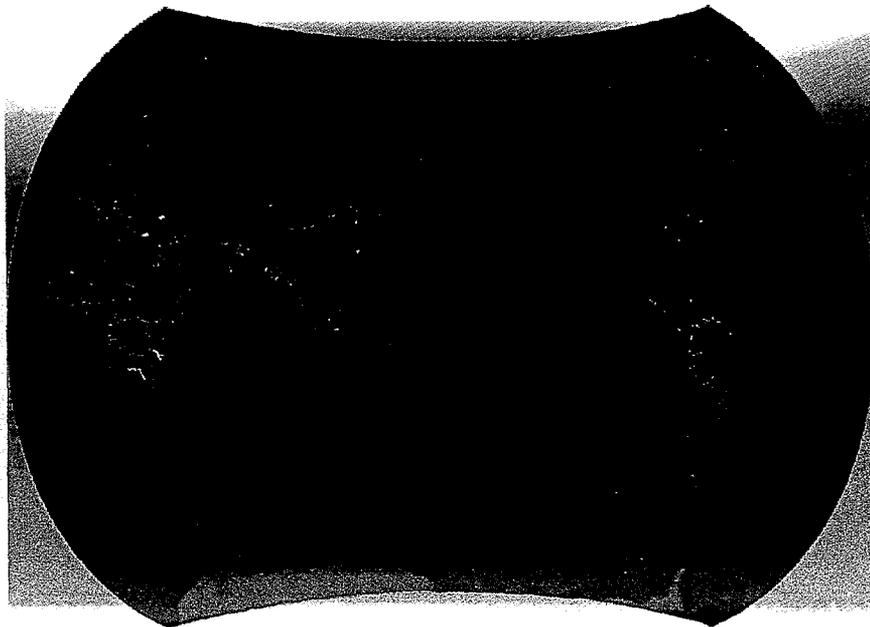


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Research

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**Final Project Report
Fiscal Years 1991-1994**

Reference

Services

Research and Reference Services

End of Project Report

Fiscal Years 1991-1994

Introduction

It is hard to believe that at the outset of the Research and Reference Services II project in September 1990, 26 people were performing a relatively discrete set of information services to the U.S. Agency for International Development. Liaisons were just beginning to take root in the geographic bureaus. R&RS outreach was bringing in new users from Washington and the field. Agency-wide electronic mail was just beginning to make communication with the field easier and response time shorter. Preparations for introducing CD-ROM technology in the USAID Development Information Center were just beginning.

Today, at the end of R&RS II, the project has grown to over 50 people spread throughout the Agency and offers a wide range of sophisticated information products and services, with specialized information centers covering diverse sectors in Washington and overseas. R&RS has come a long way.

The Evolution of the Project

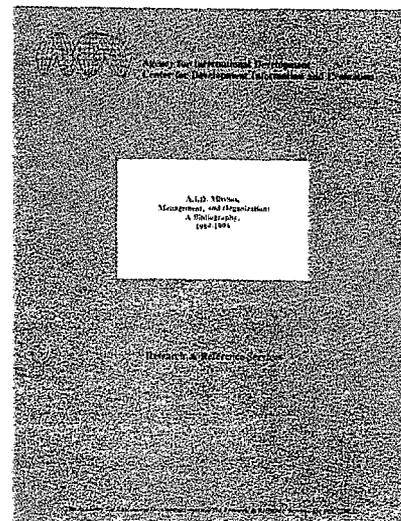
The phenomenal growth of R&RS II began immediately, following formation of the Africa Bureau Information Center (ABIC) in response to the Africa Bureau's need for a centralized source of up-to-date information on democracy and governance on the African continent. No sooner was ABIC up and running, but the Office of Development Information began negotiations with the then Bureau for Private Enterprise to create a new Center for Trade and Investment Services (CTIS). By late 1992, negotiations had been completed with the USAID regional mission in Guatemala to field staff members for the Regional Information Clearinghouse there in January 1993. With the expansion of services to the Office of Evaluation and the bureaus, central research and DIC staff needed to increase; 50 people were working for R&RS by late 1992.

It soon became clear that the former R&RS management structure could no longer support the boom in the project's activities and staff numbers. In early 1992, supervisors and managers were designated to oversee major project units. Strategic planning gave a framework for project priorities and future directions. Data collection, mission statement development, and goal setting were the three major phases of the strategic planning process. Collecting data on AID client's information needs and habits enabled R&RS to develop principles to guide future AID information service programs. Mission statement development focused the staff on shared values and operating principles. In the process, five goals were identified: to implement a human resources development plan; to ensure continued ability to anticipate and respond to AID's complex environment with timeliness and innovation; to project a bold, active and compelling information service; to create and maintain a request management system for tracking, quality assurance, and statistical reporting; and to strengthen relationships with other bilateral and multilateral donors, development research institutions, and organizations.

The Research Unit

The U.S. Agency for International Development has become a sophisticated

Many thanks for your prompt and extremely helpful provision of documents. I am not used to getting such superb service. AID Policies Review Division, OECD



user of information resources. Throughout its history, R&RS has been fortunate to be able to hire staff who helped the project stretch its capabilities in every phase of its development. Although it is difficult to say which has come first in our evolution -- whether superb staff have drawn more complex work into the project or the growing complexities of the work necessitated hiring more highly skilled staff -- nonetheless, our staff have kept pace with the fast changing needs of a diverse and complex agency.

An important feature of R&RS II's research development has been the creation of a research agenda. The research agenda parallels the evaluation agenda of the Office of Evaluation and gives focus to longer-term research projects culminating in issue briefs. The research agenda and resulting issue briefs support evaluation by providing preliminary reports of topics -- background, USAID and other donor experience, trends -- that give the Agency immediate information on topics that the Evaluation Office will spend the next one-to-two years studying. Issue briefs that were completed during R&RS II include *The United States Agency for International Development and Election Support*, by Michele Wozniak Schimpp and Lisa Peterson and *Intellectual Property Rights and Economic Development*, by Dana Wichterman.

The research unit established a formal working relationship with the Office of Evaluation during R&RS II to further support their work. In this relationship, research has been called on to carry a share of writing, surveying, and participating on evaluation teams in the field. Our work for the Evaluation Office has encompassed privatization, non-government organizations, export promotion, foresting, biodiversity, civil society, and agribusiness.

Special Project Development

The development of special projects attests to R&RS's tremendous flexibility. We were not only able to create new portfolios of services to meet special Agency needs, but also to continue the high calibre of service the Agency had come to expect from R&RS.

Office of Women in Development

Late in R&RS I, the project began a special working relationship with the Office of Women in Development. We designated a research analyst

to devote a substantial block of time to fulfilling research requests and developing the WID collection for the WID Office. A formal buy-in and scope of work added newsletter production and other assignments, requiring the support of a full-time WID coordinator. Throughout R&RS II, the R&RS WID coordinator designed and produced several issues of the *WID Newsletter*, represented the WID Office at numerous conferences and seminars where WID information was presented, as well as answering WID-related requests from the Agency and the public, helping to heighten the profile of the Agency's WID activities. As USAID underwent reorganization and shifts in funding priorities, R&RS WID activities were curtailed.

Office of Capital Projects

Support to the Capital Projects Office of the then Bureau for Private Enterprise (PRE) was another step toward providing specialized information services to USAID, in this case responding to PRE's need for a centralized source of information on capital project activities of USAID and other donors. The capital projects research analyst gained a reputation for providing a vital service to PRE, substantiated by retaining the analyst's position when PRE was merged with the new Global Bureau.

Our Country Manager for Poland used the information provided by CTIS during his trip and it contributed to uncovering a specific opportunity to increase the company's exports to Poland. Harris Corporation

CENTER FOR
TRADE AND INVESTMENT SERVICES

GUIDE FOR DOING BUSINESS WITH
LATIN AMERICA & THE CARIBBEAN



November 1993

CENTER FOR
TRADE &
INVESTMENT
SERVICES

USAID - Center for Trade & Investment Services
The Center for Trade & Investment Services (CTIS) is a
division of the Office of Economic Cooperation and
Development (ECDC) and is located in the
Washington, D.C. area. CTIS provides
information and assistance to U.S. firms
interested in doing business in Latin America
and the Caribbean.

CTIS offers the following services:

- Providing a central source of information
on market, trade, investment, and
regulatory issues in Latin America
and the Caribbean.
- Providing information on U.S. and
foreign trade, investment, and
regulatory issues.
- Providing information on U.S. and
foreign trade, investment, and
regulatory issues.
- Providing information on U.S. and
foreign trade, investment, and
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Africa Bureau Information Center

As R&RS II began, in the fall of 1990, the project was negotiating with the Africa Bureau to develop an information center. The proposed center would serve the following functions: disseminate information on democracy and governance to counterparts on the African continent; collect and maintain current democracy and governance material for use by the Agency; answer requests for democracy and governance information; and produce publications as part of the information dissemination process. The Africa Bureau Information Center (ABIC) has made significant contributions to many of the Bureau's major activities, including the country ranking exercise, the weekly *Consolidated Reports*, on the crisis in Rwanda, and three quarterly newsletters: *African Voices*, covering USAID activities in democratization in Africa; *SD Highlights*, sharing information on African development issues and the activities of the Africa Bureau's Office of Sustainable Development (SD); and *SD Abstracts*, a technical bulletin of SD's analytical work. In addition, the original scope of work was expanded to include technical assistance in publication production for AFR/ARTS and AFR/ONI/DG.

Center for Trade and Investment Services

Development of the Center for Trade and Investment Services (CTIS) rapidly followed on the heels of ABIC. CTIS grew out of the Agency's commitment to help the U.S. private sector find joint ventures and other business opportunities in USAID-assisted countries. The Center is set up as an information clearinghouse with regional analysts specializing in the USAID-assisted countries in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, Near East, Eastern Europe and the New Independent States. Business counseling services are the main feature of CTIS, matching possible business opportunities to the needs and interests of individual U.S. businesses. The CTIS service portfolio has used the most current technology available in the Agency to disseminate information tailored to the needs of a wide range of U.S. business sectors, such as the flash fax service, which distributes information to selected mailing lists via fax-modem. The Agency's Internet access promises to further facilitate CTIS's many services. By providing information and consulting services on USAID's processes, procedures, programs and opportunities, CTIS helps to foster a larger, more competitive pool of knowledgeable and qualified companies that can bring new ideas and solutions to development work with USAID.

The initial success of the CTIS operation has given R&RS potential opportunities for expansion. In December 1993, the R&RS/CTIS project developed a specialized trade and investment information service known as the Environmental Technology Network for Asia (ETNA). This service is provided in conjunction with the U.S.-Asia Environmental Partnership Program (AEP). CTIS/ETNA provides specialized service by matching environmental technology transfer opportunities in Asia with U.S. environmental firms; providing environmental resource and information clearinghouse functions; and organizing and disseminating environmental trade leads to U.S. environmental technology firms. This is done using the Global Export Manager's (GEM) database which automatically matches companies with current business opportunities. CTIS/ETNA also maintains a database of companies interested in USAID business opportunities in Asia as well as in other global regions, and a specialized database of environmental technology firms.

The Regional Information Clearinghouse

The Regional Information Clearinghouse (RIC) in Guatemala is unique among R&RS II special projects. In 1992, the Regional Office for Central America and Panama (ROCAP) approached R&RS for technical assistance in gathering and disseminating information among USAID missions and key government and non-government groups throughout Central America. As part of the Regional Support project, RIC would

REGIONAL INFORMATION BULLETIN

Decentralization: FEMICA's Regional Agenda

Introduction

The objective of this article is to provide an overview of the current situation in Central America regarding the decentralization process. This process is being implemented in various countries in the region, and it is expected to have a significant impact on the development of the region.

The decentralization process involves the transfer of responsibilities and resources from the central government to the local level. This process is being implemented in various countries in the region, and it is expected to have a significant impact on the development of the region.

BOLETIN DE INFORMACIÓN REGIONAL

La Descentralización La Agenda Regional de FEMICA

Introducción

El objetivo de este artículo es proporcionar una visión general de la situación actual en Centroamérica con respecto al proceso de descentralización. Este proceso se está implementando en varios países de la región, y se espera que tenga un impacto significativo en el desarrollo de la región.

El proceso de descentralización implica la transferencia de responsabilidades y recursos del gobierno central al nivel local. Este proceso se está implementando en varios países de la región, y se espera que tenga un impacto significativo en el desarrollo de la región.

Just wanted to...comment on the excellent quality of the RIC's Regional Information Bulletin...The focus was on decentralization and municipal development...and it was very informative about what is going on in the region... USAID/San Salvador

collect, analyze, and disseminate regional information relating to four strategic areas: trade and investment; natural resource management and environment; democratization and municipal development; and regional cooperation and integration.

The RIC director and an information specialist were fielded by January 1993 and immediately made contact with not only USAID mission groups, but also with the myriad regional organizations which have become direct beneficiaries of RIC information activities. RIC outreach efforts have encompassed face-to-face meetings, a regional newsletter, occasional reports and papers, and direct responses to information requests.

RIC's reputation for excellence in information services, prestige among groups inside and outside the Agency, and valuable contributions to USAID's regional program were evidenced by RIC's integration into the mission at a time when ROCAP and USAID/Guatemala activities were being combined, priorities redefined, and programs cut. The RIC staff's tireless efforts to maintain excellent relations with the Agency in Guatemala and the Central American region and provide information tailored to regional concerns have made it a model for future regional information services.

The Democracy Information Center

By the end of the contract, R&RS II had begun providing special services to the Center for Democracy and Governance in the Global Bureau on a pilot basis, a direct result of our success in providing democracy and governance information to the Africa Bureau through ABIC.

USAID Development Information Center

Like the rest of the project, the USAID Development Information Center (DIC) saw dramatic changes throughout R&RS II, particularly in staffing, technology, collection development, and acquisitions for the USAID Development Information System.

A major change in DIC operations was the introduction of the first automated integrated library system (ILS), The Assistant, composed of modules designed to handle DIC acquisitions, serials, cataloguing, and circulation. As a "first generation" system, the ILS did not provide the

integration of functions, adequate acquisitions and cataloguing support, statistical reporting mechanisms, nor the flexibility needed to make it fully useful. As project demands grew, support and development of The Assistant was not forthcoming from its original developer, Library Automation Products, from the vendor Inlex, or from Data Trek, to which The Assistant was finally sold. As a result, R&RS conducted a survey of possible systems and selected The Professional Series developed by Data Trek; the DIC began conversion to the Data Trek system in the last months of the project.

Under R&RS II, the DIC took on responsibility for acquiring materials for the USAID Development Information System (DIS), a function previously performed by the LTS/DISC contract. Directed by the R&RS, the LTS subcontract acquisitions technician began a worldwide program to develop a network of mission liaisons who act as an R&RS link with the missions for collecting development experience documents at their missions for inclusion in the DIS. Approximately 60 missions were participating in the program by the end of the project, contributing significantly to DI's ability to keep the DIS up to date.

Collection development became an important emphasis during R&RS II. The DIC achieved a primary goal of more fully involving R&RS research and Agency staff in decision making regarding new DIC materials to reflect USAID's changing program areas. Recommendations for CD-ROM purchases fell in the collection development domain. Internet also

Thank you for everything you have sent. The materials have been incredibly useful, for background, lessons learned, in trying to understand the parameters around which USAID can assist... They have been used extensively by the mission as aids to their thinking and design
REDSO/Nairobi

CURRENT CONTENTS BULLETIN
 March 1994

Agriculture and Environment



Volume 2 Number 3 March 1994

Investing in People
Examining basic skills, building a productive work force

Evaluation
 ment

State of the World
ARTS

A publication from the Office of Analysis, Research, and Technical Support
 Bureau for Africa, USAID Agency for International Development

Volume 2 Number 3 March 1994

Investing in People
Examining basic skills, building a productive work force

State of the World
Examining the state of the world in 1994

ARTS
Art, Research, and Technical Support

became an invaluable tool for locating and acquiring possible new material. The DIC has performed an important support function to ABIC, CTIS, and the RIC, ordering all materials for those centers. In addition, the DIC has provided technical assistance to CTIS, sending a librarian to conduct a survey of CTIS collections and resources and make recommendations to be used by the new R&RS CTIS director.

DIC staffing came full circle during R&RS II. At the inception of the R&RS project in 1985, the DIC had six staff members -- two professional librarians, two assistants, a serials technician, and an interlibrary loan technician; all technical processing, including DIC acquisitions and cataloguing, was performed by the LTS/DISC contract. Early in the R&RS II project, R&RS took on the acquisitions and cataloguing functions, creating a new technical processing unit under the LTS subcontract to R&RS to carry the extra workload. By early 1994, USAID budget cuts forced the elimination of this unit plus the elimination of a technician position in the DIC. A corresponding cut in the technical processing workload, however, was never made, meaning that fewer DIC staff than were present in 1985 were doing the work of 11 full-time staff.

Central Project Operations

The evolution of R&RS into a complex, multifaceted project affected not only the program areas, demanding new management strategies, but also the central business management of the project. New core and buy-in contractual designations for research and DIC functions, and the addition of new, full-fledged information centers in Washington and Guatemala, necessitated expansion on formerly straightforward financial accounting, evaluation, and management information systems. To handle these demands, an operations unit was formed in 1992, headed by an operations manager and staffed by the R&RS project assistant and project receptionist. In addition, the operations manager took on oversight of the systems support subcontract with LTS.

A primary task of the operations unit has been the development of a new management information system (MIS). Early in R&RS II, the project adopted a Dbase MIS system to replace the Minisis-based REQUEST database used to record request work. The MIS was

technical assistance opportunities. R&RS staff have traveled to Egypt, Chile, West and South Africa, and Costa Rica as members of evaluation teams looking at private sector, democracy, and environment issues. In Chile, R&RS assisted in a civil society assessment case study, which led to Heather McHugh's analysis of Chilean civil society. In West Africa, a PVO/NGO assessment was completed. Janice Stallard contributed to the overall assessment with a study on sustainability, as well as numerous interviews conducted during her TDY. Roberto Martín collected materials on ecotourism from Costa Rica and Honduras, and Anne Langhaug traveled to Bolivia on TDY to help set up a DIC in La Paz.

R&RS staff have also provided support to the design projects in Nicaragua and Egypt. Michele Wozniak Schimpp traveled to Nicaragua to assist the USAID mission there with the development of a monitoring and evaluation plan for their democracy program. In Cairo, Janice Stallard provided the USAID mission technical assistance in the design of a new privatization project, which contributed to the 1994 publication of *Privatization Issues for USAID Decision Makers*, an R&RS Issue Brief.

Our assistance to mission DICs continued, both in Washington and in the field. As a result of our assistance to the Nicaragua mission in helping them establish a mission DIC, the mission hired a local individual to run the operation and sent him to Washington for further training with R&RS. When the Haiti mission believed it would be reopening its DIC, their librarian was also sent to Washington for refresher training. We also participated in the training program for the mission librarian from Senegal.

In the field, we have visited mission DICs in Mali, Senegal, and Niger to introduce new technologies and advise on the organization and staffing of information centers. Our assistance to the mission in Guatemala and ROCAP resulted in an amendment to the Regional Support project that created the Regional Information Clearinghouse.

Technology

Internet

R&RS developed expertise in Internet early in R&RS II. Through an arrangement with CAPCON, we acquired passwords that enabled us to

experiment with Internet, using its vast resources to locate a wide array of information. One of the most valuable uses for Internet is in locating gray literature -- particularly research reports, thought pieces, and reports of government activities -- that never surface during the course of literature searches. We have located discussion groups through Internet on development sector issues that have led to contacts with experts. As mentioned, collection development has been enhanced by Internet. Internet's e-mail capability has enabled us to communicate with people across the globe quickly and easily. We have used Internet to fulfill document order requests, attaching the documents to e-mail messages.

In the final year of the contract, USAID began developing its own Internet interest and capability. R&RS has played a significant role in helping the Agency design the CDIE portion of the USAID gopher. In addition, USAID has taken a particular interest in the conferencing aspect of Internet, which R&RS has helped to foster through working with Agency staff to develop a possible Internet conference on participation. If this conference is approved by USAID, it will open the door to future Agency conferences on many topics.

R&RS provided technical assistance to the Agency in its development of Internet and its use in global conferencing, most notably,



The Africa Bureau Information Center (ABIC), through research services, acquisition, and a special information system, provides development information reports and special services for client and peer agency activities.

ABIC staff serves and disseminates development information to U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) staff in Washington, DC, and field offices in Africa and African governmental organizations and institutions. The Center is part of the Research and Reference Service of USAID's Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE).

The Center provides research services such as: writing information reports, secondary analysis, periodical review lists, developing bibliographies of subject literature, and developing country files. The research staff can provide information on USAID program and documents from USAID's Development Information System and other available information resources such as Research, Change Links, Plans, the World Bank, IDIC, UN database, and other sources of non-U.S. scientific literature.

ABIC provides specific support for the Bureau's Director and Consultants Offices in the areas of Operations and New Initiatives (CONI/O) and field missions in Africa, and has a database of organizations, individuals, and institutions worldwide that are active in development activities. ABIC has a specialized subject collection of up-to-date books, journals, magazines, and electronic materials directly related to Africa.

ABIC maintains a 24-hour public database of its reference collection, and also has a CD-ROM reader.

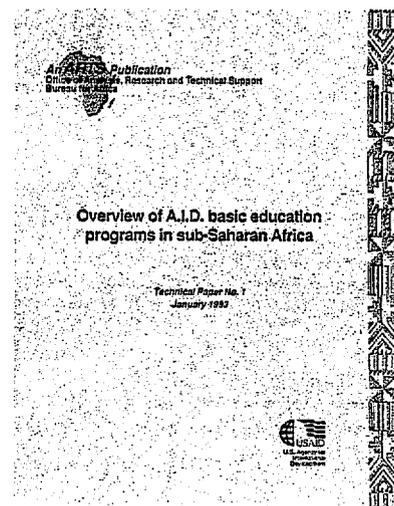
The Center currently publishes three quarterly newsletters: African Voices serves USAID activities in development, and is a forum for ongoing dialogue about these activities with Africa. Each issue features similar on development and news information, and highlights special features such as research, statistics, and available and potential organizations.

State of the ABIC provides news and information of ABIC activities and change information on ABIC and development news with USAID activities, African governments, and international donors. ABIC Abstracts is a monthly bulletin of ABIC activities that includes, among other things, analytical news items reports from a range of management, education, health, economic, and research and operations.

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I asked very hard, obscure questions and got very good answers--and quickly...all this activity was in response to a congressional request. AID/DAA/LEG



assisting the Training Office in making program summaries of its Development Studies Program Alumni Series available on Internet.

Magellan

We made many R&RS products available via the Agency's Magellan system, an electronic bulletin board accessible to Agency staff through Banyan LAN. The Magellan system was started in early FY 1994. R&RS research staff products that are available through Magellan include the monthly *Requests & Responses* newsletter, the full text of many Issue Briefs, such as *AID and Democratic Development: A Synthesis of Literature and Experience*, several topical bibliographies, such as *AID Mission, Management, and Organization: A Bibliography, 1989-1993*, and a general narrative piece describing the R&RS research services. DIC products that are available through the Magellan system include the DIC Serials List, the AID Historical Bibliography, monthly lists of new DIC acquisitions, also known as *New This Month*, electronic versions of the DIC circulation, interlibrary loan, and collection development policies, and a general overview of the DIC products and services. We have thus increased Agency awareness of the R&RS products and services through the Magellan system.