

**AFRICA REGIONAL CENTRE FOR INFORMATION SCIENCE (ARCIS):
AN EVALUATION UNDERTAKEN FOR IDRC**

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September 1991

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I INTRODUCTION

The Africa Regional Centre for Information Science (ARCIS) was inaugurated as an autonomous unit within the Faculty of Education, Ibadan University, Nigeria, on 16 November 1990. It has a full-time Director, appointed initially for three years with effect from 1 November 1990, and three other full-time faculty. ARCIS currently offers one academic program - the two-year Master of Information Science (MInfSc) - in which twenty students registered in November 1990.

The University of Ibadan undertook to supply and refurbish as accommodation for ARCIS a building together with two outhouses standing in their own grounds. It is also responsible for the salaries of ARCIS academic, technical and support staff. The National Universities Commission agreed in 1985 to provide annually N100,000 for ARCIS goods and services. This promise was honoured in 1990 but inflation in the intervening years has reduced in real terms the value of this sum by a factor of six (ie, N600,000 would now be necessary). IDRC approved a grant up to \$125,000 to support ARCIS in its first year of operations, any renewal of grant being dependent upon an evaluation by an outside consultant at the termination of the first academic year.

On 31 July 1991 Andrew Large, Director of the Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, McGill University, contracted to undertake an in-depth evaluation of IDRC's support for ARCIS during August 1991 and to submit his findings in writing to IDRC.

Appendix I contains Briefing Notes provided by the Director of ARCIS for the evaluator and which were the starting point for the six-day evaluation process. The ARCIS Prospectus comprises Appendix II.

II STAFF

a) Academic Faculty

The quality of the faculty is crucial to any academic institution; the best material resources cannot compensate for poor teachers and researchers.

ARCIS currently has four full-time faculty together with three part-time faculty (whose teaching duties are confined to second-year courses and who have not therefore as yet undertaken any teaching in the MInfSc program). Some courses are offered jointly by ARCIS and the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies, University of Ibadan, and of these several are taught by faculty from the latter department (see below, Section III).

Full-time faculty

1. Wilson O. Aiyepoku, BA (Ahmadu Bello), PG Dip Lib (Ibadan), PhD (Ibadan).

ARCIS Director and Professor, University of Ibadan.

Professor Aiyepoku has an impressive academic, research and professional record in library and information science. He possesses the local, national and international stature to lead ARCIS during its crucial formative years. I was impressed with his energy, enthusiasm and organisational abilities. Arrangements for the evaluation exercise were excellent and access was ensured the evaluator to the necessary documentary and human resources (with the exception of the National Universities Commission). Professor Aiyepoku appears to have a very good standing in the University of Ibadan and is active in university decision-making bodies. He has selected an excellent team of colleagues to assist him in his educational and research roles. Formerly he was a lecturer, senior lecturer and professor in the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies at the University of Ibadan.

2. Fabian A. Ehikhamenor, BSc (Ife), MSc (Ife), MLS (Ibadan), PhD (Drexel).

Dr Ehikhamenor is a Senior Lecturer at ARCIS before which he was a librarian at the University of Ibadan and an Associate Lecturer in its Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies. He received an IDRC fellowship to undertake his doctoral studies at Drexel University. He has published eleven articles, several in highly-prestigious journals, as well as a number of conference papers, and is on the editorial boards of two African journals.

3. Mutawakilu A. Tiamiyu, BSc (Ibadan), MSc (Ibadan), MLIS (Western Ontario), PhD (Western Ontario).

Dr Tiamiyu is a temporary lecturer at ARCIS. Previously he was a Planning Officer in the Nigerian Ministry of Finance and Economic Development. This is his first teaching position although he taught two courses as a doctoral student in the School of Library and Information Science, University of Western Ontario. His Canadian studies were supported by a fellowship from IDRC. He has three articles published in world-class journals and currently has three papers being reviewed for publication.

4. Isola S.Y. Ajiferuke, BSc (Ibadan), MSc (Ibadan), MLIS (Western Ontario), PhD (Western Ontario).

Dr Ajiferuke is a temporary lecturer at ARCIS. Like Tiamiyu, this is his first teaching post although he also taught at Western Ontario as a doctoral student (supported by an IDRC fellowship). He has seven publications in very prestigious journals and has presented conference papers in Canada, the US and Nigeria.

Curriculum Vitae for these four faculty can be found in Appendix III.

Based upon interviews with these four faculty as well as discussions with ARCIS students, a review of course outlines and examination papers and a perusal of sample student examination answers the evaluator formed an excellent impression of all these faculty members. They would be a credit to any similar department in North America or Western Europe. Their publications are impressive as is their approach to teaching and assessment. They should ensure that now the difficult first year at ARCIS is behind them they make time to engage in research work and maintain their publication records (the faculty complained of heavy teaching loads which together with workshop/consultancy demands made research in 1990-91 difficult).

In my meeting with the Vice Chancellor of Ibadan University I stressed my high opinion of the faculty and strongly supported the currently pending applications of the two most junior staff for permanent appointments at the Lecturer II grade (instead of temporary positions at Lecturer I).

The only concern as regards these faculty (and particularly the two most junior) is that the frustrations of life at the University of Ibadan coupled with low pay might persuade them to seek other employment either in the university sector outside Nigeria or outside of universities altogether. It would be a great pity if this were to happen before ARCIS has become firmly established.

Part-time faculty

1. Stephen M.A. Lawani, BSc, Pg Dip Lib (Ibadan), MS (Columbia), PhD (Florida State).

Dr Lawani is Head of the Library and Documentation Service at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, Ibadan. I was very impressed with Dr Lawani and he should prove a great asset to ARCIS where he is MInfSc Program Advisor as well as a part-time faculty member.

2. F.A. Adesanoye, BA (Ibadan), PhD (Ibadan).

3. J. Olutimayin, MSc (Aston), PhD (London).

I did not meet either of these faculty; the former is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Communication and Language Arts and the latter a Principal Systems Analyst in the Computing Centre at the University of Ibadan.

All faculty are Nigerian. The Director is aware of the need to emphasise the regional nature of ARCIS through the appointment of one or two non-Nigerian full-time faculty. ARCIS intended to have six, not four, faculty. One position was never filled and the candidate for the other position, could not in the event be appointed (he was in fact listed in the Prospectus for 1990-92 but never commenced employment. It may not be easy to attract non-

Nigerians from West Africa to live and work in Ibadan and be paid in local currency.

Four full-time faculty is too few ideally to cover a multi-disciplinary area like information science, although the availability of three part-time faculty somewhat alleviates this situation. On the other hand, an enrolment of only twenty students in the first year of the MInfSc Program and a projected enrolment of twenty-five in 1991-92 (giving a total complement of forty-five) still means that the ratio of full-time faculty to students (1:11) is quite acceptable. The recommended development path would be to increase faculty to at least six by recruiting two non-Nigerians from the region and to increase annual enrolment on the MInfSc Program to around thirty (so long as suitably qualified candidates can be attracted and jobs are available for them on graduation).

The faculty in general considered themselves overworked and complained that their heavy teaching duties greatly hindered research and consultancy. It should be emphasised that so far they have only coped with a first year intake and that next year they must handle students in both years of the Program (although formal teaching demands are much heavier from the first than the second year). I was not entirely convinced that the teaching load is onerous when compared with North American or European schools. and matters should improve as the junior faculty acquire more teaching experience and no longer need to develop new courses each semester.

b) Support staff

A full-time technologist has already been appointed and is expected to commence employment shortly (on expiry of notice in his current post). A part-time librarian has been seconded from the University of Ibadan Library to supervise the ARCIS library (but to date the library is practically empty and the librarian not yet required - see below under Library facilities). ARCIS also has a full-time Administrative Secretary.

A number of other staff - driver, security guards, gardeners, etc - complete the ARCIS staff.

III PROGRAMS

Currently ARCIS only offers one academic program: the two-year (four semester) Master of Information Science (MInfSc). It is subject to the Postgraduate School regulations governing higher degrees at the University of Ibadan.

Applicants must have a first degree in either a science or a social science subject.

The Program comprises a minimum of forty units and a maximum of forty-six units. A second-year project carries four units and an attachment between years one and two provides two units. All courses (compulsory, required and elective) represent two units. During the first year students take sixteen courses (eight per semester) which if all successfully completed gives thirty-two units. When added to the attachment and project the student would then have thirty-eight units. The remaining units are acquired in the second year by taking between one and four elective courses. The second year is also used to re-take any compulsory or required courses which were failed in year one.

The curriculum was designed by a group of international experts in 1984 and subsequently reviewed, particularly to ensure a measure of harmonisation with the MLS Program offered by the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies. Both teachers and students expressed the view that the curriculum is too heavily biased towards required courses and some of these should be replaced by electives. They also felt that the weekly class contact of around sixteen hours plus lab sessions was too high. Finally the students and staff (other than the Director) believe that the element of collaboration with the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies (not very extensive at the moment) has a negative impact on the Program. It was said that students in the latter Department were of a lower quality than ARCIS students as well as coming largely from a humanities background (in contrast with the science/social science background of the ARCIS students). As a result the quality of the MInfSc Program was reduced. The view was also expressed that some of the courses offered to ARCIS by the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies were inappropriate (such as the History of Archives, Libraries and Information Systems).

The proportion of elective units in the Program is certainly small and the weekly class contact in the first year is higher than ideal. It is difficult to comment upon the impact (positive or negative) on the MInfSc Program of the collaboration with the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies. The ARCIS Director (unlike his colleagues) believes that it would be premature and politically unwise to unravel existing links with the Department at this early stage. With only one year's experience it would seem too early to make any major curriculum changes. A review of the curriculum has been initiated but only minor modifications are intended at this stage.

All teachers relied heavily on class discussion (some allocated marks for this) and student presentations as well as more formal lectures; this is to be applauded. The students at first found this teaching method alien but quickly adjusted to its demands.

The students expressed themselves as being very impressed with the Program which was "interesting" and "worthwhile"; the courses were

stimulating and challenging (except for those offered by the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies). Interaction with faculty was rated as good. They would like, however, more emphasis on information technology and computer science to ensure that they can compete in the job market with computer science graduates. They found the workload heavy but could suggest few courses that they felt were unnecessary; one suggestion was to increase the Program length from eighteen months to a full two calendar years (this is not to be recommended). The view was also expressed that there was too much theory and not enough practice.

ARCIS does have plans to introduce before too long two research degrees: an MPhil and a PhD. It would seem advisable to ensure that the MInfSc is running on a firm basis as well as putting staff research on a firmer basis before introducing research degrees. Such an expansion of programs would also be easier if faculty numbers could be increased from four to six.

IV STUDENTS

Twenty students were admitted to the inaugural year of the MInfSc Program in November 1991: sixteen Nigerians and four Ghanaians. Two Nigerians subsequently withdrew for financial reasons, leaving a first-year class of eighteen. The Ghanaians all receive IDRC bursaries.

The enrolment in October 1991 is being raised to twenty-five, of whom it is hoped five will be non-Nigerians (two Ghanaians, two Ugandans and one Cameroonian). I can see no reason why this should not be raised in 1992 to thirty.

There were no problems in attracting suitably qualified Nigerians (more than five hundred applications were apparently received in 1990 and three hundred in 1991) and it was ARCIS itself which set a limit on their enrolment. Strenuous efforts were made, on the other hand, to attract applicants from elsewhere in the region with only very limited success. The regional success of ARCIS is dependent upon more students being attracted from outside Nigeria. If applicants cannot be attracted even when IDRC bursaries are available then the long-term chances for a regional centre in Ibadan once IDRC support has been withdrawn look less certain. In fairness, though, ARCIS is unlikely to prove attractive to outsiders at the outset and before it has had an opportunity to establish a reputation as a centre of excellence.

The faculty seem pleased with the first intake of students. Although not as extrovert as their North American counterparts they have adjusted to the demands of a participative teaching approach. I had an opportunity to meet twelve of the eighteen students and enjoyed a lively discussion with them in which they impressed. A

glance through some examination answers confirmed this opinion. The students have a wide variety of academic backgrounds (although all are required to hold a first degree in the sciences or social sciences. The following degrees were held by the twelve interviewed: Agriculture, Agricultural Economics, Biochemistry, Chemistry, Computer Science, Human Nutrition, Linguistics, Mathematics, Mechanical Engineering, Nursing, Political Science and Psychology.

V RESEARCH

ARCIS as yet has no research students although the Director has plans to introduce MPhil and PhD research programs. It would seem preferable to delay this step until a stronger research base has been developed in the Centre.

No private or funded research has been undertaken during ARCIS's first year. This is understandable given the pressure to launch a new Centre and to develop a teaching program with only four faculty, only one of whom had previously held a full-time teaching post. Research funding is difficult to obtain but one group proposal is being planned, hopefully for 1991-92: "Information in Africa's Public Domain: a Paradigm of Development Information in Action" (although funding has not yet been acquired). One faculty member mentioned the possibility of joint research projects with other departments at the University of Ibadan which might be better placed to get funding, but no specific examples were cited. Inadequate library resources also hinder research.

All four faculty members hold PhDs and have demonstrated before joining ARCIS an ability to get their research into publication. This evaluation at the end of just one year's operations cannot be over-critical of the dearth of research; any subsequent evaluation in several years' time, however, should expect to find a very different state of affairs.

VI CONSULTANCY

Although the Director's Briefing Notes to the evaluator refer to three consultancies two of them were so closely linked as to constitute one project. The client for all consultancies was the National Library of Nigeria and netted N45,000 (CA\$4,500). A N25,000 (cCA\$2,500) consultancy for a private client (Information Network Ltd, Lagos) is on-going: Trends in the Information Abstracting, Brokerage, Packaging and Dissemination Industry." A fifth consultancy is being discussed with the National Commission for Women's Affairs but the prospects do not seem bright.

As with research, the consultancy side of ARCIS has yet to prove itself in these early days. It will not be easy to generate

substantial fees within a Nigerian or even West African context but nevertheless this activity should be pursued vigorously; as well as raising money consultancies increase the visibility of ARCIS amongst potential suppliers of students and employers of graduates as well as possible research collaborators.

VII SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS

So far one workshop has been held (in July 1991), "Using Expert Systems for Effective Financial Management", in collaboration with a private sector information technology company. The workshop was targeted at the financial world and twenty-three attended (it was hoped to attract twenty-five). It broke even financially (and in fact was not intended to make a profit).

No seminars have been held nor are currently planned.

Workshops and seminars are a way of earning money and involving ARCIS with the wider information community, the source of students and research funding and the employer of graduates. It is encouraging to learn that six more workshops are planned before the end of 1991, two to be subsidised from IDRC finds but four at least to break even. Furthermore, these last four were all specifically requested by client groups, indicating both the existence of a market for workshops and an emerging recognition for ARCIS as a source of training. Charges will have to be selected carefully if the workshops are to have maximum impact as well as fund-raising capabilities. The level of costs which the private sector can bear may exclude public sector participation; the University Librarian, for example, commented that she would like to send her staff to ARCIS workshops but that it was too expensive. The Director expects that eventually these kinds of activities will be income generating but it seems improbable that they can constitute a significant source of funding in the short term.

The decision to establish ARCIS as a formal university institute offering higher degrees inevitably means that it will be judged by its parent institution, the University of Ibadan, primarily by the standards of its full-time academic programs: workshops and seminars will have to take second place.

VIII FACILITIES

a) Site

The University of Ibadan has established ARCIS in a former residential building within its own grounds. Sufficient space is available currently though the opportunities for expansion are

limited unless an extension is added. The building holds faculty offices, the Director's office, a secretarial office, reception room, seminar room, research room, information technology laboratory and library. An outbuilding has been converted into two classrooms and there are plans to convert a second outbuilding into a hostel for non-Nigerian students.

b) Information technology

Seven microcomputers were installed in February 1991 (several months after the commencement of the MInfSc Program): four are located in the Information Technology Laboratory and are for student use; two are in the research room and are for faculty; and one is in the Director's office. An eight microcomputer was installed in July 1991 and is to be used to launch the Centre's Compugraphic Unit which it is hoped will generate income. Apart from its micros the student laboratory is bare, not even sporting wall posters or documentation. ARCIS currently does not have any CD-ROM players or discs. During the evaluation visit none of the building's telephones were functioning and access to external databases is impossible. UPS units minimise (but do not eliminate) electrical power cut problems so long as the University generator switches in quickly as a substitute power source; during the evaluation visit the generator was non-operational for twenty-four hours. The computing resources elsewhere in the University of Ibadan are abysmal but the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture is better placed.

The hardware facilities are currently inadequate for an information science centre. As a matter of urgency the number of microcomputers in the student lab should be increased from four to eight and two CD-ROM players should be acquired. In the absence of communication links to external databases CD-ROMs offer the only opportunity for students to acquire retrieval skills on large databases. A data projector and two overhead slide projectors would also be invaluable. The question of a local area network (LAN) is more difficult to settle. A LAN enables resource sharing but currently ARCIS has little to share; a prerequisite for a LAN would therefore be the installation of more printers and CD-ROM players. Shared access to a modem and therefore external facilities through the LAN is impossible until the communication links at Ibadan are revolutionised. I doubt that ARCIS faculty would have the time (or maybe expertise) to install and maintain a LAN and I equally doubt that the impending technologist has LAN experience. The University Computing Centre has never installed a LAN. Only if the hardware outlined above is first purchased and only in the event of expertise being readily available should a LAN have high priority at ARCIS.

The basic types of software are available at ARCIS: wordprocessing, spreadsheet, statistical and database packages are available. There is clearly scope to improve the software collection (and CD-ROMs

will be needed if players are acquired).

c) Library

ARCIS has library shelves but presently no books or journals other than material on loan from faculty. Material purchased with IDRC funds had not yet arrived although one academic year had already been completed. Library resources in the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies and in the University Library are scarcely any better, at least regarding recent publications. The International Institute for Tropical Agriculture allows ARCIS faculty and students access to its library resources but they primarily relate to agriculture: a few information science journals, however, are received.

Information science material at ARCIS in particular and the University of Ibadan in general is totally inadequate to sustain graduate teaching and research. Both staff and students rightly complained about this situation. Students spend much time and a great deal of money in photocopying what little documentation is locally available in Ibadan. It is to be hoped that with the arrival of the material purchased through IDRC funding the situation will be improved; there is no chance that this problem will be eliminated.

The establishment of an ARCIS library with its own collection and librarian is a positive move for ARCIS. It must be said, however, that the University Librarian would rather place information science holdings in the existing College of Education library (ARCIS is an administrative but not a physical unit within the College). She believes that a separate library at ARCIS will not facilitate access to the information science collection by students from other departments including librarianship, computer science and management.

d) Ancillary equipment

ARCIS would certainly benefit from its own photocopier. In the absence of telephone lines a fax machine seems pointless.

IX ARCIS AND THE UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

The University of Ibadan has provided funds to refurbish the ARCIS building, and to purchase a vehicle. It meets all staff salaries and paid for the publication of brochures. Insurance coverage for ARCIS equipment and all energy, water and telecommunication (!) costs are also met by the University.

Following an intervention by the evaluator to the Vice Chancellor, Dean of Graduate Studies, Bursar and Registrar the University has

agreed for five years to reduce fees for West African students from the planned \$4,000 to \$1,000 (although this is still a two and a half-fold increase on the former fee for international students).

The Vice-Chancellor expressed the University's support for ARCIS as a regional centre. It is difficult to predict whether this support would remain if international agencies were to withdraw their support for ARCIS, but the proportion of outside financial support is relatively small compared with the University support. If this happened before ARCIS has established itself as a centre of excellence the most likely outcome is that ARCIS would continue but as a Nigerian rather than a regional institution.

ARCIS has links with a number of other units within the University. Foremost is its relationship with the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies. Founded in 1959, the Department was the only University unit dealing with information studies before the creation of ARCIS. This genesis was neither smooth nor rapid, and the decision to establish a separate centre rather than develop an information science program within the existing department remains controversial within the University (and at a theoretical and generalised level in the wider national and international information professions).

Although the Department is much larger than ARCIS in terms of staff, students and programs (MLS, MPhil, PhD and Diploma with plans for a first degree program) there is undoubtedly considerable envy in the Department regarding ARCIS. The Department has no external funding, no computers and (now) no information science program. Once the IDRC-funded library materials arrive ARCIS will have a marked advantage as regards recent publications; it is possible that the Department now has no funds for the purchase of literature but I am not certain about this. The Head of Department, Dr B. Nzotta, expressed fears that ARCIS could make library studies seem "old-fashioned". He said that his staff and students still feel that they do not have as good access to ARCIS computing resources as they should. He also agreed that there is overlap (though not a lot) between the MLS and the MInfSc Programs. He expressed the belief that ARCIS had been created for administrative purposes rather than as a response to a genuine subject division between librarianship/information studies and information science.

There is some cooperation between ARCIS's MInfSc Program and the Department's MLS Program. One course (Research Methods) is jointly taught and several courses required of ARCIS students are taught in the Department. It must be added, however, that this arrangement was strongly criticised by ARCIS students and faculty (with the exception of the Director) as diluting the information science component in the MInfSc and even reducing its intellectual level. Only a small number of students from the Department opted for the (for them) elective courses offered by ARCIS faculty (and required

for ARCIS students). Faculty in both the Department and ARCIS commented on some overlap between the two programs.

It is clear that the controversy surrounding the establishment of ARCIS as a separate unit has not yet been dissipated. Within the Department there is a sense of becoming sidelined in the face of the more affluent, IDRC-backed and technologically-oriented ARCIS. In the University Library there is also some concern/doubts about the wisdom of establishing ARCIS. These resentments and fears were not exhibited in my interviews initially but a little probing on my part soon revealed them. It is not surprising that this should be so, and in ideal circumstances I am by no means sure that a separate information science centre is in the best interests of the library and information professions, let alone the existing Department at Ibadan. I also had a sense, however, that the Department lacked drive and ambition, maybe even hope, and that in the actual circumstances at the University of Ibadan the regional information science program has a better long-term chance in its own independent unit than as a part of the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies.

The question of collaboration is difficult. The inevitable overlap between the MLS and MInfSc programs (inherent within their subject fields) suggests collaboration, but, of course, in a sense it also suggests that ARCIS should never have been created as an autonomous unit. The fact that it was established has certain consequences, one being that it is widening the gulf between librarianship and information science. ARCIS students already feel a sense of identity and community (which is good) and this inevitably separates them from the librarianship students to whom they feel superior. This estrangement is heightened because ARCIS students all must come from science/social science backgrounds whereas in practice librarianship students are mainly from the humanities (the Department would like to attract science students, just the kind who will be drawn to ARCIS with its far superior IT resources - providing another forum for rivalry between the two units). Likewise, ARCIS staff have a new sense of identity and believe that what little collaboration does take place has a negative effect. Unfortunately, the decision to create ARCIS has made collaboration between the subject fields much more difficult than the retention of a single unit encompassing both librarianship and information science. It seems probable that whatever is the view of IDRC regarding collaboration, the two units will drift even further apart. Indeed, in the long term should ARCIS be successful I would have doubts about the survival of the Department. Currently, however, the new and unproven ARCIS is probably the more vulnerable were external support to evaporate.

Collaboration between ARCIS and other academic departments is not as yet very well developed. ARCIS has part-time faculty from the Department of Communication and the Computing Centre. Faculty at ARCIS expressed the view that the Centre would benefit from greater

collaboration with the Computing Centre and the Department of Computer Science, though it must be added that neither unit seemed particularly strong. The former is badly equipped and the latter currently has only two faculty. One ARCIS member had tried to arrange a joint course with the Department of Economics on management information systems but the class numbers would have been too high and nothing came of this move. The Department of Statistics was also mentioned as a possible partner.

There is further scope for collaborative initiatives both in teaching and research which should be pursued by ARCIS faculty.

X THE NIGERIAN GOVERNMENT

The Nigerian Government supports ARCIS through the National Universities Commission. Despite written requests from IDRC prior to the visit that the evaluator meet with representatives from the Commission this did not prove possible. The following comments are therefore based solely on discussions with the ARCIS Director and the University's Vice-Chancellor.

The National Universities Commission has funded ARCIS during its first year by a sum of N100,000 and has undertaken to continue this annual support indefinitely. Unfortunately the value of this donation has been dramatically eroded by inflation since it was established in 1985 (it then seemed quite adequate). The same purchasing power would now require N600,000. There seems no possibility that the Commission will increase its contribution to ARCIS, and inflation presumably will remain a problem in the next few years at least.

X PRIVATE SECTOR SUPPORT

Although the private sector remains very limited in scope throughout the region there are indications that it is developing. ARCIS has already presented a workshop in collaboration with a private electronics company which attracted participants largely from the banking sector. This sector should be carefully solicited as a source of funding for research and consultancy as well as a market for workshops and seminars. In the future it might also be possible to obtain student scholarships/prizes from the private sector. Finally, it presents employment opportunities for ARCIS graduates. It would be ideal if ARCIS could identify key individuals in the private sector and involve them in some formal way with the Centre. In terms of its regional mission, the private sector target should eventually become West Africa and not simply Nigeria.

XII ARCIS AS A REGIONAL CENTRE

It is too soon to predict whether ARCIS will become a regional rather than a Nigerian Centre. Much has still to be done, however, if this goal is to be achieved.

Students: Only four from an intake of twenty in 1990 were non-Nigerians; all were Ghanaian and supported by IDRC bursaries. The proportion of non-Nigerians in the 1991 intake is expected to be the same. As a result of the evaluation visit a proposed ten-fold increase of fees to \$4,000 has been reduced to \$1,000 for five years but this could still prove an obstacle to recruitment.

Faculty: All four ARCIS faculty are Nigerian. There are plans to increase faculty size and this would provide an opportunity to hire non-Nigerians. The Director has expressed his willingness to do so but whether well-qualified, non-Nigerians from West Africa could be attracted to the University of Ibadan remains uncertain.

Funding: All ARCIS funding comes from Nigeria (the National Universities Commission and the University of Ibadan) or IDRC. Other West African countries are not providing financial assistance either directly or through bursaries. A committee has been set up whose goal is to raise an endowment fund of N50 million from other African (not simply West African) countries. The OAU is to be approached (the Nigerian President is currently the OAU chair) for support. All members of the committee currently are from the University of Ibadan. It is impossible to predict the outcome of this endeavour although the ARCIS Director is optimistic.

Activities: The workshops and consultancies so far undertaken (or planned) are all Nigerian-based.

International Consultative Committee: Under the initial contract between ARCIS and IDRC an International Consultative Committee was to be created with members from six West African countries. The representatives were to be policy makers with political weight rather than academics. Unfortunately, this Committee has never met due to lack of funds. The Director of ARCIS is aware of the need for this Committee to be constituted and activated as soon as possible. It would seem sensible for the Director of SISA also to be involved in the Committee to ensure liaison between the two Centres.

Other African School: No formal links have been established with schools of library and information studies in the region; at the very least contacts with the School of Information Science Africa (SISA) in Addis Ababa should be strengthened to their mutual benefit.

XIII TWINNING ARRANGEMENTS

It was originally intended that ARCIS should have twinning arrangements with at least one similar unit in the United States, the United Kingdom and Canada. In the 1980s contact was made with Syracuse University, the City University and the University of Western Ontario, all of which were visited by W. Aiyepaku in 1985.

In the event, progress was only made in one case: the School of Library and Information Science, University of Western Ontario. An agreement for a link program was prepared in 1986 but delays in the ARCIS launch prevented its signature. In 1990 W. Aiyepaku again contacted Western Ontario, and proposed that the earlier agreement should form the basis of new discussions. The link would cover joint research and an exchange of faculty/research students for purposes of teaching, seminars and workshops. In addition the Canadian partner would help with curriculum revision and provide external examiners for ARCIS as well as "vital resources" (this latter appears to mean various vehicles). The twinning would be financially underwritten by CIDA. No response has yet been received from Western Ontario but W. Aiyepaku hopes that the Canadian institution will be submitting an application to CIDA in September 1991.

XIV INTERNATIONAL AID AGENCIES

Other than IDRC, the hopes of ARCIS in terms of international support have centred on two agencies:

Unesco: ARCIS continues to approach Unesco for funding but as yet has not been successful. In February 1991 the following was requested:

Fellowships	\$50,000 in each of 3 years
Seminars/workshops	\$54,000
Equipment	\$155,000
Vehicles	\$30,000

Unesco' response in March 1991 was not very encouraging.

Commonwealth Secretariat: Verbally, though without written confirmation, the Secretariat has "agreed in principle" to make ten to fifteen annual Commonwealth Fellowships available for ARCIS from 1992-93 onwards. ARCIS also hopes to get library materials and staff development assistance from the Commonwealth Higher Education Support Scheme. It remains to be seen whether these hopes are realised.

The Secretariat provided travel funding for an ARCIS lecturer to attend a conference in India in August 1991 but in the event the visit could not be undertaken.

XV CONCLUSIONS

ARCIS is a new institution which has been operating for less than twelve months. It has accepted so far one intake of students but no-one has yet graduated from its two-year Master's Program. The evaluation has to take these critical factors into account when considering the progress made and the problems remaining.

In a short period of time ARCIS has succeeded in establishing a very sound academic basis for its educational and research activities. Its Director and other faculty are excellent in terms of qualifications, energy and enthusiasm. Although the Director alone has extensive teaching experience his more junior colleagues impressed in terms of teaching and assessment methods. The overall quality of the students, as far as could be ascertained, seemed good. I have no reservations whatsoever about the academic level of the Master's Program.

Research activity by faculty must be a priority in the coming years, and joint projects both with other departments at the University of Ibadan and the private sector should be sought. The faculty have the potential, without doubt, to establish a strong research centre.

Consultancy is still at an early stage but a start has been made. It would be especially useful if contracts could be established with the private sector and with organisations in the region but outside Nigeria.

Workshops and seminars are a way of generating income as well as increasing the visibility of ARCIS in the wider community. The program of workshops planned for 1991-92, if realised, will establish ARCIS as a centre for continuing training.

The University of Ibadan supports ARCIS financially and the Director of ARCIS is active in university life. Collaboration with other departments should be pursued more vigorously. The special relationship with the Department of Library, Archival and Information Studies remains somewhat troubled despite collaboration in teaching.

The regional nature of ARCIS has yet to be achieved, save for the non-Nigerian students in receipt of IDRC bursaries. All faculty are Nigerian and no other West African country provides support for ARCIS.

The only twinning agreement in the pipeline is with the School of Library and Information Science, University of Western Ontario.

Currently IDRC is the only funding agency involved with ARCIS, although both Unesco and the Commonwealth Secretariat may offer support in 1992-93.

XVI RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That IDRC fund a Phase II for three or four years to enable ARCIS to become firmly established as a regional centre for education, training, consultancy and research in West Africa.
2. That the International Consultative Committee be convened as soon as possible.
3. That ARCIS makes all efforts to attract non-Nigerian students and that in any faculty expansion special efforts are made to hire non-Nigerians.
4. That ARCIS faculty now engage in research and publication.
5. That educational and research opportunities be more vigorously explored with other departments at the University of Ibadan.
6. That the annual enrolment in the MInfSc Program be increased in 1992 to thirty.
7. That research degree programs not be introduced until ARCIS resources (material and human) are adequate.
8. That a concerted effort be made to widen workshop, seminar, research and consultancy activities from the Nigerian to the regional sphere wherever possible.