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FAMILY PLANNING MIS STUDY IN INDIA:

REPORT OF THE PRELIMINARY VISIT

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PREPARED BY:

**HANK ELKINS
DICK ROBERTS**

**Management Sciences for Health
Boston, MA 02130**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
PART ONE: THE MISSION	
PURPOSE	2
ACTIVITIES	2
PART TWO: THE PROJECT	
OVERVIEW	4
OUTPUT	4
ORGANIZATION	5
WORKSPLAN	6
ANNEXES	
ANNEX A: CONTACTS	10
ANNEX B: RESEARCHERS, WORKING NOTES	11
ANNEX C: WORKPLAN	12
ANNEX D: MULTI-STATE SURVEY, WORKING NOTES	16
ANNEX E: CASE SELECTION, WORKING NOTES	19

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Two MSH staff members spent two weeks in India working with staff of the Administrative Staff College of India (ASCI) to plan a study of family planning management information systems (MIS) and experiments undertaken therein, develop a workplan, and negotiate a working relationship and sub-project agreement (with budget) between MSH and ASCI. This assignment and all subsequent work is funded through a USAID Delhi buy-in to the Family Planning Management Training Project.

These tasks were all accomplished. The MSH team and ASCI staff prepared the details, briefed USAID and Ministry officials, and incorporated in the design and workplan suggestions resulting from the briefings. The resulting workplan is incorporated in the present report. The draft sub-project agreement has been submitted to the Contracts Administration office of MSH for review and referral to AID/W for approval. ASCI has taken steps to obtain necessary GOI clearances for the study.

On the assumption that the sub-project agreement will be approved and GOI clearances for ASCI received in a timely fashion, ASCI and MSH are now undertaking preparatory work for a workshop in mid-January. The workshop will prepare and launch a survey of the state-level family planning MIS in 15-20 states. That will be followed by case studies of at least five MIS experiments and the systems of which they are a part. Field work and initial drafting will be done by ASCI faculty and researchers recruited specifically for the study. MSH project management and technical staff will be involved in planning and review of study progress on a regular basis, as will their ASCI counterparts. They will also be active participants in the drafting and review of recommendations and of the analytical sections of the report.

The final written report will be supplemented by an MIS management workshop for state family planning officials utilizing the fruits of project research.

The collaborative relationship between ASCI and MSH is off to a very promising start. This, and the high level of interest and support for the project at USAID and the Ministry augure well for what should be a very informative study.

PART ONE: THE MISSION

MSH staff members Richard S. Roberts, Jr. and Henry Elkins, Jr. arrived in India November 5th and were there until the 19th in the case of Dr. Elkins, and the 21st in the case of Dr. Roberts. They divided their time evenly between New Delhi and Hyderabad.

PURPOSE.

To start India Family Planning MIS study in coordination with USAID/Delhi & Administrative Staff College of India (Hyderabad); to prepare workplan to be presented to Ministry; prepare: schedules, budget and negotiate agreement with Staff College.

ACTIVITIES.

November 5-7.

Warren Robinson briefed us at USAID, reviewed with us our mutual understanding of the nature of the project, and provided documentation related to the family planning program. We also had useful working meetings with G. Narayana, formerly with USAID and now back at Administrative Staff College of India in Hyderabad. The key people we were to see at the Ministry were not available that week and Narayana had to return to Hyderabad the evening of the 6th, so after consulting Warren Robinson, we joined Narayana in Hyderabad on Monday to get down to work.

November 9-14.

We met with the Principal, key department heads and faculty likely to be involved in the study. (The people met during the mission are listed in Annex A). This gave us a chance to become acquainted with ASCI and its faculty (we were very impressed), and them a chance to learn something about MSH and to get to know us. It also permitted a fruitful exchange of views on the study envisaged in this project. Most of the week was spent with Narayana, brainstorming the MIS study

project, developing its design and a way to implement it, working out details of sub-project arrangements (and budget) between MSH and ASCI, and preparing a workplan and some preliminary working notes.

November 16-21.

Back in New Delhi, at USAID, we briefed Population Officer Suzanne Olds and Warren Robinson on the week in Hyderabad. At their suggestion, we also met with other AID officials, both to keep them informed and to elicit information that could be useful for the study.

Warren Robinson joined us for a meeting with Mr. Narasimhan, Head of the Evaluation Unit at the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. Narasimhan is the project's key contact and supporter at the Ministry; with him at the meeting was Mr. Basu, a former colleague soon to join the ASCI staff. The discussion was relaxed and very fruitful. One substantive result was a Ministry suggestion that the study include a survey of current MIS practices at state level, as well as more detailed study of MIS experiments.

We subsequently worked the survey into the project design, sub-project agreement draft and budget with ASCI during a one-day trip to Hyderabad. Dr. Robinson joined us at the debriefing of Narasimhan on the revised plan at the end of the week. There it was agreed that while MSH submits the sub-project agreement to USAID/Washington for approval, the Ministry will process ASCI's request for the necessary clearances, provide ASCI with an inventory of family planning information the Ministry requires of states, and meet with Narayana to select states for the survey and lay the administrative groundwork for it. Meanwhile, ASCI is to recruit researchers in other states to participate in the study, and ASCI and MSH are to prepare for a meeting with them in mid-January to prepare and launch the multi-state family planning MIS survey.

The draft sub-project agreement between MSH and ASCI covering activities from January through December, 1988, has been submitted to the MSH Contract Administration office for review and referral to AID/W for approval.

PART TWO : THE PROJECT

OVERVIEW.

The project is to review the MIS systems used in conjunction with the family planning program in 15 to 20 major states and to analyze the nature and results of efforts that have been undertaken in a variety of states and districts to make the MIS less burdensome and more useful for program management. It is to recommend action to meet MIS needs common to the states and the Ministry, and to identify steps that can be taken to meet needs unique to state and lower level program managers.

OUTPUT.

A final report will present the results of the multi-state survey of the family planning MIS and of more detailed study of experiments in at least 5 settings. Three views of the results are envisaged:

- * Overview: commonalities and differences from state to state, and among case study systems in the context of systems in general;
- * Issues: an analysis of the way in which each of the MIS studied copes with key issues in family planning program management, and of the impact of efforts to improve them;
- * Examples: case studies of the selected MIS focusing on the objectives, introduction, problems and effect of change in the MIS, and the use of the MIS for program management.

The report will also present recommendations for standard forms and procedures governing information flow between the states and the central Ministry.

In addition, as a result of a management seminar planned as an integral part of the project, 20-30 state health officials will have been sensitized to ways in which they can improve the family planning MIS within their states.

ORGANIZATION.

The project will be directed by MSH and ASCI. It will be conducted by researchers drawn from ASCI faculty and by specialists from other institutions recruited as consultants for this project (see Annex B). MSH will provide funding and technical assistance (under a contract with USAID); ASCI will provide staff, and administrative and technical support (through a sub-project agreement with MSH).

MSH and ASCI will prepare and direct planning and analysis workshops and progress review meetings with the researchers, draft the key parts of the report, plan and direct the management seminar for state officials, and produce the final report.

The researchers (ASCI faculty and consultants) will undertake the multi-state survey, and one will be responsible for each case study. To facilitate comparisons across cases and coverage of all pertinent aspects in all cases, researchers will use standard instruments (guidelines, questionnaires) for the survey and case study data gathering, and presentation of case studies will be based on a standard outline. All researchers will be involved in most or all aspects of the project: instrument design, multi-state survey, case outline formulation, case writing, case reviewing, key issue analysis, and the management seminar.

WORKPLAN

See Annex C for the workplan in Gantt chart form and a more detailed activity schedule.

Preparation: Study and Survey. [Nov.1987-Jan.1988.]

Identification/recruitment of researchers by ASCI.

Preparation by ASCI of,

- * a case study candidate list, with a brief profile and bibliography for each;
- * an initial information system data base identifying data/indicators required by central authorities;
- * proposals (and reasoning behind them) for "key issues" to be analyzed across the case studies (for consolidation with a similar MSH effort);
- * schedules (questionnaires) for the multi-state survey (for consolidation with a similar MSH effort).

Preparation by MSH of,

- * case study framework (incorporating Family Planning Management Training Project experience);
- * proposals (and reasoning behind them) for "key issues" to be analyzed across the case studies; (for consolidation with a similar ASCI effort);
- * schedules (questionnaires) for the multi-state survey (for consolidation with a similar ASCI effort).

Meeting and Workshop.

ASCI and MSH staff will consolidate the results of their preparatory work in a preliminary meeting. Then, in a workshop, they, the researchers and Ministry representatives will review overall project design, revise and field test the draft questionnaires prepared by ASCI and MSH, prepare guides to the use of those instruments, and agree on work schedules, milestones and the scheduling of subsequent meetings. GOI clearances for ASCI and USAID approval of the sub-project agreement should precede this first meeting.

Multi-State MIS Survey. [February]

Each of four teams of two persons each will be assigned 4 states to visit for 3-4 days to document the state level MIS, obtain copies of all forms used, and interview ten to fifteen state health and family welfare officials regarding their MIS. They will use a standard questionnaire and guidelines. ASCI will consolidate replies by respondent category and send the results to all researchers and MSH for their review. (See also Annex D.)

Preparation : Case Studies. [April]

MSH and ASCI staff will prepare draft instruments for the case study research, then meet to consolidate their drafts and review multi-state survey results prior to holding a workshop with Ministry representatives and researchers. In the workshop, the participants will review the results of the state survey, select and assign case studies (see Annex E), revise, field test and develop final working versions of the draft questionnaires prepared by MSH and ASCI, and write guides to the use of these instruments.

Case Studies. [April-July]

Researchers will prepare case studies assigned to them, using the standard outline and questionnaires. Field investigators will be locally selected and engaged by the researchers on behalf of ASCI. ASCI will oversee field investigator training. Researchers will supervise field work on their own cases and draft reports. ASCI and MSH project staff will meet with researchers twice, after approximately five and ten weeks of research, to review progress and share findings. Initial drafts will be exchanged among researchers for comment early enough that additional field inquiries are feasible if warranted.

From Cases to Issues. [July-August]

Each researcher will receive copies of second draft versions of all case studies and be asked to prepare:

- * a list, or outline, of points in all studies relating to one or more of the "key issues" (they will be allocated among researchers so that all are covered); this will become the basis from which the issue analysis across cases is drafted;
- * critical comments (for the authors and editors) on at least those parts of the case studies dealing with the "key issue(s)" which he/she is assigned.

Key Issues Analysis. [August-September]

All researchers will participate in a workshop whose purpose will be to have working groups draft the points to be made in the Key Issue section. These drafts will be reviewed, and eventually revised, in plenary by the overall team and representatives of the systems studied. On the basis of the workshop, MSH will complete the draft of the Key Issues section of the study. MSH will send the draft to ASCI for review.

Overview. [August-September]

ASCI will draft the overview section of the study, basing it on the multi-state survey results, the case studies and discussion in the key issues analysis workshop. ASCI will send the draft to MSH for review.

State Officials Seminar. [September]

A training seminar will be organized for state Health and Family Welfare officials to expose them to the potential gains from an improved MIS, to the possibilities open to them and to the factors to be considered in planning MIS changes. This will be based on the results of the study, using the Key Issues draft, the case studies, and supplementary material to be developed by MSH and ASCI specifically for the seminar. The seminar will be designed to increase the level of knowledge, understanding and interest on the part of the participants, and to provide feedback to the project team for incorporation in the final project report. The researchers will serve as facilitators in the seminar.

Final Report. [October-December]

Preparation of the final draft document will be shared by MSH and ASCI. They will incorporate feedback from colleagues and the management seminar in the Key Issues and Overview drafts, and prepare the balance of the final report. ASCI editors will edit the full document. Ministry and USAID staff will have an opportunity to review the final draft and to discuss any comments with MSH and ASCI. After any mutually agreed revisions, the report will be reproduced and distributed as determined by USAID and the Ministry.

INDIA, FAMILY PLANNING MIS (Report #1) ANNEX

ANNEX A: CONTACTS

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF COLLEGE OF INDIA

DAVID, L.H., Center for Social Services
DHARNI, P.Sinha, Principal
NARAYANA, G., Head, Area Chairman (Social Services)
PANDEY, Umeshwar, Faculty
RAMAMOORTHY, V.E., Chairman, Management Development Programs
RAMESH, K.S., Faculty
RAO, H., Chairman, MIS and Computers
SRINIVASAN, A.V., Faculty
SWAMINATH, K.K., Chairman, Consultancy
WAQIF, Arif A., Area Chairman (Economics)

MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE

NARASIMHAN, R.L., Director, Evaluation/Family Welfare
BUSA, A.K., (formerly Dpty.Sec./Policy)

PRITECH/MSH

ROHDE, Jon
RAMAN, J.K.

USAID

ROCHAT, Roger, Head, Office of Health & Population
OLDS, Suzanne, Population Officer
ROBINSON, Warren C., Population Advisor
SILBERSTEIN, Spencer, Health Officer
DAS GUPTA, SANRESH, Health
HARAN, N.P.G., Health

ANNEX B: RESEARCHERS, WORKING NOTES

Notes relating to the researchers to be recruited for the project.

SCOPE OF WORK (abbreviated)

A researcher will be assigned for each case study. To facilitate comparisons across cases and coverage of all pertinent aspects in all cases, the researchers will use standard instruments (guidelines, questionnaires) for case study data gathering, and presentation will be based on a standard outline. All will be involved in most or all aspects of the project: instrument design, case outline formulation, case writing, case reviewing, key issue analysis and the management seminar for state officials.

CHARACTERISTICS

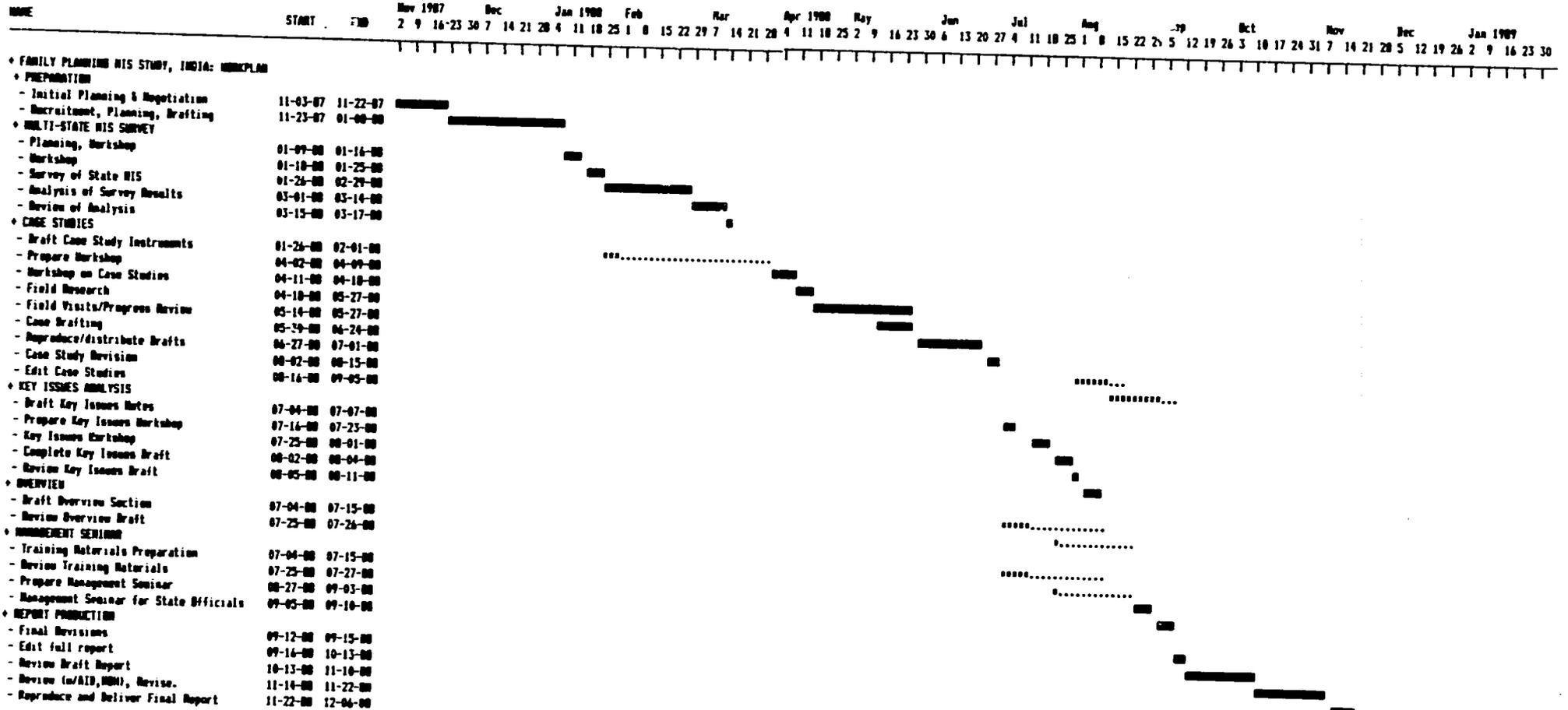
- * knowledge of family planning program, information systems and the organization and workings of state and district administration;
- * analytical skills, objectivity, organizational research and/or consultancy experience, ability to work productively in a team and to direct their own research assistants or field investigators, writing skills and the ability to work to schedule;
- * likely candidates, on the basis of past work, to provide consulting services to state governments interested in applying the lessons of this study to improve their own family planning program MIS.
- * in terms of their experience and/or institutional affiliations, representative (collectively) of as many states as possible.

12-17-87

WORKPLAN: FAMILY PLANNING HIS STUDY, INDIA (A)

12-17-87

WORKPLAN: FAMILY PLANNING HIS STUDY, INDIA (A)



12

: Actual date : MileStone : Critical : Normal : Actual bar : MileStone : Critical : Normal : Actual bar : Resource Delay : Resource Delay
 : Resource Delay ... : Slack : Actual bar : MileStone : Critical : Normal : Actual bar : Resource Delay : Resource Delay
 Scale : 1 Week = 3 character(s)

FAMILY PLANNING MIS STUDY, INDIA

WORKPLAN ACTIVITIES

Initial planning and negotiation. MSH: INDIA

MSH and ASCI plan project activities in consultation with USAID and Ministry officials. MSH: INDIA

Recruitment, planning, drafting. MSH: US

ASCI recruits consultants, prepares initial list of required data items, case study candidate list; ASCI & MSH draft survey instruments and initial key issues list.

Planning, workshop. MSH: INDIA

MSH & ASCI. Synthesizing drafts, planning details of first working meeting with researchers.

Workshop. MSH: INDIA

MSH & ASCI & Researchers. Brief on project. Critique, revise multi-state survey instruments. Pretest locally & revise. Prepare manuals, set work schedules and meeting program.

Survey of state MIS.

Field work. Four 2-person teams, each averaging 3 days in each of 4 states.

Analysis of survey results.

ASCI does analysis, reproduces and sends to MSH and researchers.

Draft case study instruments. MSH: US

MSH and ASCI (separately) prepare questionnaires, framework, key issues list.

Review analysis. MSH: US

MSH and researchers review ASCI analysis.

Prepare workshop. MSH: INDIA

ASCI & MSH review conclusions from survey, synthesize drafts for case study work.

Workshop on case studies. MSH: INDIA

Brief review of conclusions from survey. Critique & revise case study instruments; pretest locally. Plan case research and review workplan and calendar.

Field research.

Research teams in the field.

Case drafting.

Researchers draft cases.

Reproduce/distribute drafts.

Get drafts to fellow researchers, MSH and ASCI for review and to permit development of Key Issues notes.

Field visits and progress review. MSH: INDIA

MSH & ASCI project staff visit sample of researchers in the field for first hand look at subject experiment. Meeting at ASCI with staff and all researchers on progress to date and case drafting guidelines.

Case study revision.

Researchers incorporate feedback in drafts.

Edit case studies.

ASCI editorial staff.

Draft key issues notes. MSH: US

Draft key issues notes (one or two assigned each researcher) and critique case drafts. MSH and ASCI do full set. At home bases.

Prepare key issues workshop. MSH: INDIA

MSH & ASCI meeting to prepare the workshop.

Key issues workshop. MSH: INDIA

MSH, ASCI, researchers meet to develop key issues analysis from case studies.

Complete key issues draft. MSH: US

MSH completes this from results of workshop, then sends draft to ASCI for review.

Review key issues draft.

ASCI reviews MSH draft.

Draft overview section.

ASCI drafts and sends to MSH for review.

Review of overview draft. MSH: US

MSH reviews ASCI draft.

Training materials preparation.

ASCI, for management seminar for state officials.

Review of training materials. MSH: US

MSH reviews ASCI drafts.

Prepare management seminar. MSH: INDIA

MSH & ASCI prepare workshop for state officials.

Mgt. seminar for state officials. MSH: INDIA

Seminar for population officials from state governments, incorporating MIS study results and dealing with MIS system use in program management.

Final revisions. MSH: INDIA

Incorporate workshop feedback in drafts (the overview and issues drafts). Prepare all material for editors.

Edit full report.

Editorial staff.

Review of draft report. MSH: US

Ministry, USAID, MSH review draft report.

Review meeting. MSH: INDIA

MSH, ASCI meet with representatives of USAID and Ministry to discuss comments on draft report, agree on any revisions.

Revise final draft. MSH: INDIA

MSH and ASCI make final revisions in response to Ministry and USAID reviews of draft.

Reproduce and deliver report. MSH: US

MSH reproduces and delivers copies of report as specified in contract. Additional numbers requested by AID/Ministry would probably be reproduced in India at a later date. To be determined.

ANNEX D: MULTI-STATE SURVEY, WORKING NOTES

Four two-person teams fifteen to twenty major states (four states per team) for approximately three days of interviews. The purpose of the survey is,

- *To establish a clear profile of the family planning program MIS at the state level, and of state-to-state variations;
- *To identify on a nationwide scale the most promising experiments from which to select cases for in-depth study, and to identify any limited innovations that might merit investigation and documentation, but not full system studies;
- *To test initial hypotheses being used in the development of questionnaires for case studies;
- *To improve the relevance and usefulness of the study by incorporating suggestions of potential users;
- *To give our researchers a chance to obtain views from states with which they may not be familiar, thus broadening their perspectives;
- *To provide norms against which to compare the characteristics of the systems selected for case studies;
- *To assess the "change" represented by a proposed new system;
- *To increase the likelihood of interest and later responsiveness on the part of state officials by involving them in the design of the study at the start.

Selected officials will be interviewed regarding,

1. Responsibility/Authority
 - o Main responsibilities at each level (viewed from the top), or the authority vested at each level (another approach).
 - o Main operational problems at each level.
2. Information needed for decisions and problems faced (to "do the job")
 - o nature
 - o use
 - o priority
 - o availability (yes/no; timely/irregular;...)

3. Current information flow

Structure/presentation, Movement and Use of:

- o forms used to collect/send data to center
- o forms transmitted locally, not sent to center
- o registers in use

4. The information system in general

Most useful elements of system (in terms of forms, bits of information, etc.)

- o in what way useful? to whom?

Principal weaknesses, deficiencies, faults with system

Any efforts made to resolve problems with the system, to improve the way it functions, to use information new ways, or to change it.

- o description of effort
- o objectives at the time
- o source of initiative
- o external (to local health system) inputs
- o results

Suggestions for improvement in the future

Respondents will include ten to twelve people in the Secretariat (policy decision-makers) and the Directorate charged with family planning.

The interviewing teams will work from a standard questionnaire to be drafted by ASCI and MSH, and to be put in final form during a workshop with the participating researchers in January.

These interviews will be preceded by an extensive review of forms and registers received, used and sent to/from the state, their sources/destinations, their frequency, regularity, degree of completeness and similar characteristics. It is common to have one person (e.g. the demographer) responsible for receiving and distributing reports, and for despatching those sent out. Our working assumption is that most or all of the needed information about data and paper flow will be available from this person.

ASCI will reproduce responses to the questionnaires grouped by respondent category and a draft analysis, also by respondent category. The latter will be distributed to researchers and MSH for review and put in final form in a workshop with them. It will serve as a description of the norm that has been found.

ANNEX E: CASE SELECTION, WORKING NOTES

The cases will be selected from

- (a) experiments in MIS improvement, and
- (b) other settings (Ministry or PVO) in which innovations, uses or applications of special interest have been introduced.

In particular, cases will be sought in which the MIS has one or more of the following characteristics:

- * contributes to success in introducing child-spacing practices,
- * plays a major role in keeping posts fully and appropriately staffed, and in maintaining adequate contraceptive stocks,
- * involves the use of computers,
- * contributes to effective supervision,
- * gives attention to information reflecting quality of service client appraisal of services,
- * provides useful feed-back to information providers,
- * has built-in controls of data accuracy, timeliness and completeness.