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DISCUSSION DRAFT

THE AID DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION SERVICE

INTERIM REPORT TO THE "IDE" COMMITTEE

March 17, 1975

INTRODUCTION

AID Memory, information needs and information availability, have been the subject of numerous committees and much discussion. Considering prior difficulties in effecting improvement, and the practical needs and availability of information, the committee has established as its objective:

To provide project designers, whether they be in USAIDs or AID/W, with any and all information they require to ensure that AID projects not only utilize, but advance, the state-of-the-art in development.

From this objective, established after much informal discussion among the committee members, follows the committee's first recommendation to the SOG:

AID should establish as a priority, taking precedence over all other project support activities, the providing of appropriate information to project designers.

The committee also recognizes that there are many sources of information and information referral services outside of the Agency. Therefore, we recommend that:

The Agency not commit "a priori" to the maintenance of a comprehensive data base serving project designers, but instead mount an aggressive accession and utilization program concerned with functional needs -- providing information. We defer the question as to which data need to be maintained and processed in AID.

The committee also recommends that the SOG allocate resources consistent with the above recommendations to establish a "Development Information Service" (DIS) the explicit objectives of which are to meet short-term information needs and to evolve into a full-service information capability.

To ensure that the Development Information Service has the desired characteristics of leverage, ability to call on resources as required, and freedom from organizational predispositions, we make the following recommendations regarding setting up such a Development Information Service:

- A. The DIS be a part of an organization having the greatest momentum for achieving related objectives. (PPC's related work with the evaluation system, and TAB's orientation to information as a development tool make both of these plausible choices.)
- B. That the head of the DIS organization be chosen by SOG, and that he report on progress to SOG every month.
- C. That all members of the DIS, regardless of prior affiliations must serve for a period not to exceed two years. At the end of two years, the DIS must have a permanent home, permanent methods of operation, and such permanent staff as it may require.
- D. That the DIS activities be closely coordinated and possibly integrated with, such P-BAR initiatives as the country program data bank and the performance-oriented MIS.

ROUTINE DIS INFORMATION PACKAGES

Routine information packages can be provided project designers based on the following sequence:

<u>Information Package</u>	<u>Event Triggering DIS Response</u>
A	DAP
B	PID
C	PRP
D	PP
E	PIO/T

NON-ROUTINE INFORMATION NEEDS

Non-routine information needs will, in the near term at least, be met by ad hoc utilization committees moderated and supported by the DIS. The user will be the key committee member. Others are in support of him. A typical user might be the individual responsible for a Spring Review, . . . formulator of a major program initiative, etc.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS

The job before us is to serve project designers and serve them well. To do this we define three basic non-exclusive categories of information:

1. Technical Information
2. "Context" and Baseline Information
3. Problem, Project, Program, and Management Information

As mentioned, these are overlapping sets of information. AID program and project information will both contain and provide references to technical and contextual information. Similarly, AID program documentation is both a part of the technical literature and of the literature regarding socio-economic "context". Such overlap is desirable, because it provides built-in cross-references among the basic types of information.

Each of the three "information" units will be responsible for:

1. Defining and providing information consistent with the DIS charter;
2. Distilling and codifying the state-of-the-art in the information area for which they are responsible;
3. Providing bibliographic searchers indexing capability, etc. as required to simplify access to any and all information services libraries, etc., as may be appropriate to fulfillment to the AID Mission.

To implement the DIS we recommend that an organization be formed of four operational units and a director. Three units would correspond to the three information sets defined above, plus one other unit which we shall call "AID Memory". This fourth unit shall serve each of the three as well as other interrogators directly.

We recommend that the technical information activity be staffed by and provided technical coordination with TAB. The program, project, and evaluative information activity should be staffed by and technically coordinated with PPC. The context and baseline data function still requires further definition, and therefore individuals for this activity should be chosen on an individual basis by the SOG or this committee. However, the preferred source of personnel shall be the geographic bureaus. Technical liaison for this function should include 211D contractors, TAB, the State Department information activities, other donors, and such sources of demographic data as the population information centers.

The fourth functional activity -- the AID Memory -- serves all of the above. It is a service function that should combine the ARC, certain data processing and bibliographic activity, as well as analysis and retrieval of evaluative and analytical information, etc. We recommend that this activity be subcontracted during its initial year.

A fifth staff function -- development of information standards -- should be staffed by and coordinated with management services. This activity will set standards for bibliographies and abstracts, set specifications for information storage and retrieval, develop standards for literature reviews (whether prepared by AID or contractors), define bibliographic and cross-reference requirements for contractor reports, etc.

During initial operations, and possibly as a long-term alternative, a separate unit within DIS will be charged with utilization per se. This unit will work directly with users, set up ad hoc problem-oriented task forces, etc., as required to ensure that DIS serves real needs, and to evaluate DIS output. This "utilization" function will also perform policy analyses, support responses to Congressional requests, etc. -- aggressively utilizing information just as other DIS components aggressively access information.

DIS GROWTH

The same DIS configuration that serves project designers can and should also serve audiences that include the general public. The DIS implementation plan shall clearly spell out how and when such objectives will be met -- based on actual operations of the utilization/policy group.

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AID
INFORMATION

AGENDA

1. INTRODUCTION
2. RECOMMENDATIONS
3. THE DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION SERVICE
4. THE PROJECT DESIGN PROCESS & DIS "INFO PACKAGES"
5. NEXT STEPS

I. INTRODUCTION

OBJECTIVE

PROVIDE AID PROJECT DESIGN TEAMS WITH ANY AND ALL INFORMATION
NEEDED TO ENSURE THAT AID PROJECTS REFLECT THE STATE-OF-THE-ART.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

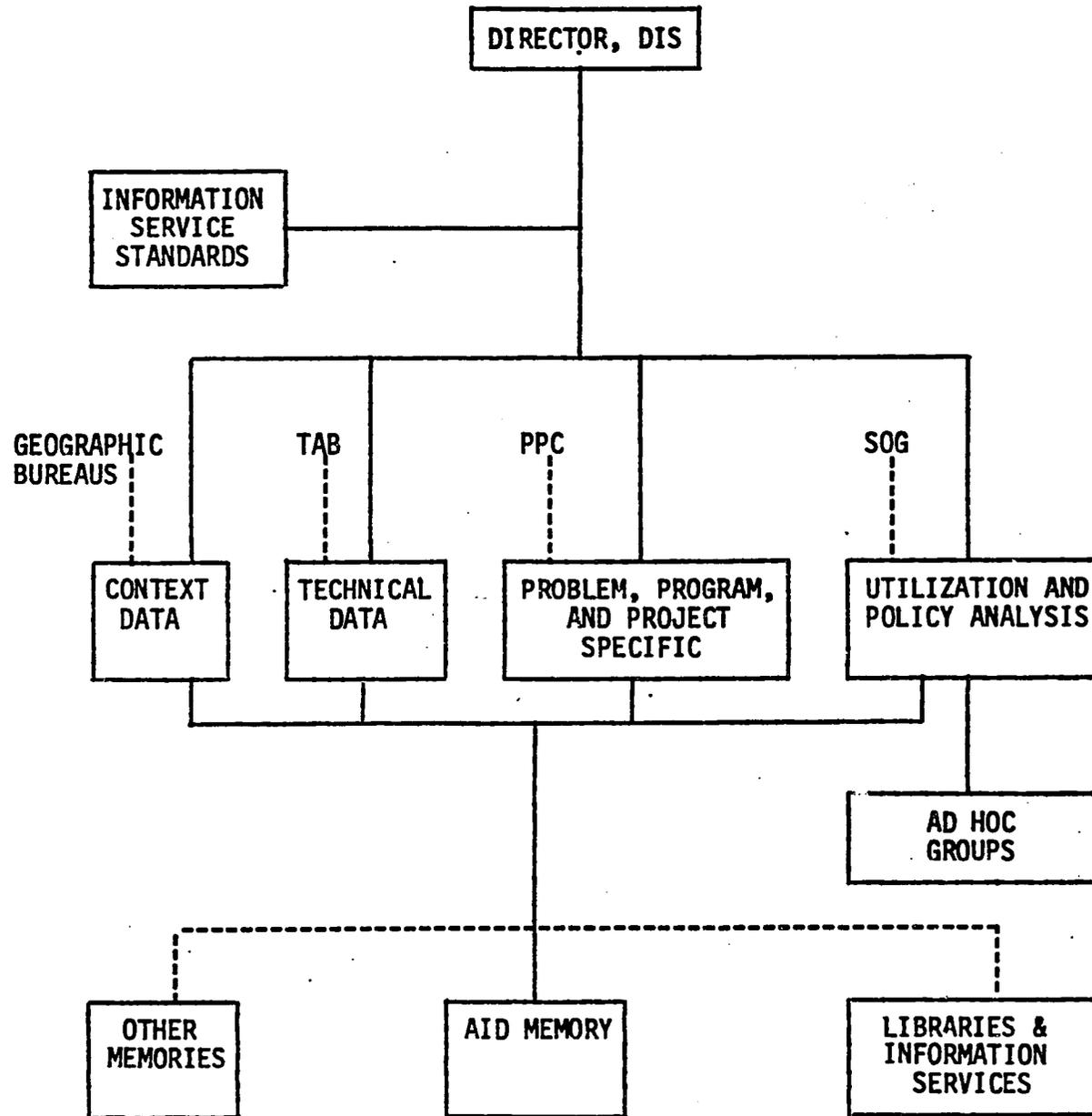
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. PROJECT DESIGNER IS KEY USER
2. RESOURCES SO ALLOCATED
 - ESTABLISH AND MONITOR DIS
 - GIVE DIS CHARTER TO ADDRESS PRIORITY PROGRAMS OR SECTOR
3. ENFORCE UTILIZATION

III. THE DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION SERVICE

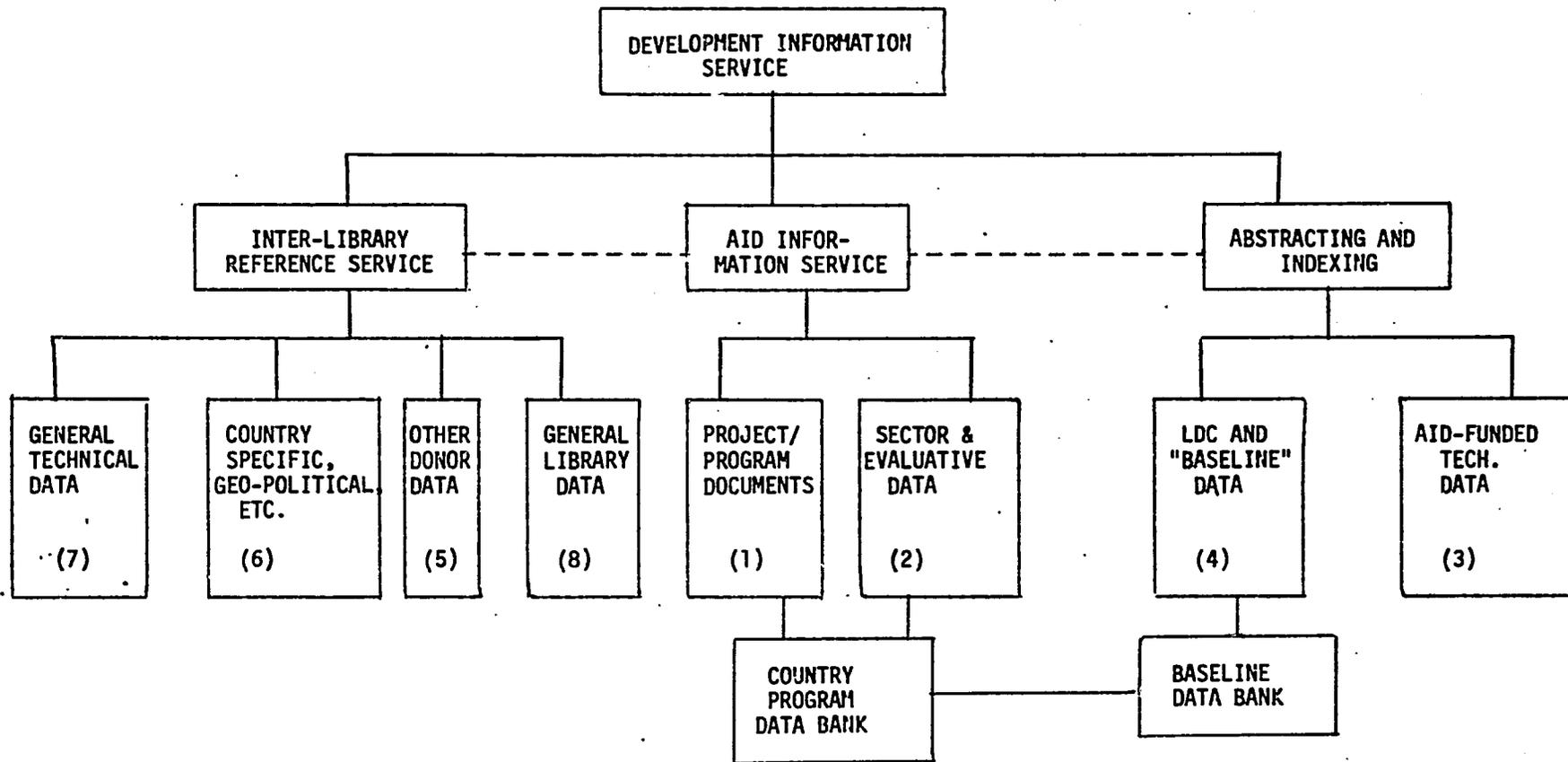
DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION SERVICE
ACCESSES ALL INFORMATION SOURCES

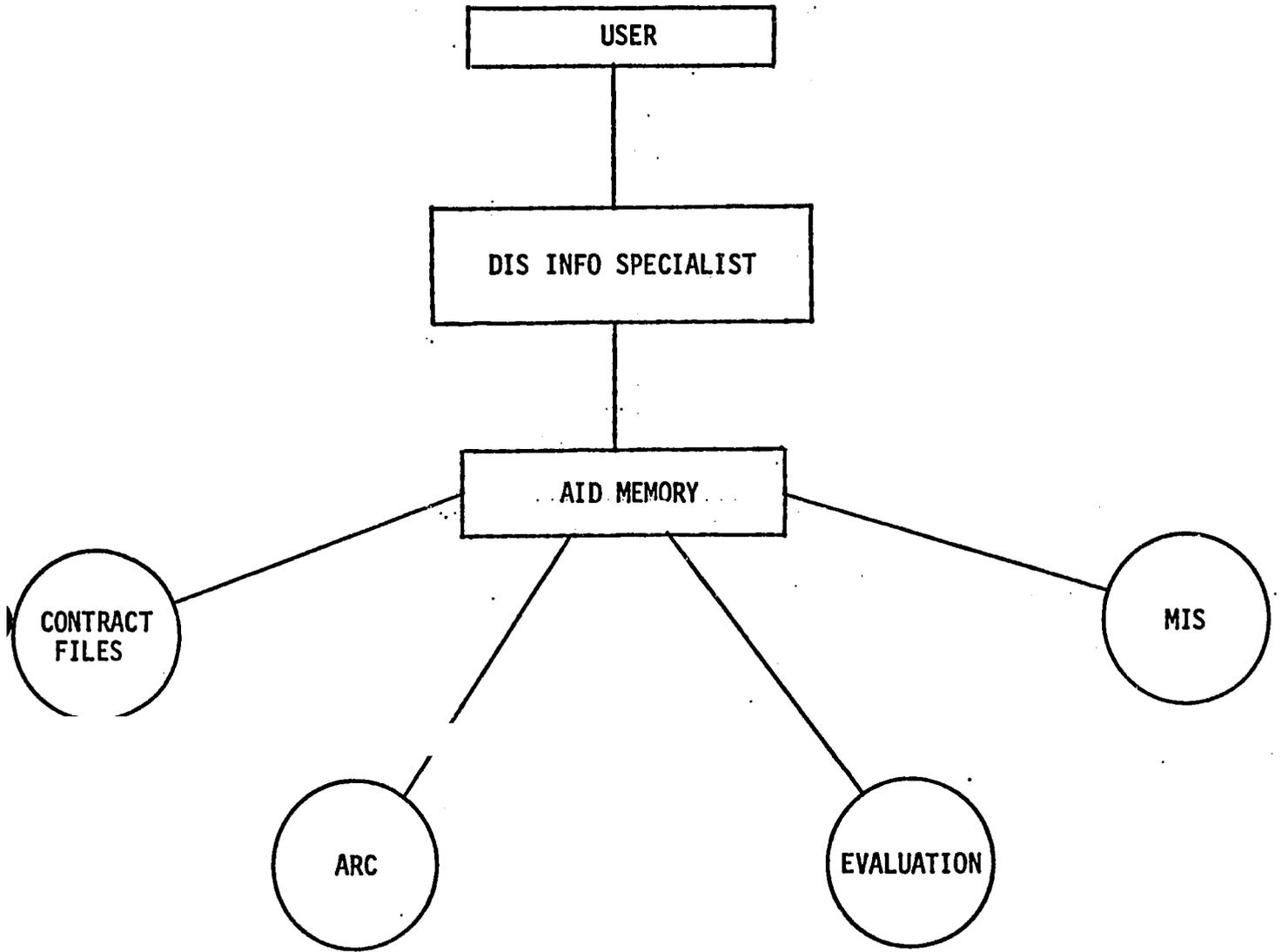
1. INDEXING AND ABSTRACTING (AID & NON-AID)
2. LIASION
3. BIBLIOGRAPHIES AND KNOWLEDGEABLE PEOPLE
4. MAINTAINS KEY AND AID-UNIQUE DATA



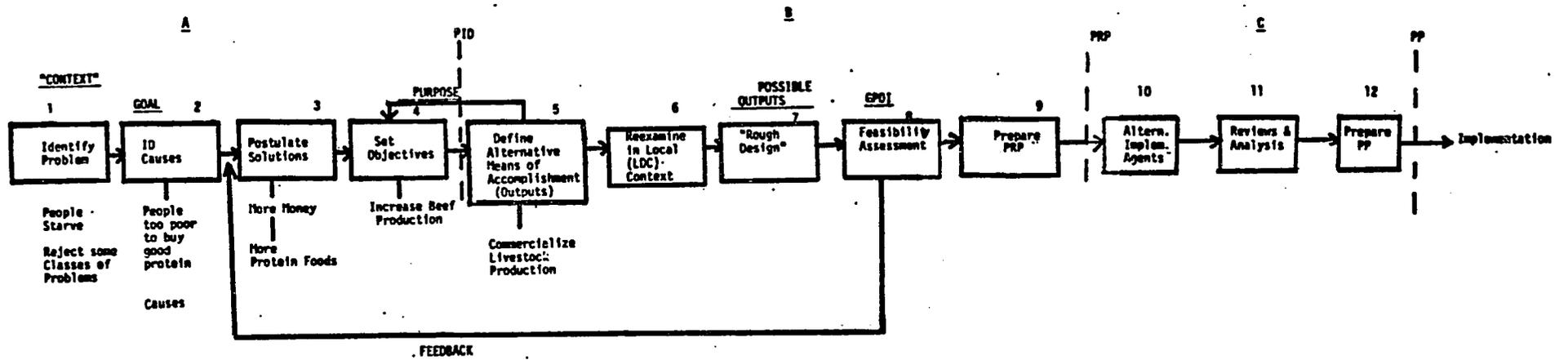
Possible Short-Term Configuration of a Development Information Service (DIS). The DIS uses the "AID Memory" as one subsystem of the total system.

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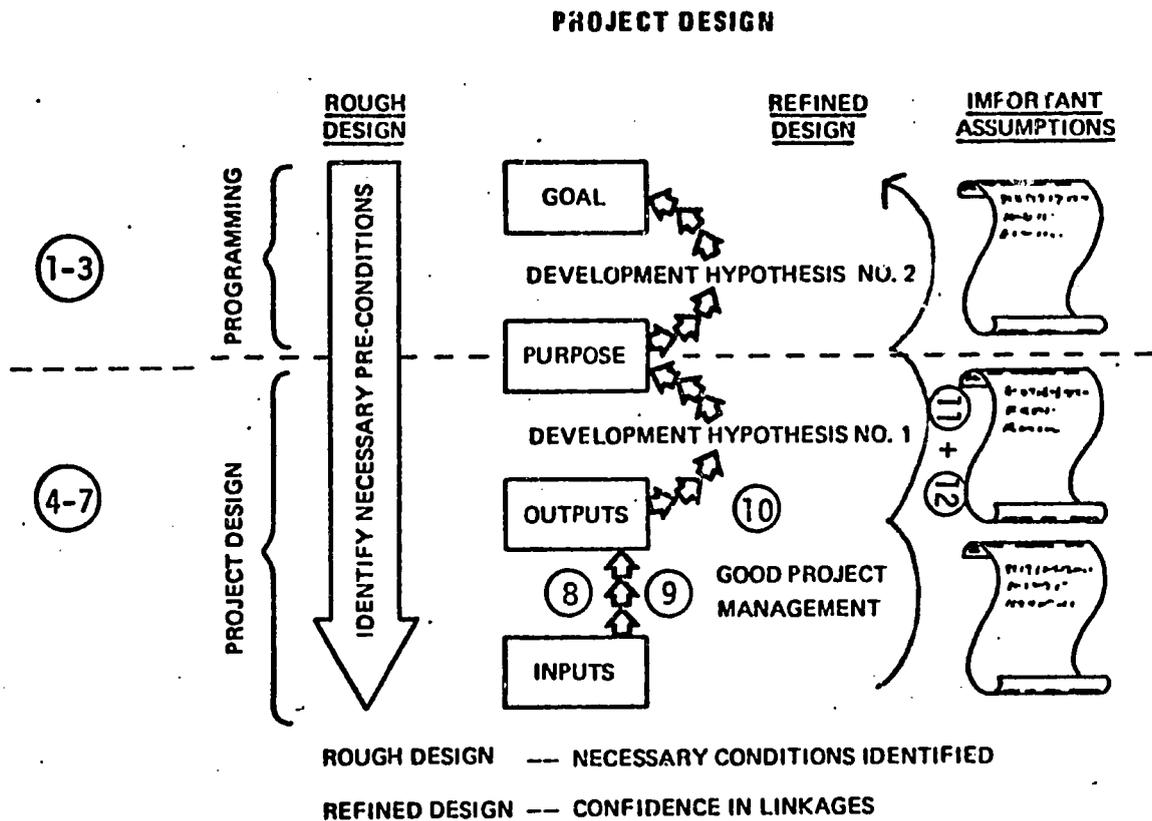


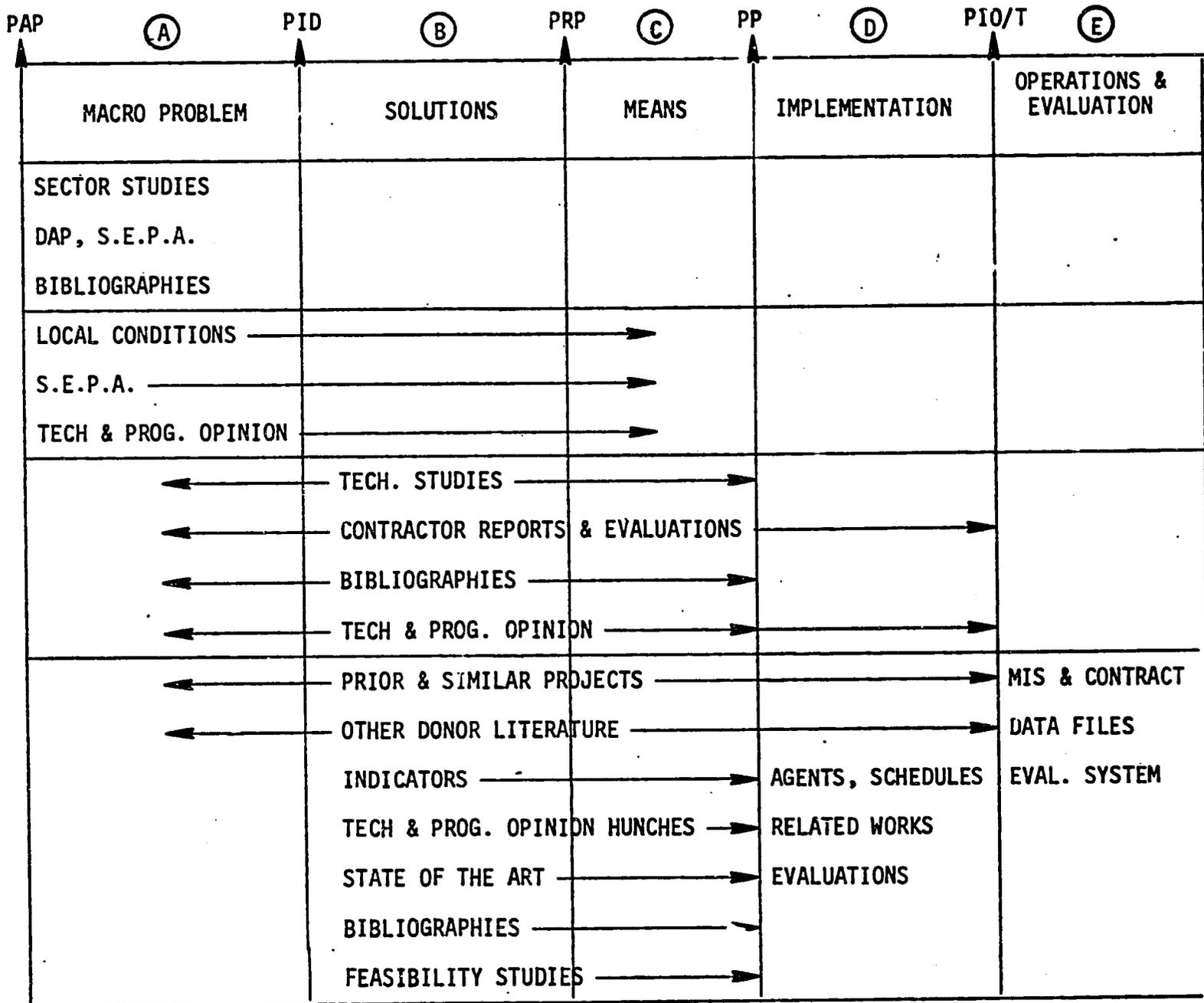
IV. THE PROJECT DESIGN PROCESS
& DIS "INFO PACKAGES"



The project design process is initially, largely a process of elimination.

THE LOGICAL FRAMEWORK LEADS US TO REFINE THE PROJECT DESIGN AND IMPROVE IT





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INFORMATION PACKAGE**A: "PRE-PID"**

1. **TYPE OF INDEX TERM:** PROBLEM ORIENTED, MACRO LEVEL
(FROM DAP): (E.G., HEALTH OF RURAL POOR)

2. **DIS OUTPUT:** PROBLEM ANALYSES: SECTOR STUDIES: PRIOR
APPROACHES

3. **PRIMARY AID SOURCES:** DIS/"CONTEXT"; TAB

4. **PRIMARY NON-AID SOURCES:** STATE AND OTHER DONORS, UNIVERSITIES

5. **NON-DIS BUFFER:** TAB; 211D's; OTHER DONORS

B. "POST-PID, PRE-PRP"

1. TYPE OF INDEX TERM: "PURPOSES, GOALS, ASSUMPTIONS"
2. DIS OUTPUT: TECHNICAL APPROACHES; PRIOR PROJECTS;
RELATED ON-GOING WORK; WLTERNATIVE OUTPUTS; FAILED
ASSUMPTIONS
3. PRIMARY AID SOURCES: DIS: "PROBLEM AND PROJECT",
"TECHNICAL"; TAB
4. PRIMARY NON-AID SOURCES: OTHER DONORS, 211D's
5. NON-DIS BUFFER: TDY SUPPORT TEAMS

C: "POST-PRP, PRE-PP"

1. TYPE INDEX: PROBLEM AND CONTEXT
PURPOSE OUTPUT INDICATORS

2. DIS OUTPUTS: REVIEW PREVIOUS EVALUATIONS
CONTRACTOR REPORTS SUMMARY
SUPPLEMENTATION SCHEDULES

3. SOURCES: PROJECT SPECIFIC
TECHNICAL DATA

ARC
AID MEMORY
CONTRACTORS

4. NON DIS SOURCES

IBRD AND OTHER DONORS
PASA
211D

5. NON DIS BUFFER: TDY PROJECT DESIGN TEAM

D: "POST-PP, PRE-PIO/T"

1. OUTPUTS, PURPOSE, INPUTS
2. IMPLEMENTING AGENTS; APPROACHES; PROBLEMS; SCHEDULES;
RELATED WORK; \$; EVALUATION
3. DIS, AID MEMORY, CONTRACT FILE; AID MIS
4. CONTRACTORS; OTHER DONORS; HOST INSTITUTIONS
5. TDY's

E: "POST-PIO/T"

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY PASSES TO MIS, EVALUATION SYSTEM,
AND CONTRACT DATA FILE.

NON ROUTINE:

USER ORIENTED AD HOC TASK FORCE

1. SOLVES PROBLEMS
2. ACCESSES PRIOR AND CURRENT DATA
3. "LIVES WITH" USER
4. ANALYTICAL AS WELL AS INFORMATION SUPPORT
5. OUTPUT INCLUDES DISTILLING "STATE OF THE ART"

V. NEXT STEPS

NEXT STEPS

1. ESTABLISH DIS BY PROVIDING RESOURCES, PRIORITY, AND OVERALL CHARTER
2. TAB, PPC, SER, BUREAUS SECOND STAFF
3. TAB, PPC, SER, GEO-BUREAUS PROVIDE TECHNICAL LIAISON
4. CONTRACTOR SUPPORT:
 - INFORMATION SYSTEM DEVELOPMENT
 - AID MEMORY
5. ARC INSIDE DIS
6. DIS OPERATES IN SUPPORT OF CURRENT PRIORITIES

FIRST-PHASE DIS OPERATIONS

1. "ROUTINE" PACKAGES FOR AGRICULTURE SECTOR
2. AD-HOC DIS GROUPS SUPPORT KEY AGRICULTURE PROGRAMS:
 - USER
 - CONTEXT DATA
 - PROGRAM, PROBLEM AND EVALUATION DATA
 - TECHNICAL DATA
 - ANALYTICAL AND CLERICAL SUPPORT
3. PREPARE LONG-TERM PLAN