

FOCUS ON UNISIST PROGRAMMES

This is the sixth instalment of this Feature. Report on the Meetings of the Working Group on Bibliographic Data Interchange is being continued from the previous issue.

REPORT ON THE SECOND AND THIRD MEETING OF THE UNISIST WORKING GROUP ON BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATA INTERCHANGE [Continued from the previous issue]

At the third meeting of the Working Group, the Task Group (TG1) study, carried out under a Unesco contract, was presented for discussion. As a result, it was proposed that work be started that will result in a standard towards tagging structure and data field definition. A paper should be prepared outlining the concept of the international macro- and individual network standards. It should attempt to define them and to relate the problem facing those networks and the information community as a whole to the growth problem of information transfer and should identify the basic areas which need investigation. Such a study should also take into account the needs of the library community.

Amongst other matters discussed at the third meeting was a paper presented by the UNISIST Secretariat entitled "A General Concept of a UNISIST - Manual for Information Handling Procedures". As a result of lengthy discussion, it was suggested that one person or a small task group be set up to study in detail the compilation of the Manual. It was the general feeling however, that the development of this Manual should go hand in hand with the establishment of an International Information Centre on Bibliographic Descriptions which has, as its first main task, to up-date and maintain the UNISIST Reference Manual.

As to the implementation of this project, the Working Group was informed that the German Standards Institute and ISO/TC 46 had already begun work on this matter and had achieved considerable results.

Another Task Group had been set up as a result of the Second Meeting to look at the requirements of different user groups for the extension of current standards to cover additional types of literature. As to a list of priorities, the TG considered the following kinds of literature: maps, translations, audio-visual material, standards, deposited publications,

off-prints, reprint productions, technical drawings and computer software. Of these, maps were considered to be of highest priority and it was learnt that IFLA had already created a Working Group especially for maps.

STUDIES UNDER DEVELOPMENT IN THE UNISIST PROGRAMME OF PARTICULAR INTEREST TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The following studies are being developed under contract:

1. Methodology and Evaluation Technique in Training and Education

A formal methodology and evaluation technique will be developed for training courses, workshops and seminars. It will be based on existing national and international guidelines and techniques. This study will contain a review and state-of-the-art of relevant evaluation techniques, provide a bibliography, give a statement of recommended techniques of various types and show samples of questionnaires related to the kind of activities (short courses, long courses, workshops, seminars).

2. Guidelines for Organizing Training and Education Courses and Seminars.

A set of guidelines will be prepared for organizing training courses, seminars, workshops and refresher courses in documentation and information services for practitioners, users and teachers in developing countries. They will cover the planning of training programmes (determination of the need for the course, the objective, the potential audience, sponsorship, teaching site, co-ordination with other educational activities in the country); the preparation of the course (publicity to potential participants, criteria for selection of participants, establishment of a screening committee, accommodation for the programme, the outline of topics and teaching modes); programme activities (language of instruction, reading material for students, etc.) and post-programme activities (evaluation of the programme, follow-up of students, reports, etc.).

3. Guidelines on the Conduct of a National Inventory of Information and Documentation Facilities

These Guidelines will discuss the methodology of inventory taking and suggest the type of facilities

to be included or omitted from the survey. The technique of tracing and contacting the selected facilities will be presented in tabular form. Examples of useful by-products which can be generated from the survey will be given as well as the techniques of keeping the inventory up-to-date. A detailed questionnaire for manual and machine processing with extensive coding instructions will be given as an annex.

4. Checklist for the Planning of National Scientific and Technological Information Services and Networks

A detailed checklist in the form of guidelines will be prepared for the planning of national scientific and technological information services and networks. This checklist will cover all factors to be considered by the systems analyst and the systems designer involved in the national planning of scientific and technological information activities. It will cover in detail: operational and managerial parameters of the planned activity; anticipated required systems performance; system-user interaction; present and anticipated activities (infrastructure) and consequent systems design parameters and points to be considered when drawing up policy recommendations and timetables.

5. Guidelines for the Preparation of an Inventory of National Current Research and Development Projects

A small, easy-to-read brochure will be prepared, especially for developing countries, explaining how to prepare a computer-based inventory on national current research and development projects. It will describe how a versatile data base can be constructed from which useful information can be extracted on on-going research, who is who in research and development, interest profiles of scientists, who to invite to different meetings, etc. It will also contain a description of the forms recommended for the provision of the input and a description and demonstration of the various outputs. Block diagrams describing the various administrative and operational steps will be provided. This study will be closely co-ordinated with the preparation of the Unesco Manual for National and International Surveys of Scientific and Technological Potential and Science Statistics.

6. Brochure on National Information Systems

A concise and easy-to-read brochure will be prepared on the essential role of national information systems (NIS) in increasing the application of science and technology to development, based on a critical review of the published literature. The brochure will assist the sponsors, designers and users of national information systems in developing countries to better understand the nature of NIS and the usefulness of formalizing and strengthening them.

7. Brochure on Methods for Evaluating, Consolidating and Repackaging Information

This brochure is concerned with existing methods of evaluation, consolidation and repackaging of information, based on a critical review of available literature in the field. It will in addition include an introductory description of the field, underlining the special needs of developing countries for the repackaged information adapted to their needs. Concrete proposals will be made for more efficient approaches in this area at world, regional and national levels. The brochure will assist sponsors, designers and users of information systems and services in developing countries in the elucidation of the concept.

8. Study on UNISIST Activities in Training and Education

A study is being prepared to serve as a main working document for the first session of the UNISIST Ad Hoc Committee on Education and Training. This study will survey activities carried out within Unesco in the field of education and training of information specialists since 1973, those foreseen in the Draft Programme and Budget for 1975-1976 and the Medium-Term Plan for 1977-1982, as well as relevant activities carried out by other international organizations. Based on this review, proposals will be made concerning activities to be undertaken in the framework of UNISIST presenting a rationale for establishing priorities among various possible projects in the field of education and training of information specialists. The study will be used by the Ad Hoc Committee to propose, to the UNISIST Steering Committee, a policy basis and strategy for the allocation of funds likely to be available in 1977-1982, among a variety of possible types of activities in education and training of information specialists.

9. Feasibility Study on the Establishment of an International Clearinghouse for Training and Education in the Field of Documentation and Information

This study, to be used as a working document at the first session of the UNISIST Ad-Hoc Committee on Education and Training, will be carried out with a view to explore the possibilities of establishing an international clearinghouse or a network of organisms with a clearing function in different regions of the world, which would collect and disseminate up-to-date, evaluated information on who is doing what, when and how in the field of training and education in documentation and information. The study will take into account on-going activities at the national, regional and international levels with special attention to programmes of technical assistance carried out in developing countries; it will include all levels of training and education, consider problems of material and human resources and contain a description of the present state of international co-operation in the field of training and education in documentation and information.