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INFORMATION NEEDS AND UTILIZATION IN USAID/JAKARTA

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Purpose/Methodology: During the course of over three weeks between January 19th and February 13th, 1987, interviews were conducted with twenty-eight members of USAID staff and management, of which twenty-three were in either the Director's Office, the Program Office, or the various technical offices. The purpose of the interviews centered on: 1. What kinds of information people used in carrying out their job responsibilities; 2. How they were getting it; 3. What kinds of information were they called upon to provide to others in and outside of AID; 4. Their level of satisfaction with existing information resources; and 5. Ideas they might have for improving those resources.

Based on these interviews, and an analysis of existing and potential information resources available to USAID/Jakarta, a series of recommendations are presented for upgrading and reorienting Mission information systems and services to better meet staff needs.

Patterns discovered: The original intention of the interviews was to develop an information needs profile for each of the Mission offices. In the course of interviews it became evident that with few exceptions, characterizations by office strained the evidence. To a large degree, types of information needs cut across offices. The individual is the most logical unit of analysis, his or her behavior as an information producer and consumer being more a function of personal work styles and background, conditioned strongly by their functional role in the Mission (i.e. whether their primary responsibilities involved planning, implementation, technical support, etc). Of the two variables, individual attributes and job descriptions, the former appeared to be more important. Whereas one might expect senior Mission staff, with their heavy management burden, to have little time to read specialized materials and keep up with the "state of the art" in development literature, in reality some are voracious readers with far ranging interests while others more closely fit the stereotype and find little time to venture beyond their in-box.

Types and Sources of Information: Interviews confirmed expectations that the vast majority of information used by professional staff is either generated directly by project activities, or is provided by GOI counterparts and contractors. This is consistent with the fact that most staff time at all levels is spent on tasks relating to the management and implementation of ongoing projects and programs rather than on planning or research. Information needed for these tasks really falls under the category of "management information" which is automatically generated in the course of project implementation.

Reports and other data relevant to USAID projects generated by the GOI does not always flow to project officers by virtue of official project requirements, but for the most part such information seems to be getting to Mission staff via their normal, informal relationships with their counterparts. This type of information can go beyond counterpart reports on project activities to include internal GOI policy discussions, statistical reports, and other unpublished or semi-official documents.

Mission staff where less sanguine regarding what happens to this information once it gets into their hands. All project officers maintain "working" project files. Those files are, for the most part, more

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complete than the "official" AID project files, which lack much of the informal correspondence and unofficial reports that help paint a complete picture of what is really happening with projects during implementation. A number of project officers felt overwhelmed by the quantity of information flowing to them from project activities and expressed fears that they no longer had useful access to their "project histories" because the information was unorganized and uncataloged. The ARD is considering organizing its voluminous PDP files using PC-based database software. Other technical offices appear to have less daunting numbers of project documents to manage and each relies on its own scheme for organizing the files.

Technical offices had even greater problems organizing those GOI reports, including statistical reports, development policy discussions/plans , etc., which were not linked to specific projects. While project documents are likely only to be of use to the immediately responsible project office and project evaluators, these more general materials often prove useful to staff in other offices. Depending on the office, they can be interfiled with project documents, or might be included in individual or office reference collections.

Information needs falling beyond those driven by project management responsibilities can be divided into two categories - needs relating to program and project planning, and needs of individual Mission staff trying to keep abreast of the "state-of-the art" in their fields. In both cases staff rely on a combination of active and passive channels to get the information they need.

Passive channels refer to unsolicited information that comes to officers on a regular basis. Numerous AID/W offices including S&T, CDIE, FVA and other routinely send copies of new research reports and policy discussions to the Mission. These reports are sent rather indiscriminately, so only some are relevant to USAID/Jakarta concerns. Those that are of interest may or may not be sent to the appropriate office, or may be simply sent to the Mission Director. Mission staff review these materials and retain, discard or pass to others in the Mission depending on whether they need the information or think anyone else might. The reliability of this "system" is obviously dependent on how well Mission staff understand each other's interests. This "musical chairs" process by which unsolicited materials do or do not find a home in the Mission fosters negative attitudes about the utility of development information coming from AID/W.

When staff actively seek out information in areas outside their expertise,, they rely heavily on each other. Most staff who have been in the Mission a year or more feel fairly well connected to the Mission "network", and feel confident that there will be someone in the building who can at least put them on the right track when they need quick information. Some people, either because they have recently arrived in the Mission, or because of individual personality traits are less likely to seek information or advice from staff outside their immediate office. These people are more likely to seek out information from AID/W and other formal channels, such as the Information Center.

Mission staff value the "filtering" function performed by their colleagues who supply them with information. While staff may not themselves appreciate having to play the role of "filter" when they weed through masses of material flowing into their offices, their informed appraisals pay off when they have the right document on hand when it is needed. Since few individuals acquire information in a truly systematic fashion, office collections might lack the very best, state-of-the-art information on a subject, but staff are confident that information supplied by their colleagues will at least be to the point.

The degree to which Mission staff attempt to keep up on the state-of-the-art in their field or on general development theory varies widely, although "I never have time to read" was heard more often than not. Most "professional development" reading occurs outside the office, but many people commented that they were already taking enough work home as it is. Instead, staff tend to acquire and digest this information when they are planning new activities. To the extent that individuals do routinely read new professional literature, it comes to them on a passive or semi-passive basis, meaning that the materials simple appear in their offices or they select articles and documents from lists circulated by the Information Center.

It is not uncommon, especially in technical offices like OPH and ARD for staff to collect technical information that comes their way whether or not they personally plan to make use of it in the foreseeable future. They are collecting documents that they would like to read some day "when I have the time". Although that "some day" may never crop up in that person's schedule, they often end up passing the material on to colleagues and contractors when the need arises. Throughout the Mission, staff stated that they frequently drew upon their informal office document collections for technical information needed by their contractors.

Perceptions of Information Quality/Utility

Given that one of the goals of my TDY was to explore ways to increase Mission utilization of AID/W-based information resources, I was interested in knowing how those resources were perceived by USAID staff. Perceptions of utility were conditioned both by the quality and relevance of the information itself, and the responsiveness of AID/W offices supplying the information.

There were large numbers for AID-funded research documents in office collection throughout the Mission. Perhaps the majority of them arrived unsolicited in the Mission from S&T, PVA, PPC and other central AID Bureaus. While people were able to point to individual documents that they found useful at one time or another, the overall perception is that they are being inundated with documents of marginal relevance and questionable quality. Several individuals criticized AID-funded literature as being too "generic" to be of practical use to the Mission and for being too tainted by AID/W's policy agendas. An obvious example of these criticisms is the large volume of literature on private enterprise development that is sent to the EED office from S&T and to a lesser degree PRE. The EED office finds little of it useful because the empirical research often addresses questions irrelevant to conditions in Indonesia and the policy literature is too strident and ideology-bound to

be of use in policy analysis. Having said that, part of these negative perceptions might be partly based on the "familiarity breeds contempt" principle. The sheer volume of materials arriving at the Mission from AID/W tends to devalue the information in peoples' eyes.

Mission staff have a high regard for research put out by the World Bank and other international organizations. The feeling was that such organizations are in a better position to undertake an objective analysis, and have more resources to carry out the research. This is especially true in the area of economic analysis, but carries over into other fields as well. Information from international organizations typically comes to the Mission via informal, personal channels and must usually be sought out by people who want it.

Of those people who have sought out and obtained information on AID development experience from CDIE, most were satisfied with the information they received, and several were quite enthusiastic. Still, opinions on the utility of AID "lessons learned" are far from unanimous. Probably the majority of the professional staff have little awareness of what information resources are available from CDIE and have never or rarely used its services. There is obviously a degree of self-selection going on here. People who are skeptical of the value of information on historical and cross-country development experience in planning their own projects are simply not going to seek it out. Beyond this skepticism, much of the non-use of CDIE is explained by its invisibility and distance from the Mission. Even staff who have used CDIE services in the past or have attended a CDIE briefing while in AID/W tend to forget that it exists when an immediate information need arises.

While Mission staff are aware of, and have reasonable access to local Indonesian social science, economic and technical literature resources, those resources are often not highly valued. When I heard staff say that the information they needed from their jobs was country-specific and available locally they were largely referring to research conducted by expatriates associated with international organizations or universities. The feeling is that Indonesian social science research is too constrained by the local political environment and often not up to international academic standards. This seems to suggest that any simplistic effort to increase access to local information resources such as research institutions and libraries will be of limited value to the Mission.

Mission Staff as Information Consumers:

As was stated at the outset, much of the variation in the behavior of Mission staff as information consumers is explained by individual work styles. Some people are information maximizers who take an academic, comprehensive approach to gathering and analyzing information in the course of their work, while others are information "satisficers" who gather only as much information as they need to make a decision, and who do so in an idiosyncratic, non-systematic manner. In between are those who would prefer to be "maximizers" but who are prevented by their workloads from behaving accordingly. The three types are distributed in an essentially random pattern throughout the Mission. Clearly, any effort to upgrade formal information services in USAID/Jakarta will most directly benefit the maximizers and the frustrated maximizers. Still, it

is not unreasonable to expect that "satisficers" will at least indirectly benefit if lowered opportunity costs encourage them to use formal information services more frequently, and if their "maximizing" colleagues can pass on more timely, relevant information via the Missions informal network.

If there is a single characteristic that is common to all information consumers in USAID/Jakarta, it is the "short fuse" between the time an information need is identified and the time they must have the information to make a decision. To some extent this condition arises from objective, concrete demands placed on Mission personnel, such as when the Mission is required to comment on a World Bank loan proposal on short notice, or when AID/W demands a detailed report from the Mission in response to a Congressional inquiry. On a more routine basis, work on action plans, concept papers, and PIDs tends to be rushed through on tight schedules while normal management responsibilities continue unabated.

Still, while information utilization can frequently occur only during brief "windows of opportunity", there are many cases where staff know about the task requiring the information well in advance. Mission staff may be aware of the task in advance, but few think seriously about their information needs until the job is at hand - at which time it is usually too late to venture beyond what is immediate available in their office. This is hardly a trait unique to USAID/Jakarta personnel, but it is one that represents a serious impediment to any effort to systematically increase information access and utilization. It suggests that a primary goal of an information system should be to minimize response times, but at the same time it must be realized there is no such thing as an instant response. USAID staff information needs rarely consist of simple, general questions. Any information service, whether it is located in the Mission or in AID/W will need a certain amount of time to analyze and act on those needs.

A General Assessment: Is There an Information "Problem" in the Mission?:

Overall, it is hard to argue that there is critical problem with information resources in the Mission. The majority of persons interviewed appeared to feel that they were getting, or could get, whatever information they needed for their jobs. Individuals have developed their own "system" including, but not limited to, personal or office document collections, contacts with consultants and counterparts, and a great deal of informal networking among Mission staff. Jakarta is seen by the staff as a "high skills" Mission where one is likely to find someone, either AID staff or consultant, who has the expertise to provide quick advice and relevant materials.

If there is a major, commonly perceived information problem in the Mission, it lies not in simple access , but rather in its organization and management. Individuals and offices have amassed large collections of technical and project related documents they find increasingly difficult to keep track of at even a minimal level, despite the best of intentions. Informal networks of professional within and outside the Mission usually function well, but they can misfire when individuals remain unaware of relevant documents and personal expertise that is literally sitting in an office down the hall.

To the extent that additional information resources (worldwide donor experiences, technical literature, development theory etc.) can be productively utilized in the Mission, there needs to be a single, clear focal point for the acquisition and dissemination of that information. There is some scope for educating USAID staff to make better use of existing mechanisms and resources (CDIE for example), but it must be realized that people will always be reluctant to venture beyond their immediate personal network if they have to first figure out where to go or who to ask.

In this context, the Mission should consider upgrading the capabilities of the Information Center to serve as that "focal point" for information resources in the Mission. The goal would be to make the Info Center a one stop gateway to information resources outside the Mission, as well as a point of coordination for information already in the Mission. This does not require centralizing documents in the Center or creating a complete development library in the Mission. Nor does it imply that USAID staff should abandon the multiple information channels already in use, rather the Center should act as the intermediary when users do not immediately know where to locate needed information. It is not realistic to expect that significant changes in information utilization and access in USAID/Jakarta will take place unless some entity in the Mission acts as facilitator and advocate of information. As it exist today, the Info Center is not ready to play this role, but it could do so if some of the steps outlined later in this report are undertaken.

The Information Center:

The Information Center has not regularly reported statistics to Mission management on services provided by the Center. Interviews revealed a general perception that the Information Center is a seldom used resource despite the fact that individuals could usually point to occasions when they had personally used the Centers resources and found them valuable. While usage records are incomplete, they paint a picture of an Information Center that is more heavily utilized than its reputation in the Mission might lead one to believe.

Document Collection/Circulation

The information center contains approximately 4,000 books, papers and reports in its cataloged collection. Document types include books, AID and other donor project documentation and technical reports, GOI reports and various unpublished papers. Subjects covered by the collection include agriculture, regional development, education, NGO management, project management, environment/natural resources, and Indonesian economy/society.

On average, approximately 40 documents per month are checked out from the cataloged collection. Last month, the breakdown of user types included:

U.S. Direct Hire	11
FSN	9
PSC (in Mission)	5
Consultants	13
Visitors (Other donors, students)	9
Total	47

In considering the above figures it should be kept in mind that a significant percentage of the existing collection is either out of date, or irrelevant to the Mission's current program. Perhaps as much as much as half of the collection never circulates at all, meaning that circulation of the Center's useful collection appears reasonably healthy.

Another interesting pattern is the degree to which the Info Center collection is utilized by USAID consultants, FSNs and other donor staff.

Journal Collection:

The Info Center subscribes to 40 journals/magazines. Selection of journal titles is based on a periodic polling of Mission staff, who are asked to review a list of journals currently received to see if they are still relevant to Mission interests, and to suggest new titles.

The Center circulates copies of journal tables of contents to staff who have expressed an interest in receiving them. From the circulated table of contents, the staff can request copies of individual articles. Fifty-one individuals currently receive selected tables of contents. They include:

U.S. Direct Hire	28
USAID Contractors	13
FSN	10
Total	51

Mission staff request approximately 30 journal articles a month. While the Center sends tables of contents to interested contractors, it does not provide copies of articles. Contractors in Jakarta, or those with offices in Jakarta (such as RMI) can borrow the journals and make copies at their own expense. In past years the center provided journal articles to contractors in the field, but the service was discontinued due cost.

CDIE Documents:

In the last year, the Info Center began circulating the AID Development Information System New Acquisitions List and has coordinated requests to CDIE for requested documents. Requests for documents from this list have averaged 17 titles a month.

Other Services:

The Info Center occasionally contacts AID/W offices other than CDIE to request information for Mission staff. This occurs only infrequently - less than once a month. Christiana has also developed informal links with local libraries in Jakarta which allow her to borrow documents (usually only long enough to copy them) despite the lack of any formal interlibrary loan system in Indonesia. Again, this occurs only about once a month.

Mission Views on the Information Center:

While there was wide variation in the level of awareness of the resources and services available from the center, clearly the most visible and well liked service was the selective circulation of tables of contents. Positive comments were also received about the AID New Acquisitions list. Obviously the attractive feature of these services are that they reach directly into users offices and in the case of the journal lists, are tailored directly to user interests.

Awareness of resources that are available by actively visiting or contacting the Info Center is much lower. This was true even for individuals who periodically draw upon those resources and have gotten useful information in the past. Despite these episodic positive experiences with the Info Center, most staff have little feel for whether in any given case, they are likely to obtain relevant information from the Center. A number of Mission staff said that while they themselves used the Center only infrequently, they saw it as a valuable resource for contractors. Several project officers mentioned that the Center's provision of journal articles to off-site contractors was a valuable service and expressed dismay that it had been discontinued.

Negative comments were relatively infrequent, but were significant because they point to important inadequacies in the Center, and because the sentiments expressed are probably shared at least to some degree by other staff who did not feel strongly enough about the subject to comment. One common complaint was that the collection does not meet match with current program areas. Another, perhaps more critical complaint was that the collection is poorly organized, and that is hard to find materials without Christiana's assistance. It is not easy to "browse" for

information in the Center, a factor which discourages people from going to the Info Center to"see what's available" on a subject, as opposed to looking for a specific report or book. The location of the Center was mentioned as a factor that has discouraged use of the Center. A number of staff noted that they made much better use of the Info Center when it was located upstairs.

Critical Constraints to Increased Information Center Effectiveness:

While the statement may seem excessively reductionist, most of the inadequacies in the Info Center can be traced back to the lack of Mission policy on the purpose of the Center, and the lack of programmatic direction which could guide the Center in the allocation its scarce resources. Similar Mission centers can and do function effectively without any formal "charter", but in most cases the centers are run by an American, most typically an FS spouse or local-hire PSC. To be successful, such managers must be entrepreneurial in their approach to running the centers, marketing the center to Mission staff, and competing for Mission resources.

For better or worse, it is very difficult, if not impossible, for an PSN to play such an entrepreneurial role in this or any Mission. While Christiana has displayed considerable creativity and initiative, she is understandably reluctant to stray very far beyond the bounds of her job description. The lack of general guidance on such issues such as collection policy and priority user groups, make it difficult allocate her time effectively and nearly impossible to justify requests for additional resources. Some concrete examples of these problem appear below.

* Christiana knows that much of the existing collection is inappropriate to Mission needs. But without any guidance on what should be in the collection, how she decide what should not be in it? Can she unilaterally decide to discard materials? If not, who should approve her selections and on what basis would they make a decision?

* The Info Center's practice of supplying contractors with copies of journal articles was discontinued upon the direction of the EXO. Was that action based on an explicit determination that the service a not Another legitimate use of Mission resource, or was it simply an incremental decision based on cost? How important is it for the Center to serve the needs of USAID contractors?

* The majority of books purchased by the Mission are specifically requested by Mission staff and are often retained in their offices. But if Christiana identifies materials she thinks should be in the center collection, on what basis does she justify the purchase to Mission management?

* In order to be more responsive to Mission informations needs, Christiana is aware that she needs greater contact with USAID professional staff. Given her present job description and status, she is reluctant to be more aggressive in approaching people "upstairs".

Another very basic problem is the location of the Information Center in the Executive Office. Given that the EXO has little need for Info Center

services, and is only indirectly involved with project planning and implementation, it is hard for that office to provide substantive guidance to the Information Center. On questions regarding resources for the Center, the EXO similarly has little information on how a given expenditure will or will not contribute to mission needs.

Options for the Information Center:

In the last year, the Mission gave serious consideration to he possibility of closing the Information Center. In light of a steady, if limited demand for Center's resources, a widespread belief among Mission staff that some kind of information facility is useful and the Center's potential role in a more comprehensive Mission information management strategy, such an decision would be unfortunate.

Since most document purchases occur in response to individual staff requests, it is reasonable to expect that expenditures for books and serials would would continue at approximately current levels. Circulation of journals could continue more or less as a clerical function, provided that the Mission could agree on which office's administrative staff would take on that responsibility . Documents and serials acquired by the Mission could be kept in individual's offices, making it even more difficult for staff to know where to find needed information. New arrivals in the Mission would have few sources of basic information on Indonesia and the USAID program here. USAID consultants would be even more reliant on their contract monitors for job-related information needs, increasing the amount of time spent by Mission staff on such "hand holding" activities. The disposition of the existing collection would pose a challenge. Should the Mission attempt to retain parts of it, such as as documents on other donor's projects or information on past USAID projects etc? If so, where should they reside?

In its current form, the cost to the Mission for the Info Center is essentially the space it occupies (a room previously occupied by one professional and his secretary) and Christiana's salary. As was mentioned earlier, most expenditures for information acquisitions now channelled through the Center would continue with or without a formal Center.

A Low Option:

A substantial enhancement of the productivity of the Center could be achieved simply through management changes which would not necessarily require major additional expenditures or an excessive amount of management time.

1. Adopt a Clear Statement of Purpose and Policy Guidelines for the Info Center: Proposed guidelines are included in the appendix of this report. A final version should be agreed upon by an Information Resources committee composed of interested Mission staff. Those guidelines should include:

   a. Priority areas for collection development.

   b. A clear policy on how requests for document purchases will be reviewed and approved.

c. A mechanism under which the Center can periodically "weed" its collection of unwanted materials.

d. A clear statement of the relative priority of user groups. That statement should explicitly affirm the importance of serving the needs of USAID contractors.

e. Designating the Information Center as the Mission's liaison with CDIE and the access point for U.S. and worldwide information resources not available through staff's personal contacts.

Once such a policy is approved the Info Center could function with very little ongoing, direct supervision. Thus, the Info Resources committee or other management body would not have to actively manage the Center or even meet with any great frequency.

2. Move the Information Center to the Program Office

While the Program Office is not, as it is currently staffed, a major potential user of Center resources, no other office is in a better position to assess overall Mission interests and information needs. As was mentioned above, taking on this responsibility is not likely to require a great deal of time, but could help put the Center in closer touch with issues and topics critical to the Mission's agenda.

3. Change Christiana's Job Description and Title

Almost four years after the original American PSC librarian left the Mission, Christiana is still a "Library Assistant". It is hard to overemphasize the negative effect this has had on her morale over the years. While her job description has been modified to allow her to perform the essential tasks required for the Center to function, she (or any FSN in this position) needs a job description that explicitly calls for the kind of proactive outreach activities required to keep the center responsive and effectively utilized. Specifically, the "Information Specialist" should be encouraged to attend selected staff meetings and to informally approach Mission staff to get a better feel for their general interests and to see if they have any immediate information needs.

Additional resources:

Certain selected equipment/software acquisitions could greatly enhance utilization of Center resources.

1. MICRODIS or similar document management software: Christiana has already developed a dBaseIII document database for new acquisitions, but its capabilities as an interactive retrieval tool are limited. CDIE has developed a comprehensive document management package specifically for USAID Information Centers and is in a position to provide the package, and ongoing technical assistance free of charge.

MICRODIS could be used in several ways:

a. To catalog Center materials using a detailed and flexible system of subject descriptors. This would enhance access to the Centers resources on a subject basis. All new acquisitions could be entered, and as time allowed, the Center could eventually catalog its existing collection.

b. The Center could gain immediate subject access to selected portions of the AID Development Information System microfiche collection of AID project and technical documents.. The Center currently has an almost complete collection AID technical reports in microfiche, but the collection is literally never used because it is virtually impossible to find materials using the printed indexes now available. The Center could maintain a more limited collection of DIS microfiche, for example all documents pertaining to Indonesia, USAID/Jakarta projects and selected sectors of particular interest to the Mission, and could provide immediate access to those materials.

c. MICRODIS can be used to manage document circulation and track services provided by service category and user type. This would give the Center and Mission management a clearer picture of how well it is reaching its clients.

2. A Wang PC with Hard Disk, IBM and VS terminal Emulation: MICRODIS cannot be run without it, and to serve as access point to the Center's collection, the PC must be in the Center. In addition to MICRODIS, the PC could function as a VS terminal. Christiana could compose information requests to CDIE for transmission via ICS, and could receive responses without leaving the Center. If the Christiana is to spend more time seeking out Mission staff, purely administrative tasks requiring her to leave the Center should be kept to a minimum.

3. Correct lenses for the existing Fiche reader/printer, an a portable fiche reader: The Center lacks the correct lens for its reader/printer needed to read AID microfiche. The fiche collection is unusable without it. Christiana is now checking onto the possibility that such a lens might be available through GSO surplus. If not, one should be purchased.

   In addition, the Mission should consider the purchase of a small, portable fiche reader that staff could use in their offices. While no one really likes reading microfiche, it would be more convenient if staff were not required to sit in the Info Center in order to do so.

<u>A Higher Option</u>:

If Mission management determines that it is desirable to develop a mechanism for centralized access to information throughout the Mission, the Info Center is the logical focal point for that activity. While specialized document collections main created by the various technical offices could remain where they are (and would have to given available space in the Center), they could be cataloged on MICRODIS and assigned descriptors to give staff a relatively complete picture of what resources

exist and where they are the Mission. While people would continue to rely on personal networking for that access where possible, most people interviewed strongly supported the idea of such a mechanism, both because of the access it would allow to Mission-wide resources, and probably more important, it would help them keep track of what they had in their own collections. People could access Mission resources through the Info Center, and could be provided with indexed, sorted bibliographies of their own collections.

Such a PC-based system is not without it's tradeoffs. If documents are fully cataloged, individual office collections would have to be organized according to a single, consistent classification system. While this might be a relief to some offices, others have developed very personalized schemes for organizing information that they might be reluctant to abandon.

If offices did not want the Center to physically reorganize their collection, the database would only be able tell one which offices had which materials, but not where those materials were located within the offices. Documents could still be assigned catalog numbers, so that if at a later time they are sent to the Info Center, they could immediately integrated into the collection. Many office collections mix personal and Mission-owned documents. That distinction could be noted in the database so individuals would not have to worry about losing their personal books and papers.

Another problem involves collection control. Some offices, such as OPH and to a lesser degree ARD have problems with consultants and others "walking off" with critical materials. With documents located throughout the Mission, a centralized system could not really function as a circulation control mechanism. But as Mission confidence in the ability of the system to organize and retrieve documents increases, offices might be willing to send part or all of their collections to the Information Center. Mission staff do not particularly like functioning as part-time librarians, but they would have to be sure that materials sent to the Info Center would not disappear into a "black hole". While at least one office, OPH, appears interested in moving its collection to the information center, doing the same for all offices has not been proposed here, largely because it would require that the Info Center move to larger space. While I would support such a move especially if that space was upstairs and closer to Mission staff, consolidating document collections is not strictly necessary to accomplish the goal of making Mission resources more accessible.

The issue of a proper classification system would have to be resolved. The Sears system currently used by the Info Center is not suitable as it would effectively scramble office collections and make browsing by topic impossible. The AID Thesaurus provides a rich, development-oriented vocabulary for hierarchically classifying documents by subject, but is not in itself a cataloging system because it does not assign a unique number to each document.

One possible solution would be to combine alpha-numeric classification codes provided by the AID Thesaurus with a "cutter code", such as a combination of author initials and publication date, thus giving each document in the system the required unique shelf number. This

approach would also have the advantage of streamlining the cataloging process. The cataloger would simply append a cutter code to the document's major descriptor term rather than having to catalog the document according to two separate classification systems as is often the case for online library databases. If the Mission wanted to proceed with a mission-wide information system, it would be essential to obtain T.A. to design a workable system.

Special Issue: Is MICRODIS the Best Software for the Job?

MICRODIS is by no means the only bibliographic database software that could be used to organize the Mission's document collection. Commercially available packages such as INMAGIC or SCIMATE could be used effectively for the same purpose. These alternatives to MICRODIS are general purpose packages, and as such can be configured more flexibly than MICRODIS. The downside of this flexibility is that much more time would have to be spent defining database structures and fields in the initial stages of implementation. The commercial packages are less "menu driven" than MICRODIS, making it unlikely that Mission staff would ever be able to search the database without assistance. Furthermore, they lack the circulation, document ordering and service tracking modules available in MICRODIS. Close substitutes for these modules could be implemented using commercial packages, but once again, the front-end development effort required would be substantial and would essential "re-invent" capabilities already present in MICRODIS.

A number of people in USAID/Jakarta were aware of problems reported by USAID/Cairo using MICRODIS in its Development Information Center, and were justifiably skeptical as to whether the package is really debugged and operational. It should be noted that as of 4/87, USAID/Cairo has stated that it is now fully satisfied with MICRODIS. Cairo was seen from the start as a demonstration site for MICRODIS, and as such required higher levels of specialized technical assistance and training than would be the case in Jakarta or has been the case in other relatively trouble free installations such as USAID/Port-au-Prince, and the PRE Center for Privatization.

Additional resources:

Implementing a Mission-wide document system would provide a stronger case for putting a PC in the Info Center. Short-term technical assistance would be necessary to develop a detailed implementation plan. The major recurrent cost of such a system would be labor.

Realistically, one person could not manage a system such as the one proposed. The front-end data entry task would be formidable and Info Center staff would have to spend a considerable amount of time in offices and away from the Center, at least in the early stages of implementation. To take on this responsibility, Christiana would have to have an assistant to perform routine data entry and clerical tasks, as well as maintain a presence in the Info Center.

Beyond the Information Center:

Based on his TDY in September, CDIE/DI Chief Maury Brown recommended that the mission consider hiring a PSC research analyst familiar with development information resources to work in the mission. That individual would play a proactive, aggressive role in identifying ways information available within the Mission, in Indonesia, and in AID/W could contribute to the Mission's program. While for obvious reasons I did not feel it was appropriate to systematically solicit Mission views on the concept, a number of people had previous knowledge of the proposal volunteered that they liked the idea.

In regular interviews, many Mission staff cited the difficulty of communicating their information needs to the Info Center, CDIE, or any other formal information service. For most people, seeking information is a reiterative process, whereby they successively sharpen their questions and focus in on issues that they may have had difficult articulating initially. On that basis, the mission could clearly benefit from a development generalist who could both anticipate information needs based on a knowledge of mission activities and work interactively with mission staff to identify relevant resources. That person could also undertake short term information syntheses on questions that fall between those that mission staff can address in the process of their normal jobs and those that justify a formal study drawing on outside consultants.

Working one-on-one with Mission staff would obviously occupy a considerable amount of the Analyst's time, but would not constitute a full-time job in a mission the size of USAID/Jakarta. Rather the Research Analyst would be involved in a broad range of information-related issues and tasks in the Mission. A position description for a Research Analyst/Information Specialist might include the following:

The Research Analyst will report to the Program Office but will serve the Mission as a whole.

A. The Analyst will be broadly responsible for ensuring that information resources available within the Mission, from AID/W and the international development community, and from in-country sources are effectively utilized in the planning and implementation of USAID programs. The emphasis is on utilization and real impact rather than simply increasing the availability of information. To this end, the Analyst will:

1. Routinely attend Mission staff and planning meetings both to gain an understanding of emerging issues and concerns, and to directly contribute to discussions where the Analyst can relate development "lessons learned" or technical information to the immediate question at hand.

2. Maintain direct, individual contact with Mission staff to keep abreast of their general information needs and to help staff identify and formulate specific information requests. The Analyst will work interactively with Mission staff to obtain and analyze needed information.

3. Prepare information syntheses on priority topics agreed upon by Mission management. The Analyst will draw upon existing data, research and evaluations to produce concise state-of-the-art reviews on topics important to project planners and evaluators.

B. The Analyst will be responsible for identifying, evaluating, and establishing Mission access to relevant information resources and systems. This role may include simply exploring new resources, but may extend to acting as an ongoing intermediary. Examples include:

1. Work with the DMC,USIA and other organizations to enhance Mission access to and utilization of international telecommunications services.

2. Explore and evaluate new information technologies in light of changing Mission needs and cost/performance factors.

3. Serve as a focal point for Mission relations with PPC/CDIE. Working with with the Info Center, the Analyst will act as the intermediary between Mission requestors and CDIE researchers to insure that staff needs are being met, and provide CDIE with feedback on the usefulness of its services.

4. In coordination with Mission management, provide substantive direction to the Info Center on how to increase the level and quality of services provided to Mission staff.

5. Aid the Info Center in establishing stronger ties to information resources in Indonesia, including libraries, universities, GOI ministries, and offices of donor organizations.

C. As the Mission's "Information Specialist" the Analyst will serve as advisor to the Program and technical offices on a range of information issues not strictly confined to information utilization within the Mission. The Analyst will:

1. Review proposed USAID projects and other assistance plans with an eye towards the technical and institutional viability of information components anticipated in the plans.

2. Identify additional opportunities where information collection/dissemination activities can enhance the effectiveness of USAID projects.

3. Work with the Mission, USIA and others to enhance and expand on USAID's efforts to disseminate AID-generated research to the GOI and the local donor community as part of the Mission's ongoing policy dialogue efforts.

Having proposed this, a number of important questions remain unanswered. While having such a person in the Mission might be desirable , could the position be sustained in the Mission over time? A PSC is an expensive proposition for the Mission. If the PSC proceeded as an experiment, what options would the Mission have for sustaining the position in the long run if it proves to be a success?

One obviously option is to consider staffing the Research Analyst position with an FSN. It would still be desirable to bring in an American PSC in the initial phase (approx. 24 months) to establish and define the role within the Mission, help recruit a qualified FSN candidate, and arrange for appropriate training. The prospect of an FSN acting in such a role was viewed skeptically by a number of mission staff, who raised two important objections:

1. Would an FSN be able to play the kind of aggressive, entrepreneurial, creative role required? Would such a person, without highly structured job responsibilities, be able to seek out opportunities where information resources can contribute to Mission programs?

2. Assuming that an Indonesian can play the role of Research Analyst, will the Mission be able to afford and retain him or her? The argument is that Indonesians with the educational background and personal qualities required are not likely to be attracted to the position. They will have higher status, higher paying alternatives available to them.

While I don't want to duck these questions, they will really have to be answered by Mission management. I simply lack enough familiarity with the market for professional manpower in Jakarta and the dynamics of USDH/FSN interactions to offer any informed conclusions. Having said that, my initial reaction is that an FSN should be seriously considered. The FSN option offers the best and most realistic prospect for sustaining the position in the long run, and while the Mission will want to evaluate the usefulness of the experiment in the early stages, there is no point in creating any new information role in the Mission unless there is at least the possibility of continuity.

Sustaining such a Research Analyst position in the Mission would necessarily reflect a strong commitment on the part of the Mission to effective information utilization. As such, it does not make sense to proceed with the idea unless the Mission is willing to undertake some of the lower cost, more easily sustainable improvements outlined in previous sections. Mission staff have observed that most of the information they needs exists in the Mission or in-country, and that only selective information from AID/W is of real use. If that is so, it makes little sense to create create the capacity to identify information needs without first having the capacity to fulfill those needs. Research Analysts in CDIE have access to and depend on a whole arsenal of well organized information resources, and while the role of an Analyst in Mission would obviously have to be adapted to local conditions anyone playing that role will still need a "toolbox" of local resources to function effectively.

Given this, there is clearly some minimum level of resource commitment to information services below which the Research Analyst role would not make sense. In my opinion, that is probably the "deluxe" low option described previously. That option included upgrading Christiana's position, moving the Info Center from the EXO to the Program Office, adopting a written "charter" for the Info Center, and providing Christiana with a properly configured PC. Leaving the Info Center under the EXO would undermine the close working relationship needed between the

Info Center and the Analyst, who would report to the Program Office and who would, in any case, lack official management authority over the Center. I do not think that it is strictly necessary to implement the more ambitious, mission-wide document tracking system prior to bringing a Research Analyst to USAID/Jakarta. By virtue of ongoing interactions with Mission staff, the Analyst would be able to develop a useful, if not comprehensive understanding of what does and does not exist in office document collections.

Also it is important to consider the possibility that Christiana, with an upgraded position in the Mission could perform at least some of the functions envisaged for the Research Analyst. Obviously, her background and her other responsibilities would prevent her from performing the full role, but the Mission should not underestimate Christiana's abilities or her understanding of staff information needs.

SPECIAL ISSUES

1. USAID Project Documentation: Individual project officers maintain working files of active projects. The Program Office also maintains a file of basic project documents for all Mission projects. The Mission's "Official" project files are maintained by C&R in the basement. Neither the Program Office or nor C&R have a complete collection of contractors technical and progress reports. Project Officers try to keep them for active projects, but for old projects such as PDP, they do not have a clear idea of what they have.

   The mission does not have anything resembling a retrospective projects file. Old C&R files are sent to Washington for warehousing, where for all practical purposes they disappear, and in any case C&R files only contain core "official" project documents.

   In past years, C&R was responsible for sending project document to CDIE (then DIU) for filming. Lately that responsibility has devolved to individual project offices. The Program Office has been fairly consistent in sending basic design documents (PDs, Amendments, etc) to CDIE, but that office does not systematically get contractors' studies, special evaluations, etc, and thus does not pass them on.

Recommendation

The Mission should make it clear that ALL project related design documents, evaluations, technical reports, and progress reports should be sent to CDIE for entry into DIS. Very few POs were aware of this responsibility. This requirement will not seem as much of a burden if staff know that documents sent to CDIE will end up in the Info Center's USAID project microfiche collection. Consistent submission of Mission project documents can not only enhance AID's overall institutional memory, but can be of direct benefit to the mission by providing a partial solution to the problems a number of offices have experienced in managing project-related materials.

As there appeared to be a considerable amount of uncertainty among Mission staff regarding exactly what types of documents should be submitted to CDIE, a listing of those document types appears below:

Design: Project Papers, PIDs, OPGs, Grant Agreements and the accompanying approved proposals, PAIPs and PAADs.

Evaluation: PESs, Special Evaluations, Audits, Final Reports, Progress, Annual, and Quarterly Reports.

Contractor: Research and Technical Reports, Handbooks, Conference reports.

Program: CDSSs, ABSs, and Action Plans

AID requires the signed and dated (approved) version of designs and evaluation documents be entered into the Development Information System. For activities implemented via Grant Agreements, Cooperative Agreements, Proposals, etc., the Mission should submit those documents which best provide a final description of the activity. For contractor reports, the final version should be submitted. If, as is sometimes the case, a report marked "draft" is actually the final version, CDIE should be so informed. Project-related documents of all types should include the project number to be properly indexed. While relying on an AID/W office for to organize the Mission's project files may seem less than ideal, it is hard to identify an alternative that will provide a similar capability at no cost other than the effort required to send the documents. CDIE can supply the
Mission with pre-addressed labels so that sending documents can literally be as easy as putting them in an envelope and sending them off. No transmittal letter or explanatory notes need to accompany documents sent to CDIE.

2. AID policy information: The mission has a relatively complete set of official policy documents (Handbooks, PDs etc). Some staff expressed frustration that it was hard to know where to look among available materials for relevant guidance. People were especially frustrated by policy-related cables, which may cross their desk when they first arrive but are hard to find later on.

   A second set of frustrations related to the more subtle problem of how to "read between the lines" of new policies, and how to keep abreast of AID/W thinking before formal policy is made.

   The Program Office or the Information Center could try to organize an AID policy core collection, including cables and Policy Determinations, an could attempt some indexing system to link policy guidance materials by topic. Realistically that might be unmanageable at the Mission level. This is a problem common to almost all AID offices and is one that CDIE, PDPR and the A/AID's office ought to address systematically for the entire agency.

   The problem of policy interpretation and sensing new policy directions is also difficult to deal with systematically. The Mission should keep in mind that CDIE/DI has on occasion acted as a neutral party on the behalf of Missions and Offices seeking this kind of ephemeral,

backchannel information, and has had some success in that role. But it is a role that is hard to play on a routine basis. This problem of policy interpretation is more a problem of politics than one of information.

3. Selective Dissemination of Information

While almost all staff reported that had little time to read materials not directly related to their immediate work, many were interested in the prospect of regularly receiving bibliographies of current literature in their field. Interest was strong, but it is hard to assess the value of such a service until it is tried. We do know that the Info Center's selected table of contents service is well liked, which is an encouraging sign. Based on my interviews, CDIE will proceed to develop subject interest profiles for 6-7 individuals and offices in the Mission, and will channel the resulting periodic bibliographies through the Info Center to the requesting parties.

The International Communications System (ICS:)

Background:

The International Communications System (ICS) provides telecommunication of WP documents among a growing number of USAIDs and AID/W offices. The system is essentially a worldwide electronic mail facility whereby WP documents are deposited in the recipient office's "mailbox" residing in a central mainframe computer in AID/W. ICS sites log on daily to check for incoming documents and to "mail" outgoing document transmissions. The actual telecommunication link can be via International Direct Dial (IDD) phone lines, or where available via a direct satellite link using the State Department's dedicated telecommunication channels.

USAID/Jakarta has participated in the ICS system since June 1, 1986. The Mission is one of many ICS sites which has free 24 hr/day access to a State channel to Washington and thus pays no international phone charges for use of ICS. A memo outlining procedures for the use of ICS was circulated in May 1986 to all USAID offices and its capabilities were explained at least once at a general staff meeting.

Since May, ICS has been used on only three occasions by Mission staff to transmit information not directly concerning ICS itself. On one of those occasions, a critical document sent to AA/ANE was garbled in transmission. On another occasion, PPS attempted to transmit Project Implementation Reports via ICS, but found that this was impossible unless the format of the reports was modified. Mission interviews revealed that overall awareness of the ICS system is low, and the limited experience to date has been largely negative.

Current Obstacles to Greater Usage:

1. Continued Low Awareness: Despite initial efforts to inform the Mission about ICS, few people without direct experience with the system displayed a clear idea of the purpose or in some cases even the existence of ICS.

2. Negative image: To the extent that ICS has an image, it is a poor one. Staff willing to try ICS early on felt let down and are not inclined to bother with a system that they see as unreliable or cumbersome. While it is important to emphasize that this bad reputation is based on very limited experience, the chilling effect of that reputation is real and will be difficult to overcome.

3. Lack of clear guidelines on usage: Administrative procedures for transmitting an ICS document are outlined in Bev Morton's May 1986 memo on ICS. The memo stated that only non-policy documents would normally be transmitted, but beyond that there is little information on how the system should be used. The EXO's memo was largely based on suggested guidelines provided by IRM, which has been deliberately vague about how the system should be used. IRM sees ICS as an informal, unofficial communication channel and it wants users to be innovative and find new applications for the system. Unfortunately this open ended approach has left users with little direction as to what uses are legitimate, and with little illustrative information on why they should use ICS versus alternative communication channels.

4. Technical Limitations: The current version of ICS, known Version 1 has was intended as a first experimental step towards a comprehensive, reliable worldwide telecommunication system for A.I.D. As a first generation system, it has serious limitations. From a user's perspective, these limitations include the inability to send documents with lines longer than eighty columns without modification, and the inability to transmit non-WP files (such as MACS data, speadsheet files, etc.). Headaches occur for ICS system managers owing to the lack of automatic confirmation of message transmissions and the absence of diagnostic routines that would alert them to system problems without having to be directly notified by other operators or AID/W. In short, it is difficult to be sure that message are being received or that ICS is functioning properly. Version II of ICS, which is being tested by IRM, promises to solve the problems described above, as well as add features such as direct TTY access to non-AID computer systems in the U.S. Until the Mission upgrades to ICS 2, the system will inevitably be limited in reliability and capability.

5. Jakarta Security Constraints: USAID/Jakarta is the only ICS site running under the State Department's CUE data security system, which has created some unique problems for the Mission in managing and operating. In its present configuration, ICS cannot be operated by the Mission DMC. It is currently impossible to allow the DMC access to ICS without granting access to restricted Embassy files. Consequently, the State Information Management Center (IMC) was forced to take on responsibility for operating ICS. Under the best of circumstances, such an arrangement would be simply inconvenient, but in this case, frustrations over a quirky, occasionally inoperative system have so soured the IMC on ICS that the IMC's willingness to operate the system in the future is in doubt. It must be said that whatever tensions have arisen have not hindered Mission use of ICS to date. Rather, the issue of who runs ICS will take on more importance when and if use of the system increases significantly.

Recommended Actions:

1. Develop a clear Mission policy on how and when staff should use ICS: AID/W is unlikely to provide leadership in this area, and in addition there are Mission-level policy questions that would have to be resolved before staff will feel comfortable using the system. For example, a number of people stated that they were unsure of how the clearance process was substantively different than that for cables. If the level of effort required to send an ICS transmission was similar to that for cables, they saw no reason to use ICS for shorter messages, as it is only marginally faster than the cable system.

   ICS has a real comparative advantage over the cable system in two areas: 1. It is much easier to transmit lengthy documents or ones that where it is most convenient to have the document arrive in an editable WP format, such as PIRs, draft project documents etc; and 2. The system has at least the potential to serve as an informal channel of communication among worldwide mission staff and AID/W staff. ICS is, by design, an unofficial system. USAID staff might use ICS as a forum for sharing their experiences with colleagues throughout AID, or to receive quick feedback on new ideas from peers in their technical field.

   But before these as yet hypothetical uses of ICS can occur, Mission management must decide for itself to what degree it wants to facilitate or encourage the kind of non-hierarchical communication that ICS allows. Need all ICS transmissions be cleared through office chiefs? If not, should the Mission worry about sending mixed signals to AID/W? Is there a danger that circulating draft papers outside the Mission before they are well fleshed out will expose the Mission to preemptive criticism from other AID offices? While these concerns are real, it is possible to exaggerate the dangers, especially in absence of any substantive track record on the system's use to date.

   In light of these considerations, the Mission should consider relaxing clearance procedures presently in place. The idea is to make the opportunity costs of using the system as low as possible. There is no system-wide policy on ICS clearances. CDIE requires no formal clearance of ICS messages, and this appears to be the practice in at least some other AID offices. The potential for misuse should not be great as long as Mission policy is clear on what kinds of communication should and should not occur via ICS.

   If the Mission opts not to alter the present clearance policy for the Mission as a whole, there is still a case to be made for a standing authorization to allow the Information Center to send ICS messages to CDIE/DI without prior clearance. ICS should become the preferred communication channel between USAID/Jakarta and CDIE/DI for information requests, as it significantly reduces response time. At least in the short term, the Information Center is likely to be the heaviest user of ICS, and the content of messages sent will be largely routine (i.e. requests for documents, requests for research services, inquiries on the status of outstanding requests). My experience in the Mission has been that clearing transmissions can delay outgoing

messages a day or more unless one hunts down someone with authority to sign. This may not be a burden for occasional users of ICS, but would be for the Information Center if the system is used as frequently as it should be.

2. DMC staff should brief Mission staff on ICS and its use: Mission staff were briefed at least once, but at this point the trail is cold. A re-announcement of ICS is sorely needed and should not wait for the installation of ICS 2, which may not occur for over a year. Armed with a well defined Mission policy on ICS use, and at least a limited record of successful use by the Information Center, DMC ought to be able to present the system to the staff as a viable communication tool that has practical uses.

3. Upgrade to ICS 2 as soon as possible: ICS 2 promises to solve most of the reliability problems and format limitations that Mission staff have identified as obstacles to further use of the system. While IRM support to ICS sites has been spotty and in some cases infuriatingly inadequate, there is still little reason to doubt IRM's claims for the new system. The most serious limitations of ICS 1 were mostly known before the system was implemented. In that sense IRM has practiced "truth in advertising", and will probably be even more careful not to overstate the capabilities of ICS 2. In any event, Jakarta will not be one of the first cites to receive ICS 2, and will have a chance to review the experiences of test cites such as USAID/Cairo.

   In addition to enhanced reliability and flexibility, ICS 2 should significantly reduce the work required to operate the system in Jakarta, an important consideration if the system manager responsibility is transferred to DMC.

   Another promising feature is the ability to have direct TTY access to AID and non-AID computers with dial-up communication capabilities. The Information Center could directly access CDIE's Development Information System (DIS). Mission staff and consultants could obtain data directly from U.S. university databases, and the Mission could communicate with contractor's home offices via commercial electronic mail services.

4. Transfer management of ICS from IMC to DMC: During my brief stay at the Mission, it became increasingly obvious that in the long run, IMC management of ICS is unworkable. The present arrangement pleases no one, and is an unnecessary source of tension. Having said that, the Mission should not rush to withdraw ICS from the VS system where it now resides. Inquiries have been made to IRM to get AID/W and State support to find a technical solution that would allow DMC to operate the system on the VS. It is too early to tell whether a solution can be found (an attempt was already made in Jakarta to no avail). Failing that, ICS could be run on a WANG PC in the DMC. The limitation is that messages created on workstation throughout the mission would have to be manually converted from one format to another, greatly increasing the workload of the system manager.

   It is possible (even reasonably likely) that ICS 2 will not have the same security problems as Version 1 and could be run on the VS without

direct IMC involvement. This would be the ideal outcome, delivering the greatest capability to the Mission with the least burden on the DMC. While USAID is in the process of acquiring the equipment necessary to operate ICS on a WANG PC (which is useful in any case as a backup system), the PC should be seen as a last resort, to be used only if other VS-based options prove impossible. If IRM can give assurances that ICS 2 can be made free of file security problems under CUB, the mission should stick to the VS and proceed with acquiring the additional necessary equipment.

APPENDIX

GUIDELINES FOR THE INFORMATION CENTER

Audience:

Users of the Information Center include USAID direct-hire staff, USAID contractors both on and off site, USAID FSNs, TDY visitors, Host-country counterparts, other donor staff, and to some degree, students. While all of these groups benefit from Info Center services, limited Mission resources dictate that the Center concentrate on its priority user groups, and serve other users as resources permit.

Priority groups:

1. Direct-Hires: Information support to U.S. Direct-Hires is the primary mission of the Center, thus this group clearly warrants top priority. For this group, the Center will strive to serve as a central access point to the full range of academic, technical, and historical information needed in the course of planning and managing USAID/Jakarta projects and programs. The Center will treat and other Mission information resources as a starting point in meeting those needs, but will routinely draw upon the resources of PPC/CDIE, local libraries, government offices, and other development organizations as circumstances demand.

2. Consultants: Recognizing the critical role played by on and off-site contractors in the Mission's program, the Center should strive to provide the highest level of service possible to this group. Generally, the Center should not differentiate between Direct-Hires and contractors in providing services when those services do not involve significant expenditures of funds and do not impinge on services to USAID DH staff. For off-site contractors, the Information Center should make special efforts to proactively inform them of resources available, provide for delivery of documents, and serve as an access point to non-Info Center information.

3. FSN Staff: Recognizing the increasing programmatic role FSNs play in the Mission, the Center will treat FSNs essentially as it would USDH staff.

Lower Priority:

1. Host Country Counterparts: GOI staff and other Indonesian nationals associated with the Mission's programs should have free access to the Information Center collection and free use of Center materials on-site. The Center will not engage in active outreach to this group and will not attempt to locate materials outside the Center's collection unless specifically requested to do so by Mission staff.

2. Other Donor Staff: This group utilizes the Center primarily as an access point for historical information on AID projects and for AID

technical reports. Services should generally be limited to use of the on-site collection and referrals to CDIE for AID documents not in the Info Center.

3. Students/Scholars: Users on this category generally will have been referred to the Info Center by AID, USIA or other USG personnel. They will have access to the Center's collection, but the degree of Information Center staff assistance afforded this group must depend on available time. As visits from such users are usually arranged in advance, the Info Center staff should schedule them to avoid disrupting higher priority work.

Circulation Policy:

USAID direct-hire, FSN, Contractor, TDY and RSSA staff working on-site in the Mission should have full borrowing privileges for the entire Info Center collection. Materials can be signed out for a period of thirty days. Recent journals, newspapers, and heavily utilized or critical reference materials may be excluded from circulation at the discretion of the Librarian. Such materials can be lent for a period of twenty-four hours to allow for copying.

Off-site contractors, and other off-site user groups cannot be afforded full borrowing privileges. The librarian may allow materials to be checked out for 24-48 hours so users can reproduce needed articles or documents. Since in most cases, such users will have limited or no access to USAID copy machines, materials can taken off-site.

All users must sign for any documents borrowed from the Center. TDY users must identify a control officer in the Mission who will be responsible for the return of any documents borrowed from the Center.

While the Information Center is not in a position to impose fines on users who fail to return borrowed materials, it must be able to impose at least some some sanctions to enforce its circulation policy.

Mission staff will be sent a series of overdue notices. After two or three notices, the Info Center will contact the borrower's supervisor to enlist their assistance in returning the overdue materials. In extreme cases, the Librarian can send a memo detailing the borrowers failure to return materials to the EXO for inclusion in the borrowers personnel file. The memo could be removed upon return of the overdue documents.

Contractors and other off-site users will be sent overdue notices and their control officers, if any, will be notified of the overdue materials. Control officers should be expected to assist the Information Center in retrieving lent documents, but if all else fails, the Center will revoke library privileges (including on-site use) to non-Mission users who do not return materials.

Collection Development:

Space and budget restrictions prevent the Information Center from attempting to maintain a comprehensive cross-section of materials on general development or even USAID/Jakarta programs. The Center must

strive to insure that its collection reflects the current technical and programmatic concerns of Mission staff. It must be recognized that these concerns represent a moving target, changing as the Mission's priorities change. In formulating collection development priorities, the Librarian will be informed by the following:

1. USAID's program priorities as outlined in the current CDSS and Action Plan.

2. Guidance provided by the Program Office or Library Committee.

3. Suggestions from individual Mission staff.

4. Assessments of how well the current collection covers priority topics. Does the Center have a useful selection of basic and state -of-the-art materials on the topic?

5. How well are priority topics covered by existing collections in Mission technical offices? The Center should avoid duplicating materials available elsewhere in the Mission. This can mean that the Center might choose to maintain only a skeletal or basic-level collection of materials on a priority topic because existing office collections can meet Mission needs.

Selection Process:

Journals/Serials: The current system of annually circulating a list of journals received for Mission suggestions on new additions or deletions should be continued. In addition, the Librarian should identify journals not currently received which appear particularly appropriate to the sectors stressed in Mission programs, and obtain review copies for the appropriate technical offices

Books/Monographs: The majority of books and monographs purchased by the Mission are obtained in response to specific requests from Mission staff and are often approved by the requestor's immediate supervisor. This process is workable but should be standardized. Requests for books that requestors need for their immediate work should be approved by the appropriate office heads before being forwarded to the Librarian. Emphasis should be placed on obtaining such pre-approved books as quickly as possible. The Librarian should encourage mission staff return such books to the Info Center after their immediate need for the documents has passed, although requestors can retain them in their office collections with the understanding that they are Mission property. Mission staff can also make suggestions for additions to the Information Center on a non-urgent basis. Such suggestions need not be approved by supervisors.

To maintain a viable collection, the Librarian must be able to independently identify and acquire materials that are not specifically requested by Mission staff but are critical to the Info Center's core sector and reference collections. Such acquisitions should be consistent with with collection content guidelines established by the Info Center committee. As the committee will meet infrequently, it should not be

expected to sign off on individual document purchases.- that responsibility should rest with the librarian's supervisor.

As with journals, the Info Center will be expected to play an aggressive role in identifying new books that are likely to be of use to Mission staff programs. The Center should routinely acquire publication lists from development-oriented publishers and organizations (i.e. Westview, World Bank, etc..) and circulate notices of potentially useful documents to appropriate Mission staff for comment.

Project Documents: It is not possible or desirable for the Info Center to retain a comprehensive paper collection of USAID/Jakarta's historical project documents, nor is there any reason to duplicate the active project files already maintained in the program and technical offices. PPs ,evaluations, progress reports and other official documentation for completed projects are needed periodically, but not often enough to justify the space required to store them. For these documents, mission staff should rely upon the Info Center's microfiche collection of USAID/Jakarta project documents, the completed project files retained by C&R, or on documents from the PPC/CDIE Development Information System. The Information Center should, however, selectively acquire project-related documents likely to be of long -term interest such as reports containing baseline data, and socio-economic or technical studies where it appears desirable to have a paper copy immediately available for staff use.

Another category of project-related documents that should be selectively retained include significant documents which otherwise would not be captured in AID information systems. These are predominantly counterpart reports or unpublished documents related to USAID programs but not considered "official" AID project documents. The Information Center will consult with the relevant technical offices in the Mission to help estimate the future usefulness of such documents. The decision to retain or not to retain is especially important for this category of documents because once discarded, they are for all practical purposes lost forever.

GOI/Other Donor/International Organization Documents: The Info Center should routinely acquire statistical, technical, economic and policy reports published by the GOI, other donor organizations, and international organizations which relate directly to Mission programs. It is especially important that the Info Center maintains as complete a collection of official GOI statistical publications as possible. Basic statistics on international trade and aid flows should be collected on as comprehensive a level as space permits. When such documents can be acquired at no cost, there is no reason for Mission management to approve the acquisitions. Conversely, Mission management should be prepared to act on the behalf of the Info Center in cases where a formal request from a USG representative will expedite the acquisition of needed official documents.

Donations: The Info Center occasionally receives donations of books and reports from Mission staff, contractors or other. While such donations are welcome, the Info Center must be free to choose which documents will be included in the Center collection on the basis of the same criteria of relevance applied to other documents. The Center will offer to return

items not eligible for inclusion in the Center's collection - otherwise they may be donated to other local libraries or discarded.

Audio-Visual Materials: The Information Center may acquire videotapes and other A-V materials which document Mission projects. Training materials will only be acquired if they are targetted for development professionals and concern topics of current interest to the mission.

Weeding of the Collection:

Limited space in the Info Center makes it critical to avoid retaining documents that are out of date or irrelevant to the Mission's current programs. While the standard of relevance to current programs is important, the shifting and sometimes cyclic nature of AID program priorities dictates that the standard be interpreted broadly, especially where information on past USAID activities is concerned. The Center must make the weeding process an open, clearly defined activity. Mission staff who consider entrusting the Center with important documents must feel assured that those materials will not be arbitrarily discarded in the future.

General Rules for Weeding:

Technical monographs will not be held for more than fifteen years unless they are considered a classic in their field. The librarian will consult with the appropriate technical offices in developing criteria for deselection, and will submit lists of documents to be discarded to those offices for approval and comment.

Journals and serials will be retained for two years plus the current year, except for heavily used titles, which may be retained as long as space permits.

Project-related documents will generally not be acquired or retained by the Info Center if they are available in the Center's microfiche collection and in paper copy from PPC/CDIE. The Information Center will assist Mission technical offices in identifying materials which are eligible for inclusion in the AID Development Information System as part of its routine consultation with Mission offices. Those selected project documents (see "Selection Process") that are acquired by the Center will not be held for more than ten years unless they are judged to be of special historical significance. As with technical monographs, lists of candidates for deselection will be submitted to the appropriate technical offices for comment.

Basic references for Indonesian social and economic statistics will be retained indefinitely unless they are superceded by newer cumulative publications.

Superceded issues of other reference materials (directories, etc..) will be discarded when they are replaced by the new edition.

PERSONS INTERVIEWED

USAID/Jakarta

Director's Office
Fuller, William P.
Anderson, James
Rucker, Robert

Executive Office
Morton, Beverly

Communications and Records
Mugeni, Cholidy
Stevanus, Eddie

Data Management Center
Soebagio, Indro

Information Center
Suryowardono, Christiana

Office of Employment and Enterprise Development
Meyers, Terry
West, Gordon

Program and Project Support Office
Bonner, Margaret
Mahoney, Tim
Cole, Bill
Sirait, Martin
O'Riordan, Desmond
Hadley, Steve

Education and Human Resources
Bonner, Cameron
Foster-Gross, Donald

Office of Population and Health
Voulgaropoulos, E.
Riggs-Perla, Joy
McDonald, Kathleen

Agriculture and Rural Development
Douglass, William
Brown Margaret
Greenberg, Ron
Like, George
Hanratty, Martin
Putnam, Diana

Voluntary and Humanitarian Programs
Pooley, Robert

U.S. Mission

Information Management Center
Smyth, Richard

USIS
Berg, Marshall
Culpepper, Donna

Other Institutions

D'Agnes, Thomas, MPH, Faculty of Pub. Health, Univ. of Indonesia
Ronoatmodjo, Soedarto, Dr., Faculty of Pub. Health, Univ. of Indonesia
Siregar, Emir, Dr., Info. Resource Center, Institut Pertanian Bogor
Johnson, Jane, Info. Specialist, Intl. Irrigation Mgmt. Institute