

Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific

**ASIA-PACIFIC INFORMATION NETWORK  
IN SOCIAL SCIENCES**

**EVALUATION OF THE APINESS  
1986-1996**



**UNESCO PRINCIPAL REGIONAL OFFICE FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC  
Bangkok, 1998**

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## PREFACE

At the fourth meeting of the Regional Advisory Group (RAG) for the Asia-Pacific Information Network in Social Sciences (APINESS) which was held in Bangkok from 12-16 December 1994, member countries agreed to "...re-examine the APINESS network and its existing programmes and activities, the modalities used to assist (member) countries, as well as its structure" (RAG-IV Report: 125).

The decision to evaluate APINESS activities coincided with the tenth anniversary of the network and the realization that progress and the impact of the network has not been as envisaged when it was first established.<sup>(1)</sup> With this in mind the meeting decided that the evaluation report should:

1. Include "Consolidated APINESS/RAG evaluation reports produced by member countries – Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, People's Republic of China, Malaysia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Democratic People's Republic of Korea (Sri Lanka, Thailand and Bangladesh did not provide evaluative comments).
2. Underline the following:
  - (a) common areas: success and obstacles
  - (b) future action at national and regional levels
  - (c) proposals for future framework and structure of APINESS/RAG
3. Be critical, factual and accurate.

Dr Henry George Bernard who represented New Zealand at the RAG-IV meeting coordinated the evaluation and provided analytical comments based on the country evaluations and his personal acquaintances and experiences from working with APINESS. He fulfilled the requirements adopted by the meeting that the evaluator should:

1. be knowledgeable in social science fields and be a user of social science information and documentation;
2. have a proven track record in doing analysis and appraisal work;
3. be objective;
4. be a good communicator, keen in getting back to countries, if necessary, for further details;
5. be conversant in computer and internet-based information technologies;
6. have a good knowledge of the region;
7. be willing to incorporated and accept last-moment changes;
8. not be settled in a major industrialised country (RAG-IV Report: 131).

The Final Report was submitted to RUSHSAP in April this year and publication was delayed mainly for administrative reasons. RUSHSAP hopes to organise a meeting for all member countries to respond to the report recommendations and decide on the future of APINESS.

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<sup>(1)</sup> an informative summary of the historical development of APINESS is included in the section "History of the APINESS Project".

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AACR2	Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules 2 <sup>nd</sup> Edition
AARNET	Australian Academic Research Network
AASSREC	Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils
ACC	Arthur C. Clarke Centre
ACCIS	Advisory Committee for the Co-ordination of Information Systems (UN)
ACU	Astinfo Coordinating Unit
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AGRIASIA	A database of information on Agriculture in Asia
AGRINET	Agricultural Information Network
AGRIS	Agricultural Science
AIRC	American Information Resource Centre
ALINE	Asian Library and Information Network
ALINET	Academic Library and Information Network
AMIC	Asian Media Information and Communication Centre
APII	Asia Pacific Information Interchanges
APINESS	Asia-Pacific Information Network in Social Sciences
APINMAP	Asian and Pacific Information Network for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants
APPEAL	Asia-Pacific Programme of Education for All
APSDIN	Asian and Pacific Skill Development Information Network
ARTI	Agrarian Research and Training Institute
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
ASTINFO	Asian Science and Technology Information Network
BANSDOC	Bangladesh National Scientific & Technical Documentation Centre
BARD	Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development
BBS	Bachelor of Business Studies
BCS	Bangladesh Computer Society
BDS	Bangladesh Development Studies
BIDS	Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies
BIRCNET	Buddhist Information and Research Centre Network
BITNET	International Network
BMDC	Bangladesh Management Development Centre
BPATC	Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre
BRAC	Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee
BSSRC	Bangladesh Social Science Research Council
CAO	Commission for Asia and Oceania
CARIS	Current Agricultural Research Information System (FAO)
CARP	Council of Agriculture Research Policy
CASS	Chinese Academy of Social Sciences
CBSHS	Centre Bureau of Statistics and Indonesian Institutes of Sciences
CCCI	Chittagong Chamber of Commerce and Industry
CDS&RI	Committee on Documentation Services and Research Information
CENWOR	Centre for Women's Research
CERNET	China Education and Research Network

CHINANET	People's Republic of China Internet Network
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIDES	Centre for Information and Development Studies
CINSA	Cultural Information Network for South Asia
CINTEC	Computer & Information Technology Council
CIRDAP	Centre for Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific
CISSS	Chinese Information Society of Social Sciences
CNIC CAS	Computer Network Information Centre of the Chinese Academy of Sciences
COLA	Course on Library Automation
CPC	Communist Party of China
CRI	Crown Research Institutes
CSDI	Centre for Scientific Documentation and Information
CSIS	Centre for Strategic and International Studies
CSTNET	Chinese Science and Technology Network
DANIDA	Danish International Development Agency
DARE	Directory of Academic and Research Establishments
DBMS	Database Management System
DCCI	Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industry
DEPLIS	Distance Education Programme in Library and Information Science
DEVINSA	Development Information Network on South Asia
DEVSIS	Development Science Information Systems
DIALOG	Name of the major US host for on-line databases
DIC	Documentation and Information Centres
DIPPNG	Data-in-publication Papua New Guinea
DLIS	Department of Library and Information Studies
DOS	Disc Operating System
DS	Department of Statistic
DSIR	Department of Scientific and Industrial Research
DT	Diphtheria
DYNIX	Name of an On-line Public Access Library Catalogue System
EBSCO	Educational and Business Subscription Company
EI	Education and Information
ENLINET	Environment Library Network
EPRDME	Education Planning and Research Division of the Ministry of Education
ERIC	Educational Resources Information Centre
ERNET	Education and Research Network
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations
FAPE	Fund for Assistance to Private Education
FBCCI	Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industry
FDP	Five-year Development Plan
FES	Friedrich Ebert Stiftung
FID	Federation International for Documentation
FRST	Foundation for Research Science and Technology

FTP	File Transfer Protocol
FYP	Five-Year Plan
GBNET	Golden Bridge Network
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GED	General Economic Division
GII	Government Information Interchanges
GN	Government of Netherlands
GO	Governmental Organisation
HELLIS	Health Science, Library Literature and Information System
HR	Human Rights
I & CT	Information and Computer Technology
IBEDOCs	An UNESCO Education Database
IBIC	International Buffalo Information Centre
ICDDR'B	International Centre for Diarrhoeal Disease Research, Bangladesh
ICOMMOS	International Council of Monuments and Sites
ICSSR	Indian Council of Social Science Research
ICT	Institute of Computer Technology
IDAMS	Integrated Data and Management Software Programme (UNESCO)
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IESR	Institute for Economic and Social Research
IFLA	International Federation of Library Association and Institution
IJO	International Juridical Organisation (for Environment and Development)
ILO	International Labour Organization
INDES	Institute for National Development Studies
INFID	International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development
INFOYOUTH	Information on Youth
INMAK	International Maritime
INNESS	Information Network in Social Sciences
INNOPAC	Library Catalogue System
INSDOC	Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre
IPSK	Indonesian Perpustakaan
IPTEKNET	Indonesian Internet Network
IRD	Integrated Rural Development
IRPA	Intensified Research Priority Areas
ISBD	International Standard Bibliographic Documentation
ISBN	International Standard Book Number
ISDS	International Serials Data System
ISDS-SEA	International Scientific Documentation Service - South-East Asia
ISISS	Institute of Scientific Information in Social Sciences
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
ISPN	International Society for the Protection of Animals
ISSC	International Social Science Council
ISSN	International Standard Serial Number
IT	Information Technology

JANET	Joint Academic Network
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JOCV	Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteers
KESISU	Key Sector Information Support Project
KIWINET	Name of a host of New Zealand Data Bases
LAN	Local Area Network
LCSH	Library of Congress Subject Headings
LEARN	Lanka Educational Academic and Research Network
LGNIW	Leading Group of National Informatization Work
LIAISON	Name of a Database of Social Science Researchers and Social Science Clients
LIN	Library and Information Network
LIPI	Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia
LIS	Library and Information Science
LISA	Library and Information Science Abstracts
LISTSERV	Name of a electronic list server programme
LLG	Local Level Government
MAF	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
MERC	Malaysian Education Research Council
MIBIS	Micro-computer Based Bibliographic System
MOSTE	Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRST	Ministry of Research, Science and Technology
NACIAD	National Centre for Information on Agrarian Development
NAG	National Advisory Group
NANGO	National Association of NGOs
NARESA	Natural Resources, Energy and Science Authority
NASSDOC	National Social Science Documentation Centre
NATNET LANKA	Sri Lankan National Network
NCDC	National Capital Districts Centre
NCP	National Contact Points
NEDA	National Economic and Development Authority
NFP	National Focal Point
NFPP	National Family Planning Programme
NFSS	National Foundation of Social Sciences
NGO	non-governmental organization
NIBM	National Institute of Business Management
NIDA	National Institute of Development Administration
NIE	National Institute of Education
NII	National Information Interchanges
NIPORT	National Institute of Population Research and Training
NIPSOM	National Institute of Preventive and Social Medicine
NIS	National Informational System
NISSAT	National Information System for Science and Technology
NLA	National Library of Australia

NLDC-SEA	National Library and Documentation Centre in South-East Asia
NLM	National Library of Malaysia
NMCLASS	National Meeting for Chief Librarian in Academies of Social Sciences
NMCLPPS	National Meeting of Chief Librarians of the Provincial Party Schools
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for International Development
NPFDBM	National Population and Family Development Board Malaysia
NRCT	National Research Council of Thailand
NSSDC	National Social Science Documentation Centre
NZCER	New Zealand Council for Educational Research
NZISRD	New Zealand Institute for Social Research and Development
OMT	Order of Magnitude
OPAC	On-line Public Access Catalogue
OSHINET	Occupational Safety and Health Information Network
PAN	Pan Asia Network
PC	Participating Centre
PDII	Pusat Dokumentasi dan Informasi Ilmiah
PGI	General Information Programme
PGSF	Public Good Science Fund
PHILDHARRA	Philippine Partnership for Development of Human Resources
PIDS	Philippine Institute for Development Studies
PJPT	Indonesian Long-Term Planning Programme
PMD	Prime Minister's Department
PMU	Planning and Monitoring Unit
PNGLA	Papua New Guinea Library Association
POPIN	Population Information Network
PROAP	Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific
PROSEA	Plant Resources of South-East Asia
PSSC	Philippine Social Science Council
PULINET	Provincial University Library Network
RAG	Regional Advisory Group
R&D	Research and Development
RDA	Rural Development Administration
RIM	Research Information Management
RIP	Develop Research in Progress
RUM	Regional Universities Meeting
RUSHSAP	Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SACEP	South Asia Cooperative Environment Programme
SAREC	Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation
SDI	Selective Dissemination of Information
SEAMEO-INNOTECH	South-East Asian Ministers of Education Organization for Regional Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology
SEC	State Education Commission
SEDNAP	Socio-Economic Databanks Network for Asia and the Pacific

SEI	Sustainable Enterprise Initiative
SERU	Socio-Economic Research Unit
SHS	Social and Human Sciences
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
SISNAP	Planning Information System and Network in Asia and the Pacific Countries
SLAAS	Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science
SLCHPNET	Sri Lanka Cultural Heritage Preservation Network
SLIDA	Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration
SLSI	Sri Lanka Standards Institution
SLSTIC	Sri Lanka Scientific and Technical Information Centre
SLSTINET	Sri Lanka Scientific and Technical Information Network
SLTDP	Second Long-Term Development Plan
SOCNET	Social Science Network
SOCWIP	Social Science Work in Progress
SP	South Pacific
SPARDIN	South Pacific Regional Development Information Network
SPC	South Pacific Centre
SSDC	Social Science Documentation Centre
SP-CenCIID	South Pacific Centre for Communication and Information in Development
SSDI	Social Science Documentation and Information
SSI	Social Science Information
SSRB	Social Science Research in Bangladesh
SSRC	Social Science Research Centre
SSRFC	Social Science Research funding Committee
STI	Science and Technology Information
STN	A database host
TCDC	Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries
TCP/IP	Internet Communication Protocol
THAILINET	Thai Academic Libraries Network
THAI NATIS	Thai National Information System
TISTR	Thailand Institute of Scientific and Technological Research
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
TVE	Television Trust for the Environment
UAP	Universal Availability of Publications
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCP	United Nations Country Programme
UNCOVER	An On-line Bibliographic Database System
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESBIB	An UNESCO database
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNESDATA	An UNESCO database
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organization
UNINET	University Network
UNISIST	Universal System of Information for Science and Technology
UNITWIN	University Twinning
UPNG	University of Papua New Guinea
URL	Universal Resource Locator
US	United States
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USP	United States Patent
USSR	United of Soviet Socialist Republic
VRC	Visual Resource Centre
VRCS	Visual Resource Centres
VTLS	Virginia Institute of Technology Library System
VU	Victoria University of Wellington
WEB	World Wide Web
WHO	World Health Organization
WINAP	Women's Information Network for Asia and the Pacific
WWW	World Wide Web



## INTRODUCTION

I open this consolidated evaluation of the APINESS project with some evaluative quotes, where it has been possible to extract them, from the national evaluation reports that were submitted to RUSHSAP.

**CHINA:** “Although the initiative of setting up APINESS is very important in promoting the development of social science information services and information resources sharing in the Asia-Pacific region, yet *its influence on China’s social science information work is relatively limited*. ...APINESS should make a more practical action programme, actively implement it, and examine the result. The RAG meeting should be improved in order to make everyone know that APINESS is not a forum but a coordinator and organiser in promoting the development of social science information network in the Asia-Pacific region.”

To this should be added the comments of the representative from the People’s Republic of China at RAG IV: “...the representative of China welcomed the proposal [to evaluate APINESS] as she had felt somewhat sceptical of APINESS’s achievements to date” {UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific 1997: 17}.

**INDIA:** “The objectives of the APINESS as formulated in the first Expert Group meeting held in 1985 have mostly remained unchanged. In the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of APINESS these objectives were all right. But at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we have to modify some of them for making these objectives more useful in the light of latest development in the information and communication technologies in providing information services...”

In various RAG meetings most of the NCP have submitted proposals for undertaking bibliographical and documentation activities either at national level, bilateral or at regional level. Some of these proposals were really well conceived and well developed, however, because of lack of adequate response from APINESS and UNESCO and even other funding agencies, even some good proposals could not take-off because of non-availability of adequate support in term of resources.”

**INDONESIA:** “Learning from the experience of ASTINFO there should be a strong personality at the regional level who will administer APINESS. Regional training courses should be held from time to time... APINESS should have one or several common projects...”

**DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF KOREA:** “..it is desired that the APINESS pays more attention to the national social science information network of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, which is a member of APINESS, and gives financial and material support to the network.”

**MALAYSIA:** “The National Library of Malaysia feels a new approach to the exchange mechanism of information needs to be established if APINESS programme is to continue. *It should no longer exist in the present set up.*”

**NEW ZEALAND:** “If the recommendations suggested in this evaluation are implemented, New Zealand could still participate in the project with benefit to itself and to other participating countries. *It is certainly the case that continued participation under the present framework would seem to be of little benefit to anyone.*”

**PAPUA NEW GUINEA:** “There has been welcome impact nationally. However, *regional activities have been, despite the best endeavours, minimal* – especially in recent years. This is a reflection of the weakness of APINESS as a ‘network’ rather than there being an absence of need or of expertise that could be shared. This is one major area for consideration in the evaluation, otherwise other networks will supersede APINESS.”

**PHILIPPINES:** “The foregoing accounts suggests that *[there has been] little progress in the implementation of APINESS in the Philippines...* The PSSC has been able to maintain its role as an information centre for the social sciences in the Philippines utilising existing programmes and infrastructures. Because APINESS at the regional level remains a loose network however, PSSC has not been able to use APINESS to further institutionalise its linkages with other national networks in the region.”

**BANGLADESH:** No evaluative comments offered.

**SRI LANKA:** No evaluative comments offered.

**THAILAND:** No evaluative comments offered.

This is an interesting mixture of evaluations of APINESS: from a range of countries that do not offer any comments, to those who offer fairly complementary evaluations, to yet others that offer quite critical evaluations. These reflect the different experiences of APINESS in each of the member countries. It will be the task of this consolidated report to sift through all the materials, including the specially commissioned national evaluations, to arrive at some kind of overview and synthesis of the evaluations and to make recommendations for future action.

Evaluation of a project as wide ranging as APINESS is fraught with difficulties. The fact that any particular participant has *not* been impressed by APINESS or has been *very* impressed by it should not be taken as a comment on the project as a whole. In order to do a holistic evaluation one needs to take up one of two almost impossible positions: firstly, one which is based on the diverse experiences of the project of its participants simultaneously; secondly, one which is ‘objective’ and based on its real achievements. Neither position is completely achievable but this report will try to take up a position that incorporates both – i.e. an internal viewpoint and an external one.

## Sources

The sources for this evaluation are the following:

- (a) a series of specially commissioned evaluation reports produced by eleven member countries.
- (b) The reports of the four RAG meetings held since the inception of APINESS, the report of the inaugural meeting and the APINESS newsletters.
- (c) The experience of the consultant's participation in RAG III and IV including the extensive discussion at the last meeting centred on the evaluation project.

In addition to these primary sources a number of other publications have proved useful in this exercise. One of these deserves particular mention: the ASTINFO evaluation report published in 1991. Though the methodology of this APINESS evaluation is quite different from that of the ASTINFO evaluation (the latter relied on a questionnaire technique whereas APINESS has quite explicitly adopted a more discursive approach to the collation of information) and though the experiences of the two projects by member countries are different, nevertheless there are useful parallels between the two projects and their respective evaluations.

One of the key differences between the two projects is linked to differences in the kinds of information that both networks try to serve. Whereas, in general, science information is more 'universal', social science information is much more nation or culture specific. This has profound implications for both supply and demand for the two kinds of information. The Indian evaluation report draws attention this: "Users interest in Social Science Information (SSI) are usually restricted to local (country wide, regional) information only. This is in sharp contrast to the Science and Technology Information (STI), the users of which cannot do without accessing the global information base" (Indian evaluation report). Thus, only a few social scientists in New Zealand are interested in India and social science information emanating from there and only a few Indian social scientists are interested in New Zealand. This is a simple fact of life in the social sciences. This contrasts with the interest of say chemists who are not too concerned about the national site of origin of information so long as they can be assured of its reliability.

This issue goes to the heart of the 'demand' side of a network like APINESS and may well be at the bottom of the developments relating to the 'supply' side which APINESS itself represents.

## History of the APINESS Project

This section of the report is based on the materials from the national evaluations and from the various reports produced during the course of the APINESS project. It should be seen as partly fulfilling the first of the bulleted points of the second clause of the Terms of Reference above.

## Prehistory

The APINESS project has both a general and a specific 'prehistory'. Speaking generally, the immediate prehistory of the project lies in the scientific research climate leading up to the early eighties. The late sixties and early seventies were a period which saw an unprecedented increase in the growth

of social scientific research and an exponential increase in the number of documents produced from such research. A large number of journals and working papers series were created in this period and a culture of report writing was established. This whole process has gone on apace with increasing momentum in the years since. This was also, fortunately, a period which saw the beginnings of the exponential growth in the development of information databases as computers increasingly became recognised as communication and storage devices rather than just calculating devices. Until the late seventies, computers were seen as being the domain of either big business – for the management of payroll and other complex billing systems – or, more commonly, the preserve of the lab-coated scientist seeking to resolve complex calculations. Then, in the late seventies and early eighties, with the development of large database organisations such as DIALOG in the United States, computers began to be seen as devices that allowed one to communicate with other computers to extract information from them. This was just as well as the developments on the document production side had grown to the point where, without the assistance of information databases, chaos threatened to reign. It is enough to compare the volumes of the early years of such an index as the Social Science Citation Index with the volumes of more recent years and its CD-ROM based versions to get a sense both of the huge growth in the sheer volume of documentation being produced and also a sense of the huge transformations that have occurred in the management of it.

It is clear that those involved at the inauguration of the APINESS project were well aware of the fact that it was these developments that provided the backdrop against which the project was conceived and brought into existence. In his inaugural address to the participants gathered at the first meeting to launch the project, the Assistant Director-General for Coordination of UNESCO Activities in Asia and the Pacific, Dr. Makaminan Makagiansar, pointed out that the number of books published between 1965 and 1974 had almost doubled and that about “8 to 10 million scientific and technical documents are published every year” (UNESCO Regional Expert Meeting on the APINESS, 1986: 44).

Concerns amongst information specialists about the burgeoning literature saw them give more and more attention to the possibility of exploiting network relationships for its management and control at all levels: at the level of information databases; at the level of acquisitions; at the level of exchange and resource sharing. Thus, for example, at the conclusion of a detailed and rigorous survey of the information needs of social scientists in the United States in the 1980s, focussing on the disciplines of Anthropology, Economics, Political Science, Psychology and Sociology and carried out by the Research Library Group as part of their Programme for Research Information Management, the authors of the study conclude that “many of the needs identified call for making information available on a ‘national network’.” (Gould and Handler, 1989: 53) It is noticeable that Education is missing from this list of disciplines and with good reason: one of the most successful examples of the effectiveness of networking in a discipline close to if not ‘of’ the social sciences is ERIC, the US network of Clearinghouses set up to control the huge literature in Education in the United States and elsewhere. This network has appealed to the imagination of a number of information workers in the social sciences though, as yet, no other social science discipline has managed to emulate it.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Educational Resources Information Centre (ERIC) was established in 1966 and recently celebrated its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It consists of a set of linked ‘Clearing Houses’ each of which has duties for a specialised area of the field of education. These clearing houses collect, abstract, and index the materials relating to their specialised area and add them to the comprehensive ERIC database. To the network of clearing houses, based mainly at Universities but centred on the National Library of Education, are a series of adjunct clearing houses that cover even more specialised fields of education. The whole system is supported by the US National Library of Education, the US Department of Education, and the US Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

We can continue to draw on the Gould and Handler report to help us understand the general context in which the APINESS project developed. In addition to pointing to the need to establish a 'national network' to meet the information needs of social scientists, Gould and Handler go on to add almost immediately that "opportunities for sharing information internationally will become increasingly compelling as more information becomes available in machine-readable form and links to networks in other continents multiply." (ibid: 52) It is this sense of a need for international networks that, I believe, lies at the back of the developments of APINESS.

However, another dimension of the climate of that period needs to be understood for an appreciation of the motivations underlying the creation of the APINESS project: the sense of the marginalisation of the social sciences in the field of sciences in general. There is a hierarchy of sciences even amongst the natural sciences with theoretical physics and molecular biology holding the current limelight. But the hierarchy is even more pronounced if one includes the social sciences (which have their own internal hierarchy as well from Economics and Psychology on the one hand to such marginalised fields as Sociology on the other). The social sciences as a whole have been significantly neglected and marginalised and this neglect and marginalisation has extended to the area of information documentation.

It is in the light of this latter dimension of the general climate that we must note the existence of another network on which the APINESS project was explicitly modelled: ASTINFO – short for the Regional Network for the Exchange of Information and Experiences in Science and Technology in Asia and the Pacific. This UNESCO cooperative project was established in 1983 and emerged as a consequence of recommendations made at a high level meeting of Science Ministers in Manila in 1982. Its objectives, according to its own publicity, are as follows: "(a) Developing appropriate information policies to guide the overall progress of national information infrastructures and services in support of national development plans and programmes; (b) Stimulate and promote the creation of non-bibliographic databases in science and technology; (c) Improving the education and training of human resources to support information programmes and activities; (d) Increasing awareness and use of information by vigorously promoting and marketing existing information systems and services and providing training in their use; (e) Strengthening at least one selected institution in each Member State to become an effective national coordination mechanism (ASTINFO Coordination Unit) for the programme; (f) Introducing new and innovative information services in order to gradually mainstream in the national development process and enable active involvement of other library and information services; (g) Developing the technical and organisational basis for cross-border exchange of data and sharing of information processing facilities and other information resources." (<http://www.inet.co.th/cyberclub/dtorrij/ast.html>; See also <http://www.education.unesco.org/proap/new/astinfo.htm>). That this network was very much at the forefront of the minds of those involved in initiating the APINESS project is made clear by the prominent role it played in the report of the first inaugural meeting of APINESS.

At the inaugural meeting of the APINESS project, the Deputy Secretary-General of the Thailand National Commission for UNESCO, Mrs. Savitri Suwanasathit, spoke of the fact that a "regional organisation for information and documentation in social sciences" had been mooted at the sixth Regional Conference of the National Commissions for UNESCO in Asia and Pacific in 1975. And even earlier than that, in 1973, at the First Asian Conference on Teaching and Research in Social Sciences organised by UNESCO, when the formation of an Association of Social Science Research was advanced. One

of the themes of that conference was the need to promote the exchange of information amongst countries of the region.

However, planning for the project only began a decade later in 1983. UNESCO, with the assistance of the Institute of Library Sciences of the University of the Philippines, organised a seminar on information sources, systems and services in the social sciences in the Asian Region. One of the 19 recommendations that emerged from this seminar urged the UNESCO Regional Unit for the Social and Human Sciences in the Asian-Pacific Region (RUSHSAP) to “extend its activities to include promotion of regional documentation and information services and assist national centres in strengthening and consolidating their activities” (UNESCO Regional Expert Meeting on the APINESS, 1986: 50). This seminar also provided the materials for the first set of country reports relating to the social science information infrastructure of eleven countries of the region.

To implement the recommendation referred to above, UNESCO RUSHSAP commissioned the director of the 1983 seminar, Dean Ursula Picache, to carry out a feasibility study for the establishment of a regional social science information network. This was duly carried out. Dr. Picache visited a number of countries of the region and then presented her report to all the national commissions in the region as well as to the member councils of AASSREC “for their comments and expressions of interest in joining the network” (ibid: 50). The report described the existing information infrastructure of countries of the region and drew attention to the “asymmetrical development” of these infrastructures: some countries were highly developed and others were not.

The report was tabled at the sixth General Conference of AASSREC in Bali, Indonesia in 1985 and was further discussed by the Executive Council Meeting of that Association in February 1986. At this latter meeting AASSREC decided to collaborate with UNESCO to establish the regional network and to organise the inaugural meeting which would launch the project. This then ends the ‘prehistorical’ phase of the project.

### **Beginnings**

RUSHSAP approached member councils of AASSREC and the UNESCO national commissions of the region to nominate delegates for the inaugural meeting of the network. There were 38 member states of PROAP and 16 of these (highlighted in the list below) sent delegates:

<b>Afghanistan</b>	<b>Indonesia</b>	<b>Nauru</b>	<b>Sri Lanka</b>
<b>Australia</b>	Iran	<b>Nepal</b>	<b>Thailand</b>
<b>Bangladesh</b>	Japan	<b>New Zealand</b>	Tonga
Bhutan	Kiribati	Niue	<b>Turkey</b>
Cambodia	Lao People’s Democratic Republic	<b>Pakistan</b>	USSR
<b>China</b>	<b>Malaysia</b>	Papua New Guinea	Vanuatu
Cooks Islands	Maldives	<b>Philippines</b>	<b>Viet Nam</b>
<b>Democratic People’s Republic of Korea</b>	Marshall Islands	<b>Republic of Korea</b>	

Fiji	Mongolia	Samoa
<b>India</b>	Myanmar	Solomon Islands

Also attending the inaugural meeting were representatives of a number of already existing regional organisations and networks: **ASTINFO**, **AMIC**, **SEDNAP** and **AASSREC**, and there were a number of observers. Details of those attending the inaugural meeting can be obtained from the report of that meeting (UNESCO Regional Expert Meeting on the APINESS, 1986).

The inaugural meeting was held in Bangkok between the 12<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> May, 1986. The agenda for the meeting had been prepared by **RUSHSAP** and was subject to an adoption process at the beginning of the substantive part of the meeting. The substantive part of the meetings was in five parts: (a) A briefing by Dr. Picache based on her feasibility study and a presentation by **RUSHSAP** of a proposed structure for the project; (b) Brief presentations of country 'situations'; (c) Discussion of the proposed structure and how it could be implemented; (d) Examination of proposed activities for the network through both general discussion and workshops; (e) Finally session to draw together the workshop proceedings and other discussions into a report for adoption. It is important to note the structure of the agenda and its contents because it provided the model for the other meetings that were organised to promote the project.

I will elaborate some aspects of the substantive dimensions of this meeting in later sections of this report. It is important to note that the meeting concluded with a list of 17 'Conclusions and Recommendations'. These were as follows (I have abbreviated some of them):

1. A statement of appreciation of the efforts of UNESCO in particular but also **AASSREC** in setting up the regional network.
2. A proposal that the countries that had expressed an interest in joining APINESS take the necessary steps in order to provide the local frameworks for the network: indicating National Contact Points, setting up National Advisory Groups, and establishing a network of national participating centres. The regional networks of **AMIC**, **ESCAP** and **WHO** would link up with APINESS once the network was in place.
3. The representatives of the NCPs, the regional organisations joining APINESS, and the representatives of **AASSREC** and **ASTINFO** would constitute the APINESS Regional Advisory Group (RAG).
4. A statement that the inaugural meeting should be regarded as the first meeting of the RAG and that the proposed activities be adopted until the next RAG meeting in two years time.
5. **RUSHSAP** was invited to be the secretariat for APINESS. It was suggested that an 'Associate Expert' such as existed for **ASTINFO** be appointed for APINESS.
6. A welcome to the offer of support and collaboration by **ASTINFO**.
7. A request that the report of the inauguration of APINESS be assigned to the agenda of a forthcoming meeting of UNESCO's Inter-governmental Council for PGI (the General Information Programme: see <http://www.inet.co.th/cyberclub/dtorrij/>) and a request that the Council support the activities of APINESS.

8. A request that UNESCO's Sector for Social and Human Sciences "make adequate provision in the next biennium for APINESS activities.
9. A expression of concern that UNDP (United Nations Development Programme; See <http://www.undp.org/>) had dropped its project on 'Regional Cooperation in Social Sciences for Development' and an expression of hope that, in the light of support for APINESS, that the UNDP would reconsider its position on this matter.
10. A recommendation that UNESCO's General Information Programme Division sponsor a Regional Seminar on vocabulary control under the auspices of ASTINFO-APINESS.
11. UNESCO General Information Programme to make available a range of materials to all APINESS members.
12. A recommendation that training and refresher courses in data banking, documentation and information handling be organised at the national level.
13. An endorsement of the idea that there be sensitization seminars for policy makers and other users of social science data.
14. An invitation to NCPs of APINESS to approach relevant authorities in their home countries to request that social science information exchanges, etc. be written into relevant bilateral agreements signed by their Governments.
15. A recommendation that the International Development Research Centre (IDRC; See [http://www.idrc.ca/index\\_e.html](http://www.idrc.ca/index_e.html) for the main office and <http://www.idrc.org.sg/> for the Asia office) be approached for funds to support a range of APINESS activities: (a) the collection of national materials by NCPs; (b) provision and promotion of the use of computer facilities for information exchange; (c) training; (d) publications of joint bibliographies; (e) provision of equipment for members who needed them to participate in the network.
16. The meeting welcomed the following offers from the respective bodies:

ICSSR: (a) to bring out the APINESS newsletter; (b) to provide facilities for the discussion of the preparation of a directory of indigenous concepts (An ISSC project); (c) to put participating members of APINESS on the mailing list of NASSDOC; (d) to provide training facilities on documentation to other countries of the region; (e) to distribute literature received from abroad.

SEDNAP: to add the names of APINESS members to its mailing list

AMIC: (a) to add the names of APINESS members to its mailing list; (b) to serve as the regional focal point for documentation in the field of Mass Communication.

ESCAP: (a) to serve as the regional focal point for information exchange in the field of social and economic development; (b) to include APINESS input in the newsletter of ACCIS.



And the final recommendation which was more formally presented and which I quote in full from the report of the meeting:

17. "The Meeting wishes to make the following recommendation to the Director-General of UNESCO:

*Considering that*

- ASTINFO and APINESS have identical objectives of facilitating and improving the exchange and sharing of information, data and experiences within and among countries of the Asia-Pacific region;
- both network projects have been initiated and supported by UNESCO in collaboration with Member States and organisations in the Asia-Pacific region.

*Taking note of the fact that*

The Division of the General Information Programme (PGI) has activities, programmes and projects especially within the ASTINFO framework to assist and develop social science information centres and libraries, for instance, assistance is provided to national, University and academic resource centres and libraries, archives, and data for development services; the activities to improve document accessibility and availability under the Universal Availability of Publications (UAP) project for the region; the seminars, workshops and training courses for information handling in general, etc.

Also in view of the fact that some of national coordinating agencies and associated/participating centres are common both to ASTINFO and APINESS.

*Appreciating that*

- (i) in project and mission oriented activities and research users need information and data of an inter-disciplinary and inter-sectoral nature;
- (ii) available resources should be pooled, conserved and optimally used by avoiding unnecessary duplication of programmes, projects and activities at the international, regional, and national levels.

*Strongly urges UNESCO to*

- (i) consider APINESS as a specialised network for the social sciences in the **ASTINFO** framework;
- (ii) make available additional financial allocations to implement APINESS activities and programmes; and
- (iii) establish, as soon as possible, appropriate mechanisms to coordinate activities of PGI, and SHS (RUSHSAP) to facilitate the rapid implementation of APINESS programmes and activities."

I have highlighted the presence of ASTINFO in the conclusions of the report in order to draw attention to the presence it must obviously have had in the thoughts of those originating this project. It is clear that APINESS was conceived of as working within the ASTINFO framework in order to further the cause of the social sciences.

In addition to those conclusions and recommendations, the meeting outlined a nine point action programme which is detailed on page 35.

It will be useful for the purposes of this evaluation to measure the achievements of the following two or three years against these proposals. It should be noted as a preliminary assessment that, in hindsight, it would appear that this action programme was perhaps a little over ambitious. It should also be noted that there is a hiatus between the action programme proposed for APINESS at the meeting and the conclusions and recommendations coming from the meeting: the almost complete absence of any mention of ASTINFO in the former as compared to the latter, in spite of the fact that one of the conclusions quite explicitly makes reference to the need to see APINESS as a specialised network within the ASTINFO framework.

### **1986-1988**

The question arises, from both a historical point of view and an evaluation point of view, as to what happened in the approximately two year interim between the inaugural meeting of APINESS in May 1986 and the first meeting of the Regional Advisory Group in September 1988. What happened in relation to both the conclusions and recommendations and the action programme enunciated at the inaugural meeting?

The first item that must be noted is that nothing further was contributed to the project by three of the countries that sent delegates to the inaugural meeting: Nepal, Pakistan and Turkey. It should also be noted that the contributions and views of Viet Nam received a serious set back by the tragic death in a plane crash of their representative to the first formal meeting of the APINESS Regional Advisory Group in 1986.

It should also be noted, and this is very important, that it is quite difficult to disentangle or disaggregate many activities in terms of whether they would have taken place regardless of the APINESS project initiative. Thus for example, the evaluation report from Bangladesh makes the point explicitly in these terms:

“It may be mentioned here that from the inception of the Bangladesh Social Science Research Council as national coordination body of the Government of the People’s Republic of Bangladesh, this council have been engaged in almost the similar related activities.”

*It goes on to add, however, that*

“... with the establishment of APINESS network in Bangladesh, the activities of the council got momentum.”

Another interesting example to note is that the National Advisory Group of APINESS in India is none other than the ICSSR's Committee on Documentation Services and Information. Thus any activity of the latter can easily have the label APINESS attached to it to turn it into an APINESS activity. Hence, the various training courses and workshops organised by the Committee can be forwarded as APINESS activities even if the participants themselves are only dimly aware of the notion of APINESS.

Similarly, the evaluation study from Malaysia reports that "attempts to set up the National Advisory Group was perceived as not urgent since the UNESCO Sub-committee on Social Sciences was already doing this function."

It will be one of the suggestions of this report that a number of activities ascribed to APINESS were in fact activities that would have occurred in any event and had an APINESS label attached to them *after the event*. It is a moot point as to whether APINESS was ever meant to be additional to already existing structures and activities but it is a serious question then what difference the project has made.

*Let us focus on structural issues first*

Following the inaugural meeting the countries attending that meeting (with the exceptions noted above) proceeded to implement the regional/national dimensions of the APINESS framework. This process involved, as a first step, either the nomination of a National Contact Point or the endorsement of one which had already been nominated. Thus, for example, for the Philippines the Philippine Social Science Council had been nominated the National Contact Point at its Consultative meeting held in April prior to the inaugural APINESS meeting in May. For other countries the choice was obvious: India already had a well established central node to its pre-existing national social science information infrastructure in the form of the National Social Science Documentation Centre of the Indian Council of Social Science Research.

This period saw the nomination of National Contact Points for a number of countries. The process by which these NCPs were nominated and the timing of their nomination varied considerably. According to the original ideas concerning implementation of the network framework the nomination of NCP was to be followed by the establishment of National Advisory Groups. This happened in some cases and not in others. Thus, in the case of Australia, the National Library of Australia nominated itself the APINESS NCP at the inaugural meeting but never ever convened a National Advisory Group. New Zealand convened a meeting of a National Advisory Group in late 1986 at which the National Library of New Zealand was nominated the NCP. This was the first and last meeting of New Zealand's NAG. Malaysia nominated the National Library of Malaysia as the NCP but did not establish a NAG as it was not perceived as a necessity because the "UNESCO Sub-committee on Social Sciences was already doing this function". The chart below gives an outline of the achievements in relation to the structural objective of nominating NCPs and establishing NAGs by member countries that have contributed to this evaluation and Australia as well.

	NCP & Date of nomination	NAG date of establishment number of meetings between May 86 and Sept. 88
Australia	Nat. Lib., May 86	None
Bangladesh	BSSRC, March 87	Unclear but probably once
China	CASS	None
Democratic People's Republic of Korea	SSIRI, unclear	Unclear
India	NASSDOC, 1986	Functions performed by ICSSR's Com. on Doc. Services and Information.
Indonesia	CSDI, 1986	None (see country report)
Malaysia	Nat. Lib., 1987	None [Functions vaguely performed by SS subcommittee of Nat. Commission for UNESCO]
New Zealand	Nat. Lib., 1986	Late 1986, (1) [1 <sup>st</sup> and last]
Papua New Guinea	UnivPNG, 1990	Regular meetings since Nov. 1990
Philippines	PSSC, 1986	Aug. 1988, (1) [1 <sup>st</sup> and last]
Sri Lanka	SSDIC, Nat. Lib., 1986	1987, 6 meetings (see report)
Thailand	NRCT, 1986	UNISIST Committee, unclear

It is clear from this chart that the nomination of National Contact Points was a fairly straightforward activity but the establishment and maintenance of National Advisory Groups was fraught with difficulties and was largely unsuccessful for most countries. The exception were those countries that could assimilate their NAGs to already existing groups. Thus, in the case of India, NAG was a label tagged on to the already existing ICSSR Committee on Documentation Services and Research Information. Given that naming an institution as a National Contact Point is not, in itself, much of an achievement and that it is the creation and maintenance of a vigorous advisory group that is the true measure of success of these structural objectives it could be argued that APINESS was largely unsuccessful, at the regional level, at achieving these structural objectives.

### 1988-1990

In September 1988 the First Regional Advisory Group meeting was held in Bangkok over a period of a week. At this meeting there were 11 country participants and a number of observers from various organisations and an observer from the USSR. It should be noted that the Republic of Korea did not participate at this meeting but that the meeting saw the first participation of Western Samoa.

At the meeting a set of 'country reports' were presented outlining the state of the art of social science infrastructure in each country and outlining its hopes for APINESS. A number of organisations also presented reports: in particular, it is worth noting that ASTINFO presented a separate report at this meeting.

The meeting devoted a session to suggestions, recommendations and proposals for the future. The substantive recommendations and proposals were as follows:

1. The cooption of representatives from ASTINFO into the NAGs of APINESS
2. The cooption of representatives from such groups as AMIC, WINAP, WHO etc. into NAGs.
3. Member countries to regularly supply RUSHSAP with core reference materials so that a regional collection could be built up.
4. Member country NAGs to develop a programme for action for the next 3-4 years and send copies to RUSHSAP by Dec. 1988 so that RUSHSAP could compile them and make suitable proposals for inclusion in UNESCO's programme and budget for the coming biennium.
5. NAGs to liaise with appropriate ministries in their governments to explore possibilities for UNDP projects.
6. The meeting recommended the adoption of the TCDC modality for APINESS activities as this could form the basis for access to support from various sources.
7. Organisation of regional training courses in the areas of information technology, machine readable databases, document delivery services, and abstracting and translation services.
8. Organisation of a regional meeting to review and discuss the use of thesauri.
9. Member countries urged to supply materials to NASSDOC for inclusion in newsletter on a regular basis.
10. The meeting urged UNESCO to organise meetings that brought users and providers of social science information services together.

Reading the report of the meeting in the light of a full ten years of experience of APINESS one has the sense that this meeting of RAG was a 'holding' operation. There is no report of any particularly substantive development in relation to APINESS. In fact, one gets the sense that the project is already coasting: there seems little energy in it. The somewhat plaintive call for member country to at least provide materials for the newsletter on a regular basis gives a particularly poignant basis for this sense. The very short chapter of the meeting devoted to the review of practical developments in relation to APINESS also highlights this.

The report of the meeting also includes a chapter devoted to a 'review and appraisal of APINESS framework'. It is not an appraisal in the strict sense of the term: no cost/benefit analysis was entered into and no rigorous critique was undertaken. Rather it revisited the structure of APINESS and presented, once again, the possibilities for the future development of the APINESS 'framework'. In fact the review could more appropriately have been called an action programme as it reiterated the goals of APINESS and suggested various activities the network could undertake. The tone of this chapter of the RAG report is, like much APINESS discussion of progress, exhortative, urging participants to a more energetic participation in the project.

Following the meeting the participants returned to their respective countries and we need to now address what actually happened in the following two years till the next meeting.

The newsletter continued to be produced on a regular basis. NASSDOCs commitment to it should be strongly congratulated for it is clear that the level of involvement by other participating countries was minimal at best and non-existent in many cases. If APINESS members could develop enough energy to make minimally significant contributions to their newsletter then there was little hope in relation to the aspirations for the rest of APINESS and its activities.

Two regional seminars were held. It is suggested by the report of the second RAG meeting that these were APINESS activities. The first, on numeric/factual data handling, was held on 12-16 February 1990 in Malaysia and the second was held in India between 19-26 February 1990 and was devoted to the creation and use of machine readable databases in social sciences.

The first of these is a particularly good example of one of the theses of this evaluation: that the APINESS label has tended to be attached *post-facto* to events which are quite otherwise in their origins. This particular meeting was included in the second RAG report as an APINESS activity but was obviously only construed as such for the purposes of the RAG meeting because it was not felt that it was an APINESS project at the time it occurred – it does not even merit a mention in the APINESS newsletter. The second of the events does feature in the APINESS newsletter but it is clear from the report that this was fundamentally a UNESCO-ICSSR project which would have been supported regardless of the existence of APINESS.

To sum up, the clear impression one derives is that APINESS exists as an idea in the consciousness of participating members for the duration of the Regional Advisory Group meetings but fades very rapidly thereafter. It has an 'ideal' existence but not a 'real' one.

#### **1990-1994**

We can deal with this period in a more summary form. A study of the national evaluation reports as well as the reports of the third and fourth RAG meetings indicates clearly that the problems that have beset APINESS from its inception have persisted. The lack of energy and commitment to the project by most member countries is clear. The exceptions are striking: India, Sri Lanka and, to some extent, Thailand have all been more active in furthering the project. For the rest there has been lack of direction and leadership.

This should not be read as criticisms of member countries but point to serious problems in the conception and execution of the project at a more collective level. This is addressed in later sections of this report.

#### **1994-1997**

It is clear that this sense of serious problems besetting the project underlay the commitment to this evaluation process. The last meeting of the RAG gave a clear signal to a rigorous and critical evaluation project of which the country report and this consolidated report are the outcome. The evaluation project afforded a serious stocktaking of the project as a whole and is critical to its future.

## General Evaluation of APINESS

In the country reports included in this consolidated report evaluations of the APINESS project from the point of view of a number of member countries will be found. Not all long standing members of the project submitted a report and, consequently, it is not possible to get a complete sense of the way the project was judged by the membership as a whole. But, nevertheless, the reports that are included give a wide range of views on APINESS.

Evaluation can take place at a number of levels and in a number of ways. This section of the consolidated report will not seek to traverse the same ground as the country reports at the national levels. Readers are referred to the section containing edited versions of these reports to get a sense of the way APINESS worked at the national level of member countries. Each of the reports is prefaced by a preamble which points to the main features and findings of the country reports.

This section will focus, rather, on the general framework and in particular on the regional level of APINESS. The report from Papua New Guinea says: "This [the regional level] is one major area for consideration in the evaluation, otherwise other networks will supersede APINESS". The clear implication of this is that, in the final analysis, the regional level is probably the most crucial dimension of the evaluation because whether APINESS is a success or not will ultimately be judged at this level. The very name of the project implies it.

However, even if we adopt a regional focus the evaluation could still be done in a number of different ways. In this report, two methods will be employed: the first will focus on evaluating the original objectives of APINESS in the abstract. The fundamental question here will be: Were the original objectives defined in a reasonable way: put simply, were the original objectives achievable? Hindsight, as they say, has 20/20 vision and we will have to guard against it. But it is still possible, I believe, to evaluate the original objectives in this way.

The second method is to accept the original objectives and then to ask to what degree the implementation of the project fulfilled the objectives in the following decade. To some extent, the historical overview provided in the previous section has already covered this ground. The task here will be to tackle the question more systematically than historically. This method is the one referred to in the original, unmodified, evaluation proposal that was discussed at RAG IV in Bangkok in 1994 which stated: "In the second phase, attempts will be made to ascertain how effective the network has been in achieving the programme of action it set for itself at the inception meeting in 1986, including assessing the outcomes of the activities undertaken and to what extent all recommendations devised along the years have been implemented." {UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. Regional Unit of Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific 1997: 126}.

It should be noted that APINESS has been 'reviewed' (as opposed to 'evaluated') on a fairly regular basis at each Regional Advisory Group meeting. These reviews consisted of reports from member countries on activities either directly connected with APINESS or with activities which may be of interest to APINESS members.

Furthermore, on one occasion, at the first meeting of RAG, an attempt was also made at an 'appraisal' but this consisted, in the event, of a discussion of a model of networking and was not an appraisal in the true sense of that term.

## Evaluations

In order to carry out evaluations using either method, however, the first step is to rehearse the major principles, framework and action programme for APINESS. These have been stated before<sup>2</sup> elsewhere but are specially necessary here.

### 1. Major Principles

*The major principles guiding APINESS are the following:*

1. The network should be a mechanism for breaking information-isolation and for helping develop adequate infrastructures at the national level;
2. The concept of network, in this instance, should be defined as an inter-institutional arrangement and not as a synonym for a supra-national centre;
3. The National Contact Point (NCP) of each participating country should be seen as a centre with its own circle of interactions guided by the commonality of interests and patterns of priorities;
4. Asymmetry in institutional frameworks at the national level will imply that no single model can be prescribed but that each country should decide for itself its priorities for development of information infrastructures;
5. Asymmetry in levels of development at the national level will imply that some activity at the regional level may be required to coordinate initiatives by network participants to assist countries;
6. The main guiding principle at this stage should be decentralisation. The network should promote a system of linkages nationally, regionally and internationally and try to identify existing national centres that can add a regional dimension for certain specialised activities;
7. The network programme should proceed step by step from the rudiments of cross-country cooperation that exist currently along the lines of TCDC and in those areas which do not require investment of huge sums of money; and
8. The raising of resources should be encouraged not only through cooperation among participants of the network by sharing for mutual benefit, but also by developing specific and general proposals for funding by agencies and associating with existing agencies which already have relevant infrastructures and which support the network's objectives.

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<sup>2</sup> See {UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. Regional Unit of Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific 1997: 25-32; UNESCO Regional Advisory Group of the Asia-Pacific Information Network in Social Science (APINESS/RAG). 1989: 29-31; UNESCO Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. Regional Unit of Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific 1993: 36-50; UNESCO Regional Advisory Group of the Asian-Pacific Information Network in Social Science (APINESS/RAG) 1991: 30-34; UNESCO Regional Expert Meeting on the Asia-Pacific Information Network in Social Sciences 1986: 24-28}.



## 2. APINESS framework

### *At the national level*

1. The National Contact Point (NCP): an institution at a high level responsible for facilitation of APINESS programmes and activities, for liaison with other information agencies of every kind, and for the secretariat of the National Advisory Group (NAG).
2. The NCP Representative: a senior officer looking after APINESS activities.
3. The National Advisory Group (NAG): to assist and advise NCP in the discharge of its duties, and to ensure that the NCP submits proposals to UNESCO by October-November, for the following year's activities.
4. The main NCP functions and activities: promotion and monitoring of the network's development at the national level; participation in APINESS regional activities; and innovation in developing policies, programmes, means and mechanisms designed to accelerate the establishment process of a cooperative information network in the region. Furthermore each NCP shall:
  - Promote the APINESS concept at a national level with a view to eliciting cooperation in APINESS activities;
  - Liaise with other institutions (governmental and non-governmental) in order to facilitate the implementation of the APINESS project; assist in the development of the national network components of the regional network; and ensure the support of national delegations for the project in the regional conferences of Ministers and appropriate regional meetings on information;
  - Coordinate, stimulate and monitor the progress of the implementation of APINESS;
  - Collaborate with UNESCO on any subject related to APINESS, such as information, surveys, applications of APINESS/RAG related recommendations and decisions, etc.;
  - Identify participating centres at the national level (profile and submission to UNESCO);
  - Provide for the referral, within the country, of enquiries coming from other countries of the region and dealing with information sources, systems services, computer facilities, and other activities which concern libraries and information processing;
  - Help identify and mobilize financial resources for the network project;
  - Prepare and publish newsletter on APINESS related activities in the country or the region;
  - Develop means and methods for information exchange between APINESS and information networks in other parts of the world;
5. The Participating Centres (PCs): centres working closely with the NAG and the NCP.

*At the regional level*

1. The Regional Advisory Group (RAG): Representatives of NCPs and other regional organisations that join APINESS and representatives of AASSREC and ASTINFO will constitute the APINESS Regional Advisory Group (APINESS/RAG)

Occasional meetings to review operations of the network and confirm or amend network priorities and action programmes. The range of activities of RAG at the regional level could eventually be as broad as, and similar to, those of each NCP as listed below.

2. The APINESS Secretariat: Its functions and activities are to:
  - Provide secretarial services to NCPs and other members of APINESS to facilitate network activities at the regional level (meetings, distribution of network information and reports);
  - Handle the administration of the network's affairs at regional level and liaison with international agencies and the National Commissions of UNESCO.
  - Develop information services for the network.

3. *Action Programme for APINESS*

It should be noted that, in addition to the action programme developed at the inaugural meeting of APINESS, each of the first three meetings of the Regional Advisory Group following the inaugural meeting added to and modified the action programme. The list of activities suggested for APINESS is therefore quite long. I have focussed on those actions specified for APINESS rather than those recommended for action by UNESCO or other bodies. It is APINESS that is being evaluated.

*From the inaugural meeting*

1. Development of resources and capabilities, 1986-1989.

A number of different activities were proposed under this heading: efforts to establish and strengthen core collections in within participating countries; establishment of exchange relationships to develop the former; preparation of inventories of data banks and documentation and information centres; training of specialists in data banking, documentation and information.

2. Adoption and development of norms and standards of information handling, 1986-1988.

Activities proposed under this heading included the adoption and promotion of norms and standards; the holding of a regional seminar in 1987 to review and refine the various thesauri development under the former.

3. Development of linkages and cooperative activities, 1986-1987

Activities proposed focussed on the establishment of APINESS national networks

4. Training of social scientists/users of social sciences information, 1987-1989  
Activities focussed on developing the knowledge of users of the potential uses of social science information.
5. Publication of state-of-the-art reports on social science subjects, 1986-1989
6. Processing and repackaging of social science information/research data for policy makers, 1987-1988  
Activities proposed included holding seminars at 'various levels' on the above subject
7. Bilateral agreements, 1986-1989
8. Development/integration of specialized sub-networks into APINESS, 1986-1989
9. Publication of APINESS newsletter and publicity of APINESS in similar bulletins.

#### *RAG I (Bangkok)*

1. Cooption of representatives of ASTINFO/NFPs onto NAGs.
2. Cooption of representatives of NFPs of other relevant regional networks, such as AMIC, WINAP, HELLIS, APSDIN and ALINE onto NAGs.
3. All members of APINESS should send on a regular basis core reference materials to RUSHSAP so that a regional collection could be built up.
4. NAGs were advised to develop a programme of action for the coming 3-4 years and to send copies of them to RUSHSAP by December 1988 so that it could compile all such national plans of action and make suitable proposals for inclusion in UNESCO's programme and budget for the coming biennium.
5. NAGs should liaise with appropriate ministries in their governments to explore the possibilities for UNCP projects in the next country programming cycle.
6. Promote the use of TCDC modality for the work of APINESS
7. The following areas were suggested for regional level activities: (a) information technology; (b) machine readable databases; (c) document delivery; and (d) abstracting and translation services.
8. Convene a regional seminar to review various thesauri being used.
9. NCPs and NAGs to provide news articles and information for the APINESS newsletter on a regular basis.

*RAG II (Bangkok)*

[It is note worthy, for the purposes of this evaluation, that some of the actions recommended from this meeting repeat those of the previous one]

1. Cooption of representatives of ASTINFO/NFPs onto NAGs.
2. Cooption of representatives of NFPs of other relevant regional networks, such as AMIC, WINAP, HELLIS, APSDIN and ALINE onto NAGs.
3. All members of APINESS should send on a regular basis core reference materials to RUSHSAP so that a regional collection could be built up.
4. NAGs should liaise with appropriate ministries in their governments to explore the possibilities for UNCP projects in the next country programming cycle.
5. Promote the use of TCDC modality for the work of APINESS
6. APINESS members should keep each other on their mailing lists and send all their future publications to other members so that the publications are available at least at one location in each country.
7. NCPs may explore the possibility of promoting the sale of AASSREC publications along the lines of the centralised subscription service set up the Philippine Social Science Council.
8. It also identified the following sets of activities at the regional and national levels for the following two years:

*Regional Level programmes*

- APINESS Newsletter
- Mobilizing Project II: Youth Shaping the Future: Each NAG to determine its level of participation in this documentation project.
- Setting up of electronic mail networks where possible.
- Training programmes in CDS/ISIS, thesaurus construction, project formulation and setting up and accessing databases.
- Compilation of national directories
- Social science abstracting services
- Survey of existing social science databases
- A range of national level programmes identified by each country for itself

*RAG III (New Delhi)*

The list of proposed actions from this meeting ran to 10 pages of the final report. The following is an edited list of the actions proposed:

- APINESS newsletter: Contributions excepted from Australia, New Zealand and Sri Lanka on email networks and from Viet Nam on social science information services. A range of suggestions for improving the content of the newsletter were also made.
- INFOYOUTH: Members were to informally survey existing sources of information on youth at the national level.
- A range of exchange and training programmes were also proposed.
- Electronic mail networks: Members to use this to communicate about APINESS issues where possible, to seek to develop links as urgently as possible, to set up a bulletin board for APINESS.
- Social Science Data Archives: Members to seek to establish data archives if one not already established.
- Central Indexing and Abstracting Service: A proposal by NASSDOC to set up such a facility and for UNESCO to finance it.
- A range of national programmes detailed for each country.

#### *RAG IV (Bangkok)*

The list of activities and suggestions for further action from this meeting ran to 8 pages.

- Evaluate the APINESS project
- Exchange programmes and training seminars
- Electronic mail and networks: establishment of a WWW presence and creation of APINESS elist
- Directories and databases
- APINESS newsletter
- Cooperation amongst APINESS members
- A range of national programmes

This is, then, a synopsis of the tasks that the APINESS project and members set for themselves. The task now is to evaluate them using the two methods outlined earlier.

#### **Method 1**

To reiterate, the fundamental question for this method of evaluation is: Were the objectives of the project defined in a reasonable way; were the objectives achievable?

The short answer to this question is: **No**.

Looking over the proposed principles, framework and action programme it would be clear to any observer that they were over ambitious. The vision was for a great network of multilaterally and bilaterally linked national centres which provided the nodes for a similar structure within each member

state. Along the channels of this network would flow a large range of information, people, resources, programmes, and activities.<sup>3</sup> These would all be linked to other networks which had common interests.

There are serious problems with this vision

Firstly, there is something of an unreal quality about it and this arises from the fact that at no point is any serious attention given to the fundamental question of where the resources for such an enterprise are going to come from. There are certainly remarks to the effect that this or that funding organisation be approached to fund the project in general or some particular activity but no mention is made of how or who would be making the case for this funding or its likelihood of success.

Thus, the resource implications – and in particular the financial resource implications – of establishing and maintaining such a network were never clearly established or stated. No serious costings were made or justified. In the absence of this the ambitions of the project seem unreal and impractical.

Secondly, the project assumes that member countries would adopt or already have in place a particular kind of social science information structure – one which relied on a publicly funded social science system. The project did not, in its conception and inception, seriously address the very diverse infrastructural arrangements existing in potential member countries. Rather, it sought to promulgate a particular vision of such arrangements – one which it was clearly easier for some countries (e.g. India and Sri Lanka) to meet than others (e.g. Philippines, Australia, New Zealand). It is a serious issue whether an organisation such as UNESCO should venture into a project which requires member countries to conform to a particular model in order for their successful participation in the project. It is clear that from the beginning APINESS was conceived in the light of the experience of a particular set of infrastructural institutional arrangements – ones which are increasingly at odds with the ‘more market’ models of information service delivery being taken up by a number of countries of the region.<sup>4</sup>

In other words, if more attention had been given to the *differences* between countries of the region in terms of their information infrastructures in the conception of the project and if those differences had been articulated and accepted and been used as the foundation for the development of the project the aims, objectives and structures of the project might have been quite different from those actually adopted. They might then have been more achievable.

To conclude, a close examination of the aims, objectives and structures spelt out for the APINESS project at the beginning clearly indicates that they were over ambitious and poorly defined to begin with. The project was unlikely to be successful from the beginning.

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<sup>3</sup> “...‘APINESS is like a highway of information’ and the Regional Advisory Group has the responsibility to chart its path by identifying what landmarks it would connect and what pitfalls it should avoid. On this highway are to tread both information-documentation specialists and users of social science information” (RAG II report: 23). It is quite clear that this is a highway which has had very little traffic of the first kind on it and none of the second.

<sup>4</sup> Thus, for example, the first meeting of the RAG in 1988 stated that: “The group was hopeful that soon other countries of the region would join APINESS. In fact, those countries which do not have social science documentation centres may be prompted like Bangladesh, to establish such centres so as to meet the demands of social science users nationally and to cooperate with similar centres regionally” (ibid, p. 29). It is clear that a centralised state-funded separate social science infrastructure as the way to the future success of APINESS was much in the minds of key participants and that the existence of such centres were required for the success of APINESS.

## Method 2

The second method of evaluation seeks to answer a different question: To what extent was the project successful in achieving its aims and objectives? That is, accepting the aims and objectives as originally defined, how successful was the project in fulfilling them.

The short answer to this question is: **Very little.**

By any measure, if one lists the objectives of the project and then looks at what was actually achieved in terms of them, the answer would be 'very little indeed'. Certainly there may be a way of reading some of the national accounts as local success stories but we have to take this with a grain of salt: it is clear from a number of such 'success' stories that the successes were not those of APINESS but of the national frameworks which pre- and co-existed with the APINESS project.

The crudest test that illuminates the answer to the question raised by this method of evaluation is to ask the question in regard to the simple objective of setting up the necessary structures for APINESS. It is clear that in most cases those countries that were 'successful' in these terms were ones which had already succeeded in meeting the narrow structural requirements of APINESS by assimilating them to already existing structures – other countries found even the achievement of this simple objective profoundly problematic.

By any measure APINESS has not even a small fraction of the objectives it had set itself at its inception or during the course of its existence. Even where some minimal objectives were achieved their very success served to highlight the weaknesses of APINESS. Thus, for example, though an electronic list was set up for APINESS nearly four years ago the traffic on it has been non-existent. Thus, for another example, though the Indian National Social Science Documentation Centre has been assiduous and industrious in its production of the APINESS newsletter, the contributions of *other* countries has been – to put it mildly – seriously deficient pointing to a lack of interest and commitment to the project. These comments should not be read as criticisms of member countries but as a generic criticism of the project itself.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, it is clear that the APINESS project, as currently conceived, constructed and supported, has not been a success. It has suffered from problems of conception and execution. The recommendations that follow seek to address this failure and suggest alternatives which might lead to better outcomes.

## Recommendations

A plan of action which would meet with consensus does not clearly emerge from the individual country evaluations that are incorporated into this report. There is a diversity of views about the success of APINESS and a diversity of views about action for the future. There are those who think that APINESS has been a considerable success to those who think it has been a failure; there are those who think that there is very little future for it in its present form and would like to see it radically transformed to those who would like to see its present objectives and frameworks strengthened and supported. It is clear, however, that there is consensus on the issue that APINESS does need a major injection of either

new energy and ideas on the one hand or all of that plus a substantial injection of funds as well on the other. In the light of this I propose to make two sets of mutually incompatible recommendations which would point to two different directions for the future. ***The third, to abandon the project altogether, is one which should not at this stage be contemplated.***

The first set of recommendations would see APINESS proceed along more or less the same lines that it has done in the past but with a much more proactive role for UNESCO RUSHSAP in fostering it and in finding the resources to maintain and develop it. This would see the appointment of a full time secretariat to the project supported by adequate financial resources to ensure that it was able to carry out the tasks assigned to it. This scenario would only work if RUSHSAP were able to accept the value of the arguments made by those in favour of the current structure and objectives of APINESS and if it were able to accept the necessary responsibilities thrust upon it. It would also be completely dependant on further and quite substantial additional funding becoming available for the project over and above the kinds of commitments already made to it over the last decade but these funds would have to come from UNESCO or from some source that UNESCO can tap into. It is clear from all evaluations that funding sources from within the countries of the region to support the envisaged project are non-existent.

But there are further implications from adopting the first set of recommendations. It is quite clear from the country reports that even if APINESS were to receive a substantial boost by the appointment of a permanent secretariatship with additional funding to assist it in its tasks not all countries are in a position to participate in this venture in the form the current objectives and structure envisages. Conceptually, the objectives of APINESS call for a considerable degree of centralised functioning of social science information systems amongst participating members. Only a few countries have this kind of infrastructure: e.g. Bangladesh, China, India, Sri Lanka. Other members – Philippines, New Zealand – have more laissez faire systems and would not be able to participate in any meaningful sense even with a considerable injection of funding at the regional level. Consequently, this scenario would require more rigorous assessment of the capacity of members to meet their obligations in terms of the objectives of APINESS. It would require UNESCO to implement a project which would, by definition, see the exclusion of a number of countries because they would be unable to conform to the network models prescribed by APINESS.

The second set of recommendations would see APINESS transformed into a forum for the exchange of views about social science information infrastructures and a forum for action to support the development of social science information structures in countries of the region. The implications for UNESCO RUSHSAP are much less stringent than the first scenario and call for no more commitment than has already been devoted to APINESS to this point. This scenario also has financial implications but these are more in line with the kinds of average costs that have already been incurred in relation to the APINESS project to date and would not require additional funding (except that required to keep up with inflation).

***I should declare my interest at this stage and state clearly that I favour the second scenario.***  
In the light of this there is one recommendation which I believe would meet with the approval of all those involved in the project:



*Recommendation*

*THAT UNESCO RUSHSAP organise a fifth meeting of the Regional Advisory Group of APINESS to discuss the recommendations of this APINESS evaluation report and to develop a programme of action in the light of the decisions arrived at that meeting.*

**Scenario 1: Continuation of APINESS with same objectives and structure***Recommendation*

*THAT UNESCO RUSHSAP more vigorously promote the objectives, structural and functional, of APINESS as set down in the original document establishing the network in 1986.*

This major recommendation can be broken down into a number of further, more specific recommendations so that a more concrete image of what is implied emerges.

*Recommendation*

*THAT UNESCO make additional appointments at RUSHSAP so as to provide the full-time secretariatship that a reinvigorated APINESS would require.*

*Recommendation*

*THAT UNESCO RUSHSAP seek funding, in the first instance, at least on a par with that of ASTINFO so as to further the aims and objectives of APINESS.*

*Recommendation*

*THAT participation by countries be rigorously monitored to ensure that they implement the structural arrangements required for successful participation in APINESS.*

*Recommendation*

*THAT each meeting of the Regional Advisory Group set aside a session to the rigorous review of the contributions and participation of member countries and the APINESS secretariat.*

**Scenario 2: Transformation and simplification of the objectives of APINESS***Recommendation*

*THAT APINESS be defined as a forum to report on, review and make recommendations on the state of the art of the social science information infrastructures of each on the participating countries.*

*Recommendation*

*THAT Regional Advisory Group meetings be renamed Regional Experts Meetings and that they be conducted in such a way as to provide critical and constructive feedback on the country reports.*

*Recommendation*

*THAT the results of the deliberations of the Regional Experts Meetings be published as separate reports on each country as soon as possible after each meeting and be widely disseminated in each country.*

These recommendations conclude the 'final report' element of the terms of reference of this evaluation. It has sought to be critical, factual, and accurate. The following section presents a consolidation of the national reports of member countries.

## BANGLADESH EVALUATION

### Preamble

The Bangladesh evaluation report of APINESS focuses on both a generalised statement about the role of social science in a developing country like Bangladesh as well as a description of the state of social science research in Bangladesh and its development over the last decade or so. It is largely descriptive in its assessment of APINESS in Bangladesh.

The focus of APINESS in Bangladesh is the Bangladesh Social Science Research Council. As a consequence of this the kinds of issues raised are not dissimilar to those raised by other countries which have a strong centralised dimension to social science research work and its dissemination. The perennial question with regard to a project like APINESS in relation to the development of the social science information infrastructure in an environment like this is: 'What difference does the project make?'. It is not easy to get a clear answer to this question from the material provided though in a couple of crucial statements it is clear that this is a question worth posing.

It is clear from the report that the social science information structure in Bangladesh is very weak: "For lack of a coordinating mechanism and bibliographic service, the extensive and growing social science research activities in the country cannot be effectively accessed by the social science research community and remain largely unknown and under utilised." Thus, and in other words, in spite of the existence of APINESS at the national level in Bangladesh for 10 years the practical impact of the project has been fairly minimal. If we add to this the observation that "from its inception the Bangladesh Social Science Research Council, as the national coordination body of the Government ... has been engaged in almost identical activities" as APINESS, the picture that emerges is that – as is the case in many other instances – the impact of the project has been very light indeed and that such activities as could carry an 'APINESS' label would have largely existed *nolens volens*.

In its concluding recommendations the Bangladesh report suggests that APINESS be strengthened and asks for a special fund to be raised for this purpose.

### Introduction

The most striking characteristic of the pattern of progress in the contemporary world is the emergence of knowledge as the primary source of wealth and power. The superiority of the intangible knowledge over tangible material goods as the main force for growth is now a universally recognised reality. Industrialised nations are today gripped by a new race, the race for knowledge which is itself growing at such a breath-taking rate that we can speak of a knowledge explosion.

As a corollary, collecting, storing, and distributing information have assumed an unprecedented importance. The number of information producers is increasing and areas of information are becoming ever larger and more diverse. New information technology, including computerisation, has brought about a revolution in information production and dissemination. It has made memorising redundant, thus creating greater opportunities for more creative utilisation of human energy.

The challenges that this knowledge explosion and information revolution pose for developing countries standing at the threshold of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are, to say the least, most critical in terms of their future development. In meeting these challenges several Asian countries have been so successful that futurologists tend to view the 21<sup>st</sup> century as the century of Asia and the Pacific. The reviewing of the APINESS activities has, therefore, been an opportune and highly commendable step. It will hopefully open up opportunities for the social scientists and policy makers of the region to have access to the social science research information available within the region.

It is well recognised that social sciences research and the resulting information play a critical role in the socio-economics status and development of any country. Bangladesh is no exception to this. All concerned, particularly the social scientists and other related personnel, engaged in improving the socio-economic status and development of the country, need an appropriate and fast information support to deliver the desired output effectively. This is only possible if their information needs could be assessed and met properly and on a priority basis. Without a coherent, effective and comprehensive information policy and resource-sharing process or network, it is almost impossible to effectively meet the information needs of social scientists and other related personnel of the country. Therefore, there is a strong need to develop and implement an appropriate national social sciences information network and policy in Bangladesh.

### **Social Science Research in Bangladesh: A Broad Overview**

Social science research is now firmly established in Bangladesh: in the academic world, in the Government and the public sector, in the private sector particularly the NGOs and privately sponsored operational entities.

It has passed through recognition phase and has been able to establish its social functions i.e., the desirability and priorities of social science research in the country.

It has also assimilated the process of indigenization through the growth of local research capability and its contribution to national development and welfare is now being progressively recognised.

Social science research spans a wide range of disciplines: its research methodologies are varied and innovative with growing emphasis on quantitative analysis through application of mathematical or statistical techniques and on participatory methods of investigations, such as anthropological methods of investigation, use of local level information etc. complementing statistical surveys of probability sampling, case studies, village or small area studies.

In Bangladesh social research in its earlier phase was primarily descriptive rather than analytical in content with hardly application of any quantitative method. However, social research is now progressively becoming analytical with application of standard statistical techniques, mathematical modelling and simulation primarily under the impetus of economic and demographic research, which have been more analytical even in the earlier phase. Development and application of micro-computer based standard packages of analysis are helping rapid diffusion of analytical methods among those branches of social science research, particularly those disciplines where application of quantitative methods of analysis is the standard research technique. Various participatory methods of social investigation particularly anthropological research at the grass root levels are also gaining wide acceptance.

Policy oriented research also is progressively gaining ground. In fact major volume of current research in the country in economics, demography and population, agriculture, environment, forestry, fisheries and water resources development, education, primary health care and nutrition are largely policy oriented, though of course the policy prescriptions arising out of such research findings vary widely in quality and applicability depending on the scope of research, its topicality and the capability of the researcher.

There have been quite a few significant policy oriented researches that have made wide spread impact, both within and outside the country. The most outstanding example is research on what is now known as Comilla Approach in the sixties culminating in the development of Grameen Bank approach to alleviating mass poverty through earning activities for the rural poor induced through supervised credit and mobilisation of saving through timely repayment of loans. The other outstanding examples are BRAC formulated mass literacy and health care programme for the rural poor that links up acquisition of primary literacy, health and hygiene and acquisition of skills and income earning activities at the grass root level.

Various demographic and population research and surveys have also been made to strengthen population policy and its implementation at the grass root level and has enabled the nation to progressively adopt family planning measures and sustain contraceptive prevalence rate currently around 45 per cent, from around 18 per cent in 1981. Similarly economic research is carried out on a sustained basis at BIDS have been largely analytical and policy oriented right from the inception of the institute. Its recent poverty oriented social research and surveys have also been able to attract attention for their policy relevance and social action.

Among the Government organisations two of them namely the BBS and NIPORT are also progressively acquiring capabilities of policy oriented and applicable social research.

BBS has emerged as the lead institution for nationally representative socio-economic data in the country and has built up a large inventory of socio-economic database relevant for social research based on censuses, surveys and administrative records.

BBS is carrying out on a sustained basis nation-wide demographic and household surveys that are helping not only meeting the data gaps in vital areas of human resource development, but are also helping clearing away widely held misconceptions about the level and trend of population growth and demographic changes, the level and dimensions of mass poverty both in rural and urban areas of the country, on the progressive changes in the composition of the country's labour force and participation of women in labour force and overall development activities, etc. NIPORT is gradually acquiring capabilities for carrying out training oriented research back stopping the sustained and growing training needs of the large number of personnel involved in the nation-wide health and family planning service delivery programmes.

Barring the example of the few outstanding social science research institutes, institutional capabilities the social research carried out in the large number of academic institutions, private research bodies and NGOs and individual researchers are however mostly disjointed, lacking policy focus or social relevance.

## Social Science Research Capabilities in the Country

The diverse social science research capabilities currently available in the country can be grouped in the following broad categories:

- Academic bodies like universities and affiliated Research/Training Institutes.
- Institutions of innovative social research like the newly founded Open University and distance learning.
- Government organisations concerned with social research and training such as the Planning Commission, BBS and NIPORT.
- Autonomous research institution like BIDS, BPATC, NIPSOM.
- Large NGO's with social science research capabilities such as Grameen Bank, BRAC.
- International research institutes located in Bangladesh such as ICDDR'B, CIRDAP, IJO.
- Indigenous and foreign social research capabilities located in Donor organisations operating in the country such as World Bank, CIDA, NORAD, DANIDA, etc.
- Indigenous and foreign social research capabilities located in the UN system operating in the country: such as UNDP, UNICEF, ILO, FAO, WHO etc.
- Public or privately sponsored foundations for social welfare with capability for social research for back stopping their operational activities such as Palli Karma Sahayak Foundation, Swanirbhar Bangladesh etc.
- Private Chambers of Commerce and Industry and Associations of Trade and Crafts with rather limited capability for selective research such as FBCCI, DCCI, CCCI, Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce, etc.
- Private individuals working as consultants researchers etc.

Academic research capability particularly capabilities of higher research in social science located in the various departments of the Universities concerned with the various disciplines of social sciences usually form the core of the social science research capability in the country. Research outputs from the academic disciplines set the standard of quality, act as path breakers in newer areas of research, marked by regularity of output and characterised by social relevance.

Judged by these criteria, social science research outputs currently produced in the Universities and affiliated Research Institutes of the country are not as good as expected. The volume of annual outputs is also not satisfactory. The Universities and the affiliated research institutes account for the major share of Ph.D.'s and highly trained social science researchers in the county. Most of these research personnel are however busy with constancy works in various research project or programmes.

Of the Research Institute enjoying autonomous status Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS), however, has progressively improved its capability for social research and is currently

recognised as an outstanding centre for economic and social research both at home and abroad. Established in the turbulent days immediately preceding the breakout of the war of liberation as a centre primarily for research on economic issues and policies, its research activities have become progressively multi-disciplinary and currently spans besides economic research, research on Population Sciences and rural development, poverty and inequality, urbanisation agricultural modernisation, trade industry and investment, women in development and other priority areas of social concern. Its research findings are regularly published in its quarterly journal, the Bangladesh Development Studies, which is recognised as one of the lead journals of economic and social research in the country. A Bengali version of the journal is published annually in the form of the Bangladesh Unnayan Shamikkha (Bangladesh Development Review). In addition to the quarterly journal, research findings of the Institute are published in the form of research monographs, special publications, research reports and working papers.

For dissemination of social research, BIDS regularly holds seminars where in additions to in house researchers, visiting and outside researchers participate. For development of research capability in the field of economics and other social sciences, it has an on going training programme for newly recruited young professionals who are regularly given training on social science research methodologies. It also operates programme for higher training abroad leading to M.Sc. or Ph.D. degrees. Its library and documentation system are modern and well developed for back stopping multi-disciplinary social research. BIDS activities are funded by Government budgetary allocations, Government endowment and donors funds.

BIDS researchers, because of their research capability and experience in operational research are in great demand by external donor agencies for carrying out various studies relating to donor funded projects and programmes. There is an increasing tendency among BIDS researchers to be involved in such outside research activities in preference to in-house research on grounds of substantial financial gains. Such conflict of interest between in-house research vis-à-vis donors funded outside research is a threat to long-term development of in-house research capability and programmes of BIDS and needs to be resolved.

Besides autonomous bodies like BIDS, the social science research capability of the Government are largely located in the Planning Commission and research bodies like the BARD at Comilla and RDA at Bogra. Within the Planning Commission social science research is undertaken primarily to back stop the periodic Five-Year Plan (FYP) formulation, regular formulation of the Annual Development Programme and various programmes and projects related to the Five-Year Plan. The research activities mostly in the form of studies, surveys or feasibility studies are organised sector wise; major volume of research activates are located in the GED, the section charged with drafting the Five-Year Plan Document. GED also acts as coordination among the various sectors of the Planning Commission with respect to sectoral studies and researches that feed into the formulation of the plan draft. In the early years drafting of the plan was generally undertaken with the assistance of a team of expatriate researchers and experts. Over the years, however, local capability for plan formulation including data modelling has grown so that drafting from the Fourth Five-Year Plan was largely done by the in-house local experts and researchers.

Although the Five-Year Plans are published and widely circulated, the research studies back stopping the plan are hardly published. As a result the research community is deprived of a large fall-out benefit of the plan formulation exercise. Sectoral studies, particularly studies related to social

sectors are generally the weak links of the planning exercise, which gets directly reflected in relatively weaker formulation of social sector programmes and projects. Lack of evaluation studies pertaining to social sectors, which can be valuable addition to social research, is also a constraint in assessing social changes.

As part of dissemination of research findings, Planning Commission occasionally organises seminars or workshops which are largely participated by social scientist. Training activities of the Planning Commission are rather scanty: confined to one or two training workshops on research methodology sponsored rather irregularly.

International organisations and donor agencies located in the country are in a much stronger position in utilising the findings of the social research carried out in the country or sponsoring such research on their own. Their strength arises from their access to resources and capability to hire local or expatriate experts and researchers and fund research studies, surveys or training programmes. By way of example the social research activities of CIRDAP, the Centre for Integrated Rural Development for Asia and the Pacific an organ of the FAO, located in Bangladesh may be cited. CIRDAP carries out a large number social research activities related to integrated rural development on behalf of its member states through expatriate or local consultants, experts and researchers. The research findings are published in the form of printed books, monographs, mimeographed studies under the CIRDAP study series, mimeographed action research series, mimeographed training series, directories, reports and bibliographies under the CIRDAP documentation programme. CIRDAP Bibliographies are of particular interest to social scientists. So far CIRDAP has published four bibliographies: two as selected bibliography, one integrated rural development, one as an annotated selected bibliography on IRD (Integrated Rural Development) and the other as a selected annotated bibliography on rural poverty in CIRDAP member countries.

The CIRDAP also maintains an updated roster of experts on IRD and related disciplines and an inventory of IRD programmes in the CIRDAP member countries. It is worth noting that CIRDAP has articulated its policy and style for its publications with a view to standardise and improve its publications on social research. Since 1991 CIRDAP has been publishing the Asia Pacific journal of Rural Development on six monthly basis. There are indications that the journal will grow as a major vehicle of disseminating selected aspects of social research covering rural development in the CIRDAP member countries including Bangladesh. CIRDAP library is also developing as a useful resource and documentation centre for social research in the country.

Over the years ICDDR'B located at Mohakhali in Dhaka has developed its capabilities for demographic and population research as an aid to its research on diarrhoeal diseases in Bangladesh. The centre is in the process of setting up a network of centres spread throughout the country and modelled after its Matlab centre for monitoring and evaluating population and demographic changes in the country through extensive data collection and related social research.

As an aid to its social research the centre has developed a well stocked library, an extensive computerised data processing system, regular publications reporting research findings on demographic and social changes on the form research reports, monographs by local and expatriate social researchers, bibliographic service on social research and a News Letter disseminating information on social and other research activities.



Paralleling the developments of CIRDAP and ICDDR'B, the donor agencies located in the country such as NORAD, CIDA, DANIDA, SIDA, USAID, Asian Development Bank and World Bank have acquired a large repertoire of social research findings in the form of research reports, special studies, position papers and survey reports through funding research and survey activities back stopping their various development programmes and project activities in the country. The in country social research activities funded by the donor agencies are carried out by local and expatriate research firms, academic bodies, NGOs or individual researchers and cover wide range of social disciplines ranging from women in development, the urbanisation process, urban and rural poverty, rural development, transfer of technology in agriculture, small scale micro-industries, education, health care, demography and population science and so on.

For lack of a coordinating mechanism and bibliographic service, these extensive and growing social research activities in the country can not, however, be effectively accessed by the social science research community and remain largely unknown and under utilised, except for specific donor purposes. This points to the need for a well established and publicity supported coordinating mechanism for covering and systematically reporting all social science research activities in the country, their social relevance and priorities and prognosticate on the emerging future trend of social science research activities in the country.

### **The Future Trend in Social Science Research in Bangladesh: A Brief Prognosis**

For making a real prognosis about the future trend in Social Research in the country, the *raison-de-tre* of Social Science Research in Bangladesh needs to be identified. The basis objective of undertaking Social Science Research in the country is to solve key operational problems channelise and promote social research towards social priority areas such as rural poverty, population control, employment promotion, urbanisation, industrialisation, environment and ecologically sustainable development, women in development, etc. but will prove increasingly difficult to achieve in view of growing GO independence stemming from donor funding and encouragement.

In fact there are countless problems in the general arena of social science in the country. Finding a problem is not difficult, but identifying a problem for the purpose of research is to identify and define clearly the problem identified for research study. A well defined problem leads to the statement of research objectives, to study hypothesis, definition of key variables and selection of methodology for measuring the variables.

All research including social science research, is set in motion by the existence of a problem. A problem is a perceived difficulty, of feeling of discomfort with the way things are, a discrepancy between what some one believes should be and what is. While problems are the initiating force behind research not all problems require research. A potential research situation arises when three conditions exists:

- A perceived discrepancy between what is and what should be.
- A question about why the discrepancy exists.
- At least two possible and plausible answers exists.

The last point is important. If there is only one possible and plausible answer to the question about the discrepancy, then a research situation does not exist.

The Social Science Research Council with its limited resources and manpower has been endeavouring to promote and coordinate social science research activities in a wide range of multidisciplinary fields. Early and orderly implementation of the draft Social Science Research Policy is likely to provide further impetus to the overall development of Social Science Research in the country.

Prognostication about the future trend of Social Science Research in the country is difficult because of interaction complex factors. However the following key trends will be increasingly discernible:

- Development of social science research-particularly its methodologies and techniques will be increasingly influenced by the development of information technology even in Bangladesh. Affordable micro-computer availability along with easily operable comprehensive software packages is radically changing data processing and use and will have a profound effect on data collection, data analysis and on social science research areas in particular.
- In future the impact is likely to intensify. Use of statistical and qualitative packages will be universal and will make social science methodologies standardised and easy to apply. Dissemination of research findings will be easier and quicker. Preservation and transmission of providing data in machine readable form will increase manifold.
- Dominance of operational policy research particularly GO and project or programme oriented research will increase, compared to academic and theoretical research. Need for researchers familiar with operational research methodologies will increase manifold to meet supply side conditions.
- Conflict of interest between personal research in the form of consultancy work and the like with routine academic or institution based research is likely to intensify and affect particularly the leading social science research institutions in the country. The risk of decline in overall quality of research done at such institutions may increase.

Need for coordination of social science research activities will intensify with a view to channelize and promote social research towards socially priority areas such as rural poverty, population control, employment promotion, urbanisation, industrialisation, environment and ecologically sustainable development, women in development etc. but will prove increasingly difficult to achieve in view of growing GO independence stemming from donor funding and encouragement:

- There will be growing need for social science research in newer research areas such as social aspects of environmental issues, sustainability of socio-economic development programmes and projects, rapid growth of urbanisation and housing demand, growth in underground economic and social activities etc. However lack of trained manpower and paucity of socio-economic data will pose formidable constraints to sustain research in the newer and emerging areas of social research.

- Need for innovative and versatile social science research workers particularly in the mid and operational level is likely to intensify. Training needs of social science research methodology and data analysis through micro-computer is likely to increase manifold. This will necessitate periodic TNA to identify systematically training needs and undertaking training oriented research.
- Social science research will increasingly be product of operational research training rather than products of academic education. Policy formulation bodies in the areas of social science research will needed to be more active in training related activities particularly training of trainers and training in social science methodologies.
- To keep track of the emerging trends in the development of social science research activities sensitive but meaningful indicator need to developed. One key indicators is the number of papers/articles pertaining to social science research Activities published in the country.

Although there is no indicator as to the number of papers or articles published in the country in the field of social science research, we may make an informed guess that the total number is around 200 and its rate of increase in the past year has been rather low- 2 per cent per annum.

For making prognostication about the future growth of social science research in the country as measured by the number of articles published annually we may borrow from the physical science and apply Adam's law of exponential growth. Adam's law enunciates that the percentage rate of the per annum increase in the level of research effort and quantitative productivity in physical sciences remains constant with the passage of time. What is of interest is estimating the doubling time of the total research effort as symbolised by the total number of articles published assuming that Adam's law also applies in the field of social science research.

Following Adam's law or the law of exponential growth we obtain the following well known scenario about the doubling time and the underlying annual growth rate. For comparison we also add the ten-fold or order of magnitude increase time in years:

**Exponential Growth Scenario of Social Science Research Output:**

Doubling time (Years)	Ten fold (Order of increase time years)	Per annum Growth Rate (per cent at Compound Interest)
5	16	15
7	24	10
10	43	7
12	40	6
14	47	5
16	52	4.5
20	67	3.5
24	78	3
35	116	2
47	155	1.2
70	231	1

Note: (1) For doubling time:  $DT \times \text{per cent} = 70$ .  
 (2) For order-of-magnitude increase time:  $OMT \times \text{per cent} = 231$ .

At the current presumptive rate of 2 per cent growth rate per annum, it will take around 35 years for the social science research output to double in the country. At double this rate-doubling time will come down to 17 to 18 years. The question is can we double the rate of output of social science research in the country in the short run? What are the basic constraints that hampers the growth of output in the sort run? And that is not all. There remains the formidable problem of improving the overall quality of the social science research output.

We need to recognise that compared to natural sciences research, which is largely concerned with exploration of the new types of phenomena or their variations, social science research is mainly concered with exploration of the new relations among the already known or emerging types of social phenomena. Natural science research is therefore largely hardware oriented i.e., capital intensive while social science research is largely software oriented i.e., concerned with mainly conceptual area of inquiry social science research thus tends to be more labour intensive i.e., a cottage industry type of activity or rather talent intensive. To be cost effective social science research must therefore be quality oriented.

Can we surmise about the quality of social science research outputs currently conducted in the country from their presumptive volume? The relationship between quality and quantity is dominated by complex factors and we need not go into those for shortages of space. We can however make a short cut and apply Rousseau's law (see J.J. Rousseau, *Contract Social*, Page 452 Boston, 1949) to obtain a broad dimension of the number of quality research output in the total research output. Rousseau's law stipulates that the volume or the total number of really important or quality results stands approximately as the square root of the total research out i.e., Number of the quality Research Output = (Total number of research outputs)  $1/2$ .

By applying Rousseau's law we can surmise that the number of quality social science research paper currently published annually in the country will be around 14 or 15 at most. Even through the

precise number can be disputed, it cannot be denied that by all indication the number of quality (first rate) social science research output published annually in the country is very small indeed. Further insight into the quality composition of the total social science research output can be obtained by adopting a five-place scale for measurement of the quality as follows:

- 50% ----- Routine
- 20% ----- Significant
- 15% ----- Important
- 10% ----- Very Important
- 5% ----- First rate

It may be summarised that almost half of the social science research output annually published in the country is routine. Social science research in the country can thus be epitomised as rather trivial or of routine quality. The basic problem of current social science research is thus lack of quality in the research output in addition to the rather meagre volume to the total output.

From the likely trends discernible in the social science research activities in the country, there is very likelihood that given Government's overall commitment to improve social welfare in the country and Social Science Research Council's energetic interventions and fostering the promising socially priority research issues, both volume and quality of the social science research activities in the country can increase.

### **Immediate Primary Steps Needed to Develop the APINESS Network and Operational Functioning of the Network Organisational Structure and Coordination**

The respective roles and responsibilities of different (existing) national libraries (National Library of Bangladesh National Archives of Bangladesh, BANSDOC, National Health Library and Documentation Centre, Agricultural Information Centre) should be clearly delineated to eliminate possible duplication of facilities, resources and services and to ensure their effective coordination.

Considering the economic value of information as an essential factor in socio-economic development and also considering the central role of libraries and information services need to be given high priority, commensurate with their importance as sources of information for development by the Government and non-Government agents and institutions.

Libraries and information centres presently attached to different social science organisations and institutions and located under different ministries, sectors, corporations development agencies, departments and non-governmental organisations with all the known problems and for a number of valid reasons, appear to be unable individually to meet the challenge of social science information explosion and meet the minimum requirement of their information users. Integration and coordination of the resources and services of those isolated to a common pool by all possible cooperative methods should be considered. To achieve this goal on a national basis formulation of a separate social sciences information policy and network and a machinery to implement the policy and network are imminent,

which are expected to stimulate and guide the evolution of a nation-wide social sciences information system.

Ministries concerned with education, information, planning and culture, should take urgent steps to establish necessary centralised administrative machinery to design and ensure an effective coordination of information services in all parts of Bangladesh.

### **Finance**

Adequate financial provision would be needed to support the development of an efficient Finance information system and in particular, sufficient grants-in-aid would be needed to develop new as well as the existing libraries and information centres on the basis of population served. Such grants should be available for the payment of salaries and other expenses as well as the purchase of books, journals, documents, reprints, audio-visual materials, information technologies, etc. and that they be made conditional on the satisfactory performance of the recipient libraries and information centres. Libraries and information centres attached to institutions should get 10 per cent of the budget of the institutions and the national libraries and information centres should get sufficient fund for meeting their needs.

### **Collection Development and use of Information Resources**

To better serve the information users, systematic listing of articles pertaining to social problems should be made. For example a bibliography of social science literature from 1947 to 1997 can be compiled and a database can be created on a national basis to facilitate maximum use of the existing information resources.

Acquisition of documents in specialised fields need to be coordinated among different libraries to avoid duplication of materials, to acquire maximum number of documents with minimum financial resources and to ensure that at least one copy of each worthwhile document is available in any of the component libraries. For the purpose, the local libraries and information centres should be given responsibility to collect literature most relevant to the activities of their parent organisations and for meeting the information requirements of local users. In addition, they may build up strong collection in the subjects of their specialisation. The national coordination centre may, on the other hand, be responsible for building up collection which have not been adequately covered by the local libraries and information centres. It may collect grey literature in the area of its specialisation to act as a national information centre and declaring-house. The national coordination centre may also complement and supplement the collection of all the national libraries and information centres and fill up the areas not covered by them.

Document/information procurement service can be made expeditious efficient and economical if the demand for papers is met from the holdings of the libraries in the country. Besides, the loss of time and cost involved in procuring a paper from abroad and foreign exchange difficulties impose an additional restraint. Efforts should be made to obtain copies of papers as far as possible from sources within the country. A reliable and up-to-date union catalogue of periodicals and active cooperation among the libraries are too essential factors that are needed to be made for maximisation of the use of existing resources of the country.

Advanced countries are fortunate to have good social science libraries with all kinds of facilities. With the support of many international bodies, like UNESCO, IDRC, etc. several new information and documentation centres have come into existence in many developing countries. The possibility of getting such assistance for Bangladesh should be explored.

### **Manpower Development**

There is a paucity of trained and skilled manpower, this is particularly so in the specialised information service work. It is mainly due to the lack of enough training facilities within the country. This may, in turn be due to the relative regency of demand of trained personnel. The scope and content of the courses of studies have not taken a clear shape taking into consideration the fuse and applications of new information technology. In the case of persons trained in general library work, lack of adequate acquaintance with the highways and bye-ways in the specialised areas of knowledge and with the trend in their wave-front has been a handicap. Adequate facilities should, therefore, be developed at the national coordination centre to conduct refresher and specialised training courses for information service personnel to keep them informed of latest developments in information science and technology.

### **Applications of New Information Technology**

Review of the historical development of library-based information networks of the developed and some of the developing countries illustrates a number of trends, namely sharing of computer power, production of union catalogues, provision of centralised technical processing, combination of various types of libraries in a single network and development of geographical groupings at both a national and regional level. Among the above trends the use of computer and communications technology is of special significance.

In the present-day world, application of computers and video-discs to library information services has brought about landmark changes. The theme of library automation is still relatively new in libraries and information centres of Bangladesh, although the country entered into the computer age in 1964. Modern information technologies are yet to be introduced in most library activities and services in the country, although their costs have fallen considerably and are now within the reach of many institutions. Experiences show that such technologies are easy to adopt and manage. Time is now ripe for the use of personal computers, CD-ROMs, electronic desk-top publishing systems and other electronic devices to create and develop efficient information systems and services for the country.

It is an appropriate time to think whether we should carry on with the traditional concept of librarianship or orient ourselves to new information technologies and train our manpower in the use of electronic devices for providing improved information services. It is strongly felt that all-out efforts should be directed to automate different activities and services of libraries, to create computerised bibliographic files and to develop strategic plan for the information dissemination-related activity.

### **APINESS Activities in Bangladesh**

On 9<sup>th</sup> march, 1987 Government of the People's republic of Bangladesh, Ministry of Education, Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO established a National Advisory Group (NAG)

consisting of 9 (nine) members under the able guidance of National Prof. M. Shamsul Haque and Joint Secretary, Planning Division also the Director of BSSRC as Chairman and member – Secretary respectively. Bangladesh Social Science Research Council were also assigned with the responsibilities to act as National Focal Point (NFP) of APINESS activities in Bangladesh.

The first meeting of NAG was held on 20<sup>th</sup> July, 1988 under the Chairmanship of National Prof. M. Shamsul Haque and took some important decisions which were as follows:

- (a) Social Science Research Council, Bangladesh will undertake necessary action to hold a national seminar, as soon as possible, with the joint attendance of persons involved in the generating of information and data related to the social sciences and also persons involved in the preservation and distribution of such information and data.
- (b) Social Science Research Council, Bangladesh will initiate suitable efforts to formulate a national policy on social science research for the consideration and approval of the competent authority.
- (c) Social Science Research Council, Bangladesh will be requested to take proper action in order to formulate a “Documentation Centre Act” along with the relevant Government authority.
- (d) Social Science Research Council will disseminate information regarding, preparation of the “National Register of Social Scientists” in the form of advertisement through utilizing the medias like newspapers, radio and television.
- (e) Social Science Research Council will regularly undertake dispense services like publication of national bibliography abstracting and indexing of published materials related to social sciences.
- (f) Social Science Research Council will send reminders to the university authorities to expedite the establishment of Inter-Library Loan System i.e. the “Library Consortium”.
- (g) If possible BSSRC will provide necessary assistance to the concerned organisations for publishing newsletter, bulletin etc.
- (h) The competent authority will be requested to initiate appropriate steps so that the libraries of the country can increase their working hours from 8 A.M. to 10.00 P.M.
- (i) BSSRC will develop a Internal Net-work with the social science research organisations in the country taking a contact person from each organisation.
- (j) BSSRC will initiate a regular training programme for the skill development engaged data preservation and dissemination of social science research. BSSRC will also help the other related organisations in this endeavor.
- (k) The Chairman of NAG will take up the matter with concerned authority to increase the number of NAG members to make it more representative.

As per decision of the first NAG meeting BSSRC requested Bangladesh National Commission for UNESCO to increase the number of NAG members to make it more representative. Accordingly



the member of NAG members were creased from 9 to 24 members. At the stage BSSRC also established a formal internal network with 50 organisations, institutions which are independently and simultaneously engaged in producing, using, preserving and disseminating social science data and information in the country (Appendix-III).

In accordance with a decision of the first NAG meeting a Seminar entailed "Social Science Information and Documentation Process and their Utilisation in Bangladesh" was held on 12-13 October, 1989 with the Joint attendance of persons involved in the generating of information and data relating to social sciences and also persons involved in the preservation and distribution of such information and data. In the said seminar some valuable recommendations were taken as follows:

- (1) A properly developed network for social science information and documentation is a national necessity for Bangladesh.
- (2) In order to facilitate collection, storage and dissemination of social science information and data and also to ensure an effective functioning of Social Science Information Network a Network a National Documentation Centre should be set up under the auspices of the SSRC.
- (3) The Documentation Centre should establish and maintain suitable linkages with other centres engaged in similar and related work.
- (4) A Social Science Documentation Centre Act should be enacted, desirably as a part of the proposed SSRC Act, to give a legal basis to the centre.
- (5) It is also desirable that a social science research policy in Bangladesh be formulated and adopted as early as possible.
- (6) Measures should be taken for publication of national bibliographies, abstracting and indexing journals, current awareness bulletins, and other publishable materials related to social science.
- (7) Publication of social science journals should be encouraged.
- (8) In cooperation with concerned institutions an interlibrary loan system along with a union catalogue should be introduced.
- (9) Steps should be taken to develop suitable training programmes to raise the professional skill of the manpower engaged in collecting, organising and disseminating information and data relating to social sciences.
- (10) A phased programme for introduction of information technology including computerisation in Bangladesh should be adopted without delay with a view to facilitating speedy access to information and literature on social sciences.
- (11) In order to ensure the reliability and quality of social sciences research data, in case of nationally high priority projects research studies should be entrusted to well known and competent social scientists instead of conducting researches by BIDS.

- (12) National Social Science Libraries should be properly equipped with books and journals and appropriately organised.
- (13) A project document should be prepared for submission to the UNDP for supporting the project "Strengthening the Capability of Social Science Research Council and Establishment of a Documentation Centre within it" and associated works in the next cycle.

It may be mentioned here that from the inception of BSSRC as national coordination body of the Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, this council have been engaged in almost the similar related activities. So, with the establishment of APINESS net-work in Bangladesh, the activities of the council got momentum. For the last eight years, this council with the help of the APINESS members in Bangladesh performed a number of activities. Some of which are as follows:

*Formulation of National policy on Social Science Research*

For the last one and half-a-decade both government as well as the social scientist of Bangladesh have been expressing the urgent need for the formulation of a national policy on social science research. The council came forward and formed an Advisory Committee on 21<sup>st</sup> December, 1989 for this endeavour. This Advisory Committee after holding series of meetings prepared a draft on the national policy which was circulated to 200 institutions and persons engaged in social science research and its application. In the light of the comments and suggestions made by them preparation of the final draft on the policy has already been completed. It would be submitted for final approval.

*The specific objectives identified in the draft are:*

- To provide assistance for the development of proper environment for promotion and flourishing of social science research pursuant to the fundamental principles of the state and the prevailing socio-economic condition and the desired priorities.
- To arrange training on social science methodology, provide funds and technical assistance grants for promotion of social science research, both in the public and private and on identification of priority areas of social science research.
- Establish a network for free and unfettered exchange and flow of data, information and research findings in the field of social science research among researchers, administrators, planners and policy makers and preservation and distribution of such data, information and research findings.
- Ensure application and use of social research findings for promoting social welfare through dissemination of findings of social research among all sections of the country's population.
- To implement the objectives, the draft policy has identified as many as nineteen strategic measures that includes the following.
- Set up three separate departments under the SSRC on and grants; collection, preservation and distribution; and on coordination and administration in addition to the three existing standing committees.

- Raise the status of the SSRC documentation as a National Social Science Documentation Centre and establish a data bank in the National Documentation Centre and connect the data bank with the Asia-Pacific data network.
- Establish three centres of excellence for social science research in the three Universities located in the divisional centres of Chittagong, Rajshahi and Khulna in addition to Dhaka.
- Devise appropriate means and procedures of ensuring full and proper use of social science research findings in Five-Year Plans and Annual Plans for National development.
- Identify priority areas for social science research in the medium and long-term. Identify and recognise employment promotion and poverty alleviation and spread of education as the two main areas of social research in the country for the next twenty years and encourage and induce through SSRC the social resechers for undertaking researches on these two priority areas.
- Make a paper on research methodology compulsory in every discipline of social science at the University level.
- Establish a system of providing grants for printing and publication of research results through the SSRC.
- To take steps for energizing research in social science in the universities and centres of higher learning in the country leading to M. Phil or Ph.D. degrees. Examine the effectiveness of managing centrally funds for higher research by the University Grants Commission and arrange for assigning funds to each university separately.
- To induce rich industrialists and business persons to provide financial assistance for promoting social science research in the country. To arrange for granting national award annually on behalf of the SSRC to an individual and an institution for extraordinary contributions to social science research.
- To ensure allocation of 0.50 per cent of the Annual Development Programme for Social Science Research and Development.
- To introduce the system of registration of all privately organised social science research institutes under the SSRC and introduction a system of institutional grant to the deserving social science research institutes by the SSRC.
- To take effective steps for inclusion of social science research methodologies in the inservice and pre-service training and courses organised by the training institutes such as BPATC, BMDC, planning and Development Academy, BCS Cadre Training Academy etc.
- To ensure timely communication of social science research findings that are deemed to have direct or indirect relevance to socio-economic policy, planning and programming to the Planning Commission, concerned Ministries and Divisions.

- To set up a national committee under the Chairmanship of the Member (SEI) of the Planning Commission for monitoring the use of social science research findings in the formulation of basic policies, plans and programmes of the country.
- To ensure use of Bengali in wider dissemination of social science research findings among the general population. At the same time take steps to prepare Bengali course materials for use in training courses on social science methodology.
- To ensure speedy translation in Bengali of the books, research reports, articles or papers in English published in the country abroad in the context of socio-economic problems of Bangladesh. Also expedite the process of translation with the help of the Bangla Academy through special financial grants.
- To hold six monthly national seminar under the auspices of the SSRC with a view to widening dissemination of key social science research findings among researchers, policy makers and field level workers.
- To ensure wider dissemination and awareness about findings of current social research findings and recommendation among the general public through news papers and other communication media.
- To publish a monthly news letter for speedy dissemination of results and information on social science research.
- To bring within the national network all institutions concerned with collection, presentation and distribution of data and information relating to social science through computerisation and promotion of other relevant modern technologies and train the concerned human resources in aspect of modern communication technology.

BSSRC during the last five year period provided financial grants for 42 research projects, 27 of them are promotional, 13 belong to Ph.D. and the remaining two are the fellowship research. In the meantime 15 promotional and 6 Ph.D. reaserch have been completed.

#### *Training in Research Methodology*

This Council in collaboration with Bureau of economic research, University of Dhaka, Department of Sociology, University of Rajshahi, is striving to improve training in research methodology in the social science disciplines at the post graduate stages. It also organise refresher courses for the college teachers who are primarily engaged in teaching in social science subjects. This Council has so far conducted 21 training courses.

#### *Compilation of National Register of Social Scientists in Bangladesh*

The council is now busy compiling the National Register of Social Scientists in Bangladesh. Eight thousands social scientists were contacted through a questionnaire for this purpose but responses only from eight hundred social scientists have been received so far. It is expected at the end of 1997 this register would be published in printed form.

### *Directory of Social Science Research Organisations*

Very recently this Council has published The Directory of Social Science Research Organisations in Bangladesh-1996. This is the fourth in its series. It lists 49 organisations of the country and furnishes information of them particularly regarding their recent research publications, on-going research projects future plan of research and particulars of chief researchers including brief resume of their professional qualification.

### *National Annotated Bibliography on Social Science Research Work*

This Council has already published a National Annotated Bibliography on Social Science Research Work in Bangladesh (1978-1987). This Bibliography is the second in its series. This compendium consists of about 1,200 research works and is divided into four volumes on subjects such as: (i) Economics, Trade and Banking; (ii) Agricultural Economics & Sociology; (iii) Women in Development, Population Control & Health and Nutrition; and (iv) Public Administration, Education, History, Communication and Geography. The third of the Bibliographical series would be published at the end of December, 1997.

### *Documentation Centre*

In January, 1988 a Documentation Centre was established under this Council. So far 7,000 research reports/Documents on social science and related areas have been preserved in this centre. It is now providing necessary services to the relevant persons and organisations.

### *Seminar/Workshop/Round table Conference*

During the last eight-year period this council succeeded in organising eight seminars and one round table conference on various aspect of Social Sciences.

### *APINESS meeting*

The NAG/Contact Persons of APINESS and also the members of different Sub-committee formed in this endeavor met at least once to evaluate different activities of APINESS in Bangladesh.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

### **Conclusion**

In the light of the above it can be said that there is an urgent need for promotion and development of a social sciences information network to cater to the varied needs of the information users, and for optimum use of the existing and new resources. The network will facilitate coordination of different scattered social science libraries and information centres of Bangladesh for planning and policy-making and for conducting social sciences research, It will result in great economy in terms of information sources and services, manpower and finance and will provide improved access to information and literature.

The success of any information network, however, largely depends on the mutual understanding and (voluntary) cooperation of various component organisations. The combined information resources of different libraries and information centres of Bangladesh are of enormous value to the country's economic and social growth, but their effective use requires the development of an adequate resource-sharing and networking process among various libraries, documentation and information centres and other knowledge resources of all types. The librarians and information scientists of the country should see as their professional responsibility the development of a national social sciences information network to equalise individual access to knowledge on social sciences and humanities.

The interest in information network lies in the opportunity they provide for economical centralised services. The economic justification of the network and of the use of modern technology becomes clearer as the number of libraries organisations and individuals benefiting is increased. Even more important than the role of centralised processing is the potential provided by the network for sharing of resources of individual libraries and information centres. This value of sharing resources is very important for a developing country like Bangladesh.

Considering the economic value of information and network as well as the role of information in socio-economic development of the country, the Government of Bangladesh may kindly pay more attention to strengthen the National Social Science Research Documentation Centre to ensure effective functioning of the network.

### **Recommendations**

- (1) APINESS activities may be strengthened in the regional as well as national level.
- (2) A special fund in this endeavour may be raised.
- (3) NAG meeting may be held at least twice in a year regularly.
- (4) APINESS newsteller may be published on regular basis.
- (5) Research work on contemporary problem may be carried out jointly with other member countries or nationally.
- (6) Seminar/Symposium/Workshop/Training Programme may be organised by RAG on current issues.

# CHINA EVALUATION

## Preamble

The Chinese evaluation report of APINESS provides a description of the developing social sciences information infrastructure of the country. It outlines the broad national policy environment within which the most recent developments have taken place. 'Informatization' of the national economy as part of the national strategy for social and economic development has been a key goal of the policy. The report points out that the state has invested a great deal of money in the process of informatization and though the social sciences have been marginal to this process they have nevertheless benefited from it. There have been considerable improvements in telecommunications networks and these have formed the backbone of developments in information networks.

In addition to the changes resulting from these policy driven developments, the social sciences information infrastructure has also been profoundly influenced by the general current of reform in the country. This has seen cut backs in the amount of money being made available for state funded information service providers. As a consequence and also as part of the reforms themselves new forms of coordination and cooperation arrangements have been entered into. The Centre for Documentation and Information of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences has become the hub both for a centralised library system within the Academy itself and an important element of ALINET, the Academic Library and Information Network. This latter network is in the process of construction and is one of the most important developments for the social sciences.

The Chinese report points to a number of the activities of the Centre for Documentation and Information of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), the NCP for APINESS in China, which resonate with the goals of APINESS. These have included the 'bibliographic' exchange relationships between Russia and China, maintaining the secretariatship of the Chinese Information Society of Social Sciences (CISSS), the creation of a number of databases such as the Database of bibliography of the CASS. But it is clear from the context that though these activities resonate with the goals of APINESS they have independent origins and motivations, that is, they would have been carried out and implemented regardless of the existence of APINESS. The report comments on this by saying that the influence of APINESS on China's social science information work is "relatively limited". The activities directly attributable to APINESS are the research for the reports delivered as country reports to the various RAG meetings and the distribution of the APINESS newsletter.

The Chinese evaluation suggests various ways forward for APINESS. It calls for the legal recognition of both the NCP and NAG and for them both to be authorised and financed to advance social science information networking both at the national and at the regional level. It also calls for the development of a more 'practical action programme' for APINESS and for RAG meetings to be occasions for promoting and organising APINESS and not just a forum for discussion.

## Introduction

Over the past ten years, significant changes have taken place in Chinese economy and society. Along with the steady and rapid growth of the national economy, the significance of information and

information services in economic growth and social progress has been widely recognised in China. The informatization of the national economy has been identified as the national strategy for social and economic development. With the strong support of the Chinese Government, the information infrastructure has been greatly improved and some information networks have been set up. The decade of APINESS is exactly the ten years that the information infrastructure and information services have continuously developed in China. The evaluation of the development and the achievements of APINESS in China should take account of the particular policy, technological, and structural environments of China.

### **The Policy Environment of APINESS in China**

Since executing the policies of opening up to the outside world and enlivening the domestic economy, China has been energetically promoting the modernisation of the country. Because of the continuously increasing role that the information industry plays in speeding and promoting economic and social development, the Chinese Government has paid more and more attention to the information industry as an important part of the national economy.

As early as in 1984, the Chinese senior leader Deng Xiaoping pointed out that information resources should be well developed and used for serving the Four Modernisations. The President, Jiang Zemin, also repeatedly stressed that "No modernisation could be realised without informatization". In the period 1985-1990, the government invested 2.5 billion to establish 12 national information systems and more than 1,000 information centres throughout the country in the fields of economy, science and technology, statistics, banking, posts and telecommunications, electricity, railway, civil aviation, customs, population, finance and tax, and disaster prevention. Since the beginning of the 1990s, the information industry of China has been further highlighted as a national target. In 1990, the Leading Group of National Informatization Work (LGNIW) was set up under the State Council. A Vice-Premier of the government is currently the chief of the Leading Group. One of its functions is to comprehensively plan, coordinate, and control the informatization of the country and to make relevant policies and regulations for the development of the state's information industry. In the Ninth Five-Year Plan of National Economic and Social Development and the 'Long-Term Targets Through the Year 2010' approved in 1996 by the Fourth Session of the Eighth National People's Congress, China's top legislative body, informatization of the national economy was seen as a national strategy and a main task of national economic development in the next 15 years. Since then, the government has made a great deal of effort to promote the development of the information industry. "Informatization" has become a very popular word in China. Almost all government departments have set up their own information institutions and have developed some relevant action programmes, such as the CERNET (China Education and Research Network) and ALINET (Academic Library and Information Network) by the State Education Commission, GBNET (Golden Bridge Network) by the Ministry of Electronics Industry and CSTNET (China Science and Technology Network) by the State Science and Technology Commission and the Chinese Academy of Sciences. In addition to the Leading Group of LGNIW, the main policy-makers for the construction of information networks are the Department of Information of the State Science and Technology Commission and the Department of Information of the State Education Commission.

In China, the State's general information policy aims at supporting and encouraging its information industry including social science information. However, when the government makes efforts



to be engaged in the modernisation process centring on economic construction, it usually pays special attention to the development of those fields of the information industry which are directly relevant to economic growth. Policies on the development of the information industry also show the same trend. In previous years, the government's investment in information infrastructure was much more than that in information resources construction, and investment in science and technology information was more than that in social science information, and investment in applied information such as economic and law information was more than that in pure academic information. At the time the government invested 2.5 billion to set up 12 national information systems during the 1985-1990 period, most social science information institutions were suffering shortage of funds and were fighting for their survival. In spite of this general policy priority, the level of social science information work has been generally much lower than that of science and technology information work. For example, as early as in 1986, some research institutes of the Chinese Academy of Sciences started to utilise E-mail services in their communications with foreign research colleagues. The Computer Network Information Centre of the Chinese Academy of Sciences (CNIC CAS) was established in 1990, and connected with the Internet in 1994. Compared to natural and technological sciences, however, the level of social science information work is very poor. To date, the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), the largest social science research institution in China has not as yet a Central Library Building, and a computerised information network connecting all its research institutes is still under the construction.

It should be noted, however, that the construction of both information infrastructure and information resources in education receives strong support from the government due to the widely recognised important role of education in social and economic development. Some projects related to information infrastructure and document resources, such as the CERNET and ALINET, were set up one by one in past years.

The project for the establishment of APINESS showed that social science information services and information sharing in particular in Asia-Pacific region received attention and support from UNESCO. At the same time, the existence and development of APINESS in its member counties also shows that the position of social science information services in government policy priorities has been raised. It is undoubtedly the case that APINESS will be effective in making policy-makers better understand the importance of the social science information work, and the importance of developing a proper social science information policy.

### **The Structural Environment of APINESS in China**

China is a large country with a large number of social science information institutions and a complex structure formed by five systems: academies of social sciences, public libraries, higher learning institutions, military academies and Party schools. The follow-up activities to implement APINESS proposals vary from system to system. In 1990 when the Chinese Information Society of Social Sciences (CISSS) held its second national conference, Prof. Ru Xin, the chairman of the society and the chairman of the APINESS NAG of China appealed to participants in the conference to do their best to effectively carry out APINESS activities. He asked social science information workers and library staff members to break their isolation and to strengthen cooperation and coordination, so that an effective network can be created to promote resources sharing. At this conference some participants proposed that the CASS organise a nationwide network for social science information service within system of academies of social sciences, and then to expand out from that toward the other systems of the country. However,

due to factors such as different management systems and lack of funds, the conditions were not ripe for the CASS to fulfil this arduous task. The participants agreed that the network should be set up first within each of the five systems, then all five networks would gradually develop into a large nationwide network. After this conference, some regional information societies of social sciences were set up as sub-societies of the CISSS and became regional and provincial coordination centres for social science information services. And the libraries and information institutes in the five systems made out their activity programmes within the framework of the APINESS.

### **The System of Central and Local Academies of Social Sciences**

The central and local academies of social sciences in China are advanced research institutions which are directly managed by the central or local governments and are engaged in social science research. One of their main aims is to serve the policy-making of the governments. Except for the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, under the direct leadership of the Central Government, every province, every autonomous region, and every municipality also has its own academy of social sciences. In consideration of the special position of the academies in policy-making for the government, the information institutions of academies did play an important role in promoting the reform and opening up of China, introducing the development of new disciplines and new ideas in social science research from abroad to Chinese scholars and encouraging Chinese scholars to better understand the outside world, especially in the late 1970s and the early 1980s when the door of China was just opened to the outside world. At that time, there were more than 40 libraries and information institutions and over 1,000 information staff members in academies of social sciences of China. They edited and published more than 50 information journals throughout the country. Because of the deep development of the social and economic reforms and the transition from the planned economy to the socialist market economy, the weak points of the information service institutions in academies based on the old economic system – such as overstaffed organisations, inefficient work and rigid management system – have been fully revealed especially when financial difficulties in these academies increasingly became evident (the pressure of expenditure reduction and big increase in price of books and periodicals). Many information institutions fell into a dilemma. So the reform of the information services has become a task of top priority.

Because of the deepening of the reform of scientific management system and the rise of new information and communication technologies, especially with the growing popularity of the computer technologies and the Internet knowledge, the library and information work based on the old management system must be reformed to meet the needs of new era. The Centre for Documentation and Information (CDI), of the CASS, the largest and most representative social science information institution in the country, is a successful example in regard to the library and information work reform.

Before the reform, there were 34 libraries attached respectively to 34 research institutes of the CASS. These libraries operated independently in their acquisition, collection cataloguing and document delivery services without necessarily any coordination between them. This situation caused a lot of duplication in document purchase and collection, and an enormous amount of avoidable waste of financial and personal resources. More seriously, the old work structures hindered the effective utility and convenient access to document and information resources because of the lack of unified management. Readers, for example, were normally only permitted access to one of the libraries. At the CASS 1994 Annual Working Meeting, it was decided to establish an Academy central library. The

first step was to bring the 16 libraries in the headquarter building of the Academy together to establish the central library based on the CDI and make other 18 libraries out of the headquarter building of the Academy be specialised branches of the central library. The second step of the reform is to realise a unified acquiring, cataloguing, collecting among all libraries and to provide the interlibrary loan services to the researchers of the whole Academy. The aim of the reform is to break the isolation and to form a unified library and information service network in the Academy. The first step has already been completed and the second step has also been partially completed. On January 3, 1995 the CASS Library was formally founded and started to provide services to researchers inside and outside the Academy.

After the reform, the CDI and the Library of the CASS were two names for the same entity. As a result of the reform, the CDI has become the largest institution in social science information services in China. It now has a collection of more than 5 million volumes and subscribes yearly to over 1,000 foreign periodicals and over 1,800 Chinese ones. As the NCP of the APINESS in China, the CDI of the CASS could now play a better role in guiding, coordinating, and Organising the nationwide social science information activities.

In the past several years, much attention was paid to the system of academies of social sciences in order to strengthen cooperation and coordination in the field of library and information work. The National Meeting for Chief Librarians in Academies of Social Sciences (NMCLASS) is one of the efforts in this aspect. The Centre for Documentation and Information (CDI CASS) hosted the first NMCLASS in October 1993. About 50 representatives from 15 libraries and information institutes of the country's academies of social sciences attended the meeting. The representatives discussed and approved some action programmes for strengthening the coordination and cooperation. They are:

Unified Catalogue for New Foreign Books in Academies of Social Sciences

Unified Catalogue for New Foreign Periodicals in Academies of Social Sciences

Directory of Chinese Local Academies of Social Sciences

The construction of a nationwide information network in social sciences was also discussed at the meeting.

In May 1997, hosted by the Jiangsu Academy of Social Sciences, the second NMCLASS was held in Jiangsu province. Representatives from 26 academies of social sciences attended the meeting. Speeding up the progress of computerisation in documentation management and services and constructing the nationwide information network for social sciences were a topic of general interest among the representatives. The fact that more and more academies attended the NMCLASS showed the common aspiration for cooperation and coordination in social science information services. These two meetings showed that the construction of a nationwide network among academies of social sciences has already become a common concern. It is planned that a special meeting on this topic will be held in the near future.

### **The System of Public Libraries**

The idea of establishing a library and information network in China can be traced back to the early 1980s when the Secretariat of the Central Committee of Communist Party of China (CPC) pointed

out that Beijing Library – the National Library of China – should be developed into a national central library and a national library network should be set up. In March 1987, a report on strengthening and improving national library work made by the Department of Propaganda of the Central Committee of CPC, the Ministry of Culture, the State Education Commission and the Chinese Academy of Sciences emphasised that the reform of the library should be focused on the development and utility of document and information resources. In October 1987, the Coordination Committee for Library and Information Work among Ministries and Academies composed of the representatives from 11 government departments was set up. The main aim of the Committee is to coordinate and jointly deal with the problems in developing library and information work of the country. However, these ideas and relevant decisions have not been implemented due to financial difficulties and obstacles in the administrative system.

In the past ten years, the Chinese Government has gradually increased the investment in public library construction and a group of libraries have been built or reconstructed. The quality and the quantity of all public libraries have obviously been improved. At the same time, there are still many weak points in national policy on the development of libraries and there are still many difficulties that need to be overcome in the construction of a nationwide library network.

According to the Statistical Yearbooks of China in recent years, the number of public libraries at above county level in China increased from 2,440 in 1987 to 2,615 in 1995. During the same time, the total floor space of public buildings increased from 2,480,000 square metres to 4,160,000 square metres, of which, stack rooms increased from 840,000 square metres to 1,180,000 square metres. The total collection increased from 270,830,000 volumes to 328,500,000 volumes. The total yearly budget increased from 15 million to 92.6 million.

Through the financial support of the central and local governments, a number of old libraries were reconstructed in recent years. The conditions of libraries have been obviously improved. For example, the new building of Beijing Library (the National Library of China) completed in 1987 is the largest one in Asia with a construction space of 140,000 square metres and a stack capacity of 200 million volumes. The library is comprehensively managed and administrated through an advanced computer system and can provide all kinds of services to the public from reading, loan, duplication, microreproduction, to CD-ROM materials and so on. The new building of Shanghai Library, another of the largest libraries in the China, was completed in 1996. The new library is equipped with the most advanced computer technologies in the world and is recognised as the second largest and the most modernised public library in China today.

Although obvious progress was achieved in recent years, the development of public libraries now is facing a series of challenges. Firstly, the number of documents and information has been increasing so rapidly that no library could purchase, process and collect all publications on its own. According to incomplete statistics, the number of books newly published in China was 103,836 and more than 700,000 in the world in 1994. The figure doesn't include periodicals and non-print publications such as video materials, CD-ROM, and microfilms. Secondly, the price of books and periodicals has been rapidly increasing. According to the statistics provided by the China Book Import and Export Co., the average price of books has been continuously increasing by 10 per cent yearly in recent years. If one considers such factors as the exchange rate in China the increase is not limited to 10 per cent per year. No library could afford the increasing burden. Although governments at all levels

increase their budget on public library undertaking every year in China, the growth in budget still lags behind the growth in book price. For example, the budget for book purchase in public libraries increased from 744,000 in 1987 to 2.4 million in 1995, but the number of purchased books decreased from 11.81 million volumes in 1987 to 7.65 million volumes in the same period, while the average price per volume increased from 0.63 to 3.13, i.e. by 5 times.

As a result, the problem of book collections being out of date is a very common problem that needs to be resolved in Chinese public libraries. A survey in 1992 showed that among public libraries, there were 500 libraries with less than 100 new volumes for the collection in that year. Of these, 423 libraries had less than 50 new volumes for the collection and 341 libraries actually without any new volumes. In 1992, there 92,000 newly published books in China, but only 10 per cent were collected by public libraries. Some people now give public libraries the name "houses for old books". Some readers even express their disappointed opinions about public libraries and some would rather go to other documentation and information institutions to search for needed information. The public library's role as a main information resources provider has been weakened. Some have even worried that public libraries would become museums if the situation isn't changed as soon as possible.

The only way to overcome these difficulties is to set up a network or networks among libraries and to encourage the sharing of information resources. The construction of networks is one of the most pressing tasks for public libraries.

For historical reasons, the construction of networks must be developed step by step. In recent years there has been some preparation for networking public libraries in China.

Firstly, new technologies have been extensively applied to the administration and services of public libraries. According to a survey among 3,139 public libraries and educational and academic libraries in 1995, there were 6,521 computer systems, 2,296 computer terminals and 1,076 databases. Many public libraries are actively constructing their own networks to improve the quality of services. The wide use of computer systems and other new technologies in public libraries have provided the necessary conditions for networking public libraries in the near future.

Secondly, the importance of breaking isolation and strengthening cooperation among libraries has been widely recognised as the only possible way forward for library activities in China. In recent years, public libraries have paid more and more attention to cooperation and have achieved good results. Thus, for example, Beijing Library has received strong support from Shanghai Library, Zhongshan Library, and Shenzhen Library in creating the Database of National Bibliography of China, one of the national priority projects financed by the government. With common effort, the project is going smoothly and 150,000 items of data relating to national bibliography have been processed. The database will contain 500,000 items of data when it is fully completed and will provide the condition for standardising catalogues in all libraries. The Database of Libraries Information of China funded by UNESCO and hosted by Beijing Library is another successful example of cooperation among libraries. The database includes rich information about more than 3,000 libraries of the country and is a useful tool for planning the national library network. The Unified Bibliography for Western Periodicals produced by Beijing Library is also the result of cooperation. Through this bibliography, readers can retrieve the western periodicals collected in more than 300 libraries. More and more cooperation will make networks both possible and necessary for the healthy development of library activities.

Thirdly, continuously improving national information infrastructures provide strong support for the effective operation of planned public library networks. There are sufficient reasons for people to believe that a national public library network will be constructed step by step through the common efforts of all libraries of the country.

### **The System of Higher Learning Institution**

The development of documentation and information network in the system of higher learning institutions has been considerably superior to the average level of APINESS activities in China. When the government decided to promote the process of modernisation of the national economy, education was widely viewed as one of the most important factors relevant to the success or failure of the modernisation drive. In 1994, the "Project 211", a programme promoting the development of higher education undertakings of China, was initiated by China's State Council. The main aim of the "Project 211" is to create a group of first-rate universities and to promote the disciplines required to train and develop the talents that the modernisation process needs. In June 1994, the Chinese Premier declared at the National Education Working Conference that a decision had been made by the highest authority to put the "Project 211" into practice. To implement the "Project 211", a sub-project named as the Public Service System Construction was created and a plan to establish three systems by the year 2000 was proposed. The three systems are: the China Education and Research Network (CERNET), Academic Library and Information Network (ALINET), and the Network for Sharing of Large and Processor Facilities. As mentioned earlier, the first system, CERNET was completed and was put into operation in 1995. The second system, ALINET, is now under its construction and the third one is still in its planning stage. A brief introduction to the ALINET is given below in view of its special implication for APINESS activities of China.

As early as the 1980s, the poor financial situation was a problem that had perplexed libraries in higher learning institutions of China. It resulted in a serious shortage of document resources and a low level of services. To solve the problem, early in June 1987, a five-year plan for establishing a nationwide academic and information system was drafted and was submitted to the Third National Conference on Academic Library and Information Work which was held in Beijing in the same year. It was suggested in the plan that within the next 5 years, about 30 documentation and information centres (DIC) should be established in universities and colleges of the country. The centres should develop their document collections according to their disciplinary emphases so that a documents and information supplying system covering all disciplines in higher learning institutions of China could be set up. The centres should also report their newly collected books through union catalogues and the centres should be linked to a network. The plan was discussed and approved by the conference, but was not put into practice because of the poor financial situation at that time.

In 1992, China's State Education Commission (SEC) decided to establish a group of DICs firstly in disciplines related to the social sciences, and later DICs in other disciplines after some experiences had been accumulated. The Leading Group of DICs in Social Sciences under the SEC was formed and a decision that 15 DICs would be established in some key universities, such as Beijing University, was made. The SEC asked the centres to acquire the documents from different sectors of the country and from abroad according to the divided disciplines, to share information resources, and to provide efficient documentation and information services to readers from regional, national, and even

international institutions. The centres should influence the other higher learning institutions and raise the level of modernisation in documentation and information services of national higher learning institutions.

After some preparation, six 'comprehensive' DICs were set up in six key universities that were located in various regions of China. They are Beijing University, Nankai University, Fudan University, Wuhan University, Sichuan University, and Jilin University. Beijing University has taken on the role of leadership and coordination. At the end of 1992, another nine 'specific' DICs were set up. They are China People's University, Beijing Normal University, Beijing Foreign Studies University, Central Nationalities University, East China Normal University, Shanghai Foreign Studies University, Nanjing University, Zhongshan University, and Xiamen University. Under the guidance of the Leading Group of DICs, SEC, a plan for the Construction of Information Resources was developed when the 15 DICs were established. The main aim of the plan is to develop a comprehensive distribution and documentation system covering all the disciplines of the social sciences through cooperation and coordination between centres and relevant universities and under the management of the SEC. The goal is to provide higher learning institutions with a high level system of documentation in education and research, and to make a greater contribution to the development of national information resources. The plan requested that the documents collection in the universities which had set up the DICs cover 90 per cent of the discipline that they were specialising in.

Due to shortage of funds and other factors, it has been impossible to make all centres reach established standards such that the work would adhere to the basic principles of comprehensive planning and separation of duties.

To promote the development of the centres, a special fund was set up for the DICs to collect foreign materials. At the same time, a division of key disciplines was made among the DICs. Each of them focuses their foreign materials collection on different disciplines so that a more complete and less duplicated collection of foreign materials can be developed.

So far, some unified activities have been taken in strengthening bibliographic control. They are as follows:

- (1) Ordering bibliofile CD-ROM for each DIC as the basic resource for cataloguing
- (2) Training cataloguing staff members
- (3) Adopting US-MARC as the format for producing the MARC records
- (4) Using LCSH as the subject headings authority in cataloguing and indexing
- (5) Using AACR2 and ISBD as cataloguing rules
- (6) Compiling a union catalogue in order to report new materials that DICs have already collected

The construction of DICs is only a part of ALINET. The major objective of ALINET is to establish a large nationwide academic documentation and information service system, so as to provide efficient and convenient services by the end of the year 2000. Within the system, there will be 30-40

national and regional DICs as nodes connecting all university libraries, major public libraries, and information institutions in China and some important foreign institutions. By the year 2000, libraries of about 100 key universities participating in the "Project 211" will be connected to the campus networks, about 30 national and regional DICs will be set up and be put into operation and provide on-line services, a batch of databases will be set up and opened for users, some CD-ROM will be produced and issued. By the year 2010, all universities and colleges libraries (about 1000) should have been connected to the campus network and more services will be offered by ALINET.

To achieve its goals ALINET places emphases on two features: one is the expansion of the collection of documents and information resources to meet the needs of readers. Foreign publications such as research reports, proceedings, dissertations and references, and electronic publications such as CD-ROM are also emphasised. The other feature is the establishment of various databases so that all the resources can be properly and quickly processed and in-putted so that the readers can easily use them. The planned databases include:

Union MARC of Chinese Books

Union MARC of Chinese periodicals

Union MARC of Western Language Books

Union MARC of western Language Periodicals

Union MARC of Chinese Ancient Books

Chinese Fulltext Electronic Publications

ALINET will significantly improve the level of documentation and information services not only in higher learning institutions but also in all academic circles and society in China.

There are some other documentation and information networks in higher learning institutions, but ALINET is undoubtedly one of the most successful efforts in the construction of documentation and information networks in the field of social sciences in China. The reasons that the ALINET is successful are:

(1) Strong support from the government

ALINET has been implemented as a sub-project of the "Project 211", so it has received strong support, especially financial support, from the government

(2) Clear aims for action

ALINET was set up to meet the needs of higher learning institutions in order to create the first-rate universities in the country.

(3) Clear plan of action

As a sub-project of "Project 211", ALINET has been operated simultaneously with the development of the "Project 211" and ALINET has been implemented step by step.

(4) Based on the CERNET, ALINET could achieve its most effective result.



## **The System of Military Academies and the System of Party Schools**

The United Meeting of the Chief in Library and Information Group, affiliated to the National Centre for Coordination of Military Academies, is in charge of planning, Organising, and coordinating the development of library and information networks within the system of military academies. As a result of efforts of over the last ten years, an information network within the system has been built and put into operation. The first group of academies (about 15) were connected to the network in 1996. The second group (more than 40) in 1997. The third group (about 50) is still at the planning stage. The achievement of networking within the military academies system can be attributed to relatively stable funds and a relatively strong leadership.

Compared to the system of military academies, the system of Party schools is much more complex. After the first National Meeting of Chief Librarians of the Provincial Party Schools (NMCLPPS) in 1991, all the libraries within the system began to transform traditional libraries into modernised multi-functional libraries. In 1994, the second NMCLPPS was held. The meeting asked for the reform and development of libraries in order to catch up with the rapid development of the information infrastructure. Like academies of social sciences, the Party schools have to overcome a number of difficulties such as shortage of funds and lack of unified leadership in the construction of networks.

## **The Technological Environment of APINESS in China**

The decade of APINESS in China are the ten years in which information infrastructure have been gradually improved and preliminary information networks have been established. The greatly changed technological environment requires APINESS to operate in new ways.

## **The Development of Telecommunication Infrastructures**

Ten years ago, the level of telecommunication infrastructure was very poor. According to the Statistical Yearbook of China 1995, there were only 6,282,811 telephone subscribers in urban areas and 1,774,434 in rural areas in 1987. The number of telephones for every 100 persons was only 1.35. The backward situation in telecommunication had become a bottleneck for the development of the national economy, and something that foreign investors complained about.

To change this situation, the government invested about 29 billion in the posts and telecommunications industry during the 1991-1995 period. It has brought about substantial changes in the scale, technological level, quality and quantity of posts and telecommunications networks. Digitisation and programming-controlling were established. Over 100,000 kilometres of long-distance optical cables were laid, and the capacity of the telephone switching system was increased by 58.95 million telephones, averaging about a 42 per cent annual increase. The public switched networks linked more than 2,000 cities and towns above the county level. The public data communication networks covered more than 2,000 cities and counties. The telephone ownership rate rose from 1.1 per cent to 4.66 per cent during the 1991-1995 period. In 1995, the urban telephone switching capacity reached 3.8 million lines, and there were 35.5 telephones for every 100 urban residents. It is also planned to enable about 40 per cent of the urban population to have access to telephone services, 90 per cent of

the cities and counties to have public exchange networks and 60 per cent to have digital networks in the near future.

By the year 2000, the length of long-distance optical cables will extend 210,000 km to cover the whole country, and the capacity of long-distance automatic switching system will extend to a total of 6 million terminals. China is expected to invest \$60.24 billion in the telecommunications industry in order to open an additional 150 million telephone lines during the 1996-2000 period.

### **The Development of Internet in China**

As early as in 1986 some researchers in the Chinese Academy of Sciences utilised the predecessor of the Internet and E-mail services by connecting their computers through telephone dialling to computer systems in the United States and European countries. The Internet formally entered China in May 1994 when the CSTNET, the first national backbone network linking to the Internet, was founded in the Chinese Academy of Sciences. Since then, China has established four national backbone networks. They are: the CSTNET (China Science and Technology Network) founded by the State Science and Technology Commission and the Chinese Academy of Sciences in 1994; the CERNET (China Education and Research Network) founded by the State Education Commission, in April 1995; the CHINANET founded by the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications in December 1995; and the GBNET (Golden Bridge Network) founded by the Ministry of Electronics Industry in 1996. These four networks have their own special client groups. As a non-profit organisation financed by the State, the CSTNET serves only the institutes in the field of science and technology, especially the institutes in the Chinese Academy of Sciences and its branch institutions in the country. The CSTNET now links more than 120 institutes. The CERNET is also a non-profit organisation funded by the State. Its clients are limited to the field of education and research institutions, and now it connects almost all universities and colleges of the country. As the first commercial computer network, the CHINANET provides various information services including Internet service to the public in China. The GBNET serves clients in the field of finance and economy.

Since the Internet became available in 1994, there have been more than 100,000 Internet users in the country. Some specialists predict that Internet users will amount to 300,000 within next two or three years.

The rapid development of telecommunications and the Internet provides favourable conditions both for the informatization of the national economy and for the social science information work.

### **The Development of Databases in China**

Along with the rapid development of information technology, especially the network technology, an increasing number of documents and information has been processed and in-putted into various databases in order to make them accessible to users. In 1995, the State Planning Commission and the State Science and Technology Commission jointly made a survey on the construction of databases in China. According to this survey, there are 1,038 databases that are relatively large in size and could provide services to the public. 586 of these databases are related to the social sciences. The survey showed that the number of databases has rapidly increased in recent year (there were only 13 databases in 1992) and the capacity of databases has obviously enlarged.

## The Main Activities of APINESS in China

Since 1988 China, as one of the earliest member countries of the APINESS, has given strong support to its activities. In 1988, soon after the establishment of APINESS, the National Advisory Group was set up in Beijing. The NAG was composed of high-ranking officials and famous specialists and scholars in the field of social science information. According to the decision of the NAG, the Centre for Documentation and Information (CDI) of CASS was appointed as the NCP of APINESS in China.

In the last ten years, the CDI organised and implemented various activities at the central and local levels under the APINESS framework.

At the central level, CDI, the largest social science information institution in China, organised and took part in the following types of activities:

1. CDI took part in the activities of APINESS. As the NCP of APINESS in China, the CDI has been actively engaged in the APINESS activities. It made several surveys on the activities and the development of social science information work in China according to the APINESS framework so that the results of the surveys could be incorporated in the country reports that were submitted to the APINESS Regional Advisory Group Meetings every two years, and in the questionnaire surveys made at the request of the Secretariat of APINESS. The CDI also tried to increase the influence of APINESS by timely delivery of APINESS newsletters to relevant institutions in China. It also constantly sent short reports on China's new developments of information services within the framework of APINESS. Also, it often reported APINESS activities in other Asia-Pacific countries in the Journal entitled "Information and Documentation Services", edited by Chinese Information Society of Social Sciences. To response to the UNESCO Mobilizing Project on "Youth Shaping the World", CDI has edited and published the yearly abstracts of youth studies entitled Youth Shaping the World (annually) since 1990, and some preparations have been made for setting up a planned database of abstracts under the same name.

2. Some efforts were made to promote exchanges of academic documents and scholars among some Asia-Pacific countries. Up to now, CDI has established cooperation with a number of institutions in Russian, Japan, Korea, and Viet Nam. Among them, the Agreement of Regular Exchange and Cooperation Between CDI of CASS and the Institute of Scientific Information in Social Sciences (ISISS), Russian Academy of Sciences is the most successful one. According to the agreement, CDI and ISISS should mutually provide publications needed by other side, and hold, in turn, new books exhibition in Moscow and Beijing every two years. Through the efforts of both sides, the Agreement has been smoothly implemented. So far CDI has held four books exhibitions in Moscow and St. Petersburg, and ISISS held two books exhibitions in Beijing. After the close of exhibitions, all the exhibited books are given to the other side as gifts according to the Agreement. It means both sides could overcome the difficulties in shortage of foreign currency and receive a number of valuable new academic books. Most Russian books and periodicals needed by CDI are collected by exchange. A similar system exists in relation to Republic of Korea.

Besides exchange of publications, there have also been exchanges of personnel exchanges several times between CDI and ISISS. CDI has established cooperation with the Library of Russian Academy

of Sciences, Korean National Central Library, Korean Institute for International Economic Development Policy, and the Centre for Social Science Research of Viet Nam.

3. CDI coordinated and guided the activities of CISSS. As the Secretariat of the Chinese Information Society of Social Sciences (CISSS), CDI is in charge of Organising the activities of CISSS including the national annual conferences. Through these activities, CDI plays a role of coordinating nationwide social science documentation and information services.

4. The CDI compiled and published many important information materials including Handbook of Social Sciences in China, 1990; Chronicle of Events in World's Social Sciences, 1993; Directory of Social Science Institutions in the World, 1995; Social science Policy Studies Abroad, 1995, etc. Now CDI is compiling Handbook of Contemporary Social Sciences in Republic of Korea. This project is financed jointly by CDI and the Korean Foundation of Republic of Korea and will be completed in January 1998.

5. Creation of databases. To transform from a traditional information service to a modern one, CDI is energetically engaged in setting up various databases. Some databases have already been completed and have begun to provide services to users. They are:

Database of Bibliography of CASS;

Database of Index of Social Science Papers Abroad

Database of Index of Social Science Papers in China

Database of Abstracts of Economic Papers

6. CDI was entrusted by higher bodies with research projects

As mentioned above, CASS is the national research centre for social sciences and one of its main tasks is to serve the policy-making of the government. CASS was entrusted with a number of projects by higher bodies. In 1994, CDI produced Findings Report on the Development of Library and Information Science in China Since 1970s. The project was financed by the National Foundation of Social Sciences (NFSS) and completed in 1995. 'Findings' reports play an important reference role in the policy-making in the planning of the country's development of library and information undertakings. The CDI is busy with the preparations for another State's top priority project named Study on National Library and Information Network Facing the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. The project will be completed by the year 2000.

### **Some Suggestions about the Future of APINESS**

Although the initiative of setting up APINESS is very important in promoting the development of social science information services and information resource sharing in the Asia-Pacific Region, yet its influence on China's social science information work is relatively limited. Many things have to be done to improve APINESS at the national level, and at the regional level as well.

At the national level, the management system of China's social science should be further reformed and the role of CDI as the NCP of APINESS should be strengthened. China, as one of the largest

countries in the world, has many separate departments with its own institutions of information services and this is just as true of the field of social science information services. Isolation can always be seen among them. For example, many institutions in the field of social science research are busy with the construction of databases and networks without necessary coordination. As a result, duplication of the same work often happens. There is also a diversity of formats and software in databases thus creating difficulties in sharing information resources. The purpose of APINESS is to break isolation within the social science information institutions. CDI, as the NCP of APINESS in China, has done a lot to break the isolation among libraries in the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences and has achieved success, but it is difficult to break the isolation among all information institutions and libraries in the country. Shortage of funds is one of the major reasons. In addition to this the lack of a strong and integrated leadership is another reason hindering the healthy development of social science information network.

In view of this the NCP (and the NAG) of APINESS in China should be legally authorised to be the coordinator in developing a national social science information network and be properly financed by the government. The NCP (and the NAG) should work out realistic action plans under the APINESS activities framework and bring its actions into the orbit of planned development.

At the regional level, the APINESS activities should be further improved. In the Asia-Pacific Region, there are many differences in social, cultural, and economic development and many difficulties in academic exchanges as well. Since its launching, APINESS has achieved much in promoting the development of social science information undertakings in the region. But the quality of its activities should be further improved in order to exert more important influence on the direction and development of the regional network. First, APINESS should develop a more practical action programme, actively implement it, and examine the results regularly. The RAG meetings should be improved in order to make everyone know that the APINESS is not a forum but a coordinator and organiser in promoting the development of social science information network in the Asia-Pacific Region.

## INDIA EVALUATION

### Preamble

The Indian evaluation of APINESS covers three major areas: the current state of the social sciences and social science infrastructures in India, including the market for information in India; APINESS in India; and a statement about possible future directions.

In the Indian report it is clear that NASSDOC is viewed as a synonym for APINESS. Therefore any activity of the former can be viewed as an activity of the latter. As NASSDOC is a very proactive and energetic institution in the field of social science information in India it would appear that APINESS is also very vigorous in that country. India operates according to a centrally planned and funded model of social science information infrastructure development and the report gives a detailed account of both the structural framework of the social sciences and the activities carried out within this structure by the information services divisions of the structure.

India was in the fortunate position of having a long standing social science infrastructure which resonated with the structural requirements defined for APINESS. It was very easy to identify the institution, NASSDOC, that be the obvious candidate for the APINESS NCP and the structural arrangements within which this institution existed lent themselves to being given an APINESS label. Thus for example, the functions and title of the APINESS NAG for India could be matched to NASSDOCs existing advisory committee.

It is not surprising, therefore, that India has taken a leading role in APINESS and it was because of this that some key elements of APINESS activities, such as producing and distributing the APINESS newsletter, were delegated to this member-country. India is also the only country that has hosted a Regional Advisory Group meeting (in August 1992); all the others meetings were held in UNESCO's offices in Bangkok. These, and other indicators, demonstrate the vigour with which India adopted the APINESS project. It has been one of the most vocal and strong supporters of the project.

The Indian evaluation of APINESS is generally favourable but calls for a more vigorous pursuit of its fundamental aims based on greater funding and support for APINESS activities by UNESCO. It also calls for a review of particular objectives in the light of recent developments in information and communication technologies. These suggestions and recommendations form the basis of one of the scenarios for the future of APINESS outlined in the body of this report.

The following is an edited version of the full report which contained a number of significant appendices and also more detail on the activities of NASSDOC. In this version an attempt is made to highlight the specifically APINESS elements of NASSDOC's activities.

### Social Science Enterprises in India

Countries like India are engaged in the national development activities with the sole aim of improving the standard of living and life style of their vast populations. The social sciences are gaining more and more popularity and social scientists are in great demand in India. National reconstruction and development activities have augmented the role of social scientists beyond academia. They are in

great demand as advisers and consultants not only in government but also in private enterprises, business and industry, international organisations and even in organisations focussed on science, agriculture, medicine, engineering etc.

The Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) is a non-governmental organisation, fully supported by the Govt. of India. It is a national agency responsible for the promotion of the social sciences, improving their quality and attempting to increase their use in policy formulation and national development in India. The ICSSR performs both promotional and responsive roles and is trying to improve social science enterprise in India through its various programmes such as research grants, fellowships, grants for organising seminars, workshops and publication of social science research and other monographs. It has established a National Social Science Documentation Centre and a Data Archive to provide information support to social scientists in India.

Globalisation, liberalisation, free trade, international economic cooperation etc. has resulted in further expansion of social science enterprises worldwide. India is no exception. The last 25 years of so has seen a tremendous growth of social science enterprises. With the growth of social science there has been considerable growth in information, data and documentation services. Today India has over 1,000 social science research institutes and about 700 specialised social science libraries and information centres. The number of books, journals, research reports in the social and human sciences has increased significantly.

### **Priority Areas in Social Sciences**

The ICSSR carries out, on a regular basis, surveys of research in different social science disciplines in India with a view to identify research gaps and determine research priorities. For this purpose the entire area of social science has been divided into 7 major fields:

- (1) Economics, including Commerce and Demography;
- (2) Political Science, including International Relations;
- (3) Public Administration;
- (4) Management;
- (5) Sociology, Social and Cultural Anthropology, Social Work and Criminology;
- (6) Psychology; and
- (7) Economic, Human and Political Geography.

These seven major fields have been further divided into 125 sub-fields. So far more than 50 research surveys have been published by the ICSSR in this series.

The priority areas in social sciences and social science information in India for the 9<sup>th</sup> plan period i.e. 1997-2002 are as follows:-

2002-2020 vision, Future studies, Population, Basic needs, Food securities, Health and education etc. Globalisation

Regional inequality/Income distribution

Emancipation of under privileged groups i.e. Scheduled castes, Scheduled tribes, Women, Child labour etc.

Gender concern: Empowerment of women

Strengthening of international collaboration programme and developing a comparative perspective for social science research

Promote interaction between social scientists and policy makers in order to improve the use of social science research in policy formulation

Urbanisation, Democracy, Decentralisation, Human rights, Grass root movement, NGOs, Panchayati Raj institutions

Social Justice, Secularism, national integration

### **Priority Areas in Social Science Information**

*In social science information the priority areas are:-*

- (i) exchange of information through networking among social science research institutes and ICSSR regional centres; (ii) upgrading existing information and communication technologies; (iii) organising short-term training courses on the use of information and communication technologies in social science information services for librarians and users of social science information; (iv) to further extend the National Social Science Documentation Centre (NASSDOC) facilities to other social science organisations in and out side the country; (v) bring under bibliographical control Indian social science literature and make it available to users in digital format specially online and on CD-ROM etc. (vi) the strengthening of the Documentation Centre on Asian Studies to facilitate access to information on and about the region; (vii) provide translation services for documents in Asian languages into English language.

### **Information Market in India**

The potential information market in India is quite big, complex and variegated. The users of social science information are scattered throughout the whole population. In addition to use by social scientists engaged in teaching and research in academia, business and industry, government and other sectors, social science information is being used in agriculture, medicine, engineering etc. There is a big difference in the nature of demand of social science information with in these groups and the intensity of demand differs from one group to another and within a sector itself. A fairly reliable library and information service is available to academia and others but few other sectors – such as grass-root workers and non-governmental organisations – have this kind of support.



## **International Collaboration in Social Sciences between India and countries of the Asia and the Pacific Region**

The ICSSR is the implementing agency of the social sciences component of the various Cultural Exchange Programmes between India and a number of countries in America, Europe, Africa and Asian region. Bilateral relations have been established under various cultural exchange programmes and other major agreements of cooperation between the Govt. of India and other countries. India has International collaboration programme with the following countries: Russia, China, Japan, Egypt, Viet Nam, South Korea, Turkey.

These programmes are used for the exchange of literature, exchange of expertise and for undertaking collaborative research projects, jointly organising international seminars and conferences on specific issues relevant to these regions. Under this programme ICSSR not only sponsors Indian social scientists to visit these countries but also receives Asian scholars to work in India. Research fellowships for scholars from these regions to do research in India are available.

In order to promote research collaboration between Indian and foreign scholars the ICSSR has recently identified the following general themes which are also useful for cultural exchange programmes:

- (1) Impact of liberalisation on labour market and global economy
- (2) Problems of urbanisation
- (3) Studies on agricultural and rural economy
- (4) State, labour market and society
- (5) Problems of economy in multi-ethnic and multi-cultural societies
- (6) Peasant, agriculture, and social structure

The ICSSR has also identified more specific topics in relation to certain countries like China.

### **Funding**

Funding of the social science information infrastructure is fairly straightforward. NASSDOC activities in India are supported by multiple funding agencies namely, ICSSR, University Grants Commission, various departments and ministries of the Govt. of India, State Governments etc. Business and industrial libraries are funded by the corporate sector. There are a few private enterprises like Centre for Economy, Mumbai, and Indian Documentation Service, Gurgaon etc. which are funded by individual or private enterprises. However, more than 95 per cent of the libraries and information services in India are funded from public sources.

Some foreign funding agencies have also provided grants-in-aid for various programmes relating to documentation and information services. The Government of Japan has provided grants in aid of the establishment of the Documentation Centre on Asian Studies in NASSDOC. The Government of the Netherlands has provided grants-in-aid for a programme of exchange of literature, data and documentation to NASSDOC. These sources support not only documentation and information activities

but also provide funds for undertaking research projects in information culture and for preparing information locating tools such as directories and statistical databases.

### **Asia-Pacific Information Network in Social Sciences: India**

India has played a very active role in the APINESS Regional Advisory Group (RAG) and participated in its meeting since its very inception.

India has brought out the APINESS Newsletter on behalf of APINESS members since its very inception. A brief report about the Newsletter is given later.

Over the last 8-10 years, in keeping with APINESS objectives, NASSDOC has completed various documentation projects and has provided information services in social sciences. Some of these are:

- (1) Creation of bibliographical databases of social science literature produced in and on India, covering different types of literature.
- (2) Updates, on a regular basis, of information locating and resource sharing tools such as the following: union catalogue of social science periodicals and serials; and directories of social science research institutes, Asian studies centres, social science libraries and information centres.
- (3) Organisation of short-term training courses to expose information intermediaries and social scientists, working at senior and middle level, to the use of the latest information and communication technologies.
- (4) NASSDOC works in close cooperation with other information centres and networks in India and abroad. NASSDOC has played a catalytic role in establishing the national information network on Women and Development Studies in India.
- (5) Efforts are being made to provide additional support for strengthen existing social science networks of libraries and information centres in India.
- (6) NASSDOC, with the support of national and International organisations, has undertaken and completed many bibliographical and documentation projects which have been found very useful by scholars and other users of social science information in India and elsewhere. Some of these are:

Directory of Social Science Research Institutions in India;

Trend reports on Social Science Research in India;

Directory of Libraries and Information Centres in India; and

Bibliography on India 2000.

## Network Arrangements

NASSDOC has established strong linkages with national, regional and international activities in social science information and documentation. NASSDOC works in close cooperation with the other information networks such as Delhi Library Network, INFLIBNET and in the network of libraries of ICSSR supported research institutes and regional centres at national level. Some of the activities in which NASSDOC has taken an active part are as follows:-

At city level, NASSDOC is a founder member of Delhi Library Network and is closely associated with its activities and management since 1991. It has also organised a meeting of the social science libraries and information centres in Delhi in the year 1992 with the basic aim of soliciting cooperation with them in resource sharing and information network at city level.

INFLIBNET is a computer communication network of libraries and information centres of Indian universities, and major research institutes in India. NASSDOC since very inception is involved actively in establishing this library and information network.

NASSDOC is the main catalytic force behind the network of libraries of ICSSR Research institutes and information centres.

### Cooperation with other regional information networks

NASSDOC has cooperated with other Indian national focal points of regional information network in India such as ASTINFO and WINAP.

At the sub-regional level NASSDOC provides bibliographical input about social science literature from India in DEVINSA databases which is a database of South Asian Development Literature coordinated by the Marga Institute, Sri Lanka. NASSDOC is also actively associated with the Documentation Centre on South Asia presently located in Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre (INSDOC), New Delhi. Documentation Centre on Asian Studies, established with assistance from Japanese government is located in NASSDOC.

NASSDOC has actively participated in various activities of NISSAT and ASTINFO in India. It's a member of the Executive Advisory Committee of NISSAT and similarly the Joint Advisor of NISSAT is a member of ICSSR Committee on Documentation Services and Research Information (CDS&RI), which acts as the National Advisory Group for APINESS in India. NASSDOC has also participated in ASTINFO's Document Delivery Project in Asia. Under this programme, the National Library of Australia offered photocopies of documents available at a highly subsidised rates to ASTINFO member countries.

NASSDOC has also organised various programmes connected with information and documentation services and networking related to WINAP.

At the international level NASSDOC actively participates in various activities and deliberations of various organisations such as the International Committee for Social Science Information and Documentation. The Director of NASSDOC is the present Chairman of International Committee for Social Science Information and Documentation Centre, Paris.

NASSDOC also closely cooperates with other international agencies and associations like F.I.D. and IFLA and actively participates in their various activities.

NASSDOC has completed many social science information and documentation projects with support from UNESCO Paris and UNESCO Bangkok.

NASSDOC also contributes, on a regular basis, information about Indian national output for the International Social Science Bibliographies sponsored by ICSSR and UNESCO.

### **National Advisory Group**

The work of the National Advisory Group of APINESS India is being looked after by the ICSSR's Committee on Documentation Services and Research Information. This Committee consists of 13 members, is headed by the Chairman, Indian Council of Social Science Research, and other senior social scientists and library and information scientists representing various universities, research organisations, government departments etc. NASSDOC is the NCP for APINESS and the six regional centres and 27 research institutes funded by ICSSR form the backbone of the APINESS network in India. At second level NASSDOC works in close cooperation with library information and documentation centres within university system, in government and autonomous research organisations and in business and industry.

### **APINESS Activities**

The following activities of NASSDOC resonate with the aims and objectives of APINESS:

#### *Databases in Regional Languages in India*

India has 15 official Indian languages that are used by academics and state governments in day to day administration. Teaching and research work is now increasing being done in these languages. However, as the literature in these languages is widely scattered and available mostly in grey form it is out of the reach of users outside the region. Such literature in social sciences is rarely translated into other Indian or other languages, therefore, it is outside the reach of not only international but even Indian scholars. NASSDOC has taken up two documentation programmes to bring such literature under bibliographical control:

- (1) Bibliographies of Teaching and Research Material in Indian languages,
- (2) Bibliographies of Area Studies

#### *Exchange of documents/Publications*

ICSSR and NASSDOC have a very ambitious publication programme in social sciences and in information and documentation services. ICSSR and NASSDOC books and journals are offered for exchange world wide. In the first UNESCO Expert meeting, held in Bangkok in May 1986 NASSDOC offered in exchange all national contact points of APINESS and other participants of the meeting its publications. The ICSSR library which is located in NASSDOC currently receives over 2500 social sciences journals and other publications from various countries including India. NASSDOC

(ICSSR) is a depository of Republic of China government publications. It has a special collection of publications from Japan.

#### *Short-term Training Courses and meetings*

NASSDOC regularly organises short-term training courses, workshops and seminars with the basic aim of exposing librarians, information intermediaries and users of social science information to the use of information and communication technology in handling social science information. During the last 8-10 years India has organised various short-term training courses in which librarians and users of social science information working in the ICSSR Regional Centres, social science research institutes and other organisations have participated. These programmes have been found very useful and are appreciated by the participants including the representatives of other Asian countries.

NASSDOC, as NCP for APINESS in India organised the Third Regional Advisory Group meeting of APINESS at Ashoka Hotel, New Delhi from 25-27 August 1992. It also organised a regional training workshop on CDS:ISIS and Information Technology as a follow on to this meeting.

NASSDOC has also deputed its staff members to participate in regional training programmes in Philippines and Malaysia.

#### *On the Job Training*

NASSDOC has also provided on the job training to participants from various libraries and information centres from India and from the Asia and the Pacific region.

#### *APINESS Newsletters*

The first expert meeting of APINESS held in Bangkok in May 1986 proposed that a newsletter for the APINESS should be brought out to disseminate information about social science information activities, services and resources in and on Asia. The ICSSR offered to support such a venture and assigned this responsibility to NASSDOC. Since its very inception, then, NASSDOC has brought out the APINESS Newsletter. The APINESS Newsletter disseminated information by reporting significant development in the field of social science information. The broad objectives of the Newsletter are:

- (1) To disseminate information about activities and achievements of APINESS
- (2) To disseminate information about activities of other sister networks and information centres in the region like, ASTINFO, AMIC, WINAP, NISSAT, SEDNAP etc.
- (3) To project developments in social science research.
- (4) To project developments in the field of documentation and information services.
- (5) To cover information about core reference sources in social sciences.
- (6) Disseminate information about publications and other research material available in exchange to APINESS family members.
- (7) TCDC offers from the region.

- (8) Information about activities of social science research institutions like their current research programmes, seminars and conferences.
- (9) Cover information about training programmes organised in and outside the region.

In addition to the information about the activities of APINESS information about activities of AASSREC, UNESCO general information programmes and information about the various social science research councils and libraries and information centres from Asia and Pacific region are also published on a regular basis.

The newsletter is distributed among all the National Commission for UNESCO, Social Science Research Councils, major social science libraries and information centres in the Asia-Pacific region. The newsletter is very well received not only by social science librarians and information intermediaries but even by social science research scholars and others working in various organisations in the Asia and Pacific region.

In the recent issues of APINESS Newsletter more emphasis has been given to news-items regarding use of information and communication technology in providing and upgrading library and information services in social sciences in the region.

UNESCO has provided the financial subvention to bring out two issues of the newsletter every year.

## **The Future**

### *Exploiting Information and Communication Technologies*

APINESS has so far been concentrating on library based information services, and development of bibliographic databases. This is invariably the first stage in the development of any information systems therefore, the last eight years in the life of APINESS may be construed as a preparatory phase only.

The advent of personal computers in 1980s revolutionised the information scene. The conventional library and archive systems were also quick to adopt the technology to automate their activities in part or in full. The Indian APINESS focal point, NASSDOC, has embraced the computer technology and the related optical technology of compact disks. To that extent, the Social Science Documentation Centres have not lagged behind. Though almost all research institutions under the ICSSR have got E-mail connectivity however, the computer culture has not percolated down to organisations affiliated to ICSSR, or social science institutions outside the ICSSR except for few major institutions. Apart from financial constraints other major factors responsible for less use of information and communication technologies in social sciences are a low skill base in social science libraries and weak demand from users. The paucity of financial resources is an all pervading problem. Its end is not in sight. However, the situation can definitely be improved upon in respect of the other two factors if systematic efforts are made.

In skills development NASSDOC has already conducted a number of programmes. However, these efforts will not yield any results if the neo-skilled do not get opportunities to apply their new

knowledge to solve real-world problems. Since APINESS has constraints of funds, financial resources for acquisition of I & CT products for social science institutions will have to be found from multiple sources only.

In user education, however, the NASSDOC has not been able to make much headway. This is not only the case with NASSDOC but all other national Information systems because social scientists have very little exposure to the new IT regime as compared to their counterparts in science and technology. NASSDOC has planned to organise short-term training courses for users also.

User education has assumed more significance in view of the transfer of databases to magnetic and optical media; and the advent of the Internet. Today, libraries acquire CD-ROM databases and load these on workstations for general access. Information retrieval is done by intermediaries like the librarians and more importantly directly by the end-users. The proportion of searching by end-users vis-à-vis searching by librarians is increasing rapidly specially because the payment for CD-ROM acquisition is done on a flat rate on yearly subscription basis. As a result, unlike on-line technology, users are under no stress to complete a search and log off. Similarly, Internet facilities are mostly used by the end users.

In this new environment, the role of conventional librarians is on the decline. This may not be a point for debate here, but it is essential to recognise that the conventional librarians have to share the responsibility of sensitising, familiarising and training users in fully exploiting available information sources in digital format.

The use of Internet in India has not taken off yet as the following table reveals:

**Internet users in Asia ('000)**

	1996	2000
China	108	716
Former Hong Kong	228	1,514
India	30	300
Indonesia	55	345
Japan	2,550	7,412
Malaysia	298	1,481
Philippines	85	494
Singapore	298	1,481
Taiwan	275	1,553
Thailand	60	300
Republic of Korea	313	1,596

Users interest in social science information is usually restricted to the local or the immediate regional neighbourhood. This is in sharp contrast to science and technology Information where users cannot do without accessing the global information base. Nevertheless, even in the social sciences,

there are areas which may attract wider interest. This interest may be more from neighbouring countries in the SAARC region, south and South-East Asia. This may include, apart from general theories, methodologies etc., experiences and case studies and factual/numeric information such as demographic information, database of experts, expert institutions, research in progress, institutional pattern of administration, macro and micro-economic indicators, and so on.

So far, these materials have been published in paper print form only. With the advent of Internet technology, the information may be loaded on WEB servers for wider access from users within the country and from abroad. Most of the developing countries have been accessing the Internet for search and retrieval of information. Individuals and institutions in developing countries have not been contributing to the information content of the Internet for a variety of reasons.

It is imperative for social scientists in a country like India to get over their inertia and to start using the information highway both as users and also as contributors of information.

#### *Provision of Internet Connectivity*

Social science institutions in India today, except for a few, do not have access to Internet. A programme needs to be evolved to provide TCP/IP connections to as many institutions as possible.

The small population of Internet accounts in India is largely dominated by commercial users and science and technology workers. Because their exposure to modern information access facilities has been small social scientists have not been ardent users of the Internet. Under weak demand pressure, social science institutions have also not taken to use the information highway even when it has been available – little as users and next to nil as contributors. It would require well coordinated efforts to bring social scientists at the same level of application intensity as their counterparts in science and technology and to bring Indian social scientists on par with their counterparts in the developed world in using the information highways.

#### *Development of Internet Literacy*

The Internet users population in India is estimated at 30,000; some authorities put the estimates lower than that. Whichever number is correct the literacy level is low by any standard. The main reasons behind this dismal picture are: Telephone lines are still scarce (The estimate is ten lines per thousand); Connectivity is still unreliable as well as expensive; Home users have to make do with unreliable and slow dial-up lines and individual users also cannot afford full TCP/IP facilities; Not many Indian homes have a computer and a modem (The PC penetration is 1 per 1,000); Internet courses are inordinately expensive.

There is a need to spread Internet literacy among users of different categories of social science information in India. Special efforts have to be made to set up Internet training schools, Internet clubs, and Discussion forums.

In order to prepare NASSDOC to play a useful role in upgrading information provisions in social sciences.



Webservers/sites may be set up on areas of general interests like:

A. Indian education facilities including:-

1. announcement of formal courses, announcement of entrance examinations, job placement facilities, career guidance.
2. short-term continuing education programmes, management development of executive development programmes, training workshops.
3. forthcoming conferences, etc.

B. Indian infrastructure of social science research including homepages of Indian institutions, directories/databases on institutions, experts, sponsors of extra-mural research projects, research in progress etc.

C. Bibliography of Indian contribution in the field including books in print and grey literature like research reports.

Such materials could be hosted on independent servers located in an institution like NASSDOC (ICSSR). This would demand powerful computer systems with back up systems, staff to work round the clock, uninterrupted power supply and, most importantly, at least a 64 kb dedicated link to the Internet gateway. This might be an expensive proposition.

Alternatively, appropriate space could be rented on servers located within the country or abroad, which may be quite inexpensive alternative.

Appropriate training packages aids to deliberate effectively on the subject may be procured from national and international sources.

Left unchecked, the globalisation of information will widen the information gap between developed and developing countries. It will further distance elites from the general population and limit traditional social and economic development efforts. Supports is required for upgrading information and communication systems, networks, products, technologies and applications that enables developing countries to be well informed, active participants in their own development.

There is a need to put greater emphasis and provide adequate support for computerisation and networking in social science information services under the APINESS framework. Information and communication technologies can provide more equity and increase pace of development in developing countries.

#### *Role of UNESCO*

During all these years UNESCO has contributed substantially to the development of social science research and upgrading information services by promoting establishment of network among social science research organisations, information and documentation activities. The role and support of UNESCO in the development of social sciences and social science information stands out clearly.

The catalytic role played by UNESCO in the establishment of APINESS through its Bangkok regional office is worth appreciating. The work of coordination of APINESS work in the UNESCO has been looked after by RUSHSAP in UNESCO's Regional office in Bangkok. It performs the work of APINESS Secretariat and has provided secretarial services to NCPs and other members of APINESS to facilitate network activities at the regional level (meetings, distribution of network information and reports). It has also liaised with international agencies and the National Commissions for Cooperation with UNESCO.

In the earlier period RUSHSAP Director in Bangkok was assisted by two to three associate experts. However, these staff members were transferred from regional office in Bangkok and in 1997 there is no professional expert left who can coordinate the work of APINESS. Consequently, there was almost a lull and the active role played by UNESCO, Bangkok through RUSHSAP was totally absent during the last 2-3 years with the result that even the small grant provided by UNESCO for bringing out APINESS newsletter was not released in time. No provision was made for the meetings of RAG in the last UNESCO i.e. 1995 and 1996.

The role played by RUSHSAP in promoting the concept of APINESS in the region and in encouraging member-states to join it has been very impressive. It is hoped that efforts will be made to provide adequate support for various activities and programmes of APINESS in the programmes and budget of UNESCO and other funding agencies.

It may be mentioned here that the level of funding available to APINESS should be compared with the funding available for ASTINFO and other NGO's from UNESCO. There are more users of social science information than users of science and technology information. The imbalance between the funding of the different regional networks should be minimised. The activities of ASTINFO and activities of APINESS at national level as well as in the region have enhanced the visibility of UNESCO.

Presently the member countries of APINESS approach each other only through RUSHSAP, UNESCO, Bangkok. Programmes like networking, resource sharing, exchange of data, documents and information can be successful, if countries strengthen bilateral relations. Efforts should be made to devise programmes so that bilateral relations between APINESS members are strengthened.

#### *APINESS Newsletter*

APINESS Newsletter is playing an important role in exchange of information in the region, therefore, support for this Newsletter should be maintained. However, efforts should also be made to raise additional resources for it by way of advertisement etc. In future, efforts will be made to preserve, produce and distribute APINESS Newsletter in digital format through a list server. For this purpose additional resources to upgrade computer hardware and software in the NASSDOC will be needed.

#### *Technical Cooperation Among Developing Countries (TCDC)*

The level of development and the use of information and communication technology in providing information services in the region varies from country to country. Some of countries of the region like Australia and New Zealand have the latest infra-structure and they are fully exploiting information and communication technology in providing information services. However, for other countries like Bangladesh, Nepal, Viet Nam, Mongolia etc. such infrastructures are almost non-existent.

There is a need to promote TCDC modality under APINESS framework vigorously. The development of information and documentation services and the availability of information and resources in different countries of Asia and Pacific differs from country to country and they can be categorised as information haves and have-nots. A quite substantial number of the members of APINESS can contribute effectively by sharing their experiences and resources with other APINESS member countries.

There is also a need to improve relations between various countries under APINESS framework at bilateral level for exchange of persons, experiences etc. An exercise should be taken to identify specific needs of APINESS members in different countries and their capacity to help other members in upgrading information services, in less prosperous nations through TCDC programmes by matching the need of some countries with the expertise available in other countries.

Though there are one or two cases of support provided earlier by UNESCO under APINESS framework for TCDC, however, there is a need of encouraging information intermediaries working in countries where an adequate infrastructure for social science information is not available to visit countries with better infrastructures for exchange of views and hands of experiences. APINESS countries like Australia, Malaysia, India and New Zealand should provide support in terms of organising short-term training courses and giving on the job training to information intermediaries from less prosperous countries.

## Conclusions

APINESS played a major role in breaking information isolation in the Asia-Pacific region. APINESS played an important role in raising level of awareness of use of information and communication technology at national and regional level. It has encouraged many countries in the region to establish National Social Science Documentation Centres of special social science libraries to take care of the information needs and requirements of users of different categories of social science information. Today information intermediaries and social scientists from different countries know much more about each other than a decade earlier, when they were living and working in isolation. APINESS acted as a catalytic force in upgrading and strengthening social science information and documentation services in the region. Some of the country like Bangladesh, Korea etc. were able to establish Social Science Documentation Centres and Information Services under APINESS framework.

Over the last 8 to 10 years (1986-1997) progress has been made in information provision in APINESS members countries, but after reviewing the country reports of the members of the APINESS presented at RAG meetings senses that there is a big imbalance between the level of development of information services and the use of information and communication technologies between countries in the region.

The APINESS was established in the year 1985 with humble beginning and humble objectives. The number of members countries of APINESS during a span of 10 years have increased from 12 to 16. This is quite impressive but still there is a need of involving more countries in APINESS. This will have implications of a financial and of other nature. Countries like Japan, Pakistan, Nepal, and from West Asia and Russian Federation should be encouraged to join APINESS. Members of the regional and sub-regional information networks and library associations could be encouraged to participate in RAG meetings as observers.

The meeting of the RAG should be organised by rotation in various member countries and the RAG meeting should be followed by one or two days training seminars/workshop or seminar.

The objectives of the APINESS as formulated in the first Expert Group meeting held in 1985 have mostly remained unchanged. In the 1<sup>st</sup> phase of APINESS these objective were all right. But at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we have to modify some of them for making these objectives more useful, specially in the light of latest developments in information and communication technologies in providing information services.

In various RAG meetings many NCPs have submitted proposals for undertaking bibliographical and documentation activities either at national level, bilateral or at regional level. Some of these proposals were really well conceived and well developed, however, because of lack of adequate response from APINESS and UNESCO and other funding agencies these proposals could not be followed through because of a lack of resources.

A flow-up of action taken on the Regional proposals presented before the last RAG meetings should be presented by the coordinating agency of APINESS (Presently RUSHSAP). Similarly action taken on the proposals discussed at the last NAG meeting should be reported before the next NAG meeting as well as before the RAG meeting.

With every RAG meeting one or two days workshops/seminars should be organised on some topic related to library and information services in social science and use of information and communication technology.

Under the APINESS framework, efforts should be made to strengthen at least one institution from each country to play an effective role as a national agency for exchange of information, documents and data and act as a coordinating agency for collecting its national literary output and managing its access to users within and outside the region. Facilities like e-mail, photocopy machines, scanners and micro filming equipment should be guaranteed at the focal points of APINESS in the region. If required, grants-in-aid should be arranged through other funding agencies. The system of effective document delivery and exchange of information should be established in the region. Various provisions for free flow of information like reducing telecommunications, shipping and postal rates and liberalisation of customs rules should be introduced. Such facilities, it is hoped, would strengthen not only information provision, but also upgrade the quality of research and teaching and national building and reconstruction activities in the less prosperous nations, who are engaged in upgrading the quality of life and living standards of their citizens. It is hoped that serious efforts will be made by various agencies to provide resources for free flow of information especially in the information poor world.

One of the problems of social science information is that in most of the countries in the developing world, information and documentation activities are not seriously treated as an integral part of the social science infrastructure. Relationship between social science research and policy makers on the one hand and information and documentation services on the other, are not fully exploited. Modern information and communication technology will play a crucial role in bringing these groups much closer and will enhance the inter-play between research and information to a considerable degree. The information and communication technology and the availability of world wide web and listsservers will encourage the development of information and communication networks at national, regional and international levels.

The majority of information services and databases presently available in the region are produced in hard/printed format. There is a need of providing support in terms of training course and for converting such databases into digital format like CD-ROM format etc. for which adequate resources in terms of money, manpower and computer hardware and software is required. Unless the data and documentation work is available in digital format, the exchange of information data and documentation will not be very smooth in the region.

Most of APINESS countries use their own indigenous languages for teaching, research, administration and publication programmes. An inventory of such publications available in translated format from their national languages to other languages should be maintained and made available on demand to others. Possibilities of using machine translations facilities should be explored.

Though AASSREC played a major role in establishing APINESS, however relations between these two regional associations is not very strong at present. There is a need for establishing better relationships between these two. The representatives of both should participate more actively in each others programmes.

The results of social science research that have policy implications are not properly disseminated among the target group of users like policy makers, business and industry and other users such information. This results in gross underutilisation of research. The academic style of writing of such reports for the peer group has to be repacked in different formats for different end user groups.

There is a big imbalance between the demand and supply of social science information and documentation not only in India but world wide. The situation can be improved only by sharing resources and networking among libraries and information centres. In this way we can really make better use of our existing limited resources. There is also a need of undertaking research in this area.

## INDONESIA EVALUATION

### Preamble

“There were so many activities in the social sciences information in Indonesia in the past ten years, either sponsored by the Centre for Scientific Documentation and Information or the National Library, but none in the name of APINESS.” This statement captures the essence of the Indonesian experience of APINESS. Like the experience of APINESS in many other member countries, the project had a very limited impact on activities both at a national or a regional level. It is clear from the report that a working NAG has yet to be established and that there are problems with identifying a NCP.

The Indonesian feeling is that, if there is suitable development at the national level, then Indonesia's participation in APINESS may be more vigorous. In the light of the present crisis, however, any such development seems very unlikely.

### Introduction

A brief description of the geographic and demographic information on Indonesia is proper to better understand the problems and prospects of the participation of Indonesia in the activities of the Asia-Pacific Information Network in the Social Sciences.

The country consists of more than 13.697 islands, the largest being the Kalimantan, followed by half of Irian, Sumatra, Java, Sulawesi and numerous smaller islands. According to in-between census survey (Survei Antar Sensus: SUSPAS) of 1995 the population of Indonesia at the time was 194.8 million, 59 per cent of whom lived in Java, which consists of only 7 per cent of the whole area of Indonesia.

Bahasa Indonesia is the national language, widely spoken and understood and is a medium of instruction from primary schools to universities, though about 583 vernacular languages and dialects are still spoken by many, including the Javanese, the largest ethnic group in Indonesia. Illiteracy for 10 years and older is 12.70 per cent and the percentage is higher in rural areas than in urban areas.

There are 77 State higher educational institution, comprising of 31 universities, 4 institutes, 10 teachers colleges, 4 high education, 26 polytechnics and 2 academies. Besides that there are 1.293 private higher educational institution: 262 universities, 44 institutes, 571 subject oriented higher education, 9 polytechnics and 407 academies. The number students is 2.304.600, 853.345 from state universities and 1.450.755 from private universities with 157.756 faculties. In addition there are 14 State run Religious higher learning institutes with 92.376 students.

Indonesia's economy has grown dramatically during the last 25 years as shown by a gross domestic product that has expanded at an average annual rate of, after inflation, 7 per cent in the last 25 years. The economic expansion, however, is increasingly reliant on manufacturing industries, which in turn will depend on the application of (natural) science and technology. This trend in effect put economics, science and technology in the forefront and pushed social sciences into the background. Rapid economic development brings also social problems: urbanisation, changes of social and cultural values, environmental degradation, ethnic conflicts, etc.

## National Priorities in the Social Sciences and Social Sciences Information

1. National priorities in the social sciences research is determined by the Guidelines for State Policy (Garis-Garis Besar Haluan Negara), spelled out in the Five-year Development Plan (Rencana Pembangunan Lima Tahun) and detailed by the National Research Council (Dewan Riset Nasional).

The Guidelines for State Policy is formulated every five year by the People's Consultative Assembly (Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat), the highest body in Indonesia. The Guidelines lays down the basic framework for long and short-term socio-economic development and it stipulates that socio-economic development is to be carried out in a series of successive five-year development plans. The present Guidelines for State Policy is for the year 1993-1998, which will be succeeded by the next Guidelines in 1998. The present VIth Five-year Development Plan is for the year 1994-1999.

The aim of the next Long-term Development Plan, as stated in the Guidelines for State Policy, is the creation of quality human beings and a quality of Indonesian society that are advanced an self reliant. The priority is placed on the economic field as the main engine of development, together with the quality of human resources and inter-linked with development in non-economic fields.

At present about 80 per cent of total research and development is funded by the government. By the end of the Second Long-term Development Plan (about 20 years hence) it is expected that 70-80 per cent of total research and development will be funded by the private sector. About 70 per cent of the science and technology research and development programme expenditure is provided for programmes in government institutions. It is expected that the private sector would increase its participation in research and development programmes so that the share of science and technology programmes would increase from 0.3 per cent of GDP to about 2 per cent at the of Second Long-Term Development Plan.

During the 5 consecutive Five-year Development Plans research priorities were placed on economics, (natural) sciences and technology. As stated by Tjondronegoro "economics and technology were major considerations and received the highest priority while sociology was pushed to the background, either because social factors were perceived to slow down project implementation, or because they were seen as factors which could be changed without prior sociological analysis."<sup>5</sup> And only recently social sciences research is included in the VIth Five-year Development Plan.

The following social sciences research programmes receive national priorities in the present Five-year Development Plan. Each programme is divided into sub-programmes and each sub-programme contains numerous research projects:

- (a) Manpower development: improvement of the quality of manpower, dispersion and mobility of manpower, and the development of organisation, management and institution;
- (b) Development and utilisation of socio-cultural potencies: development of socio-cultural values to support the development of the industries, improvement of the discipline and development of mental attitude and work productivity;

<sup>5</sup> Tjondronegoro, Sediono M.P. *Indonesia's social science agenda: a personal view*. In Nordholt, N.S. and L. Visser, eds. *Social science in South-East Asia; from particularism to universalism*. Amsterdam, VU University Press, 1995.

- (c) Management of the environment: management of the social-political life system, management of social-cultural problems and the management of social life system;
- (d) Improvement of the quality of data.

The development of culture in the present Five-year Development Plan is to create a strong national identity, a national personality, a sense of integrity and unity, and national pride. It includes the creation of modern attitudes through the absorption of science and technology, while simultaneously filtering out negative influences from other cultures resulting from global communication. It also mentions to improve the quality of libraries.

The VIth Five-year Development Plan has a special chapter on Information and statistics. The objectives of the development plan for Information and statistics are the availability of quality and timely information, the development of integrated information system network and the development of information technology industries. It also mentions that the information system of the Centre for Scientific Documentation and Information is to be linked with university libraries and research institutes. However there is not any mention on the social sciences information.

## 2. The Social Sciences Research Institutes

Before 1990's, social sciences research programmes were mainly carried out by government research institutes and research centres of major state universities. At least two private funded research institutes already existed in 1970s. There are the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and the Institute for Economic and Social Research, Education and Information (Lembaga Penelitian, Pendidikan dan Penerangan Ekonomi dan Sosial-LP3ES). Nowadays each state universities and some major private universities has its own research centres, mostly in the social sciences. A number of privately run research centres comes into existence lately, such as the Centre for Information and Development Studies (CIDES), Institute for National Development Studies (INDES) and other research centres run by business affairs and non-government organisation, such as INFID (International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development), which conduct studies among others on debt, labour and poverty.

Indonesian Institute of Sciences (Lembaga Ilmu Pengetahuan Indonesia – LIPI) has four research centres in the social sciences and humanities: the Centre for Social and Cultural Studies, Centre for Economics and Development Studies, Centre for Population and Manpower Studies and the Centre for Political and Area Studies. The four centres are coordinated by the Deputy Chairman for Social Sciences and Humanities of the Indonesian Institute for Sciences. Research programmes of the four research centres are in the fields of contemporary policy research, development of environment, area development studies population and manpower development. The Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) was established in 1971. Its main activity is to undertake policy-oriented studies on domestic and international affairs. The CSIS has four departments: International Affairs, Economic Affairs, Political Affairs, and Socio-Cultural Affairs. CSIS Library is one of the most important library in the social sciences.

The Institute for Economic and Social research, Education and Information, a private, autonomous and non-profit organisation, was established in 1971. Its main activities are research, surveys and studies on economic and social problems; training and educational programmes; and consulting, extension and communication programmes.



### 3. Social Sciences Indicators.

Science and technology indicators, 1993 does not include social sciences in its treatment but gives some indication on the allocation of budget for research. Future edition hopefully will include social sciences indicators. It is estimated that Rp.500 billion was spent for R&D activities in 1991, 80 per cent of which was supported by the government and it was only 0.2 per cent of Indonesia's GDP.

In 1980 there were already 364 government research centres, 153 of which were social sciences research centres with 3,633 research workers. This figure includes social sciences research centres run by non-governmental organisation which are very active lately in social sciences research, especially in the fields that are not related in the government social sciences research programme.

In 1995 there were 4,835 social sciences and human sciences research workers in Government Department R&D units, out of 11,205 research workers in all field of study. In Non-Departmental Government Agencies R&D units there were only 706 social sciences and human sciences research workers out of 6,079 research workers in all fields of study. The small amount of researchers in the Non-Departmental Government Agencies because their activities are mainly in the (pure) sciences and technology, except the Central Bureau of Statistics and Indonesian Institute of Sciences, which has 4 research centres in the social sciences.

There were 697 special libraries and documentation centres in Indonesia in 1995, 186 of which are in the social sciences (excluding university libraries), 79 located in Jakarta, 24 in Yogyakarta and 5 in Surabaya. The number of library and documentation centres is also misleading because most of them are small units with about 500 to 1,000 books, journal holdings of 5-10 titles and a small budget for acquisition.

### **The National Informational System**

The law of the national library system is yet to be enacted but there existed already a regulation on the national library system and a Presidential Decree no. 20/1961 on the function and duties of documentation and libraries in government agencies and institutions and an informal national information system.

The national library system consists of:

- (1) National libraries with its 27 regional libraries;
- (2) Special libraries and documentation centres;
- (3) Academic (College) and university libraries;
- (4) Public libraries;
- (5) School libraries.

While the national information system consists of: libraries, documentation centres, information centres, specialised information centres, information analysis centres, data centres, and archival centres.

Information centres, specialised information centres, information analysis centres and data centres are not closely related with the library and documentation world and the term information does not necessarily mean about library and documentation activities.

According to the data compiled by the National Library in 1994 there were 235 municipal public libraries, 6,501 village and district libraries, 196 mobile libraries, 27 model school libraries, 879 academic and university libraries, 631 special, government department and company libraries, a National library with its 27 regional or provincial libraries, in all there were 113.167 units of libraries with 138.415 librarians and library assistants with the total collection of 65.051.875 library materials. The main problem for the libraries and documentation centres is the shortage of qualified librarian and documentalists. At present (1996) only about 10 per cent of the existing librarians (4.944) are trained professionally.

Sixteen universities now offer 4 first degree programmes and 13 diploma programmes (2-and 3-year diploma programmes). University of Indonesia offers post-graduate programme, first degree programme (S1) and diploma programme in library sciences, information sciences and archival science or record management.

First degree programme are also offered by University of Padjadjaran at Bandung, Nusantara Islamic University at Bandung (Universtas Islam Nusantara, a private university) and University of Gajah Mada (also offers post-graduate study). The output of all the sixteen universities are about 300 graduates a year and this number is not enough to supply the needed professional trained librarians and documentalists in the next ten years.

The major resource centres in the social sciences information are the National Library, the Centre for Scientific Documentation and Information, The Central Library of for Social Sciences and humanities and the library of Centre for Strategic and International Studies. There are also some important resources in the private hands, mostly collected by researchers and senior faculties.

The National Library was established in 1980, a realisation of a long standing expectation 1950s. In 1989 the status of the National Library was elevated into a higher level national body (Non-Departmental Government Agency) and entrusted with the implementation of the Legal Deposit Law. The function or the responsibility of the National Library, then, is to assist the President to formulate policies on the development and the use of libraries, including the development of manpower and library cooperation, nationally and internationally. It also has to provide guidance and technical assistance to all types of libraries in Indonesia, either government run libraries or managed by private organisation.

The scope of the National Library is so extensive that it needs the support of 2 policy making centres, two resource centres and 27 regional libraries. The two policy making centres are the Directorate for the Manpower and Library Cooperation and the Directorate for the Development of Library Systems and Control, while the resource centres are the Center for Library Information Services and the Centre for Deposit and Conservation. The National Library publishes the Bibliografi Nasional Indonesia (Indonesian National Bibliography, now published quarterly) and numerous subject bibliographies but does not publish current indexes on primary literature. The National Library and its regional libraries use the Micro-VTLS system for the library operation. The National Library is the national centre for ISBN.

The Centre for Scientific Documentation and Information (Pusat Dokumentasi dan Informasi Ilmiah, known for short as PDII-LIPI and formerly named the National Scientific Documentation Centre), was established in 1965 with the function to carry out among others the documentation of the national scientific and technological literature, provides scientific and technological documentation and information services, conserve and disseminate national research and development reports and surveys, develop the documentation and information network in science and technology and to carry out research and development programmes in documentation and information. The Centre publishes indexes to national scientific periodicals (Indeks majalah ilmiah/Index of Indonesian Learned periodicals, bilingual), Indeks laporan penelitian dan survei (Index to research reports and surveys), Indeks makalah konferensi, lokakarya, seminar dan sejenis di Indonesia (Index to conference and seminar reports), Katalog induk disertasi Indonesia (Union catalogue of Indonesian dissertation/theses) and numerous subject bibliographies with abstracts and literature surveys. The Centre has an extensive collection of Indonesian scientific periodicals, research reports, theses and monographs. The Centre has the best resources in science and technology but even so about 60 per cent of its collection are in the social sciences. The Centre is the National centre for ISSN.

The Central library of Social Sciences and Humanities (Perpustakaan Pusat IPSK) under the Division (Deputy) of Social Sciences and Humanities of the Indonesian Institute of Sciences was established in 1985 as a result of merging two libraries of the former National Economic and Social Research Institute and the National Cultural Research Institutes. The Library has no formal organisational structure and at the beginning was intended to be the future Documentation and Information Centre for the Social Sciences and Humanities. It has a comprehensive collection on economic history of Indonesia and Indonesian contemporary history owing to the donations given by George L. Hicks (formerly from Hong Kong) and the late Abdurachman Surjomihardjo.

Owing to the lack of interest, low priority and budgetary constraints it could not be realised up-till-now. It is an important node of the APINESS participating centre.

The Library of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies is a major sources in the social sciences, mostly in political science, international relations, economics, education and commerce. It has a comprehensive collection of Indonesian newspaper clippings.

### **Social Sciences Documentation and Information**

As mentioned before the National Library publishes the national bibliography and numerous special bibliographies and catalogues but does not indexes the primary literature. The special bibliographies and catalogues are mostly in the social sciences, such as in law, education, religion, anthropology, literature, maps, history and general election. Since the National Library is entrusted with the implementation of the Deposit Act since 1990, it would certainly have complete resources of the national imprints in the future.

The documentation of primary literature was done by the Centre for Scientific Documentation and Information. The centre carries out the compilation of bibliographic data bases of journal articles, reports, conference papers and dissertation.

Indeks majalah Ilmiah Indonesia/Index of Indonesian learned periodicals is published twice a year. Indeks laporan penelitian dan survei, indexes all the research reports and surveys published in

Indonesia, but does not include research reports from the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Health. Indeks makalah konperensi, lokakarya, seminar dan sejenisnya or shortly INMAK indexes conference papers and proceedings and Katalog induk majalah Indonesia lists dissertation in and on Indonesia published or issued in Indonesia or abroad. The Centre also publishes numerous special bibliographies with abstracts or annotations, mostly in the social sciences, women and children.

The reports data base contains 6.581 records (or 31.78 per cent) in the social sciences and humanities out of 20.705 records from 1984 to 1997. The other records mostly in agriculture and health sciences. The learned periodicals and conference proceedings data bases contain 19.409 records (or 46.83 per cent) in social sciences and humanities out of 41.444 records in the same period.

### **Library and Information Network**

Library and information networks began in 1971 as an outcome of a Workshop on the Scientific Documentation and Information Network in Indonesia at Bandung. The Workshop proposed four subject oriented networks:

- (a) Documentation and Information Network in Science and Technology with the Centre for Scientific Documentation and Information (formerly National Scientific Documentation Centre) as its coordinator;
- (b) Documentation and Information Network in Agriculture and Biology with the Centre for Agricultural Library and Research Information (formerly Central Library for Agriculture and Biology) as its coordinator;
- (c) Documentation and Information Network in Health and Medicine with the Central Library of the Department of Agriculture as its co-ordinator; and
- (d) Documentation and Information Network in the Social Sciences, the centre of which was yet to be identified.

A Pilot Project for the establishment of a Documentation Centre for the Social Sciences was initiated in 1975 in order among other things to coordinate the Documentation and Information Network in the Social sciences. The Pilot Project was abandoned a few years later due financial constraints and a lack of manpower, after successfully conducted an a national survey on information needs and of users of social scientists.

The notion of library and information network was soon regarded by the library and information world as a sure means to remedy the financial constraints, lack of resources and lack of manpower. During 1970s and 1980s there were about 20 documentation and information networks existed in the country, such as in the family planning, laws and regulation, environment, housing and in women in development. Almost all the networks was established by a ministerial or joint-ministerial decree. Some had died down in five years but some existed until to-day in the Internet era, such as in the family planning network and laws and regulation network.

During the early 1990s a new kind of information network using information technology came into being.

IPTEKnet was created in 1986 but began to operate in 1990. Its objectives are to provide access to global Internet, to use and exchange information and to encourage the development of electronic databases in Indonesia. IPTEKnet provides a nation-wide infrastructure and a data base network based on an open system standard. It is connected to the global Internet using a dedicated satellite line to the United States through Indosat, a satellite communication company.

The following are the facilities and services provided by IPTEKnet:

- (a) facilities for national and international electronic communication or E-mail;
- (b) facilities for browsing using application programmes such as Mosaic, Gopher, etc.;
- (c) facilities for members to offer their own resources to other uses;
- (d) provides subscribers with domain name services;
- (e) provides consultation on network planning, implementation and management.

At present several nodes have been connected directly using leased line to Internet. Among others are the Agency for the Assessment and Application of Technology (Badan Pengkajian dan Penerapan Teknologi), Centre for Scientific Documentation and Information (PDII-LIPI), Central Bureau of Statistics (Biro Pusat Statistik), Department of Trade and Industry. Besides its connectivity IPTEKnet members are creating their home page based from their own resources and accessible through IPTEKnet programme.

IPTEKnet has conducted a survey on the data bases services through Internet. More than 2000 data bases are registered in IPTEKnet registry and only about 10 per cent are domestic data bases.

The survey also indicates the significant increase in the number of data bases produced by government agencies private institutions. The more important nodes in the social sciences are the Centre for Scientific Documentation and Information, the Central Bureau of Statistics and the Department of Trade and Industry.

Other important networks in the social sciences is NusaNet and UNINET, an inter-university computerised network. NusaNet, a network of non-governmental organisation (NGO) was established in 1993, by the Indonesian NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (INFID) and two other NGOs (Yayasan Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Indonesia and Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia) and members are opened to all NGOs. The facilities provided by the NusaNet are electronic mail, electronic conference, file transfer and mailing list.

### **National Advisory Group**

The first regional meeting of APINESS in 1986 was attended by the late Miss Luwarsih Pringgoadisurjo, then the Director of the Centre for Scientific Documentation and Information. The Centre then was designated as the National Focal Point for APINESS and Miss Luwarsih Pringgoadisurjo was named the Liaison Officer. Mr. Zultanawar succeeded Miss Luwarsih Pringgoadisurjo as the Liaison Officer for APINESS in 1996.

The Centre has been a national focal point for several regional and international cooperation such as FID, ASTINFO, ISDS-SEA and Infoterra.

It was proposed at the beginning that APINESS should have its own National Advisory Group, such as the National Steering Committee for ASTINFO. The National Steering Committee for ASTINFO convened only once and nothing happened after that. The National Contact Point then worked alone without the Steering Committee. The failure of the Steering Committee is due not to the lack of funds but more to the lack of attention by higher decision makers.

The proposed NAG consists of Deputy Chairman for the Social Sciences and Humanities of the Indonesian Institute of Sciences as its chairman, the Director of the Centre as its Secretary, the representative of Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO, the representative of the bureau of Technical Cooperation of Cabinet Secretariat, the representative of the Central Bureau of Statistics, the representative of the Indonesian Library Association, and others.

Learning from the problems encountered by the ASTINFO Steering Committee, it was decided later on that the NAG should be only an informal meeting of the heads of participating centres. To be effective the participating centres should consist of only a few libraries and documentation centres, however discussion usually on information technology, economics but the problem of social sciences information were usually put aside. Up-till now there is no formal National Advisory Group in Indonesia.

The First Regional Advisory Group Meeting in 1988 was attended by Mr. Zultanawar. The Second Regional Advisor Group Meeting was also attended by Mr. Zultanawar. In those two meetings he reported the development of social sciences information in Indonesia during the last four years. Any proposal made by the National Contact Point or by Regional APINESS itself were never realised.

As the first activities under APINESS, the Indonesian National contact Point has made in 1987 an annotated bibliography on the year 2000 relative to Indonesia. The bibliography contains 100 abstracts of research reports, journal articles, conference proceedings and monographs.

There were so many activities in the social sciences information in Indonesia in the past ten years, either sponsored by the Centre for Scientific Documentation and Information or the National Library, but none in the name of APINESS, such as the development of thesaurus on women in development, training courses in the use of CDSISIS for the social science librarians and documentalists, training courses in Internet and numerous workshops and seminars.

Women in development thesaurus was published in 1991 by the Clearinghouse for Information in Development (Pusat Informansi Wanita dan Pembangunan) in cooperation with Unicef. The Thesaurus was an ASEAN project, first launched by ASEAN Women Programme, and compiled by experts from Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines. The Clearinghouse is a special unit within the Centre for Scientific Documentation and Information, which also published several guidebooks and annotated bibliographies.

The Regional Workshop on Introduction to IDAMS (a software on management and statistics) was held in January 16-20, 1995 in Jakarta and sponsored by ASTINFO. The Workshop was attended by librarians and documentalists from the Indonesian Institute of Sciences and the Department of Education and Culture. A workshop on the Library and Information Network on Youth Information

also sponsored by ASTINFO, was held in Bogor from 14 to 17 March 1995. A Seminar on the Study of the Information Infrastructure for Planning Information System and Network in Asia and the Pacific Countries (SISNAP) was held in Jakarta on 21 February 1995 and was attended by 50 librarians and documentalists.

The National Contact Point of ASTINFO is now carrying out a Pilot Project for Multipurpose Community Centre in Muara Enim in South Sumatra.<sup>6</sup>

Almost all the above activities were mainly occurred since 1992, when the Centre for Scientific Documentation and Information began to receive a bigger budget from the government. Almost all the activities were initiated by the Centre and ASTINFO as a sole player.

## **Problems and Prospects of APINESS**

### *The Problems*

The problems encountered by APINESS in Indonesia are that there are only a few social sciences resources in Indonesia, the low priority given to the social sciences research and social sciences information, hence the lack of funding, the absence of a strong documentation and information centre in the social sciences and humanities. All of these problems stems from the high-tech vision of the government policy makers in research and technology.

Some university faculties and researchers are still complaining about the difficulties of getting social science information within Indonesia. If they want to write research on Indonesia, they have to go abroad (Australia, Netherlands or Cornell University). This fact alone illustrates the condition of social sciences information in Indonesia.

### *The Prospects*

The prospect of APINESS in Indonesia is going to be good. As Taufik Abdullah said "the second long-term planning programme (PJPT II) may mark the beginning of a new and brighter period of the Indonesian social science history."<sup>7</sup> The Government begins to provide more funds to the social science research activities, as expressed in the Guidelines for State Policy, the VIth Five-year Development Plan and the Principal Programme for Research and Technology of the National Research Council. Besides there are so many government research centres in the social sciences operated by many researchers, not to mention the privately run social sciences research centres, who will generate and use information. Furthermore globalization of information and the negative side effects of rapid economic development need serious social sciences analysis, hence social sciences information.

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<sup>6</sup> This is a Joint Project of UNESCO/PGI and APPEAL and the Japanese Fund-In-Trust.

<sup>7</sup> Abdullah, Taufik. Past performance and future directions: the state and social science in Indonesia. In: Nordholt, N.S. and visser, L. Ibid. p. 58.

*Future strategic plan*

## AT NATIONAL LEVEL

The first priority is to develop sooner a National Social Science Documentation and Information Centre, which is already in the planning process for so long. The National Contact Point should be relocated into this Centre. This will enhance the participation of Indonesia in APINESS.

A strategic plan should be made by the National Contact Point and should be sent to the Secretariat of APINESS.

The next plan for the future is manpower development for the existing resources centres, including training in basic social sciences documentation and information, computer literacy, Internet and English language.

## AT REGIONAL LEVEL

Learning from the experience of ASTINFO there should be a strong personality at the regional level who will administer APINESS. Regional training courses should be held from time to time in social sciences documentation and information, computer literacy, Internet, home page development, etc. APINESS should have one or several common projects, such as APINESS own home page and LISTSERV.



# DEMOCRATIC PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF KOREA EVALUATION

## **Preamble**

The report from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea concentrated on describing the current state of play in social science information services in the republic. It focuses on the activities and products of its national social science information network.

The report indicates that there are no 'subjective' factors hindering the development of APINESS in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, only 'objective' factors – quite simply a lack of financial resources.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to see APINESS devote more energy towards ensuring that it receives more financial assistance so that it can participate more fully in APINESS.

## **Formation of national information network systems in social sciences and organisation of the activities in the national information service**

### **Formation of the National Information Network in Social Sciences**

#### *Formation of Network*

The national information network of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is composed of the Association of Social Scientists of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Social Science Information Research Institute, the Grand People's Study House, the Science Library of Kim II Sung University, the Library Department of Kim II Sung University, the Library of the Managerial Methodology Research Institute, libraries in each province, libraries in each University, and all the information departments in ministries and committees and Ministry of Finance.

At present, the national information network is being developed into a computerised network.

#### *Evaluation*

Information isolation could be broken by using the network to deliver social science information services at the national level.

This network has been become a national centre.

#### *Organisation of information service activities*

1) The NAG has formulated several norms and has made provisions to organise information activities according to guidelines specified by government for the appropriate establishment of scientific and technological information systems. The norms are:

- Norms for cataloguing

- Norms for indexing and abstracting
  - Norms for information services
- 2) As a result of government requirements the following resources have been developed:
- |                                      |        |         |
|--------------------------------------|--------|---------|
| Bibliography                         | 50,000 | (items) |
| Indexing                             | 11,000 | ”       |
| Abstracting                          | 10,000 | ”       |
| Translation                          | 5,000  | ”       |
| Information data service for persons | 25,000 | ”       |
- 3) The Social Science Information Research Institute is responsible for editing and publishing the journal “Social Science Information”, a periodical published since 1997. The task of this journal is to promote social sciences research work and to enhance and develop the information network.

Its content: are as follows:

News of the scientific societies' activities  
 Abstracts  
 Bibliographical information  
 Papers delivered at the seminars of information society  
 Document information  
 Introduction of management of the national information network  
 NAG's news

## **NAG and its Activities**

### *Organisation of NAG and activities*

Immediately after the creation of APINESS, NAG was organised with representatives from the Association of Social Scientists, the Social Science Information Research Institute, and the Grand People's Study House, the Library of the Managerial Methodology Research Institute, Ministry of Finance and others. It has held approximately 10 general assemblies.

The assemblies have discussed work plans including long-term plans (for 3 or 4 years) and the short-term plans (for 1 or 2 years) and have evaluated their implementation. They have discussed issues and made decisions regarding the organisation of national information activities. They have overseen the work of the secretariat of the NAG, a function performed by the Social Science Information Research Institute.

### *Evaluation*

The NAG and its secretariat have enhanced the function and role of the social science information network through their activities. However, they are still weak in the information exchange work with other national information networks including the regional information network of APINESS.

### **Work for Establishing the Social Science Automatic Information Retrieval System at National Level**

#### *Social Science Thesaurus*

A compilation committee composed of well-known social science information workers and social scientists has carried out a decision of NAG has compiled "Social Science Retrieval Language Dictionary" (Vols. 1, 2, 3) (thesaurus).

This thesaurus includes about 38,000 terms which can be divided into 385 categories of 18 fields of social sciences such as the revolutionary history of the great leader Comrade Kim II Sung, the revolutionary history of the great leader Comrade King Jong II, Juche Idea, philosophy, history, politics, law, economics, education, psychology, literature, art, publishing and broadcasting, language, scientific technological information and museum, physical culture, military affairs and international relations.

The number of the descriptors of the thesaurus is 28,981 and deepest level is 9.

This thesaurus is a fundamental one and can be used to develop the thesaurus of several fields of social sciences.

#### *Social Science Databases*

A number of databases to undergird the automatic information retrieval system were developed according to decisions of NAG:

In the social science information research institute has been built the database of 100,000 – works including those written by the great leader Comrade Kim II Sung and the great leader comrade King Jong II. This database is a document factual retrieval system.

In the Science Library of Kim II Sung University has been stockpiled 10,000 materials for the social science education books. This database is a subject retrieval system of the pedagogical books and documents.

In the Grand People's Study House has been built the database of 45,000 bibliographical indexes. This is a bibliographical retrieval system for the books written in foreign languages.

The NAG is also promoting the modernisation of the national information network.

On the basis of the national light fibre network, the on-line-system is being prepared.

However, there are some difficulties in establishing an on-line-system with the local databases since computers with high capacity have not yet been provided. Even though the local libraries have

been interested in the social science information, they have also had some difficulties in establishing an on-line-system due to a lack of equipment.

The CD-ROMs of documents of large volumes including the national classics is being developed and it is intended to introduce the internet technology.

By the way, the level of the professionals working in this field is not high and sensitive to the international trends and accordingly, the CD-ROMs and internet work is being done very slowly.

### **International Exchange of Information**

#### *Exchange of information within the APINESS network*

The social sciences external books compilation committee has been organised to publish and disseminate theoretical books in the social sciences and the periodical of the Academy of Social Science called "Social Sciences".

The Foreign Languages Books Publishing House has translated many books including the works of the great leader Comrade Kim Il Sung and the great leader Comrade Kim Jong Il into English, Chinese, Japanese and other languages. Owing to the financial limitation, these books are not being systematically sent to APINESS and its member countries.

It is being prepared to exchange by means of satellite communication the information with the APINESS data bank and the national social science information retrieval systems.

#### *Contacts with APINESS partners in the Field of information*

##### (1) Contacts with ASTINFO

The Science and Technology Information Centre of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is intensifying its activities to have contacts with ASTINFO.

An effort is also being made to form the science and technology information network and social science information network into a unitary one of the country in order to have close contacts with ASTINFO through the science and technology information centre of the country.

(2) Preparation is being made for contacting with Asian mass-communication study and information centre through the International Communication Centre equipped with the up-to-date science and technology.

Since funds need to be provided for this contact which should be carried out apart from the informational exchange of APINESS, the National Advisory Group has limited itself to the planning for contact.

## **Information Science Research and Training of Information Professionals**

### *Information science research work*

(1) Following the measures taken by the government to develop the boundary sciences in the fields of social sciences, the Social Science Information Research Institute, which is a central base of the information science research at the national level, is strengthening its scientific forces for developing the new information science and selecting the new research titles to deepen its research work.

The Social Science Information Research Institute now consists of 100 scientists and its number will be increased to 200 in the near future.

The Social Science Information Research Institute has targeted 20 objectives for its work such as retrieval science, document analysis and processing, information language, artificial intelligence, natural language understanding, etc.

(2) Besides this, the library department and information research room of Kim II Sung University, the library of the Managerial Methodological Research Institute, the bibliographical information research room of the Grand People's Study House and other theoretical research units of the information network are carrying out research to solve information problems arising from information practice in their respective units.

As a result, the following publications have been issued:

“Basic theory of Information Science”

“Outline of social science information”

“Information Retrieval Science”

“Analysis and Processing of Documents”

“Korean language-information processing” and other books and essays.

### *Training of Information Professionals*

As a result of measures taken by the Government information personnel are being trained as professionals. The Section of Library and Informatics of Kim II Sung University has trained hundreds of library and information professionals and the Section of Informatics of the Social Science College is also now training a number of information professionals.

The Grand People's Study House and provincial libraries have organised several intensive training courses, lectures and seminars, etc. and have been re-educating information personnel working in the field of information.

However, the following problems have not been addressed; the scientific and technological problems necessary for the worldwide activities of the network and the regional network of APINESS; the problems arising from the development of new information sources and databases, and peripheral memory device techniques; the problems in the fields of the advanced information system, information service and its computerisation.

### *Funding Streams*

The government has been the main provider of funds for the development of the national social science information network and its activities.

In the recent years, the government has provided about ten millions wons (local currency) for the compilation of the "Social Science Retrieval Thesaurus" and for the development of bibliographical database.

Several millions wons have been allocated for the training of information searchers.

NAG and its Secretariat are not financially supported by international organisations such as UNESCO, UNDP, UNICEF. The national social science information network of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has not been financed by the international organisation even though it is an APINESS member.

### **Marketing and Information Activities**

#### *Marketing*

The national social science information network has not any relations with the economic and trade information system since it has not tried to get into the markets which can approach to the national social science information service.

#### *Obstacles in information activities*

No subjective factors relating to the enlargement and development of the information network and its activities can be found within the territory of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. However, the objective factors, in particular economic difficulties temporally experienced by the country have been a financial hindrance to the enlargement and development of the national information network and information activities.

Therefore, it is desired that APINESS pay attention to the national social science information network of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, which is a member country, and gives it financial and material support.

## MALAYSIA EVALUATION

### Preamble

The Malaysian report, like a number of others, points to a member country struggling to give energy to the APINESS project without much success. It is clear from the report that there have been many and significant developments in relation to the collection and delivery of information in the social sciences in Malaysia, but these have happened quite independently of any APINESS involvement. APINESS at the national level has been largely non-existent. Despite this, many APINESS type activities have taken place without the label.

The Malaysian evaluation draws attention to the very little traffic in social science information amongst the countries of the region. It points to a similar conclusion at the regional level as has been reached for the national level: that APINESS as a regional force is, to put it mildly, very weak. Malaysia's conclusion is that APINESS should not "exist in its present set up".

### Background of APINESS in Malaysia

APINESS was introduced to Malaysia in 1986 by the UNESCO Sub-Committee on Social Science which had its secretariat then at SERU (Socio-Economic Research Unit) of the Prime Minister's Department. Members of the Committee consist of social scientists from various academic institutions and other related government departments and Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) with the Director-General of SERU as Chairman.

### National Contact Point

The Chairman of the UNESCO Sub-Committee on Social Sciences attended the APINESS Regional Meeting in Bangkok from 12-16 May 1986 as the representative of Malaysia. Amongst the implementation strategies agreed upon by member countries at the Meeting was that the respective governments of the APINESS programme designate an institution to be the National Contact Point for APINESS so as to act as the key link with other National Contact Points in the region.

One of the immediate duties of the National Contact Point was to set up a National Advisory Group responsible for advising and assisting it in the discharge of its duties. This matter of the appointment and role of the APINESS National Contact Point as well as the aims and objectives of APINESS were discussed at a meeting of the Malaysian UNESCO Sub-Committee on Social Sciences. Realising the nature and extent of the responsibilities of the National Contact Point, the Committee agreed with the suggestion of the Chairman that the National Library of Malaysia be appointed as the APINESS National Contact Point for Malaysia and that the Director-General of the National Library be the Liaison Officer for Malaysia. At the National Library, this responsibility was delegated to the Director of Support Services until 1992, after which the responsibility was given to the Director of Development Division. Since then, all activities of APINESS were reported and discussed at the UNESCO Sub-Committee on Social Sciences. In this way the National Contact Point is ensured of the cooperation of social scientists in whatever programmes that it were to undertake.

## Development

Although much effort has been made by the National Library to promote APINESS in Malaysia progress has been slow due to various factors. One of the main reason is that APINESS does not have a full-time officer but is an additional duty to the normal duties and busy schedule of the Liaison Officer. Very little time is given to the APINESS programme as there are other pressing duties to be carried out. However, attempts were made to carry out some activities. The National Contact Point organised a National Seminar on APINESS in 1992 aimed at promoting the concept of APINESS and to recommend the setting up the National Advisory Group. However, attempts to set up the National Advisory Group were perceived as not urgent as the UNESCO Sub-Committee on Social Sciences was already fulfilling this function.

Furthermore, as the National Library of Malaysia is also the National Contact Point for ASTINFO Malaysia, it was felt that APINESS and ASTINFO programmes could be carried out jointly. However, because of the kinds of constraints mentioned above, much of the programmes were largely limited to the training and upgrading of the information skills of the information personnel in charge of the information storage and retrieval of data. These programmes include training courses, seminars or conferences either at the national or regional level. For activities held at the regional level, participants were invited from member countries of both APINESS and ASTINFO. These activities were organised either solely by the National Library or jointly with relevant institutions. Funds were secured, some from UNESCO and at other times from the National Library's own budget.

## Activities of the UNESCO Sub-Committee on Social Sciences

The UNESCO Sub-Committee on Social Sciences was itself also not very active. Meetings were not held regularly because committee members were tied up with their own daily work. Nonetheless, it managed to hold one major activity in 1990 in the form of a seminar. This was a result of the call by UNESCO to review the situation of the social sciences in the countries of South-East Asia and the Pacific. A national seminar entitled Seminar Penyelidikan Sains Sosial (Seminar on Social Science Research) was held from 18-19 Jun, 1990 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. It was attended by more than 100 participants from various social science and social science related institutions throughout the country. Amongst the resolutions arrived at a by the Seminar were the following:

- (i) Social science research should facilitate the developments of new concepts, paradigms, approaches, applications, etc. suited to the contemporary Malaysian context which not only help the collection of data but contribute towards a desirable future in the face of changing international milieu.

This philosophy reflects the situation of the social science activity in the country. As has been repeatedly mentioned in various writings, the social science activity in the country then and to a certain extent even in the present situation, tends to emphasis more on the collection of data to fulfil immediate needs or analysis by either the government departments wishing to analyse certain problems or situations or some organisations undertaking some projects. This form of data collection is ad hoc for short-term projects only rather than being done systematically and consistently for the consumption of those in need to prepare for long-term goals for the country.



- (ii) There is a need to systematise social science research in Malaysia, to identify research gaps and to promote well-coordinated interdisciplinary research. It was therefore recommended that a Social Science Research Council be set up with the following functions:
- (a) to formulate policies on social science research;
  - (b) to provide linkages with a view to coordinating activities between government, private institutions, universities and external researchers;
  - (c) to enhance social science participation in the decision-making and policy formulation process;
  - (d) to be responsible for the overall direction, type and priority areas for social science research;
  - (e) to ensure proper communication, dissemination and utilisation of research findings;
  - (f) to provide relevant inputs to policy-making bodies;
  - (g) to ensure scientific cooperation and networking across organisational and geographical boundaries.

Though the recommendation on the setting up of the Social Science Research Council was not implemented by the government, it is however encouraging to note that some of the suggested roles of the Council were being executed. The most noteworthy outcome was the involvement of social scientists in the decision-making and policy formulation process of the government. Some former senior social science lecturers and activists were given important positions in various government departments and government statutory bodies. Amongst the institutions into which these social scientists were absorbed is the Institute of Strategic and International Studies Malaysia (ISIS), an influential organisation which is responsible in advising the government on socio-economic policies and strategic plans, including the implementation of vision 2020. As for research findings, there have been aggressive moves by librarians, particularly from university libraries, to collect and systematically document research and findings by their academic staff and graduates. This has greatly helped to facilitate access to these materials. However, such documentation is confined to research that is published and is available for reference in these libraries. Unfortunately large number of undergraduate theses are not well documented.

In October 1992, the Socio-Economic Research Unit of the Prime Minister's Department was dissolved and its functions were absorbed into various agencies. Since then, the status of the Sub-Committee was unclear until sometime in 1997 when the Sub-Committee was revived by the Malaysian UNESCO Commission.

### **Activities of Other Social Science Bodies**

It is the government's policy to ensure that social justice, quality of life, political stability and positive spiritual and social values are given emphasis, in its effort to achieve the status of a developed nation by the year 2020.

To ensure that this policy is adhered to, various organisations particularly government departments organise activities and programmes and conduct studies and research in order to provide substantial and accurate data to help policy and decision makers. These activities are carried out either independently or in collaboration with similar or related institutions. The absence of a coordinating body has meant that these activities are not well integrated and each institution undertakes its own projects and researches.

Though the National Contact Point is not directly involved with these developments, it however monitors the information resulting from these researches. This is important for the National Contact Point which is also the National Library of the country and has an important role to play in the collecting, documenting and dissemination of information about the country. Amongst the institutions related to social science that are active in conducting research are the following:

- (i) Women's Affairs Division (HAWA) of the Prime Minister's Department
- (ii) The Educational Planning and Research Division of the Ministry of Education
- (iii) The Statistics Department
- (iv) The National Population and Family Development Board Malaysia

#### *HAWA*

HAWA has been very active in undertaking projects relating to the development and improvement of the living standards and social situations of women in the country. They are also very active participants at the regional and international level. One of the interesting features of this institution is that it involves participation not just of government bodies, but also encourages active participation from non-government organisations (NGOs) in its activities. All these activities are well documented in their quarterly serial publication called "Beritanita" which was first published in 1987. Other activities are training programmes like courses, seminars and workshops for women to help them become useful citizens of the country economically and socially.

#### National Population and Family Development Board Malaysia (NPFDBM)

The National Population and Family Development Board was first established in 1966 to help reduce the population growth rate from 3 per cent to 2 per cent by 1985 through the implementation of the National Family Planning Programme. However, in 1984 the Act was revised in line with the widening of the scope of its programmes and activities. It was renamed the National Population and Family Development Board (NPFDB) and came under the purview of the Prime Minister's Department.

The NPFDB has been very active and has carried out various activities such as information and advocacy, training and education with regards to population and family. It has conducted research and surveys, etc. It has also been very active internationally being the focal point for Malaysia for the UN International Conference on Population and Development, focal point for the Asia-Pacific Population Information Network (POPIN) and various other projects in the areas of population, family development and reproductive health.

NPFDB have actively published its research findings, activities and educational articles in a number of publications.

The Board also publishes pamphlets and leaflets for educational purposes, research reports and other publications for distribution to the general public.

Some of the surveys and studies carried out by the Board are the following:

- (a) West Malaysia Family Surveys
- (b) Family and Health Survey in The Federal Territory and Petaling Jaya
- (c) Study on Childcare Needs of Low Income Women in Urban Malaysia
- (d) Study on the Effect of Economic Development on Family and Gender Relation in Kuala Lumpur

Only the survey on population and family life is done regularly, i.e. every 5 years. Others are done on an ad hoc basis as and when required.

#### *The Ministry of Education*

The Educational Planning and Research Division of the Ministry of Education is another example of a department which actively undertakes studies and researches in the related social science field of education. It has also formed its own research council, the Malaysian Education Research Council (MERC), which is a national educational research and evaluation council. Its members consist of representatives from the professional divisions of the MOE, Ministry of Human Resources, Ministry of National Unity and Community Development and representatives from institutions of higher learning as well as teacher unions.

### **Issues in Social Science Research**

#### *Lack of writing culture*

There really is no known hindrance to social science research at the national level. The reason for the limited amount of social science research is the culture itself. There is a lack of a research and writing culture generally amongst Malaysians. This has been attributed to the colonial system of government in the early years which did not encourage research in the social sciences. The same can be said of the 'documentation' culture. Unfortunately this culture is only slowly being instilled into the present generation. Many research findings are not documented properly. Much writing is not kept or deposited with libraries and this has resulted in loss of bibliographic control.

#### *Funds*

Funds for carrying out researches are provided by various funding agencies such as the Malaysian government and regional and international bodies. Government funds are in the form of grants to universities and capital grants and operational budget to the government departments.

Beside that, the government also allocates grants under the Intensified Research Priority Areas (IRPA). Such funds however are difficult to obtain for social science projects because there is a stiff competition from the natural science sector. Since the Malaysian government's priority is to encourage the development of natural science in the country, it is not surprising that much of the grants from IRPA goes to natural science research.

### *Recommendations*

#### Developments in Technology

The rapid development of Information Technology, particularly the Internet, has enabled many libraries and institutions world wide to build their own home pages on the Web. These home pages contain information about the institutions, their activities and their library catalogues.

Coupled with this is the development of the facilities for communicating amongst individuals and institutions electronically, the e-mail service, which has helped speed up access to information and provide fast contact amongst individuals or institutions.

In Malaysia, libraries have been encouraged to set up their own websites and make their on-line Public Access Catalogue accessible through the Internet.

Institutions have also been encouraged to build up strong collections in their specialist subject areas. In other words, they are encouraged to act as Centres of Excellence in their specialised areas. They can be connected and their databases accessed through the national information network called Jaringan Ilmu. Thus, for example, the Women's Affairs Division of the Prime Ministers' Department is responsible for building up databases on women. The Department of Statistic maintains its own database on population. These institutions have their own networks nationally, regionally and internationally and whatever information is needed is serviced through their own networks. Their databases are in the public domain.

#### Document Delivery System

To facilitate borrowing amongst institutions nationally, the National Library of Malaysia introduced the Document Delivery System in 1988. This system allows members to borrow from each other once they have signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the National Library of Malaysia which acts as the coordinating centre. It is interesting to note that there already 292 institutions and libraries in Malaysia who have signed up as members of the Document Delivery System. Besides the university libraries, which have vast collections of materials on social sciences, 19 out of the 292 members are from social science related institutions, either government or private libraries.

Besides being able to borrow within the country, institutions or libraries in Malaysia can also borrow materials outside Malaysia through this interlibrary loan arrangement. For instance overseas libraries or institutions in need of information from any university in Malaysia can go through this interlibrary loan arrangement to request publications or information. Information on the availability of the materials can be obtained from the OPACs of the various universities as they are already available on the Internet.

From the statistics maintained by the National Library, it is noted that the volume of requests for materials from other countries by Malaysians is low, except for information on Australia. The same can be said for requests from the other Asia-Pacific countries for Malaysian Publications. There are however a few requests from Australia and Papua New Guinea. The reasons for this are not known. Perhaps those really in need of information on social science have other means or channels to go to.

### **Future of APINESS**

With the developments outlined above taking place, it is important for the APINESS Regional Centre to conduct a study on why information in the social sciences from Malaysia are not used amongst countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

The Regional Centre should also perhaps suggest concrete projects like establishing social science databases in specific areas to which member institutions can contribute.

Taking into consideration these developments, it is important that RUSHSAP study their implications and recommend appropriate directions if APINESS is to continue. The National Library of Malaysia feels a new approach to the exchange mechanism of information needs to be established if APINESS programme is to continue to exist. It should no longer exist in the present set up.

## NEW ZEALAND EVALUATION

### Preamble

The New Zealand report paints a very clear picture of the impact of APINESS on the national scene and New Zealand's involvement with the regional aspects of the project. It is quite clear that the project has had little or no impact at both these levels. The political economy of social science information activity is described in order to provide the background for an understanding of the reasons why the project has been a failure in the New Zealand context.

It is quite clear, also, that the New Zealand experience is not unique but reflects the experience of countries like the Philippines and Malaysia. It is suggested that the project, from its origins, has resonated better with particular forms of social science information infrastructures than with others and the question is implicitly raised as to whether UNESCO should be involved in a project which is so directive and demanding in terms of the kinds of infrastructures which will lead to successful outcomes for a particular project.

The New Zealand report concludes with a set of recommendations which would see the aims, objectives and functions of APINESS radically redefined so as to allow for greater flexibility in the demands it makes on participating countries. New Zealand could not continue to participate in the project in the light of the current aims and objectives.

### Introduction

This report presents the results of an evaluation of New Zealand's participation in the Asia-Pacific Information Network in Social Sciences. The evaluation proceeds from decisions taken at the last Regional Advisory Group meeting of APINESS in Bangkok in December 1994.

The body of the report is in three parts. Firstly, the context in which New Zealand's participation in APINESS is described in detail. The structure of the field of social science activity in New Zealand, as in any other country, is very complex. It is essential to an accurate and critical evaluation of the New Zealand dimensions of APINESS that both the broad outline of this field and the details of the information infrastructure are understood. It is through a detailed understanding of this structure that the 'penetration' or 'influence' (or the lack thereof) of the APINESS network can be understood. If I may venture a metaphor, if one conceives of the infrastructural information network along the lines of the circulatory system of a complex organism, then the APINESS project can be understood as a dye that has been entered into the system at a certain point in both space and time. The degree to which it has spread through the circulatory system is a measure of its 'success' in relation to that system.

The second part of the report presents details of New Zealand's participation in APINESS. This part covers both the national activities and the regional activities carried out under the auspices of APINESS. It will be transparently clear that these activities have been, at best, marginal to the social science information effort in New Zealand.

Finally, the report presents an appraisal and evaluation of New Zealand's participation in APINESS and concludes with a series of recommendations about the nature of that participation in the

future. Though the picture that emerges from the first two sections is not very promising, the recommendations point to a way of retrieving the situation and to making the project a more useful one from the point of New Zealand.

It will be quite clear as one reads the report that there is an imbalance between the various sections of the report. This imbalance conveys a very important evaluative message in itself.

## Context

### Introduction

In this section of the report I will firstly briefly outline a framework for understanding social science activity and then apply it to the New Zealand situation. It is my belief that this framework is a useful one for both a general understanding of the social science system as a whole and also a useful device for measuring and evaluating the success of the APINESS project.

We need first to recognize that New Zealand social scientists are engaged in a range of activities: teaching, research, policy development, consultancy work, professional services (e.g. counselling services by psychologists), information broking, administration, management, media, etc. The development of social science information networks are relevant to all of these activities but this report will concentrate on research and, to a limited extent, teaching activities.

In relation to research and teaching it is useful to distinguish between the superstructure and infrastructure of the field.<sup>8</sup> The first level, the superstructure, consists of the functions of commissioning research outputs, commissioning education/training outputs, providing research outputs and providing education/training outputs. In the case of independently formulated basic research these four categories can coincide but they are also often independent of each other, increasingly so in New Zealand as we shall see. The second level consists of a range of services that support the functions of the superstructure: "technology transfer" services; data services; information services; electronic communication services; professional services; and the services of policy and decision making committees. It might have been useful to distinguish a third level – a kind of substructure – which covered the functions relating to the funding of all the activities associated with both the superstructural and infrastructural levels. This substructure undergirds all the activity at both the superstructural and infrastructural levels. For the most part, however, those who commission research and education/training programmes are also the funders but this is not always the case. Thus, for example, research may be commissioned by a community group, be provided by a market research organisation and be funded from government sources. Another example: in the case of 'basic' social science research, such as that which takes place in public universities, researchers in a sense 'commission' and 'provide' their own research but are funded to do it by central government. The researchers are the ones who define the goals, objectives and parameters of the research. However, for the purposes of this report the sub-structural level of the field will not be distinguished from the first.

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<sup>8</sup> It should be noted that the terms used here (especially the term 'infrastructure') are employed in a way somewhat at variance with those currently used in science policy making circles.

The manner in which the structure outlined above and the corresponding functions are embodied in institutional arrangements gives expression to the science culture and policy framework of a country. These institutional arrangements and hence the science culture and policy framework vary considerably amongst APINESS member countries. The country whose institutional arrangements come closest to New Zealand is Australia, but even between those two countries there are very substantial differences including but not exclusively those of scale. An understanding of these unique characteristics and the differences between New Zealand and other countries in the APINESS grouping are essential to an understanding of the differences between the way APINESS has been taken up in New Zealand as compared to other member countries.

*Schematically, the general framework looks like this*

**Superstructure**

Funders

Providers

**Infrastructure**

Information dissemination services

Data services

Information services

Electronic communication and internet

**Services**

Professional services

Policy committees

**Structure of Social Science Research and Social Science Education/Training Activity in New Zealand**

*Superstructure*

**Funders**

A range of bodies commission and fund social science research: central government departments; local governments; non-profit voluntary organisations; commercial organisations. They do so for a variety of purposes. The following table gives a very rough indication of the sources of social science research funding:

Figures on funding of social science research are very unreliable. The Ministry of Research, Science and Technology has based its figures on the data it collected through the benchmark study of research and development carried out in 1991/1992. At the time many in the universities saw this as a tendentious exercise and hence the figures provided for the amount of time spent on the various projects reported there are very unreliable. More than this, many ignored the benchmarking exercise all together. Interesting as a database of projects currently under way, the figures provided in the study cannot be relied on to provide an accurate picture of the state of funding or expenditure on social science research.



**Table 1. Source of funds for social science research in New Zealand**

	NZ\$ millions	per cent
Crown funded		
Vote Education: Universities	22	44
Vote Government Departments	13	25
Vote Science: PGSF	7	14
Vote Health: Health Research Council of New Zealand	1	2
Private	8	15
Total	51	

I also suspect that there is a degree of underestimation of the amount of money that is provided from such sources as the health funding sources. The two child development studies based at Christchurch and Otago, between them would require in the region of \$1M a year at least. It is true, however, that the Otago study gets most of its funding from US funding agencies.

It may also well be the case that the private element is somewhat understated. Figures on this are very hard to establish. It should also be noted that local government and non-profit sector research is not included though the general view is that funding from these sources is minimal. On top of all this the figures do not take into account the costs of providing the 'free' infrastructural services that social scientists make use of: libraries and electronic networks. All of this shows that we should treat the figures provided above as indicative only.

New Zealand's investment in social science research is quite low. It is – in relative terms – about half that of Australia's making adjustments for the relative scale of the two countries.

Social science is very unusual in that its major sources of funding are Vote Education and through government departments. The other sciences gain most of their funding from Vote Science and Private sources (roughly 35 per cent) each. This difference in funding sources is reflected at the infrastructural level.

This distribution of funding also has implications for the kinds of research that are carried out. There are different typologies that can be employed to divide up research. We can distinguish between 'operational', 'strategic' and 'blue sky' research or between 'applied', 'strategic' and 'basic' research. But whatever typology of this kind is employed it is clear that the balance of research in the social sciences in New Zealand as compared to the other sciences is towards the 'basic' or 'blue sky' variety. This is not because there is too much of this kind of research but because there has not been sufficient resources for the social sciences in the non-Vote Education funding streams.

Government departments, for the most part, fund operational research. Strategic and applied research is funded by the PGSF and basic or blue-sky research is funded through Vote Education.

It would be useful at this point, for the purposes of this evaluation, to describe very briefly the nature of the funding for social science activity from the various sources mentioned above and, especially, the conditions under which it is made available.

#### *Vote Science: PGSF*

The public good science fund was established in 1990. For the social sciences this meant that the research resources that had been available from through the Social Science Research Funding Committee were now channelled through the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology. In terms of funding of social science research outputs the transition to the Foundation was not a major change from the previous regime. But from the point of view of the nascent social science information infrastructure this restructuring was disastrous. It is very important to note that the principles that the Foundation operates under prevents it from funding any 'infrastructural' activities directly. Rather the costs of infrastructure of any kind have to be built into the pricing of projects and programmes that funding is being sought for. The only exception to this rule relate to a very small set of pre-existing resources and databases of which have been clearly identified as being of 'national importance'. No such resources and databases were identified as for the social sciences: a classic Catch 22 position – serious underfunding of social science research meant that no such resources could be developed; If new ones were developed they would not qualify as the resources had to pre-exist the introduction of the new system.

It is very important to understand the implications for infrastructural development of this system of funding. To put it very simply, it makes the development and maintenance of such resources very difficult except as a by-product of the research process itself. The discontinuous nature of this kind of funding, the lack of any guarantee of continuity over a period much more than three years, means that the whole system works on short-term time-scales, time-scales which are at odds with the rhythms required for good infrastructural development.

#### *Vote Education*

The most significant funder of social science education and training is the central government. It does this largely through Vote Education, channelled through the Ministry of Education to the tertiary educational sector. In recent years, as students have begun to carry an increasing proportion of the costs attached to their education, they too have become significant funders of social science education and training through their fees. It is the stated policy of the current government to move to a situation where students fund 25 per cent of the costs attached to their education and training. This development has had and will continue to have significant effects throughout the field and at all levels of social science activity in New Zealand. It should also be noted that from the point of view of central government a significant proportion of the funding (notionally about 20 per cent) provided by it to Universities (and not others in the tertiary sector) through Vote Education is supposed to be directed towards the support of the research that it is understood undergirds the education and training provided by them.

#### *Social Science Research Funding Committee (SSRFC)*

The guidelines for the APINESS evaluation require that we give consideration to developments in the field in the last eight years as well as the future. It would not be possible to understand these

developments without giving some consideration to the SSRFC which ceased to exist in 1990. When we begin to consider the relationship of APINESS to the social science information infrastructure we will see that the SSRFC was possibly the most important player in the field at the beginning of the project and the evolution of the APINESS network in New Zealand was very much tied up with its fate.

The SSRFC was established in 1979. While it existed, it performed similar functions in the field of social science research as such bodies as the Economic and Social Research Council of Great Britain and the Indian Council for Social Science Research but, of course, on a much smaller scale. The SSRFC was set up to manage and administer the distribution of a very modest sum of money for social science research (approximately NZ\$500,000 per annum at the time it was wound up). It was also supposed to encourage the development of the infrastructure of the social sciences and, as we shall see, took some very bold steps in regard to this towards the end of its career. Unfortunately, for reasons not dissimilar to those that brought about the demise of the New Zealand Institute for Social Research and Development, it could not embark on a serious programme in relation to such developments except at the expense of its core activity: the funding of research. It, too, was seen to be costly in terms of its overheads and the creation of the Foundation of Research, Science and Technology provided the opportunity to wind it up and to pass its funding functions over the Foundation.

#### *Providers*

There are a number of different providers of social science research. The configuration of such providers has changed dramatically over the period this evaluation covers.

#### *Universities<sup>9</sup>*

New Zealand now has seven universities. At the beginning of the APINESS project it had only 6. It is widely believed that with the transformations in the tertiary sector that are currently under way New Zealand may well only have about 3 or 4 universities by the end of the next decade. The whole of the tertiary educational sector is undergoing radical change. Polytechnics have begun to offer degree courses, colleges of education (the old Teachers Training Colleges) are being taken over by universities, and even off-shore universities are developing linkages with institutions in New Zealand (such as that between Griffiths University and the College of Education in Christchurch).

In addition to this, there have been major transformations to the social sciences themselves within these institutions over the last decade. We have seen the rise of new fields of study and the rapid expansion of others: women's studies; media studies; museum studies; nursing studies; police studies; development studies; and so on. There are radical changes currently under way in a number of institutions in the departmental arrangements of traditional disciplines with a considerable degree of realignment taking place between them.

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<sup>9</sup> More information about the various universities can be found at the following Internet web sites: University of Auckland: <http://www.auckland.ac.nz>; University of Waikato: <http://www.waikato.ac.nz>; Massey University: <http://www.massey.ac.nz>; Victoria University of Wellington: <http://www.vuw.ac.nz>; University of Canterbury: <http://www.canterbury.ac.nz>; Lincoln University: <http://www.lincoln.ac.nz>; University of Otago: <http://www.otago.ac.nz>

The following table based on figures from 1993 gives some idea of number of graduates produced in the various disciplines and sub-disciplines of the social sciences:

**Table 2. Number of Bachelor/Honours graduates by discipline 1993**

Anthropology	125
Economics	290
Education	650
Geography	300
Maori Studies	50
Politics	360
Psychology	600
Sociology	150
Media Studies	40
Nursing Studies	100
Leisure studies	480
Social and Public Policy, and social work	50
Women's studies	65
World religions	70

Each member of country of APINESS will have its own configuration of social sciences and each member of APINESS can be distinguished from every other on the basis of the profile of its social sciences as exemplified in the number of graduates produced in the different disciplines and sub-disciplines. This profile is a very important and significant dimension of the 'cultural' characteristic of member countries.

Because New Zealand University social science research is based on a funding formula in which student numbers play a very important part the figures above also give a rough indication of the distribution of research activity in the various fields of the social sciences. Needless to say, perhaps, this too is a very dynamic scene and the figures above do not necessarily reflect in detail the state of play as it currently exists.

A number of universities have institutes and centres whose major output is research rather than education. The following list is meant to be indicative and by no means comprehensive:

**Massey University**

- Disability And Rehabilitation Research Clearing House
- Educational Research and Development Centre
- Social Policy Research Centre
- Social Research Agency
- Applied Psychology Centre

Maori Health Research Centre  
University of Canterbury  
Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies  
Victoria University of Wellington  
Institute of Policy Studies  
Health Services Research Centre  
Stout Centre for New Zealand Cultural Studies  
Centre for Strategic Studies  
Institute of Early Childhood Studies  
University of Waikato  
Centre for Environmental and Resource Studies  
Population Studies Centre  
University of Otago School of Medicine<sup>10</sup>  
Christchurch Child Development Study

It is likely that with changes to the structure of funding, differentiation between the educational and research activities of university academics and the institutional arrangements through which this differentiation is given expression will continue apace.

#### Publicly-owned Institutes

We need to give some attention to two publicly 'owned' institutes that have been involved in providing social science research.

#### New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER)<sup>11</sup>

The NZCER describes itself in the following words:

It was set up in 1934, and became a statutory body in 1945. The NZCER Act 1972 states that the function of the Council shall be: (1) To foster the study of, and research into, education and other like matters, and to prepare and publish such reports on these matters as may in its opinion be necessary or of value to teachers and other persons; (2) To furnish information, advice, and assistance to persons and organisations concerned with education and other similar matters (s.13). NZCER's current mission is to support educators through quality research, resources, and information.

NZCER aims to: improve the quality of education through research; help reduce barriers and expand educational horizons for all New Zealanders; create educational resources based on sound research.

<sup>10</sup> More information: <http://www.chmeds.ac.nz>

<sup>11</sup> The NZCER has an Internet web site: <http://www.nzcer.org.nz>

NZCER's research programme is organised under four themes:

(1) Maori Education; (2) Early Childhood Education; (3) Educational Policies and Institutions; (4) Learning, Curriculum, and Assessment.

NZCER carries out contract educational research projects for a variety of organisations. Short-term consultancies, such as development of research instruments or reviews of hot issues are also undertaken.

Like many other publicly-owned institutions in New Zealand it has continued in public ownership though increasingly it is not publicly funded. In this respect, its structure and governance approximates that of the Crown Research Institutes<sup>12</sup> (CRIs). It is also the case that as universities set up their own research institutes the differences between these institutes and organisations like the NZCER are more and more attenuated. Thus, for example, the Educational Research and Development Centre of Massey University would compete for the same funds as the NZCER.

#### New Zealand Institute for Social Research and Development

It had long been a dream of the social science community that an independent crown-funded social science research institute be established on the model of the various research agencies that the government had already established for a range of other disciplinary areas. With the restructuring of the whole field of government funded science in 1990, which saw the demise of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research and the Social Science Research Fund Committee and the establishment of a range of companies known as Crown Research Institutes, an opportunity arose to revisit this dream. Alongside the nine Crown Research Institutes<sup>13</sup> based on the research areas of the erstwhile Department of Scientific and Industrial Research a new CRI was established devoted to social research and development: the New Zealand Institute for Social Research and Development.

Like all of the other CRIs the NZISRD received the bulk of its funding from FRST for various projects it had applied for grants for. It was intended that this funding would become more open to competition, especially as the pool of money available for research in the general area of the social

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<sup>12</sup> New Zealand's Crown Research Institutes (CRIs) were set up in 1992 as government-owned companies with a clear focus on servicing the technology and innovation needs of important sectors of the economy. Where did they come from? The new organisation are based on the skills of staff from a wide range of backgrounds in Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR), Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF), the Forest Research Institute (FRI) and other government research organisations. These skills, together with the freedom to operate as commercial organisations, have resulted in close and productive relationships with the sectors the CRIs serve. What do they do? The CRIs offer a rich and flexible resource for providing large, medium and small organisations with technology and innovation services. The CRIs undertake a wide range of research, technology development and consulting for private companies within New Zealand and overseas. The CRIs also undertake strategic public good science for government; work that complements the more applied research undertaken for the private sector. The company structure allows the CRIs to borrow funds, form joint ventures and subsidiary companies so that they can fully exploit the commercial potential of new developments for the benefit of New Zealand. (See URL: <http://www.crop.cri.nz/informat/crivot.htm>)

<sup>13</sup> The others are as follows: New Zealand Forest Research Institute; AgResearch; HortResearch; Crop & Food Research; Manaaki Whenua – Landcare Research; Geological & Nuclear Sciences; Industrial Research; National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research; Institute of Environmental Science and Research. (See URL: <http://www.crop.cri.nz/informat/cris.htm>)

sciences was targeted to grow substantially. The Institute was also expected, eventually, to find funding from sources other than FRST, in like manner to that of other CRIs. The Institute was established in Christchurch, with a small branch office in Wellington and it embarked on a series of projects.

It became clear from a very early stage that the Institute was not performing well. The basic and most fundamental problem was that it was far too small and thus the amount of funds used up in overheads meant that it had far less money to invest in the actual projects it was engaged in. It was not able to recruit seasoned researchers with good and long track records of research in the field of social research.

The Institute foundered and was wound up by its share-holding minister in early 1994, just two years after it had begun its operations. Its projects were farmed out to various other institutions, its library disposed of or archived.

I have included this account of the rise and fall of the NZISRD in this report because the institute – regardless of its lack of success – was a key development in the social sciences in New Zealand in the period covered by the APINESS evaluation project. Its demise gave rise to a wide-ranging and important reviews of the state of social research in New Zealand, reviews that are very important to an evaluation of the APINESS project. I will have more to say about them later in the report.

#### *Private providers*

##### New Zealand Institute of Economic Research

The New Zealand Institute of Economic Research is an independent non-profit incorporated society. It was established in 1958 and is under the governance of a Board of Trustees. Its objectives are as follows:

- (a) to conduct research into economic problems affecting New Zealand, especially in connection with economic growth;
- (b) to encourage economic research by other organisations;
- (c) to collect and circulate information on economic subjects;
- (d) to promote the study and understanding of economic matters by training research officers, by holding conferences and seminars, and by publishing the results of research and study.

The Institute does research for commercial organisations and government bodies. The income for this research is based on contracts but it also draws on a substantial subscription income (nearly \$500,000 in 1995).

#### *Market and Social Research Companies*

It is hard to estimate the extent and degree of involvement of private companies in the provision of social science research. It would require a substantial project in its own right to document this

involvement and to track its history. It is certainly clear, however, that it is becoming an increasingly important dimension of the social science research scene in New Zealand. A range of companies, large and small, operate in the field: Colmar-Brunton; AGB McNair; Coopers and Lybrand; and so on. They provide services to both public and private institutions and it is not uncommon now for university social science researchers to make use of their services for the more routine aspects of their own research; thus, for examples, we could mention the recent surveys of the values of New Zealanders that have been carried out by private research companies or the major study of the living conditions of the elderly carried out by Colmar Brunton on behalf of the community organisation Age Concern and the Insurance company National Mutual. Government departments are making more and more use of their services.

#### *Private individual researchers*

Many private 'companies' consist of no more than one or two individuals who make a living by 'piece' work, working for both government (local and central) and commercial organisations on an ad hoc basis. In the last ten years there has been a very significant expansion in the contribution made by such researchers to the field of social science research. Unfortunately, this is also an area of social science research provision that we know very little about and which would deserve serious research and analysis in its own right.

#### *Infrastructure*

##### Introduction

We now come to the dimension of social science activity in New Zealand that is central to the evaluation of the APINESS project. I have already indicated that the use of the word 'infrastructure' here is somewhat at variance with uses of the word in the New Zealand context though more in keeping with its use in Information service circles elsewhere.

The order in which I discuss social science infrastructural services should not be taken to imply any invidious comparison of their relative merits. I deal with information dissemination services first simply because without them the other services would not exist.

#### *Information Dissemination Services*

The phrase 'Technology transfer' has gained some currency in science research circles in the last decade. The idea is that scientists should be giving more attention to issues concerned with the dissemination of their results so that wider circles can benefit from the fruits of scientific research. Though largely coined to refer to issues and problems in relation to 'natural' science research, one of the side benefits of this is that reviews and studies of social scientific activities are giving more direct attention to issues concerned with the dissemination of the results of research. In the 'contract' culture that has arisen around social scientific research, researchers are expected to indicate clearly in their proposals the mechanisms they will employ for the dissemination of the results of their research.

In social science circles, though more explicit attention is being given to these issues, the modes of dissemination still remain fairly traditional. They are the following:



- (a) Journals
- (b) monograph or book publications
- (c) reports
- (d) publication in non-print media, including computer mediated media (CD-ROM, Internet Web sites, etc.)
- (e) conferences, seminars and workshops and their published proceedings

### *Journals*

New Zealand seems to have tried to reinvent the entire structure of professional disciplinary journals found in much larger countries. This has led not only to a proliferation of journals but it has also meant that these journals lead a very precarious existence: most of them have to be heavily subsidised because their subscription bases are very small. They find it very difficult to obtain copy, and it is a rare journal that is more than biennial. Most of the journals have their editorial bases located in Universities where it is easier to hide the true costs of their production and hence to provide an implicit subsidy through the education system to professional disciplinary associations, especially in those cases where the association does not incorporate the relevant journal as a house journal. This situation will become increasingly untenable in the future as universities move to more and more transparent accounting systems and audits of expenditure and as the reins of expenditure are tightened.

Thus, for example, the journal *Sites*, produced by the Department of Social Anthropology at Massey University, currently only has to recover the costs of printing associated with its publication. All the other costs of production and the management of the journal are carried by the department itself. These costs are not insubstantial.

A recent review of the state of the social scientific research and capacity in New Zealand proposed the establishment of a quality periodical to report specialist social science findings. It was suggested that this journal could form part of the stable of journals published by the Royal Society of New Zealand. It is unlikely that such a journal would do anything to mitigate the problems arising from the proliferation of journals. A review of the state of social scientific publication in New Zealand is required.

It may also well be the case that in the future more and more journals will be published on the Internet. Some New Zealand journals have already appeared in this format. Thus, for example, the journal *Trout*, a journal devoted to media studies in the South Pacific, is published at the following URL:

<http://www.auckland.ac.nz/lbr/trout/trout.htm>

### *Monographs and books*

A steady stream of monographs and books are published by New Zealand social scientists. There has been a considerable expansion. This has been for at least two reasons: Firstly, the increase in the number of social scientists and, secondly, because there has been a considerable increase in the local publishing industry: there are more publishing houses and many of them are prepared to contemplate doing the small runs that New Zealand social science books require. It is possible, however, that the halcyon days of such publishing are over.

### *Reports*

In volume, reports are possibly the most significant form in which New Zealand social science research is disseminated. Much material that eventually sees the light of day in the form of published monographs or journal articles are first published as reports or in working paper series. But it would be equally true to say that most of the material that is published in this form never sees the light of day in formal publications.

This voluminous literature has always presented a particular problem to the social science community and to the information workers who serve them. Over the years various proposals have been put forward to 'control' this grey literature but none have come to fruition. The need remains pressing and grows more and more serious each year.

### *Alternative Media publications*

I have already indicated that there is a move to experiment with disseminating social science information and research results in the new computer mediated media. It is too early to tell at this moment but there is every reason to believe that this will become an increasingly important medium.

### *Conferences, workshops and seminars*

New Zealand is as well served for professional social science associations as it is for journals. Most disciplines and disciplinary areas have their own association and most hold annual conferences. These are very important occasions for the dissemination of research results.

### *Summary*

In the field of information dissemination services, New Zealand social science is served by a large range of journals, report series, and conferences. The degree of integration of this field is very slight, even though the problems and concerns shared by the different ventures have very strong similarities.

### *Data Services*

There are two service providers in the field of data services for social science researchers: Statistics New Zealand and the New Zealand Social Research Data Archives: Statistics New Zealand is much the bigger of the two.

### *Statistics New Zealand*

Statistics New Zealand creates and maintains approximately 50+ survey collections which are used as the basis to produce something in the order of 350+ publications. Many of these are absolutely essential to social scientists.

In recent years access to this data has, on the one hand, been made easier by dramatic improvements in metadata files, i.e. data about the data themselves. Statistics New Zealand has taken a very pro-active role in disseminating information about the information it has. On the other hand, this data has simultaneously become less accessible because of the costs attached. Statistics New Zealand, like other Government departments, is expected to find more and more of its funding through

user charges and this has meant an escalation in the costs of accessing the data which it collects. It should be noted, however, that the department is seeking innovative ways of making data available to bona fide researchers at low or nil cost, through such devices as, for example, the creation of a data laboratory on its own premises.

#### *New Zealand Social Research Data Archives*

The New Zealand Social Research Data Archives was established in 1992 in the Faculty of Social Sciences, Massey University. Its mission is to collect, clean, document, maintain, and disseminate machine-readable data sets from survey research. The Data Archives has acquired some 30 or more data sets from a wide range of social science studies representing a number of different disciplinary approaches.

The Data Archives has been seeking long-term funding for its activities. Thus far it has been unsuccessful in its endeavours but it is possible that some time in the future it may find itself supported in a somewhat different context. This is spelt out in more detail below.

#### *Information Services*

New Zealand has the full range of common information resources that are to found in many other countries: a National Library, University Libraries, Public Libraries, and Special libraries attached to other institutions. Nothing would be gained for this report in enumerating all of these or going into them into great detail. However, it is appropriate for this evaluation report to draw attention to some key transformations in this field over the last decade.

#### *National Library of New Zealand<sup>14</sup>*

The National Library has seen dramatic changes in the eight years covered by the review. To put it at its simplest, these changes have involved (a) the review of its functions on the national scene with the aim of defining its 'core' activities; (b) the development of policies and programmes to sharpen the focus of its energy on these activities; (c) the implementation of these policies and programmes; (d) the establishment of processes to evaluate the policies and programmes.

In the main, the result of this appraisal of its activities has seen it define its core functions in what has been called heritage terms. Thus, in its self-publicity, the Library describes its mission in the following way:

**"The unique role of the National Library is to collect and maintain literature and information resources that relates to New Zealand and the Pacific, to make this information readily available, and to preserve the documentary heritage of this country for future generations." (URL: <http://www.natlib.govt.nz/about/>)**

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<sup>14</sup> For further information visit URL: <http://www.natlib.govt.nz>

In its document outlining its strategic directions this mission is spelt out in greater detail:

“To achieve key objectives for Government, the National Library of New Zealand will concentrate its working efforts on the following:

Collecting and preserving

- Continue to manage the Crown’s documentary heritage collections, and identify and preserve the national documentary record.

Facilitating access

- Provide advice and services to the library community and facilitate access and resource sharing within that library community.

Policy advice

- Provide policy advice to Government on information literacy in New Zealand, and the management of, and access to, structured information collections.

In carrying out these activities, the National Library will:

- focus on the delivery of services which other operators do not provide
- identify solutions to gaps in the provision of structured information, rather than devise solutions which extend its delivery role
- favour coordination and support
- continue to provide contestable services to schools to contribute to Government outcomes for education.”

The result has been that there has been a considerable degree of divestment of non-core activities. This has, for example, led to the decision to “cease to host externally sourced databases from the end of 1997, [though] a capacity for providing on-line access to information generated by the Library will be maintained.” (National Library of New Zealand 1996-1997 Annual Report: Chief Executive’s Report URL: <http://www.natlib.govt.nz/about/annlrept/chiefexec.htm#notable>) In other words, KIWINET is being passed back to the wider information services community.

Another dramatic venture in the period under review as the inauguration of the National Document and Information Service project in 1994. This project was embarked on in collaboration with the Australian National Library but foundered in late 1996 as a result of problems with software development and may be abandoned. The aim of this project was to provide a state-of-the-art information system which would provide on-line access not only to bibliographic information but also to full text and full image information.

The development of the new policy framework for the National Library and commitment to the new vision have had profound implications for the APINESS project in New Zealand and will be taken up in greater detail in a later section of this report.

The National Library of New Zealand is a key, if somewhat under-appreciated, resource for social scientists in New Zealand. Its large collections are crucial to social scientific research in and about New Zealand. At present the only discipline that makes significant use of this resource is History; it would be in the interests of the larger social scientific community to make greater use of its holdings and services.

#### *University Libraries<sup>15</sup>*

University libraries have also been caught up in the managerial and technological changes that have occurred over the last decade. Many have been significantly restructured. Thus, for example, developments at Massey University Library have seen a shift in the balance of labour devoted to different functions in the library. As a consequence of increasing automation the acquisition and cataloguing services were consolidated and scaled down: fewer hands were required to do the work. This in turn has meant that, through redeployment, the library was able to develop services it had long dreamt of doing. A whole new section of 'College Liaison Librarians' has been established through which services of a much higher professional order can be delivered to the different sections of the research community. The College of Humanities and Social Sciences, for instance, now has two full time dedicated staff with high level qualifications to service its information and library needs. In addition, a New Zealand and Pacific Librarian's position has been established with the view to developing a special collection in this area. It is likely that other university libraries will develop along similar lines if they have not already done so.

From the point of view of social science information services and networks what is interesting about these developments is the possibility that there will be increasing numbers of library and information personnel who will begin to specialise in social science information services. If sufficient numbers move into this area of specialisation it may be possible to develop a small professional grouping – perhaps a 'virtual' on-line one – where they could share ideas, views and information in regard to their activities.

#### *Public libraries*

Public libraries have not been significant players in the field of social science information services.

#### *Specialist libraries*

There is a collection (but not network) of specialist libraries who have a significant social science information component to their activities. Some of these deserve special attention:

#### *New Zealand Council of Education Research Library and Information Service*

The NZCER has already been discussed above as a research provider. Of equal importance to its activities is the provision of information services to the education and educational research community. The NZCER has a long history of innovation in the field of educational information

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<sup>15</sup> For a list of library URLs see the following site: <http://www.lincoln.ac.nz/libr/nz/nzlibs.htm>

services. It has for long tried to develop databases of grey literature pertaining to education and educational research in New Zealand. It has been unsuccessful in its campaign to have such a database established. However, waging the campaign has kept the issue of the control of grey literature alive.

It should be noted that with changes to the funding regimes, even the little work the NZCER had been able to do in relation to the activities mentioned above have had to be cut back.

#### *New Zealand Institute of Social Research and Development*

Although the Institute was disestablished in 1995, it is important to note its contributions to the field of social science information services. In the first instance, it established a library which, should the Institute have been successful, could well have become one of the most important centres for social science information in the country. It had embarked on a programme to do precisely that and this had included the development of a collection of statistical datasets.

On the disestablishment of the Institute its library's holdings were distributed amongst a number of interested parties: University of Canterbury; National Archives; Massey University.

In addition to this one of the first contracts that the Institute negotiated with the Foundation for Research, Science and Technology was to conduct an audit of existing social science information sources. Though this audit was for its own purposes the Institute published a directory based on the findings of its audit.

The directory is not meant to be definitive. It documents approximately 290 social science information sources. Though seriously flawed in its conception and execution the directory represents the last serious attempt to gain a conspectus of information sources in social science in New Zealand.

#### *Social Science Research Fund Committee*

As I have already indicated the SSRFC, in its final years, engaged very actively in the development of a number of social science information data bases. It established three: SOCWIP (Social Science Work in Progress); SOCNET (a directory of social scientists); LIAISON (a database of funding sources and organisations who were purchasers in the field of social research). One of these, SOCNET, was the basis for the publication of a printed directory of social researchers in 1989.

On the winding up of the SSRFC the databases were passed on to FRST. As it did not see its brief as including this kind of work the databases were allowed to lapse and, in fact, disappeared. The SSRFC's library was also dispersed to various quarters.

#### *Other specialist libraries*

A number of other special libraries exist: the library of the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research; the libraries of such government departments as the Departments of Social Welfare, Corrections, Health, etc. The reason for listing them is that they are all elements in a possible social science information network and thus relevant to an evaluation of APINESS.

### *Electronic Communication and Internet Services*

The period this evaluation covers has seen a dramatic revolution in computer mediated communication. At the start of the period under consideration, 1989, very few people knew about the Internet and the tools available to make use of it were very crude and user-unfriendly. The World Wide Web was in its infancy and the major communication tool used by information workers was remote telnet access to such database suppliers as DIALOG. Social Scientists themselves were largely ignorant of all these developments.

The transformation has been nothing short of revolutionary. Few social scientists in New Zealand now do not have email addresses and most are aware of and have made use of the Internet in other ways. All University catalogues are accessible through the net and most university libraries have also provided network access to major databases that were originally only accessible through the services of a specialised professional librarian.

*The major developments have been the following:*

#### Email

Most social scientists and social science information service providers now have access to email. This is a medium which lends itself to the creation and development of networks and the creation of 'virtual' communities. It is the tool that underlies other developments on the Internet. New Zealand social scientists are now, generally, extensive and intensive users of the email system.

#### Elists

There has been a proliferation of elists some of them devoted to the social sciences. This tool allows New Zealand social scientists not only to set up their own virtual communities but also to participate in international ones. A useful study would be to investigate, document and analyse the use of this medium of communication amongst social scientists. A list of New Zealand social science elists and how to subscribe to them can be found at the following WWW URL site: <http://www.massey.ac.nz/~NZSRDA/nzsorigs/elists.htm>

*In the main these lists are used in the social sciences to*

- provide a medium of communication amongst members of various professional associations: saanz-l@massey.ac.nz (Sociological Association of Aotearoa/New Zealand); nzasa-l@massey.ac.nz (Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa/New Zealand); etc.
- provide a medium of communication amongst those interested in a particular subject area: thus there are lists for the sociology of health, for museum studies, for womens studies, for studies of social class, etc.
- for teaching purposes: many teachers now have elists for their courses. There is an elist devoted to APINESS: apiness-l@massey.ac.nz I will discuss this in a later section.

### *Netnews and Usenet*

These Internet tools are not used in any serious fashion by social science researchers. They do not have much to offer in comparison with e-lists and in fact have considerable disadvantages. There are none specifically devoted to social science subjects in New Zealand. The only partial exception is a news group devoted to New Zealand politics, but this has so much non-scientific traffic it is not used as the basis for any serious professional discussion.

### *WWW (and FTP)*

We now turn to one of the major developments of the Internet, the World Wide Web and hypertext materials. The growth in this field of computer-mediated communication has been exponential. It is what is making the Internet such an attractive medium for ordinary and professional users. The number of Web sites grows at a phenomenal rate and there are numerous sites of interest and importance to social scientists in New Zealand.

### *Professional Services*

New Zealand has a considerable range of professional associations that serve different disciplinary communities. These associations often produce newsletters, hold annual conferences, and develop policies in relation to their disciplines. They provide those who belong to them with a means of keeping abreast of what others working within the same discipline are doing, and work to further the interests and status of their disciplines. Many social scientists belong to more than one such organisation and some belong to several. Typical examples of such associations are the following: Sociological Association of Aotearoa/New Zealand; Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa/New Zealand; Applied Linguistics Association of New Zealand; Population Studies Association of New Zealand.

Such associations would be an essential part of any social science information network.

### *Policy Committees*

New Zealand social science is also served by a range of policy and decision making committees. There are a few that are specifically targeted towards the social sciences and they are listed below. In any serious development of a social science information network they would have to be taken into account:

- Royal Society of New Zealand Social Science Standing Committee<sup>16</sup>
- Foundation for Research, Science and Technology Social Science Advisory Committee<sup>17</sup>
- New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO Social Science Advisory Committee

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<sup>16</sup> For more information see: <http://www.rsnz.govt.nz/ctees/socsci>

<sup>17</sup> For more information see: <http://www.frst.govt.nz/public/pgsf/advcomm.htm#ss>



## A New Zealand Social Science Research Clearing House

In 1994, in the wake of the disestablishment of the NZISRD, the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology commissioned a study to develop a more in-depth understanding of the present characteristics of New Zealand's social science research resources and how these might be strengthened to match national needs. After extensive consultation and review the study team presented its report with a series of recommendations. Two of these are of great importance here.

*The first stated the following:*

### Proposal 4: The establishment of a social science research clearing house

We believe that new frameworks are needed to allow the various funders, practitioners and users of public good social science research to exchange information with each other and thus propose the establishment of a social science research clearing house.

To institute a research clearing house, coordination and 'start up' funding will be required. We believe MoRST should convene a working party to agree the proportion of funding required from each of the major stakeholders and the likely operational requirements of the clearing house. The working party should then call for tenders from interested parties to set up the clearing house.

For Maori information the clearing house and all components of it ought to recognise and act on the issues of intellectual property rights, appropriate archiving, management and guardianship, and Maori perspectives of knowledge.

*The second:*

### Proposal 5: A tendering notice board

Within the clearing house we advocate the establishment of a tendering notice board to link practitioners, users and funders of research. Such a notice board should be one of the operational requirements of the social science research clearing house.

It may be best to locate Maori topics on a parallel board to facilitate a process whereby purchasers, providers and participants of research projects negotiate the research process. The research process should not be seen as a two-way dynamic between just researchers and the researched. A notice board should assist in ensuring Maori are involved from the conceptual stages of a project.

As there were only seven recommendations it is clear that the authors of the report saw that the establishment and development of information systems for the social sciences was a key element in the strategy to remove the barriers to good social science research in New Zealand.

In the body of their report they made the details of what they wanted the clearing house to do clearer. They wanted the clearing house to hold the following types of information: database of social science research information; database of work-in-progress; database of research requests; directory of social researchers and organisations; calendar of conferences; and, Maori information, which would be identified within and alongside each database, directory or calendar.

They suggested that a venture which saw the Clearing House incorporate the already existing New Zealand Social Research Data Archives should be given serious attention as considerable synergies could result from such a partnership. In the wake of this report, a number of developments took place: Firstly, the Royal Society of New Zealand indicated that it was very interested in the Clearing House proposal. It approached Massey University with a view to a joint venture based at Massey University and incorporating the Data Archives as suggested in the report.

A report was commissioned by the Social Science Committee of the Royal Society. It outlined the structure and functions of the Clearing House and also calculated the financial implications of the venture.

The Minister of Research, Science and Technology commissioned a further report to provide advice on how, in the light of the fact that the Government had decided that the NZISRD should not be maintained as a stand-alone entity within the CRI structure an applied science capacity could best be provided. The review team deliberated through 1995 and in September of that year published its findings and recommendations in a document for Cabinet consumption. That review argued for support of the Clearing House venture.

It is very clear from these proposals that there is a profound concern and desire to address the social science information needs of New Zealand.

Following the above proposals there was considerable turmoil on the political scene, including a general election. The reviews mentioned above have been shelved in the wake of the political changes. It is a moot question as to whether they will be revived; For the present the omens do not look very good.

From the point of view of APINESS this is a serious setback because if there had been any future to New Zealand's involvement in the project in its current form then it would have depended on the establishment of such a Clearing House.

## **APINESS New Zealand**

### **Introduction**

The next step in this evaluation is to describe and report on New Zealand's involvement in the APINESS project. This is the 'text' to the 'context' of the preceding section. It is by looking at both that we can evaluate the successes and failures as well as suggestions for its future reorientation in the light of that evaluation.

The APINESS project grew out of discussions at a series of meetings between 1983 and 1986, under the auspices of both UNESCO and AASSREC, culminating in an inaugural meeting held in

Bangkok in May 1986. At that meeting, attended by representatives of 16 countries of the region and observers from other organisations and networks, it was agreed to embark on a project whose goals were as follows:

- To establish, develop and maintain a regional network for social science information and related services. The network would be called the Asia-Pacific Information Network in Social Sciences or APINESS for short.

The principles on which the network was to be implemented and the structure that it was to employ were spelt out in a document that resulted from discussions at the inaugural meeting. It would be useful to this evaluation to visit them again.

Following will be the guiding principles of the proposed network:

- That the network should be a mechanism for breaking information-isolation and for helping develop adequate infra-structures at the national level;
- That the concept of network, in this instance, should be defined as an inter-institutional arrangement and not as a synonym for a supra-national centre, which is not presently envisaged;
- That the National Contact Point of each participating country be seen as a centre with its own circle of interactions guided by the commonality of interests and pattern of priorities;
- That asymmetry in institutional frameworks at the national level implies that no single model can be prescribed but that each country should decide for itself its priorities for development of information infra-structures;
- That asymmetry in levels of development at the national level implies that some activity at the regional level may be required to coordinate initiatives by network participants to assist countries;
- That the main guiding principle at this stage should be decentralization. The network should promote a system of linkages nationally, regionally and internationally and try to identify existing national centres that can add a regional dimension for certain specialised activities;
- That the network programme should proceed step by step from the rudiments of cross-country cooperation that exist currently along the lines of the TCDC and in those areas which do not require investment of huge sums of money.
- That the raising of resources should be encouraged not only through cooperation among participants of the network by sharing for mutual benefit, but also by developing specific and general proposals for funding agencies and associating with existing agencies which already have relevant infra-structures and which support the network objectives.

These principles were to be implemented within a structure which consisted of, firstly, a set of National Contact Points (NCP), nominated by the local National Commissions of UNESCO. The NCPs were usually though not always the local National Library. Each National Contact Point would have an APINESS representative whose task it would be to look after matters relating to APINESS. Each NCP would set up a National Advisory Group (NAG) consisting of representatives from bodies with an interest in social science information infrastructures. The main function of the NCP was defined as being the promotion and monitoring of the Network's development in the country, and participation in the regional activities of APINESS. This broad function was disaggregated into a series of detailed functions and activities.

Secondly, at the regional level, the NCP representatives mentioned above would constitute a Regional Advisory Group. The major function of this group was to meet occasionally to review the operations of the network and confirm or amend network priorities and action programmes. A regional secretariat was also established based at UNESCO RUSHSAP in Bangkok.

In addition to the principles and structure the inaugural meeting identified and nominated a very large programme of activities for the network for the following two to four years: Development of resources and capabilities in the social sciences; Adoption and development of norms and standards of information handling; Development of linkages and cooperative activities; Training of social scientist users of social science information; publication of state-of-the-art reports on social science subjects; processing and repackaging of social science information/research data for policy makers; bilateral agreements; development/integration of specialised sub-networks into APINESS; publication of APINESS newsletter and APINESS publicity.

New Zealand sent a representative to this inaugural meeting, Mr. John Gallacher, from the New Zealand Institute of Economic Research. Mr. Gallacher was also involved with SEDNAP, the Socio-Economic Databanks Network for Asia and the Pacific.

#### *National level activities*

##### National Advisory Group

New Zealand's National Advisory Group was set up in late 1986. The APINESS framework was adopted in principle but it was decided to await further developments and to continue with already existing initiatives until the nature of the network and how it would function had become clearer. From all the records I can obtain it would appear that this was also the last meeting of the National Advisory Group.

##### National Contact Point

At the inaugural and last meeting of the National Advisory Group, the National Library was nominated to and accepted the role of National Contact Point. It has remained the National Contact Point since then being the organisation to which all communications relating to APINESS have been sent, including copies of the APINESS newsletter.

Other than the distribution of the Newsletter and responses to the very rare and occasional request for information from other APINESS members or interested parties the National Contact Point has not taken a proactive role in relation to either the principles of or the programme of APINESS.

#### National Contact Point representatives

The list of NCP representatives (all attached to the National Library of New Zealand) is as follows:

1986	Mr. Szentimay
1988-1989	Janet Caldwell, Director, Reference and Information Services
1990-1993	Oon Tan, Senior Reference Librarian
1993-1994	Mary Atwood, Senior Advisor
1995-1996	Anna Chalmers, Research Manager
1997-	Catherine Parkin, Policy Secretariat

The tasks of the National Contact Point mentioned above have been carried out by these individuals. These tasks have been in addition to their full-time roles and no adjustment has been made to their other duties, as far as I understand, to engage in APINESS activities. In other words, APINESS had a very low priority in the work regimes of its representatives, but through no fault of their own: the larger institution of which they were a part, itself did not see APINESS as a major item on its list of priorities. This observation is not meant as a criticism but simply as an observation of fact. There were very good reasons for the low priority placed on APINESS within the National Library. It is clear from the discussion in the chapter on 'context' that the kinds of commitment that APINESS represented, and continues to represent in its present form, are not part of the 'core-activities' of the National Library.

#### *Regional level activities*

##### Participation in Regional Advisory Group Meetings

The major regional activity of APINESS has been the holding of an occasional meeting to review the activities of the 'network'. New Zealand, as I have already indicated, was a participant at the inaugural meeting but it also sent representatives to three out of the four subsequent meetings of the Regional Advisory Group described above. The delegates to those meetings were as follows:

1988	September	Bangkok	Lynn Barlow, Information Officer, SSRFC
1990	August	Bangkok	No representative
1992	August	New Delhi	Henry Barnard, New Zealand Social Research Data Archives
1994	December	Bangkok	Henry Barnard, New Zealand Social Reserach Data Archives

These meetings consisted, firstly, of the presentation of country reports. New Zealand's contributions are interesting as measures of its involvement in APINESS. The New Zealand country

reports consisted almost exclusively of accounts of developments in the social sciences information infrastructure. These developments had occurred quite independently of any connection with or linkages to APINESS. The accounts were of developments that were the outcome of the evolution of the research and information systems that was taking place in the country. If, by chance, these developments coincided with outcomes consistent with the goals that APINESS set down for itself, then attention was drawn to this fact. It was abundantly clear, however, that even in these cases the coincidence of outcomes was purely fortuitous and not one resulting from conscious design. A typical example of this would be the development of the SOcNET, SOcWIP and LIAISON databases by the SSRFC. These were reported on at the first regional meeting but it is clear from the context that, though they coincided with some of the objectives set down for APINESS activities at the inaugural meeting, that these were developments that had arisen independently of any APINESS connection.

In addition to the country reports other reports and presentations were a feature of the meetings: reports from other regional networks; presentations and even workshops on new developments in the social science information field (such as a workshop on the use of CDISIS database software at the New Delhi meeting).

#### Contributions to APINESS Newsletter

New Zealand has been, like most member countries with the exception perhaps of India – the publisher of the Newsletter – a rather desultory contributor to the newsletter. In all about 6 or 7 minor contributions of information about activities in New Zealand have been published in the 19 odd issues of the newsletter. It is hard to gauge the impact of the newsletter or its usefulness on the New Zealand but relying on subjective judgement my assessment would be that it adds nothing to the social science information scene in New Zealand.

#### Apiness elist

New Zealand's major 'regional' contribution to the APINESS project was the setting up of the apiness elist in 1994. The following year saw a large number of individuals from around the world subscribe to the list and there was considerable traffic through it most of it originating from the Australian National University's Coompspaper Social Science service centre. However, the number of people subscribed from the Asian region was comparatively low and it did not develop into a forum for discussion or dissemination of information from APINESS members. Perhaps it was unwise to make it an open list and it may well have been better to keep it restricted to the representatives at National Contact Points and those with a direct interest in APINESS.

The list became quiet through 1996 and there has been no activity on it for the last year.

#### 'Free' subscriptions to New Zealand journals

As a result of discussions at the 1992 RAG meeting, the New Zealand representative communicated with a number of editors of New Zealand journals to arrange for free subscriptions to be arranged for key social science information centres in APINESS participating countries.

#### *Appraisal, Evaluation and Recommendations*

##### Appraisal and evaluation

It will be clear from the accounts given above that New Zealand's involvement with APINESS has been minimal. It has not participated in a vigorous way to implement the principles, structure or activities of the network. APINESS has not registered in any significant way in the consciousness of information workers in New Zealand. Its existence and New Zealand's participation in it has had no obvious impact on the information infrastructures for the social sciences.

The account of the context in which APINESS has operated in this country shows a fragmented, diverse, complex and evolving infrastructure whose future direction it is hard to prophesy. The only thing that can be said, in the light of views canvassed and recorded by the two recent reviews of the social sciences in New Zealand, is that the current state is not one which social scientists, or those who use their research, are happy with. A need for concerted action has been identified and concrete suggestions as to the form this action might take have been put forward. It would appear, however, that the will to implement them is lacking.

In the light of New Zealand's experience a number of observations can be made about the APINESS project:

- APINESS arrived on the New Zealand scene just at a time in the evolution of the science system of the country when conditions for its implementation and success were fast deteriorating. In my judgement, if the SSRFC had continued to exist and its functions had not been taken over by a generic funding body then the outcomes in relation to the APINESS project might have been different. Those who took New Zealand into this project were unaware of the consequences of the impending changes, even if they might have been dimly aware of the changes themselves.
- In the new regimes of science in New Zealand that have emerged since the APINESS project was initiated the basis on which infrastructural development takes place have changed radically. With a few exceptions no longer are infrastructural developments funded directly but they have to be supported as part of the activities of research programmes which have short-term rhythms, a state of affairs quite at variance with the rhythms required of infrastructures and 'networks'.
- Future developments in the tertiary education sector are hard to predict at this stage. But this is where a considerable amount of the expenditure on social science research and other activities takes place. Until a clearer picture of these developments emerges it would be foolish to make any predictions about the future fate of the New Zealand social science information infrastructure.
- In the light of the New Zealand experience comment can also be passed on the aims and objectives of the APINESS project itself and on the structures recommended for their implementation:
  - The project was conceived within a framework which did not seriously address the differences in the policy frameworks for science and information services of different countries. More particularly, it was a framework which seemed to resonate more with the science and information service frameworks of centrally planned economic systems than with those frameworks which were moving towards making more use of 'market'

mechanisms even within the 'public' sector. This was evidenced, partly, by the fact that very little attention was given to questions of the costs and the allocation of costs of the creation and implementation of the network.

- There were no rigorous evaluation mechanisms built into the project from the beginning. There was the opportunity to 'review' the project at the occasional Regional Advisory Group meetings but these reviews were couched in such a way as not to invite close examination of the principles on which the project was based. This evaluation exercise is the first attempt to do that in the history of the APINESS project.
- However, the Regional Advisory Group meetings did give an opportunity to access the state of the social science infrastructure in New Zealand. This, indirectly, fed into the reviews of the social sciences which have taken place in the last two to three years.

It would appear from the foregoing that APINESS project, from the point of view of New Zealand's participation in it, has been a failure. This would be too simple a reading of the appraisal and evaluation and the accompanying materials. It is my judgement that, from a New Zealand perspective, there is merit still in an APINESS project but one with radically different objectives and structures. I address these briefly below.

## Recommendations

The one clear and signal benefit of the APINESS project was that, on a moderately regular basis, it brought social science infrastructure experts from a range of countries together to share their knowledge and experiences of their work. This had considerable benefits for all participants, alerting them to innovations in their field. A transformation of the aims and objectives of APINESS to give pride of place to this activity would be a worthy outcome of this evaluation of the project.

*Recommendation: That the APINESS objectives be redefined so as to state that its primary function is to bring together, at regular intervals, experts in the field of the social science infrastructures to report on, review and make recommendations on the state of the art of those infrastructures in participating countries.*

These meetings should be held on a regular basis, possibly once every two to three years. However, this change of objective would not be enough. There would have to be accompanying changes to the format of the meetings themselves to ensure that the outcomes of their deliberations would be of benefit to all participants. A possible format might be as follows: appointment of a review panel for each country; presentation of a country report; discussion by appointed discussant; open meeting discussion. On the final day, the review panels for each country could then present their findings and recommendations. In the light of this the following recommendation should be considered alongside the first:

*Recommendation: That the Regional Experts Meetings be conducted in such a way as to provide critical and constructive feedback on the country reports.*

So that the benefits of these deliberations should be made available to all, but especially to the social science communities in the participating countries it is essential that that deliberations, including



the country report of each country, a record of the discussions and a constructively critical report be published as a series of 'Country reports' as soon as possible after the meetings.

*Recommendation: That the results of the deliberations of the Regional Experts Meetings be published as separate reports on each country as soon as possible after each meeting.*

If these recommendations were implemented, New Zealand could still participate in the project with benefit to itself and to other participating countries. It is certainly the case that continued participation under the present framework would seem to be of little benefit to anyone.

## PAPUA NEW GUINEA EVALUATION

### Preamble

Papua New Guinea's report is a particularly interesting one. Papua New Guinea had already conducted an 'appraisal' exercise of APINESS shortly after the last RAG meeting at which the evaluation project was discussed. Following this exercise there was a lapse in APINESS regional activity. It has relied on two more recent seminars at which Papua New Guinea social science information issues have been raised.

It is clear from the Papua New Guinea report that the inception of the APINESS project in that country acted as a 'catalyst' to the development of a more rational social science information networking infrastructure at the national level. It is not entirely clear why the project had this effect or whether the effect would have occurred regardless of APINESS. But it is certainly appears to be the case that considerable work was done under what the report calls the 'APINESS' banner.

The report is also unique in another way: rather than reporting extensively on past activities a considerable proportion of the report is devoted to discussing opportunities for the future. In the main these are opportunities for Papua New Guinea itself: the kinds of problems it faces and the solutions to them. It seems clear that these issues will be addressed slowly over time regardless of the existence of APINESS.

Papua New Guinea's main evaluative comments are targeted at APINESS as a regional network. At this level it finds the project significantly deficient and suggests that if it is not seriously invigorated its position will be superseded by other networks.

### Appraisal Method

In response to the need for an appraisal of APINESS activities it was decided to hold a meeting – a kind of large NAG – to discuss this. Presented papers would add to the knowledge of practice and problems in Papua New Guinea, while discussion would assist in the development of items for the appraisal framework. This was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1995 and the results were submitted to UNESCO PROAP.<sup>18</sup> However, there has been a lapse in APINESS regional activity over the period 1995 and 1996 and no further action was taken on that report.

The current review therefore uses the 1995 Appraisal exercise and adds to this the findings from two other significant information meetings held at the University of Papua New Guinea – "Information and the Nation: the 1997 Waigani Seminar – 27-29<sup>th</sup> August – and the subsequent Key Sector Information Support Project Seminar 1-3<sup>rd</sup> September 1997.

Some of the past work done by APINESS has been concretised and projects have been formulated. These are discussed in this document.

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<sup>18</sup> John Evans, *Papua New Guinea APINESS Appraisal Seminar Report*, Port Moresby: SPCenCIID, 1996.

*Basic details about 'Information and the Nation' the 1997 Waigani Seminar – 27-29<sup>th</sup> August*

*Seminar Theme – 'To know and be known' – As the first World Science Report 1993 of UNESCO points out the gap between rich and poor countries today is not so much a resource gap as it is a knowledge gap.*

*Seminar Goals – To provide a forum for discussion on the role of information in Papua New Guinea, noting both the role of indigenous knowledge as well as the potential of recent developments in information and communication technology.*

- To reflect on improving social aspects of the information and the communication of information.*
- To refine and discuss the issues that will require consideration for the improvement of the National Information Infrastructure.*

*Seminar Content:– Indigenous Knowledge and Communication; Developing National Information Systems; Oral History and Recording Local History; Publishing – local and regional; Telecommunication Sector; Information and Communication Technology Developments; Sectoral Case Studies; Human Resources; Information Skills; Issues and Concerns about Information and Papua New Guinea.*

*Basic Details on the Key Sector Information Support Project Seminar 1-3<sup>rd</sup> September 1997*

*Objectives*

- to instruct staff in basic research methodology*
- to equip them to be able to profile information needs in their organisations*
- to inform participants of, and to involve them in developing, further stages of the project KESISU – Key Sector Information Support Project.*
- to inform participants of developments in the UNESCO APINESS network and in the Pan Asia Network of IDRC.*

*Target audience:– Those in management positions in Papua New Guinea Library/Information Studies who are hold at least Diploma level qualifications and*

*who are in a position to apply what is learned to the operations of their own units.*

A significant recent feature has been the involvement of the Papua New Guinea Focal Point in PanAsia Networking activities and the indication that there could be greater synergy between related networking activities in future – in Papua New Guinea at least.

## Activities at the National Level

### The Papua New Guinea National APINESS Network and Focal Point

The first APINESS meeting in Papua New Guinea – attended by Dr. Yogesh Atal – was held on 19 October 1990. The meeting agreed that the University of Papua New Guinea would be the National Contact Point for APINESS in the country. National Advisory Group meetings have been held on a regular basis since 27 November 1990. In addition the National Contact Point, consisting of various entities within the university, also has meetings of these component parts. Various roles have been assigned within the National Contact point as follows:–

#### *Research*

##### Research in Melanesia

Faculty Research Committees (e.g. Arts, Education, Science, Medicine, Law, Creative Arts.)

University Research and Publication Committee

Publications e.g. Yagl-Ambu

#### Library resources

Michael Somare Library, esp. the New Guinea Collection

#### Education and Training

Dept. of Anthropology and Sociology

South Pacific Centre for Communication and Information in Development – SPCenCIID

#### System Development

JOCV (Japanese Overseas Cooperation Volunteers)

#### Project proposal development

JOCV

#### Commercial applications

Unisearch (Papua New Guinea) Pty. Ltd. (A registered company looking after university enterprises)

An APINESS brochure has been produced for Papua New Guinea and widely distributed. NAG meetings have been highly productive in term of ideas and projects. Owing to limited funding there has been much less success in getting these carried out. There will be changes as Research in Melanesia is transferred to National Research Institute. There will also be changes as a single School of Social Sciences and Development is formed replacing many currently separate disciplinary based Departments of the university.

NAG members are:

UPNG;  
Papua New Guinea University of Technology;  
National Research Institute;  
Office of Libraries and Archives;  
Papua New Guinea Institute of Public Administration;  
Government Departments.

### **Major social science activities in the country**

#### *Social sciences information and documentation*

A continuing publication is the Papua New Guinea Social Development Newsletter covering events at community level collected from all over Papua New Guinea. The newsletter is published by the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, at the University of Papua New Guinea and reaches almost 800 readers country wide, four times a year. It has been supported by the Canada Fund and University research funds. This is an useful conduit for information and it is hoped it can carry the APINESS banner – especially should the proposal for its enhancement be supported.

#### *Social policy development*

Events to note include the production and acceptance of a Social Development Policy for Social Services of July 1993. The goal of the policy being to “improve the basic quality of the lives of the individual, families and groups within villages and communities through the provision of an effective participatory social service delivery system”.

#### *Policy objectives are:–*

To promote and maintain harmonious family relationships consistent with Papua New Guinea family values and Christian Principles;

To promote the sustainable use of resources and the equitable distribution of resources and benefits to all segments of the community;

To increase the provision of assistance to groups with special needs;

To review and enact appropriate legislation which is conducive to present national development policies and strategies;

To develop and maintain competitive manpower base with the capacity to facilitate the delivery of social services;

To improve and maintain a responsive workforce and an administrative structure.

This policy has four direct references to information components and links.

There is also a review of the National Youth Policy which is in its final stages. Here the goal is "To develop young men and women and to meaningfully involve them in the social, political, economic and cultural development of the country through their active participation in the affairs of their families and the activities of their communities".

*The primary objectives of this policy are:–*

To facilitate and support the training and rehabilitation of young men and women so as to improve their creative and productive abilities and powers and enhance the quality of their lives, the lives of their families and their communities.

To encourage and provide avenues for young men and women at the local level to enter the workforce in order to create and maintain a regular cash income.

To improve and strengthen the communication and information network which will enhance the self-organising capabilities of young men and women and link them to local, provincial, national and international organisations of young people.

To promote and encourage young men and women to have pride and respect for the social, spiritual and cultural heritage of their communities, through their active participation in community service activities.

To improve and strengthen the National Youth Commission to enable it to efficiently and effectively address the changing needs of young men and women at the local level.

On the youth front there has been considerable activity in 1996 as a result of the hosting of the third Global Conference on National Youth Service at Port Moresby.<sup>19</sup> Associated with this was another conference that looked at local issues in relation to youth – a wide range of practical experience was shared at this meeting.<sup>20</sup>

There has also been the unveiling of a National Population Policy – an event which tied in neatly with the production of results from the 1990 Census. Another relevant policy is the Women's Policy, although since it was endorsed in 1990, is technically outside the scope of this review. Associated plans of some interest are the Corporate Plan of the Department of Religion, Home Affairs and Youth for 1993-1998 and the first Corporate Plan (1994-1998) for the Papua New Guinea Social Workers Association.

A very recent review of note is the situational analysis Children, Women and Families in Papua New Guinea published by UNICEF Papua New Guinea in 1996.

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<sup>19</sup> John Evans, *Nations Youth Service: A Global Idea for Local Action*, Port Moresby: Department of Home Affairs and University of Papua New Guinea Press, 1996.

<sup>20</sup> George Wronhdimi, *Mini Conference on National Youth Service, Papua New Guinea 1996: Papers and Resolutions*, Port Moresby: National Youth Service, 1996.

### *Information policy development*

Work has been completed by the Ministry of Communications and Information on a National Information and Communication Policy – approved in November 1993. It is a composite policy in that it contains several extant policies, and has obviously drawn on the draft policy on Libraries and Archives for its section on information services. The draft policy on Libraries and Archives originates from a Library Development Seminar held by UPNG in May 1991.

It was decided that a Library and Information Services Policy was a possibility, and could be initially drafted within the library community itself. The very poor state of library services in most parts of the country was such as to brook no delay in policy formation. The major policy objectives are followed by a detailed strategy for library and information services in Papua New Guinea. The goal of the National Policy for Libraries and Archives is to enhance the social, economic and educational development of the people of Papua New Guinea through the provision of coordinate and comprehensive library, archives and related information services.

The policy provides statements and detailed strategies in relation to:–

- the role of information in Papua New Guinea development
- access to information resources and services
- development and use of Papua New Guinea information resources
- promotion of use and awareness of information
- organisation and coordination of the policy
- information technology and systems
- regional and international information participation.

The 1997 Waigani Seminar used this framework to organise the ideas presented there and this may form the basis of pressing for the long overdue implementation of the information policy.

An the provincial level a seminar on Provincial Information Services Seminar has been reported to the 1992 RAG meeting. However, problems are faced in that the provincial government system is at present being reviewed and there is little enthusiasm for new initiatives. Circumstances regarding information services in provinces are grim indeed.

There has been recent library legislation and the setting up of an Office of Libraries and Archives is given in an Office of Libraries and Archives. Two plans are also worth noting, those of Wijasuriya<sup>21</sup> and Lee<sup>22</sup>. The latter report identified certain libraries as having major collections which could be regarded as centres of excellence. These should be considered as major building blocks of a proposed Papua New Guinea Library and Information Network. The network could serve as the gateway to library and information services outside the country.

<sup>21</sup> D. Wijasuriya. *Library Development Plan for Papua New Guinea*. Port Moresby: Library Council, 1991.

<sup>22</sup> H.W. Lee *Library Networking, Resource Sharing amongst Higher Education Institutions in Papua New Guinea*. Port Moresby: Commission for Higher Education, 1992.

### *Papua New Guinea UNESCO Social Science Sub-Committee*

The APINESS NCP has been instrumental in starting up this entity in 1994. It has encouraged the development of social science proposals and indications are that some of these will involve information components. The proposal outlined below at appendix A to implement many of the ideas formulated by APINESS in Papua New Guinea has benefited from the operation of this sub-committee and the resultant links to UNESCO.

#### *Government structures*

These have been subject to significant change. Discussion has continued on the creation of a Science and Technology Council since the early 1990's. This raises the possibility of formation of a Social Science Council – a long-term intention of the APINESS National Advisory Group.

Other central Government structures now have new faces as a result of recent changes. Important changes in the social sector appear in:–

Home Affairs

Provincial Affairs and Village Services

Health

Education, Science and Culture

Also noticeable is the creation of an Office of Libraries and Archives.

In 1995, National Parliament passed the Organic Law on Provincial Governments and Local Level Governments. This law is intended to reduce the role of central government – never too effective in this country – by enhancing other levels, specifically the reform aims to:–

- make sure people, especially those living in villages, have access to basic services like health, education, water and transportation.
- get grassroots people more involved in decision making and solving their own problems.
- increase the powers and responsibilities of local-level governments so they can better serve the needs of the people in their communities.

A wide range of activities in the social sector are now in the domain of the local level governments. There are 24 Urban LLGs and 260 rural LLGs and funding for these is derived from “Urban LLG Grants” and “LLG and Village Services Grant”. LLGs are also able to raise taxes and levy fees and fines.

As regards information at this level, it has been remarked:–

“A community’s capacity for participation in development depends highly on information and awareness. Generally, people are not well informed about government policies and programmes, nor do they have a clear understanding of how they as individuals and communities relate to the government process, especially the recently introduced provincial government reforms. With little communication



and information coming from the national and provincial level of government, many people at the grass roots feel alienated and confused.”<sup>23</sup>

#### Education for Information

The Department of Library and Information Studies (DLIS) was set up within the Faculty of Education of the University of Papua New Guinea (UPNG) in 1989. This was coupled, with the commencement in 1989, of a bachelor's degree course in library and information studies at the University of Papua New Guinea. This ended a period of neglect for this discipline at the Administrative College of Papua New Guinea. In 1994 a Proposal and Draft Development Policy was drawn up for a South Pacific Centre for Communication and Information in Development (SP-CenCIID). This was accepted by the university Council in 1995.

The development focus will direct attention towards the most necessary ends within the context of Papua New Guinea's severe underdevelopment. The Centre has a similar status to a Department of Studies, but does have a somewhat broader mandate than a Department given the very changing nature of this field, and its neglected nature in Papua New Guinea. The mission of the Centre is to assist in national development through enhancing professional capabilities and service attitudes in the fields of communications (journalism and media studies) and library and information services and by providing a facility for research and study in this field. The goals of the Centre are:-

- to produce qualified staff at para-professional: junior-professional and professional levels for the nation's library and information units and qualified journalists for professional media roles in the nation's Press and broadcast services, government information agencies and public relations units;
- through continuing education provide courses and seminars to extend the ability of professional journalists, and other information workers and to provide development communications courses;
- to provide courses to enhance the ability of those in charge of school libraries and enhancing the information skills of school students;
- to provide courses to enhance information skills at University level and to develop the institutions information culture;
- to provide research on Papua New Guinea and South Pacific media and mass communications issues; to develop knowledge and understanding of library and information science in Papua New Guinea and the region and through this research to develop new approaches to village and community information services;
- to provide expertise through consultancy and other means to Government, industry and the community.

This Centre will be an important one in carrying out APINESS activities in Papua New Guinea and, possibly, elsewhere in the region.

<sup>23</sup> *Children, Women and Families in Papua New Guinea: a situational analysis*, UNICEF Papua New Guinea, 1996.

### Indigenous knowledge

Discussions at the 1993 Waigani Seminar were continued at the 1997 Seminar event and raised further interesting issues regarding the issue of an Indigenous Knowledge Group. Provision for this is made in the project included in the appendix.

### Computer facility and training

Through the work of the JOCV Isao Komobuchi, Hiro Ide and Maasaki Deguchi progress has been made on basic training for social science students in computer usage. This has been assisted by a donation of networked computers from JICA. These activities come under the APINESS umbrella.

### Regional level

Unfortunately despite significant impact nationally regional activities have been, despite the best endeavours, been minimal especially in recent years. This is a reflection of the weakness of APINESS as a "network" rather than there being an absence of need or of expertise that could be shared.

### APINESS Newsletter

Contributions continue to be made and the Newsletter is distributed to all NAG members. This will continue now that the Newsletter has been re-instated.

### E-mail and regional contact

The contact point is now accessible on Compuserve. Since mid 1997 Papua New Guinea has a full Internet connection and several ISPs now exist. The university still has to obtain an adequate connection. However, simple e-mail has been excellent for the enhancement of activities. Unfortunately, very little e-mail comes from the APINESS Network – the Listserv rapidly faded away. While at the 1994 RAG one had high hopes of assistance in mounting the Social Development Newsletter with the assistance of the Australian Contact Point nothing eventuated. As a result since the last 1994 RAG meeting most contact regionally has been through networks other than APINESS.

### Recent regional networking developments for the NCP

#### PAN

The focal point has benefited considerably from participation in the IDRC's PanAsia Network and this has taken up much of the slack in APINESS activities. PanAsia provides activities in the following areas:–

- e-mail and Internet access through telecommunications connectivity
- content building and dissemination through web sites
- access, communication, linking, sharing and exchange through networking
- development of Internet technologies, systems and policies through applied research

For information on the PanAsia network see <http://www.PanAsia.org.sg>

Material on Papua New Guinea publications is available at the University of Papua New Guinea web site <http://www.PanAsia.org.sg/upngp>

#### TVE's Asian VRC Network

Since the 1994 RAG meeting the focal point has become a Video Resource Centre for the Television Trust for the Environment. Papua New Guinea was represented at the VRC meeting in Colombo in May, 1995. In January 1996 an agreement was signed establishing the VRC at the South Pacific Centre for Communication and Information in Development. This has provided considerable opportunities to network regionally and in addition provides access to a wide range of video materials on social science issues which have proved highly popular.

The Television Trust for the Environment (TVE) was founded in 1984 by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) the World Wide Fund for Nature (UK) and UK's Central Television. Its purpose was to promote environment and development issues through broadcast television and to see more films made on environmental issues. TVE functions as a "broker" between non-broadcast agencies, often in the UN family or aid agencies, and the television industry. Agency priorities for communication are turned into programmes able to attract wide audiences. Issues of social development, women, population, health, the environment and many more become mainstream "human story" television programmes, that may be documentaries, or often dramas animation or children's programmes.

The main mechanism used is one of co-production of programmes with all kinds of broadcasters and independent film-makers throughout the world. TVE has a particular commitment to film makers, NGOs and educational institutions in the South. This is seen as a means of balancing the Westernisation of the global airwaves, and the resulting stereotyping of viewers perceptions of developing countries.

While successful in helping develop and fund new films – some 300 films backed and with funds drawn from 100 organisations – there was a problem in securing sufficient audience for these films in the areas where the environmental and development issues were often the most vexed. In 1987, therefore, TVE introduced a distribution service, Moving Pictures. This was aimed at broadcasters and NGOs in developing countries, who were supplied with free programmes. This approach proved too popular. In the first eight years the service distributed 30,000 tapes to 150 countries placing a strain on available resources. In addition the scope of the resources is increasing rapidly. The latest catalogue Moving Pictures 6 lists 362 programmes in 18 categories. These range from shorts to educational series in many parts. Programmes span a variety of genres and all continents.

It was also felt that distribution was an activity that was neither sustainable development or capacity building. Policy therefore changed toward one of establishment of Video Resource Centres in various developing countries, such as Papua New Guinea.

The Asian Network held two meetings in 1995 and 1997 as part of a 3-year Asian VRC Development Project, primarily funded by Novib. An impressive array of activities was reported. Priorities for the future of the Network are seen as:–

- supporting more language versions;
- conducting short-term training programmes and workshops;
- enhancing the marketing capability of VRCS;
- strengthening indigenous production capability of high quality programmes on environment;
- greater sharing of information, experiences and expertise both at south-south level and between the north and south.

Contact details for TVE are <http://www.tve.org>

### **Library networks**

In 1995 the British Columbia Library Association held a two day workshop on "Networking the Pacific". This was a very congested event and there was little time to develop conclusions. However an electronic magazine was promulgated as a means of keeping in touch and the NCP has been contributing material to Provenance – the electronic magazine for information professionals since 1995. The first information provided being on the destruction of the public library in Rabaul by volcanic activity in 1994.

### **Training Programmes**

Regional training has been available through both PAN and TVE networks described above. In general training opportunities are good because of the interest of Australian and New Zealand institutions in Papua New Guinea.

### **National Directory of Social Science Information Sources**

This has been published locally (with a second edition in 1995 – now out of print) and distributed regionally and will be kept up to date. The database has been compiled on CDS/ISIS and has been sent to the PanAsia web site to be housed there. This should be accessible from 1998 and will also be searchable using a search engine available at the web site.

### **Compilation of National Research Policy Guidelines**

In 1994 the Contact Point produced a compilation of the policies in force at major institutions and in the provinces. This has proved useful as policies vary widely. Copies are available from the NCP.

### **Social Science Abstracting Services**

There is no formal service – but the periodical Research in Melanesia provides a digest of research going on in the area. This publication will be moving from the university to the National Research Institute – a part of the NAG. It is also likely to become part of a new serial, the Papua New Guinea

Journal of Anthropology. The Institute of Papua New Guinea. Studies (for a while named the Cultural Services Division of the National Research Institute) has a database of research in progress in machine readable form in addition to a database on Papua New Guinea music.

### **Survey of existing social science databases**

This was incorporated in the survey undertaken for the second edition of the Directory. However, the coverage was unsatisfactory and needs to be undertaken once more. An UNDP project passed at the National Planning Office will be attempting to collect information on databases beginning late 1997.

### **Activities undertaken at national level**

#### **With regional dimensions**

Contact with others in the APINESS region has been very limited – though the liaison officer has taken the opportunity for chance visits to other NCP's. Equally Papua New Guinea responses to incoming questionnaires, especially in the past, has been poor. Given the improvements in communication possible from technology we would like to engage in better dialogue. A particular case that has been raised (with UNESCO and PSSC) would be that of assistance with the development of a Social Science Council in Papua New Guinea.

#### **With national and local dimensions**

The National Advisory Group endorsed two projects for funding as APINESS projects through its' meetings.

- Social Science Documentation Centre
- KESISU (Papua New Guinea Key Sector Information Support Project)

While Papua New Guinea has two good University libraries the public library service – an important element of national infrastructure – has been in decay since decentralisation of the Public Library Service in 1978. Traditional library services continue to be provided where the libraries remain open but few attempts have been made to develop new services or to meet the needs of priority sectors.

The overall aim of the project is to augment the information resources of major information agencies at the national and provincial level and to facilitate the provision and development of relevant and timely information services for national development purposes. These projects focus, in the initial phase, on such areas of concern as 'women and development', 'the environment', 'human resource development for NGOs and government bodies' in accordance with the Government's current policies.

It is intended to provide this service through development of existing facilities. Attention will be paid to the redirection and revitalisation of existing services as it is most unlikely resources will be available to go beyond this. This project was a result of the Library Development Plan. The project in modified form has since been adopted by the Papua New Guinea UNESCO CII Committee as suitable for funding. Initial funding has since been obtained and was used in support of a consultancy visit and meeting by Dr. Wijasuriya held in August/September 1997. It is hoped that this will result in further aspect of the project being implemented.

Many of the ideas originating from NAG meetings and the APINESS Appraisal meeting in 1995 have now been collected together and formatted in a new project – ReDi Papua New Guinea which was submitted for regional funding to UNESCO in 1997. This project is to be found at Appendix 1.

### **Links with ASTINFO-Papua New Guinea**

The APINESS Liaison Officer is also a member of the ASTINFO-Papua New Guinea NAG and vice-versa. However this rarely meets. The regional project ASTINFO Project SISNAP is of potential interest but the results (or details of operation) of the project seem very hard of access.

### **Issues and concerns in social science information in Papua New Guinea**

#### *Summary of issues from the Appraisal Seminar 1995*

##### Issues from session by Prof. Hill

- Need to obtaining Internet gateway in Papua New Guinea
- Need to improve ethics of researchers in Papua New Guinea
- Property rights in genetic material and of ethics, particularly in the context of “genetic mining” and issues such as traditional medicine. This was an issue that lawyers, scientists and social scientists had only just begun to think about in Papua New Guinea. APINESS might be able to provide a way forward.

##### Issues from session by Dr. B Yeates

- Difficulties with the UNESCO apparatus in Papua New Guinea and in ensuring that UNESCO channels were being used properly.
- More use could be made of the UNESCO Participation Programme and also extra budgetary sources. The onus was on the members of committees to collect projects. There were problems presented by persons who did not acquit projects properly, or who failed to show adequate accountability.
- Possibilities of linking with UNITWIN that should be investigated.
- Structural readjustment and its effects would be major constraints on social science programmes in the country. However, local government reform and the exceptional changes that would accrue from this would be the major factor and opportunity for the next years. The impact of this on information activities was almost completely unknown and required attention.
- Government reorganisation and changes in personalities added to the problems of development adequate contacts for the formulation of APINESS plans and discussions
- Greater international involvement from Papua New Guinea in social science events was also called for.

## Issues from session by Prof. Moody

- Availability and usage of research funds was generally inadequate.
- Opportunities for publication in country could be improved upon.
- Lack of basic research being done in country (e.g. the issue of poverty) – effecting policy formation and implementation of policy.
- Lack of research team work in country. Lack of help from senior to junior academics. Contract structure not felt to assist matters.
- In stark contrast to lack of basic research the abundance of consultancy and research for payment that is being done was noted, and the issue of quality/value of much of this.
- Problems of access to research materials, particularly consultancies, in this research policy guidelines were not being kept.
- Key works used in teaching were early ones by overseas researchers and were now outdated. There was a need for new studies conducted by Papua New Guinea academics.
- There was a need for work of broader scope, for multi disciplinary and holistic approaches. The case of somewhat blinkered approaches in education were a result of a lack of this. Unitech noted the integrative effects of social science on science and technology and the resulting technological sensitivity. This raised issues of definition and scope in the social sciences.
- Issues require projects for better analysis of consultancy and its output.
- A high priority to be attached to development of a Research Agenda – a meeting (RUM) was suggested as a mechanism for this.

## Issues from session by Mr. Naguwaen

- Attention to the preservation and conservation of the New Guinea Collection Materials.
- Possible reproduction of key items
- Space problems within the key Social Science Collection
- Tidying up of database and possibly making it available by Internet or CD-ROM
- Improvement of the range of bibliographies available and their coverage – already on the APINESS agenda.
- The possibility of an electronic library of New Guineana.

- The above may be assisted by designating the New Guinea collection as Social Science Library in respect of APINESS activities.

Issues from session by Ms. Eva

- The need for the development of information literacy and educating the user, even within academic institutions.
- Problems in the communication of available information.
- A need for approaches that included natural language searches.
- The need to develop more appropriate tools, in addition to those already available.
- Problems arising from the use of rules developed by another environment, not necessarily adapted to the needs of users.
- The role and problems that will be presented in Papua New Guinea by the information industry.
- The comprehensiveness vs. access issue – the need for the service as gateway aspect.
- Neglect in Papua New Guinea of oral sources of information.
- Overall the need for an Indigenous Knowledge Centre to be set up was given a high priority.

Issues from session by Mr. Ide

- Staffing requirements of networks and for appropriate counterpart training.
- Need for adequate funding – which will be high.
- The need for a meeting which will concentrate on the actual requirements for network, rather than hopeful hype.

Issues from session by Mr. Paraide

- Issues on how South Pacific initiatives of ASTINFO would fit in with other regional players, SPC and SP Forum.
- Potential of ASTINFO support for public libraries workshop and for the PNGLA.
- The importance of Internet connections and the better arrangements in place at USP for example.
- The need for a more detailed report on progress re. SPARDIN.

Issues from session by Mrs. Lovai

- Difficulty faced by the need to hunt for policies, these should be made more readily available – especially as courses are policy based.



- Need for counterpart staff for computer training initiatives.
- Need for training in a/v aids and materials and the use of this equipment in investigation in addition to computing.
- The need for appropriate approaches and methods in conducting field work and for respondents to learn the results of the researches carried on.
- Secrecy and hiding of information from students and researchers by Government and NGOs.
- Information perceived as having value and hence “freedom of information” a very serious issue.
- Students could be involved in data collection projects, given serious lack of data.
- Improved liaison with Government departments, specifically with computer packages being introduced to Departments.
- Standards and policy for computer packages.
- Computing illiteracy, also the need for the development of keyboarding skills.
- Further emphasis on the needs for a group of skills relating to research and information, impacting on the overall quality of education.

#### Issues from general discussions

- Training for information needed considerable attention – including the need to relate information skills to what the student was actually doing.
- Community information use also needs to be developed with a role for Community Information Centres as NCDC had planned. Grass roots information was just not available in libraries.
- Lack of consultation of colleagues in libraries and insufficient use of librarians skills, owing to the cultural difficulties about asking questions.
- “Gurus” needed to be identified.
- Profiles and registers of research as developed by the Pacific Information Centre were also needed.
- Records on resident researchers need to be improved. The same went for overseas consultants and for “dead/lost souls”.
- Better identification of available consultancy reports needed.
- Need for an annual conference of research officers and planners.
- Control of research vs. the need for more information in all walks of life.

## **Report on issues raised at the 1997 Waigani Seminar meeting and subsequent KESISU meeting**

Given the interconnected nature of issues recommendations need to be formulated within an overall action plan and this is being developed by Dr. Wijasuriya and should be available shortly. The listing uses the headings on Information Services of the already approved National Policy on Information and Communication of Papua New Guinea – indicating their relationship with the existing policy base.

There has been little time to integrate these conclusions into the APINESS framework though this will be considered by the Waigani Seminar Implementation Committee which has been supported by the University Academic Board to work on the results of the seminar.

### *General aspects*

NII development, this requires formation of Task Force and a meeting on issues. Further guidelines have been issued by UNCSTAD.

Development of National Information Systems is possible but needs careful planning. Some plans for Papua New Guinea have been developed by the Library Council. (Wijasuriya)

An information issue related NGO can assist (Tankha/Kavanamur)

Further workshops are required (possibly collaborative)

National Policy on Information and Communication of Papua New Guinea (Iduhu) – should be further implemented.

A better structural position in Government was needed for the Department of Information and Communication (questioner)

An all out search for resources is required for implementation. (Volmer, Kami, Koike)

As ICT development required energy support is given to solar energy projects for schools and their associated libraries and Internet access

### *Role of information in Society*

Sectoral studies show that information can make a difference – but supply is often deficient:–

Women (Kidu); Small business (Kavanamur); Land owner (Kwa); Democratic process (Anere); Law and order (Sali); Disasters (Waninara); Human rights (Tom'tovala); Science (Mua)

There is a large body of sectoral policy for guidance (Yeates) – do we need a directory of policies? Papua New Guinea Government is to be urged to sign relevant declaration on disabilities (Yeates)

Women's policy was not implemented and information for women an urgent need. (Kidu)

Traditional knowledge was highly and efficiently organised (Kinasa/Kamene), but now eroding. There was a need to maintain and study its mechanisms (Hill) – and a need to recognise its continuing

role for 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Waiko). It was noted that the mother tongue was to be used in early years in school to foster local traditions

There was a wide range of traditional communication methods other than speech (Nekitel/Nali) that need to be properly considered especially as new ones are introduced

APEC TEL Test bed on Language and Culture issues could be established

Access to Information resources and services

Papua New Guinea can not afford to lag behind with ICT (Waiko)

Low participation rates/high participation costs were a great challenge (Nali/Unwin)

A two way flow (from and too) was required (Nali) – and there was a need to strike a balance between top-down, bottom up information flows (Nekitel)

Community service obligations were being recognised by the regulator (Wobiro)

Satellite bases services were needed to reach some areas (Wobiro)

It was timely to formulate a programme of human rights education (Yoli)

An information imbalance exists with western dominated media market, strategies were needed for democratic media. (Tankha)

Services were generally poor and worsening (Sause). E.g. At UPNG – traditional sources not being bought, and there was poor access to ICT (Hills). A further example showed in the communication profile (Anere)

There were requirements of the NIS for those with disabilities (Yeates)

Reality of the rural condition (Decock) requires proper planning of communication for development

Cost of Internet access needed to be reduced (Hills)

Urban and rural information/telecentres need to be made available (Kavanamur/Wrondimi). Though there will be problems that need thinking through (Tinkepa)

There were high costs as a result of lack of information (Sause)

There were significant legislative implications (Tom'tavala, Kwa, Tankha, Wobiro)

There could be LIS improvements via resource sharing, better access, marketing, good business practices (Reu – Wijasuriya)

There was a crying need to improve community school libraries (with power) (Nekitel)

*Development of Papua New Guinea Information Resources*

There was a need to celebrate Papua New Guinea's linguistic, genetic and cultural diversity (Waiko) and its contribution nationally and to humanity (Wari) Note – A project on the issue of diversity had been developed by the Social and Human Sciences Sub-Committee of the Papua New Guinea National Commission for UNESCO and was with UNESCO which had approved it for extra-budgetary funding.

The situation required a Commission of Inquiry into Traditional Knowledge and Folklore (Waiko)

More national writing and collection and making available of local history was needed (Winduo, Kituai, Kinasa)

PI content was required (Kami)

The Oral History Journal needs to be re-established (Kituai)

Resources will be needed for Oral traditions projects-village experience goes deep and needs to be recorded to construct local history (Kituai)

Traditional medicine is of value and traditional methods in teaching and learning should be utilised as models at educational institutions (Matainaho)

Local publishing serves development and can be improved (Crowl, Matane) – UPNG Book Development Group has developed project. (DIPPNG) – A Book Sector Study is suggested

Authors to be encouraged by better opportunities to publish (Winduo)

Papua New Guinea content was required in all media and content could be in local languages (Nekitel)

Development of libraries will assist sales, market and access (Matane)

Educational institutions should buy Papua New Guinea authors works (Matane)

Indigenous knowledge centre could help – but methods and requirements require further consideration (Mangi, Muke, Digim'rima, etc.)

Intellectual Property Rights need to be actively followed through (Muke, Hill)

The role of museums (Moutu) and records and archives need to be recognised (Kanasa, Kaima/ Hoheg)

Films and video provided great opportunities to reach an audience. (Waiko, Muke, Evans)

Previous plans, policy should be utilised (Wijasuriya) – KESISU was being developed

Collaborative projects can result in useful resources (PROSEA) – Matu

Use and awareness of information

There were only limited achievements so far, e.g. Book Week (Matane)

Political awareness was needed, with commitment and vision from above – e.g. Malaysia (Kami)

There was a need to look for information solutions (e.g. Conference panel) and a need to look at relevant projects and experience elsewhere (Tankha)

Scientific knowledge, in particular, needs better mechanisms for dissemination (Mua)

NGOs should make use of technologies for awareness purposes – also use information on low cost business opportunities (Tankha)

Advocacy in relation to information skills was required (Evans)

There was a need to democratise media systems, freedom of information, free flow of information (Anere)

#### *Human resources*

These were vital for development of NIS (Wijasuriya)

There was a need to invest in future productivity through ICT and libraries (Hills) and all students needed to be immersed in IT (Kami)

Curriculum revision was necessary (Eva)

An Information Management programme for those handling information in organisations was required. (Treloar)

Information skills to be taught widely (Evans/Reu) In place of current partial and ad hoc approaches educational institutions and systems should consider the teaching of information skills which are:

#### *Integrated to other curricular areas*

Use a well developed model for ease of acceptance and delivery

There would need to be a shift towards resource based learning so the trend towards negligible provision of resources must be reversed, acknowledging that resources can both be traditional and of western origin and recognising that both have roles to play. Development of Papua New Guinea content of media resources is to be given priority.

Mandatory short courses in information skills should be provided for the Public Service (Treloar)

There was a need for Development Communication Training for Liaison Workers (Kehatsin) – should include Papua New Guinea Language training (Nekitel)

Improved attitudes among LIS workers were required (Reu)

Include Information/IT aspects should be required in training for teachers

There could be a consortium in information and communication training to save duplication

There was an urgent need to implement the HR and Research aspects of the National Policy

There could be cooperative planning and teaching of courses with LIS staff (Reu)

*Networks/Technology*

There was to be a national network for educational institutions (Waiko)

It should be possible to connect key points around the county (Nali) at least as an initial measure

There should be full participation in NII, APII, GII (Telikom Meeting)

Papua New Guinea should use trailing edge technology (Treloar)

A National Plant Research Information System was required (Matu)

Improved allocation of resources to LIS and computing at UPNG/Unitech was required (Treloar)

More information on initiatives was required (Govt. Panel)

There was a need to form associations, and influence Government (Tankha)

The IDRC (International Development Research Centre) and its PanAsia Network should be encouraged to take more interest in Papua New Guinea

There was a need to restart Association for LIS workers (Reu)

LIS network was needed (Reu)

Papua New Guinea Intranets needed development (Kami)

Improved IT in Government was required (Madire)

Attention needed to be paid to Internet issues

There needed to be more exchange of information gained at conferences.

*Results of the KESISU Workshop, 1-3 September 1997*

It should be noted that a full report relating to KESISU is in preparation.

**Cultivation of basic research mentality**

It was agreed that research was a basic function that required more attention by local information workers and not left to overseas consultants. This could involve the following: research to be undertaken as part of normal duties; research to be undertaken with a view to publication; utilisation of opportunities to become part of multi disciplinary teams; training in research methods was required; need for a National Research Registry; seminars for the sharing of research findings and reporting on conference attendance

Reestablishment of the Papua New Guinea Library Association recommended

Barriers to research included

Finance; Time; Dissemination of research results

#### Summary of Achievements and Non-Achievements

The major achievements of APINESS in Papua New Guinea have been:

- Successful setting up of a multi-faceted contact point at the University of Papua New Guinea
- Setting up a Social Science sub-committee within the Papua New Guinea National Commission for UNESCO:
- Creation of APINESS related computer training facility within UPNG:
- Production of information products.
- Generation of a significant corpus of ideas from NAG members:
- Contribution to E-mail and network development at the National Contact Point.
- Development and funding of project KESISU.
- Involvement in Social Policy Formulation by APINESS members.
- Contribution of ideas towards project ReDi Papua New Guinea.
- Synergy with other regional networks (PAN and TVE) as a result of their involvement with the NCP

#### Issues needing attention:–

- Setting up of a Social Science Council as an institutional framework for social science research. This should work in an integrative and holistic manner. [This is now being developed as part of the project ReDi – Papua New Guinea – see appendix]
- An ethical framework for Papua New Guinea social science research
- Involvement in development of Community Information Centres which could be assisted by the involvement of NGOs in the NAG.
- Improvement of e-mail and other links – remembering that electronic networks should not preclude the very important people networks, especially in the context of Papua New Guinea.
- Improved access to and knowledge of important databases.
- Formation of research groups and acknowledgment of priority areas such as Social Policy and Poverty Studies as foci for research.

- Provision of more basic and advanced training for information related issues.
- An Indigenous Knowledge Centre to be developed. [This is now being developed as part of the project ReDi – Papua New Guinea – see appendix]

Other weaknesses in APINESS in Papua New Guinea, already reported, are ones of failure to implement the ideas raised because of lack of sufficient people, sufficient funds and failure, as yet, to secure a sufficient range of contacts, both nationally and regionally, to appreciate the totality of what is going on. As time goes on these factors are receding somewhat and more opportunities are being realised.

### **Summary of major obstacles and threats**

Generating sufficient support and making government aware of need for free access to and for utilisation of information. Government needs to implement their own Communication and Information Policy – an important issue from the Waigani Seminar.

### **Structural and policy**

1. Lack of awareness of need for information for good policy making.
2. Lack of research on what is going on.
3. Problems arising from structural adjustments and local government level changes.

### **Resources – manpower and money**

1. Avenues and methods.
2. National Commission Secretariat as obstacle in obtaining maximum benefits.
3. Lack of personnel in numbers and with skills to do necessary tasks.

### **Operations**

1. Logistical aspects.
2. Generation of basic research and for there to be more of this than consultancy.
3. Concealment of information by government officers.
4. Storage and retrieval of information
  - more coordination needed e.g. common database
  - better tools and facilities for retrieval of information/access to information
  - inadequate training in computer and information literacy



5. Continuity – The continuity of people involved in Papua New Guinea APINESS need to be maintained, if progress is to be made.

### **Networking regionally**

APINESS has had a significant catalytic effect nationally and has encouraged thinking on the issue of social science information for the first time. However, in the absence of RAG meetings, newsletters, or regional projects APINESS could not be considered to be making any progress outside national boundaries. This will be an area for reinvigoration of the network. Fortunately in the case of Papua New Guinea and other this slack will have been up by the abundance of other networking opportunities now available.

### **Desirable Future Activities**

#### *Continuing*

Improved communication both regionally and nationally, the following strategies to continue:–

Produce and distribute a guide to Papua New Guinea information sources and databases in print and electronic form. A Directory of Training Opportunities to be a part of this product.

Assist in production of Papua New Guinea Social Development Newsletter – print and electronic – and a Policy Review journal

Send notes to APINESS Newsletter and other newsletters – Print and Electronic.

Improve contact with UNESCO National Commission and knowledge of UNESCO channels in general.

Hold NAG meetings (2 per year), possibly associated with workshops.

Seek research funding e.g. from the University Research Committees.

Use e-mail facilities, electronic networking and connectivity.

Provide computer training (to include counterpart staff) and facilities.

Use of UNITWIN to increase in-country skills and networks

Improved use of participation projects

#### *Medium term*

Encourage the development of Community Information Centres at National Capital District and at provincial level

Develop guidelines on appropriate information services and tools

Develop Research in Progress (RIP) database – with better inter linkages with provincial planners and provincial research activities. A parallel Consultancy RIP is also needed.

Encourage improved access to past social science research.

Encourage inter linkage of social science libraries, nominating one as Social Science Documentation Centre.

Develop appropriate local tools such as a Papua New Guinea thesaurus for subject retrieval and Papua New Guinea Authority file.

Hold information and desk-top publishing workshops, to be integrated with analysis of needs for packages, etc.

Encourage publication of provincial bibliographies – continuing work already started by RIM – and provincial/national newspaper indexes.

Provide guidelines for local collection development in public libraries.

Pilot projects to be encouraged in particular:

- Local government/provincial databases/social mapping
- Integrated database to be created from the Provincial Data System and other already available for the purpose of decision and policy support. This could be made available on CD-ROM with annual updates.

Develop capacity for local publication, both in print and electronically – this is a feature of the proposal outlined in the appendix below.

Assist in the implementation of the numerous ideas of the Waigani Seminar as outlined in this document with particular attention to the need for further work on.

1. Ethical issues in social science
2. Indigenous knowledge
3. Research Upgrading
4. Information skills in social science

### **Stakeholders and Funding Streams**

At the early stages in the evaluation most of the relevant agencies were felt to be within the government sector and that these were poorly funded, and as a result limited in effectiveness. It was also feared the structural readjustment and its effects would be major constraints on social science programmes in the country. Government reorganisation and changes in personalities added to the problems of development of adequate contacts for the formulation of APINESS plans and discussions.

The project outlined in the appendix will give a significant redirection to such formal structures and there are new developments resulting in new areas of activities that offer substantial, if currently confusing, opportunities for APINESS.

Local government reform and the exceptional changes that would accrue from this would be the major factor and opportunity for the next years. The impact of this on information activities was almost completely unknown and required attention. Certainly the intention of reform was to concentrate resources on the numerous problems that the country faces and this introduces a new group of stakeholders and potential funding.

Another area of opportunity was provided by the improvement of the NGO sector in the country – this was an area where many funding agencies were paying considerable attention. There were numerous NGOs and some of these were allied in NANGO – the National Association of NGOs. However, knowledge of the existence of many NGOs is imperfect, and the APINESS Directory has proved to be an useful tool in publicising them. Given their importance in providing services, their need for information support and the opportunities they have for funding they should certainly be involved in APINESS activities in future.

Owing to a lack of basic information and the availability of aid on a significant scale often the private sector is involved in doing basic research in the form of consultancies in support of various phases of development projects. As much of the earlier discussion shows what is provided from such work in the private sector is disseminated very narrowly and is in need of much greater consideration given the cost and magnitude of the work being done. Aid agencies and their projects represent a very significant source of funds in support of social science research and information activities.

There is a need to actively pursue the funding of the project plus ensure representation of new groups of stakeholders within APINESS activities.

## **Conclusion**

There has been welcome impact nationally. However, regional activities have been, despite the best endeavours, minimal – especially in recent years. This is a reflection of the weakness of APINESS as a “network” rather than there being an absence of need or of expertise that could be shared. This is a major area for consideration in the evaluation, otherwise other networks will supersede APINESS.

Nationally much needed work has been identified and there is a need for support to be provided for the project to establish a Social Science Council to ensure that this work can be undertaken. There has been a considerable shift away from conventional stakeholders in the country and this new range of opportunities needs to be taken into account in the future composition of the APINESS NAG and its activities.

## PHILIPPINES EVALUATION

### Preamble

This review of the Asia-Pacific Information Network in Social Sciences (APINESS) activities in the Philippines traces the involvement of the Philippine Social Science Council (PSSC) in the APINESS programme initiated by UNESCO-RUSHSAP in the mid-1980s and analyses the factors impinging on the implementation of the programme within a national context.

The Philippines evaluation is one of the most critical. It clearly demonstrates that in the context of that country the impact of APINESS has been minimal to say the least. The most fundamental reason for this lack of impact is quite a simple one: the low priority APINESS has had in the thinking of those who would might have been its most significant actors. The reason for this, in turn, is also quite simple: these institutions and individuals have had other more pressing priorities. APINESS being largely a voluntary, unfunded exercise was not one which attracted much attention or energy.

It is clear from the Philippines evaluation that, in the absence of substantial funding for APINESS and its activities both at the national and regional level, there is little hope that the project will be successful one in its present form.

### Background

Prior to the launching of the Asia-Pacific Information Network in Social Sciences (APINESS) in Bangkok in May 1986, the UNESCO National Commission of the Philippines invited 12 representatives to a consultative meeting at the Sulo Hotel on 12 April 1986 to discuss the proposed regional network of social science information and documentation Centres in the region. Present at the luncheon meeting were representatives of schools and colleges of the University of the Philippines as the Asian Centre, the College of Education, the Institute of Library Science, the Institute of Mass Communication, the Institute of Social Work and Community Development, and the School of Economics, as well as representatives from the Fund for Assistance to Private Education (FAPE), the Ministry of Social Services Development, the Philippine Normal College, and the Philippine Social Science Council.<sup>1</sup> All representatives expressed interest in joining the regional network. They also identified 10 other schools and agencies to be included in the Philippine network which would link with the proposed regional network. These were Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University, Divine Word University in Tacloban, Institute of Philippine Culture in Ateneo de Manila, Mindanao State.

University in Marawi City, Population Centre Foundation, San Carlos University in Cebu, Silliman University in Dumaguete, St. Louis University in Baguio, and Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro City.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Letter of Secretary-General Narciso Albarracin, Unesco National Commission of the Philippines, to PSSC on 21 April 1986.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

During the Consultative meeting, the findings of a UNESCO-commissioned feasibility study by Professor Ursula Picache of the U.P. Institute of Library Science on the establishment of a social science information network for the Asia-Pacific region were presented. The Picache study was undertaken in response to an expressed need for a regional network in social science information, akin to the Asian Science and Technology Information Network (ASTINFO) earlier organised by UNESCO as a regional network for information on science and technology. Professor Picache confirmed the existence of country organisations which had networking structures in place, and therefore the establishment of APINESS was feasible. She also recommended in her study that each country which planned to participate in the proposed regional network chooses its "National Contact Point" from among the members of its potential national network. The consultative meeting chose the Philippine Social Science Council (PSSC) to be the National Focal Point for APINESS.<sup>3</sup>

Before the holding of the Consultative meeting on the proposed APINESS in the Philippines in April 1986, support for the establishment of APINESS was pledged also by the Executive Council of the Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils (AASSREC) in their meeting in February 1986. AASSREC would collaborate with UNESCO in organising the Bangkok meeting to launch APINESS.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, in keeping with its having been chosen to be the Philippines' National Contact Point, PSSC represented the country during the organisational meeting of APINESS in May 1986 in Bangkok.<sup>5</sup>

The organisational structure that was decided upon for APINESS involved two levels of networking. The first level consisted of the member-country network which would feed into the second or regional level through the National Contact Point. To operationalize the work of APINESS on these two levels, two major units would be organised. These were:

National Advisory Group (NAG), to be organised by each participating country and composed of some of the participating national government and non-government agencies or departments in the member-country's national network. The NAG would be responsible for coordinating, planning, and monitoring the network, and the National Contact Point would provide secretariat support.

Regional Advisory Group (RAG), to be composed of NAG representatives who would meet at regular intervals, like every 2 years, to review the progress of the member-networks and to plan further activities on a regional level. RUSHSAP would provide secretariat support for RAG in Bangkok.

During the launching of APINESS, representatives of National Focal Points were urged to organise their NAGS and to strengthen their national information networks upon their return to their respective countries. They were expected to enter into networking arrangements and collaborate with members of their network on initial activities, as documentation and training. At the end of two years, the RAG would be called to a meeting to assess the accomplishments of the NAGs and to make further plans for APINESS.

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Unesco-RUSHSAP General Information Note, "Regional Meeting of Experts to develop Asian-Pacific Network of Social Science Information and Documentation Centres," Bangkok, 12-16 May 1986 (mimeographed and circulated to participants).

<sup>5</sup> PSSC sent Mrs. Lorna Makil, Coordinator for the Information and Special Services Division, as delegate to the APINESS launching in Bangkok.

## **PSSC's Networking Infrastructure and Limitations**

PSSC was chosen as the National Contact Point for the Philippines mainly because of its central role in promoting the development of the social science disciplines in the country.

At the time of its selection as National Contact Point, PSSC had already organised the PSSC Research Network (refer to Annex A) consisting of 27 university-based research centres or institutions in Manila and the provinces. The universities had sent teacher-researchers to the PSSC Summer Research Training Programme held in Manila in previous years. The sending universities were expected to maintain the research centres for their school and provincial research needs and to participate in larger research projects such as national surveys which required trained researchers in the provinces.

In addition to the PSSC Research Network, there were other structures in PSSC which could be tapped for information networking. These included the following:

PSSC's regular members consisting of national professional social science associations, and its associate members consisting of other research and educational institutions (refer to Annex B);

The presence of the Frank X. Lynch Library in PSSC as a social science documentary centre, with a long-term plan to transform it into a clearing house for social science information; and

The PSSC publication and Central Subscription Service which pools the scholarly journals of member associations for wider dissemination to readers.

The presence of these structures, however, was no guarantee that information networking activities would be maximized in PSSC. The Research Network, for instance, operated more as a loose organisation of provincial and Manila-based research centres. As funds for PSSC-sponsored national research projects began to dry up, the individual research centres were left to fend for themselves. (Some of these local units received a boost when they were involved in the PSSC Research Consortium Programme from 1982-1988, but the rest of the centres which were not involved weakened or became moribund and some ceased to communicate with PSSC.) Moreover, budgetary constraints did not allow PSSC to carry out full networking activities or to hire additional personnel for the job. The Frank X. Lynch Library, for example, was staffed by only one person whose work involved manual operations of documentation tasks. Lack of qualified human resources, lack of financial resources and difficulties of maintaining collaborative activities with members on a regular basis were problems which PSSC faced in getting its infrastructure to work.

## **PSSC Infonet Proposal**

To remedy the above situation, PSSC prepared a proposal for the establishment of a "PSSC Infonet Programme" in 1986 which would be initiated with funding support from an external agency.<sup>6</sup> The proposal called for the development of the Frank X. Lynch Library and some 12 libraries associated

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<sup>6</sup> The PSSC Infonet Proposal was crafted by Dr. Cesar Mercado in February 1985. Dr. Mercado was representative of the discipline of Communication in the PSSC Executive Board. The Infonet Proposal was submitted to the IDRC Director for Information Services Ms. Martha Stone during her visit on 11 February 1985 to PSSC. In principle, IDRC made a commitment to support a pre-Infonet survey of information needs and the larger Infonet project.

with the PSSC Research Network into an information network specialising in social science. The proposed PSSC Infonet was envisioned to perform the following functions: (1) collection; (2) referral; (3) depository; (4) exchange; (5) processing; (6) distribution; (7) documentation; (8) dissemination; (9) compilation; (10) monitoring; and (11) evaluation.

When APINESS was launched in 1986, PSSC was in the midst of following up its funding request from the International Development and Research Centre (IDRC) in Singapore for the PSSC Infonet Proposal. Although there was initial interest and support on the part of IDRC (it gave funds for a pre-project survey of needs and a consultative workshop of potential network members to discuss the survey results and make tentative plans), the expected funding for the project did not push through. There were some problems in crafting the PSSC project concept to fit the development focus of the funding agency (i.e., the funding agency tacitly preferred that the social science information handled by the network would be in a form useful to policy or decision makers and NGO groups in development). A second reason why IDRC did not support the project despite its earlier interest was a shift from supporting the development of large systems or networks under its Development Science Information Systems (DEVSI) to smaller projects dealing with more applied or practical aspects of development information (for example, IDRC funded a project of the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction on developing indigenous communication channels for the dissemination of information on technology and development).

Hopeful of finding Infonet funding from other sources, PSSC submitted the proposal to the National Economic and Development Authority (NEDA) and to the UNESCO National Commission in the Philippines. Both agencies however did not also consider the Infonet proposal among their priorities for funding.

### **Ad Hoc Nature of APINESS**

When APINESS was launched there was no firm commitment from UNESCO to fund the project. Perhaps there was a feeling that immediate funding was not crucial based on the findings of the initial Picache study that the establishment of such a network was feasible due to the presence of national social science bodies like PSSC which had networking infrastructures in place. In the UNESCO-RUSHSAP invitation to the launching of APINESS, mention was made that "funding support will be sought from UNDP under the latter's "Regional Cooperative Programme in Social Sciences for Development" which formed a part of UNDP's "Wardrobe" for the next five-year cycle beginning 1 January 1987." It was not clear to the participants who met in Bangkok however, whether they were expected to separately approach the UNDP offices in their respective countries to request funding, or whether UNESCO-RUSHSAP would facilitate this region-wide for APINESS. Although it was quite clear that the participants were expected to act as "catalyzers" in the formation and strengthening of their national network, the sources of funding support were not as certain.

Such a situation led to the ad hoc nature of APINESS in PSSC, which had hoped that if the Infonet project would be funded, it would spill over to support some NAG activities. PSSC therefore did not attempt to organise a Philippine NAG within the APINESS framework until 2 years later.

## Organisation of Philippine NAG

In May 1988, UNESCO-RUSHSAP sent PSSC a notice of the first meeting of the Regional Advisory Group (RAG) of APINESS, scheduled in September 1988. PSSC replied that it had not moved the concept of APINESS in the country and would thus not participate in the RAG I meeting.<sup>7</sup> Upon RUSHSAP's urging for PSSC to participate in the regional meeting,<sup>8</sup> PSSC felt that the least it could do was to try and organise the Philippine NAG.

The first (and the only) meeting of the Philippine NAG took place in August 1988. Invited to constitute the body were representatives from the National Library, U.P. Library System, Fund for Assistance to Private Education Library (three of the original participants in the consultative meeting held before the APINESS launching), Philippine Information Agency, South-East Asian Ministers of Education Organisation for Regional Centre for Educational Innovation and Technology (SEAMEO-INNOTECH) Library, Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) of NEDA, Philippine Partnership for Development of Human Resources (PHILDHARRA), and the UNESCO National Commission in the Philippines. The meeting was congenial, and interest in information exchange and some collaborative activities was expressed. The issue of funding was brought up, and while there was surprise that PSSC was embarking on something for which funds were not committed, two of those present were willing to explore some tentative arrangements, as cost-sharing for certain activities. There was an agreement for the NAG to meet again after the RAG I meeting in Bangkok.<sup>9</sup>

Unfortunately, the NAG did not meet anymore. The second meeting did not take place because of conflicting schedules of the members and a low priority on their part to attend the meeting. Thus, although it had been reported in the RAG I meeting that the Philippines had organised its NAG (making it one of the few APINESS member countries which had already constituted a NAG), APINESS was not operational in the Philippines two years after the regional network had been launched. It has remained so to this day.

Despite the non-existence of Philippine NAG for APINESS, Bangkok continued to invite PSSC to three more RAG meetings in 1990, 1992 and 1994.<sup>10</sup> In all these meetings, PSSC representatives continued to report on the difficulties of forming a NAG in the country, but they did report on the information and exchange activities undertaken by PSSC.

Even as PSSC was not successful in forming a NAG structure for APINESS in the Philippines, it should be mentioned that it had availed of and benefited from the skills training provided by APINESS to participating countries. A member of PSSC's technical staff attended a training seminar on the use of CDS/ISIS in New Delhi in August 1992, while its Librarian for the Frank X. Lynch Library attended a regional workshop on Common Communication Format in Kuala Lumpur in October 1993. Although

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<sup>7</sup> Ruben F. Trinidad, PSSC Executive Director, in a letter to Dr. Yogesh Atal, UNESCO Regional Adviser for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific, dated 28 July 1988.

<sup>8</sup> As conveyed in a telephone message from Bangkok to Prof. Trinidad.

<sup>9</sup> PSSC sent Mrs. Lorna Makil to attend the meeting.

<sup>10</sup> RAG II was held in Bangkok and PSSC was represented by Ms. Rachel Angela Anosan, Research, Training and Development Project Leader. RAG III was held in New Delhi and was attended by Miss Alana Gorospe, Coordinator for Research, Training and Development. RAG IV, which was held in Bangkok, was attended by PSSC Executive Director Ponciano Bennagen.



the PSSC Library has been using the DOS/ISIS system since 1991, the additional training received by PSSC staff under the auspices of APINESS has further improved PSSC's bibliographic and documentation services.

In addition, PSSC had participated in a number of APINESS activities initiated by UNESCO-RUSHSAP. These include the compilation of related literature on projective studies on the year 2000 in the Philippines, and the UNESCO InfoYouth Project which aimed to put out a "Country Data Book on Youth Information and Documentation Centres". National reports on these were submitted to UNESCO-RUSHSAP, although no region-wide results or reports on these appear to have been received by PSSC. PSSC also contributed news items and bibliographic briefs to the APINESS Newsletter published by the National Social Science Documentation Centre of the Indian Council for Social Science Research in New Delhi.

But owing to the difficulties in constituting a NAG, PSSC simply pursued its national information exchange networking activities through its own programmes and infrastructures and primarily through the services offered by the Frank X. Lynch Library and the its Central Subscription Service. Currently, the Frank Lynch Library maintains exchange arrangements with some 20 institutions within the country, and with 24 foreign institutions. PSSC's Central Subscription Service on the other hand handles the sales, subscriptions and distribution of 14 professional social science journals regularly released by PSSC's member-organisations, in addition to books, papers and monographs written by Filipino social scientists. While most journal sales and subscriptions are within the country, several journal subscribers also consist of university libraries and research institutions abroad. The PSSC Central Subscription Service has also increased the subscription and distribution of social science journals and materials to the country's provincial colleges and universities. PSSC moreover, publishes the PSSC Social Science Information, a bi-annual publication that, among other social science activity news and information, contains bibliographic abstracts of new Philippine social science publications. In brief, PSSC has tried to maintain its role as an information node for the social sciences albeit not within the envisaged structure and framework of APINESS.

### **Concluding Notes**

The foregoing account suggests that the little progress attained in the implementation of APINESS in the Philippines owes primarily to two reasons namely, the low priority given to APINESS by agencies and institutions that have been invited to join the network and the lack of funding support to sustain network activities.

Although agencies invited to constitute the NAG in the Philippines showed initial interest in APINESS, it was difficult to convene them to subsequent meetings due to their own work demands and priorities. Some also have their own agency contacts and networks which they can tap for their own information and exchange needs. Hence, many could not fully appreciate the necessity of setting up a new and separate APINESS structure as the NAG. For the most part, the PSSC and the other agencies/institutions invited to the NAG felt that their respective information-exchange networking activities were and are operational and that these paralleled those envisioned by APINESS at least at the national level. What appears not to have been fully exploited was the potential of APINESS as a region-wide network for information exchange in the social sciences.

Although national institutions and networks can be mobilized for region-wide information exchanges, this often requires the formulation of specific projects or concrete activities with their own funding sources. This was true in the case of the compilation of bibliographic entries on projective studies of the Year 2000 which was initiated and funded by UNESCO-RUSHSAP and jointly participated in by PSSC and other National Contact Points in the region. Left to their own, PSSC and some of the National Contact Points do not have the funding and personnel resources necessary for conceptualizing region-wide activities and projects or for sustaining regional network linkages.

Finally, it should be mentioned that difficulties in institutionalizing APINESS within PSSC and possibly other National Contact Points also owes to changes in their administrations and personnel. The composition of PSSC's Board for example changes every other year and it has not always been the case that each Board viewed APINESS as a priority activity for PSSC. Some Board members were not inclined to allocate more resources to PSSC's information and exchange networking activities beyond the regular budgets of the PSSC Library and Central Subscription Service; whereas others sought funding for other programmes or projects which had then to be treated as priorities. Still others thought that PSSC should concentrate on strengthening its own programmes and networks rather than seek new partner institutions for information exchange particularly where these use up additional time and resources. Given these limitations, the PSSC has been able to maintain its role as an information centre for the social sciences in the Philippines by utilising its existing programmes and infrastructures. Because APINESS at the regional level remains a loose network however, PSSC has not been able to use APINESS to further institutionalize its linkages with other national networks in the region.

## **SRI LANKA EVALUATION**

### **Preamble**

The Sri Lanka evaluation concentrates on providing a description of the implementation of the APINESS framework in the Sri Lankan context. It shows a nation that enthusiastically embraced the idea and an institution, the Social Science Documentation Centre, which assiduously sought to meet its commitments within that framework. Alongside India, Sri Lanka has been a clear participant in APINESS.

The Sri Lanka report, however, does not pass any evaluative judgements about APINESS. Steadfastly looking to account for those activities which can be interpreted as meeting the requirements of APINESS it does not ask the question to what extent those activities would have occurred regardless of the existence of APINESS. For a true sense of the impact of APINESS it would be important to disaggregate activities which would have occurred in any event from those which are the direct result of APINESS. This would be particularly helpful in the Sri Lankan case because of its enthusiastic engagement with the APINESS project.

### **Historical Background of the Social Sciences in Sri Lanka**

The social sciences have occupied an important place in Sri Lanka from a very long time, even before the universities were established in early nineteen forties. The social sciences have undergone several phases of change and the main three phases of social science development in Sri Lanka are: colonial intellectual domination; colonial intellectual influences; and the gaining of independence.

Universities have become the main centres for teaching and research in social sciences, and social science subjects such as History, Economics, Demography, Political Science, Anthropology, Statistics and Sociology have been obtained for university degrees. Most of the graduates who hold key positions in the public sector, private sector and in the administrative services today, are those who had taken University Degrees in the Social Sciences. Even for the secondary education, certain social science subjects have been compulsory in the secondary school curricula and since the introduction of the National Education Scheme of 1972, a subject called social studies has been introduced for all students above grade six. The main objective of this scheme is to enable the educational system to be geared to socio-economic development at grass root level.

When comparing with many other developing countries in South Asia, one could say that Sri Lanka has had a great volume of literature in the areas of social, economic, demographic and statistical information. Sri Lankans along with expatriate scholars had produced a considerable amount of social science literature which have been available for over a period of more than one hundred years.

### **National Priorities in Social Sciences and Social Science Information in Sri Lanka**

Sri Lanka is a multi-national, multi-religious and multi lingual society and records a history of two thousand five hundred years. The population of the country is 18.3 million with a literacy rate of 89 per cent. Sri Lanka is endeavouring to improve her economic and social conditions and therefore,

the need has arisen for the facts and theoretical models which can be utilised by the government for the formulation of development policies. Social science research has become relevant in this connection. As societies face acute economic and social problems, today in Sri Lanka, there is a call for relevance of social science research to the development needs of the society. Although the Sri Lanka government does not have a policy for social science research and for social science information, their role is recognised by the government and other organisations of the country. Government has given great emphasis to the practical applications of the social sciences, and has called upon the services of Economists, Sociologists and other social scientists in the formulation of plans and project evaluation in the accelerated development programmes of the country. Although the objectives of social development have been clearly identified by the Sri Lanka government, the methods of achieving these objectives have however, yet to be planned. Like the other developing countries, social development planning is also a new concept of recent origin in the national planning of Sri Lanka.

In order to eliminate poverty in Sri Lanka, the present government has launched a project called "Samurdhi Programme". Different governments in the past, have introduced various programmes to relieve the plight of the poor people in the country. The "Janasaviya Programme" is one of the previous government programmes implemented to alleviate poverty. The main purpose of these programmes are to help the people in Sri Lanka, those who did not have the barest of necessities, to have a change in their life styles. Government has recruited the educated youth, mostly, graduates who have obtained degrees in social sciences as samurdhi animators for the implementation of the programme. Samurdhi will strive to eliminate poverty, and its final aim is to have a contented society.

The present government of Sri Lanka has launched another movement called "Sudu Nelum" which is a movement of peace by peace and for peace. It believes in its capacity to change the hearts of people that are at war with each other. The movement is aimed at combating communalism, racial and religious extremism in all forms; the development of a grass roots awareness of the need for a political solution to Sri Lanka's ethnic crisis; and extend help to the victims of war. The restoration of the Jaffna Public Library is one of the priority projects of the "Sudu Nelum" Movement. The views of several experts were sought related to areas of engineering, architecture and library and information science.

Devolution of power and Ethnic conflict are two major issues that Sri Lanka is facing today. The Sri Lankan government has made a request from the National Library of Sri Lanka to establish a Documentation Centre on Devolution of Power, Ethnic Problem and related subjects. The role of the proposed Documentation Centre is to cater the researchers and decision makers by providing necessary material or providing information on location of documents related to the subject. The preliminary work of the Documentation Centre commenced in July, 1996.

One of the important initiatives taken by the government to promote social science research is the establishment of the National Science Council in 1968. Under its auspices a statutory working committee on Social Science Research was appointed in 1976 and in May, 1977 the statutory working committee set up a Social Science Research Centre (SSRC) with the objective of promoting research in the social sciences in relation to national requirements of Sri Lanka. The main task of the research centre is to promote social science research at the postgraduate level and to coordinate research in social sciences. It has already taken steps to facilitate research collaboration and interdisciplinary contacts among social scientists in the Universities, Research Institutions and other Agencies. Realizing the

increasing importance of the research activity, the government of Sri Lanka, established the Natural Resources, Energy and Science Authority (NARESA) of Sri Lanka in 1982 in place of the National Science Council. The authority of advising the government on matters pertaining to social science problems was also given to NARESA. During the period of late 1940s and the early 1950s a significant amount of research was in progress both in the social sciences and other fields of science, there was no common forum for the scientists and administrators to meet, exchange their views, and discuss their findings. To meet this long felt need, the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science (SLAAS) was set up in the early 1950s. This Association has a separate section for the social sciences.

### **Social Science Research at National Level**

Sri Lanka has a few institutions both state sponsored and private, engaged in Social Science Research. The existing institutions are not adequate to fulfil the research needs in the entire field of social sciences. Due to the specialisation in certain areas, the number of institutions in the government and private sector, which undertake socio-economic studies, could be categorized under five types. These institutions could be considered as the major producers of research in the social sciences. Programmes on social science research conducted by these institutions differ from one institution to another, according to the type of research that is undertaken. The objectives of these institutes varies from one institute to another. The types of institutions are as follows: State-sponsored Research Institutes; Ministries and Government Departments; Social Science Faculties of the Universities; Private Research Institutions; International Organisations with their branches in Sri Lanka.

#### **State – Sponsored Research Institutes**

The main objective of the state – sponsored research institutes is to conduct studies on specific subject areas relevant to the prevailing socio-economic context in the country, which are mainly useful to policy makers, planners, other agencies and to the national development.

The Economic Research Department of the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, (formerly known as Central Bank of Ceylon) is one of the premier state – sponsored social science research institutes in Sri Lanka. It is primarily concerned with the collection, preparation and analytical presentation of economic data, conducts economic research for the guidance of the monetary board and the governor in formulating, implementing and executing policies in the areas of money and banking and other subjects of general interest. A considerable amount of data collection and analytical presentations are carried out by this department in the fields of agriculture, balance of payments, banking, economic and social overheads, industry, prices, public finance and money, trade, wages and employment. Research work includes, macro and micro-economic analysis, studies of investment for development, government policies and programmes, monetary and fiscal policies, their operations and effectiveness.

Another state-sponsored social science research organisation that carries out specialised research in the socio-economic sphere of the agrarian sector in Sri Lanka is the Agrarian Research and Training Institute (ARTI). Research carried out by the ARTI is largely objective and operational. It serves as a centre for undertaking, fostering and coordinating of research into the agrarian structure, examination of institutional factors basically on the development of agriculture, training of personnel who are engaged with on-going programmes of agriculture development and agrarian reorganisation. Disciplines covered are agricultural extension, cooperatives and credit, land economics, land settlement, land tenure,

marketing, production economics, rural sociology and statistics. Information provided by this centre covers particularly Sri Lanka and generally South-East Asia Region.

The Economic Research Division of the People's Bank is engaged in research related to rural credit programmes and socio-economic data structures in Sri Lanka. It conducts short-term and long-term research. The short-term research is concerned with the analysis of specific bank credit programmes and the long-term research is concerned on national economic development.

Institute of Policy Studies established in 1990, serves as a centre for conducting economic research and disseminating information on issues relating to national policy. Although this institute is independent in its research and recommendations, it works in close cooperation with the Sri Lanka government as well as policy makers. The Institute encourages and facilitates socio-economic research and specially undertakes activities to promote studies related to national development plans and policies. It maintains close liaison with government institutions, research institutions and universities engaged in development studies in Sri Lanka and has links with foreign institutions and scholars who work on similar or related fields.

### **Ministries and Government Departments**

Ministry of Plan Implementation, Ethnic Affairs and National Integration consists of various divisions and units namely, Monitoring and Progress Division, Regional Development Division, Ethnic Affairs and National Integration Division, Sudu Nelum Movement, Southern Area Development Authority, District Planning Units and Integrated Rural Development Projects. These divisions and units are involved in research related to social sciences. Each division comprises of a Director and a Research Staff. The research staff is engaged in conducting surveys and preparing reports on planning from time to time when there is a need to carry out research activities. The implementation of plans and development programmes in Sri Lanka is mostly based on these action research programmes.

Ministry of Mahaweli Development established the Mahaweli Development Authority for the implementation of the accelerated Mahaweli programme which is the largest development project undertaken in Sri Lanka. Within the Mahaweli Authority, a unit called Planning and Monitoring Unit (PMU) was established for planning at macro level and monitoring of all aspects of activities of Mahaweli programme. Socio-economic research is being done by the PMU such as economic evaluation and socio-economic feasibility studies of new projects. The Social Scientists have made contributions related to the human and sociological problems of settlement in the Mahaweli areas. PMU conducts censuses, sample surveys and impact studies on on-going settlement programmes within the Mahaweli system. It also undertakes similar surveys and studies for other state and non-government agencies that fall within the expertise of the PMU.

The Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (SLIDA) was established in 1966 to train public officers of all types and levels to discharge their duties in a fruitful manner which would enable them to realise the national goals. While having training as its main task, this institute conducts research on problems of development administration.

The National Institute of Business Management (NIBM) was set up in 1968 under the Ministry of Industries and Scientific Affairs, to train and educate personnel engaged in industrial, commercial and service organisations in the country, and to provide consultancy and research services to the country

for the improvement of organisational performance. Programmes related to training and research conducted by the NIBM are mainly lean towards the development needs of Sri Lanka. Therefore, the institute adopts a flexible policy, in the type of programmes which can be implemented at any given time.

The Department of Census and Statistics is responsible for the collection of primary data related to population, housing, agriculture, industries etc. on a national – wide basis. It is an operational and objective research centre. Annual statistics are collected, tabulated, analysed and published by this centre with the assistance of its network of statistical units throughout the country. Surveys conducted by the Census and Statistics Department provides socio-economic data which is essential for the analysis of current trends and emerging problems of the country.

### **Social Science Faculties of the Universities**

Although teaching has tended to predominate over research in the universities of Sri Lanka, a considerable amount of Social Science research particularly in History, Human Geography, Sociology, Socio-Psychology, Anthropology, Economics, Demography, Education and Political Science is being carried out in the faculties of Arts and Social Sciences in eight universities. Though research is not included in the programmes of these faculties, the staff members have been engaged on specific studies and programmes of evaluation related to government activities. Due to the heavy teaching and tutorial load of the staff members, it leaves little room for research. Theses submitted by students for special degrees and the postgraduate work in the form of dissertation and micro studies, produces a regular volume of research in the universities. University research has appeared mostly in the form of articles in Social Science Journals published by the different universities. Other than the journals, academics of the universities have brought out several publications in the form of monographs which are based either on their Doctoral theses or on the results of research undertaken after their postgraduate training.

### **Private Research Institutions**

The most important institutions falling under the category of private Research Institutions, undertake research on socio-economic issues. The private organisations have made a considerable amount of contributions to problem oriented research.

The Marga Institute established in 1972, is a non-governmental social and economic research institute. The Institute is mainly concerned on the study and analysis of development problems in Sri Lanka and improving the knowledge and understanding of development issues among people. Its programmes include analytical studies and research projects on a selected range of socio-economic issues and other development issues. Marga Institute conducts workshops, seminars and public discussions ranging from village to the Asian Regional Level. It has published several books in English and Sinhala languages on various aspects of development. The journal entitled Marga which is a quarterly publication of the Institute, discusses the current problems of development in the society of Sri Lanka. This could be described as a vehicle for scholars, mostly in the private sector to publish their research. Other important publications are Marga Research papers, Research Reports and Seminar Papers.

In order to meet the long felt need for a centre for more systematic and in-depth research as a basis for action programmes for women, the Centre for Women's Research (CENWOR) was established in 1984. The Centre undertakes the promotion of research in action – oriented studies and programmes relating to women in the Asian Region and evolves appropriate methodologies for such studies. It evaluates development policies and projects relating to women and also provides a forum for discussion and dialogue on women's issues. CENWOR conducts conferences, seminars, workshops and public lectures on women's issues. Research papers and studies are published by the Centre.

Sarvodaya which is a private voluntary organisation, established a research institute in 1975, with the objective of seeing how far the development philosophy of Sarvodaya has been successful in improving the villages of Sri Lanka. The research done by the institute covers disciplines such as rural development, child and family welfare, population and culture, tourism and poverty alleviation. It has a permanent research staff. Research results are published in the form of monographs, journal articles and reports.

Although the Centre for Society and Religion was established by a group of Catholic Clergy, its activities are not confined to religion. The institute is less research – oriented and more in the field of social advocacy. It conducts research on current social and cultural issues. Programmes of studies and seminars conducted by the Centre are directed at the evaluation of socio-economic and political trends. Research done by the institute is incorporated in its journals such as Dossiers, Logos, Quest and Social Justice.

The Social Scientists Association which is a non-governmental professional body was set up by a group of concerned Social Scientists and others interested in Social Sciences. The objectives of the association are to promote independent research relevant to a scientific understanding of society, to publish studies arising from such research and to provide a non-sectarian forum for discussion on national and socially relevant issues. It promotes free discussions on topics of economic, political and social interest. The association has been engaged in research on the political economy of Sri Lanka, the capitalist penetration of domestic agriculture, aspects of ethnic conflict and ethnic relations, gender, cast and religion.

### **International Organisations with their branches in Sri Lanka**

Several International Organisations with their branches in Sri Lanka are active in the field of Social Science Research and even participate directly in research programmes. International Organisations such as UNESCO, USAID, UNICEF, NORAD, United Nations and World Bank used to engage highly qualified programme officers who are capable of undertaking research work. The international organisations contribute a considerable amount to research activity in terms of financial assistance and professional staff.

### **Research Methods**

A study on "An Analysis of Social Science trends in Sri Lanka from 1975-1984" has mentioned in the findings of the study, that research methods employed by the researchers in Sri Lanka are predominantly Historical, Case Study, Survey or combination of methods. Other research methods like Operations Research, Content Analysis, Experimental Method and Bibliographic Method were used



for very few studies. The absence of using Citation Analysis method in research implies that the use of literature in the country has not been investigated although the above mentioned research methods has shown increases and decreases of using them for researches. The methods used by researchers in various institutions has not shown any significant difference. Most of the research methods employed for regional studies undertaken, could be mentioned as Applied Research, General Research, Survey, Experimental Method and Feasibility Study. When compared to the number of General research studies it could be mentioned that the number of Applied Research studies is enormous.

Social Science researchers in Sri Lanka are mostly familiar with and prefer the methods such as case study, historical, survey method and theoretical research. Courses in research methodology is included in some undergraduate and Post-graduate level courses in the universities of Sri Lanka. Therefore, young researchers are not aware of the different methods which could be employed in their research studies. It could be said that the selection of research method depends mostly on the nature of the problem to be investigated. Researchers seem to have selected problems to suit the methods they knew.

The Social Scientists in Sri Lanka have realised the value of educating young researchers, and has conducted several seminars relating to Social Science Research methodology from time to time. These seminars have been organised mainly by the Social Science Research Centre and the social science section of the Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science. In these seminars, research methods were discussed in detail and main emphasis was given to research tools such as questionnaires and interviews and the use of statistical techniques and computers for analysis and presentation of data.

### **Social Science Manpower**

When referring to the present state of Social Science Research in Sri Lanka, it is important to look at the availability of research personnel to do research. Those who are serving in the universities in Social Science disciplines and persons attached to specialised research institutes such as Agrarian Research and Training Institute, Marga Institute, Centre for Women's Research, Social Scientists Association, Institute of Policy Studies, Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya and some other institutions such as the Central Bank of Sri Lanka, Department of Census and Statistics, People's Bank where a part of their functions related to research will fall into this category. Although the number of research personnel or potential research personnel seems to be fairly large, the availability of personnel with formal experience and training in research has found that there is an acute dearth of personnel for Social Science Research in Sri Lanka. Even though there are trained Social Scientists and the know-how to get the necessary data and information, these resources have not been properly used.

### **Status of Regional Studies Related to Social Sciences**

Regional studies in research related to social sciences have been undertaken by some of the state sponsored research institutes such as Agrarian Research and Training Institute, private organisations like Marga Institute, Centre for Women's Research, Social Scientists Association, Academics of Universities both local and foreign as individuals and finally the International Organisations.

The above mentioned institutions have undertaken regional studies mostly as a part of a multi-country research study, as an inter-regional study, country study of a research project and Sri Lanka as

a component of a regional study. Academics of the universities of Sri Lanka as individuals, have undertaken regional studies mainly for obtaining their Post-doctoral and Master's Degrees and Post-graduate Diplomas. Academics of the foreign universities as well as International organisations include Sri Lanka as a country component of their regional studies.

Regional studies cover Asia, South Asia and South-East Asia. Some of the disciplines covered by these regional studies are Agrarian Reforms, Agricultural Services, Cooperatives, Economic and Social Development, Poverty Alleviation, Rural Development, Rural Poverty and Women Workers.

Most of these regional studies have been funded by the funding agencies such as CARP (Council for Agriculture Research Policy), CIDA (Canadian International Development Agency), CIRDAP (Centre for Integrated Rural Development in Asia and the Pacific), ESCAP (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific), FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation), FES (Friedrich Ebert Stiftung), GN (Government of Netherlands), NORAD (Norwegian Agency for International Development), SAREC (Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation), UNESCO, UNICEF and UNIDO.

### **Establishment of the APINESS Network in Sri Lanka**

In May 1986, the UNESCO Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific (RUSHSAP), in collaboration with the Association of Asian Social Science Research Councils (AASSREC), initiated a Network of Social Science Documentation and Information Centres named APINESS (Asia-Pacific Information Network in Social Sciences).

### **Social Science Documentation Centre**

The Social Science Documentation Centre was established in 1986, as a unit of the National Library of Sri Lanka. With the designation of the National Library as the National Documentation Centre for Social Sciences, the responsibility for coordinating and developing social science documentation and information activities which was laid with the Natural Resources, Energy and Science Authority of Sri Lanka (NARESA), was transferred to the National Library, in 1986.

### **The Legal Policy Framework of APINESS Operating at National Level (APINESS National Infrastructure)**

#### *National Contact Point (NCP)*

With the aim of facilitating the coordination of programmes and activities under APINESS, and to liaising with other agencies dealing with information systems, services, programmes and activities at the national, regional and international levels, it was decided that each participating country has to establish an APINESS National Contact Point (NCP). The Social Science Documentation Centre of the National Library of Sri Lanka was designated as the National Contact Point (NCP) for APINESS Sri Lanka in 1986. Since then the National Contact Point is responsible for the establishment of the network and for implementing this programme in Sri Lanka. The main function of the NCP is to coordinate and develop Social Science Documentation and Information activities in the country on a national level. The NCP is entrusted with the task of developing policies, programmes, means and mechanisms designed to establish and implement the network. The National Library of Sri Lanka which

falls under the Ministry of Education, Sri Lanka, is the apex institution of the country's library structure, which provides leadership in library and information services. The NCP Sri Lanka has links with other NCPs and hosts the secretariat of the National Advisory Group (NAG).

#### *NCP Representative*

The Director of the National Library acts as the liaison officer and a senior officer has been appointed to look after the matters relating to APINESS.

#### *National Advisory Group of the NCP (NAG)*

The National Contact Point has set up a National Advisory Group (NAG) which will advise and assist in the discharge of its duties. The National Advisory Group of the APINESS network was first set up in 1987. This committee consisted of representatives from six institutions appointed by the then Ministry of Education Services, Sri Lanka, on the recommendation of the National Library of Sri Lanka. The NAG appointed in 1987 consisted of representatives from the institutions namely, UNESCO National Commission for Sri Lanka, Ministry of Plan Implementation, Sri Lanka Library Association, Institute of Fundamental Studies, Social Science National Committee of the Natural Resources, Energy and Science Authority of Sri Lanka [NARESA] and University of Kelaniya.

The National Advisory Group was reformed in March, 1993 owing to changes in some institutions and to be more accurate in setting up of a NAG according to the APINESS framework. This advisory group, consisted of representatives from six institutions namely, Sri Lanka National Commission for UNESCO, Ministry of Policy Planning and Implementation, Steering Committee on Social Sciences of the Natural Resources Energy and Science Authority of Sri Lanka (NARESA), Standing Committee on Social Sciences of the University Grants Commission, Social Scientists Association and Sri Lanka Library Association.

The National Advisory Group was reformed again in March, 1995 after the change over of the Sri Lanka government. Depending on the national context, the Honourable Minister of Education and Higher Education has appointed the NAG which consists of seven representatives since 1995 to date. The Advisory Group, advises and assists the National Contact Point to discharge its duties.

#### *National Advisory Group Meetings*

Since the constitution of the National Advisory Group in 1987 up to 1996 Six (6) National Advisory Group meetings have been held. According to the APINESS framework, NAG has to meet at least once a year. National Advisory Group reviews the operations of the National network and confirms or amends network priorities and action programmes. At these NAG meetings activities of the National Contact Point were reviewed under the following headings: Establishment of the APINESS Network; Progress of the APINESS activities of the National Contact Point; Participation in the activities of the existing National Networks; Contributions of the participating centres; Publications completed and on-going; Involvements in Regional Activities; Contribution to APINESS Newsletter; Proposed activities for future.

A decision was taken by the NAG at its last meeting held in December, 1996 to have three NAG meetings per year from 1997.

### *Participating Centres (PCs)*

The National Contact Point has identified thirty one (31) major libraries in the country relevant to Social Sciences and allied fields as participating centres. Each Participating Centre (PC) in the national network is required to make a meaningful contribution towards strengthening Documentation and Information activities in the country. Participating Centres are involved in Documentation, Information and Data Services activities in their relevant institutions as well as cooperative activities.

## **Social Science Documentation, Information and Data Services of the APINESS Network in Sri Lanka**

### **Collection Building on Social Sciences**

National Library of Sri Lanka is mainly concentrating literature on Social Sciences; Humanities; Library and Information Science; Science and Technology (Secondary and Tertiary Reference Sources); and Mass Communication. It commenced building up a core collection with the designation as one of the deposit libraries in the country in 1976. Since then it commenced receiving all the published material in Sri Lanka, which includes literature on Social Sciences. Building up of a core collection which started in 1976, was expanded in 1985, and to date, acquisition of material on Social Sciences could be mentioned as a continuous activity of the National Library. These material are acquired through purchases, gifts and donations, exchange (National and International) and under the legal deposit law. In order to expand the social science collection, National Library has an active International Exchange Programme of publications with 57 National Libraries and Universities in 32 countries of which 18 are from the Asia-Pacific Region.

With the establishment of the Social Science Documentation Centre (SSDC) and its designation as the National Contact Point (NCP) of APINESS network, special emphasis was given on acquiring reference sources such as International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, Encyclopedia of Human Rights, Social Science Citation Index (Printed version), Current Contents – Arts and Humanities (Printed version) and Library and Information Science Abstracts plus (LISA plus) CD-ROM version. Natural Resources, Energy and Science Authority of Sri Lanka, one of the PCs of the APINESS, has purchased the CD-ROM *Sirs Researcher* – a reference tool with full text articles on a wide variety of Science, Social Sciences and World Affairs.

Social science and socio-economic literature are being generated by three major sectors namely, the government, institutions of higher learning and to a certain extent the private organisations. It is noteworthy to mention that in Sri Lanka, libraries have been set up in most organisations established by the government as well as private sector, which cater to the development activities in the country. The total number of Libraries, Documentation Centres and Information Centres with social science information material which can do research is approximately ninety two (92).

Out of this number, four major libraries in the country namely, National Museum Library, Department of National Archives Library, University of Peradeniya Library and the National Library of Sri Lanka being legal deposit Libraries, collect and preserve all Sri Lankan published and unpublished material. Important large collections on social sciences are also available in the largest public libraries such as Colombo, Kandy and Anuradhapura. Institutions of higher learning such as universities that

offer graduate programmes in social sciences, consist of collections of theses, research reports etc. and fairly good libraries with social science literature. Special collections on particular subject areas are being built up in project oriented libraries and institutions. To name them, Central Bank of Sri Lanka, People's Bank, Marga Institute, Agrarian Research and Training Institute, Institute of Policy Studies, Centre for Development Information, Department of Census and Statistics, Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration, National Institute of Business Management, Ministry of Mahaweli Development, National Institute of Education, Centre for Women's Research, Sarvodaya Shramadana Sangamaya, Centre for Society and Religion, Sri Lanka Foundation Institute and so forth. Libraries of the above mentioned institutions also serve as the participating centres of the APINESS national network.

### **Bibliographic Control on Social Science Literature**

The volume of Social Science literature generated in Sri Lanka is vast and complex. Therefore, it is impossible for those who are involved in research, to scan the entire literature to retrieve the information according to their needs. Information on material relating to social sciences is being retrieved through bibliographic control by various institutions, both governmental and private sector and individuals, by way of compiling and publishing Bibliographies, Specialised Bibliographies in various disciplines, Indexes, Directories, Catalogues and Inventories. The National Contact Point and the Participating Centres of the APINESS national network play an important role with regard to the bibliographic control on social science literature in Sri Lanka.

### **Use of Computers and New Technologies in Social Science Information Work**

#### **Growth of Computerisation**

The two surveys conducted in 1989 and 1992 relating to the use of computers by libraries in Sri Lanka, revealed that there had been a rapid progress in computerisation activities due to the introduction of the Database Management System (DBMS) developed by UNESCO – CDS/ISIS in 1987. After 1987, within three years the number of computer installations increased from 10-40. Out of 40 libraries, 37 libraries had ISIS software in 1989. This situation clearly shows that growth of computerisation was mainly due to the availability of ISIS. It has been revealed that in Sri Lanka, the micro CDS/ISIS has become the most popular software package used for the development of local databases.

#### **Survey of Existing Social Science Databases**

In Sri Lanka, application of computers and new technologies in Social Science Information work has been increased during the last two decades. The National Library of Sri Lanka, University Libraries, Special libraries and some libraries of the Governmental and Non-governmental sector have created computerised databases of their holdings in order to provide efficient services to users. Out of the 92 Social Science Libraries 62 libraries have created computerised bibliographical databases. Out of the 62 libraries, 55 have computerised using CDS/ISIS software. 7 University libraries have created computerised bibliographic databases by using MIBIS software. The NCP of the APINESS network (National Library of Sri Lanka) has created computerised databases namely, holdings of the main

collection, collections such as Library and Information Science collection and Reference collection, Sri Lanka ISBN Publishers Directory and the National Union Catalogue.

Out of the 31 Participating Centres of the APINESS national network, 26 libraries have created computerised bibliographic databases and another 5 PCs are in the process of computerisation.

### **Use of CD-ROM**

Most of the Libraries in Sri Lanka, have acquired CD-ROM platters, and use of CD-ROM has extended the accessibility of information sources by library users. The National Library has acquired CD-ROMs of Library and Information Science Abstracts Plus (LISA Plus), Science Citation Index upon the requests of users. The NARESA and the National Institute of Education (NIE) have acquired CD-ROMs of UNESCO namely, UNESBIB, IBEDOCS, ICOMMOS, DARE, ENERGY and UNESDATA. In addition NIE has acquired ERIC (The Educational Research Information Centre) and Distance Education Databases on CD-ROM, while NARESA has acquired five CD-ROMs namely, Sirs Researcher, EI Energy and Environment, Silver Platter Biotechnology Abstracts, Silver Platter Life Sciences Abstracts and Dissertation Abstracts.

### **Use of Electronic Mail (e-mail) Networks and Other Electronic Devices**

#### *E-mail*

The Mallard Mail Box System introduced by the Arthur C. Clarke Centre for Modern Technology in Sri Lanka (ACC) was an early effort to introduce computer based electronic mail in Sri Lanka. This was used for transmission of electronic messages between a few individuals and organisations. The electronic mail network established by the University of Moratuwa in July 1990, connects to Universities, Major Research Institutions as well as non-profit organisations and several private sites in Sri Lanka. The National hub of this network is at the University of Moratuwa. The e-mail hub also handles messages to and from other e-mail networks. It has link to other networks such as Internet, the international network (in the USA), BITNET and JANET (in the U.K.), AARNET (in Australia) and ERNET (in India). This network has been well received by users and is used for a variety of uses. E-mail was very much in its infancy at the time that the country report was submitted for the RAG III meeting held in India in 1992. Since then it has grown more than expected, specially in organisations geared towards research. The major Libraries in Sri Lanka including the National Library have e-mail facility.

University of Moratuwa has established another Computer Network named LEARN – Lanka Educational Academic and Research Network. Through this network Universities and Research Institutions have linked to one another and to the Internet. This could be mentioned as the first attempt taken in Sri Lanka for the exchange of data through e-mail. Sri Lanka Scientific and Technical Information Centre is making use of the LEARN to disseminate information to the Scientific and Technical Community.

#### *Internet*

Introduction of Internet – the super high way was introduced to Sri Lanka by the Lanka Internet Service Company Limited in July, 1994. At present there are nearly ten institutions that supply Internet

service in Sri Lanka. Mostly the Libraries have obtained the full Internet connectivity either through Sri Lanka Telecom or through LEARN. National Library of Sri Lanka, Sri Lanka Scientific and Technical Information Centre (SLSTIC) of NARESA, National Institute of Education Library, American Information Resource Centre (AIRC), British Council Library, University of Moratuwa, Institute of Computer Technology (ICT), Computer & Information Technology Council of Sri Lanka (CINTEC) and ITMIN Limited are some of the Institutions that have full Internet connectivity.

## **Regional Level Activities**

### **Contribution to APINESS Newsletter**

Social Science Documentation Centre of the National Library of Sri Lanka has provided information about the activities relevant to Social Sciences in the country for the APINESS newsletter. Information is provided bi-annually and the contributions made to APINESS newsletter since 1986-1996 have covered a wide range of topics.

Copies of the APINESS Newsletter issues sent to the NCP by the National Social Science Documentation Centre (NASSDOC) India for in-country distribution, are distributed among the participating centres. A list of recipients of the Newsletter is sent to NASSDOC for information and record. Since RAG III the National Contact Point receives 35 copies of the newsletter for in-country distribution, which is highly appreciated and gratefully acknowledged.

### **Asia-Pacific Regional Seminar on Social Science Information**

National Library of Sri Lanka participated in the Asia-Pacific Regional Seminar on Social Science Information held in Seoul, Korea in June 1993. The seminar was sponsored and hosted by the Korea Social Science Library in Commemoration of its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. A paper presented at the seminar titled "Developments in Research and Information Services Relevant to Social Sciences in Sri Lanka". The proceedings of the seminar could be mentioned as a valuable contribution to the growing literature on the Social Sciences and Information needs of the Social Sciences in the Asia-Pacific Region.

### **Participation at the Regional Advisory Group Meetings (RAG)**

The National Contact Point of the APINESS Network participated in three RAG meetings namely RAG II, RAG III and RAG IV.

## **Activities Undertaken at National Level with Regional Dimensions and with National and Local Dimensions**

### **With Regional Dimensions**

#### *Annotated Bibliography on Sri Lanka in A.D. 2000*

As a part of a major UNESCO supported project on "futuristic studies" related to various countries, the APINESS national contact point, the National Library of Sri Lanka, compiled a bibliography on "Futuristic Studies – Sri Lanka" in 1987. This bibliography contains futuristic studies

related to Sri Lanka. The scenario covers Population, Economy, Education, Health, Environment, Management and Public Administration, Politics, Science and Technology etc.

*UNESCO Mobilising Project on "Youth Shaping the Future" – INFOYOUTH*

The SSDC of the National Library acted as the focal point in distributing the "Country Data Book" questionnaire on youth and collecting the replies in order to identify the Youth Information and Documentation Centres, Services and Networks in Sri Lanka. Twenty four (24) various institutions dealing with youth – related information in Sri Lanka have been identified. This information was sent to the Regional Unit for Social and Human Sciences in Asia and the Pacific (RUSHSAP) PROAP Bangkok in 1992.

With the aim of identifying the youth related information needs and problems at national level, a suggestion was made at the third RAG meeting held in 1992, to carry out country based feasibility studies, to decide the suitable mechanism for INFOYOUTH in the country concerned. The following steps have been taken by the SSDC Sri Lanka, in relation to INFOYOUTH:

- (a) Identification of major organisations working for the youth in Sri Lanka – governmental, non-governmental, research institutions and universities which have special cells on youth documentation and information. Thirty two (32) institutions have been identified.
- (b) A questionnaire was circulated among the institutions with the aim of obtaining information such as Statistical information to draw up a demographic profile of youth; information regarding government policy towards youth; activities on youth organised by both governmental organisations and NGOs; Documentation and Information Centres related to youth information; contemporary research on youth; available literature on youth; computerised databases on youth and users of youth information. Out of 32 institutions 17 (50 per cent) responded to the questionnaire and provided information to their level best.

*Inventory of Centres of Excellence in the Asia-Pacific Region – within the frame work of the Jakarta plan of Action for Human Resources Development*

In response to the request made by RUSHSAP in 1994 to provide information for the above mentioned inventory, the NCP provided information on 45 institutions in Sri Lanka, which fall under the following categories:

- (i) Development Policy Research Institutions
- (ii) Institutions that offer research opportunities at post graduate levels
- (iii) Institutions cover/serve the Asia-Pacific Region

*List of Abbreviations used for Networks and Databases in Sri Lanka*

At the third RAG of the APINESS held in India, in 1992, the National Contact Points (NCPs) were assigned to send a list of abbreviations used in the country concerned, related to the networks and databases for the compilation of a glossary. A list of abbreviations relevant to networks and databases used in Sri Lanka, was sent to RUSHSAP in 1993.



### *International Cooperation*

The National Library of Sri Lanka, (NCP) maintains a Book Exchange Programme with 57 institutions in the world. These institutions include National Libraries, Universities and other institutions mainly in the Asia-Pacific Region. Two of the participating centres, of the APINESS National Network, the Centre for Development Information (CDI) and Natural Resources Energy and Science Authority of Sri Lanka (NARESA) have several programmes under international cooperation. CDI maintains an exchange programme with 30 national, regional and international development oriented research institutions. The Centre functions as the National Focal Point of the SAARC (South Asian Regional Cooperation) Documentation Network. The CDI Library acts as a depository library of publications of the United Nations Organisation. NARESA serves as the National Focal Point for ten (10) overseas bodies of which two are Association of Asian Social Science Research Council (AASSREC) and Regional Network for the Exchange of Information and Experience in Science and Technology in Asia and the Pacific – ASTINFO.

### **With National and Local Dimensions**

#### *Cooperation/Networking*

The National Contact Point and the participating centres of the National APINESS network have links with International, Regional and National Information networks. Most of the centres serve as either focal point, coordinating or associated centres or as a member. Some of the International and Regional networks that the NCP, participating centres and other Libraries involved are ASTINFO, DEVSIS, DEVINSA, CINSA, APINESS, APINMAP and OSHINET. The major networks that are functioning at present in Sri Lanka are: SLSTINET (Sri Lanka Scientific and Technical Information Network); AGRINET (Agricultural Information Network); HELLIS (Health Science, Library Literature and Information System); ENLINET (Environmental Library Network); National Information Network on Education in Sri Lanka; and CINSA (Cultural Information Network for South Asia); [Although this is designed as a regional network still it considers as a national network] Functions of these networks are performed through meetings, seminars, workshops, training programmes and conferences.

DEVINSA (Development Information Network on South Asia) and INNESS (Information Network in Social Sciences) that Marga Institute is the focal point for both networks, are not functioning at present due to the non availability of funds and lack of trained manpower. BIRCNET (Buddhist Information and Research Centre Network) and SLCHPNET (Sri Lanka Cultural Heritage Preservation Network) have not yet moved beyond the starting point.

Library Networks in Sri Lanka has had fluctuating fortunes during the last two decades. The National Library of Sri Lanka has witnessed the rise and fall of a number of networks. The paucity of both qualified and quality librarians, financial constraints, inadequate cooperation from participating libraries, lack of vision and enthusiasm at the focal points can be cited as some reasons for the failures of many library networks.

As the premier government organisation in the library field, the National Library of Sri Lanka, considers it a duty to assist library networks, and formed a network named NATNET LANKA – The National Library Network of Sri Lanka in 1996. The main objective of the network is to coordinate the activities of library networks in Sri Lanka. Other objectives include, improving cooperation among

library networks, assisting new and comparatively weak networks, coordinating training programmes and assisting library networks to improve their activities and performances etc. The inaugural issue of the NATNET LANKA Newsletter Vol. 1. No. 1 July 1997 (ISSN 1391-2658) was published in July, 1997. Through this newsletter the National Library hopes to give publicity to activities of all library networks in Sri Lanka.

### *Training Programmes*

When viewing the present state of Social Science Information Services, one has to first look at the personnel available to provide these services. Most of the persons serving in the Social Science Libraries, Documentation Centres and Information Centres are professionally qualified in library and information science. Some institutions which lack any professionally qualified staff may be having the services of semi-professionals. However, it could be said that there is still a shortage of professionally qualified persons in the field of library and information science in Sri Lanka. In Sri Lanka, most librarians start on with a basic degree in a specialised subject and gain further experience in library and information services through on-the job training or attending training courses conducted in the country or abroad.

Various training programmes have been carried out by the National Library (NCP) and the participating centres of the APINESS national network and some major social science libraries in the country as well as the Sri Lanka Library Association, during the last 2 1/2 decades. These training programmes aimed at keeping the professional community upto date with regard to the latest developments in documentation and information techniques and systems. Owing to the new advances in the field of information technology, which includes use of computers, CD-ROMs and CD-ROM Disk Drives, Desk Top Publishing, Laser printers, E-mail, Internet etc., these had to be introduced to the librarians, documentalists, information specialists, researchers and the users. Therefore, trained manpower is a vital requirement for social science information services.

Application of computer technology for creation of databases using CDS/ISIS and various other software packages, storage and retrieval systems of information, CD-ROM searches, development of Local Area Network (LAN) use of E-mail and access to Internet and so forth, special emphasis was given on training of Librarians, Documentalists and Information Specialists. On the other hand researchers and readers are being trained to do searches using CD-ROM and other databases. Training programmes have widely been conducted by the above mentioned organisations by way of conferences, seminars, workshops, meetings and demonstrations.

Under the Education programmes in Library and Information Science, University of Colombo commenced a Masters Course in Library and Information Science in 1993 while the Department of Library and Information Science of the University of Kelaniya reviewed its Post-graduate Diploma Course in Library and Information Science in 1993, which was started in 1974. University of Kelaniya started a Masters Course in 1996. Apart from these two courses, University of Kelaniya conducts a course in Bachelor's Degree and a part time Certificate Course in Library and Information Science. The Sri Lanka Library Association conducts a three year part time course in Librarianship, Documentation and Information Science, a six months course in Information Technology named COLA (Course on Library Automation), Library Technicians Course, a Fellowship Programme and a Distance Education Programme in Library and Information Science named (DEPLIS) to train library personnel

in Maldives. The National Library of Sri Lanka conducts a Correspondence Course in Library and Information Science.

#### *Financial Resources and Research Activities*

The Social Sciences are largely supported by the state funds in Sri Lanka, like in many other developing countries. State sponsored Research Institutes, Ministries and Government Departments and Universities involved in social science research are financed mainly from government funds. Private Research Institutions and International Organisations are financed largely by the funding agencies such as UNESCO, UNDP, UNIDO, UNICEF, USAID, CIRDAP, SAREC, CIDA, IDRC, FAO, NORAD, ESCAP, CARP, SACEP, ADB and so forth.

Under the Research Grants Scheme initiated by the National Science Council in 1970, (since 1982 named as Natural Resources, Energy and Science Authority (NARESA) of Sri Lanka) the Statutory Working Committee on Social Science Research, operates through the Social Science Research Centre, created a Social Science Research Fund to finance research projects. Funds are provided annually for research in social science in the following areas of study, relating primarily to Sri Lanka: Agrarian studies, Anthropology, Demography, Economics, Education, Geography, Law, Management Studies, Politics and Sociology. Grants are provided within the range of Rs.10,000/= – Rs.60,000/=.

The National Library of Sri Lanka, (NCP) assists in publishing social science publications, through its Publications Assistance Programme since 1984. Allocations for this project has been increased from Rs.4 million to Rs.5 million. Apart from this, in 1994, the National Library of Sri Lanka awarded grants of Rs.5,000/= each for six students following the Masters Course in Library and Information Science for the researches undertaken by them as a partial requirement of the course.

#### *Standards for Library Documentation*

The Sri Lanka Standards Institution (SLSI) is in the process of adopting the ISO standards related to library and Documentation as Sri Lanka Standards. A working group on Library and Documentation has been appointed by the Sri Lanka Standards Institution. The National Library of Sri Lanka is a member of the Library and Documentation committee and the other institutions are University of Peradeniya; National Institute of Education; Sri Lanka Association for the Advancement of Science; Natural Resources Energy and Science Authority of Sri Lanka; Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation, Sri Lanka Standards Institution; Department of Government Printing; International Irrigation Management Institute; and Rajarata University. Senior Librarians in the profession are representing the above mentioned institutions.

#### *Programmes for Promotion of the Reading Habit in Sri Lanka*

The National Library of Sri Lanka has launched a number of programmes for the promotion of reading habits.

### **Social Science Documentation and Information Centres**

Sri Lanka has National Documentation and Information Centres related to social sciences that are responsible for organising and providing services at national level in relation to national requirements.

Some of them are Centre for Development Information, Agrarian Research and Training Institute, Population Information Centre, Documentation Centre of the People's Bank, Social Science Documentation Centre of the National Library etc.

The Centre for Development Information (CDI), has established an information system relevant to socio-economic development for the benefit of planners, policy makers and consultants both at macro and sectoral levels. It serves as a repository of development information and has the capability of coordinating, collating and speedily retrieving information from existing national and international sources. The Centre also provides information relevant to development and development planning for national purposes and also inputs to centres such as IDRC and to other regional and international centres on the basis of mutual sharing of information. The Library of the Centre consists of collections of monographs, periodicals (local and foreign), UN publications, Sri Lankan report literature and mission reports on socio-economic development, government publications, unpublished reports, theses and few foreign newspapers.

The Agrarian Research and Training Institute which is a major resource centre in the sphere of agrarian information, operates a system for storage and disseminate of such information to serve the needs of Sri Lanka specifically and of the region generally. The Library of the ARTI specialises in disciplines dealing with agrarian matters and forms a part of the National Centre for Information on Agrarian Development (NACIAD). The bibliographic database which includes the backup collection of NACIAD consists of over 75,000 records. The Centre provides access to information on agrarian development and allied fields to policy makers, planners and to researchers. It also acts as a collection agency, repository and a service bureau.

The documentation unit of the People's Bank was established in 1973, with the aim of satisfying the information needs of the bank's staff. The main function of this unit is to collect, classify, store and retrieve the information when required by the Bank's staff. This unit comprises the Library, Information and Documentation Sections and a Publications Division. Current collection consists of over 20,000 monographs, approximately 200 periodical titles, pamphlets, press clippings, maps, a special collection of local and foreign commercial bank reports and a Sri Lanka collection. Except the bank officers, reference facilities are provided to researchers, university students and bank's clients. In addition to services such as current awareness, SDI, preparation of bibliographies, the documentation unit provides some other special information services namely, preparation of branch profiles and district profiles, providing of economic information and development information and daily news summary.

The main function of the Social Science Documentation Centre of the National Library of Sri Lanka, is to coordinate and develop social science documentation and information activities in the country on a national level. It serves as the National Contact Point of the APINESS Network in Sri Lanka and as the National Agency for the International Standard Book Numbering, International Standard Serial Numbering and International Standard Music Numbering. The Documentation Centre also serves as an important centre for bibliographic control of the Sri Lankan literature in Social Sciences in the country.

### **Users of Social Science Information**

A study on Survey of Social Science Information Users in Sri Lanka carried out in 1983, has primarily concerned the identification of needs of users engaged in social science research and development. This survey has revealed that according to the age distribution of social science information users, the ten year age group 40-49 had accounted for 36 per cent and all the other age groups amounted to 3/5<sup>th</sup> of all responded users.

The study has also identified that more than 95 per cent of the users are graduates of a recognised university or has equivalent professional qualifications and these users are seeking for research material. According to the distribution by occupation, the characteristics of social science users of information by functions, information needs and areas of subject have been influenced by the environment of the work. The survey has tried to identify the Language Preference by users, Information Acquisition Methods of users, Frequency of Visits to Centres of Information and Utilisation of Centres of Information for Acquisition of Social Science Material by users. These observations are useful for the improvement of the services provided by the Libraries and Information Centres.

### **Future Programmes**

A range of Programmes, from the purchase of foreign social science databases on CD-ROM to triannual NAG meetings, are planned for.

## THAILAND EVALUATION

### **Preamble**

The Thai evaluation consists of a fairly detailed outline of the social science information infrastructure of Thailand. With its original appendices (not included here) the account provides a synoptic perspective on the delivery or 'output' structure of the infrastructure. Details down to the level of the kind of computer software used in library catalogues are provided. The 'input' dimensions of the infrastructure, however, are not detailed. In the future, an account of the policy framework within which social science research and social science information work are funded would be a very useful adjunct to the account provided below.

The Thai account also provides a list of recommendations. These largely rehearse the need for cooperation in information collection and delivery and provide lists of the kinds of activities in which cooperation could focus. No mention is made of how such cooperation is to be financed or managed.

The Thai account ventures two evaluations: Firstly it notes that APINESS participating members in Thailand are more likely to engage in cooperation through already existing networks such as Thalinet (M) and Pulinet and, secondly, that the APINESS newsletter compares unfavourably with the ASTINFO newsletter. The first of these is a view that is commonly expressed: that where networking arrangements are successful it is not as a result of APINESS but because of already existing networking arrangements. The account as a whole demonstrates this fact very strongly. It is quite clear, for example, that the introduction of such systems as Innopac and Dynix into library systems in Thailand have nothing to do with APINESS but simply reflect developments in the field of cataloguing system that are taking place world wide. However, because they affect institutions that are nominally within the APINESS framework they can be accounted within that framework. For a critical evaluation of APINESS it is important to disaggregate those things that are directly attributable to APINESS from those that are attributable to other developments. It is clear from reading the Thai account – and clear too from the comment made by the author of the report – that very little of the structure and activities outlined are directly attributable to APINESS. In this regard the impact of APINESS on Thailand has been very light.

The comment on the APINESS newsletter in the Thai report is not surprising in the light of the comments of the previous paragraph. A newsletter is only as strong as the activity or project it reports on. NASSDOC, in the light of the problems of APINESS, has produced the best newsletter that it could under the circumstances.

### **Social Science Information Events**

#### **Social Science Information and Documentation**

A large amount of social science information and documentation has been issued by government organisations, higher institutions, the private sectors, publishers and non-profit organisations. The types of information include facts, statistics, news, research, proceedings, texts and other materials in printed, audio-visual and computerised or electronic forms. At present the growth of social science information

and publications is high and complex. Consequently, sometimes users find it hard to locate, identify and retrieve the information they need in time.

In Thailand, libraries and information centres, particularly academic libraries, play an important and leading role in social science information storage and retrieval for easy and convenient access and optimal use. They collect information resources and provide services based on the interests of the users of each university/organisation – faculty, researchers, academicians, students, administrators, social scientists and ordinary people. But they each cannot gather all the publications and information that their particular users need. As a result, cooperation and the formation of networks for resource sharing and exchange among libraries and information centres at the local, national and regional levels has been set up in order to give services as efficiently as possible. This has included the creation of APINESS.

### **Library cooperation/networking**

#### *Creation of a national APINESS network*

The Asia-Pacific Information Network for the Social Sciences (APINESS), supported by UNESCO, shares the national subcommittee with the Asia-Pacific Information Network for Science and Technology (ASTINFO) – Thailand Subcommittee on ASTINFO and APINESS Coordination. The National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT) has been designated as the ASTINFO Coordinating Unit-ACU (1984) and the APINESS National Contact Point-NCP (1986). The Thailand National UNISIST Committee serves as the National Advisory Group (NAG).

Thailand Subcommittee on ASTINFO and APINESS Coordination consists of the NRCT Secretary-General as chairman, NRCT Deputy Secretaries-General for Science and for Social Sciences as vice chairmen, 3 representatives from NRCT Research Information Centre as secretary and assistant secretaries, consultant members and representatives from ASTINFO Associated Centres and APINESS Participating Centres, namely:

- (1) Centre of Academic Resources, Chulalongkorn University
- (2) Kasetsart University Library
- (3) Instructional Resources Centre, Khon Kaen University
- (4) Chiang Mai University Library
- (5) Library and Information Centre, Mahidol University
- (6) Institute of Academic Services, Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus
- (7) Library and Information Centre, National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA)
- (8) National Library of Thailand
- (9) Thai National Documentation Centre, Thailand Institute of Scientific and Technological Research

- (10) Scientific and Technological Information Division, Department of Science Service
- (11) Library and Information Centre, Bank of Thailand

The NRCT Deputy Secretary-General for Social Sciences also serves as the Liaison Officer.

Thailand National UNISIST Committee as National Advisory Group (NAG) is responsible for advising and assisting in NCP duties. The UNISIST Committee is composed of representatives from information coordinating centres of the Thai National Information System (THAI NATIS), libraries and documentation centres and specialists in library and information services.

Thailand Subcommittee on ASTINFO and APINESS Coordination meets regularly in order to formulate policy, work plans and activities in relation to ASTINFO and APINESS in Thailand. The main function of the Subcommittee is to advise NRCT on matters relating to ASTINFO and APINESS on coordination and exchange of information; developing operational activities; lending service for science, technology and social science information; consideration of foreign technical assistance for the improvement of ASTINFO and APINESS structure; organisation of training and seminars; and other matters as referred by UNISIST, FAO, WHO and UNESCO.

#### *Other cooperation/networking*

The ASTINFO Associated Centres and APINESS Participating Centres cooperate with other significant information networks through various committees and subcommittees at the national, regional and international levels as follows:

#### *National level*

##### Thai National Information System (THAI NATIS)

THAI NATIS is a national cooperative programme, established in 1986 as a result of the recommendation of the Universal System of Information for Science and Technology (UNISIST), Ministry of Education. Its objective is to stimulate and facilitate the effective participation of government agencies and private organisations, as information sources, in acquiring, processing, and providing accurate information services.

THAI NATIS is administered by the Committee on the Administration and Coordination of the National Information System, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister. The Committee has appointed six sub-committees as coordinating centres for the following technical information:

- (1) Coordinating Centre for Agricultural Information Network-Kasetsart University Library
- (2) Coordinating Centre for Medical Science Information Network-Library and Information Centre, Mahidol University
- (3) Coordinating Centre for Humanities Information Network-National Library of Thailand
- (4) Coordinating Centre for Scientific and Technological Information Network-Scientific and Technological Information Division. Department of Science Services. Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment



- (5) Coordinating Centre for Economics Information Network-Library and Information Centre, Bank of Thailand
- (6) Coordinating Centre for Social Science Information Network-Library and Information Centre, National Institute of Development Administration

The National Library of Thailand serves as the Secretariat and Central Coordination Office.

The last of these sub-committees, the Coordinating Centre for the Social Science Information Network, consists of fourteen participating institutions:

- (1) Archives and Library Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- (2) Research Information Centre, National Research Council of Thailand
- (3) Legal Affairs Division, Office of the Judicial Affairs, Ministry of Justice
- (4) Labour Information Centre, Department of Labour Protection and Welfare
- (5) Cabinet Information Bureau, Secretariat of the Cabinet
- (6) Parliament Library, Secretariat of the House of Representatives
- (7) Centre of Academic Resources, Chulalongkorn University
- (8) Office of Documentation and Information, Sukhothai Thammathirat Open University
- (9) Ramkamhaeng University Library
- (10) Chiang Mai University Library
- (11) Thammasat University Library
- (12) Institute of Academic Services, Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus
- (13) Library, Office of the Civil Service Commission
- (14) Library, National Statistical Office

Subcommittee for University Library Development of the Ministry of University Affairs

In 1975, government university libraries with the support of the Ministry of University Affairs began to cooperate formally in order to share and exchange resources, set standards and perform other activities. The working groups under this subcommittee cooperate on acquisitions, cataloguing, serials, information services, audio-visual projects and information technology. The conference of the subcommittee is conducted annually.

The Provincial University Library Network (PULINET)

In 1986, PULINET was set up to facilitate cooperation in the exchange and sharing information among government university libraries in the provinces. PULINET members who are APINESS Participating Centres are:

- (1) Chiang Mai University Library
- (2) Instructional Resources Centre, Khon Kaen University
- (3) Institute of Academic Services, Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus

Thai Academic Libraries Network (THAILINET (M))

In 1992, THAILINET (M) was set up by government university libraries in metropolitan Bangkok. The APINESS Participating Centres of THAILINET (M) are:

- (1) Centre of Academic Resources, Chulalongkorn University
- (2) Kasetsart University Library
- (3) Library and Information Centre, Mahidol University
- (4) Library and Information Centre, National Institute of Development Administration

MOSTE Network (Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment)

The APINESS Participating Centres of MOSTE are Thai National Documentation Centre, Thailand Institute of Scientific and Technological Research and Scientific and Technological Information Division (Department of Science Services).

The cooperative development of other national networks will certainly support and benefit the APINESS social science information network because most of them are APINESS Participating Centres and ASTINFO Associated Centres.

#### Regional and International Levels

Apart from the national networks, some APINESS Participating Centres play significant roles in regional and international networks. Most of them act as national focal points. Selected libraries and networks are as follows:

Centre of Academic Resources, Chulalongkorn University

#### Regional and International

Health Literature Library and Information Services (HELLIS)

Population Information Network (POPIN)

South-East Asian Medical Information Centre (SEAMIC)

Kasetsart University Library

#### International

Thai National AGRIS Centre (the International Information System for the Agricultural Science and Technology)

Thai National CARIS Centre

Cooperating with the international information network under FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation)

Cooperating with IBIC (the International Buffalo Information Centre)

Regional

AGRIASIA

Library and Information Centre, Mahidol University

Regional and International

National Focal Point of Health Literature Library and Information Services (HELLIS) (World Health Organisation) in South-East Asia

Coordinating Library of South-East Asian Medical Information Centre (SEAMIC)

Library and Information Centre, National Institute of Development Administration

International

World Bank 's Depository Library Programme

National Library of Thailand

Regional and International

NLDC-SEA Consortium (National Library and Documentation Centre in South-East Asia)

ISSN-SEA (Regional Centre for ISSN in South-East Asia)

ISDS Regional Centre for South-East Asia (International Serials Data System)

ISBN Centre (International Standard Book Number)

ASTINFO Document Delivery Service Pilot Project

UNESCO Document Delivery Service Centre in Asia and the Pacific

Thai National Documentation Centre, Thailand Institute of Scientific and Technological Research

International

National Node of UNESCO-APINMAP (Asian and Pacific Information Network for Medicinal and Aromatic Plants)

National member of International Federation for Documentation (FID) and Commission for Asia and Oceania (FID/CAO)

## **APINESS Activities at the National and Regional Levels**

APINESS Participating Centres conduct various activities at the national and regional levels. Examples of such activities are contributions for and distribution of the APINESS Newsletter, the library computer system, the creation of library databases, the special information services, the titles of works compiled and published, the seminars and training as hosts or co-hosts and the staff development.

As APINESS Participating Centres are the same members as ASTINFO Associated Centres, the APINESS social science activities are conducted in conjunction with those of science and technology.

The member libraries can be categorised according to the following major areas of information:

social science – 1) Library and Information Centre, National Institute of Development Administration 2) Library and Information Centre, Bank of Thailand 3) Institute of Academic Services, Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus;

science/technology and social science – 1) Kasetsart University Library 2) Instructional Resources Centre, Khon Kaen University 3) Chiang Mai University Library 4) Library and Information Centre, Mahidol University;

science and technology 1) Thai National Documentation Centre, Thailand Institute of Scientific and Technological Research 2) Scientific and Technological Information Division, Department of Science Services and various areas are Centre of Academic Resources, Chulalongkorn University and National Library of Thailand.

## **APINESS Newsletter**

The Library and Information Centre, National Institute of Development Administration has been assigned to distribute the APINESS Newsletter to the Participating Centres and other social science libraries in Thailand. The APINESS Newsletter is useful and interesting but the frequency of six months does not give the up-to-date news and information. Comparing with the ASTINFO Newsletter, the contribution and collaboration to APINESS Newsletter is less satisfactory.

## **Library Computer System**

During 1990-1997, APINESS members have developed and applied computer systems for library use. The most common and well known system in the first period is the mini-micro CDS/ISIS system of UNESCO. Later turn key systems have been installed and implemented for automated library systems. Main library functions have been computerised step by step around five main modules: Cataloguing, On-line Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), Circulation, Acquisitions and Serials Control. The turn key systems of the members are.

Innopac

Centre of Academic Resources, Chulalongkorn University

Kasetsart University Library

Instructional Resources Centre, Khon Kaen University  
Chiang Mai University Library  
Library and Information Centre, Mahidol University  
Institute of Academic Services, Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus  
Library and Information Centre, National Institute of Development Administration  
Dynix  
National Library of Thailand  
Library and Information Centre, Bank of Thailand

### **Library Databases**

Each Participating Centre creates its own databases based on the fields of interest of the university or organisation and users' needs. All libraries have bibliographic databases of books and other materials. During the first period, using the CDS/ISIS programme, many databases were created by types of materials and subjects. But after implementing the automated library system, the major databases are integrated in order to retrieve the information at one point.

For the type of databases, most of them are references: bibliographies, indexes and abstracts and directories. For the type of materials, most databases include all kinds of materials. Some include only particular types: periodicals and serials, books, theses and dissertations, newspapers, audio-visuals, researches, documents, proceedings and others. For the subject of materials, most databases include all subjects. Some concentrate on particular fields such as local databases, science and technology, agriculture, food, humanities and social sciences, medical science, biography, ethnobotany, human resources, library and information science, and education. The contents of some databases are also published in printed form for broader use.

### **Special Information Services**

With regard to the special information services of the APINESS Participating Centres, each library provides the services of on-line access to foreign databases, CD-ROM services, Internet services, document delivery services, library web site and other special services. Some examples:

On-line access to foreign databases

Library and Information Centre, Bank of Thailand

Any subscribed journal that offers on-line search through web browser.

Centre of Academic Resources, Chulalongkorn University

Dialog, STN, FirstSearch and EBSCO host

**Chiang Mai University Library**

Uncover, FirstSearch and WWW

**Kasetsart University Library**

AGRIS database

**Instructional Resources Centre, Khon Kaen University**

Ohiolink and Uncover

**Library and Information Centre, Mahidol University**

Dialog, FirstSearch, UNCOVER, other specific databases available for public access via Internet

**Library and Information Centre, National Institute of Development Administration**

FirstSearch

**Institute of Academic Services, Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus**

Library of Congress, Ohiolink, University of California, Pittsburg State University, University of Minnesota, gopher, etc.

**CD-ROM services**

The reference and full-text CD-ROM databases in standalone and network mode are useful information sources. Each library acquires CD-ROM databases on the subjects based on the interests of their users.

**Internet services**

All Participating Centres have world wide web and e-mail services.

**Document delivery services**

The document delivery services are provided by the Centre of Academic Resources, Chulalongkorn University through UNCOVER, EBSCO Doc, FirstSearch and ART Tel; Library and Information Centre, Mahidol University through Thai libraries, foreign organisations/networks e.g. SEAMIC, WHO South-East Asia Regional Office, Australia National University, UNCOVER and others. Other libraries such as Kasetsart University Library, Institute of Academic Services, Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus and National Library of Thailand also provide this kind of service.

**Library web site**

At present, most Participating Centres create their web sites to disseminate library information and bibliographies. Some libraries have their own web sites and some use the university's or institution's web site.

Library and Information Centre, Bank of Thailand

At present only intranet service. The Internet will be announced in January 1998.

Type of information: List of Journal Index

Centre of Academic Resources, Chulalongkorn University

URL : <http://www.car.chula.ac.th>

Type of information: library information and services

Chiang Mai University Library

URL : <http://www.chiangmai.lib.cmu.ac.th>

Type of information: general information services and some databases of Chiang Mai University Library and faculty libraries

Kasetsart University Library

URL : <http://www.lib.ku.ac.th>

Type of information: library catalogues

Instructional Resources Centre, Khon Kaen University

URL : <http://202.44.192.199>

Type of information: Library information services, CD-ROM databases and OPAC

Library and Information Centre, Mahidol University

URL : <http://www.li.mahidol.ac.th>

Type of information: library catalogues

National Library of Thailand

URL : <http://www.span.com.au/nlt>

Type of information: general information about the activities and services of National Library of Thailand and National Library branches in the provinces.

Library and Information Centre, National Institute of Development Administration

URL : <http://www.nida.ac.th> (select library)

Type of information: library information services, list of new acquisitions

### Other services

Some libraries provide other special information services such as Library and Information Centre, Bank of Thailand has SDI services; Chiang Mai University Library has electronic journals, digital resources, Northern Information Centre and Securities Exchange Information; Institute of Academic Services, Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus has the Islamic Collection, Buddhadasa Collection and Prince of Songkla University Archives; the Library and Information Centre, National Institute of Development Administration has the World Bank publications.

### Titles of Works Compiled and Published

APINESS Participating Centres published and compiled a large number of publications on different kinds and subjects for the use of each library during 1990-1997. Most of them were published in the Thai language at the national level. There are in two major forms: serials and books. The serials are academic journals in library and information sciences and library newsletters. For the books, the major type are bibliographies, abstracts, indexes and directories for information retrieval. Guidelines and manuals, thesauri and subject headings were also published for library work. Research, particularly on library use, has been conducted and published. The National Library of Thailand published many volumes on the Commemoration of the Opening of the Library. Another important type is the seminar and conference papers and proceedings.

The subjects of the publications are in the fields of library and information sciences, the particular fields of the universities or institutions or special interests for example: business administration, economics, agriculture, medical science, ethnobotany; science and technology, computer and library: Internet, LAN, CDS/ISIS; works of significant persons; library and information use and publications of each university and library. The major contents of journals and newsletters are the new acquisitions list and academic articles in library and information science.

### Seminar and Training Programmes

During 1990-1997, a number of seminars, conferences, meetings, lectures, training workshops, surveys and consultation have been organised by APINESS Participating Centres as hosts or co-hosts. Most activities were aimed towards human resource development at the national and regional levels, particularly in relation to information technology.

#### *Regional and International Levels*

A number of programmes have been arranged at the regional and international levels. Most of the training and workshops are conducted for library personnel from neighbouring countries on basic library works and management. The meetings are organised by Participating Centres as the national nodes of the networking. To cite some samples:

#### *Training/Workshop*

Training Course on "Administration and Management of Information Centre" for Lao Officers, by Kasetsart University Library, 1 November 28 December, 1990



- Training Course on "Administration and Management of Information Centre" for Vietnamese Officers, by Kasetsart University Library, 6-27 March, 1992
- Training Course on "Computer Application to Library Works" for Lao Forestry Librarians, by Kasetsart University Library, December 1992 January 1993
- Workshops for SEAMIC Committee, by Library and Information Centre, Mahidol University
- Training Course on "ISBN for Asian Participants, by the National Library of Thailand with the cooperation of UNESCO, November 1991
- Library Preservation Workshop on "Developing a Preservation Management Policy" by the National Library of Thailand and other organisations, April 1992
- Training Course on "Basic Library Science" for Library Staffs of Teachers' Colleges, Laos People's Democratic Republic, by the National Library of Thailand, 4 October 1996
- Training Programme for one librarian from a public library in Rangoon, Myanmar, by the National Library of Thailand
- Training Programme on "Library and Information Services and Management" for 30 Laotian Librarians and Personnel, Vientiane, Laos People's Democratic Republic, by Library and Information Centre, NIDA, August - September 1993
- Training for Lao School of Administration Staff, NIDA, Thailand, by Library and Information Centre, NIDA, July 1995
- Training Course on "Library and Information Works" for 2 Librarians from Laos People's Democratic Republic and 1 Information Officer from Malawi, by Thai National Documentation Centre, TISTR Meeting
- 5<sup>th</sup> SEAMIC Technical Committee Meeting on Health Documentation and Publication by Library and Information Centre, Mahidol University, 3-7 August 1993
- 13<sup>th</sup> FID/CAO General Assembly and Congress, by Thai National Documentation Centre, TISTR
- 4<sup>th</sup> APINMAP Management Board Meeting, by Thai National Documentation Centre, TISTR

#### *National Level*

At the national level, a large number of activities have been nationally and locally arranged by APINESS Participating Centres on training, workshops, seminars, conferences and lectures.

The topics of the seminars and conferences have been mainly on the cooperation of libraries such as academic libraries and agricultural libraries, information in social science and economics, computers and library and information technology.

The training, workshops, meetings and lectures have been mainly on computers and the library. During 1990-1994, most libraries used Mini-Micro CDS/ISIS of UNESCO so numbers of CDS/ISIS

training were arranged particularly by the Centre of Academic Resources, Chulalongkorn University, the authorised distributor of the Programme in Thailand.

Information retrieval training on CD-ROM, on-line searching, Internet was also conducted several times. During 1995-1997, most Participating Centres were in the process of implementing library automated system. In-house training on INNOPAC, DYNIX and other systems have been arranged for library staff and users.

All participating members also provide theoretical and practical training continuously for library staffs and students from library schools. The training sessions are conducted upon request. Regular consultations for public and private organisations are on library and information services, information systems, information technology and their use in social sciences.

### **Staff Development**

Effective information services and networks need proper hardware, software and peopleware. The library personnel of APINESS Participating Centres have attended and participated in various activities: study, training and workshops, seminars conferences and meetings in Thailand and abroad to gain knowledge and experiences in information technology, information storage and retrieval, information network and management.

### **Limitations**

#### *National priorities in social sciences and social science information*

The Eighth National Economic and Social Development Plan mainly aims towards human resource development but with emphasis on science and technology more than social science and humanities. Consequently education, training, research (including libraries and information centres) are supported more in the fields of science and technology.

#### *Budget and expenditure*

As all of APINESS Participating Centres are government organisations, almost all financial allocation comes from the government budget and the university or organisation budget which are usually inadequate. The exception may be the Library and Information Centre of the Bank of Thailand. Despite the limited budget, the expenditure on the automated library system and the communication network as well as the acquisition of information resources is comparatively high.

#### *Social science information*

Generally, social science data and information are scattered in different sources. The social science facts and statistics are issued and published by various organisations in various forms. Some are not up to date particularly those produced by government organisations. Social science research is published and used by academicians, faculty and researchers but not widely used by public. Some titles may have one or a few copies. Though libraries and information centres have tried to acquire materials and create the information tools, sometimes it takes time to retrieve the relevant and complete information for the users in time.

### *Library Staff*

Most libraries and information centres still lack professional staff in computer and information technology to manage and maintain the system. Librarians need continuing development to keep up with the progress in this field.

### *APINESS network*

It can be evaluated that the APINESS Participating Centres cooperate in other networks such as Thailinet (M) and Pulinet more than in the APINESS network in relation to some activities: setting standards, sharing resources, on-line access to other databases. APINESS supports representatives of Participating Centres to attend activities like seminars, meetings, training and workshops to broaden knowledge and experiences.

## **Recommendations**

Social science information is as important as science and technology information. The social science libraries, information centres and networks should be supported by all factors: budget, personnel, computer, communication particularly the cooperation.

## **Cooperation/Networking**

In the age of information growth and budget constraint, the concept of information resource sharing is inevitable for social science libraries in order to satisfy the information needs of users. APINESS members should be supported by government and APINESS National Advisory Group (NAG) be encouraged to extend the present cooperation at the national, regional and international levels. The following are some recommendations for activities:

### *National level*

- (1) Development of on-line linkage and access to members' databases and web sites
- (2) Development of document delivery service by inter-library loan, photocopying and e-mail.
- (3) Encouragement of the acquisition in specific or particular subject area of printed and electronic materials of each member
- (4) Development of standards of bibliographic control and search terms
- (5) Publication of publications and information tools with no repetition among members
- (6) Development of a union catalogue of all members' databases
- (7) Development of digital collections.

### *Regional and International levels*

#### **Regional level**

The APINESS Participating Centres in Thailand should cooperate with other APINESS Participating Centres and social science information networks in the region for better information services.

- (1) Development of on-line linkages and access to social science databases and web sites
- (2) Development of document delivery service by e-mail
- (3) Creation of LISTSERV to share knowledge and experiences among social science information personnel.
- (4) Production of a directory of Regional APINESS Participating Centres: mailing lists, e-mail, web site etc.
- (5) Publication
- (6) Collection of regional reference materials of APINESS members
- (7) Survey of regional existing social science databases
- (8) Library staff exchanges.

#### *International level*

The APINESS Participating Centres should participate in international social science information activities e.g. the Social Science Libraries section of IFLA.

#### **Budget**

Social science libraries and information centres really need adequate financial provision by the government, UNESCO and other organisations to maintain and develop their information services.

#### **Staff Development**

Continuing activities (seminar, meeting, training, workshop etc.) in information technology and related areas should be organised in order to keep library staff abreast of current knowledge in their profession.

#### **National Library**

The National Library of Thailand has to have every title of publications published in the country according to the copyright law. The complete titles will create the real national bibliography.