

67657

Some eager beavers
never have enough
but all the others
get too much!



Published by DEUTSCHE STIFTUNG FÜR
INTERNATIONALE ENTWICKLUNG
Hans-Böckler-Str. 5
D - 5300 Bonn 3
Federal Republic of Germany

Information
Sciences
Archival Copy

3-N-83-7407

IDRC-Lib
67657

R E P O R T

EUROPEAN COOPERATION
IN DEVELOPMENT INFORMATION
AND DOCUMENTATION

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
BERLIN OCTOBER 9 - 14, 1983

Rapporteur:
Jürgen Horlemann

DOC 1208 A/a
IT 26-57-83

Bonn, November 1983

~~FOR USE BY IDRC ONLY
ALL INFORMATION CONTAINED
HEREIN IS UNCLASSIFIED~~

ARCHIV
002:338
D 38

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
PREFACE	01
1. PROCEEDINGS OF OCTOBER 9, 1983	
1.1 <u>Opening Session</u>	01
1.1.1 Introduction by DSE (D. Danckwortt)	01
1.1.2 Presentation of the Participants	03
1.1.3 Agenda of the Conference	04
1.1.4 Steering Committee	04
2. PROCEEDINGS OF OCTOBER 10, 1983	
2.1 Discussion on " <u>Computers in Information</u> "	04
2.1.1 Computers in Information: Dataprocessing and Change of Structures in Small Size In- formation Bureaux (Lecture by R. Schneemann)	05
2.2 Discussion on " <u>Low Cost Documentation</u> "	13
2.2.1 Low Cost Documentation (Lecture by M. Klatter)	15
2.3 Discussion on <u>Thesaurus</u>	17
2.3.1 The Subject Approach to Information: The Role and Use of Thesauri. An Introduction to some Basic Concepts (Lecture by R. Supper)	19
2.4 Reception by German Foundation for Inter- national Development (DSE)	29
3. PROCEEDINGS OF OCTOBER 11, 1983	
3.1 <u>User Analysis and User Education</u> (Discussion)	30
3.1.1 User Education (Lecture by O. Nørgaard)	31
3.1.2 User Analysis (Lecture by D. Steinert)	34
3.2 Visit to Deutsches Bibliotheksinstitut (DBI) (German Library Institute)	40
3.3 Film Presentation (History of Berlin)	40
4. PROCEEDINGS OF OCTOBER 12, 1983	
4.1 Discussion on <u>International Information Systems</u>	41
✓4.1.1 International Information Systems (Lecture by R.T. de Mautort)	44
4.2 Demonstration of MINISIS	51

4.1.1

INTERNATIONAL INFORMATION SYSTEMS (DEVSIIS)

(R.T. de Mautort)

I must admit to a considerable amount of trepidation having been called upon to represent IDRC at this gathering of learned and experienced information specialists, and to talk about DEVSIIS. Having barely been with IDRC for more than a hectic week of moving from Vienna to Paris, and having hardly worried about DEVSIIS since a meeting in Ottawa in 1974, where I represented UNIDO during a discussion of the very concept.

I must apologize on behalf of IDRC that they could not assure a representation of someone more central to ongoing DEVSIIS developments. Fortunately, some written material has been forthcoming. Whatever could be said on the current state of DEVSIIS affairs is contained in a paper by Catherine Shearer, the DEVSIIS project manager, that has been distributed to you.

Other relevant material is available (and I have written it all on a chart):

IDRC 156^e

International Cooperative Information Systems
Proc. Seminar Vienna, July 1979

IDRC 065^e

DEVSIIS: Preliminary Design of an International
Information System for the Development Sciences

IDRC TS 43^e

International Socioeconomic Information
Systems. An Evaluative Study of DEVSIIS-Type
Programs

ST/ECA/PADIS DEV/81.4
DEVINDEX AFRICA 1981

IDRC 180^e

PROJECTS 1970-1981

PADIS/80/6/Rev.

PADIS. Pan African Documentation and
Information System

IDRC TS 40^e

Manual for Preparation of Records in De-
velopment Information Systems
Gisele Morin Labatut

Information Exchange in North-South Context
Cooperation rather than new Markets?

John E. Woolston

DEVSIIS-Type Systems and Activities

Catherine Shearer, DEVSIIS Project Manager

Global African and Nigerian Efforts
to Develop Information Systems for Socio-
economic Development
Wilson Aiyepoku, Program Adviser

After these bibliographic references, I ask you to allow me to say a few words about IDRC, and I shall then also say something about myself and my credentials for being hired by IDRC in the first place after retirement from the UN, and for being heard by a group of such a librarian standing.

IDRC, in the words of the President, was created in 1970 by the Parliament of Canada in response to the realization that considerable developmental research was needed in the developing countries, if developing countries were to gain the competence to fix their own goals and to solve their own problems. The centre is, unlike any other organization; it continues to be funded entirely by the Parliament of Canada. Yet, it is not in any sense part of the Parliament of Canada. Its policies are set by a board of governors, composed of both Canadians and Non-Canadians; 10 of the 21 members are drawn from outside Canada, 6 of them from developing countries. And there is a member of that board in France, a professor of law, who is going to breach down my neck in Paris.

IDRC is distinct not only in what it is but also how it goes about its task. Its concern is not simply to offer research support to the developing countries, but to do so in ways that increase the competence of researchers in those countries. We do this by spending our funds in large measure to the developing regions themselves. But in Canada we finance research programs which, in most instances, are chosen by scientists from those regions, and operated by them. IDRC does not itself conduct research, rather it assists in the identification process, in the trace and refinement of methodology, in the monitoring of progress and in the evaluation of results.

The research project and programs are of very practical applied nature, focussing primarily on the rural poor. We encourage activities in the fields of agriculture and health sciences, we assist the interdisciplinary refinement and application of new technology, we often help isolated scientists without access to the materials of their colleagues through the creation of information systems for basic development data and through the dissemination of bibliographic and other materials, many of them prepared within the centre. In short, IDRC is international both in scope and in structure, and most important for our presence here, IDRC is charged by a statute not only with the task of fostering research, but as well with the task of fostering the mechanism for the dissemination of information. That is, assisting in the distribution of existing knowledge. The angle under which IDRC has approached its mission towards information has been in two directions:

- 1) Assisting the world community in the developing linkages - data bank-interconnections, developing in particular MINISIS and being central to the development of AGRIS and DEVSIIS.
- 2) Taking a practical view of the information-function by develop-

ing in particular in Southeast Asia, in Singapore, an institution called TECHNONET - a network of industrial information and extension services to small and medium industry in every country of Southeast Asia. This system has terminal access to sources of information throughout the world, but particularly in Canada.

Wherever IDRC-staff-members travel, and that applies to me here, we are scouting for projects that fit in the spirit that I spoke of, and we try to find finances for it.

As to your humble servant, I have had associations with the world of libraries by virtue essentially of their administrative insertion in the various enterprises I have been associated with. I was close to the Central Library of the French Atomic Energy of Saclay. Referring to the discussion we had yesterday, there you have a centre with several thousand people, consisting of physicists, chemists, medical doctors interested in the radiation aspects of life. They all are being fed by a central library that under the head-librarian, at least during my time, there was an array of specialists working in the premises of the library, who were medical doctors, physicists, chemists - but their job was to keep constant eye on the research-work being done in the various departments and extracting from the incoming material and from the holdings of the library relevant material for SDI-service and concrete spoon-feeding of information to their colleagues. The structure was spoon-feeding from the library by specialists of various fields, controlled by the head-librarian.

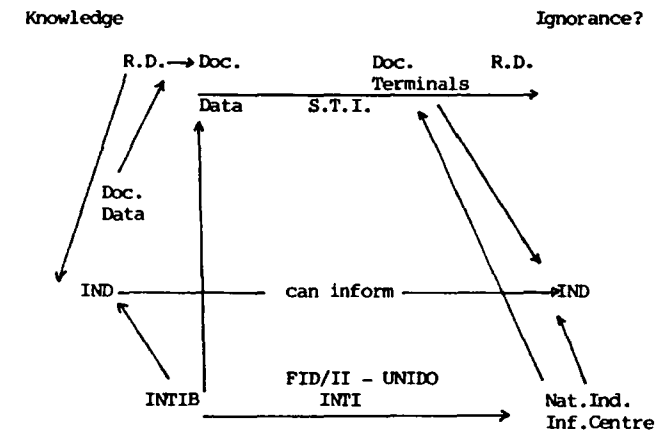
I have also been close to the library of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna back in 1958 and the following years as an immediate colleague in the same division to the head-librarian. There, the procedure was quite different. The library staff was strictly doing its librarian work, and in the various units of the Agency, documentation was a self-service function. But a self-service function by individual professionals that somehow, in the various divisions, without concertations turned to be really the function of a senior secretary, who had passed the stage in age and dignity where she would touch a typewriter. So, she would be a documentalist. And you see that phenomenon happening in various big institutions. Perhaps by a lack of user education with the professionals or perhaps some intellectual laziness.

In an executive capacity I have been responsible in the early 60s for the library of the OECD/European Nuclear Energy Agency which was inserted in the administrative and external relation service. In the later 60s I was responsible for the central library of OECD, which was part of my external relations division. A phenomenon you find in various institutions: some executives with those administrative external relation capacity who happen to acquire some librarian "Geschür" (flair for) by mere administrative vicinity of supervisory responsibility. Something happened in the early 70s in Vienna at UNIDO: Together with the Atomic Energy Agency and certain other UN units the decision was made to establish a central library in the area of common services. And this is how they have slapped together an Atomic

Energy Library, an industrial library, a social services library - it is, from the point of view of subject coverage, an immense and total thing; they are providing the whole houses with the classical services of accession lists, photocopies of the contents of incoming material, etc., and they are trying very hard to add an active feedback and interchange with the readers, they use questionnaires etc.

That falls into my remark of yesterday: "Some eager beavers never have enough, and all the others always get too much". Since the library of UNIDO went its own way I have remained for ten years the head of UNIDO's industrial information section. I finished up as director of public information services for Austria and the Federal Republic of Germany.

But before going back to my subject there (and I had hoped very much that board would slowly be filled, so I would know exactly what to say), I will turn to a board which I filled myself which refers to my specific experience and which may have a bearing on the concerns of the participants here:



Research and Development (R.D.) generates documents (Doc.) and data in quantities and some hidden knowledge that (short of brain-washing or safe-cracking) one never gets at. That is totally out of anyone's reach. Those documents and data flow through scientific and technological information flows (S.T.I.) from the libraries, counters, data-banks to documentation-centres' terminals and recipient institutions - the world of ignorance and question-marks. Those who engage in research and development are totally satisfied with all those documents and data; they relish those bibliographic printouts and those documents that may possibly come along with them. And it is important

for everyone who does a research on a mini-point to know what has been done on this subject between Ulan Bator and Asuncion as a base for his further efforts. The scientific and technological information flows have been institutionally the worry of the non-governmental FID and UNESCO with its UNISIST program. They have considerably served the dissemination of information throughout the world and lent a higher dignity to the profession of librarian, and the more computerized the librarian, the greater is his grade of dignity.

The world of industry, I would say, differs. Concerning knowledge in industry, you have a segment of it which generates documents and data, and much of that gets into the STI. This free flow of documents and data consisting of industrial knowledge is important, but by far not the essential. You have a sector of knowledge, proprietary knowledge, in industry where this is fed into and which is totally inaccessible unless you use undecent means. Developing countries seem to believe that sector of preserved information, simply because it doesn't flow around, fills the horizon. The role of international organizations, the role of development promotion centres is to persuade developing countries, that this sector is not as big as you think, and in the intermediary world between this free-flowing information and that hidden knowledge, you have a world of available knowledge which is perfectly fit for cheap, direct access on excellent terms.

Now, you have a matching situation in the world of ignorance. You have a limited sector of industry that is able to identify its problems and to express it in the form: If I get these data and documents, my problem is solved. That is the more sophisticated sector of industry with information-gate people who can identify problems and find those documents they believe they need. But that is only a limited segment. The less developed the countries, the fewer engineers, the fewer there are people who can identify problems and translate it into the request for documents. Then you have a sector of total refuse of information and absolute block-head neglect of any cooperation. And you find that everywhere. The role of our organization is to try to reduce this hard-core of willful ignorance. But between these two extremes you have a magma of unformulated requirements and problems that are to be solved. It will not be solved by a slow progress and extension of that sector that thrives on documents and data. It is absolutely necessary to set up in developing countries national industrial information centres whose role is to have access to the terminals and the documents. They can translate some of this into the request for documents and data. They are the best customers of those documentation centres, but their industrial information officers are people with industrial and economic experience with a slight dabbling of documentation technique; but their function as information officers is essentially that of connaisseurs of industry by sector and its economic and financial problems. Who else is informing industry? You have a commercial information flow. Those who produce capital goods in developing countries supply as much information it takes to persuade someone to invest in these product-services or -goods and they transfer as much information as in their contracts for transfer of technology; they have

committed themselves to them, but not more; they don't pretend to facilitate an appropriate choice between available technologies. This is the role of another circuit, and I would call it, by difference with the scientific and technological information flow, the industrial and technological information flow. This requires a central international structure - one, or more. In UNIDO it is INTIB (Industrial Technological Information Bank) the function of which is to explore for the benefit of developing countries through those national information centres this vast area of run-out patterns of engineers retired, who are quite ready to offer directly their services to settle a new technology motion and to answer inquiries.

I now want to talk about the international cooperation in information, of which DEVSIS is a part. In the late 60s and early 70s there was a general vision in the UN system that a brave new world was on the threshold to happily exchange information about everything, and the only problem was to get organized. John Woolston, at that time, was the head of the information services of the Atomic Energy Agency. There you had a superb model situation which, unfortunately, could not be found until today anywhere. The political situation: in every country there was some kind of atomic energy program, there was a national authority which decided once and for all that this document was classified and the other was free for circulation. This being said, everything that's military classified etc. is completely out of sight, and the problem was, what to do with the other things. In those years informatics were at their very start, and so was the field of Nuclear Energy Agency. There was not a formula but built-out of documentation through many, many years before informatization evinced. So, this was a perfect case where one could practically start with computerized information at the same time as the start of that new science and technology. And then there was a political will of the Soviet Union and the United States of America that they were extremely curious to look at what the other side was producing; and if it was not secret they could do so. On that basis INIS was started and it turned out to be a success. The producer and consumer community of nuclear energy literature is extremely homogenous. No centre looks different from that run at Karlsruhe or anywhere in the world. People who work in these institutions are very much the same type of people.

After the success of INIS one asked why not go to agriculture? Certainly the ministers of agriculture in all countries happen to have an important role and they had access to all the documents relevant. AGRIS was the second cooperative information system that came into being and which, too, is a success. There, the difficulties lay in the mass of agricultural-orientated literature produced in the world, which cannot be compared to the amount of literature on nuclear energy. But it serves its purpose and is a success in which IDRC has been markedly involved.

AGRIC as well as INIS are based on the computers in Vienna in the hands of the Atomic Energy Agency. As a neighbour of it in Vienna UNIDO said, why don't we make an INDIS (Industrial Development Information System)? There we've got to do something quite different. Industry in the Western countries at least is not something that a

government has its hands on. Not at all to the extent that applies to agriculture. Much of the knowledge and know-how even written into documents and data is not something one would wish to flow on a press-button basis. There was no enthusiasm on the part of any of the industrialized countries to feed industrial data into a system like that. That is why INDIS turned out to be much more modestly and put up a set of abstracts. Up to now there are some 15,000 items. All this package of UNIDO abstracts is published in a purple book and has been integrated in the IDRC-operated bibliographical data bank and included in the MINISIS bibliographic package. My experience with UNIDO is some amount of classical bibliographic services and an intense insistence on that last segment of the information flow which goes not to an undetermined user group but to the very end-user who has decisions to make, and who wants pre-cooked elements for decision-making rather than tons of paper.

The DEVSIS proposition came after the success of AGRIS and without thinking much of INDIS development as a genuine proposition. It was thought that the international community would be ready now to take over since development was a thing which was thought in need of a new cooperative information system. During all those years there have been efforts in the UN system to make it adopted as a project starting at the top and going down to the bottom. In those years money suddenly became short and perhaps the political will was not there, and the minus-growth in budgets may have added to the problem.

There was another idea of establishing a world-wide network for scientific and technological information. This idea has been worked on in the early 70s and brought to the floor at the Vienna conference on science and technology for development in 1979 where it was regarded the only outcome of this maxi-conference. The idea was to establish a GIN (General Information Network). This was a vague concept but had a vision of satellites everywhere, terminals and data-banks everywhere, and a fabulous exchange of all manner of information at low cost practically to any-one throughout the world. The argument was, since we are working on this idea of GIN, why worry about a sector of things like DEVSIS? So GIN became the object of inter-agency meetings and all sorts of people are writing interesting papers. There was one interesting proposal written by a professor in information-sciences, Prof. Slamnecka, which was seriously discussed. His vision was a central console somewhere in the world, where everyone with a problem, be it metaphysical, technical, sociological etc. would telex not a request for literature on the subject but for the telephone- or telex-number of the man/woman who knows. It was a sort of maxi-reference system. There is one international information system that is of that nature, and that is INFOTERA. It is a UNIP institution, which propose not to make available Mr. or Mrs. x, who wrote a paper back in 1956 on something that occupied his mind at that time for three months, but Mr. or Mrs. y who is living right now and has a phone-number and is competent on this subject. This has been perceived to be a danger to bibliographic data-banks in a period of increased illiteracy in particular among the cultured classes.

In this respect I can refer to more modest enterprises so as to draw up guides to sources of information. Many people have been doing that. My previous institution and myself have been drawing up from every sector of industry guides to information sources that are very much appreciated.

But what happened to the bright idea of a centralized DEVSIS? Since it did not come in through the front door it has been tried through many kitchen-doors. The paper by Mrs. Shearer gives a listing of DEVSIS related enterprises. There has been a DEVINDEX Canada in 1975/76 which represented an effort to retrieve every piece of literature relevant to development sciences generally in Canada, but also of countries who kindly contributed - the Federal Republic of Germany was one of these. The DEVINDEX Canada has been widely disseminated and shown to everyone that it was a practical and useful thing. India developed its own DEVINDEX India in 1981, and also in Australia a respective DEVINDEX is in preparation.

There have been DEVSIS-type operations on which IDRC had some influence or gave some money. In Tunisia there is a national DEVSIS operation which is computerized, and in Thailand, Pakistan and the Philippines there is one manual.

I should also like to draw your attention to a relevant place - IBISCUS in France. We have been doing that without specific reference to DEVSIS. But the idea is spreading. And it is not excluded that when many countries have done their national thing they will come together and produce on a democratic basis what has been thought of on a technical basis.

Furthermore, there are regional systems, like INFOPLAN around CEPAL in six latinamerican countries, which produced a PLANINDEX in 1979. There is CARISPLAN relating to six countries in the Caribbean, which produces ABSTRACTS (of development literature). And then there is PADIS, a maxi-technical network of Africa, which startet PADIS/DEV, the DEVSIS-phenomenon for Africa, in 1980; you have seen the DEVINDEX Africa today. - In Asia there isn't anything of this type yet, but a certain network is going to be put up this year or next year, and there has been a meeting in Colombo to discuss the possibilities for the future; something is most likely to come up for Asia and South-east Asia. In ESCAP there has been produced some service in relevance to development literature. - In the Middle East, though the political situation is difficult, some things have been solved, concerning ECWA. As far as the UN is concerned, they have established a development information system which is producing development information abstracts (DIESA/DIS). - Stopping to talk here I am prepared to answer any questions that may arise concerning all these projects.

4.2 Demonstration of MINISIS

The second half of the day was taken by an introductory lecture on MINISIS plus practical demonstration of the