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REFUGEE STUDIES PROGRAMME
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A REFUGEE INFORMATION SUB-PROGRAM
FOR THE INFORMATION SCIENCES DIVISION

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-March 1987-

"Refugees are not a 'problem' that can be 'solved'
They are people ..."

Report for the Independent
Commission on International
Humanitarian Issues 17



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INTRODUCTION

The term "refugee" conjures up images of Vietnamese arriving on the shores of countries of South East Asia by the hundreds in boats too small to safely transport them, of starving Ethiopians fleeing to neighbouring countries to escape political turmoil and famine, of Afghans crowding into camps in Pakistan seeking refuge from unrest within their homeland, of individuals burning their passports in European airports to avoid being returned to their country of origin. This phenomenon of people uprooting themselves from their place of habitual residence and fleeing to another region as a result of conflict, famine and persecution is not new - it has existed since the beginning of time. But the last 30 years has seen the flow of refugees increase drastically to the point that an estimated 700 people a day now are forced to leave their own countries swelling the world's refugee population to over 13 million. Added to these figures are an equal number, if not more, who are displaced within their own homeland. Recognizing that, in spite of this increasing problem, the subject of refugees has been relatively neglected in international, regional and national population information efforts, it was recommended in the review of the population information program in January 1985, and subsequently in the 1986-87 Program of Work and Budget, that this was an area that needed to be examined within the framework of the Human Environment, Health and Population information program. This paper attempts to present recommendations for future action by the Information Sciences Division by looking briefly at the world's refugee problem, the type of agencies working in this area, the diversity of their subject interests and related activities with regard to refugees both at the international level and within IDRC itself.

— unplaced?
placed?

REFUGEES

The term "refugee" can have different meanings to different people. It is widely used, however, to describe people who have fled from their homes for reasons such as persecution, war, and natural disaster. The legal meaning of refugee, as defined in terms of the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees and amended by the 1967 Protocol is someone who "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion is outside the country of his nationality

and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it".(17)

Recognizing that in developing countries many people are forced to leave their own country for reasons other than persecution, the 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention Concerning Refugee Problems stated that "The term 'refugee' shall also apply to every person who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order --- is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence".(17) These definitions, however, do not encompass all people who are unable or unwilling to leave their own country and identified by refugee specialists as the "internally displaced".

Today, unlike in years past, the overwhelming burden of the global refugee problem falls not to the industrialized countries but to some of the poorest and most deprived nations in the world. Twenty-five countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America now have refugee populations in excess of 50 000. Famine, war and civil conflict have forced millions of people in Africa to move. In Sudan alone, at least 1.5 million people have left their homes in search of food. Two million Palestinians are scattered throughout the Middle East. In Central America, 1.5 million people have been displaced due to political violence and armed conflict. Over 3 million Afghans have fled to Pakistan and Iran following the events of 1979. In Vietnam, Kampuchea and Laos, at least 2 million people have been uprooted in the last ten years. At least 150 000 Tamils have been forced to leave their homes because of communal violence. And the one million "returnees" to Ghana from Nigeria in 1983, who were not considered refugees, impacted seriously on the economy of Ghana increasing it's population by 10%.(17)

*each?
all?
not much →*

REFUGEE RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

To deal with the varied activities and practicalities associated with refugees from legal assistance for asylum seekers, determination of their refugee status, to the provision of food and shelter, education and self-help

programs there are several groups ranging from international agencies to church and private organizations. (An incomplete list is given in Appendix D). At the forefront is the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), with its 80 offices worldwide, which is the only intergovernmental organization specifically mandated to protect and assist refugees. It functions on a humanitarian, non-political basis and can act autonomously in protection matters. With regard to material assistance, it acts only if invited to do so by the host government concerned. Since the Palestinians do not fall within the High Commissioner's mandate, they are assisted by the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA). UNHCR also works in close cooperation with the World Food Programme (WFP), which provides emergency relief to refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Committee of the Red Cross and more than 300 non-governmental organizations (NGO's). The latter range from organizations such as Oxfam, the British Refugee Council, Médecins sans Frontières, to small locally based agencies. In addition, numerous academic and research institutions are examining aspects of the refugee problem from the psychological impact on the individuals themselves to the economic impact on the host community.

SUBJECT COVERAGE

Each of the various organizations involved in the refugee area use and produce information and documentation according to their varying mandates and goals. The subject coverage deals with all aspects of the refugee problem including country of origin information, country of reception information, historical information, development strategy information and information on international human rights instruments.

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organiza
listed abov

Information on country of origin of refugees can cover the causes of flight and continuing exile to the changing situations in these countries; information about ethnic and religious groups from these countries; and information about specific refugee groups in other asylum countries. This information is of particular relevance to those working in advocacy cases, and in resettlement and aid programmes.

Information about jurisprudence and administrative decisions and legislation in countries of reception as well as comparative data on other asylum countries to assist in the development of policies and strategies for assisting refugees is needed by legal workers. In addition, those working in the area of resettlement require information about reception and prospects in third countries.

Workers at all levels require historical information about previous refugee movements and their causes as well as solutions whether successes or failures. Information about organizations and their activities is needed to minimize duplication of effort and to guide refugees themselves to those able to provide appropriate assistance. Information related to technical and vocational training, community development and income-generating projects as well as disaster management is needed by those working at the field level, particularly refugee camps.

INFORMATION ACTIVITIES RELATED TO REFUGEES

In spite of the increasing numbers of the world's population that were becoming refugees and the diversity of information topics related to them, it became apparent during a review of the population information program that very little had been done in the developing countries to systematize relevant documentation in this area. While it was evident that, with such a wide range of topics to be covered, no one organization could possibly collect, process and disseminate all refugee-related information it was recommended that this was an area that should be examined within the framework of the population information program. This recommendation coincided with related activities both in Europe and within IDRC.

In late 1984, the Refugee Studies Programme, Queen Elizabeth House (QEH) in Oxford, England submitted a proposal to IDRC for sustaining and expanding its Refugee Studies Programme linked with Juba University in the Sudan. The major components of the project were to create a database and supporting document collection on refugees; disseminate research results through a series of working papers; and prepare teaching materials for the development of a training programme for workers in refugee administration. Given IDRC's mandate, we saw little way that we could support QEH directly to set up a refugee documentation centre but we indicated that we would be prepared to explore the subject further should a request be forthcoming from Juba University. To date none has.

Later the same year, a DAP (3-A-84-4208) processed by the Social Sciences Division to review existing research on Third World Refugees and to identify areas where knowledge is most scarce, noted that while considerable assistance had been provided to refugees at both international and national levels, through the UNHCR, non-governmental voluntary organizations and national governments, refugee assistance overall was haphazard, inconsistent and badly coordinated around the world. "Such lack of coordination is based to a large extent on inadequate knowledge about the status and size of refugee populations, the identification of problem areas, and the lack of interchange of information between relief agencies concerning existing strategies and programs." The study that was carried out as a result of this DAP indicated that existing documentation centres in the field of refugee studies do not cater to the needs of developing world scholars, that little information is available at most of these centres on refugee research, particularly in Asia and Africa, and that access to the information they do have in these areas is difficult if not impossible for researchers in the field. It was proposed that perhaps IDRC should give consideration to supporting the establishment or strengthening of refugee information and documentation centres in the developing world.(11)

*Has there been
adequate research
in dev countries
to help with
data on IDRC
at UNHCR
- E*

Taking this recommendation, as well as that of the Population Information Program Review, into account, contacts were initiated with the major refugee agencies to obtain more background on their information activities in an effort to determine whether the Division should consider supporting refugee information and documentation activities in its program.

Benefitting from the background in the Social Science Division Consultant's report, initial efforts were directed to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and to the European refugee agencies. It was learned that the UNHCR together with the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) and the Intergovernmental Committee for Migration (ICM) had started a documentation centre known as the International Integration Resource Centre (IRIRC). This Resource Centre was established in 1981 as a result of a workshop held in Geneva in 1980 that concluded, inter alia, that there is "the need for creation of an international refugee resource centre to facilitate the sharing of materials and information on resettlement, to convene future conferences and workshops on issues of common interest to countries of resettlement, and to identify individuals and groups with the expertise to assist countries requesting such help".(32) Difficulties in the perception of the IRIRC and its role were to ensue, which in due course led

to its dissolution in 1985, and its merging with the Refugee Law Documentation Centre and the Documentation Centre of the UNHCR Secretariat into the ~~UNHCR Refugee Documentation Centre (now known as the Centre for Documentation on Refugees (CDR))~~. It was under the aegis of the Refugee Documentation Centre that a "Guide for Abstractors", "International Cataloguing Rules for Bibliographic Records" and the draft "Thesaurus of Refugee Terminology" as well as a "Selected and Annotated Bibliography on Refugee Women" and the bibliographies "Refugee Abstracts" were produced.

Further inquiries to the major organizations occurred at about the same time as several European refugee-related agencies including the European Consultation on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), the British Refugee Council, the Danish Refugee Council, etc. were discussing the establishment of norms and standards for the collection and dissemination of bibliographic information related to refugees. This was under consideration because some of the relevant agencies found the UNHCR tools, particularly the thesaurus, to be inadequate for their needs. Although exposed to the "HURIDOCs Standard Formats" developed for the related field of human rights, the agencies were not familiar with the efforts in the broader area of population and the products, including the Population Multilingual Thesaurus, developed for the international Population Information Network (POPIN) coordinated by the United Nations Population Division.

REFUGEE DOCUMENTATION NETWORK MEETING

IDRC's inquiries to European, Canadian and American agencies, our expressions of concern about duplication of effort with regard to bibliographic standards, and our personal meetings with staff of the ~~UNHCR and the British Refugee Council~~ in June 1986 led to the formal submission of a request to the Ford Foundation and IDRC for financial assistance to convene a meeting to address the need for an international refugee documentation network.

This request, submitted by the British Refugee Council on behalf of the European Consultation on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) and in collaboration with the UNHCR, led to the provision of funds by IDRC (3-A-86-4136) to enable the participation of representatives from developing countries working in areas related to refugee documentation. The remaining funds were provided by The Ford Foundation.

The meeting, which was held from 18-22 November 1986 in Bergisch-Gladbach, West Germany, had as its objectives to exchange information and experiences between existing refugee documentation centres, to address the need for an international refugee documentation network, and to discuss its functioning and the information tools required. Over 35 participants (listed in Appendix B) from governmental and non-governmental organizations in Africa, Asia, Latin America, North America, Australia and Western Europe attended. Those with documentation centres provided background on their objectives, collections, users and cooperative links, which are briefly outlined in Appendix A.

While it was evident at this meeting that the information concerns of the developing countries were somewhat different to those of the developed countries, and that the latter had made more progress in the establishment of refugee documentation centres, [there was unanimous recognition that an international refugee documentation network was needed and should be established as soon as possible.] It was also recognized that the subject areas covered by such a network should include information on the full range of refugee issues. It was recommended that such a network be decentralized with a coordinating unit in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Pending clarification of the role UNHCR could play in the network, it was agreed that UNHCR be requested

- to coordinate current efforts to establish a common refugee thesaurus, with the assistance of an advisory group selected from other documentation centres concerned with refugees, and
- to initiate work on standard formats required for easier exchange of documentation and information

and that the British Refugee Council (BRC), which had played a major role in convening the meeting, be requested to continue immediate follow-up with regard to communicating the results of the meeting to all interested parties. Recommendations were also made for the development of standard documentation tools with the modus operandi for their preparation to be determined. (Appendix B)

yes, why?
 And to serve who?
 - the agencies who have to work w/ refugees
 - the gov't
 ie reception centres?
 doubt it.
 - defend not the refugees themselves
 - the members working in the topic?

INFORMATION NEEDS OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

While most activities related to refugee information whether from the point of view of utilization or collection and processing have taken place in the developed countries, there is growing evidence that developing country institutions working in refugee-related areas are recognizing the importance of having better information resources to support their work.

The African Institute for Economic and Social Development (INADES) produced a bibliography entitled "Les Refugies en Afrique" in November 1986, which includes 82 annotated references to articles on the subject, plus the international laws on the protection of refugees in the world and in Africa and a chronological table on the principal influx of refugees since 1960.

{The refugee problem, particularly that of the Palestinians, has concerned the Arab countries in general and the League of Arab States in particular.} As such, an information service on refugees has been identified as a priority area within the plans of the Arab League Documentation Centre (ALDOC) and the Arab Information System/Network (ARIS-NET).

A draft proposal to the Social Sciences Division from the Centre for Applied Economic Studies of the University of Peshawar, Pakistan included as one of its primary objectives "to lay foundations for a dependable system of documentation for material classification, storage and eventual sharing by interested organizations".(27)

In addition, a proposal has been received by IDRC for assistance to prepare and publish a handbook entitled "Asylum in Asia" on the legal provisions, procedures, and administrative practices relating to asylum and refugee status, as well as the economic, social and cultural rights of refugees. This proposal, while submitted by the Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law at the University of Lund, Sweden, is designed to link up with existing activities within the framework of the UNHCR, ASEAN, the League of Arab States, the Asian-African Consultative Committee and would involve the participation of rapporteurs at the national level familiar with asylum law, refugee law or immigration and alien law under the guidance of a 7 member Editorial Committee from the Philippines, India, Thailand, the Middle East (2 persons), Belgium and Sweden.

meaning what?

?

SOCIAL SCIENCES DIVISION'S ACTIVITIES IN AREA OF REFUGEES

Although consideration of refugee-related documentation activities as a component of the population information program must take into account activities at the international and national levels, it is also very important to view this from the perspective of the program of the Social Sciences Division. In the 1986 Program of Work and Budget, Information Sciences stated that "the need for IDRC involvement in such different aspects of population information as refugees and aging will also be explored" (p. 191). Social Sciences stated that the Population Program is "beginning discussions with IS concerning documentation on refugee issues" and went on to note that research activities in the area of refugees would be pursued. It stated that some of the questions constituting the global focus of the Population Program's support for 1986-87 are the consequences of high rates of internal and international migration on sending and receiving areas; the provisions being made for the burgeoning numbers of homeless people, most of whom reside or have asylum in the Third World; and the affect on Third World development of the absorption of such populations. These questions will be addressed through "studies of the determinants and consequences of international migration to developed and developing countries, both for sending and receiving areas. Attention will also be given to studies of refugee settlement in Third World countries, especially in cases where they are likely to settle there permanently" (p. 149, 150).

It went on to say that "Population distribution is of great concern to most countries of West, East and Southern Africa, particularly rural-urban migration and the rapid rate of urban growth...

Also, in East and Southern Africa, there is particular concern over large inflows of refugees and the problems associated with settlement and delivery of services to these groups. It is expected that support for research on these important issues will be increased in 1986-87" (p. 151).

Furthermore, it noted that in Asia, "attention will also be given to studies of refugee settlement in South and Southeast Asia, especially cases in which refugees are likely to remain there permanently. This will build upon initiatives undertaken in Pakistan and Thailand in 1985-86" (p. 153).

To date, Social Sciences has processed 5 projects in the area of refugees: Refugees - Botswana, Lesotho and Swaziland (3-P-85-0163); Refugee Settlements - Tanzania (3-P-85-0299); Management and Resettlement of Indochina's Refugees - Thailand (3-P-86-0193); Drought and Resettlement - Ethiopia (3-P-86-0215); and Populations Deplacées au Liban (3-P-86-1006). Several more are currently under development.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INFORMATION SCIENCES

In his address to the Joint Meeting of the Canadian Bar Association & the International Commission of Jurists in August 1984, Ivan Head stated that the "refugee burden on developing countries is economic, environmental, social and political". It is fully recognized, however, that perhaps more than the others, the subject of refugees is an intensely political issue. Their existence affects both foreign and domestic policy, exacerbates inter-state conflicts and influences international attitudes. Nevertheless

IT IS RECOMMENDED that we move slowly and on a limited scale into supporting documentation activities related to refugees in support of the research program of the Social Sciences Divisions.

at the level

Since the development of standards for the classification, storage and exchange of information/documentation is crucial if organizations working in the refugee field are to be able to work effectively in the development of shared policies and programmes,

*for whom?
For the agencies
involved w/
refugees
- UNHCR
- etc in
the work*

IT IS RECOMMENDED that, if requested, IDRC provide financial support to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for the production and adaptation of common bibliographic tools including the multilingual Refugee Thesaurus.

Given that many organizations working with refugees do not have ready access to information about the historical background of refugee populations, the rules and regulations in countries of first asylum, the refugee situation in other countries and resettlement activities in these countries.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that support be provided to "one-time" projects, such as the compilation and production of the handbook on "Asylum in Asia", and be developed in close consultation with the Social Sciences Division.

It is recognized that many institutions and agencies working with refugees in the developing countries operate on very modest budgets. Furthermore, as their primary goal is to resolve the refugee problem there is a presupposed impermanence to their long-term existence. Bearing this fully in mind,

IT IS RECOMMENDED that proposals from developing countries, particularly those seriously affected by an influx of refugees, to establish or strengthen documentation centres on refugees be considered on a case by case basis and in collaboration with the Social Sciences Division.

While the subject of refugees is closely linked to population activities because of its demographic components, there are also close linkages to the activities of the Humanitarian Affairs and Legal Affairs sub-programs of the Socio-Economic Information sector.

IT IS RECOMMENDED that refugee information be an integral part of the Population Information sub-program and that project activities be developed in close consultation with other related SEI programs such as humanitarian affairs.

In the interim

IT IS RECOMMENDED that in 87/88 some funds should be earmarked for refugee documentation activities from the SEI program.

*In the Population
Sector.*

In the Report for the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues on Refugees, it was stated that "Voluntary agencies could support UNHCR's role by systematically collecting, evaluating and disseminating information and documentation". I believe the Information Sciences Division can also play a small but important role in supporting not only the efforts of the UNHCR but also the wider international community working in this area.

Frances M. Delaney
Frances M. Delaney
Senior Programme Officer
26 March 1987

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APPENDIX A

REFUGEE DOCUMENTATION CENTRES

The developed or industrialized countries have over the years developed refugee-related libraries and/or documentation centres to serve their own needs. The major ones, their objectives, collections, users and cooperative links are listed.

Centres have been listed alphabetically in the following general order - international, regional and national and other related agencies. Also included are institutions working in the related area of human rights.

This compilation is based on available information and is not necessarily comprehensive.

INTERNATIONAL

UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES Centre for Documentation on Refugees (CDR)

- Objective** - The CDR, which was established in April 1986 as a result of the merger of the International Refugee Integration Resource Centre (IRIRC), the Refugee Law Documentation Centre, and the Documentation Centre of the UNHCR Secretariat, has as its primary task to assemble or locate as much information as possible on refugees and other complementary subjects.
- Collection** - The CDR collection, consisting of approximately 4,000 items, focuses in three main areas: refugee assistance, resettlement and integration; refugee law and protection; UNHCR documents, particularly those of the Executive Committee, and documents of other United Nations Bodies. The CDR regularly reviews 200 periodicals, receives monographs or theses either unsolicited or on request from authors, publishers, libraries, etc. The CDR uses its own established cataloguing rules and its databases (bibliographic and organization) run on the BASIS software of Battelle Institute, Geneva.
- Users** - The main users are UNHCR staff, member states, non-governmental organizations, trainees, students and researchers in the refugee field.
- Cooperation** - One of the main objectives of the CDR is to expand its cooperation with other centres working in this area.
- Location** - Geneva, Switzerland

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

- Objective** - Amnesty International works for the protection of certain fundamental human rights. Its activities focus on prisoners: it seeks the release of prisoners of conscience. These are people detained anywhere for their beliefs, colour, sex, ethnic origin, language or religion, who have not used or advocated violence; it works for fair and prompt trials for political prisoners and on behalf of such people detained without charge or trial; it opposes the death penalty and torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of all prisoners without reservation.
- Collection** - the International Secretariat of Amnesty International is not a public documentation centre, but of necessity it produces and holds documentation and information for its own use. The documentation reflects Amnesty International's work in the protection of human rights, and so is not refugee-oriented, but much of it would be useful to organizations working on behalf of refugees, because it provides information about the human rights situation in refugee-producing countries.
- The major part is internal. Some of it is external, and can be made available to inquirers on request. However, at present Amnesty International's capacity to deal with such inquiries is limited.
- Users** - members of Amnesty International.
- Cooperation** - with the organizations working in related areas.
- Location** - London, England

HUMAN RIGHTS INFORMATION & DOCUMENTATION SYSTEM (HURIDOCS)

- Objective - to promote human rights through the wider dissemination of human rights information.
- Collection - as a network of non-governmental organizations, academics, activists and others concerned with information on and about human rights, there is no central collection. Each member builds its own collection.
- HURIDOCS has produced Standard Formats for the recording and exchange of bibliographic information and a Human Rights Thesaurus and as agreed short list of terminology.
- Users - NGOs, academics, activists interested in areas related to human rights.
- Cooperation - with various human rights organizations including the Netherlands Institute of Human Rights (SIM), Council of Europe, etc., government ministries, international organizations, etc.
- Location - Conderation - Utrecht, Netherlands

REGIONAL

ARAB LEAGUE DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

- Objective - to provide information support to the Arab League and its organisations to achieve their goals and objectives; to develop a regional documentation centre as a centre of excellence, with documents, data and information representing and promoting the thoughts, aspirations and movements towards Arab unity and the integrated development of the Arab nation, and to make its services available to Arab countries through reference, referral and on-line services; to promote unified Arab action in the information sector by fostering co-operation and co-ordination among Arab information and documentation centres and data-banks in harmony with international and regional information systems and agencies; and to develop information infrastructure and maximise information transfer capability in the region; to work towards the promotion and development of the Arab League Information System (ALIS) as an integrated network of information and documentation centres in the Arab region, in harmony with national and regional telecommunication network development vis-a-vis the Arabsat satellite communication facilities; to foster development of a well-trained cadre in the new automated techniques of information and documentation both at ALDOC and at other advanced centres; to contribute to the development of Arabisation in informatics particularly in the field of information and documentation at ALDOC and in the Arab region in general.
- Collection - a major collection of selected documents. Among them are documents from the Arab League and its specialized agencies, the Arab countries, and the UN, which are processed and indexed using a trilingual thesaurus and are in the computer database for on-line access. Databases of relevant UN agencies are also acquired and used as well as a collection of microfilms and microfiche covering back volumes of some leading periodicals and newspapers, the resolutions of the UN General Assembly, Security Council,

and the Social and Economic Council from the year 1947 to the present. There is also a special collection of theses of doctoral dissertations on Arab problems, from Arab and foreign universities. Over 1000 Arab and international periodicals including a number of abstracting and indexing services on Arab and Middle Eastern Affairs; and a collection of over 250 000 press clippings is also held.

- Users** - the staff of the Arab League Secretariat, its departments and its specialized organizations; the Arab countries, governments, and institutions and individuals; other Arab subregional organizations and institutions, and their members; international organizations and agencies seeking the Arab point of view on various issues; researchers on problems relating to the Arab nation, anywhere.
- Cooperation** - maintains close cooperation with the Arab League and its organizations, and acts as the Secretariat for the Arab League Sectoral Committee on Information, Documentation and Statistics, and its several working groups; and the Secretariat for cooperation with ARABSAT for development of ARABNET for data communication network within the framework of ALIS.
- ALDOC cooperates with Arab Standards and Metrology Organization (ASMO) and Arab Telecommunication Union (ATU) in developing Arabisation standards for informatics and telematics; the Statistical Department of the Arab League in building the Statistical Data Bank; the Population Research Unit of Arab League and UNFPA in its plans to develop an Arab Population Information System, ARAB-POPIN. It has cooperation agreements for specific joint activities and database network connections with Arab Industrial Development Organization (AIDO), Bagdad, and the Gulf Organization for Industrial Consulting (GOIC), Doha.
- Location** - Tunis, Tunisia.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE - HUMAN RIGHTS DOCUMENTATION CENTRE (HRDC)

Objective - to serve the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe as regards to its functions under the European Convention on Human Rights, and the European Court and Commission of Human Rights which were established by the Convention.

The Centre is responsible for the preparation of the publications of the Directorate of Human Rights, and other ad hoc publications and documents.

The most important aspect of the Centres work is to establish computerized databases including basic texts of the Convention, case-law of the European Court and Commission of Human Rights.

Collection - the Human Rights Library (LHRDC) is a part of the Human Rights Documentation Centre. It collects information on legal aspects of human rights. The Library is open to the public who can consult the works on the premises. Its holdings include approximately: 25 English language periodicals; 40 French language periodicals; 160 UN documents; 2000 English monographs; and 2500 French monographs. In addition, there is several hundred theses and specialized studies in various languages.

The most important publications from NGOs, such as the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), Amnesty International (AI), Federation International des Droits de l'Homme (FIDJH), etc. are kept. However, the Library and the Documentation Centre cannot respond in depth to queries regarding action oriented human rights activities of non Governmental entities and the actual human rights situation in particular countries.

The Library's catalogue is presently being converted to an electronic form. It uses the "HURIDOCs Standard Format for Recording & Exchange of Information on Human Rights".

- Users - While the holdings are available to the general public for consultation, services are directed to in-house users.
- Cooperation - with the major institutions, governments, etc. working in relevant areas.
- Location - Brussels, Belgium

INSTITUT AFRICAIN POUR LE DEVELOPPEMENT ECONOMIQUE ET SOCIAL
(INADES) - Documentation Centre
(African Institute for Economic and Social Development)

- Objective - to provide services in the way of compilation of bibliographies to INADES Training, training of its probationers, lending and acquisition of material.
- Collection - comprises over 17 000 references and articles dealing with economics, sociology and politics related to black Africa. Eighteen periodicals are reviewed regularly.
- Users - staff and trainees of INADES, researchers, profesors and teachers both from Africa and abroad.
- Cooperation - exists mainly in the form of exchanges of publications and are pursued with: CIEH (Centre for Information on the Water and Hydraulic Problems of Ouagadougou); IPD (Panafrikan Institute Douala and Ouagadougou); RESADOC (Sahel Network Documentation of Bamako); CESAO (Centre for West African Social Studies of Bobo Dioulasso); GRAAP (Group for Research and Aid for Peasant Auto-Promotion of Bobo Dioulasso); GRET (Group for Research and Technological Exchanges of Paris); APICA (Centre for Aid for Non-indigenous Technologies of Douala); ENDA (Environment Development in Dakar).
- Location - Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

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INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE ON MIGRATION (CIM)
Latin American Information Centre on Migration 4

- Objective** - to inform interested institutions and specialists about the literature published in the field of migration, refugees, human resources, reverse transfer of technology and related topics and to provide technical assistance in the information field, on request, to countries of the region wishing to establish or strengthen related documentation centres.
- Collection** - information on migration, refugees, human resources, reverse transfer of technology and related topics as it relates to Latin America or documents of a methodological nature. The database of 3 200 documents is stored on IBM 370 and uses the CDS/ISIS software. The "Population Multilingual Thesaurus" (POPIN Thesaurus) and the "Macrothesaurus for Information Processing in the Field of Economic and Social Development" are used for indexing and the UNISIST "Reference Manual for Machine Readable for Bibliographic Description for bibliographic description.
- Users** - policy makers and specialists/sociologists, demographers, lawyers, geographers, historians, etc., working in governmental or private institutions in the region.
- Cooperation** - with the Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLA's) Common Bibliographic System, the Latin American Population Documentation System (DOCPAL) of the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) and the International Population Information Network (POPIN) coordinated by the Population Division of the United Nations.
- Location** - Santiago, Chile

COMISION PAR LA DEFENSA DE LOS DERECHOS HUMANOS EN
CENTROAMERICA (CODEHUCA)

(Commission for the Defence of Human Rights in Central America)

- Objective - to promote and defend human rights throughout the region, through a network of national commissions (in Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Mexico/Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama).
- To further the work of its constituent organizations, CODEHUCA felt the need to break down information barriers by developing a flexible, expeditious and reliable system design to gather, store, process and disseminate information.
- Collection - the Documentation Centre consists of 217 periodicals on human rights and the social, political, economic and military situation in Central America; a collection of documents about the situation of human rights in Central America from 1978 to 1986 (reports from the national commissions, statistics, newspaper clippings, written and recorded testimonies, photographs, slides, videotapes); a collection of documents on the rights of special groups (indians, refugees, children, women) and on special subjects (forced disappearances, torture, peace, etc.); a reference library with theoretical and juridical material on human rights, general information about the countries of the region, directories, etc.
- Users - human rights commissions and similar organizations working in the region.
- Cooperation - with its members organization including Associated General Workers Union (ASWU), Belize; Comision de Derechos Humanos (CODEHU), Costa Rica; Asociacion de Familiares de Presos Politicos (FAPREP), Costa Rica; Comision de Derechos Humanos de El Salvador (CHES), non governmental; Comision de Derechos Humanos de Guatemala (CDHG), Mexico; Comite para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos (CODEH), Honduras; Comision Nacional de Proteccion y Promocion de los Derechos Humanos (CNPPDH), Nicaragua;

Centro de Capacitacion Social (CCS), Panama.

Location - San Jose, Costa Rica

ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES (AACC)
Refugee Service

- Objective - The Refugee Service's main responsibilities are the coordination of refugee work among the AACC Member Churches and/or the National Christian Councils (NCCs) in Africa; assisting the churches in preparing refugee projects for fund raising; advising the Churches regarding recruitment and training of local personnel to work with refugee matters and programmes; production, receipt and dissemination of information to the AACC Member Churches about refugee issues on the continent.
- Collection - Informal collection of refugee documents either received by the AACC and forwarded to its constituents or produced according to specific demands and situations. Annual reports, and audio-visuals to inform the public about refugee issues and problems.
- Users - Church refugee workers and the representatives of the 118 member churches and 20 associated Christian Councils in 38 African countries.
- Collaboration- with the AACC member churches and Christian Councils
- Location - Nairobi, Kenya

AL-HAQ/LAW IN THE SERVICE OF MAN DOCUMENTATION & DATABASE

- Objective - promote the application and development of principles of human rights, humanitarian law and justice, as well as to extending their protection and benefits to Palestinian society and to all peoples.
- Collection - 940 affidavits, 214 questionnaires, 155 photographs and 74 documents primarily orders and court decisions and secondary materials acquired from external sources. Subjects covered include house demolitions, tour arrest, closure of institutions, land areas, and others.
- Users - concerned organizations and individuals with AL/Haq's approval.
- Cooperation - With HURIDOCs, INTERDOC, Society for International Development and related human rights organizations.
- Location - West Bank

NATIONAL

BRITISH REFUGEE COUNCIL RESOURCE CENTRE

- Objective** - to provide a focal point for the collection, storage and retrieval of materials documenting refugee matters for use by refugees, researchers, lawyers, academics, member agencies, the public and staff, particularly the BRC, OXFAM, Christian Aid and Save the Children Fund. In addition, to provide repackaged information materials which would help those working on behalf of refugees in raising public awareness and increasing communication between refugee assisting organizations.
- Collection** - Published and unpublished materials covering all aspects related to asylum-seekers, those given refugee and international law settlement, training and employment for refugees in the U.K; photographs on settlement and camp life in the developing world and some on the life for refugees in European countries and the U.K.
- Users** - Plans for cataloguing in according to the Anglo-American Cataloguing rules from HURIDOCs. Standard formats the Resource Centre is computerized. From refugees learning English, agencies sending out relief teams to U.K. lawyers assisting an asylum-seeker is gaining refugee status in the U.K.
- Cooperation** - In the U.K. Refugee Action, Refugee Unit of the U.K., Immigrants Advisory Source, Queen Elizabeth House-Oxford, World University Service, and the Relief and Development Institute; Latin American Bureau, Latin American Cultural Centre, Latin American Women's Rights Service, Cander Vietnamese Community; Lewisham Indo-China Community School, Polish Artists Association of Great Britain, Tamil Information Centre, Tamil Action Committee. The BRC also maintains close links with the Danish Refugee Council, ZDFW, France Terre d'Asile, UNHRC, PRIO and the Council of Europe.
- Location** - London, England

DANISH REFUGEE COUNCIL DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

- Objective - to supply Council staff with information on the situation in the field of refugees, the national and international political situation, information related to country of origin of refugees, and legal and statistical information.
- Collection - 1 500 books, research reports, university thesis, conference papers, yearbooks plus 150 periodicals and press clippings.
- Internal Classification system currently under revision.
- Users - primarily Council staff from the asylum department.
- Cooperation - with the Danish Committee of the Red Cross, Rehabilitation Centre for Torture Victims and the International Working Group for Indigenous Affairs. Also, working with France Terre d'Asile, British Refugee Council and ZDWF in producing an indexing guide and descriptor list in the area of refugees.
- Location - Copenhagen, Denmark

CARLETON UNIVERSITY
Research Resource Division for Refugees

what faculty?

- Objectives - to act as a central information collecting and disseminating agency and archival resource for material pertaining to the settlement and resettlement of refugees in less developed countries of first asylum and in developed countries.
- Collection - Since its establishment in the fall of 1985, as successor of the Canadian Foundation for Refugees, approximately 1 100 items dealing with various aspects of refugee resettlement have been collected. The collection comprises primarily newsletters, policy, research and other reports dealing with refugee settlement and re-settlement published by international, national, and local non-governmental and governmental organizations; research articles published in academic journals and studies published by non-governmental agencies.
- Users - the holdings are available to all interested settlement agencies and researchers.
- Cooperation - with Canadian settlement service organizations, non-governmental, intergovernmental and governmental organizations within Canada and abroad.
- Location - Ottawa, Canada

CENTRAL AMERICAN RESOURCE CENTER

- host institution

- Objective - to act as a national information clearinghouse providing computer-based services to groups, agencies, and individuals concerned about Central America and Central American refugees
- Collections - more than 15 000 English and Spanish language items on Central America including clipping files, new and unpublished scholarly journals, U.S. government documents, church and human rights organization reports, affidavits from Central American experts regarding current conditions and maps. A computerized database on a microcomputer is being built.
- Users - attorneys involved in asylum cases, groups assisting refugees, groups working to increase public participation in U.S. policy dialogues, church groups, policy makers, journalists and the interested public.
- Cooperation - with relevant organizations in the U.S.A. and Central America.
- Location - Austin, Texas

ECUMENICAL MIGRATION CENTRE
Clearinghouse on Migration Issues (CHOMI)

- Objective - to provide "refugee service providers" with cultural background information and other data on migrant and refugee issues and to provide information to staff of the Ecumenical Migration Centre in support of their refugee and migrant training programs developed for government departments, private industry, educational institutions and other organizations.
- Collection - comprises over 40,000 documents including books, government reports, unpublished reports and papers, conference papers, pamphlets, newsletters, newspaper clippings and approximately 250 journal titles. The CHOMI classification system is an alpha numeric system designed specifically for the immigration and ethnic affairs field in Europe and modelled on that of the Centre of Migration Studies in New York.
- Users - secondary and tertiary ^{university?} students, service deliverers (such as welfare workers, teachers, government departments) researchers, business people, community groups, government departments and authorities.
- Cooperation - informal networks maintained with community groups and other related documentation centres.
- Location: Melbourne, Australia

INSTITUTE OF SOUTHERN AFRICAN STUDIES (ISAS)

Documentation Centre

- Objective - as the principal research unit of the National University of Lesotho, the ISAD Documentation Centre has been given the mandate by the University to collect the grey literature on Southern Africa.
- Collection - includes conference proceedings, technical papers, academic reports, business literature, official publications; pamphlets, briefs, articles, leaflets, brochures and clippings. Subjects include rural development, migrant labour, destabilization by South Africa; ISAS documentation on Refugees emerged as part of the development of the study on Human Rights in Southern Africa. The PADIS methodologies are used. The human rights collection is arranged by the Centre's own scheme.
- Users - University staff, researchers and those interested in Lesotho; other SADCC countries, Namibia and South Africa - as well as on general topics like Commonwealth and OAU.
- Cooperation - the Centre interacts with information services in Lesotho; and with all major research institutes in the Southern African region.
- Location - Roma, Lesotho

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES -
DOCUMENTATION CENTRE

- Objective - to collect and organize information sources on or related to the refugee problem in the Sudan and to disseminate information on refugees in the Sudan.
- Collection - the documentation centre has a collection of 2 700 documents acquired on donation, exchange, purchase and photocopy basis. Materials held include books and other monographs, conference/seminar papers, reprints, press cuttings, maps and photographs. A large percentage of the collection is on refugees in the Sudan and Africa. UNHCR bibliographic tools are now being used.
- Users - staff of the office of the Commissioner for Refugees, including administrators, the Deputy Commissioner for Refugees, Assistant Commissioners, agricultural and nutrition officers; staff of the UNHCR Sudan Branch Office including the Deputy Resident Representative, Public Information Officer, other UNHCR staff; volags and NGOs working with refugees in the Sudan including functional field officers; undergraduate and postgraduate students and students from other institutions of higher learning from the Sudan, Western Europe and America; and researchers from Sudan, Western Europe and America.
- Cooperation - with UNHCR; Juba University; Khartoum University including its main library, Institute of Afro-Asian Studies, Institute of Extra-Mural Studies, Institute of Environmental Studies, Centre for Research and Development, and Departments of Political Science, Geography and Engineering; Academy for Administrative Sciences, Gezira University; volags and NGOs involved with refugee work in the Sudan; Queen Elizabeth House, Refugee Studies Programme; United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.
- Location - Khartoum, Sudan

UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Refugee Studies Programme - Documentation Centre of Forced Migration

- Objective - to ensure that all those involved in research, refugee assistance and policy-making shall have, readily accessible, the basic materials relevant to refugee issues. While the collection is needed as a resource for the research and training projects of the Refugee Studies Programme, the aim is to make these resources available to support other study Centres, especially those in the poorer countries of the world. It also aims to co-operate with all institutions engaged in independent study of refugees and other forced migrants, to exchange documentation; and to facilitate the development of collections in universities, and other centres of independent research.
- Collection - due to the location in Oxford University with its rich library sources, acquisitions have been limited to essential materials and those not readily available and unpublished material. The Programme has recently acquired the Tristram Betts papers, one of the more important private collections of unpublished materials on refugees in Africa. It includes about a thousand documents covering refugees and development issues from east central Africa. In addition to the Betts collection the present collection amounts to approximately 2 000 titles and papers, plus the periodicals and newspapers. The classification is according to HURIDOCs following the British Refugee Council methods.
- Users - the main users are Visiting Fellows from all over the world, Ph.D. students, researchers from the U.S., Canada, Africa and Europe, staff from several aid agencies, journalists and other members of the media.
- Cooperation - the Centre co-operates with the British Refugee Council Link Project; it is the secretariat for the members of the Inter-University Consortium on Refugee Research, and has links with Third World universities. Through its preparation of the directory of current refugee research it has established a wide network of literature exchange.
- Location - Oxford, England

ZENTRALE dokumentations stelle der freien (ZDWF)
(Refugee Documentation Centre)

- Objective** - to provide information and documentation in the field of law concerning recognized refugees, quota refugees and asylum seekers to ensure standardised and responsible legal counselling through centralized measures in Germany. In addition, the documentation centre is to fill the information gap identified by courts and lawyers vis-à-vis countries of origin particularly as they relate to the application of asylum law.
- Collection** - relevant jurisprudence and administrative decisions since 1954, information about countries of origin from official and unofficial authorities; reports from national and international organizations and documentation centres; literature, reference works, monographs, periodicals and unpublished material. The computerized database ASYLD0C contains over 13 000 references. The ZDWF uses its own Asylum Affairs Thesaurus.
- Users** - Parliamentarians, ministers, public administrators, lawyers, social counsellors, social workers, researchers, etc.
- Collaboration-** UNHCR, ECRE, HURID0CS, Federal Office for the Recognition of Refugees, Documentation Centre of the Administrative Court in Wiesbaden, Documentation Centre of the Higher Administrative Court of North Rhine Westphalia.
- Location** - Bonn, West Germany

SCHWEIZERISCHE ZENTRALSTELLE FÜR FLUCHTLINGSHILFE (SFH)

(Swiss Central Office for Aid to Refugees)

Documentation Centre

- Objective - the Documentation Centre is an office within the Swiss Central Office for Aid to Refugees, where a variety of publications are stored and made available to all. Because it is small, it does not attempt to attract the general public.
- Collection - a small collection catalogued by subject and maintained according to the system used by Swiss national libraries. Newspaper cuttings that have appeared in the Swiss press on the subject of refugees, asylum seekers, aid organizations, asylum policy, etc.
- Users - staff of non-governmental organizations, teachers, students, school-children, the staff of government offices and other interested parties.
- Cooperation - publications produced by the Swiss Central Office for Aid to Refugees and non-voluntary organizations are exchanged.
- Location - Zurich, Switzerland

APPENDIX B

MEETING TO ESTABLISH AN INTERNATIONAL NETWORK ON REFUGEE DOCUMENTATION

18-22 NOVEMBER 1986,
Bergisch-Gladbach, Federal Republic of Germany

F I N A L R E P O R TINTRODUCTION

In the past few years several initiatives have been taken by human rights and refugee-assisting agencies to try and work towards a systematic method for the storage and exchange of information of refugee-related materials. With the global refugee crisis putting an immense strain on all those involved in assisting asylum-seekers and refugees in the North and the South, the role of non-governmental organisations (NGO's) has become increasingly important. There is a growing belief that NGOs from countries in the North and the South need to work together to resist the expansion of restrictive and deterrent asylum policies and to assist in the development of effective policies and programmes for aid and resettlement.

Organisations have come to recognise that information is vital to the appraisal of existing policies and practices, to the development of new approaches to meet the challenges of preventing refugee flows and to provide better assistance to refugees. Effective sharing of information is dependent on the systems which are used for classification and storage. If incompatible systems are developed, it becomes virtually impossible to share. As technological innovation accelerates, it is likely that technically incompatible systems will emerge which will result in a waste of resources, both human and financial.

The development of a standardised model for the classification, storage and sharing of information is therefore crucial if organisations working in the refugee field are to be able to be effective in the development of policy.

It is self-evident that a unified, standardised system must be usable by organisations irrespective of their technological capacity and their geographical location. For this reason it was felt that it was essential to bring together all interested organisations wanting to work on a universally shared storage and retrieval system and to assess the possibility of developing a network of information exchange. With funding from the Ford Foundation, USA and the International Development Research Centre, (IDRC), Canada, a meeting was held to assess the need for, and action required for, an international exchange of refugee documentation.

The European Consultation on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), organised the meeting. They agreed that such a network would have to adopt common standards or working tools for the storage and exchange of information on refugees in different geographical regions, irrespective of the technological capacity of organisations.

To this end 43 people were selected as participants representing different geographical regions from all continents, who had either developed refugee documentation centres or who represented a geographical focus or subject orientation to be considered in the development of such a network. In addition there were some individuals who had special expertise in information handling within the more-general 'human-rights' field. It had been felt that wherever possible there should only be one participant per country and that the selection process should lead to equal or almost equal representation from the South and the North. A list of the participants at the meeting is attached to this report.

It had also been felt that the Meeting should take place in the vicinity of an existing refugee documentation centre which could be visited, and that it should offer simultaneous translation facilities in English, French and Spanish.

1. The objectives established for the Meeting were:

- i) to exchange information and experiences between existing refugee documentation centres; and
- ii) to address the need for an international network of documentation centres; and
- iii) if confirmed, to address the questions of which tools are required to achieve such a network, how to obtain them, who will obtain them and who will pay for it.

The Agenda of the Meeting covered the following areas:

- i) General presentation of refugee documentation centres;
- ii) The scope of refugee documentation;
- iii) The need for and objectives of an international refugee documentation network;
- iv) Description of types of information networks, examples of information networks and links between them;
- v) Elements required to obtain standardisation and compatibility within a network, including the presentation of, and discussion about, working tools developed to date:

Cataloguing Rules
Thesauri
Indexing Rules

3.

- vi) How modern technology can help the fast information flow of an international refugee documentation network;
- vii) How to obtain different tools required for a refugee documentation network:
 - Network organisation
 - Standards for the recording and exchange of information
 - Thesauri and Indexing Rules
- viii) Implications of participating in a network and the stages involved in developing the network, including immediate and long-term follow-up.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING:1. General:

It was agreed that a future international refugee documentation network should be able to provide the background material required for every aspect of refugee protection and assistance, as required by researchers, caseworkers, policy-makers, lawyers, and members of the public.

Prior to the Meeting all documentation centres represented had submitted an outline of their Centre, including where possible, information on the documentation held, obtained or needed, an analysis of the Centre, its main users, a description of with whom the Centre co-ordinates and co-operates and what procedures/formats/Thesaurus it uses.

It was agreed that refugee documentation covered all subject areas relating to the broad concept of 'refugees' including different forms of forced external and internal displacement. In addition, the meeting understood documentation to include textual and non-textual (including audio-visual) material. In spite of the academic analysis of the subject matter, refugees were not seen as an academic discipline but always as people to whom documents related. It was noted that information concerning refugees appeared not only in traditional bibliographic material but also that a large proportion of it was to be found in non-conventional literature, such as reports, papers and events reporting.

2. The Need for, and objectives of, an International Refugee Documentation Network

It was agreed that no one centre could hope to hold all existing documentation concerning refugees as described above. Given that different organisations had different needs, ranging from operational knowledge to assistance activities and policy-making, a network might serve to enable the distribution of such varied documentation to a wide variety of users, taking into consideration different geographical regions and technical competence (e.g. information gatherers, policy makers).

Organisations have different uses from documentation:

- Assistance
- Protection
- Research
- "Activism"/Interventionism

A network needs to be aware of the requirements of all types of participants and users.

Without an international network of refugee documentation there would be great waste, duplication and ignorance. Within a network there could be a division of labour to assist the distribution of the mass of material on refugees internationally, catering for the needs of different users.

There was also agreement that the information gathered and exchanged should be 'reliable' and that its distribution should be sensitive to the issues contained in the material to be circulated. It was noted that within the refugee agency community there were many "activist"/interventionist agencies in the South who could give information to the North and that there was much accumulated documentation which could be passed on to the South. It was felt that action-oriented organisations needed to have a network which was sensitive to their organisation's needs. Therefore the systems chosen for facilitating the recording and dissemination of the different types of information involved had to be appropriate to the different types of agencies involved.

It was suggested that specialisation by different units or sub-groups within the network would enhance the distribution and exchange of information.

Objectives:

A network should help to establish:

- how to obtain information;
- how to treat information;
- and
- how to share information.

There was a consensus on the need for such an international refugee documentation network. An information/documentation exchange network should define a minimum programme of action, to which all concerned can contribute and in which all concerned can participate. But this must also take into consideration difficulties for some centres in countries where there is no freedom or facility to build up documentation bases or where the immediate defence of the poor and the oppressed is the major daily activity.

A refugee documentation information network is a long term project whose value is not limited to current refugee problems but extends to assisting in the prevention of future refugee flows.

3. Description of types of information networks, examples of information networks, and links between them:

A description was given of different types of information networks: The purpose of a network was to facilitate the exchange of information for the benefit of those who would like to participate in it; it would not have forced membership.

Information networks are comprised of groups of organisations or individuals who exchange information in various forms on a regular and organised basis. Individual information units nowadays usually perform - in some degree - three main types of information activity:

- conservation and provision of primary documents (library and archive activity);
- content description and dissemination (documentation activity);
- answering queries by exploitation of the available information (information activity).

Networks also reflect these kinds of information activity.

The structure or configuration of a network can range from a fully centralised one, in which units have to communicate through a centre, to a more decentralised type of network in which all units communicate directly with each other.

A decentralised type of network implies that members assume different responsibilities for the collection and dissemination of information throughout the world, on a regional or national basis, including sub-sets of information according to particular needs within the network. However it also assumes that each member of the network agrees on procedures to record different types of information. Even a decentralised network requires a co-ordinating body which can send out enquiries or information to different bases within the network or communicate amendments on procedures to the members of the network.

Descriptions were given of information networks and other forms of collaboration between information units: the Latin American Information Center on Migration (CIMAL) (Chile), the Population Information Exchange Network (POPIN), the Human Rights Information and Documentation System (HURIDOC), the Documentation Centre of the Arab League (ALDOC) and the Central American Human Rights Commission (CODEHUCA) (Costa Rica).

Certain features of their experience were most relevant to any future international refugee documentation exchange:

CIMAL (Latin American Information Centre for Migration):

Set up in 1983 with its Headquarters in Chile, it manages literature on international migration in Latin America. In order to standardise database information it created a common work-sheet using The Anglo American Cataloguing Rules 2nd Edition (AACR II), a user guide, and the ISO Standards (1981). It uses the POPIN Thesaurus and OECD Macro Thesaurus. CIMAL co-ordinates and co-operates with the Economic Committee for Latin America (ECLA)'s system - DOCPAL - and is a member of POPIN (the Population Information Exchange Network).

POPIN (Population Information Exchange Network):

As a decentralised network for the co-ordination of population information activities at the international level, the United Nations Population Information Network (POPIN) was established in May 1979 following the recommendations of the Population Commission. The objective was to identify and establish better ways to improve the flow of population information. It was felt that the network concept of supporting information services at the international level had proven beneficial in other areas, encouraging co-operative arrangements for collecting and processing documents.

POPIN has developed basic networking tools, namely: the Inventory and Evaluation of Training Materials for Population Information Services, the first bibliography of training materials for population information services, the POPIN Thesaurus, the Population Multilingual Thesaurus. It has developed a series of guidelines, such as Manual I Guide to the Computerisation of Population Documentation Storage and Retrieval Systems, Manual II: Guide to Selecting a Classification Scheme for a Population Information Centre and the present guide to networking. It also publishes the POPIN Bulletin to serve as a forum for POPIN members to report on recent developments in the population information field.

POPIN exists in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

HURIDOCs (Human Rights Information and Documentation System):

HURIDOCs started as a working group of non-governmental organisations in 1979 and was set up as an informal network in 1982. Its main goal is to achieve standards for the recording and exchange of information to facilitate information sharing. The Standard Formats developed to date facilitate the exchange of bibliographic and organised material but there is now pressure to extend HURIDOCs' ideas to provide standards to record information about Human Rights phenomena. It has a global mandate. Its second Assembly was held in Rome, April 1986.

ALDOC (The Documentation Centre of the Arab League):

The 'Arab League' is an inter-governmental, regional organisation formed in March 1945. Since 1979 its Secretariat has been in Tunisia. It incorporates 22 Arab countries and involves 22 specialised agencies. With regard to refugees, its responsibility is the 'General Directorate for Palestinian Affairs'.

ALDOC (The Arab League Documentation Centre) was created in 1980. It has a computerised, arabised system, in which 25 other organisations have been trained. It has adapted the UN Thesaurus (expanding some facts) and has developed a trilingual Thesaurus. It has also developed input sheets for books, reference works and periodicals, a non-bibliographic database (e.g. of other documentation centres) and a statistical database. ALDOC has also developed a technical manual (e.g. for audio-visual material, press-cuttings etc.). It is developing national networks, concentrating on issues important for that country and sectoral networks of specialised agencies, and is used as a model for Arab countries to help them develop their own documentation centres.

CODEHUCA (The Central American Human Rights Commission):

Started in 1986, CODEHUCA concerns itself with collecting and disseminating information on Human Rights violations. It started without formally trained staff. It is a network of 8 national Human Rights Commissions and is a project offering technical assistance to those organisations which do not have trained personnel to handle information.

CODEHUCA is a computerised network which can handle 5 databases whereby case by case entries of human rights violations can be made. The information gathered helps to defend individual cases or to lobby for policy changes. It has a co-ordinating unit to ensure the efficiency of the network.

This network has not been developed from a traditional base and has developed its own formats to record human rights violations or political social or cultural indices of the region. It has also developed a Central American Thesaurus on Human Rights. Important features in the development of the Network are the selection and acquisition of compatible equipment, the ensurance of a proper maintenance service, as well as the provision of training courses.

9.

Academic Exchange:

A proposal to develop a network of academic information exchange was also briefly discussed.

4. The elements required to attain standardisation and compatibility within a Network:

The basic tools required for the storage and retrieval of documents for the distribution and exchange of information were identified as follows:

To describe and analyse Documents:

- Agreed Standard Formats to record information e.g. written material, jurisprudence, events).
- Agreed Thesaurus of controlled terms or 'descriptors' to describe the contents of documents and materials (in different languages).
- Agreed Indexing Rules to indicate the way to describe documents.
- Agreed Guide to Abstracting indicating how to abstract documentation.

To Retrieve Documents:

- Document Descriptors (Thesaurus) or Codes.

To Establish and maintain the use of these tools:

- Training Programmes

To Share Documents/Information:

Names addresses and descriptions of agencies participating in a network, identifying sub-specialities where possible, so as to:

- a) receive announcements of new documents within the network;
- b) answer enquiries;
- c) contact those concerned if something of particular interest to them is identified within the network;
- d) spread news about the availability of documents to as many potential users as possible.

5. Presentation of and discussion about basic tools developed to date:- Cataloguing Rules/Standard Formats:

Based on documentation circulated prior to the Meeting a number of existing cataloguing rules/standard formats were discussed and additional points made.

10.

UNHCR/Centre for Documentation on Refugees:

It was pointed out that UNHCR's Cataloguing Rules were designed in the first instance for computer entry into the database which the Refugee Documentation Centre (CDR) maintains in BASIS software. The designers of the rules adopted the ISO's Standards for country codes; they also worked on an analytic structure of fields to facilitate quick retrieval. It should not be a problem to adopt a common format for exchange provided there is agreement on such a format between different centres.

HURIDOCs:

HURIDOCs developed its Standard Formats with a view to facilitating the recording of information on bibliographic materials. They are not tied to any particular software programme. They were designed to be used on a manual system as well as by small and large computers with on-line storage; they were also designed to be as simple as possible but yet professional enough to allow information to enter formal library channels. At present HURIDOCs is developing additional formats for the recording of case-law, audio-visual material and human rights phenomena.

CIMAL:

Have their own rules which differ from the Anglo American Cataloguing Rules (II).

- Thesaurus:

It was explained that a Thesaurus is a tool to control terms and that it is essential for the retrieval and exchange of information.

It has to reflect changes in the subject concerned. It should have a list of terms with semantic and generic relations identified, which represent concepts (either in single or several words). Scope notes (definitions) are given for terms which are not readily understood. The purpose of a thesaurus is to control the terminology used. Users of a thesaurus must critically review terms on a regular basis.

Thesauri had been circulated prior to the Meeting and a description was given on the following thesauri:

POPIN
ZDWF
UNHCR - used in conjunction with the UN Macrothesaurus
Council of Europe - Human Rights Directorate

The British Refugee Council also circulated a list of terms concerning refugee matters.

It was accepted that a comprehensive and fully agreed thesaurus on refugee issues would take time to develop, but that much preparatory work had already been done to this end.

- Indexing Rules:

It was pointed out that indexing rules guide a documentalist through the content of a document in order to ensure that it is described in the same way as by other documentalists (e.g. by asking certain types of questions). (A Thesaurus, on the other hand, supplies the controlled terms to be used to describe the document after having asked these questions.)

A guide to Indexing Rules which had been extensively discussed by ECRE and UNHCR was presented.

It was pointed out that, for action-oriented agencies, the relevant standards for affidavits, interventions and events, require specific sets of controlled vocabularies and indexing rules, distinguishing, for example, between action, verbal action, object of action and instrument.

Standard Formats, a Thesaurus and Indexing Rules were discussed further in separate Working Groups, whose reports are to be found at the back of this report.

6. How Modern Technology can help the fast information flow of an international refugee documentation network:

Instruction was given by Datakonsult on how to develop communication. The limitations and potential of modern information-technology were also discussed.

A description was given on how satellite networking is possible between those countries which have satellite dishes and telecommunication links to them.

It was noted that in some countries state interference may be problem in accessing a satellite dish.

7. How to develop the different tools required for a refugee documentation network

Conclusions and recommendations from the three working groups were submitted to the plenary and after discussion were accepted by the closing plenary. The recommendations concern:

- The organisation of the network;
- Recording Standards; and
- Thesaurus and Indexing Rules.

The final recommendations agreed by the plenary are included in a short summary of the meeting in the separate sheet attached, which was so written in order to allow their wide dissemination.

Susan Blum
for the European Consultation on Refugees and Exiles

London
February 1987

TOWARDS AN INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE DOCUMENTATION NETWORK

Recommendations from the first Meeting on the Establishment of an International Refugee Documentation Network, Bergisch-Gladbach, Federal Republic of Germany, 18 - 22 November 1986.

The meeting was attended by 27 different agencies from all geographical regions, whose activities ranged from advocacy to lobbying, assistance, case-work and research.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. An international network of refugee documentation centres should be established;
2. The subject areas covered by such a network should include all information concerning the background, flight, reception and durable solutions on refugees and those displaced involuntarily;
3. Such a network should be based on a decentralised model with a co-ordinating unit;
4. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) should be requested to assume the co-ordinating function as rapidly as possible;

Pending clarification of the role the UNHCR could play in a network the meeting made the following additional recommendations:

5. UNHCR should be requested to co-ordinate efforts to establish an international refugee thesaurus with the assistance of an advisory group selected from the documentation centres, representatives of the regions and the full range of needs to be met within the network;
6. UNHCR should be requested to initiate work on the standardization of formats required for the easy exchange of documentation and information within the network;
7. The British Refugee Council (BRC) should be requested to assume, on behalf of the participants of the meeting, the immediate follow-up to the Meeting for the forthcoming months, with respect to communication and liaison, until the precise role that UNHCR could assume has been fully clarified.

It was felt that the complexity of the subject matter and the variety of organisations involved should lead to a network
a) in which there will be room for specialised sub-groups and
b) in which the tools to be developed will take into account geographical, technical and subject differences.

The information on the participating agencies, and their many publications, presented at and exchanged during the meeting, was a useful beginning to documentation exchange, which it was felt should be continued immediately after the meeting.

The network will not be limited to the agencies present at the meeting. It was recognized that further developments of the network require future meetings with those for whom refugee documentation exchange is vital to their work.

London, February 1987

APPENDIX C

INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE DOCUMENTATION NETWORK

MEETING 18 - 22 NOVEMBER 1986
BERGISCH GLADBACH, W. GERMANY

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APPENDIX D

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AID TO EUROPEAN REFUGEES

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CARTIAS INTERNATIONALIS

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CENTRAL BRITISH FUND FOR WORLD JEWISH RELIEF

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Telephone: 01--387 3925

CHRISTIAN RELIEF AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICE

Address: P.O. Box 5674
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COMITE CATHOLIQUE CONTRE LA FAIM ET POUR LE DEVELOPPEMENT

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75001 Paris
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COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES

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COMMISSION CATHOLIQUE INTERNATIONALES DES MIGRANTS

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DEFENCE & AID FUND INTERNATIONAL

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London EC1, United Kingdom

DISASTERS EMERGENCY COMMITTEE (DEC)

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London SW1X 7EJ

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EUROPEAN CONSULTATION ON REFUGEES AND EXILES

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London SW8 1SJ

EURO ACTION-ACORD

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Telephone: 01-828 7611

LUTHERAN WORLD FEDERATION-WORLD SERVICE (LWF)

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MEDECINS SANS FRONTIERES

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INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF VOLUNTARY AGENCIES (ICVA)

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SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND (SCF)

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**UNITED KINGDOM COUNCIL FOR OVERSEAS STUDENTS AFFAIRS
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London W2 5FG

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UNITED KINGDOM IMMIGRANTS ADVISORY SERVICE (UKIAS)

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Savoy Street, London WC2E 7EN

Telephone: 01-379 7969

**UNITED NATIONS RELIEF AND WORKS AGENCY FOR PALESTINIAN
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WORLD UNIVERSITY SERVICE (WUS(UK))

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WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

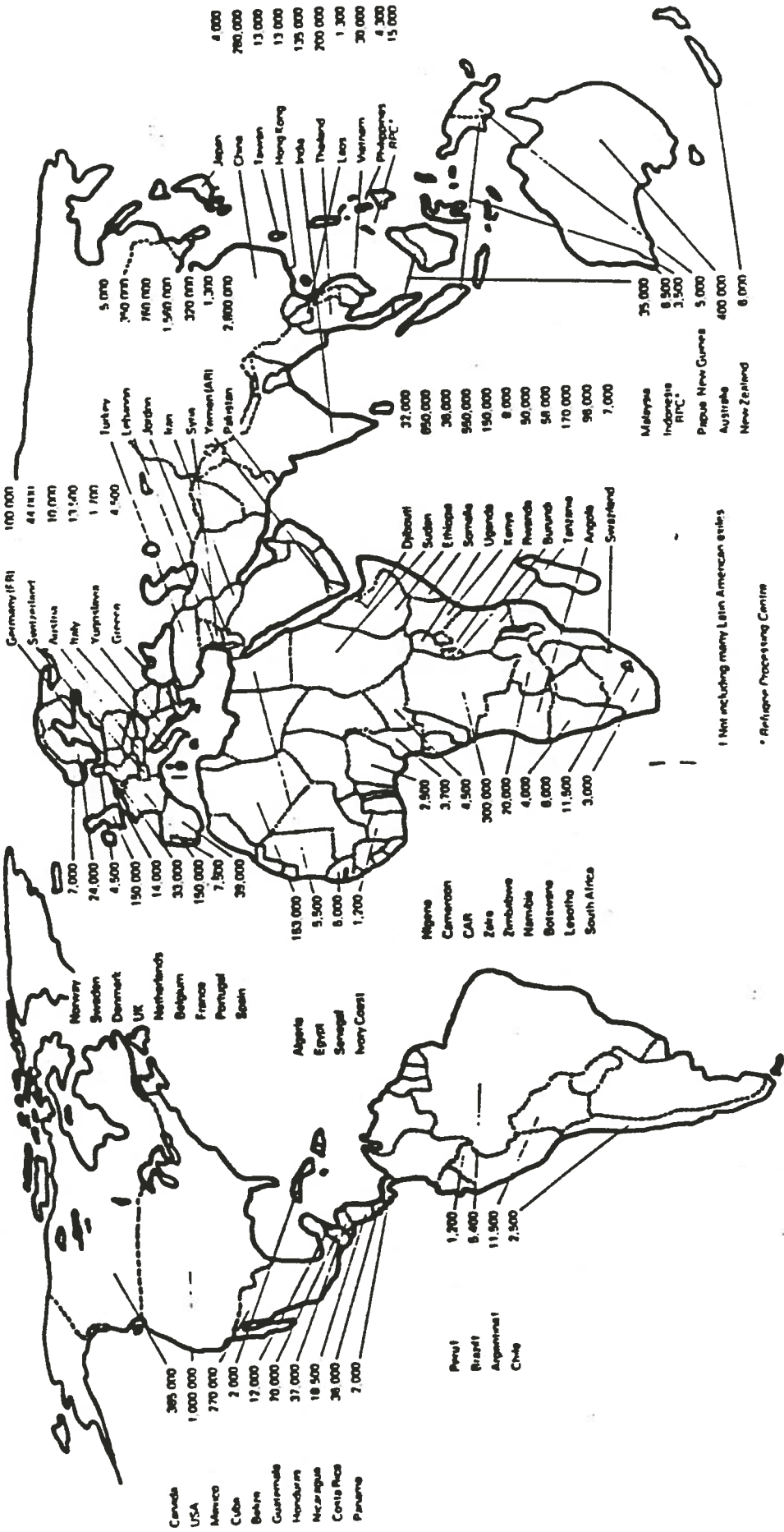
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Telephone: 01-609 0211

British Refugee Law



! Not including many Latin American exiles
 * Refugee Processing Centre

Many of the refugee numbers cited on this map are approximate or estimated. Countries with fewer than a thousand refugees are not listed.

World Refugee Map

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