

Internet as an AID Management Tool: Discussion Paper

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TO: Ambassador James H. Michel, DAC Chair
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THROUGH: Paula Goddard, USAID D/ES

FROM: Joseph Nassif, USAID
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SUBJECT: "Internet as an AID Management Tool" Discussion Paper

The attached discussion paper has been developed based on a number of meetings and discussions over the past several months between Ambassador James Michel and Richard Carey of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), and Joseph Nassif, Darrell Owen, and Jim Russo of U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Specifically, the paper is the result of a series of presentations and meetings that transpired during a visit by Joseph Nassif and Jim Russo to DAC's Paris office, on May 23 and 24, 1996. See Attachment 1 of the paper for the Travel Programme, detailing presentation/meeting topics and participants.

The paper, "Internet as an AID Management Tool" serves not only as a trip report, but attempts to go further by synthesizing these discussions with efforts underway within USAID, with what is going on with emerging Internet-related technologies, and also dynamics that are taking place within the development community at large. The purpose in taking the time to document our thinking at this time, is to see if we can expand the dialog amongst the DAC members toward shared goals.

cc

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"Internet as an AID Management Tool"
Development Assistance Committee
June 28, 1996

The purpose of this paper is primarily two-fold: 1) to capture salient discussion points emerging from a number of meetings and discussions over the past several months between Ambassador James Michel and Richard Carey of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC), and Joseph Nassif, Darrell Owen, and Jim Russo of U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and 2) to construct a general framework by which future activities undertaken by DAC relating to *Internet as an AID Management Tool*, can be orchestrated.

Many of the donor agencies have already embarked on developing internal and external Internet sites in an effort to improve their internal operations, as well as improve information access to their public constituencies. The OECD and more recently, the DAC itself has embarked on such an initiative to make valuable information available to the development community via the Internet.

Internet as an AID Management Tool--The key salient thread emerging from these discussions has been that of leveraging the Internet technologies, including it's adoption internally (e.g. Intranet), to further DAC's role in bringing about improved development coordination and partnerships. This focus on using Internet as a management tool implies not only the sharing of information with the various players, but moving beyond the passive aspects of increasing the accessibility to information, to incorporating more dynamic components such as electronic-facilitated conferencing, on-line discussions, etc.

Potential DAC Roles

There are at least three distinct, but connected roles the DAC can play in leveraging the Internet for development. To a significant degree, the DAC currently performs these roles, but extended to embrace an Internet agenda.

First, the DAC can *provide direct value-added information* and services to the DAC Members--and the development community at large. DAC undertakes a number of activities that are of value to these customers, and as such, can leverage the Internet to improve in the availability (delivery and access) of this information. This could include not only the electronic publication of hard-copy reports normally published by DAC, but could also the establishment of new services that would support the development community (e.g. facilitating electronic conferences, providing for electronic dialogs, providing central navigation to key development-related information sources, etc.

Second, the DAC can *provide direction, guidance, and coordination, to the DAC Members* by synchronizing their individual Internet-related efforts. The Internet provides a new approach of providing simplified access to information available from distributed sources by providing pointers to distributed data (rather than requiring the establishment of central databases and the commensurate feeding mechanisms). DAC could add value in; 1) orchestrating a level of commonality of key development-related information being developed and maintained by the various DAC Members (e.g. development strategies, evaluations, press information, business opportunities, etc.), and 2) providing a central navigational, access, and delivery, mechanisms for getting at this information (e.g. establishing an Internet site that links to DAC information and the Members' individual Internet sites.

Third, the DAC can *provide key value-added services to DAC Members* as they initiate their Internet activities. At this point in time, it is anticipated that there is a range of sophistication levels within the DAC Members, with some well along in leveraging Internet technologies, and others just in the initial phases of its implementation. To speed the process, the potential exists that DAC could provide an Internet server for use by the DAC Members, as well as consulting/development services. These could be provided on a cost-plus basis to those requiring this level of support, or potentially provided by DAC.

Customer Groups

One emerging consideration has been that of focusing on different customer groups. Originally, the Internet initiatives have focused primarily on reaching a broad general-public audience. During this last year, however, there has been a major shift toward using Internet technologies for the internal audience (e.g. Intranet). With respect to DAC and associated international development activities, a logical construct is to add two more customer groups--totaling four: *1) DAC itself (intranet), 2) DAC Member agencies, 3) the international development community at large (including public and private sector participants), and 4) the general public (most likely the target audience of DAC's current Internet World Wide Web (WWW) site.*

Breaking DAC customers into distinct customer groups serves as a base. From here, we can identify specific value-added information and services that DAC can provide to each of these customer groups (recognizing that there is some overlapping demands). This is especially critical in using the *Internet as an AID Management Tool*. This use transcends the more typical use of Internet, which to-date has primarily been limited to creating a "presence," soft marketing of products and/or services, or simply making information available to a yet-to-be-determined audience of Internet "surfers." While most Internet sites focus on an audience with a specific interest, few Internet sites provide what could be called a *Management Tool*. Some are emerging, such as FedEx, who provides parcel tracking status to those customers that have shipped a parcel, and the various travel-related Internet sites that allow travelers to book hotel, airline, and car rental reservations.

Customers and Associated Value-Added Services

The following provides a brief sketch of the four targeted DAC customer groups, and the associated information and services that would likely be delivered to each.

DAC Employees--Increasingly, the internal employees of organizations are being recognized as having information requirements that are different from those external to the organization. Further, the Internet/WWW-related technologies are increasingly being deployed internally by organizations to satisfy these information and service demands. In fact, the *Intranet* is the fastest growing segment of the Internet phenomena. Netscape Communications estimates that 92 of the Fortune 100 have Intranet efforts underway. A growing number of sophisticated software tools are emerging that allow for the management and access/distribution of text, images, audio, video, animation, etc.--tools that until now, simply did not exist or were prohibitively expensive and had limited functionality. For a background discussion on various Intranet examples and issues, refer to Attachment 2.

Borrowing from USAID's experience, the Intranet has gained significant momentum in recent months with several active internal Web sites being developed, including: 1) the Executive Information System being done by the Office of the Executive Secretariat (Joseph Nassif), 2) the Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE) Online with its evaluations, and bibliographic database (Maury Brown), 3) a new Human Resources WWW site that provides up-to-date information on personnel-related topics as the Agency goes through the Reduction in Force process (Bob Egge), and 4) an emerging Operations--New Management Systems--site that will provide automated access to user manuals, related bulletin board notices, questions and answers, and eventually direct e-mail access to support personnel in USAID (Chuck Anstrom). These efforts, and others getting underway, will provide direct access to key information from the desktop of each Agency employee.

This Intranet experience has direct application to DAC, and based on the recent visit to DAC, direct application to the United Kingdom's ODA as well -- most likely many others. *Focusing on Internet as a Management Tool*, the idea emerging is to explore the possibility of determining what information would be of value to DAC employees, where best to capture (or where to "point" to it if it already exists in some outside Web site), and determine what would be required to get a project such as this up and running (architecture, design, plan, and resources). The best model for getting started may well be to construct something similar to USAID's Executive Information System (EIS) and the CDIE Online efforts. While the focus of the Intranet is access to internal information, the navigation for DAC will include access to non-DAC development-related information located on the Internet (via an Internet gateway). The EIS, as an example, links USAID staff in over 40 Countries to up-to-date internal, as well as external (WWW) public affairs, legislative and program information. The EIS "Newspage," in particular, points staff to daily news (e.g., USAID Newsclips, CNN, Reuters), press releases (e.g., USAID, White House, OECD) and news reports (e.g., United Nations, World Bank).

DAC Member Agency Employees--In addition to an internal DAC Intranet, there is a need for an expanded Intranet that would serve the DAC members. The focus of the DAC member

Intranet would be to improve information sharing amongst members, specifically in the international development area. The concept here is that information is in itself a valuable development currency. In that much of the development activities include collecting data, translating this into information, and applying knowledge, making this available via a common Internet tool set, leverages information beyond what is now being realized.

While many DAC members are developing their own Web sites, the DAC could create a point of reference (e.g. a DAC Member Internet site) that would link these current and future sites, which would include information of a broad interest/value to DAC members' development activities. Here again, there is a need for some additional refinement of the idea as well as the development of an architecture, overall design, plan, and budget, for undertaking such an effort.

Within the context of using *Internet as an AID Management Tool*, the focus for DAC to facilitate information sharing amongst the DAC Members could perhaps best be served by; 1) surveying what the current Members' plans are relative to Internet, 2) identify key Member-level information that would have a high value to share amongst the Members (e.g. development strategies, evaluations, press information, business opportunities, etc.), 3) establish some common priorities, ideas, guidelines, standards, for the Members to use in their individual initiatives, and 4) establish a DAC Intranet site that would provide access to the Member's information. For those Members wishing to pursue an Internet agenda but perhaps lack direction, the DAC may want to make some consulting/development resources available to speed the process. Another information-related initiative to be undertaken by DAC would be to build off of the Intranet and current DAC Internet activities (see discussion on general public customer group below), and determine what DAC-produced information can be made available to the DAC Members via this DAC Member Internet site. Most likely this is a sub-set of the DAC Intranet information made available to DAC employees, plus some information developed and/or made available specifically for DAC Members. DAC may also want to provide navigational capabilities at this DAC Internet site to non-DAC Member information sources that would provide of value to the DAC Members (e.g. Regional news feeds, key Internet sites with rich country-, development-, economic-related information).

In addition to providing information, the DAC should consider adding more interactive capabilities to their DAC Member-oriented Internet site by hosting electronic conferences on selected topics, provide ListServes to keep interested parties informed, establish "chat-rooms" for on-line discussions on certain topics, etc. This, coupled with information sharing and access, and the electronic linkages that come about by DAC Members simply being on Internet (e.g. E-Mail), should have a dynamic impact on the interaction, cooperation, and partnerships that form between DAC and between the DAC Members. For an expanded discussion on these interactive capabilities, see Attachment 3.

International Development Community (Public and Private)--This customer group builds upon the DAC Members in that it includes a substantially broader audience of those public and private organizations directly engaged in international development activities. This would include other

government organizations (donor as well as receiving country governments), and non-government organizations (NGOs) including PVOs, Universities, for-profit private sector firms and associations, etc. In broad terms, this is a significant expansion of the DAC Members customer community discussed above, but a subset of the general public audience (e.g. limited to those with a specific and most likely, hands-on involvement in development activities). With respect to using *Internet as an AID Management Tool*, this DAC Internet site is likely a subset of the DAC Members site with respect to making DAC-specific information available to this broader audience, but potentially an expanded set of information and services due to the broader set of participants and their interest/participation in development activities. This expansion would most logically be via the Internet site providing added navigational features that link directly to pre-existing (and emerging) Internet sites of value to the development community.

As an adjunct, a critical element in addition to developing the development-related information services, is the need to ensure that the information and services being put into place by DAC and the DAC Members, is accessible. As a general condition, this is not an issue in the developed countries. However, within many of the developing countries, this is an issue in that Internet access is frequently not available, or available on a very limited basis. The accessibility of this development-related information and services from these countries is extremely vital as it puts the information and dialogs on the front-lines of international development. Towards this end, USAID has developed a separate Discussion Paper that focuses on establishing what is being called *Development Service Centers* (DSCs) to serve as in-country hubs for Internet and local connections for the development community. At this time, this is at a discussion phase, with no firm commitment to proceed. Attachment 4 provides a brief overview of the subject.

General Public--The currently emerging DAC Internet site represents a work-in-progress for delivering information on DAC activities to the general public. While it obviously contains information of interest to a population of users with a specific interest in international development, it likely is not aimed at becoming an active management tool. With respect to using *Internet as an AID Management Tool*, this DAC Internet site is primarily focused on meeting general public demand for external affairs information. By being graphically consistent with the OECD Internet site, the public is presented with a united image of the OECD/DAC organization and its activities. The Content provides easy access for DACs constituency to know what is taking place within DAC, and a ready access via E-mail, to provide comments, suggestions, etc. The table on the following page reflects a general framework of the above customer/services discussion.

Customer Groups and Value-Added Services General Framework

PRIMARY CUSTOMER (WHO)	STRATEGIC FOCUS (WHY)	VALUE-ADDED INFORMATION AND SERVICES (WHAT)
DAC Intranet	Improved internal DAC efficiencies and effectiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Events Calendars -Telephone Directories -Bulletin Boards -DAC Publications -Executive Level Information -Access to Internet -Access to back-end transactional databases
DAC Members	Improved Donor Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Conference Calendars -DAC Publications -Donor Publications -Donor Strategic Plans and Budgets -Donor Evaluations -Donor Development Activities -Electronic Conferences -Press Information -Links with Donor Internet sites -Real Audio -Internet Phone
Development Community at Large (Public and Private)	Improved coordination and partnerships between all entities participating in international development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Business Opportunities -Press Information -Selected Donor Evaluations -Selected Donor Publications -Real Audio
General Public	Improved Public Relations relative to DACs international development efforts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Press Information -DAC and DAC Member Activities -DAC Publications -Quick Time Movies

It should be noted that with respect to the value-added services being provided to each of the identified Customer Groups, there is a significant level of overlap. This in fact should be expected in that the entire focus is singular--international development and while the Customer Groups are different, there are a number of entities that are in all Groups (e.g. DAC is a customer in the DAC Intranet, DAC Members, and Development Community at Large). This overlap should not be viewed as redundant in that where information and services are common to these different they can be provided by a common set of information sources and tools.

From Here

This paper has been written to provide input into DAC's emerging Internet/Intranet efforts. The purpose in providing this paper is to provide value-added lessons-learned input based on similar efforts undertaken by USAID over the past several years. The following provides ideas for consideration as DAC proceeds with its Internet/Intranet agenda.

DAC Internet Forum--Without becoming too formal, if DAC takes on an Internet coordination role for its members, there may be the need to establish an informal Internet forum. This would facilitate lessons-learned (USAID isn't the only one doing this stuff), and would provide for dialog on topics such as architecture (central or distributed), common formats, priorities, etc. The forum could be facilitated by deployment of the very tools we're trusting will have value in the Internet as an AID Development Tool orientation (information sharing, electronic conferences, etc.). The target outcome of this forum would be improved information consistency of Internet activities being undertaken by the DAC Members and the faster development-to-production cycle.

Informal Experience Sharing/Consulting--It appears that the dialogs that have taken place between USAID and DAC, have been of value--to both participants. In essences, this has been a form of informal experience sharing/consulting, that has leveraged our investments by adding-value to new initiatives. During, and subsequent to the recent visit by Joseph Nassif and Jim Russo, there has been dialog with Brian Hammond of the United Kingdom's ODA, to perform a similar set of demonstrations and discussions, as well as to help set up a prototype Intranet system. It is anticipated that this type of thing may be required at some expanded level. It may well be carried out within the above-referenced DAC Internet Forum, as the various Agencies can borrow from each other to fill holes they may have. Again, consistency and speed are the target outcomes of such arrangements.

DAC Member Internet Server--A quick survey of DAC Members would provide input into the need for such a value-added service to be provided by DAC. The notion here is that to improve the speed with which the DAC Members could join together and build their respective Internet sites, could potentially be facilitated if DAC were to become (at least temporarily), and Internet service provider to its members. Not all would want to take advantage of this service (nor need to), since many have already established their own either directly or via an outside service provider. The potential exists that to reduce costs, potentially a current member has unused capacity already in place that could be provided to other members on a cost-sharing/cost-recovery approach. The target outcome is to speed up the launching of the Members' Internet activities by providing a central, operational capacity upon which members could do their initial Internet Web posting.

Developing Country Web Pages--Another central service that DAC could provide Members is that of building a set of consistent country WWW pages. This could serve as a common information and communications base for the DAC Members re: developing country information. A substantial amount of work would be required to determine what should be included in such a country profile, and to determine sources of country information applicable to such a site. But the potential to the DAC Members to have a consistent and growing country information base would be a significant value-added service. At this time, USAID is experimenting with developing such a page internally to facilitate access to key country information in those countries in which it has activities. This is very preliminary at this time, but the prototype effort now underway is gaining internal support. Attachment 5 reflects a very preliminary Home Page now under construction for Ethiopia (NOTE: this is being developed for internal use, whereas the target result of a DAC initiative would be to develop a comprehensive set of country sites for access by all DAC Members, and potentially the development community at large.

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Day 2, Friday, May 24

10:00 a.m. to 11:45 a.m.	Meeting with DCD Staff “Brainstorming on Internet as an Aid Coordination Tool”
Participants:	Hans Lundgren (DCD) Brian Hammond (ODA) Roberta Bensky (DCD) Jean Gomm (OECD)
12:00 p.m. to 12:30 p.m.	Meeting with Jim Michel (DAC Chair) “Coordination of DAC Member Country Internet Information”
1:00 p.m. to 2:45 p.m.	Lunch with Jean Gomm (OECD) and Gerlando Taibi (DCC) “Internet/Intranet as a Management Tool for the OECD”
4:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.	Meeting with Richard Carey (DCD) “Tying it all together: Internet as an Aid Management Tool”
Participants:	Richard Carey Roberta Bensky (DCD) Brian Hammond (ODA)

Intranet Examples and Issues

Background

While the authors experience in developing an Intranet is at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), a government agency, USAID is far from the only organization developing an Intranet. To quote Jerrold Grochow of American Management Systems "I have seen the future of corporate information systems (IS), and it is the Web. Traditional, as well as new corporate applications will be delivered via the WWW."¹ Bill Raduchel, Sun Microsystems says "We think the Intranet is where the majority of profits will be made ... it will become the dominant force in organizational computing ..."². These private networks are far different from what most Internet users see via public home pages.

Xerox--plans to connect all 90,000 of its employees via a Web-based Intranet. To date, 15,000 employees have been given access to "The Xerox Web Board" which contains postings of daily company and market news, phone directories, and links to relevant outside sites. Xerox expects to have 60,000 connected by the end of this year. "That Xerox can contemplate moving tens of thousands of employees to this medium in a year and a half demonstrates how incremental the web can be."³ Xerox evaluated a wide variety of workflow and network management tools before opting for integrating Web functionality with vendor-specific groupware packages.

Levi Strauss & Co.--plans to connect 10,000 employees worldwide via an Intranet to join in electronic discussions, watch the latest Levi's commercials or comment on marketing pitches.⁴

Lockheed Martin Corp.--has connected 40,000 employees using Netscape enabling them to read latest company news and ask questions about corporate policies. Soon they will be able to update personnel records, sign up for training and check government procurement regulations.

At **AT&T**--about 60,000 employees can use an internal Web system to access a corporate library and some employees are using the Web to link work teams in different locations.

Eli Lilly & Co.--has a 7,000 user Web system where employees can check drug regulations in the US, Europe and Japan, or review drug-development data on incompatible computer systems.

¹J.Grochow, American Management Systems, Computer World, 1/2/96, pg. 57

²Fortune Magazine, 2/19/96, pg. 57

³Mary Modahl, Forrester Rresearch, Inc., Communications Week, 11/20/95, pg 75.

⁴Wall Street Journal, 11/7/95, pg.1.

At **Alias/Wavefront**--each of the 400 employees has a personal home page housed behind the firewall that they can personalize with photographs, job descriptions and interests.

The Intranet is how companies can use standard Internet technologies to deploy a rich, full-function, ubiquitous environment for information sharing, communication, and applications, built on top of open networking technologies and on an open network-based application platform. Simply put, an Intranet is a TCP/IP network inside a company that links the company's people and information in a way that makes people more productive, information more accessible, and navigation through all the resources and applications of the company's computing environment more seamless than ever before.⁵

The Intranet takes advantage of the family of open standards and protocols that have emerged from the Internet. These open standards make possible applications and services--such as email, groupware, security, directory, information sharing, database access, and management--comparable to software such as Lotus Notes or Microsoft BackOffice. Because the Intranet is built on these open standards, customers reap the benefits of cross-platform and cross-database support, flexibility, and vendor independence; they also gain the ability to leverage the innovation and products created by an entire industry, not just a single vendor.

Services

Netscape Communications describes the Intranet model in terms of services. These services are provided by the intranet's software environment, which (since intranet software runs across all client and server operating systems and hardware platforms) results in a common network environment that spans even the most heterogeneous network environments.

The Intranet's services allow users to browse for information, send and receive email, and search directories, among other things. In addition, custom and third-party applications, such as sales automation systems or financial applications, can take advantage of the Intranet's capabilities in the areas of replication and security. Since these services can be centrally managed, and capabilities such as security and directories are "built-in," information technology (IT) managers can manage more efficiently.

According to Netscape Communications, the Intranet provides the following major user services:

- Information sharing and management
- Communication and collaboration
- Application access

⁵Forrester Research, The Intranet, 3/1/96.

Information Sharing and Management--Easily create and publish documents online. The Intranet provides painless, transparent network-wide content publishing and management, ensuring that everyone with access rights has the latest available information. HyperText Markup Language (HTML) documents can be created using intuitive "what you see is what you get" (WYSIWYG) and drag-and-drop interfaces, and legacy file formats such as word processing documents and spreadsheets can be easily published. With hyperlinks, multimedia, and embedded objects, rich and interactive online content can be integrated and personalized. Documents can be indexed and organized as they are published and managed from the desktop, within the department, or centrally in one location. The result is a single, seamless environment for all information throughout your company.

Communication and Collaboration--Open email and groupware are ubiquitous. Internet standards allow open email and groupware capabilities to be as powerful and functional as traditional proprietary alternatives, and integrated across the Intranet. Access control and security allow email and discussion groups to be private and can be distributed across systems or taken offline for disconnected use. Email and discussion groups incorporating audio and video plus network-transparent calendaring/scheduling provide a seamless environment that spans all modes of human electronic communication. Users can look-up email addresses, security keys, and Internet phone numbers by using a simple address book interface tied into an open directory service across the Internet.

For example, a salesperson can look up a customer's current status in an internal customer-tracking discussion group, then look up the customer's email address over the Internet and send the customer an email message.

Application Access--Seamless access to databases and applications. Existing databases, data warehouses, and legacy applications can be accessed from a single interface. New applications can be authored once with JavaScript and Java, and quickly deployed on any platform, including desktop and server operating environments and hardware platforms. All client-side application logic is downloaded when an application is accessed and the logic is automatically updated. Applications can be interwoven with content and can be deployed transparently over the Internet as well as over the internal Intranet. All the Intranet services are available to applications, including content management, directories, and replication. Application access can be easily controlled, and can be built on top of business processes, enabling easy-to-use workflow capabilities across the entire enterprise.

For example, an inventory application can receive orders from any employee on the network, tie into both internal and supplier databases, and place orders and report expected delivery dates automatically.

Security

The Intranet's security services provide ways for resources to be protected against unauthorized users, for communication to be encrypted and authenticated, and for the integrity of information to be verified. Applications, Web pages, directories, discussion groups, and databases are all subject to access control. Security is managed centrally, with information about specific resources and user privileges linked to those resources managed and distributed through the intranet's directory service. Email and real-time communication can be secured, with each party authenticated and with message traffic encrypted. Corporations can issue and manage a security key infrastructure to give their employees the ability to conduct company business securely across the network. Additionally, intranet applications can be extended securely across the intranet.

For example, a product development team on a highly confidential project can issue security certificates that grant different access permissions to core team members, other internal associates, and external partners.

Enhanced Interactive Internet Capabilities

The following provides a brief overview of the Internet tools that provide services beyond that of posting/sharing information. These are aimed at moving the capabilities to a more interactive model such that there is increased dynamics between the provider and the customer, and between the customers themselves. Where possible, these discussions include references to existing Internet sites that deploy these tools.

ELECTRONIC CONFERENCING--This type of service is emerging either as parallel support to a physical conference, or as an electronic conference that stands on its own. The idea is simply to establish a service in which a moderator informs others of the electronic "event," and then seeds the forum with some opening comments, etc. From here, individuals add comments, discussions, point/counter point, etc. Good examples include Bellanet <http://www.bellanet.org/> which provides technical and substantive support to facilitate discussion and interaction among development workers, and the UN Sustainable Development Network - <http://www.undp.org/sdnp/brochure.htm>.

LISTSERVE--is an Internet service that turns a simple one-to-one email into a one-to-many email-mediated discussion forum around a specific topic. However, unlike USENET, you must "subscribe" to a list and then if accepted, you will receive list postings via e-mail. Once you are a member of a listserv (electronic discussion group), you will receive any message sent to the discussion group. List members easily send email messages (info, questions, ideas, etc.) to the whole discussion group. Many listservs, including ones at USAID, maintain archives of messages and file directories which can be accessed by members using commands like "index" and "get" in a message to the listserver. "Index" returns a listing of the message archives available and "get" transfers the archive files from the listserver to your machine. "Review" is a command that returns a list of all current subscribers to the list and their email addresses. Members can then engage in one-to-one discussions rather than one-many. Moderated lists are managed by an administrator who controls what is posted, un-moderated lists are open for posting by all list members.

Listservs tend to be fairly specific. For example, devel-l is a listserv managed by VITA (Volunteers in Technical Assistance) that is international development oriented, rferl-l is a listserv related to technology transfer in Russia. All USAID press releases are now available via the `usaid_press_release` list and all USAID CBD notices are available.

To subscribe to `usaid_press_release`, just send an email to: `listproc@info.usaid.gov`. In the text of the email write: `subscribe usaid_press_release YOUR FULL NAME`

To subscribe to `devel-l`, send an email to: `listserv@american.edu`. In the text write: `subscribe devel-l`

That is all there is to it! One last point. If you want to start your own listserv, you can do that as well.

Here are a few other examples:

AG-DEV@info.usaid.gov	Food aid & Agricultural Development
e-trade-l@info.usaid.gov	Trade and International Development
gleen-l@info.usaid.gov	Global Energy and Environment Network
india-energy@info.usaid.gov	Indian Energy Issues
leland-l@info.usaid.gov	USAID Internet in Africa Project
phil-tech-l@info.usaid.gov	Philippines Technical Development
usaid-cbd-l@info.usaid.gov	USAID CBDs (Procurement Information)

A good resource for Higher Education listservs can be found at:
<http://www.abo.fi/hied/listserv.htm>

NEWSGROUPS--NEWS OR USENET - Newsgroups are Internet Bulletin Boards which consist of a variety of discussion groups on several subjects. Participants write articles that are posted to the group(s) they specify. Participants can also respond to articles, thereby having a discussion. It is part of the USENET network that was established in 1979 by Duke University and the University of North Carolina. USENET is presently available in many countries around the world. Newsgroups are organized into hierarchies, such as: comp (computers), news (news software), rec (recreation), sci (science), soc (social), talk (debate), misc (none-of-the-above). Internet and USENET are separate networks but Internet handles the traffic for USENET. A couple of good reference sites are: <http://netvet.wustl.edu/e-zoo/about/usenet.txt> and <http://linex.com/pub/docs/usenet.news.faq>

CHAT ROOMS--are like an electronic cocktail parties without the drinks. Groups gather electronically to "chat" about various topics. Some chat rooms are open to any topic at all where others are quite restricted in terms of subject matter. One of the most popular general chat facilities is the Internet Relay Chat (IRC). It consists of a number of channels, each channel has a particular topic. A good review of IRC can be found at: <http://www.cs.rochester.edu/u/leblanc/internet-course/irc.html>.

INTERNET PHONE SERVICES--At this time there are several freeware and commercial products available to allow voice communications over the Internet. This is just emerging, but with the upcoming release 3.0 of Netscape Navigator, there will be a phone service built into the product. The quality of the transmission will not be that of a direct voice link, but over time this should develop. Considering the international tariffs of many countries, and the players within the development community, this could be an area worth exploring--at least on a pilot basis. For more info try: <http://www.vocaltec.com/>

DESKTOP VIDEO CONFERENCING--In addition to voice, technology is emerging that allows for desktop-to-desktop video conferencing over the Internet. At this time this is very primitive, but as the Internet becomes more robust, this technology will mature. One of the technical limitations is the issue of timing of image packets to travel the Internet and arrive at a workstation in the right timing and sequence. While the issue is the same for the phone services (above), the requirements for voice are less demanding for video conferencing and narrowcasting (below).

NARROWCASTING--While most all of us are familiar with Radio and TV broadcasting, there are emerging radio and video capabilities on the Internet that provide for what is being called by some, "narrowcasting." This technology uses a one-way communications capability to deliver voice and/or video over the Internet to a narrow group of customers. The quality at this time is marginal in most cases, but it is anticipated this will improve significantly over time.

A couple of current applications appear to be education (e.g. simply a video camera placed in the classroom to support distance learning), and NASA (<http://www.nasa.gov>). For a general overview see: <http://www.sils.umich.edu/impact/Winter95/HTML/syllabus.html>.

In-Country Development Service Centers (DSC)

Summary

The concept being presented here for discussion is that of establishing a new private Development Support Center (DSC) entity that would provide a central hub for expanded in-country coordination with other donors, PVOs, NGOs, Universities, host government ministries, and other USG activities. For those countries where USAID is closing its Mission, this Center would provide in-country logistical and administrative support for our continuing development activities. It would be set up not only to provide a central point of coordination for USAID activities, but would serve as an in-country point of coordination for commercial for-profit private sector activities. This leverages the more autonomous nature of the business entity in that it can facilitate transitioning U.S. involvement from aid to private sector economic and social development. This would be facilitated by providing central logistical support for those private sector firms wishing to explore business opportunities in these countries. The entity would be small, and being commercial, would ideally operate on a cost-sharing/cost recovery mode; potentially being a full for-profit enterprise. A key factor that allows this approach to be viable is that it would highly leverage information and communications technologies (ICT) to bring about a level of coordination and partnerships that does not exist even now.

Description: In-Country Development Service Center

The proposal here is to establish a new, independent Development Service Center (DSC) that would provide for continued USAID presence, albeit in a much altered state, and in a much-scaled back level.

Roles/Responsibilities

The new DSC would provide support in the following four areas:

USAID Transition--The new entity would provide a point of transition for the current USAID Mission by providing an on-the-ground nexus for the Agency. This new entity would provide the following:

- logistical & administrative support for what's left behind
- logistical support for TDY's
- Point of contact in linking with USAID/Washington
- Provide a physical in-country presence
- USAID "eyes-and-ears" in country
- Provide point for quick-response events

Improve In-Country Development Coordination--This new organization would be the local vehicle by which USAID provides expanded in-country coordination and partnerships with the other donor organizations, universities, other USG Agencies working in country, NGOs and PVOs, and local government ministries with which we are working. This represents a new role that focuses on expanding our service to the development community, even though our program budget is being reduced. Functions/Activities include:

- Build/expand people and electronic linkages
- Improve linkage with other USG Agencies working in country
- Coordinate local development-related conferences and training
- Architect and provide needed common services
- Provide coordination and partnership support to efforts outside country (e.g. Regional)

Serve as In-Country Nexus for Private Sector--The new entity would not only provide logistical support to USAID activities, and coordination/partnership support for the development assistance community within country, but it would also provide logistical support for private for-profit firms doing business in country. This would serve as a base for furthering an aid-to-trade transition by improving the linkage between in-country contacts and private firms wishing to do business in that country. The services are akin to a "local business concierge service," including the following:

- Logistical support for companies exploring business opportunities
- Temporary office/technology support for private companies
- Business information, leads, potential opportunities, contacts, etc.
- Provide translation services, etc.

Provide Local Electronic-Based Services--To achieve the needed efficiency and effectiveness, and to facilitate the needed networking, coordination, and partnerships, the new entity would rely heavily on advanced Information and Communications Technologies (ICT). This would include the establishment of what would be considered a local network service provider. The services would include:

- Internet connection outside country (gateway)
- Provide development community network support
- Provide Information Center for Development-related Information
- Develop and maintain local key information databases
- Develop and maintain local electronic conferences
- Provide training on Information and Communications Technology (ICT)



Ethiopia COUNTRY PAGE



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- [Chiefs of State & Cabinet Members, CIA](#)
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Documents and Publications

- [FEWS Bulletin](#)
- [CDIE Online: documents since 1994](#)
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Related USAID Web Sites

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NON-USAID Links

Country Information

- [Human Rights Report, 1995](#)
- [CIA 1995 Factbook](#)
- [Library of Congress Country Profile](#)

Current Events

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- [Search CNN](#)
- [ANC News Briefings](#)
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U.S. Department of State & Other

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International Development Organizations

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- [Search OECD](#)
- [Search UN - WHO](#)
- [Search OneWorld Online, U.K.](#)

External Documents & Publications

- [Ethiopia: Country Study, Library of Congress](#)
- [Ethiopia: Annual Report, Red Cross](#)
- [UN - Addis Ababa Info Center](#)

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