's placement in CDIE/DI stand out have more to do with the way in which A.I.D. envisions its Policy Directorate than they do with the details of managing a technical information service. As currently envisioned, A.I.D.'s Policy Directorate functions as a staff arm for the Agency's Administrator. As such, it has chosen to minimize its role in

operational projects and programs. In this context, TIG's operational focus is unusual, but it is not unique. CDIE/DI also manages a group of contractors who work on an "in-house" basis to provide information on a variety of sectors, as well as on the lessons of A.I.D.'s experience to mission staff.

Data from MSI's interviews suggest that there are a number of positive reasons for locating sectorally-oriented technical information services in a central bureau office whose mandate focuses on information management and retrieval. A case can also be made for locating such services in sectoral offices, such as those found in the R&D Bureau.

Arguments which favor the location of information services, including not only TIG but other specialized services in a single central information office include:

- Greater efficiency, as result of the reduction or elimination of such duplication as may have been spawned by the decentralized development of such services;
- Higher, or at least a minimum standard of quality, as a function of such an office's ability to set and enforce common standards across sectorally-oriented services;
- Greater objectivity, as a function of the wide array of topics and sectors from which answers could be obtained, together with the absence of any reason, i.e., philosophy, habit, etc., for organizing or limiting the information provided to users so as to promote a specific programmatic outcome, and
- An improved capacity, in the case of CDIE/DI in particular, for ensuring that the information provided to users included not only technical data but also the lessons of A.I.D.'s experience.

Arguments that favor locating specialized information services in sectorally-oriented technical offices include:

- Stronger technical focus and higher technical quality in the work of such services, as a function of the level of technical knowledge of the A.I.D. staff that oversee such services, and
- An increased tendency for such services to move with the state-of-the-art technically as well as with shifts in A.I.D.'s approach to programming resources in a particular sector, again as a function of the involvement of A.I.D.'s sectoral specialists in the management of such services.

Taken together, arguments for placing specialized information services such as TIG in information versus technical offices do more to show the advantages of involving both types of units in the oversight process than anything else. Given the considerations listed above, on both sides, it may be that all of the specialized information services A.I.D. manages would benefit from the creation of an Agency Task Force or Committee which could look into such issues as

duplicative services, quality standards, objectivity and the inclusion of innovative concepts in information packages, etc.

Practically speaking, this assessment's positive findings concerning the quality and efficiency of TIG's work make it clear that this particular service has not suffered from being located in CDIE/DI. What is more, the simple fact that more of these services tend to be located in R&D technical offices does not constitute a sufficient case for shifting its location. With respect to A.I.D.'s continuing commitment to the provision of agricultural, environment and natural resources information services through TIG, the question may, in the end, turn on the availability of resources in CDIE versus, for example, the Agriculture Office in the R&D Bureau.

The question of financing for specialized information services, such as TIG, is itself somewhat complex. Given the world-wide nature of such services, the case can, and often is made for central funding. At the same time, central bureaus can and do argue that geographic bureaus should pay their fair share of the costs of such services. Finally, there is a valid argument to be made for user fees, although the difficulty of administering such systems inside of A.I.D. tend to make them impractical at the level of final users. Drawing from A.I.D.'s experience with other projects the most flexible arrangements appear to be centrally funded contracts or agreements which provide for "buy-ins" by regional bureaus and missions, using funds transfer methods with which A.I.D. already has a good deal of experience. Where such arrangements are used, the level of central funding varies from minimal to half the effort or more, depending upon what the central office involved considers to be its mandate, e.g., its research agenda, etc., and its ability to pay.

The current mechanism for funding TIG approximates the "buy-in" model, although it is not formally structured in this way. As indicated in Section One, CDIE/DI financing, which covers the majority of TIG's staff costs, runs through a RSSA arrangement with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. These funds are supplemented by separate financial arrangements TIG has with R&D's Agriculture Offices, with geographic bureaus and, in one case, with a regional office inside of a geographic bureau. These supplementary arrangements serve some of the functions associated with user fees, e.g., they cover the costs of books and other materials procured for missions with a region, and in one case they covered the cost involved in having a TIG staff member travel to a region to explain and promote TIG services.

With respect to the future, it seems both reasonable and logical to have regional bureaus continue to "buy-in" to the TIG program for special services. From an overall management and budget perspective, A.I.D. may find that it makes sense to formalize the TIG arrangement somewhat, i.e., linking core and "buy-in" funding under one arrangement, rather than the several that now exist.

As to the level and source of central funding for TIG, this will, of necessity, remain a matter of judgement. To the degree that A.I.D. believes that the service should continue to exist, it must be prepared to centrally fund whatever costs cannot reasonably be absorbed by the units that utilize this service, i.e., the regional bureaus and key technical offices in central bureaus. A general meeting of user bureaus, in which utilization statistics are reviewed might be a useful step in an A.I.D. process that aims at determining what level of funding for TIG must come from

central sources. Given the high regard in which mission staff hold the TIG service, it would not be unreasonable to encourage higher levels of regional bureau funding in such a meeting.

Once A.I.D. determines what level of central funding is required to continue TIG services, and expand them as demand warrants, decisions about which central office will fund the TIG program may still need to be made. To that end, a meeting involving CDIE/DI and the R&D Bureau's Office of Agriculture as well, perhaps, as its Office for Environment and A.I.D.'s main budget office may be the most appropriate forum in which to examine the options. If CDIE/DI cannot maintain its position as the lead funder of this service, the other offices involved in such a meeting should, between them, be able to arrive at a satisfactory solution.

While, decisions concerning the funding of that portion of TIG's costs that must be centrally funded may lead to a change in the share of TIG costs borne by CDIE/DI versus other central bureau offices, such decisions may or may not be linked to changes in the management locus of TIG. A.I.D. can and should view decisions about who pays for TIG as conceptually separate from the question of who manages the effort. Here again the candidates are CDIE/DI and R&D's technical offices. Both are qualified to manage such an arrangement. The resources in question when it comes to this decision are not program funds, but rather direct hire staff time and interest. Once again, A.I.D. is likely to find a meeting of the appropriate parties to be the most efficient approach for identifying real options and making appropriate decisions.

SECTION FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents the assessment's general conclusions as well as its recommendations for both the TIG staff and for A.I.D.

A. General Conclusions

Drawing upon data collected from a variety of sources, the MSI team reached the broad conclusions that **the TIG program provides A.I.D. with high value products for which there is a continuing demand. It should, if financially feasible, be continued.** Key findings that support this conclusion are summarized below:

- The TIG service is used throughout the Agency, by staff members representing a range of offices and technical disciplines, as a direct support to A.I.D. processes for designing and implementing development projects and programs.
- Users, many of whom are repeat customers, give high quality ratings to TIG's products, believe that they arrive on a timely basis and, in many cases, can characterize their development impact.
- An independent analysis of the efficiency of TIG services suggests that, once begun, task are completed as rapidly as the nature of such work permits. Overall, the TIG service was found to be at least as cost-effective if not more cost-effective than those provided by other vendors.
- All available information suggests that the demand for TIG services, which has grown significantly over the past five years, will continue for the foreseeable future, and may even expand as a function of the evolution of A.I.D.'s approaches to sectors on which the TIG program concentrates and improved telecommunications facilities which make it easier for field staff to use this service.

Based on indications provided by this assessment, the MSI team reached a second set general conclusions that look beyond TIG to A.I.D.'s overall management of its information service programs. The team's conclusion in this broad area is that **improvements in the way A.I.D. oversees the many information service programs it operates are warranted. Absent an appropriate management mechanism, A.I.D. has inadequate documentation concerning, or control over, the full range, depth, cost or quality of such services.** Unnecessary duplication is a distinct possibility under such circumstances. It is also highly probable that many of the intended users of such services are unaware of their existence.

B. Recommendations

While MSI's broad conclusions concerning the TIG program are very positive in nature, the team identified a number of improvements that TIG could usefully make. These improvements are identified in this section as are recommendations to A.I.D. concerning actions it might take in connection with the TIG program, as well as on its overall approach to information service program oversight.

1. Recommendations for the TIG Program

Several issues raised in the body of this report provide opportunities for TIG's management team to improve its services and the way it represents those services.

a. Higher Quality Responses on Policy Issues and On the Environment.

On an overall basis, the assessment's user survey gave TIG high scores for quality. At the same time, a difference between the quality scores TIG received for its responses on agriculture versus policy and environment-related questions. Quality scores for responses on policy questions and on the environment were noticeably lower. With respect to making improvements in these two important areas, several general suggestions were made by A.I.D. staff during the course of assessment interviews. These suggestions are noted below as TIG may benefit from acting upon them:

- If TIG is going to respond to questions about policy, especially policy reform, and the environment, it should be developing open and interactive lines of communication with the range of AID/W offices that focus on these topics.
- TIG should acquire an inventory of all of A.I.D.'s centrally managed projects which deal with the environment (or with policy reform) -- and a habit of contacting the staff on these projects when TIG is working on responses. Central project staff often know why a question is being asked. They may also have ideas about ways in which products of A.I.D.'s centrally-funded work might contribute to the development of answers to user questions.
- Since TIG is responding to questions about the environment on a routine basis, it should develop and make use of a "hot-line" relationship with those units inside of EPA that are doing the same kind of work, i.e., answering questions raised by A.I.D. field staff. A.I.D. environment officers in R&D and the geographic bureaus can identify these EPA contacts. Some of these contact may be the same people TIG normally calls on environment questions; others may turn out to be new resources.

b. More Systematic Incorporation of Information on A.I.D.'s Experience in Response Packages

Data from the user survey suggested that about half of A.I.D.'s users perceive TIG as including information on A.I.D.'s experience on a regular basis. What is not clear from this data is whether there are opportunities for including such information which are missed. That possibility, the MSI team found, is of continuing concern to A.I.D. This is an area where TIG managers, as well as final users, stand to gain if TIG undertakes creative new efforts to ensure that every significant opportunity to incorporate information on A.I.D.'s experience into TIG responses is taken. Suggestions in this regard, a number of which were recorded during the interviews carried out by the MSI team, are provided below:

- Select a random sample of at least a dozen recently completed information packages and join with the CDIE/DI staff in an in-depth review of these packages to determine whether opportunities for incorporating information on A.I.D.'s experience were missed. Consider the results of this "audit" to be a baseline. Plan to repeat this process a year later as a means of measuring changes from the baseline.
- Insert a step into the TIG work flow diagram, Figure 3-1, in the early stage of the work that calls for TIG to ask and answer the question -- "Is it possible that there is pertinent A.I.D. experience on this question?" Record a "no" on the log for any case where the answer is "no." Contact CDIE/DI wherever the answer is "yes" -- and allow CDIE/DI to work on that part of a response in parallel to TIG's efforts to develop the technical aspects of answers. Send both elements to users in a single package where possible. If one side of an answer or the other must be delivered on a lagged basis, make that clear to the user in the first package sent out.
- Work with CDIE/DI management to establish a routine monthly or bi-monthly meeting at the analyst level which brings together CDIE/DI's "in-house" team and TIG's analyst group. Routine face to face meetings at this level will go a long to ensuring the incorporation of A.I.D. experience in TIG responses. It will also help all of the analysts to understand when and how they can improve their work by drawing on the resources of their combined networks.

c. Develop New Approaches for Managing TIG's Backlog of Requests

As the assessment indicated, TIG responds to inquiries with a high degree of efficiency once work begins. To the degree that there are delays in starting work on requests as a function of backlog, this efficiency level is reduced. TIG is

currently looking to hire a fourth full time analyst. Until such time as that person is on board, TIG will need to employ creative approaches for dealing with periodic backlog problems. Among the solutions it might want to investigate are short term and part time assistance. Authorization for a six-day work week, on occasion, might also be used to solve backlog problems with existing staff.

d. Making TIG Statistics More Meaningful to A.I.D.

TIG's statistical reports are not as meaningful to A.I.D. as they are to the TIG staff. This situation can be improved. TIG's current approach to tracking its work load involves taking inquiries and breaking them down into their component parts. These component parts or elements count as work units from TIG's perspective. On TIG's statistical tables, this broken down "work unit" version of an inquiry tally is shown as an initial column called "inquiries". Through a series of intermediate columns TIG tracks aspects of its work, arriving at a final column on its statistical table that deals with "response packages sent." This final column provides a combined count of interim and final packages sent out by the TIG staff. To an outside reader both the "inquiries" and "response package" columns constructed in this manner read like an inflated estimate of the number of inquires TIG receives.

Since inflated estimates are not TIG's intention, a few simple changes in TIG's record keeping system and a simplification of its reports to A.I.D. along the following lines might help:

- In TIG's record keeping system add an initial column that tracks the absolute number of inquiries TIG receives in a year, i.e., the number of letters, faxes, etc., irrespective of how many aspects there are to a user's question. Then move to a column that breaks these inquiries into work units, just as TIG does now, but change the title of this column to work units, rather than calling it inquiries.
- In TIG's record keeping system split the final column used to track the number of response packages sent out. Let the first half of the column record initial or preliminary responses. Let the second half of the column record final responses. Using this approach TIG will be able to sum the number of final response in a way that is meaningful in comparison to the new initial column on the absolute number of inquires received.
- In simplified annual, and perhaps quarterly, reports to A.I.D. include only the initial and final columns suggested above: inquiries received and final packages sent.
- Keep TIG's more detailed version of its service statistics on file at TIG's office, to facilitate a more in-depth analysis should the need for it arise.

2. Recommendations for A.I.D.

In its efforts to address the questions in CDIE/DI's scope of work, this assessment has identified a number of areas where A.I.D. might improve its management of the TIG program in particular, as well as its information service programs more generally.

a. Financing and Managing the TIG Program in the 1990s

Assuming that the assessment's prognosis of a continuing demand for the products TIG produces is valid, and that A.I.D. will decide to continue to fund this program, there are issues concerning internal mechanisms for financing and managing the TIG arrangement that must be resolved. These are not issues which can be resolved by CDIE/DI's contractor for this study -- nor are specific contractor recommendations about who should fund TIG and who should manage it likely to be particularly useful. What MSI recommends instead is that:

- CDIE/DI convene a meeting or series of meetings with those parties who are in important ways "stakeholders" in the TIG effort.
 - R&D's Office of Agriculture is clearly a "stakeholder" in this sense. R&D's Office on the Environment has a similar relationship to this program, but given the "agriculture" label so often placed on TIG's services, this office may not be fully aware of its linkage to the TIG program.
 - Other important parties to decisions about the financing of the TIG program include the program offices in both the Policy Directorate and R&D; A.I.D.'s central budget office and those offices in regional bureaus that have in the past contributed funding for the TIG program.

Through these meetings, CDIE/DI should lead an effort to reach decisions on the following questions -- making it clear that its by acting as coordinator for this process, it is not trying to determine the outcome:

- If the Policy Directorate cannot continue to provide funds for the TIG program, either because of lack of funds or because of decision concerning the types of programs this Directorate will manage, how can A.I.D. most fairly and realistically divide the costs of this program among the other offices and bureaus that have a stake in seeing it continued?
- A central arrangement with a "buy-in" feature might simplify the process for obtaining appropriate contributions from several bureaus. Is such an arrangement feasible and desirable?

- Considering decisions taken concerning the sources of funds that will support the TIG program in the future, where should management responsibility for the program be housed. The pros and cons of having CDIE/DI continue to manage the program versus turning over management responsibility to another office should be examined openly. The availability and interest of direct hire staff in this management task should be considered. Decisions in this area should be as transparent as those made concerning financing.

Even before decisions are made concerning the future management home of TIG within A.I.D., CDIE/DI should take steps to help TIG improve the management of its program. More specifically, CDIE/DI should take an active interest in helping TIG to implement the recommendations presented in B.1 above.

b. Improving the Overall Management of Information Service in A.I.D.

Findings from this assessment concerning A.I.D.'s lack of information on the range, depth, quality and cost of the information services it funds and about the potential value of such basic tools as a user catalogue of such services suggest the need for action by A.I.D. on high level and cross-bureau basis. MSI's recommendations in this regard are thus directed not only to CDIE/DI, but also to the managers of A.I.D.'s Policy Directorate, who, acting for the Agency as a whole, might:

- Establish an Agency-wide Task Force or Standing Committee on Information Services Program Management.
 - Define the purview of this committee to be all formally defined information services, which stand alone or are parts of projects, programs, RSSAs, etc., and which gather, store, analyze, or retrieve information, primarily but not exclusively of a secondary nature, on technical subjects, including A.I.D.'s experience with those subjects, for the purposes of informing field staff, A.I.D. management or the Congress, in response to inquiries or on some pre-determined systematic basis.
 - Include on such a Committee representatives from CDIE; key sectoral offices within R&D which have created and manage various information service programs; regional bureaus; A.I.D.'s budget office and, if appropriate, such other entities as IRM, GC, etc. Given CDIE/DI's central technical role in this general area, it might well be appropriate to ask CDIE/DI to play Secretariat role for this Committee. The position of Chariman could be taken

4/6

either by someone on the Policy Directorate's executive staff or by a representatives from one of the offices listed above.

- Charge this Task Force or Committee with, at minimum, the following tasks:
 - (a) The development of a report for A.I.D.'s senior staff, by a date certain, which details the range, depth, quality and cost of all information services A.I.D. funds. This report should identify areas of duplicative effort and propose solutions.
 - (b) Development of a plan for transforming the inventory of information services developed through its report into a user catalogue of services that can be distributed to all appropriate A.I.D. staff and updated on a regular basis. Options for carrying out this task should include the development and maintenance of this catalogue as an E-mail bulletin board, following the pattern A.I.D. now uses to store and update its telephone directory. Inclusion of the catalogue on CD-ROM discs developed and distributed by CDIE/DI to promote use of information from A.I.D.'s memory should also be considered.
 - (c) Development and implementation of a plan for ensuring that all A.I.D. funded information services meet basic standards for quality and objectivity, where objectivity is defined to include the provision of information on new and novel approaches to solving development problems as well as on traditional solutions to such problems.

Annexes

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Annex A

Advisory or Assistance Services:
Yes X No

1. Country of Performance: U.S.A.
2. Indefinite Quantity Contract: OTR-0000-I-13-0034-00

NEGOTIATED PURSUANT TO THE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT
OF 1961, AS AMENDED, AND EXECUTIVE ORDER 11223

3. CONTRACTOR (Name and Address):	>4a. ISSUING OFFICE:
Management Systems International.	>
600 Water Street, S.W., NBU-7-7	> Agency for International Development
Washington, DC 20024	> FA/OP/B/AEP
	> <u>Washington, D.C. 20523-1429</u>
	>
DUNS No. 04-840-7589	>4b. ADMINISTRATION OFFICE:
TIN No. 52-1215041	> Agency for International Development
	> FA/OP/B/AEP
	> Washington, D.C. 20523
	>
5. PROJECT OFFICE:	>6. SUBMIT VOUCHERS TO:
Margaret S. Pope	> USAID/W
POL/CDIE/DI	> FA/FM/CMP/DC Room 700, SA-2
	> Washington, DC 20583
	>
	>
	>
	>
7. EFFECTIVE DATE:	>8. ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE:
September 1, 1992	> December 1, 1992
	>
	>
9. ACCOUNTING AND APPROPRIATION DATA:	
Amount Obligated: \$19,035	PIO/T No.: 930-0264-2022094
Ceiling Price: \$19,035	Appropriation No.: 72-112/31021.3
	Budget Plan Code: TDN2-92-10207-KG11
10. The United States of America, represented by the Contracting Officer signing this Order, and the Contractor agree that: (a) this Order is issued pursuant to the Contract specified in Block 2 above and (b) the entire Contract between the parties hereto consist of this Delivery Order and the Contract specified in Block 2 above.	
11a. NAME OF CONTRACTOR:	>11b.
	> UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
	> AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
	>
BY: (Signature of authorized individual)	> BY: (Contracting Officer)
	>
	>
TYPED OR PRINTED NAME:	> TYPED OR PRINTED NAME:
	> Jeffery D. Bell (WFP)
	>
TITLE:	> TITLE:
	>
	> CONTRACTING OFFICER
	>
DATE:	> DATE:
	>

BACKGROUND

Under Project 930-0264, the A.I.D. Directorate for Policy, Center for Development Information and Evaluation, Office of Development Information (POL/CDIE/DI) operates the U. S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Information and Related Services Resources Support Services Agreement, (AID/USDA RSSA). This RSSA is a long-standing agreement which was initially funded in 1966. In direct support of CDIE/DI this RSSA serves as a primary resource for providing technical agricultural information needed by A.I.D. in the design and implementation of sound agricultural development assistance programs. The RSSA's Technical Inquiry Services (TIS) team responds to ad hoc Mission requests from USAID Agriculturalists, AID/W and appropriate host country institutions for technical information in the agricultural development and food production/nutrition fields. In responding to these requests, the RSSA TIS team consults with subject specialists within the U. S. Department of Agriculture, the US-Land Grant College System, the private sector and international research institutions.

The last evaluation of this activity was in 1982 when the USDA/National Agricultural Library A.I.D.-UPDATE was part of the services provided.

No formal project paper for this activity has been submitted. See attached copy of 1966 agreement.

ARTICLE I - TITLE

Evaluation of the AID/USDA Agricultural Information and Related Services RSSA.

ARTICLE II - OBJECTIVE

The objective of this contract is to perform an in-depth evaluation of the Agricultural Information and Related Services RSSA, Technical Inquiry Services (TIS).

ARTICLE III - STATEMENT OF WORK

The contractor will conduct a comprehensive analysis of the performance of the TIS to determine its effectiveness in

contributing to A.I.D. agricultural programs. This evaluation will also focus on the impact of this activity on other Agency programs and initiatives.

The contractor shall:

1. Identify primary and secondary audiences for this service.
2. Evaluate the need for this service by these audiences.
3. Assess the value of the Technical Inquiry Services, i. e., how important are the services provided under this activity to A.I.D. Mission and Bureau Agriculturalists.
4. Evaluate the quality of service - How effective has the Technical Inquiry Services team's performance been in fulfilling its mandate under the current scope of work?
5. Determine if TIS team has performed in the the most cost-efficient manner when responding to requests.
6. Evaluate the impact and the appropriateness of the services provided to A. I. D. Missions and AID/W audiences.
7. Identify the benefits derived from this activity by A.I.D.
8. Given the level of funding resources for this activity, determine if the Agency is receiving the maximum benefits from these resources.
9. Measure the impact this activity has on overall Agency programs and initiatives and analyze how this use of Agency resources impacts on other Agency initiatives.
10. Evaluate whether earmarking this level of Agency resources for the agriculture sector is the most cost-effective use of Agency resources.
11. Assess various program options including whether (1) CDIE should continue to provide complete funding of this activity or (2) CDIE should provide core funding and Missions and/or Bureaus participate in financing in accordance with their use of these services or (3) this activity should be transferred to another A.I.D. unit for full funding support but coordinated by CDIE or (4) the services for Missions and/or Bureaus should be handled as buy-in's but managed by CDIE or (5) this activity should be discontinued.

12. Identify and make recommendations for alternative uses of these resources.
13. Explore the following question, independent of TIS performance: Should this level of Agency resources be earmarked for any one sector?
14. Develop and design a questionnaire/survey form for the purpose of collecting data from selected USAID Mission and A.I.D./W Bureau experts.

ARTICLE IV - CDIE AND OTHER A.I.D./W SUPPORT

POL/CDIE/DI, as a fact-finding/information gathering activity in support of this evaluation, will consult/survey selected USAID Mission Agricultural Development Officers and Bureau Agriculturalists for their views regarding the relative importance of these information services. Mission Program Officers and other sector specialists; and A.I.D./W experts will be consulted for their input as to whether the use of Agency resources at this level to exclusively support agriculturalists is the most cost-effective use of Agency resources.

The contractor shall analyze responses from this survey to explore the question of earmarking Agency resources for one sector and to identify alternatives as how these resources could more appropriately be allocated.

POL/CDIE/DI will establish an A.I.D./W committee/task force to oversee the evaluation process. This committee/task force will include representatives from the Regional Bureaus, the Bureau for Research and Development, the Directorate for Operations and the Directorate for Policy.

5/8

ARTICLE V - CEILING PRICE

For Work-Days Ordered	<u>\$17,392</u>
For Other Direct Cost	<u>\$ 2,420</u>
Ceiling Price	\$19,812

The contractor will not be paid any sum in excess of the ceiling price.

ARTICLE VI - TECHNICAL DIRECTION

The contractor will receive technical direction from the POL/CDIE/DI Deputy Director and the POL/CDIE/DI Research and Reference Services Coordinator.

ARTICLE VII - REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The contractor shall prepare a draft written report and an interim oral briefing and a final written report.

ARTICLE VIII - TERM OF PERFORMANCE

- A. The services requested in this delivery order must be completed within 120 days from the date of the contract award.
- B. Subject to the ceiling price established in this delivery order and with prior written approval of the Project Manager (see Block No. 5 on the Cover Page), contractor is authorized to extend the estimated completion date, provided that such extension does not cause the elapsed time for completion of the work, including the furnishing of all deliverables, to extend beyond 30 calendar days from the original estimated completion date. The contractor shall attach a copy of the Project Manager's approval for any extension of the term of this delivery order to the final voucher submitted for payment.

- C. It is the contractor's responsibility to ensure that the Project Manager-approved adjustments to the original estimated completion date do not result in costs incurred which exceed the ceiling price of this delivery order. Under no circumstances shall such adjustments authorize the contractor to be paid any sum in excess of the delivery order.
- D. Adjustments which will cause the elapsed time for completion of the work to exceed the original estimated completion date by more than 30 calendar days must be approved in advance by the Contracting Officer.

ARTICLE IX - WORK DAYS ORDERED

<u>A. Functional Labor</u> <u>Category & Specialist</u>	<u>Work Days</u> <u>Ordered</u>	<u>Burdened Fixed</u> <u>Daily Rate*</u>	
Management Consultant	18	\$633.60	\$11,405
Management Consultant	18	\$332.64	\$ 5,988
		Total	\$17,392

*Based on a multiplier of 1.98

- B. The individuals identified above are designated as essential/key personnel pursuant to Section H.3. of the contract.
- C. Subject to the ceiling price established in this delivery order and the prior written approval of the Project Manager, the contractor is authorized to adjust the number of work days actually employed in the performance of the work by each position specified in this order. The contractor shall attach a copy of the Project Manager's approval to the final voucher submitted for payment.
- D. It is the contractor's responsibility to ensure that the Project Manager-approved adjustments to the work days ordered for each functional labor specialist do not result in costs incurred which exceed the ceiling price of this delivery order. Under no circumstances shall such adjustments authorize the contractor to be paid any sum in excess of the ceiling price.

ARTICLE X - USE OF GOVERNMENT FACILITIES AND PERSONNEL

The contractor, and its employees or consultants are prohibited from using U. S. Government facilities (such as office space or equipment), or U. S. Government clerical or technical personnel

54

in the performance of the services specified in the delivery order, unless the use of Government facilities or personnel is specifically authorized in the order, or is authorized in advance, in writing, by the Contracting Officer.

ARTICLE XI - DUTY POST

The Duty Post for this delivery is Washington, D. C.

ARTICLE XII - ACCESS TO CLASSIFIED INFORMATION

The contractor will not have access to classified information.

ARTICLE XIII - LOGISTIC SUPPORT

All logistic support will be provided by the contractor.

ARTICLE XIV - WORK WEEK

The contractor is authorized up to a 5 day work week with no premium pay.

5

EVALUATION METHODS

Data for this assessment was collected using three different methods: (a) a user survey, (b) a time utilization study involving the TIG staff and (c) interviews with pertinent A.I.D. staff in Washington. This annex briefly reviews the data collection and analysis procedures associated with each of these methods.

1. Survey of TIG Users

MSI's survey of TIG users was designed to yield answers about specific experiences rather than general comments. The sample for the survey was a sample of TIG response packages -- rather than a sample of users. The list from which this sample was drawn was constructed from TIG's weekly reports, in which short paragraphs are provided describing the packages TIG has sent out during the preceding week. A time frame of two and 3/4 years was selected for examination, i.e., from the beginning of FY90 - July of FY92, based on the judgement that respondents would be able to recall experiences with TIG over that time period.

After MSI obtained lists of response packages covering this time period from TIG, it organized them into topical groups. These groups were then formed into five large clusters, covering policy; high value crops; other crops; competitiveness, and the environment. At the start of this process there were 523 paragraph descriptions of TIG responses. As the topical clusters were developed, 28 of these paragraphs were dropped from the sample frame, as they dealt with isolated issues, e.g., the history of USDA. This left 495 TIG responses in the sample frame, as shown in Exhibit B-1. In drawing a sample, MSI sought a relatively high confidence level, i.e., at least 85%. It also anticipated that at least 20% of those to whom the questionnaire was sent would not respond. The sample that resulted from these expectations consisted of 236 cases, which were randomly drawn from within each of the five topical clusters.

In order to translate a sample of responses into a user survey format, MSI had to double back and identify the names of the users who had made the inquiries covered by the sample of TIG responses. Working backward to a list of users in this manner yielded a situation in which some users were associated with only one of the sample responses, while other users were associated with 2, 3 or more responses in the sample. To accommodate this situation, the user survey questionnaire was constructed in such a manner as to allow respondents who were being asked about several cases to respond separately on each of them.

The survey instrument for this aspect of the work was developed based on discussions with CDIE and the TIG staff. It was pre-tested at USAID/Togo with two A.I.D. staff members, one of whom was from USAID/Niger. Comments from CDIE's technical review panel for this assessment were also taken into account as the final version of the instrument, which is provided here as Exhibit B-2, was developed.

Table B-1. Sample of TIG Responses Examined Through the User Survey

Cluster	UNIVERSE OF PARAGRAPHS DESCRIBING TIG RESPONSES FY90 - FY92 (July)		SAMPLE OF PARAGRAPHS DESCRIBING TIG RESPONSES		TIG RESPONSES COVERED BY COMPLETED/ ANALYZED QUESTIONNAIRES	
	Total No. of Paragraphs	% of Total	Total No. of Paragraphs	% of Total	Total No. of Paragraphs	% of Total
Policy	25	6%	23	10%	12	12%
Production, Processing and Marketing of High Value Crops	120	24%	55	23%	23	23%
Production, Processing and Marketing of Other-Crops	69	14%	43	18%	21	21%
Competitiveness	131	26%	56	24%	28	28%
Environment	150	30%	59	25%	34	34%
Total	495	100%	236	100%	100	100%

User survey instruments were then faxed to A.I.D. missions, one copy per mission, along with a list of the respondents for whom these instruments should be reproduced. Missions were also faxed individual memos for each respondent which identified the specific TIG response packages on which they were being asked to comment. Faxes were used instead of the pouch for overseas respondents in order to complete this assessment with the time frame allotted for completion of this evaluation work order. Questionnaires returned by respondents provided answers on 100 of the 236 TIG responses included in the sample, as Table B-1 indicates. Exhibit B-3 presents an inventory of the sample of TIG responses examined through the user survey. It also identifies the individuals who were asked to report on these cases. Those who actually responded are also identified. While this level of response is lower than MSI had hoped for, it is nevertheless higher than the norm for written questionnaires. It is quite probable, but not absolutely certain, that the answers received from user survey respondents represent the views of all TIG users.

Data from the user survey was entered into an automated data base and analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences), a standard computer program for this type of data analysis. Statistical analysis of this data focused on frequency distributions and cross-tabulations.

51

2. TIG Staff Time Utilization Sub-Study

The time utilization sub-study, which is discussed in Section Three of this report, was carried out on a small sample of responses on which TIG's three primary information analysts had worked during the preceding six month period. Using a list of all the responses on which each of these analysts had worked during that period, MSI randomly selected three responses for each analyst. The procedure used to obtain data on the "real" and elapsed time associated with each of these cases is fully described in Section Three, as are the simple mathematical procedures used to analyze this data.

3. Interviews with A.I.D. Staff

Interviews carried out in Washington involved two identifiable groups of individuals. The first group of "key informants" were individuals from regional and central bureaus who deal with the two topics on which the majority of TIG responses focus: agriculture and the environment. With respect to the regional bureaus, MSI limited its interviews to representatives of the three bureaus which are the primary users of TIG services: LAC, Africa and Asia, respectively. The second group of "key informants" interviewed included individuals who currently serve in positions which give them insight into the general direction in which the A.I.D. as a whole, or the Policy Directorate, more narrowly, is moving. A complete listing of the A.I.D. staff interviewed in the course of this assessment is provided as Exhibit B-4. While a somewhat standard set of questions was used in these interviews, they were "open-ended" in nature and were designed to encourage interviewees to present their views in a relatively unconstrained manner.



SAMPLING CLUSTERS

POLICY: 25 paragraphs

1.	agricultural policy analysis and planning	16
2.	land tenure/agrarian reform	8
3.	environmental policies for sustainability	1

**PRODUCTION, PROCESSING AND MARKETING OF HIGH VALUE CROPS:
120 paragraphs**

1.	fruits and vegetables	50
2.	specialty crops	16
3.	spices, nuts, flowers and ornaments	23
4.	oilseeds	9
5.	other crops	22

PRODUCTION, PROCESSING AND MARKETING OF OTHER CROPS: 69 paragraphs

1.	forest products	14
2.	fish and shellfish	9
3.	livestock	30
4.	specialty livestock	9
5.	other commodities	5
6.	fisheries	2

COMPETITIVENESS: 131 paragraphs

1.	market analyses and trade data for crops	33
2.	agribusiness development	21
3.	country and regional studies	33
4.	research and extension	12
5.	economics and agricultural economics	6
6.	U.S. agriculture	7
7.	U.S. regulations	14
8.	technology transfer and appropriate tech.	5

59

ENVIRONMENT: 150 paragraphs

1.	sustainable agriculture	22
2.	global climate change	3
3.	waste management	7
4.	soil and water conservation	13
5.	parks and protected areas	6
6.	resource conservation	9
7.	toxins and health	14
8.	plant/livestock diseases and integrated pest management	43
10.	water management/irrigation	16
11.	sustainable forestry	2
12.	agroforestry	13
13.	resource economics	2

Assessment of USDA/USAID Technical Inquiries Group (TIG) Services



U.S. AGENCY FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

November 30, 1992

Dear Respondent:

The USDA/USAID Technical Inquiries Group (TIG) is a service oriented staff that researches and provides technical literature requested by the Agency for International Development in the design and implementation of agricultural, agribusiness and natural resource projects worldwide. This service, which has been in existence for several decades, is sponsored and managed for A.I.D. by the Office of Development Information in the Center for Development Information and Evaluation, Directorate for Policy (POL/CDIE/DI).

As you know, A.I.D. policy calls for the periodic assessment of all major projects and programs, including those which support the work of A.I.D.'s professional staff. The assessment in which you are being asked to participate is the first review of this USDA/USAID service in ten years. Your response to this questionnaire, which should be faxed to Ms. Margaret Pope, POL/CDIE/DI, at fax # 703-875-5269, Room 209, SA-18, by December 11, 1992, will help us to plan for the future of the Technical Inquiries Group (TIG) services and to adjust the coverage of their efforts to better meet your evolving requirements.

Since different kinds of A.I.D. professionals utilize the TIG, we are attempting to gather information from a fairly large group of A.I.D. officers. Each A.I.D. officer included in the sample has been selected based on a particular inquiry that he or she made to the USDA/USAID Technical Inquiries Group (TIG). For this reason, more than one A.I.D. staff member per mission may have received this questionnaire. Note: Some TIG responses were originated as USAID mission requests to POL/CDIE/DI and were subsequently referred to TIG for appropriate action.

Summaries of inquiries you made, which were selected as part of the sample, together with a synopsis of the response you received are included with this questionnaire. Please use your experience with these inquiries, as well as other experience you have had with the USDA/USAID Technical Inquiries group (TIG) to answer this questionnaire. All of your individual answers are important to the assessment and your cooperation with this effort is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maury Brown".

Maury Brown
Director, POL/CDIE/DI

320 TWENTY-FIRST STREET, N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20523

EVALUATION CONTRACTOR:

Management Systems International (MSI)
600 Water Street, S.W., NBU 7-7
Washington, D.C. 20024
Phone: (202) 484-7170 Fax (202) 488-0754

Date: _____

1. Respondent Identification:

a) Name: _____

Title: _____

b) To which of the following employment categories do you belong? (Check only one answer.)

_____ A.I.D. staff, including FSNs and PSCs

_____ U.S. contractor or grantee, including PVOs and RSSA employees

_____ Host country government, business, PVO, etc.

c) For A.I.D. staff including FSNs and PSCs:

Present Mission/Post: _____

Length of time at Post: _____ years

Length of employment with A.I.D.: _____ years

A.I.D. Personnel Backstop Code: _____

d) For Contractors and Grantees, excluding PSCs, but including PVO and RSSA employees:

Name of Organization represented: _____

e) For the host country government, business, PVO, etc.:

Name of Organization represented: _____

2. For how long have you been aware of the USDA/USAID Technical Inquiries Group (TIG)? (CHECK ONLY ONE ANSWER)

_____ Have not heard of the USDA/USAID TIG before.

_____ Less than 1 year.

_____ 1 to 5 years.

_____ Over 5 years.

3. Which of the following information resources do you use when you require information in the areas of agriculture, agribusiness and natural resources and with what frequency do you use them? (PLEASE PROVIDE ONLY ONE ANSWER FOR EACH ROW AND ANSWER ALL ITEMS a-h.)

Information Sources	Frequency of Use of Each Source				
	My mission/ country does not have this resource	Resource is available; never used	Resource used infrequently (1-2 times per year)	Moderate use (3-10 times per year)	Frequent use (over 10 times per year)
a. Mission's own library (whether as a separate entity or as a set of office level document collections).					
b. The Embassy or United States Information Service (USIS) library.					
c. Other donor libraries, both bilateral and multilateral, e.g., U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).					
d. Local government/ministry libraries or document collections.					
e. Local university or other educational entity libraries.					
f. Regional bureau offices, or technical offices in A.I.D.'s central bureaus.					
g. USDA/USAID Technical Inquiries Group (TIG).					
h. Other information sources. Please identify: _____ _____					

4. How many times would you estimate that you have requested topical information on agricultural, natural resources, agribusiness or related subjects from the USDA/USAID Technical Inquiries Group (TIG), during the past five years?

_____ times

5. When did you last request information on agriculture, natural resources, agribusiness or related subjects from the USDA/USAID Technical Inquiries Group (TIG)?

_____ year

6. For what purposes do you tend to request information on agriculture, natural resources, agribusiness or related topics from the USDA/USAID/TIG? (PLEASE PROVIDE ONLY ONE ANSWER FOR EACH ITEM AND ANSWER ALL ITEMS a-k.)

Purposes for Which Information from USDA/USAID/TIG Is used.	Frequency of Use for this Purpose			
	Never	Infrequently (only occasionally)	Moderately often (about half the time)	Frequently (most of the time)
a. To support or facilitate a policy dialogue with the host country				
b. To support or facilitate the development of sector assessments or pursuant to the preparation of a CDSS/CPSP.				
c. To support an annual planning (e.g. ABS-type) or performance reporting exercise.				
d. To support or facilitate the predesign or design of a project or non-project assistance (NPA) effort.				
e. To support or facilitate project or NPA implementation.				
f. To support or facilitate a project or NPA evaluation.				
g. To address issues raised in an audit.				
h. On an ad hoc basis, to help host country counterparts on general matters related to projects or programs.				
i. On an ad hoc basis, to help host country counterparts on matters <u>not</u> related to a specific project or program.				
j. On an ad hoc basis, to address issues and questions faced by the office outside of the context of a specific project, program, policy reform effort, or planning exercise.				
k. Other. Please specify: _____				

[THE FOLLOWING SERIES OF QUESTIONS ASK YOU TO RESPOND AT A MORE SPECIFIC LEVEL TO THE ISSUES RAISED IN QUESTION 6. Space is provided for answers for up to five specific cases. While most respondents are being asked -- via the personalized memos which accompany this questionnaire -- to provide answers concerning one information request they made, a number of people are being asked to provide answers concerning several information requests. Differences in the number of information requests on which respondents are being asked to provide answers are a function of the way in which the sample for this survey was drawn, i.e., it is a sample based on specific information requests over a two and a half year period, rather than a sample based on the names of users.

PLEASE ANSWER AS MANY OF THE QUESTIONS IN THE FOLLOWING SERIES AS NECESSARY TO ACCOUNT FOR EACH OF THE INFORMATION REQUESTS IDENTIFIED IN THE PERSONALIZED MEMORANDUM YOU RECEIVED.]

Please enter the case numbers for specific information requests provided in your personalized memo as you answer the questions in this series.)

- 6.a. For the 1st information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, which of the purposes listed above best characterizes the purpose for which you made this request. (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND, USING QUESTION 6 ABOVE AS A REFERENCE, ENTER THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [A-K] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE INFORMATION YOU RECEIVED IN RESPONSE TO YOUR REQUEST FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ PURPOSE: _____

- 6.b. For the 2nd information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, which of the purposes listed above best characterizes the purpose for which you made this request. (ENTER CASE NUMBER AND THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [A-K] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ PURPOSE: _____

- 6.c. For the 3rd information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, which of the purposes listed above best characterizes the purpose for which you made this request. (ENTER CASE NUMBER AND THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [A-K] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ PURPOSE: _____

- 6.d. For the 4th information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, which of the purposes listed above best characterizes the purpose for which you made this request. (ENTER CASE NUMBER AND THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [A-K] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ PURPOSE: _____

- 6.e. For the 5th information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, which of the purposes listed above best characterizes the purpose for which you made this request. (ENTER CASE NUMBER AND THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [A-K] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ PURPOSE: _____

7. As a general rule, with whom, and how frequently do you share the information you receive from the USDA/USAID Technical Inquiries Group (TIG)? (PLEASE PROVIDE ONLY ONE ANSWER FOR EACH ITEM AND ANSWER ALL ITEMS a-h.)

Parties with Whom Information from USDA/USAID TIG is Shared	Frequency of Information Sharing			
	Never	Infrequently (only occasionally)	Moderately Often (about half the time)	Frequently (Most responses are shared)
a. Staff within your office.				
b. Staff in other technical offices in the Mission.				
c. The program office.				
d. The Mission Director or Deputy.				
e. Other donors.				
f. Ministry personnel.				
g. PVOs, contractors and others involved in carrying out analyses or implementing projects/programs for A.I.D.				
h. Private sector firms (host country, U.S. or third country) for whom the information has direct businesses/revenue generation relevance.				
i. Local universities and research institutions.				
j. Students and other individuals who have asked for information you might be able to make available to them.				
h. Others. Please identify: _____				

66

[THE FOLLOWING SERIES OF QUESTIONS ASK YOU TO RESPOND AT A MORE SPECIFIC LEVEL TO THE ISSUES RAISED IN QUESTION 7. PLEASE ANSWER AS MANY OF THE QUESTIONS IN THE FOLLOWING SERIES AS NECESSARY TO ACCOUNT FOR EACH OF THE INFORMATION REQUESTS IDENTIFIED IN THE PERSONALIZED MEMORANDUM YOU RECEIVED.]

Please enter the case numbers for specific information requests provided in your personalized memo as you answer the questions in this series.]

- 7.a. For the 1st information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, which type of information distribution listed above best characterizes the purpose for which you made this request. (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND, USING QUESTION 7 ABOVE AS A REFERENCE, ENTER THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [a-h] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ PURPOSE: _____

- 7.b. For the 2nd information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, which type of information distribution listed above best characterizes the purpose for which you made this request. (ENTER CASE NUMBER AND THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [a-h] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ PURPOSE: _____

- 7.c. For the 3rd information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, which type of information distribution listed above best characterizes the purpose for which you made this request. (ENTER CASE NUMBER AND THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [a-h] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ PURPOSE: _____

- 7.d. For the 4th information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, which type of information distribution listed above best characterizes the purpose for which you made this request. (ENTER CASE NUMBER AND THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [a-h] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ PURPOSE: _____

- 7.e. For the 5th information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, which type of information distribution listed above best characterizes the purpose for which you made this request. (ENTER CASE NUMBER AND THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [a-h] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE DISTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ PURPOSE: _____

8. How applicable do you feel the kinds of information you receive from USDA/USAID TIG to the potential uses listed below. Mark each potential use as being:

- a = The information is very applicable.
- b = The information tends to be somewhat, but not totally applicable.
- c = The information is not generally applicable.

- _____ Policy dialogue with a host country
- _____ Sector assessments or CDSS/CPSP preparation
- _____ Annual planning or performance reporting
- _____ Project/NPA design
- _____ Project/NPA implementation
- _____ Project/NPA evaluation
- _____ Assessing issues raised by audits
- _____ Ad hoc assistance to host country counterparts
- _____ Ad hoc requirements of the requesting Mission or office

[THE FOLLOWING SERIES OF QUESTIONS ASK YOU TO RESPOND AT A MORE SPECIFIC LEVEL TO THE ISSUES RAISED IN QUESTION 8.

PLEASE ANSWER AS MANY OF THE QUESTIONS IN THE FOLLOWING SERIES AS NECESSARY TO ACCOUNT FOR EACH OF THE INFORMATION REQUESTS IDENTIFIED IN THE PERSONALIZED MEMORANDUM YOU RECEIVED.

Please enter the case numbers for specific information requests provided in your personalized memo as you answer the questions in this series.]

8.a. For the 1st information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how applicable was the information you received, given the purpose for which you requested it and the distribution that best characterized your planned use of it. (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND, USING QUESTION 8 ABOVE AS A REFERENCE, ENTER THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [a-c] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE INFORMATION YOU RECEIVED FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ PURPOSE: _____

8.b. For the 2nd information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how applicable was the information you received, given the purpose for which you requested it and the distribution that best characterized your planned use of it. (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND ENTER THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [a-c] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE INFORMATION YOU RECEIVED FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ PURPOSE: _____

8.c. For the 3rd information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how applicable was the information you received, given the purpose for which you requested it and the distribution that best characterized your planned use of it. (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND ENTER THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [a-c] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE INFORMATION YOU RECEIVED FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ PURPOSE: _____

8.d. For the 4th information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how applicable was the information you received, given the purpose for which you requested it and the distribution that best characterized your planned use of it. (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND ENTER THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [a-c] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE INFORMATION YOU RECEIVED FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ PURPOSE: _____

8.e. For the 5th information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how applicable was the information you received, given the purpose for which you requested it and the distribution that best characterized your planned use of it. (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND ENTER THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [a-c] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE APPROPRIATENESS OF THE INFORMATION YOU RECEIVED FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ PURPOSE: _____

9. On average, how long does it take from the time you make a request till you receive information from the USDA/USAID Technical Inquiries Group (TIG)?

- _____ Less than 2 weeks
- _____ 2-5 weeks
- _____ more than 5 and less than 12 weeks
- _____ 12 weeks or more

10. With regard to the amount of time it takes till you receive an answer from the USDA/USAID Technical Inquiries Group (TIG), how would you rate this service:

- _____ Exceptional -- answers are received very rapidly; more rapidly than is the case with other sources of pertinent information.
- _____ Highly satisfactory -- answers arrive fairly quickly; at a speed that is very compatible with my needs.
- _____ Adequate -- answers arrive a bit slowly, but they are generally timely.
- _____ Very inadequate -- answers arrive very slowly, often well after my need for them has reached a critical point or passed altogether.

[THE FOLLOWING SERIES OF QUESTIONS ASK YOU TO RESPOND AT A MORE SPECIFIC LEVEL TO THE ISSUES RAISED IN QUESTION 10.

PLEASE ANSWER AS MANY OF THE QUESTIONS IN THE FOLLOWING SERIES AS NECESSARY TO ACCOUNT FOR EACH OF THE INFORMATION REQUESTS IDENTIFIED IN THE PERSONALIZED MEMORANDUM YOU RECEIVED.

Please enter the case numbers for specific information requests provided in your personalized memo as you answer the questions in this series.]

10.a. For the 1st information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how would you rate the USDA/USAID TIG service with respect to the amount of time it took to respond to your information request? (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND, USING QUESTION 10 ABOVE AS A REFERENCE, CHECK THE ANSWER THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES YOUR RATING FOR TIMELINESS OF RESPONSE FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE. CHECK ONLY ONE RATING.)

CASE # _____ Exceptional: _____
Highly Satisfactory: _____
Adequate: _____
Very Inadequate: _____

10.b. For the 2nd information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how would you rate the USDA/USAID TIG service with respect to the amount of time it took to respond to your information request? (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND CHECK THE ANSWER THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES YOUR RATING FOR TIMELINESS OF RESPONSE FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE. CHECK ONLY ONE RATING.)

CASE # _____ Exceptional: _____
Highly Satisfactory: _____
Adequate: _____
Very Inadequate: _____

10.c. For the 3rd information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how would you rate the USDA/USAID TIG service with respect to the amount of time it took to respond to your information request? (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND CHECK THE ANSWER THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES YOUR RATING FOR TIMELINESS OF RESPONSE FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE. CHECK ONLY ONE RATING.)

CASE # _____ Exceptional: _____
Highly Satisfactory: _____
Adequate: _____
Very Inadequate: _____

10.d. For the 4th information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how would you rate the USDA/USAID TIG service with respect to the amount of time it took to respond to your information request? (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND CHECK THE ANSWER THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES YOUR RATING FOR TIMELINESS OF RESPONSE FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE. CHECK ONLY ONE RATING.)

CASE # _____ Exceptional: _____
Highly Satisfactory: _____
Adequate: _____
Very Inadequate: _____

10.e. For the 5th information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how would you rate the USDA/USAID TIG service with respect to the amount of time it took to respond to your information request? (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND CHECK THE ANSWER THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES YOUR RATING FOR TIMELINESS OF RESPONSE FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE. CHECK ONLY ONE RATING.)

CASE # _____ Exceptional: _____
Highly Satisfactory: _____
Adequate: _____
Very Inadequate: _____

11. With regard to the quality of the answers you received from the USDA/USAID Technical Inquiries Group (TIG), how would you rate this service:

- _____ Exceptional -- answers to my inquiries tend to be very complete and comprehensive, and they meet my needs very well.
- _____ Highly responsive -- answers to inquiries tend to address most of my questions and issues, and meet most of my needs.
- _____ Generally responsive -- answers to inquiries tend to address at least a portion of my questions and issues. I often need to go beyond these responses to fully meet my needs.
- _____ Unresponsive -- answers to inquiries do not focus directly on my questions and issues; they have only limited value.

[THE FOLLOWING SERIES OF QUESTIONS ASK YOU TO RESPOND AT A MORE SPECIFIC LEVEL TO THE ISSUES RAISED IN QUESTION 11.

PLEASE ANSWER AS MANY OF THE QUESTIONS IN THE FOLLOWING SERIES AS NECESSARY TO ACCOUNT FOR EACH OF THE INFORMATION REQUESTS IDENTIFIED IN THE PERSONALIZED MEMORANDUM YOU RECEIVED.

Please enter the case numbers for specific information requests provided in your personalized memo as you answer the questions in this series.]

11.a. For the 1st information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how would you rate the quality of the answer to your request for information from USDA/USAID TIG? (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND, USING QUESTION 10 ABOVE AS A REFERENCE, CHECK THE ANSWER THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES YOUR RATING FOR QUALITY OF RESPONSE FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE. CHECK ONLY ONE RATING.)

CASE # _____ Highly Responsive: _____
Generally Responsive: _____
Unresponsive: _____

11.b. For the 2nd information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how would you rate the quality of the answer to your request for information from USDA/USAID TIG? (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND CHECK THE ANSWER THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES YOUR RATING FOR QUALITY OF RESPONSE FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE. CHECK ONLY ONE RATING.)

CASE # _____ Highly Responsive: _____
Generally Responsive: _____
Unresponsive: _____

11.c. For the 3rd information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how would you rate the quality of the answer to your request for information from USDA/USAID TIG? (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND CHECK THE ANSWER THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES YOUR RATING FOR QUALITY OF RESPONSE FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE. CHECK ONLY ONE RATING.)

CASE # _____ Highly Responsive: _____
Generally Responsive: _____
Unresponsive: _____

11.d. For the 4th information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how would you rate the quality of the answer to your request for information from USDA/USAID TIG? (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND CHECK THE ANSWER THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES YOUR RATING FOR QUALITY OF RESPONSE FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE. CHECK ONLY ONE RATING.)

CASE # _____ Highly Responsive: _____
 _____ Generally Responsive: _____
 _____ Unresponsive: _____

11.e. For the 5th information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how would you rate the quality of the answer to your request for information from USDA/USAID TIG? (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND CHECK THE ANSWER THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES YOUR RATING FOR QUALITY OF RESPONSE FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE. CHECK ONLY ONE RATING.)

CASE # _____ Highly Responsive: _____
 _____ Generally Responsive: _____
 _____ Unresponsive: _____

12. With what frequency do responses you receive to questions you send directly to USDA/USAID's Technical Inquiries Group (TIG) contain pertinent information from TIG or CDIE/DI about developing country experience or the experience of A.I.D. with respect to the topics on which you requested information. (PLEASE PROVIDE ONLY ONE ANSWER FOR EACH ITEM AND ANSWER ALL ITEMS a-b.)

Experiential Coverage of Responses	Frequency of Inclusion			
	Never	Infrequently (only occasionally)	Moderately often (about half the time)	Frequently (most of the time)
a. Responses contain pertinent information about the experience of developing countries with respect to the questions and topics included in my inquiries.				
b. Responses contain pertinent information about previous A.I.D. experience with respect to the questions and topics included in my inquiries.				

13

13. In your experience, how frequently has information provided by the USDA/USAID TIG had a direct impact on a development program or project financed by A.I.D. or by the host government with which you are working? As you answer, consider projects implemented by NGOs, universities, contractors, etc., which are financed by either A.I.D. or the host country. (PLEASE PROVIDE ONLY ONE ANSWER FOR EACH ITEM AND ANSWER ALL ITEMS a-i.)

	The Impact of Information on Development and Projects			
	Never	Infrequently (only occasionally)	Moderate (about half the time)	Frequently (most of the time)
For USAID Programs/Projects				
a. Information from TIG was used in the development of a PID/PAIP during its preparation.				
b. TIG information was used in the development of a PP/PAAD.				
c. TIG information was used between the time of a PP/PAAD and the start of project/program implementation.				
d. TIG information was used in a program/project after implementation was underway.				
e. TIG information was obtained and used following an evaluation.				
For host country programs/projects not financed by A.I.D.:				
f. Information from TIG directly was used in the development of a program/project design.				
g. TIG information was used during the implementation of a program/project.				
At the policy level: (Please answer even if redundant with questions above)				
h. TIG information was used to modify a host country's policies -- whether through an A.I.D. or host country program/project or through a policy dialogue.				
In the academic/training environment: (Please answer even if redundant with questions above)				
i. TIG information was used to develop or served as part of the curriculum for a university or other higher level academic course, or for a vocational or job-related training course -- whether through an A.I.D. host country program/project or directly as a result of requests for TIG information which USAID received from individuals/organizations that offer academic or other educational/training opportunities.				

7

[THE FOLLOWING SERIES OF QUESTIONS ASK YOU TO RESPOND AT A MORE SPECIFIC LEVEL TO THE ISSUES RAISED IN QUESTION 13.

PLEASE ANSWER AS MANY OF THE QUESTIONS IN THE FOLLOWING SERIES AS NECESSARY TO ACCOUNT FOR EACH OF THE INFORMATION REQUESTS IDENTIFIED IN THE PERSONALIZED MEMORANDUM YOU RECEIVED.

Please enter the case numbers for specific information requests provided in your personalized memo as you answer the questions in this series.

13.a. For the 1st information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how would you describe the impact of the information that was provided? (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND, USING QUESTION 13 ABOVE AS A REFERENCE, ENTER THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [a-i] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE IMPACT OF THE INFORMATION YOU RECEIVED FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ IMPACT: _____

13.b. For the 2nd information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how would you describe the impact of the information that was provided? (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND ENTER THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [a-i] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE IMPACT OF THE INFORMATION YOU RECEIVED FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ IMPACT: _____

13.c. For the 3rd information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how would you describe the impact of the information that was provided? (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND ENTER THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [a-i] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE IMPACT OF THE INFORMATION YOU RECEIVED FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ IMPACT: _____

13.d. For the 4th information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how would you describe the impact of the information that was provided? (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND ENTER THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [a-i] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE IMPACT OF THE INFORMATION YOU RECEIVED FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ IMPACT: _____

13.e. For the 5th information request identified on the personalized memorandum you received with this questionnaire, how would you describe the impact of the information that was provided? (WRITE IN THE CASE NUMBER AND ENTER THE LETTER OF THE ALPHABET [a-i] THAT BEST CHARACTERIZES THE IMPACT OF THE INFORMATION YOU RECEIVED FOR THIS SPECIFIC CASE.)

CASE # _____ IMPACT: _____

14. Please indicate with an X those topics on which you have requested information from TIG in the last five years and those topics on which your current and planned work focuses. (PLEASE PROVIDE ANSWERS FOR BOTH COLUMNS -- CHECK AS MANY BOXES IN EACH COLUMN AS ARE APPROPRIATE.)

TOPICS	Topics on which I have requested information from or USDA/USAID's Technical Inquiries Group (TIG) in the past five years	Topics on which my current and planned work focuses
a. Crops (Production, Processing and Marketing)		
a.1. Fruit and vegetables		
a.2. Spices and Nuts		
a.3. Flowers, Ornamentals		
a.4. Oilseeds		
a.5. Forest Products		
a.6. Fish and Shellfish		
a.7. Livestock		
a.8. Specialty/High value crops (e.g., mushrooms, coffee, etc.)		
a.9. Other crops		
b. Pest and Disease Management		
b.1. Pest management, including integrated pest management		
b.2. Diseases affecting crops, livestock, etc.		
b.3. Threats to human health, e.g., from toxins, pesticides		
c. Agribusiness		
c.1. Development, planning and management of agribusiness		
d. Markets and Trade		
d.1. Domestic/host country markets and trade issues		
d.2. U.S. market issues		
d.3. Third country, e.g., European or regional markets		
d.4. Trade policy issues, e.g., tariff policy, GATT negotiations, etc.		
e. Environment/Natural Resources		
e.1. Sustainable agriculture/ resource management, including conservation		
e.2. Agroforestry/sustainable forestry		

TOPICS	Topics on which I have requested information from or USDA/USAID's Technical Inquiries Group (TIG) in the past five years	Topics on which my current and planned work focuses
e.3. Coastal resources management/ fisheries protection		
e.4. Soil and water management		
e.5. Pollution and waste management		
e.6. Biodiversity/parks and protected areas		
e.7. Resource/environmental economics		
e.8. Environmental policies/regulations		
e.9. Global issues, e.g., climate		
f. Agricultural Policy		
f.1. Planning/Analytic Methods		
f.2. Policy issues, e.g., pricing government's role in the agricultural sector, etc.		
f.3. Land tenure/reform		
g. Area/Regional Information		
g.1. Country/regional studies on economics, the environment, i.e., situation reports		
h. Other		
h.1. Other topics--please write in the other topics on which you have requested or might need information in the future: _____ _____ _____ _____		

15. If there have been occasions when information you have received from the USDA/USAID Technical Inquiries Group (TIG) had a clear and specific impact on your work or the work of your mission, or on the thinking or work of PVO staff, contractors, developing countries representatives, etc., please relate these stories. (Do not exceed two impact stories).

a. Example One

b. Example Two

#1: Policy — Sample

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
001	Charles Strickland	Agricultural Development Officer (ADO)	Contract Farming	USAID/Nepal	91	Y
002	Robert Navin	Agricultural Economics Officer	Contract Farming	USAID/Indonesia	90	Y
003	Don Drga	Chief of the Agricultural Development Office	Land Use Planning	USAID/The Gambia	91	Y
004	John Balis	Development Officer	Land Reform	AID/ENE/TR/ARD	91	Y
005	Toure Vehi	Regional Agricultural Advisor	Sustainable Agriculture and Land Tenure in Africa	USAID/REDSO/WCA/Abidjan	92	—
006	Doral Watts	Agricultural Development Officer	Land Tenure and Land User Groups	USAID/Mali	91	
007	Hilary Lorraine	Environmental and Natural Resources Advisor	Agrarian Reform and Laws Affecting Indigenous People	USAID/ROCAP/Guatemala	92	
008	Kifle Negash	Agricultural Economist	Cash Crop Pricing and Food Crop Production	USAID/Zaire	91	
009	Guillermo Alvarado	Liaison Officer for the Mission's Agricultural Policy Project	Seed Policy	USAID/Honduras	92	Y
010	Gregg Baker	ADO	Non-Emergency Food Aid	USAID/Niger	92	
011	David Schroder	Agricultural Economics Officer	Policy and Trade in Developing Countries	USAID/Egypt and AID/LAC/DR/RD	91	
012	John Balis	Agribusiness Project Officer	Policy and trade in Developing Countries	AID/ENE/TR/ARD	91	Y
013	Neptalf Bonifaz	Director of IDEA (Instituto de Estrategías Agropecuarias) in Ecuador	Agricultural Policy Analysis	USAID/Ecuador	92	

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
014	Ken Randolph	Special Projects Officer	Policy and Programs for U.S. Agriculture Sector	USAID/Oman	92	Y
015	Larry Laird	ADO Chief	Agricultural Pricing Policy and Food Subsidies	USAID/Dominican Republic	92	
016	Gale Rozell	Chief of the LAC Rural Development Office	Agricultural Policy Analysis	AID/LAC/DR/RD	92	Y
017	Robert Navin	Agricultural Economist	Institutional Arrangements for Policymaking	USAID/Indonesia	92	Y
018	David Schroder		Books and Journals for an Agricultural Policy Unit	USAID/Egypt	92	
019	Larry Laird	Chief ADO	Seed Policy	USAID/Dominican Republic	91	
020	Fenton Sands	Agricultural Economist	Methodology for Agricultural Sector Assessments	USAID/Morocco	90	Y
021	Fenton Sands	Agricultural Economics Officer	Agricultural Policy Analysis	USAID/Morocco	90	Y
022	Dick Goldman	Deputy Chief of the Office of Agriculture and Rural Development	Agricultural Policy Analysis	USAID/Pakistan	90	Y
023	Naria Latino	Assistant Project Officer for Natural Resources Management in San Salvador	Natural Resource Policymaking	USAID/Ecuador, El Salvador	92	-

#2: P,P,M of High Value Crops – Sample

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
024	Blair Cooper	ADO	Tea Production	USAID/Guatemala	92	
025	Jim Butcher	OICD Research Program Leader	Arsenic Concentration in Rice	American Embassy/Bulgaria	90	Y
026	Stephen Szadek	ADO	Upland Rice Production	USAID/Jamaica	92	
027	Robert Armstrong	GDO	Sources of Alfafa Seed	USAID/Zimbabwe	92	—
028	Gale Hall	Mission Librarian	Cultivation of Asparagus	USAID/Jamaica	90	
029	John Mullenax	ADO	Production and Marketing of Avocado and Kiwi	USAID/Morocco	92	—
030	Thomas Olson	Agricultural Development Officer	Flour Fortification	USAID/Pakistan	90	Y
031	Dennis McCarthy	ADO	Seed Production	USAID/Burkina Faso	92	Y
032	Doug Pickett	Agricultural Development Officer	Production of Kenaf	USAID/Zimbabwe	90	—
033	Allison Brown	Agricultural Development Officer	Stevia Rebaudiana	USAID/Sri Lanka	90	—
034	Gale Hall	Mission Librarian	Sea Island Cotton	USAID/Jamaica	90	
035	Ernest Gibson	ARD Chief	Semi-processed and Processed Roots and Tubers	USAID/Cameroon	91	
036	Doug Pickett	Agricultural Development Officer	Production of Ramie	USAID/Zimbabwe	91	—
037	Tim Stewart	Forest Economist at Development Alternatives Inc.	Vapor Heat Treatment	USAID/Sri Lanka	92	

ND

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
038	Max Goldensohn	Chief of Party of the Mahaweli Agricultural and Rural Development Project	Cultivation, Processing, and Marketing Hearts of Palm	USAID/Sri Lanka	90	
039	John Mitchell	Agricultural Development Officer	Distribution, Cultivation, and Research on Lablab Purpureus	USAID/Niger	90	Y
040	Max Goldensohn	Chief of Party Mahaweli Agricultural and Rural Development Project	Kenaf Production	USAID/Sri Lanka	90	
041	John Thomas	Agricultural Development Officer	Production and Investment Potential of Jojoba	USAID/Madagascar	90	Y
042	Robert Navin	Chief of the Agricultural Research and Planning Division	Distillation of Essential Oils	USAID/Indonesia	92	Y
043	Robert Bailey	LACTECH Plant Protection and Quarantine Advisor	Cocoa Production and Marketing	USAID/RDO/C	92	Y
044	Sanath Reddy	Agricultural Development Officer	Black Pepper Production	USAID/REDSO/WCA	90	
045	Brad Miller	Forestry Advisor	Cultivation of Cumin	USAID/Afghanistan	91	
046	Doug Pickett	Agricultural Development Officer	Production of Peppermint and Spearmint	USAID/Zimbabwe	90	-
047	John Thomas	Agricultural Development Officer	Jojoba Information in French	USAID/Madagascar	90	Y
048	George Like	ADO Chief	Cashew Production	USAID/Belize	91	
049	Sanath K. Reddy	Chief Agriculture Development Officer	Kola Nut Production and Marketing	USAID/Guinea	92	
050	John Mitchell	ADO	Cashew Harvesting and Uses	USAID/Niger	92	Y

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
051	John Horton	Agribusiness Advisor	Prices and Yield Data for Various Oilseeds	USAID/Haiti	91	Y
052	Victor Amman	Team Leader of the Zambia Agribusiness and Management Support Project	Cultivation and Production of Essential Oils	USAID/Zambia	90	Y
053	Gabino Canto	Mission Cooperator	Production and Processing of Black Pepper	USAID/Belize	92	
054	Brian Rudert	A.I.D. Staff	Sesame Seed Production and Marketing	USAID/Nicaragua	92	Y
055	Robert Bailey	LACTECH Advisor	Vernonia, a New Industrial Oil Crop	USAID/Nicaragua	92	Y
056	Curtis Nissly	A.I.D. Staff	Tissue Culture of Apple and Peach	USAID/Pakistan	90	
057	John Horton	Agribusiness Advisor	Oil Pressing Equipment for Benzolive Fruit	USAID/Haiti	91	Y
058	Mireille Pelloux	Mission Librarian	Cultivation of Pimento and Chillies	USAID/Haiti	90	
059	Stephen Szadek	ADO	Citrus Industry Development	USAID/Jamaica	90	
060	Arturo Villalobos	Agricultural Economist	Production and Marketing of Raspberries and Blackberries	USAID/Costa Rica	91	Y
061	David Gardella	Chief ADO	Tropical Fruit Production Guides	USAID/Panama	90	Y
062	Terry Hardt	Program Supervisor	Cranberries	AID/FHA/FSP	92	
063	Max Goldensohn	Chief of Party Mahawehli Agricultural and Rural Development Project	Methods of Drying Grapes	USAID/Sri Lanka	92	

100

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
064	Joshua Mushauri	Agriculture and Natural Resources Development Officer	Latest Strawberry Varieties	USAID/Zimbabwe	92	—
065	Terry Hardt	Program Supervisor	Production of Chili Peppers	AID/FHA/FFP	92	
066	David Sowerwine	Agroenterprise Specialist	Propagation, Handling and Storage of Irish Potato	USAID/Nepal	92	Y
067	Ed McGowan		Cultivation and Processing of Saffron	AID/W	90	
068	Arturo Villalobos	Agricultural Economist	Cultivation of Pimento and Chilies	USAID/Costa Rica	91	Y
069	Jon Lindborg	Agricultural Development Officer	Tropical Viticulture	USAID/Indonesia	90	Y
070	Ney Lopez	Agroindustries Advisor in Cochabamba	Small-scale Drying of Fruits and Vegetables	USAID/Bolivia	92	—
071	Rudy Vigil	Agricultural Development Officer	Methods for Drying Grapes	USAID/Yemen	90	Y
072	Gary Lewis	Chief of the Agriculture and Rural Development Office	Drying Grapes	USAID/Afghanistan	91	Y
073	David Sowerwine	Agro-Enterprise Specialist for the Agro-Enterprise and Technology Project	Production and Processing of Baby Corn	USAID/Nepal	92	Y
074	John Fasullo	Agricultural Economist	Processing Fruits and Vegetables	AID/LAC/DR/RD	91	
075	Stanley Kuehn	National Cooperative Business Association Chief of Party	Production of Banana	USAID/El Salvador	92	Y
076	Randall Cummings	Agricultural Development Officer	Drought Tolerance in Legumes	USAID/Jordan	90	

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
077	Gabino Canto	Principal of the Belize College of Agriculture	Onion Production	USAID/Belize	92	
078	Fred Hunter	Project Manager of the Commercialization of Alternative Crops and Toledo Agricultural Marketing Projects	Irish Potato Production in the Sub-Tropics	USAID/Belize	92	

#3: PPM Other Crops/Commodities – Sample

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
079	Judith Brown	Mission Librarian	Environmental Requirements for Abattoir	USAID/REDSO/WCA	91	
080	Victor Amann	Chief of Party for the Zambia Agribusiness and Management Support Project	Milk Pasteurization	USAID/Zambia	91	Y
081	Robert Wilson	ADO	Milk and Dairy Plant Standards	USAID/RDO/C	92	
082	Carol August	Science Lecturer at the Belize College of Agriculture and Mission Cooperator	Small-scale Processing of Beef and Pork	USAID/Belize	92	
083	Robert Hanchett	Regional Environmental Coordinator	Regulations on Effluent from Slaughterhouses	USAID/REDSO/WCA	91	
084	Timothy Miller	ADO	Inspection and Grading of Livestock and Poultry	USAID/RDOC	92	
085	Rudolfo Griego	Chief of the Office of Food and Agriculture	Sorghum in Poultry Feed	USAID/Peru	92	Y
086	Joyce Turk	Livestock Specialist	Rubber Tree Seed as a Feed Component	AID/R&D/AGR	92	Y
087	Robert McColaugh	ADO	Equipment for Mixing and Quality Control of Feed Additives	USAID/Botswana	92	
088	Fred Qushair	Project Management Specialist	Ammonia Treatment of Straw	USAID/Jordan	90	Y
089	John Mitchell	Agricultural Development Officer	Haymaking in the Sahel	USAID/Niger	91	Y
090	Phillip Warren	Agricultural Development Officer	Poultry Production in Integrated Aquaculture	USAID/Bangladesh	90	Y

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
091	Meg Norton	Mission Librarian	Livestock Production in Southern Africa	USAID/Malawi	90	
092	Phil Warren	Agricultural Development Officer	Livestock Production in Bangladesh	USAID/Bangladesh	90	Y
093	Phil Warren	Agricultural Development Officer	Current Status of Embryo Transfer Technology	USAID/Bangladesh	90	Y
094	Blair Cooper	ADO	Embryo Transfer Technology	USAID/Guatemala	92	
095	Curt Reintsma	Agricultural Development Officer	Angora Rabbit Production	USAID/Lesotho	90	
096	Doral Watts	Project Officer	Livestock Production and Marketing in the Sahel	USAID/Mali	92	
097	Lydia Martinez	Office of Natural Resources, Agriculture and Decentralization	Catfish Culture	USAID/Philippines	92	Y
098	James Dry	Private Sector Policy Advisor	Shrimp Aquaculture	USAID/Kenya	92	
099	Robert Ralston	Agricultural Technology Project	Producing and Marketing Surimi	USAID/Thailand	90	-
100	Jorge Murillo-Yepes	Agronomist with the High Impact Agricultural Marketing and Production Project	Oyster Production and Identification	USAID/Grenada	90	-
101	Victor Amann	ZAMS Chief of Party	Biology of the Tanganyika Sardine in lake Kariba	USAID/Zambia	90	Y
102	Fatou Kader	Mission Librarian	Beekeeping	USAID/Senegal	92	Y
103	John Fasullo	Agricultural Economist	Silk Production	AID/LAC/DR/RD	91	

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
104	John Mitchell	ADO	Importers and Exporters of Gum Arabic	USAID/Niger	92	Y
105	Diedre Clifford	Export Promotion Officer	Aerospace-Industry Uses of Cochineal	USAID/Bolivia	92	Y
106	Diec're Clifford	Export Promotion Officer	Production of Carmine	USAID/Bolivia	92	Y
107	Don Harrington	ADO	Raising Iguanas	USAID/EI Salvador	92	Y
108	Sandra Severn	Private Enterprise Advisor	Ostrich Production	USAID/Kenya	91	
109	Gale Hall	Mission Librarian	Raising Alligators and Crocodiles	USAID/Jamaica	91	
110	Joyce Turk	Livestock Specialist	Ostrich Farming	AID/S&T/AGR	90	Y
111	Sandra Severn	Private Enterprise Advisor	Raising Crocodiles	USAID/Kenya	91	
112	Arturo Villalobos	Agricultural Economist	Apiculture and Management of the Africanized Bee	USAID/Costa Rica	91	Y
113	Chuck Hatch	Forest Planning and Management Project	Wood Characteristics of Paulownia Tomentosa	USAID/Pakistan	90	Y
114	David Delgado	Agricultural Development Officer	Utilization of Coconut Wood	USAID/Thailand	90	Y
115	David Delgado	Agricultural Development Officer	Utilization Properties and Preservation of Tropical Hardwoods	USAID/Thailand	90	Y
116	Wayne Williams	Regional Environmental Advisor	Fuelwood for Electricity Generation	USAID/ROCAP	92	
117	Ray Carpenter	Agricultural Development Officer	Jari Project in Brazil	AID/AFR and University of Wyoming	90	Y
118	Max Goldensohn	Chief of Party of the Mahawehli Agricultural and Rural Development Project	Utilization of Coconut Wood	USAID/Sri Lanka	92	

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
119	Bill Hart	DAI Chief of Party	Non-Timber Forest Products	USAID/Philippines	92	
120	Doyle Romans	Sawmill Specialist	Briquetting of Carbon	USAID/Honduras	91	—
121	Richard Peters	Agricultural Development Office Chief	Small-Scale Pulp and Paper Mills	USAID/Ecuador	90	

#4: Competitiveness – Sample

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
122	Gary Alex	Agricultural Development Officer	Removal of Fertilizer Subsidies	USAID/Sri Lanka	90	Y
123	Dennis Panther	Rural Development Officer	Biometric Methods of Crops Forecasting	USAID/Togo	90	—
124	C. C. Lu	Agricultural Economics Officer	Economic Evaluation of Proposed Research Projects	AID/S&T/AGR	90	
125	Larry Harris	IICA Representative and Mission Cooperator	Solar Energy	USAID/Haiti	90	
126	Rollo Ehrich	ADO Agricultural Development Officer	Technology Transfer and the Private Sector	USAID/Morocco	90	Y
127	Max Goldensohn	Chief of Party Mahaweli Agricultural and Rural Development Project	Technology Transfer by the Private Sector	USAID/Sri Lanka	92	
128	Fuad Qushair	Project Management Specialist	Nursery Codes	USAID/Jordan	90	Y
129	Gabino Canto	Principal of the Belize College of Agriculture	USDA Regulations and Quality Standards for Imported Meat	USAID/Belize	92	
130	Arturo Villalobos	Agricultural Economist	U.S. Codes for Tomato Paste and Tomato Paste Cans	USAID/Costa Rica	91	Y
131	Gary Alex	Agricultural Development Officer	Seed Import Regulations	USAID/Sri Lanka	91	Y
132	Leo Arao	Regional Pest Management Advisor	Pesticide Status List	USAID/REDSO/ESA	90	—
133	Don Harrington	Agricultural Development Officer	Food Inspection Procedures	USAID/El Salvador	90	Y

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
134	Ernesto Lucas	Agricultural Economist	Prices and Spreads for Fruits and Vegetables	AID/AFR/Uganda	91	--
135	Don Harrington	ADO	European Markets for Papayas and Potted Palms	USAID/EI Salvador	92	Y
136	Don Greenberg	Private Sector Advisor	European Markets for Horticultural Products	USAID/REDSO/ESA	90	
137	Lil Soto	Agricultural Economist	Markets for Four Horticultural Crops	USAID/Costa Rica	92	Y
138	Susan Bain	West Indies Tropical Produce Support Project Administrator	Marketing Fruits and Vegetables	USAID/RDOC/C	92	
139	Sharon Fee	ADO	U.S. Exporters of Chicken Feed, Broiler-Hatching Eggs and Fresh and Frozen Chicken Products	USAID/RDO/South Pacific	92	Y
140	Carol Armstrong US Business and Commerce Center	Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism of St. Lucia	Importation of Perfume	USAID/RDO/C/SL Lucil	92	
141	Steve Maranz	TropSoils Project	Dalbergia Melanoxylon: Marketing Information	USAID/Niger	92	--
142	Joyce Turk	Livestock Specialist	Import/Export Data for Llama and Alpaca Wool	AID/S&T/AGR/AP	91	Y
143	Stephen Szadek	Agricultural Development Officer	U.S. Sugar Exports	USAID/Jamaica	91	
144	Jerry La Pitus	Economic Analyst with A.I.D.'s Economic and Social Data Service	Data on Grains and Other Commodities	AID/PPC/CDIE	90	
145	Mireille Peloux	Mission Librarian	Economics of Coffee Marketing	International Organization for Immigration	91	

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
146	George Like for Eulalio Garcia	ADO	Marketing Tropical Root Crops	USAID/Belize Ministry of Ag. & Fisheries	92	
147	Jonathan Sleeper	ADO	Flour Milling Profits in the LAC Region	USAID/Bolivia	92	Y
148	Arturo Villalobos	Agricultural Economist	Imports of Palm Hearts	USAID/Costa Rica	92	Y
149	Yvette Griffiths	Mission Librarian	U.S. Imports of Leatherleaf Fern	USAID/Jamaica	91	Y
150	Sandra Holmberg	Mission Contractor	Establishing a Tissue Culture Laboratory	USAID/Egypt	91	
151	Stephen Szadek	Agricultural Development Officer	Farming Systems Research	USAID/Belize	90	
152	Audon Trujillo	Agricultural Development Officer	Agricultural Extension	USAID/Peru	91	
153	Michael Fuchs-Carsch	Agricultural Development Officer	African Research on Zea Mays	AID/AFR/TR/ANR	91	Y
154	Tim Miller	Agricultural Development Officer	Current Research on Tropical Fruits	USAID/RDOC	90	
155	Jeffrey Allen	Natural Resources Officer	Agricultural Extension	USAID/Belize	92	
156	Richard Newburg	ADO	Promoting Export Growth	USAID/Burundi	92	Y
157	John Balis	Agricultural Development Office Chief	Cooperative Marketing	USAID/Cameroon	90	Y
158	Jerry Brown	OICD Trade and Investment Program Leader	Publications for an Agribusiness Information Center	ONI	91	
159	Harvey Blackburn	Agricultural Production Division	World Cotton Trade & Outlook	R&D/AGR/AP	91	

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
160	Brian Rudert	A.I.D. Staff	Market Information for Major Commodities	USAID/Nicaragua	92	Y
161	Dr. George Wilson	Director of the USAID-sponsored Jamaica Agricultural Research Programme	U.S. and European Markets for Tropical Commodities	USAID/Jamaica	92	Y
162	David Schroder	A.I.D. Staff	Agribusiness	USAID/Egypt	91	
163	Ken Weiss	Agribusiness and Trade Advisor	Market Studies of Horticultural Crops	AID/LAC/RD	91	Y
164	Ray Renfro	Agricultural Development Officer	Public and Private Seed Corporation Laws	USAID/Bangladesh	90	Y
165	Brian Rudert	A.I.D. Staff	Market Information on Non-Traditional Crops	USAID/Nicaragua	92	Y
166	Heinrich Tschinkel	Regional Forestry Specialist	Government Regulations on Logging Concessions	USAID/ROCAP/ Guatemala	92	
167	Karen Burress	USDA/OICD RSSA Agribusiness Consultant	Marketing in West Africa	Agribusiness Committee Office of New Initiatives (ONI)	92	
168	Rodney Kite	Agricultural Economist	Citations on Agriculture and Economics in Senegal	USAID/Senegal	90	Y
169	Gale Rozell	LAC/DR/RD Chief	Native Crops of the South American Highlands	AID/LAC/DR/RD	90	Y
170	Robert Weaver	Agricultural Economist	Agricultural Production and Marketing Systems in Two African Countries	USAID/Zaire	91	--

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
171	Patrick Peterson	Director of the Office of Agriculture	Agriculture and Environmental Degradation in the N.I.S.	AID/R&D/AGR	92	Y
172	Craig Anderson	Agricultural Development Officer	European Markets for Horticultural Products	USAID/Honduras	91	Y
173	Fatou Kader	Mission Librarian	Export Promotion in Africa	USAID/Senegal	92	Y
174	Donald Drga	Agricultural Development Officer	Nature Field Guides	USAID/The Gambia	91	Y
175	Gary Alex	Mahaweli Ag. & Rural Dev. Proj.	Japanese Import Regulations	USAID/Sri Lanka	91	Y
176	Larry Laird	Agricultural Development Office Chief	OICD's Trade and Investment Program	USAID/Dominican Republic	91	
177	Larry Laird	Chief ADO	Import Rejections	USAID/Dominican Republic	92	

#5: Environment – Sample

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
178	Ray Meyer	Soil and Water Specialist	Drainage of Agricultural Land	AID/R&D/AGR	92	Y
179	Joseph McGann	Project Officer	Hydroponics	USAID/Belize	91	
180	Abdel Berrada	NAARP Soils Agronomist	Soil and Crop Spatial Variability	USAID/Niger	92	—
181	Guillermo Alvarado	Liaison Officer for the Agricultural Policy Project	Policies for Sustainable Agriculture	USAID/Honduras	92	Y
182	George Like	ADO	Sustainable Agricultural Practices	USAID/Belize	92	
183	Don Harrington	ADO	Population and the Environment	USAID/El Salvador	92	Y
184	Kenneth Prussner	Chief of the Office of Natural Resources	Sustainable Natural Resource Management	USAID/Philippines	91	Y
185	Robert Wilson	Agricultural Development Officer	Processing Garbage into Compost	USAID/Honduras	90	
186	Carl Gallegos	Chief Forester	Forest Based Private Enterprise Development	AID/R&D/ENR	92	Y
187	Darell McIntyre	Chief of the Agricultural Development Office	Watershed and National Park Management Programs	USAID/Bolivia	91	
188	Tadesse Kibreab	Agricultural Research Technical Advisor	Soil Erosion	USAID/Mali	90	Y
189	Jeffrey Allen	Natural Resources Officer	Agroforestry Promotion	USAID/Belize	92	
190	John Mitchell	ADO	Estimating the Age of Trees	USAID/Niger	92	Y
191	David Atteberry	Project Officer	Economic Appraisal of Agroforestry Projects	USAID/Haiti	90	

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
192	Alan Goozner	Statistician with the Zambia Agricultural Training, Policy, and Institutional Development Project (ZATPID II)	Fertilizer and Pesticide Guides	USAID/Zambia	90	Y
193	Leo Arao	Regional Pesticide Advisor	Toxicity and Environmental Hazards of Six Pesticides	USAID/REDSO/ESA	91	—
194	Paul Fritz	AID Representative	Protective Clothing for Applying Pesticides	USAID/Chile	92	Y
195	Richard Owens	Deputy Chief of the Agricultural Development Office	Asbestos Health Concerns	USAID/Nicaragua	92	Y
196	Wayne Williams	USDA Plant Pathologist and Team Leader	Biological Control of Insects Using Nematodes	ROCAP	90	
197	John Hyslop	USDA Agricultural Economist and Mission Consultant	Control of Thrips Palmi	USDA Acting Chief, Africa, Asia, and Europe	90	Y
198	Craig Anderson	ADO	Control of Insects in Small-Scale Storage	USAID/Honduras	91	Y
199	Carol August	Science Lecturer at the Belize College of Agriculture	Plant Physiology and Biological Control of Agricultural Pests	USAID/Belize	92	
200	Kenneth Ellis	Director of the Rural Development Office	Diseases of Field Crops	USAID/El Salvador	91	Y
201	Paul Fritz	A.I.D. Representative	Aeration of Grain in Storage	USAID/Chile	91	Y
202	Tully Cornick	Agricultural Development Officer	Control of Snowpea Diseases	USAID/ROCAD	91	
203	Wayne Williams	Fruit Production Specialist	Thrips Taxonomist	USAID/Guatemala	91	

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
204	Fuad Qushair	Project Management Specialist	Tomato Yellow Leaf Curl Virus	USAID/Jordan	92	Y
205	Robert Bailey	Plant Quarantee Advisor	Controlling the Bean Pod Borer	AID/LAC/DR/RD	90	Y
206	Richard Fisher	Highlands Agricultural Division Project	Control of Bemisia Tabaci	USAID/Guatemala	91	Y
207	Rudy Vigil	Agricultural Development Officer	Rinderpest	USAID/Burkino Faso	91	Y
208	Phil Warren	Agricultural Development Officer	Bovine Spongiform Encephalopathy	USAID/Bangladesh	90	Y
209	Fuad Qushair	Project Management Specialist	Screwworm Fly Eradication	USAID/Jordan	90	Y
210	Flynn Fuller	ADO	Monitoring and Reducing Pesticide Pollution of Ground-Water	USAID/Egypt	92	Y
211	Ray Norman	Water Management Specialist	Water Lifting and Pumping Technologies	USAID/Niger	90	—
212	Fuad Qushair	Project Management Specialist	Irrigation and Water Quality Monitoring	USAID/Jordan	92	Y
213	Robert McColaugh	ADO	Cloud Seeding and Artificial Groundwater Recharge	USAID/Botswana	91	
214	Pat Peterson	Acting ADO Chief	Alternatives to Opium Poppy Cultivation	Office of the A.I.D. Rep./Afghanistan R&D/AGR	92	Y
215	Wilbur Scarborough	Rural Development Officer	Hydroponics	USAID/Indonesia	90	Y
216	Jorge Calvo	Agricultural Specialist	Polyester Row Covers	USAID/Bolivia	91	—

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
217	Ken Prussner	Agricultural Development Officer	Use of Greenhouses in the Hot, Humid Tropics	USAID/Philippines	91	Y
218	John Nittler	HIGHLANDS Agricultural Division Project	Regenerative Agriculture	USAID/Guatemala	92	
219	Tomás Dousdebes	Director of Development for FUNDAGRO (Fundación para el Desarrollo Agropecuario)	Organic Farming	USAID/Ecuador	92	
220	Blair Cooper	ADO	Sustainable Agriculture	USAID/Guatemala	92	
221	Ron Senykoff	ADO	Sustainable Agriculture	USAID/Pakistan	90	Y
222	Rafael Rosario	Chief of the Natural Resources and Environment Division	Global Warming	USAID/Honduras	92	
223	David Schroder	Agricultural Economics Officer	Renewable Natural Resources	USAID/Egypt/R&D AGRIEP	90	
224	John Thomas	ADO Chief	Natural Resources Management	USAID/Madagascar	92	Y
225	Kathryn Saterson	Natural Resources Officer	Importance of Plant and Animal Resources	USAID/Thailand	91	
226	Christine Adamczyk	Health Development Officer	Composting Latrines	USAID/El Salvador	92	--
227	Fatou Kader	Mission Librarian	Green Manures and Organic Fertilizer	USAID/Senegal	92	Y
228	T. Vaishnav	Senior Lecturer in Civil Engineering at Botswana Polytechnic	Design and Construction of Waste Stabilization Ponds	USAID/Botswana	92	
229	George Taylor	Agricultural Development Office Chief	Impact of Policy Reform on Natural Resources	USAID/Niger	91	

Case No.	Name of Recipient	Title of Recipient	Title of Packet Received	Post of Recipient at Time of Request	FY	Questionnaire Returned/Analyzed
230	Charles Philoctete	Coordinator of the Targeted Watershed Management Project	Park Management	USAID/Haiti	90	Y
231	Charles-Emile Philoctete	Project Coordinator for the Targeted Watershed Management Project	Biosphere Reserves	USAID/Haiti	90	Y
232	John Thomas	Agricultural Development Officer	Effectiveness of Dolomite as a Soil Amendment	USAID/Madagascar	90	Y
233	Tadesse Kibreab	Agricultural Research Technical Advisor	Soil and Water Management Research	USAID/Mali	90	Y
234	Jerry Bauer	Environmental Management Specialist	Plant Species Suitable for Erosion Control	USAID/Guatemala	91	
235	Camara Ibrahima	RDO Specialist	Soil Conservative Control	USAID/Guinea	91	Y
236	Sharon Fec	RDO	Soil Erosion	S/PA	92	Y

TIG ASSESSMENT INTERVIEWS WITH KEY A.I.D. STAFF

THURSDAY, JANUARY 11, 1993

1:15 p.m.	Roberto Martin, CDIE/DI (ENV), 206E SA 18	(703) 875-4915
2:30 p.m.	Rosemarie Depp, LEG (AG & ENV)	647-8441
3:30 p.m.	Wayne Nilsestuen, LAC (AG), 2242 NS	647-8162
4:00 p.m.	Ben Stoner, AFR (AG & ENV) 2744 NS	647-7202

FRIDAY, JANUARY 12, 1993

9:15 a.m.	Molly Kux, ASIA (ENV) 3214 NS	736-7463
10:00 a.m.	Roger Bloom, ASIA (AG) 3214 NS	647-9828
11:00 a.m.	Jeff Brokaw, LAC (ENV), 2242 NS	647-8070
1:00 p.m.	Twig Johnson, (ENV) 509 SA-18	(703) 875-4106
2:00 p.m.	Patrick Peterson (AG), 409 SA-18	(703) 875-4208

TUESDAY, JANUARY 16, 1993

10:30 a.m.	Larry Sairs, POL, 3892 NS	
2:15 p.m.	George Hill, OPS, 3947 NS	647-8558
1:15 p.m.	Hariadene Johnson, TRANSITION, 3942 NS	647-5482

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 1993

9:15 a.m.	John Eriksson, CDIE, 311B SA-18	(703) 875-4314
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USER COMMENTS ON TIG SERVICES

COMMENTS FROM ASIA

The program has been, in my opinion, highly successful. Without it, we, as technical project planners and implementers, would be left with few sources for technical information. The program is highly responsive; its personnel are dedicated. Every other technical officer I know has high regard for the USDA/USAID program and its personnel. We try to use the resource as much as we can. (USAID/Bangladesh)

I did not want to miss a chance to give TIG's excellent staff a "thank you" for the rapid responses, the outstanding research and thought which goes into their work and to thank them on behalf of my colleagues at the Ministries of Agriculture (in the South Pacific) for the information they have supplied. Without this "lifeline to technology" we would indeed sink behind the times. Best wishes to the TIG staff and thanks for your interest and support. (USAID/South Pacific)

(1) Program must be continued -- we in the field need this source of information. (2) Further information about the program would be helpful, i.e., use of TIG program reference to evaluations. (3) Many thanks should go to the TIG "tech staff" who dig out the information. (USAID/Pakistan)

COMMENTS FROM THE NEAR EAST

The program should be continued because it is one of the only places people overseas can turn to for information. (USAID/Egypt)

E-Mail will greatly increase the use of and demand on this service. Any negative conclusions from this evaluation should be held in abeyance until the service experiences the impact of more convenient, i.e., electronic access. (USAID/Morocco)

I would like to comment USDA/USAID TIG on a very fine job they are doing in responding to our requests for information. I have been with A.I.D. for over thirty years and consider this service to be worthwhile and supportive to the field. It should be continued. (USAID/Jordan)

Thanks to the CDIE staff for a job well done in locating and providing development documentation in the past, and future. (USAID/Oman)

102

COMMENTS FROM AFRICA

I have always received excellent service from this group. They are very prompt in their responses. At time when they were very busy, they would send me a small package of information with a note saying that more information would follow. I thought that was really great as the information that they sent was really useful and I knew that my request was being worked on. Material sent through the pouch can take from 2 to 4 weeks to arrive at post. This is if you are lucky. The length of time it took for the requests to arrive at post is for me of secondary importance, it is more important to have the material available, as the material sent is most likely the most complete file on the subject existing in the country. While stationed in Washington I had the occasion to request material on Varroa mites on honeybees for work that was being done in Egypt. I was really surprised that the turn around time on my request was less than one week. I even had two phone calls from the USDA group telling me what they had found and asking if more information was required. I call that excellent service. In summary, I think this is one of our better programs. It allows officers stationed in the field to acquire technical information on a wide range of subjects. It has been my experience that the mission library is well supplied with evaluation reports, reports from consultants, economic data and policy material. But the library has none or almost no material relating to technical subjects. I have always been involved in the implementation of technical programs. If I need information on soils, water, irrigation, apples, dates or any other technical subject I have found that the best place to turn is the USDA/USAID Technical Inquiries Group. (USAID/Burkina Faso)

I was very impressed with the thoroughness of the responses we received. There was a clear effort to dig up as much pertinent information as possible to give us a complete response. I recall in one case the articles trickled in over several weeks as they became available to TIG, and being pleased that they followed up so well until the job was finished. (USAID/Burundi)

In general, TIG provides an excellent response service. Without it we would be hard pressed to seek the technological information elsewhere. (USAID/Gambia)

I have always been impressed by the quickness and completeness of the USDA/USAID TIG responses to my requests for information. The program has never failed me. My requests are followed up with status reports to inform me of the actions being taken, and when I can expect to receive a response if there was a problem in locating the right materials. Even after I have received the requested materials, I am contacted to inquire if I am satisfied or need additional information. Although the specific impact on mission programs cannot be easily measured, the general impact of the USDA/USAID TIG program on the overall effectiveness of technical officers and their relations with host country counterparts is significant. For USAID missions with little access to technical and other up-to-date reference materials, the program has provided a valuable service. I hope it will be continued. (USAID/Madagascar)

This is an extremely valuable service to agriculture officers that receive numerous requests for specific information, especially in smaller missions. A.I.D.'s ability, through TIG, to quickly respond to a broad range of requests for information is greatly appreciated by host country researchers. (USAID/Senegal)

COMMENTS FROM LATIN AMERICA

You have a very good service. (USAID/Bolivia)

Please do not underestimate the importance of information service for ad hoc host country requests. As A.I.D. becomes known for its ability to provide relevant information, our credibility proportionally increases with respect to other program and policy areas of direct interest to A.I.D. (USAID/Chile)

Excellent service. Please continue as is. Thank you. (USAID/Costa Rica)

I have always appreciated the information available on what ever task I am carrying-out. It helps to understand the issues faster and more thoroughly and avoids repeating unnecessary mistakes. Nevertheless, in my previous jobs I have not been supported by a service that delivers timely relevant information. The USDA/USAID TIG Program has proven to be superb, and unknown in other organizations that I am aware of. The information it provides saves thousands of dollars in TA, and it would do more, if officers used its services. (USAID/Honduras)

In Jamaica, TIG information helped us select specific ornamentals for research.

I suspect a great deal of the service and support was a result of Pat Wetmore. I always felt she could/would have provided more of her excellent service if she had more funds. It's time to send out a notice telling the field about this service and how to access it easily. Are they connected to E-mail? (USAID/Peru)

104

COMMENTS FROM A.I.D./WASHINGTON

I think it is an excellent program. Saves me a lot of time frequently

During my eighteen years with A.I.D. I have always obtained exceptional service/support from the USAID/USDA TIG when specific technical information requests were made. Their assistance has been invaluable in facilitating agriculture/rural development activities in the field.

I certainly appreciate the excellent service TIG has provided over the years! Staff is exceptional!

I was introduced to the TIG program soon after I joined A.I.D. in 1976. I was told then by colleagues, who had been with A.I.D. for years, how valuable that resource would be to me, particularly once I was in the field. They were absolutely correct. I have accessed information from them consistently ever since and their support has been excellent and extremely helpful in my work. I'll continue to use them and I always introduce their services to new staff, etc., so they know about the program. Not everyone knows about this resource and maybe something can be done along this line.

This is a good service. Thank you.

Over the years (14 of which were spent overseas) TIG has in many cases been the only source of information on a wide variety of subjects. It has helped me to be better informed than other donors on specific matters, has been a starting point for new designs, and in several situations key to advising the host government on what other LDCs were doing. Its services are timely, relevant, unique, well-researched and dependable.

In general, I was quite pleased with the materials provided to me, and the thoroughness with which searches were conducted. I highly commend the TIG staff for the professional manner with which they processed my requests.

COMMENTS FROM OTHER TIG USERS

I enjoy dealing with the TIG staff and sharing information with them.

(Our) project was visited by USDA/USAID TIG personnel. Their service is very valuable and should be continued. Their expertise is specialized and the USDA pool of technical assistance is probably the best in the world.

I would like the TIG personnel to feel encouraged to open and maintain a dialogue with me in order that searches be most effective. Officially requests flow through the mission, but it would be helpful to interact on a working basis. For this TIG would need a communication budget.

I have been a user of the TIG for the past thirteen years while working on either PASA or contract arrangements. Information was requested on a wide variety of topics and in each case the materials provided were useful, well researched and pertinent. It is evident that the TIG staff spends adequate time and effort to thoroughly search the literature to provide relevant and useful information.

I was the Agribusiness Advisor in USAID/Haiti Office of Private Enterprise from 1987-1991. Since my Personal Services Contract ended in October 1991 following the coup d'etat and the freezing of all programs, I do not have with me the extensive TIG files which would help me answer more completely. I am taking the time to respond however because I was a frequent user of what for me was an invaluable service.

Most of the information TIG sent us helped us to improve our understanding of the different product markets we asked TIG to tell us about. Thus, we were able to make a better product which was consistent with market studies and complemented feasibility studies.

The services I have received in the past from USDA TIG have been inestimable as a resource in the performance of my job as AID Advisor. In mission's that I have worked in the reputation of TIG has been one of high regard, especially in the thoroughness of the information provided. The only fault that can be found with this group is it is underfinanced, which limits staffing and response time. AID should provide additional funding so this service can expand and continue to provide their excellent service. I plan in the future to continue to rely on the USDA TIG as an information backstopping source.

I would rate the information received as exceptional, very complete and comprehensive. It meets our needs quite well.

TIG is staffed with a capable, dedicated leader and a resourceful group. TIG goes beyond simply responding to requests for information, it uses its own creative resources to help define issues, broaden the query base and expand the value of its responses.

STORIES ABOUT THE IMPACT OF TIG INFORMATION

STORIES ABOUT ASIA

In **Bangladesh**, the poultry-cum-aquaculture production information was particularly useful to help educate host country project staff and government staff on the benefits and techniques of integrated aquaculture production. This program was well received, particularly by female villagers/farmers. The project became one of the "show and tell" activities for A.I.D. staff, visitors from AID/W, and for other donors as well as for the government.

We are assisting the commercial ginger growers of **Fiji** to increase their exports of fresh and processed ginger to the U.S. and other Pacific Rim markets. However, ginger farmers are using some of the steepest, most fragile lands to grow their crop. High top soil losses and erosion are the result. We are TIG information on "Soil Erosion in the Tropics" with the Ministry of Agriculture staff and trying to design and test more sustainable agricultural practices. TIG information is an excellent source for planning to measure and control soil erosion. Another example of the impact of TIG information in **Fiji** comes from the information that Bob Aldrich of TIG has supplied us with on high value horticultural crops. The package we were sent focused on A.I.D.'s experience with quarantine, production, processing and marketing of high value niche crops in Latin America. This information has enabled us to save a good deal of resources we would otherwise have spent to get information on processes, quarantines, spice markets, etc. Bob obviously put a great deal of thought and work into his response as he went directly to APHIS and other sources which were above and "beyond the call".

Information from TIG was extremely valuable to our **Indonesian** counterpart scientists who have no access to current literature on rubber seeds. These scientists have developed a rubber-seed supplement to feed sheep -- significant because rubber seeds are free, plentiful & considered a waste product. Small ruminant producers are usually tenant farmers on government rubber plantations. The A.I.D.-funded small ruminants collaborative research support program (SR-CRSP) has stimulated private sector development whereby rubber tappers who raise sheep have increased their average annual incomes by 40%.

The information collected on glassmaking answered several technical questions which allowed USAID to rule this out as an income generating option in rural **Nepal**, even though the availability of most of the ingredients in glass are in plentiful supply.

The information provided to us has become a key part of the facts that local entrepreneurs use to begin or improve their businesses. Information which TIG contributed is not part of local tissue culture, livestock and vegetable projects -- or will become part of them as the slow process of development in Nepal picks up momentum. Good information is like good foundation stones.

The Edible Oil Sector study in Pakistan was designed to change the Government's policy to liberalize the entire industry, i.e., change its pricing policy and privatize the ghee processing plants. As a result of the project, major policy changes were made. However, much of the analysis and information generated was dependent on information provided by the USDA/USAID Technical Inquiries Group. As team leader, I depended heavily on the TIG for information, on a timely basis, to supply the 28 consultants involved in the project over a one year period. TIG performed admirably.

TIG materials are also being used in Pakistan to support a "strategic planning" group in the Pakistan Agricultural Research Council working with BOSTID (The Board on Science and Technology in Development), and to support management initiatives in the Government of Pakistan at the mid-operational level and at senior management levels. Materials on agricultural sustainability were extremely valuable for the planning and implementation of Agricultural Sustainability Conferences which provided information to senior staff within the Government of Pakistan.

In Thailand, TIG work resulted in assistance to the Government as it refined a project proposal. For one sub-project, that initially was not approved, was greatly enhanced technically and the technology which was to be transferred was clearly defined as a result of TIG information.

STORIES ABOUT EUROPE

Information from a USDA respondent to the TIG Assessment Questionnaire who worked with A.I.D. in Sofia, Bulgaria indicates a TIG response played an important role in identifying the agriculture and health-related issues associated with an important U.S. effort to assist a Bulgarian effort to address problems arising from heavy metals contamination. As indicated in a cable which was attached to the TIG Assessment Questionnaire response: "Post strongly supports AID and USDA efforts to continue to assist Bulgaria as the country comes to grips with possibly severe heavy metals contamination problems. Bulgaria has shown that it can absorb and act upon the complex technical advice and assistance which would lie at the heart of an enhanced and extended program in this area."

STORIES ABOUT AFRICA

While I was on a TDY to Chad, a PVO had encountered a thrips problem in the region in which it was working. I arranged to provide information on thrips through TIG. I believe that what was sent was an information packet that had been prepared for another client.

The Government of Senegal is now focusing on increasing private sector activities and encouraging the involvement of the private sector in agricultural activities. This is the reason why some books, such as "Export Promotion in Africa", "Beekeeping" and "Green Manure Organic Fertilizers" are always appreciated by private sector businessmen, University professors and other experts involved in agricultural activities. Therefore, concerning these books many people told us that they were very useful reference documents for their activities. Within the mission, such documents have been used as references during the design of a new agricultural research project.

Other information provided to the mission by TIG was used to develop a detailed, annotated bibliography for policy studies in or on Senegal since 1984. This bibliography served as a foundation for a comprehensive Agricultural Sector Analysis of Senegal, which had substantial impact on USAID, Government of Senegal and other donor policy.

Information collected in Somalia in relation to the Central Rangelands Project was very useful to a whole host of people. It aided people on my staff, contract staff and the counterpart (host government) staff. It was also used by the Faculty of Aquaculture staff and U.S. instructors. The information was instrumental in project research and teaching activities and in planning implementation workplans.

Uganda imports most of its edible oil as a result of the breakdown of the cotton industry. Cottonseed was formerly the source of oil. In order to rehabilitate the oil industry, a new oil seed had to be introduced. Research did some work on sunflower seed introduction, however, information from TIG helped us to set up a seed multiplication scheme and introduce other oilseeds. The new private sector policy is to use other oil crops to compliment the small amount of cotton seed available. TIG played an important role in this development. The Government of Uganda and the private sector are supporting the resulting change.

The Farm Chemicals Handbook was an invaluable asset in identifying chemicals on the Zambian "Agricultural Pastoral Production Commercial Farms Survey." It enabled a first time summary of this type of data which was published in August 1990 in Agricultural Pastoral Production, Commercial Farms 1986-1987. The timely procurement of the guide assisted in a timely release of the data. The ZATIDD project thus assisted in publishing an 11 year backlog of data, pesticide use included."

STORIES ABOUT LATIN AMERICA

We needed to know whether Bolivian miller's margins under a Title III wheat program were unusual. Information provide through CDIE showed that they were not unusual, i.e., they were typical. This information dispelled a lot of accusations and claims against millers on the part of the Government of **Bolivia.**

Information provided on Palm Heart was crucial to the Ministry of Agriculture for the implementation of a new crop program that includes 1,500 small farmers. Also it was very important in terms of "most current" information available regarding marketing, sales and market perspective. A Palm Heart program is currently a good success story among **Costa Rican** farmers.

A lacuna in the **Haitian** institutional framework, as is the case to varying degrees throughout Latin America and the Caribbean, is the lack of any ready source of information on new agricultural products and markets. We received a steady flow of ad hoc requests concerning prospective agribusiness investments. Partly in response, we were in the midst of designing a project known as AGLINK when the program was frozen. We intended that TIG would have continued to supply valuable information to (this) unit. TIG had done a superlative job since the early stage of development of the AGLINK concept when they supplied me with information on dozens of products. In 1988 they helped me to identify a series of ethnic crops and specialty fruits. They showed great initiative by going to the Sub-Tropical Research Station staff in Homestead and the National Agricultural Research Service in Beltsville to provide background and even a set of slides for these exotic commodities. The information and slides were later incorporated into an article on an agricultural diversification plan for Haiti. In 1990 TIG supplied me with information about another series of exotic crops from South-East Asia in response to a request from Haitian agribusinesses. These businesses went into production of these exotic crops, creating about 300 jobs each for 5-6 months and exporting nearly \$1 million in produce the first year. This was one of the first times that Haitian exporters became directly involved in production.

In Honduras, information on seed policies helped a policy contractor to convince (i.e. provide confidence to) local government and private sector authorities on the need to privatize the seed industry. The information showed that it works better if the industry is privatized. It also contributed to the revision of the Seed Law. (A second example of impact from Honduras involved the way) information on sustainable agriculture helped me to understand better the issues involved, and therefore contributed in the design of a PP for the amendment to the Policy Analysis and Implementation Project. This amendment has a subcomponent that addresses Natural Resources and Environmental Policies.

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