

IDRC - Lib

THE KEY TO THE FUTURE:  
ACCESS TO INFORMATION

*by*

V. MONKHOUSE



ARCHIV  
MONKHO  
no. 2

***THE KEY TO THE FUTURE:  
ACCESS TO INFORMATION***

Report to the League of Red Cross  
and Red Crescent Societies

BY

Valerie Monkhouse\*  
Associate Director  
Information Sciences Division  
International Development Research Centre (IDRC)  
Ottawa, Ontario  
CANADA

September 1990

---

\* The views expressed in this report are those of the author. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the International Development Research Centre.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Executive Summary</i> . . . . .	i
<i>List of Recommendations</i> . . . . .	x
<i>Acknowledgements</i> . . . . .	xii
<i>Introduction</i> . . . . .	1
<i>Methodology</i> . . . . .	1
<i>Findings</i> . . . . .	2
1. Background . . . . .	2
2. Information Needs of the Staff of the League . . . . .	10
<i>Assumptions</i> . . . . .	20
<i>Proposal</i> . . . . .	21
1. Clientele of the Information Network . . . . .	21
2. Information Network . . . . .	22
3. Benefits . . . . .	22
4. Library and Information Retrieval Service . . . . .	24
5. Implementation Plan . . . . .	27
6. Requirements to Support a Library and Information Retrieval Service . . . . .	28
7. Resources Required . . . . .	37
<i>Conclusion</i> . . . . .	40
<i>Bibliography</i> . . . . .	41
<i>Appendix</i>	
Appendix I	Definitions
Appendix II	Guidelines for Clearing of Files before Sending to Archives
Appendix III	Comité international de la Croix-Rouge : Gestion unifiée de l'information et de la documentation
Appendix IV	List of People Interviewed at the League
Appendix V	Questionnaire
Appendix VI {a}	Response to Questionnaire - Tables
Appendix VI {b}	- Charts
Appendix VII	Suggested Duties and Qualifications

# THE KEY TO THE FUTURE: ACCESS TO INFORMATION

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### A. INTRODUCTION

In this era of an increasing rate of change, a key to providing effective leadership and enhancing service to the most vulnerable people in the world is quick access to reliable information. In its role as Secretariat to the National Societies, it is essential to the effectiveness of the Red Cross Movement that the League take the leadership role in the development of an information network serving the League, National Societies and Delegates in the field.

The League used to have a well-resourced library service and, indeed, it would be considered a normal state of affairs for the League to have one. However, at present, the League does not have one which seriously weakens its capacity to provide informed leadership. In addition, it recognizes that it does not have the capability to provide the basis for an information network among the National Societies.

### B. FINDINGS

A user survey was conducted to establish the general information needs of the staff of the League and Delegates.

#### 1. Why Information is Needed by the League

There are six main reasons why it is essential for the League to manage its information resources more effectively. The League must:

- a. as Secretariat to the National Societies, provide leadership for the development of an information network.
- b. provide leadership to other non-governmental and international organizations in the field of disaster relief by sharing the results of its experiences.
- c. contribute to the international and national information networks by providing access to unique League material.
- d. provide information to the National Societies and Delegates to assist them in their endeavours, such as the development of projects.

- e. provide information support to the Policy Advisory, Operations and Technical Services groups within the League.
- f. have reliable information upon which to make well-informed decisions.

2. Types of Information required

There is a desperate need for information on:

- a. the activities and decisions of the League.
- b. the current structure and operations of the National Societies.
- c. up-to-date socio-economic profiles of countries.
- d. subjects of interest to the League, e.g. disaster relief.

3. Existing Situation

In this Information Age, the League is isolated from the main information networks. The existing situation within the League is that:

- a. there is a library providing minimal service to no one's satisfaction.
- b. the League is not assigning adequate resources for the provision of a proactive and professional information retrieval service.
- c. adequate information to make well-informed decisions is frequently not available.
- d. staff have difficulty in keeping current in their fields of expertise.
- e. the staff of the League are innovative in the ways they use to seek and find information but at a cost in time and quality of work.
- f. information about National Societies is scattered throughout the League. Much simply gets lost.
- g. there is a wealth of information resources in Geneva which is neither being tapped effectively nor being contributed to by the League.
- h. there is a lack of knowledge about the potential of a well-developed information retrieval service.

### C. ASSUMPTIONS

The following general assumptions have been made in the approach to this Proposal:

1. The League of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has a requirement for information in order to function effectively as the Secretariat for the National Societies.
2. As the Secretariat for the National Societies, the League should play a leadership role in the retrieval of information.
3. The League needs to retrieve relevant information quickly in order to respond to crisis situations.
4. The primary clientele of the service is the staff of the League, Delegates and National Societies.
5. To ensure the success of an information retrieval service, it must be based on the information needs of the users and provide service to their satisfaction.
6. It should be cost-effective and practical.
7. Once the League has organized its own information resources efficiently and effectively, it will become the hub of an information retrieval network in which all National Societies can participate.

### D. PROPOSAL

A Proactive Information Retrieval Service geared to the information needs of the staff of the League, the Delegates and the National Societies is proposed. A Proactive Information Retrieval Service is one which:

1. interacts with its users, on an on-going basis, to permit them to keep abreast of their changing information needs.
2. delivers relevant information when it is required.
3. anticipates the information needs of its users.

A Proactive Information Retrieval Service within the League will:

1. provide a service based on the information needs of its users to their satisfaction.
2. coordinate its information holdings for quick retrieval by the staff of the League, Delegates, National Societies and researchers.
3. coordinate an information network among the League and the National Societies.
4. provide a link with the external database of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

## E. BENEFITS

The implementation of this Proposal will result in benefits for the League, National Societies and Delegates.

1. The League.
  - a. The League will become a leader in the provision of information for the National Societies.
  - b. There will be an improvement in the productivity and quality of work of the staff of the League and Delegates, e.g. more thorough briefings for Delegates.
  - c. The staff of the League will be kept up-to-date in their fields of interest.
  - d. There will be better informed decision-making decreasing the vulnerability of League officials.
  - e. The League will be able to learn from the results of its experiences.
  - f. The League will be able to sponsor research on its activities and experience and publish the results.
  - g. The League will be able to play a unique role in international and national information networks.

2. National Societies

- a. There will be regular access to information about all National Societies.
- b. The National Societies will have some assurance that, when information has been sent to the League, it will be able to be retrieved.
- c. For those National Societies where it is particularly difficult to obtain current information, a service will be provided by the League.
- d. There will be access to information about experiences of other National Societies e.g. in the field of disaster relief.
- e. The National Societies will be able to participate in an organized information retrieval service with sister organizations.
- f. The National Societies will be able to seek advice and guidance on the provision of a proactive information retrieval service within their own Society.

3. Delegates

- a. They will have more complete and up-to-date briefings before they go out into the field.
- b. They will be able to maintain an awareness of what is currently taking place in their specialty.
- c. They will have information which they need to make informed decisions in the provision of services in the field.
- d. They will have assurance that the information provided by them will be easily accessible to the staff of the League and to National Societies.



## **F. CONDITIONS FOR SUCCESS**

To ensure the success of this information retrieval service, five basic conditions must be met. They are that:

1. the Management of the League recognize the importance of the quick retrieval of reliable information and proceed with the implementation of this Proposal.
2. to provide an efficient and timely information retrieval service relevant to the needs of the staff of the League, including Regional Offices, Delegates and National Societies, an organizational unit be created to coordinate all the information resources of the League.
3. this organizational unit, the Library and Information Retrieval Service (LIRS), report directly to the Secretary-General.
4. an Advisory Committee to this service be formed with representation at an influential level from all organizational units within the League.
5. a fully trained and experienced information specialist be appointed as Director.

## **G. IMPLEMENTATION**

This recommended implementation plan for the first year is based on the following priorities:

1. Recruiting a well qualified and experienced information specialist as Director.
2. Determining the specific information needs of the staff of the League and Delegates and providing them with proactive service.
3. Providing a Reading Room with current issues of journals and an up-to-date core reference collection.
4. Providing access to the archival material.



## H. RESOURCES REQUIRED

### 1. Start-up Costs

Upgrade core reference collection . . . . .	CHF 30'000
Equipment . . . . .	CHF 50'000
Furniture . . . . .	CHF 20'000
Compact shelving . . . . .	CHF 200'000
Special project (Salaries for 3 people for 1 year) . . . . .	CHF 200'000
<b>TOTAL . . . . .</b>	<b>CHF 500'000</b>

The start-up costs do not include making a security copy of the archives. It is not possible to estimate these costs until the exact quantity and type of material is known. It will also depend on the technology used.

### 2. Annual Budget

Salaries . . . . .	CHF 350'000
Operations . . . . .	CHF 125'000
<b>TOTAL . . . . .</b>	<b>CHF 475'000</b>
Approximate existing annual costs . . . . .	CHF 110'000
<b>TOTAL INCREMENTAL COST . . . . .</b>	<b>CHF 365'000</b>

## I. CONCLUSION

The League is unable to take advantage of its wealth of experience as this information is difficult to access. It is also unable to obtain information from external sources effectively. Many National Societies are in the same position. National Societies, especially in the Third World, are unable to obtain published information. In addition, Delegates in the field are completely cut off from current information.

It is absolutely essential that the staff of the League has the will to implement this proposal. Without a proactive information retrieval service, the League will continue to be outclassed by like-minded organizations. As Secretariat to the National Societies and being responsible for the coordination of the work of Delegates in the field, the League cannot justify its inability to learn from its own experiences and not knowing about the latest developments in its own fields of endeavour.



## ***LIST OF RECOMMENDATIONS***

### ***Major Recommendations***

1. That the League develop its own effective information retrieval service as the first step in developing an information network linking the National Societies with the League.
2. That an organization unit called the Library and Information Retrieval Service (LIRS) be formed within the League to provide an efficient and timely retrieval of information service relevant to the information needs of the staff of the League, including Regional Offices, Delegates and National Societies.
3. That the LIRS report directly to the Secretary-General.
4. That a Library and Information Retrieval Service Advisory Committee be formed with representation at a senior level from all organization units within the League.
5. That a fully trained and experienced information specialist be appointed to manage the LIRS, to be responsible for planning, directing, controlling and evaluating the functions of the LIRS and managing the human and financial resources.

### ***Specific Recommendations***

6. That the LIRS have access to external data bases.
7. That the LIRS be encouraged by management to be actively involved in the library networks available in Geneva.
8. That the collection of the LIRS contain a basic reference collection, current periodicals, the Photo Library, the complete archives of the League of both published and unpublished material, copies of all active vital documents and publications of the National Societies.
9. That the League develop a Records Management Policy for managing active records.
10. That the League ensure that there is a security copy of all published and unpublished archives.

11. That the LIRS prepare a Disaster Plan in the event of fire or flood.
12. That the LIRS provide access to its collection using the centralized computer system.
13. That the League become a participant in an information network of the Red Cross Movement in Geneva by approaching the ICRC to use their software and thesaurus for the recording of the holdings of the LIRS.
14. That a reading room be provided on the first floor to house the latest issues of periodicals received, the League publications and a core reference collection for consultation.
15. That the Reading Room be staffed by an information specialist to answer questions from both the staff of the League and the external clientele.
16. That the rest of the collection be housed together elsewhere but readily accessible to the Reading Room.

## ***ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS***

This report is the result of the enthusiastic cooperation of many people without whose assistance it would not have been accomplished.

To staff members of the League of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and, in particular, the Advisory Committee who were so helpful with their comments and advice; to Catherine Ochsenbein who unstintingly answered all my many questions; to Loredana Marchetti, who made so many arrangements for me to interview those people both within the League, and Fatia Hamsa, who enthusiastically assisted me, I owe gratitude. Not the least, I would like to thank Ian McAllister for asking me to conduct this study and the Canadian Red Cross Society for its support.

I am grateful to Mr. Head, President, International Development Research Centre, for suggesting my name and giving me the opportunity to undertake this assignment. By willingly undertaking additional work, Bev Chataway enabled me to have the time required to carry out this study. The unfailing support of Bibi Hussein and Sylvie Cormier in the preparation of the document has also been much appreciated.

To my family, their understanding during the last six months has been inestimable.





## ***INTRODUCTION***

The International Development Research Centre was pleased to be able to respond to a request from the League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to provide the services of Valerie Monkhouse, Associate Director, Information Sciences Division responsible for the Library and Bibliographic Services, to act as a consultant in order to:

1. assess the current and future requirements for an effective working library and institutional memory system for the League in Geneva and its Regional Offices;
2. formulate a proposal for the most appropriate way to proceed to service the current and anticipated future working library and institutional memory requirements of the League in Geneva and its Regional Offices.

It was agreed that this study would take five to six weeks and would be completed by the end of September, 1990.

## ***METHODOLOGY***

The following methodology was used in this assignment:

1. An Advisory Group within the League was formed to provide advice to the consultant.
2. The consultant conducted interviews with representative staff members of the League.
3. A questionnaire was designed and distributed to the Advisory Group for their comment. Following this, it was sent to staff members of the League to determine their information needs.
4. The results of the questionnaires and the interviews were analyzed to constitute the information requirements of the staff of the League.
5. The existing Library and Archives was assessed.
6. Information resources accessible to the League in Geneva were investigated by visiting appropriate libraries and documentation centres as well as conducting individual research.
7. A proposal was developed based on the findings, the literature and the experience of the consultant.

## ***FINDINGS***

### **1. BACKGROUND**

#### **a. Purpose of the League**

*"The League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is the international federation of National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. It is one of the three components of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, the others being the International Committee of the Red Cross and the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.*

*"The League's function is to contribute to the development of the humanitarian activities of National Societies, to co-ordinate their relief operations for victims of natural disasters, to care for refugees outside areas of conflict and, in so doing, to promote peace in the world <sup>1</sup>.*

#### **b. Organization of the League**

The League comprises approximately 185 staff located in the headquarters in Geneva and three Regional Offices. Approximately 150 delegates are in the field at any one time.

Under the Secretary-General, the League is divided into six major areas: Operations, Technical Advisory Services, Finance, Administration, Human Resources and Public Affairs.

##### Operations

In the provision of assistance to the National Societies, there are three main activities:

##### **i. Disaster relief**

---

<sup>1</sup> League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Review 1988. Geneva, 1988. Back cover.

- ii. Development
  - a. Organization capacity of National Societies
  - b. Programs of National Societies
- iii. Promotion of policies adopted by the General Assembly.

#### Technical Advisory Services

Technical advice and support are given in the areas of health and nutrition, social welfare and women in development.

Finance, Administration, Human Resources and Public Affairs support the work of the League.

#### c. **The League Library and Archives**

Definitions for terms used in this report appear in **Appendix I**.

##### i. **Location**

The Library is located in the basement quite separate from the staff in the League who would use it for their work. The door is kept closed most of the time. The entrance way is dark with locked cupboards on one side. Once in the Library, the circulating collection is located on the left and documents in boxes on the right. Most of the shelves in the Library extend to the ceiling making it difficult to retrieve material on the top shelves. By the window, there is a small reading area with the reference books located nearby. The working area of the person in charge is hidden amid high shelves containing pamphlet boxes.

The Library has two rooms, which are accessible to the users, and most of the space is taken up with the archives. There is also a small locked room just outside the Library for more material. The Library uses the space just outside the Library proper for International Red Cross Movement documents which are kept in the locked cabinets. Recent issues of journals are also displayed there. There is additional storage space in another building across the road.

**ii. Management of the Library**

The Library reports to the Director of Administration and comprises one full time person with a half-time volunteer assistant. The person in charge of the Library was the assistant to the person in charge who left two years ago and has had minimal library training. There is no back up for the person in charge when she is away and she does not keep statistics on library use or work done.

**iii. Acquisitions**

The Library orders books and journals for the League and has a budget of CHF 30,000 per year. It receives much material either in exchange for League publications or, as a result of solicitation, for free. Previously, a list recording the books received by the Library in subject order was prepared twice a year but plans are that this list will only be produced annually from now on. Orders are now being entered on the computer which will save time in preparing the list of books recently received.

**iv. Collection**

The Library collection is made up of the archives of League publications and publications of the National Societies as well as a small collection of books and journals. No security copy has been made of the League's archives although there are a lot of duplicates in another office in the basement for distribution upon request. Most of this material is in pamphlet boxes which are hard to open but at least keep the dust off the material. Some of these publications go back to the twenties but most are from the forties on. It seems that earlier material has ended up in the United States and at the Henry Dunant Institute (HDI). The papers from the meetings of the General Assembly, the International Conferences, the Executive Committee of the General Assembly and the Advisory committees are also kept in the four languages used by the League.

The Library subscribes to 10 newspapers, five of which are international in scope. It also receives 188 journal titles of which 123 are received free of charge. There are approximately 6000 books in the Library. It was not possible to estimate the amount of archival material because of the various locations of the material and the variable amounts of material in the boxes. The reference material comprises about six shelves near the reading area. There are also boxes containing information about people who are or have been important to the League.

Most of the books in the Library are out of date as the really useful ones are in various offices. There is a record in the Library of where they are located. The same holds true for the reference collection so that, although there are some books such as the **Yearbook of International Organizations** for which the current year is available. Users are not in a position to know which reference books are up-to-date or not without visiting the Library. The result is that there is no confidence that up-to-date information is consistently available there.

v. **Organization of the Collection**

The Library has four sections:

- i. Archives of published documents of the League and the National Societies.
- ii. Documents of the League, the National Societies and other organizations which are of interest to the League, arranged by subject.
- iii. Official Red Cross documents.
- iv. Published books and journals.

The archives are kept in boxes arranged alphabetically by country. They contain material which includes general information, reports, statutes and periodical articles about the National Societies. The documents of the National Societies and the League as well as non-Red Cross material which is of interest to the League are arranged by subject. There is no record of individual documents.

The Red Cross documents are kept in locked cabinets in the hallway and arranged chronologically by conference.

There is a card catalogue containing records by author, title and subject for the books. A simplified form of the Universal Decimal Classification System is used for classifying the books. The subject analysis is done using a list of subjects developed in-house which has not been updated for two years. The records of the journals are kept in a visible file where the receipt of individual issues is also recorded.

Because of the way the material is arranged and the fact that there is no control of what should be received, it is very difficult to find one's way around the Library and one does not have the confidence that what is in the Library is complete.

**vi. Other Collections**

There is a collection of material related to the interests of the Health Department on the fourth floor which is maintained by a secretary in that department. The Library purchases the books and journals, catalogues the books and records the receipt of the journals and sends them to the fourth floor. There, the books are recatalogued using a different system and the journals are circulated. Older issues of journals are returned to the Library.

There is a complete collection of statutes in the office of the Technical Adviser, Statutory Matters/Dissemination. The UNDP country profiles are kept in the Delegates' Room.

Records are kept in the Departments for a period of about two years after which they are placed in the basement where they are kept for three years before being sent to the central archives where they are selected according to the established guidelines {See Appendix II}. As each Department organizes its own files according to a departmental system, only that Department can readily find information in these files. In addition, copies of documents which are sent to many Departments are kept by each Department resulting in duplication of the same document in several files for five years. This contributes to the space problem so evident in the League building not to mention the difficulty in searching the files in a poorly lit basement. No consideration is being given to the preservation and security of these files.

The Audio-Visual Collection in the Public Affairs Department comprises posters and film material going back some seventy years. There are negatives of photographs taken by Delegates in the field, of all photographs which have been included in League publications and photographs which have appeared in the media about the League and its activities. It is arranged chronologically and sometimes by subject but the collection is not readily accessible. There is an informal selection policy as to what should be included. At present, it appears to have adequate storage taking into consideration the environmental requirements to preserve such a collection.

**vii. Library Services**

The Library is only able to provide minimal service at present. It purchases books and journals upon the recommendation of Departments and the approval of the Director of Administration. It circulates journals to Departments for circulation within the Departments. It provides a seating space for readers

though, in April a temporary person was there inputting a large League mailing list. Books are loaned for a month with records kept but there is little evidence of following through if they are not returned. The person in charge of the Library says that she does not have time to provide a reference or interlibrary loan service. It should be noted that the person in charge of the Library provides the back-up for the distribution of League documents and serves one hour a week at the main Reception Desk.

**viii. Summary**

There are many collections containing valuable information on the League and the National Societies. They are organized in such a way that they are not easily accessible. Therefore, much time is spent looking for information by staff of the League.

**d. Information Sources in Geneva**

There is a wealth of information resources many of which are more accessible to the League on an institutional basis than to individual staff members. In order to take part in this network to one's advantage, it must be remembered that one must also contribute to it.

**i. International Committee of the Red Cross**

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has adopted the approach of managing its information resources in a similar way to its human resources and financial resources. The concept behind the system is to develop a coordinated system of information and documentation which will permit the staff of ICRC to access information easily and quickly, which they need in the subject of their choice, regardless of where that information may be. It is creating a computerized information and documentation system for its archives, audiovisual collection, records, and library holdings.

In order to prepare for this, ICRC will be converting their electronic data processing system to an AS 400. They are using BASIS for software and they have developed their own descriptive standards. Over the last year, they have developed a thesaurus, for subject access, which is very closely related to the interests of ICRC and not as applicable for wider use. At present, it is written in the French language and there are plans to translate it into English.



There are two databases - one for internal use only which contains the records of the ICRC and one for external use which contains the holdings of the ICRC and HDI libraries, the médiathèque and information on international humanitarian law. For the internal database, only those documents which contain decisions, action, policy, special contacts and standards are included. These represent about 12-13% of the total documentation in ICRC. A single document numbering system is used. This is a five year project with 10 people working on it. It is expected that it will require 5 people to maintain it.

Because the standards have been developed to meet the very specific needs of the records in ICRC, they are not compatible with bibliographic standards used in the library world. The thesaurus also needs to be broadened in scope for library use and this is taking place in consultation with the librarians at ICRC and HDI. {See Appendix III for more information on this system}

The ICRC is indexing the Red Cross Resolutions.

The ICRC has five people working in a unit developing profiles of National Societies and they plan, eventually, to put all this material on the external database. At present, these profiles are available in hard copy and the one seen on Austria was most impressive.

The library at the ICRC has a resource collection on humanitarian law but it is not easily accessible to its primary clientele. It does, however, provide reference and interlibrary loan service.

There is a total of 27.5 people working in the Library, Archives and with the Photographic Collection. There are also other documentation centres within the organization.

## ii. **Henry Dunant Institute Library**

The librarian at the Henry Dunant Institute works part-time and is extremely service oriented. She has an acquisitions budget of CHF 10,000 but has shown much initiative in starting a current awareness service of photocopying tables of contents of the journals in the Library and sending them to individuals in the League and those National Societies in the Third World. The Library subscribes to about 70 journals. Their reference collection is poor. The librarian is very aware of the information resources in Geneva and uses them to provide service rather than depending on the Institutes' own collection.

The librarian has been working cooperatively with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) by inputting into their data base and participates in their fortnightly meetings to expand the thesaurus so that it will meet the Library's needs better.

**iii. Libraries of the United Nations**

The United Nations Library expressed great interest in cooperating with the library in the League by providing material on interlibrary loan and doing searches on their databases free of charge. They have two databases - one on external publications and a joint one with the library in New York on UN documents to which the library in Geneva contributes 10,000 records a year.

The library at the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO) would also offer free searches on their database of about 3500 records. An interlibrary loan service is currently being considered.

The library at the World Health Organization (WHO) is reluctant to participate in an active interlibrary loan service with the League but would be willing to provide the League with a diskette containing records of their holdings.

**iv. Other Libraries**

Information was sought from the libraries of the World Council of Churches and Oxfam for comparative purposes. The World Council of Churches has seven (7) people in its Library and Archives. Oxfam depends heavily on volunteers most of which have been there on a long-term basis, but has four full time posts for the Library, Archives and Photographic Collection. In both cases, judging from the responses to the written questions, little emphasis is given to services offered. The Oxfam library does provide a quarterly Review of Journals which gives brief summaries of new articles and books published. It is circulated to their field offices.

**v. Summary**

There are 200 international libraries in Geneva containing 4 million books and 35,000 different serial titles. In addition, there is a national union catalogue in Bern where one can obtain locations of material held in Swiss libraries. There is also a network called Réseau des bibliothèques utilisant Sibil (REBUS) which provides a free on-line system containing a million records of

holdings of libraries in French Switzerland for the cost of a telepac communications link. It also contains a listing of biomedical and foreign journals and where they are held.

The university libraries are very active in providing interlibrary loan service to other libraries in the city.

## **2. INFORMATION NEEDS OF THE STAFF OF THE LEAGUE**

36 staff members were interviewed representing all parts of the organization at different levels. {See Appendix V}.

A questionnaire was sent out to 125 staff of the League and 29 were returned representing a response rate of 23.2%. {See Appendix V} This section covers the results of the questionnaire and the interviews.

### **a. Why Information is Needed**

Information is needed by the League to:

- i. as Secretariat to the National Societies, provide leadership for the development of an information network.
- ii. provide leadership to other non-governmental and international organizations in the field of disaster relief by sharing the results of its experiences.
- iii. contribute to the international and national information networks by providing access to unique League material.
- iv. provide information to the National Societies and Delegates to assist them in their endeavours, such as the development of projects.
- v. provide information support to the Policy Advisory, Operations and Technical Services groups within the League.
- vi. have reliable information upon which to make well-informed decisions.

**b. Identification of Information Needs**

**i. League Activities**

During the course of the interviews, it became evident that information about both the current and past activities of the League was needed by the staff of the League for managing and administering the Leagues' activities, for learning from past experiences, for preparing for meetings, such as those of the General Assembly, and to publicize the League. This need was reinforced by the results in the questionnaire in which 93% of the respondents indicated that they have a need for current information about the League's activities. Special areas such as decisions of statutory bodies, operational relationships between the League and other components of the Red Cross Movement, current operational activities and policy papers were mentioned. Of those indicating a frequency of use, 18% indicated that they used this material more than once a day, 45% more than once a week and 37% more than once a month.

In response to the question about the need for information about the League's past activities, 93% responded affirmatively. Such types of information as decisions, operational experiences, surveys and guidelines were added. Internal draft reports, appeals, agreements, memoranda of understanding, contracts, situation reports, progress reports, final reports, audit reports and evaluation reports were identified as vital documents which must be kept. A need to index the background documents to policies adopted by the General Assemblies and the International Conferences was also identified. Of those indicating a frequency of use, 14% indicated that they used this material more than once a day, 29% more than once a week and 57% more than once a month.

When asked about where they obtained their information, respondents identified various sources. Many of them depended on the person responsible for an activity or program, others on their own files or their Department's files. In spite of being asked where they would go first to find information, there were often two or three sources mentioned. None mentioned the Library.

During the interviews, one administrative assistant mentioned that, when she is looking for a document, she first of all tries the Department's files. If she is unsuccessful, she then goes to the Stock Room and Library and failing that to the Documentation Production Unit which would have translated the document and may still have it in their files. Another telling example of how difficult information is to find is one where a question from an outside agency was asked of the League about its activities. It required days of work because

of the poor organization of the files. It was also suggested that the Photo Library should be included in any organization of material as photographs are very important for public affairs and training purposes.

Several interviewees expressed concern that researchers and students are not able to come to the League to do research. In fact, one interviewee was very critical of the League for not sponsoring research on its experiences in the field in order to publish the results. He expressed his concern about the need to increase the professionalism of the League e.g. at present, there is no opportunity for in-house research. This would be extremely difficult at present due to the lack of overall organization of the records and library material as well as its incompleteness. In the past, there has been a history of alternatively keeping all records or throwing the material away.

There is a general concern about the amount of staff turnover and the effect that this has on the institutional memory. Many of the staff depend on the few who have been with the League for a long time for their information. One interviewee expressed frustration at being unable to find information going back over the last ten years and gave as an example wanting information on failed projects. He said that documents are spread everywhere and multiple copies are filed in different places. This compounds the space problem.

ii. National Societies

There was a good deal of frustration among the staff of the League in obtaining information about National Societies. Several staff remarked that, when they had asked for information from a National Society, a reply had been received stating that the information had already been given some time ago. As the League is the Secretariat of the National Societies and represents them at the international level, it is imperative that good information about each National Society must be located centrally in the League.

This need became evident in the responses to the questionnaire in which 90% of the respondents indicated that they needed information about National Societies. 13% reported that they require it more than once a day, 27% more than once a week and 60% more than once a month. The greatest need identified was for information on the current activities of National Societies followed by information on their constitutions and structures. Other areas of information needed included fund raising ideas, telecommunication systems, capacity, expertise, training programs for volunteers, financial reports, bilateral agreements, and disaster preparedness plans. Listings of delegates, who are posted, and their skills are also required.

The need for information on National Societies is particularly crucial in order to brief delegates properly before they go to the field. At present, much of this information is in the files of Departments. There are files in the Library containing the statutes. There is some confusion as to whom initially receives annual reports from National Societies - the Desk Officer or the Library. In spite of claims for non-receipt being sent by the Library for annual reports, its collection is still incomplete.

iii. Countries

The third subject area for which there is major need for information is general information on the countries of the world. 93% of the respondents to the questionnaire stated that they needed this information. Overwhelmingly, there is a need for socio-economic, political, demographic and geographic information. However, other specific areas such as the health situation, telecommunications suppliers, the relationship between the National Society and the government, government policy on disasters and health, constitutions, laws, including import laws, and exchange rates were mentioned.

4% of the respondents to the question on frequency indicated that they needed information about countries more than once a day, 42% more than once a week and 54% more than once a month.

Each Department tends to keep its own country profiles which are generally not kept up to date because of lack of time. In addition, the UNDP country profiles are in the Delegates' Room but few staff members were aware of them being located there. One person stated that these were not always up to date either. {See Appendix VI - Chart 1}

iv. Other Subjects

To give an idea of the breadth of the subjects mentioned in the interviews and questionnaires, the following is a partial list. Interest was expressed in both current and in-depth information.

*AIDS*

*Blood transfusion matters*

*Cooperation with other donor agencies*

*Development*

- *General*

- *Issues*

- *Women*

*Disaster preparedness*

*Disaster relief*

*Donor agencies*

*Emergency shelters*

*Fund raising techniques*

*Global economic trends*

*Global investment indices*

*Global statistics*

*Health issues*

*Housing construction*

*Human rights*

*International humanitarian law*

*Management*

- *Personnel*

- *Project*

*Marketing*

*Medical information - current*

*National Societies*

*Natural disasters*

- *Developments*

- *Trends*

*Non-governmental organizations & their activities*

*Nutrition*

*Policies adopted by the General Assembly*

*Primary health care*

*Refugees*

*Refugee producing situations*

*Sanitation*

*Structural adjustment*

*Technical evaluations of automated systems*

*Training techniques*

*World commodity prices*

*Youth*

v. Time Spent Looking for Information

As expected from the results of the interviews, 89% of those who answered this question on the questionnaire indicated that they spent time looking for information. 38% of the respondents estimated that they spent 1 hour a week looking for information, 43% estimated 5 hours a week and 19% 1 day a week. Comments were also made indicating that, although some respondents did not look for the information themselves, their secretary spent considerable time doing so. The earlier example of an administrative assistant looking in four distinct places for League documents is an excellent case.

There is a concern among staff that they are not keeping up to date in their field. They stated that they are unable to remain current because of workload and other priorities. In addition, staff stated that they feel inadequate in being able to serve the National Societies in the way in which they believe should be done. As can be seen in the next section, there are a large number of staff

who use external information resources in Geneva. This is a very time-consuming way to obtain information as it not only involves travel time but also professional staff time in searching for information.

Information is located in various places. Each individual and Department has their own method of organization. Hence, much time is spent in looking for the required information. Not only is the information located physically in many places but also there is a great dependence on individuals' personal files and personal knowledge both of which become unobtainable when that individual is away or leaves the League. The result is that:

1. there is no assurance that the information, which has been obtained, is as complete or accurate as practicable.
2. an enormous amount of time is spent looking for the relevant information.
3. decisions are made on obviously incomplete information because of time constraints.

{See Appendix VI - Chart 2}

vi. Use of Information Sources in Geneva

Relevant information sources were identified during the interviews. 89% of the respondents of the questionnaire completed this question on the use of information resources in Geneva other than what is available at the League. Of these, 81% indicated that they used outside resources and, in some cases, more than one.

**Relevant Information Sources in Geneva**

Henry Dunant Institute	21.1%
UN library	10.5%
UNHCR	14.0%
WHO	12.3%
ICRC	24.6%
UNICEF	5.3%
UNDRO	12.3%

Other specialized libraries or institutions were identified as well as book stores. (see 1d Information Sources in Geneva) {See Appendix VI - Chart 3}



vii. Information Given to other League Staff

It became obvious by the interruptions during the interviews that staff of the League depended on other staff for information. In order to obtain a sense of the extent of this sharing, a question was asked to try and estimate the time involved.

83% of the respondents to the questionnaire indicated that they gave information to other League staff. 69% of these responded to the frequency question indicating that 20% provided information more than once a day, 35% more than once a week and 45% more than once a month. Not only is there the time spent in finding the answer to the question or even in answering it quickly based on memory, there is the problem of constant interruptions which contribute negatively to the heavy workload. {See Appendix VI - Chart 4}

viii. Summary

There is a desperate need for information by the staff of the League in many different subject areas but, in large part, on the League's activities and decisions, the structure and operations of the National Societies and up-to-date socio-economic country profiles.

Consequently, there is a need for an organized system in order to obtain information more efficiently and effectively. There is a two-fold need:

- how to organize the League's own material for quick access; and
- how to make available and easily accessible material of interest to the League from sources external to the League.

The staff of the League are being innovative in the ways which they use to seek and find information but at a cost in time. Therefore, adequate information in order to make a decision is not always available and staff have difficulty in keeping current in their field of expertise.

c. **Identification of Information Services Needed**

Before a proposal can be made as to what would constitute an effective working library and institutional memory for the League, an indication of the services the staff of the League believe would assist them in their day-to-day work is required.

i. Rating of Potential Library Services

There was good response in the questionnaire to the question asking respondents to rate the importance they give to eight specific services. No less than 90% responded to each of the parts and, in one case, there was a response rate of 96.5%.

The services are listed in the order of priority according to the responses for the top three categories:

- Photocopying of articles service
- On-line catalogue
- Book/journal purchasing
- Current awareness services
- Loan of books and journals
- Newspaper clippings
- Table of contents service
- Literature search service

There is obviously the need for increased library services when 86% of the respondents rate these services in the top three categories and 59% in the top two categories. {See Appendix VI - Chart 5}

ii. Current Use of the League Library

During the interviews, the impression was received that staff rarely visited the Library. This assessment was born out in discussions with the person in charge. Despite this, staff are receiving library services the most obvious of which is the circulation of journals to Departments and the purchase of books and journals. There were complaints about the former service in that it takes a long time for journals to circulate. Staff tend to put them to one side because of lack of time to read them or else they are away and the journals sit in their in-baskets. Regarding the purchase of books and journals there was a concern that when a book is recommended for purchase, it does not necessarily mean that it will be approved by the Director of Administration.

90% of the people responding to the questionnaire answered the question on the use of the Library. Of those, 38% indicated that they used the Library and 61% did not. The location of the Library did not seem to be a burning issue as only 55% answered this question and 69% indicated that they would not use the Library more if it were located elsewhere. Likewise, the response to if there were a larger reading room was almost evenly divided. However, 72% of the respondents replied to the two other questions giving a clear indication to the need for a centralized collection {76%} and a different organization of the material {81%}.

Comments such as "*it now does not have much of what I need*" and "*essentially, the Library lacks reference documents*", "*if there were a clear definition of why it exists*" (i.e. to specifically serve which needs) and "*a higher profile, new literature research facilities and assistance in seeking information*" were made.

During the interviews, the need to improve the profile of the Library was stressed and a reading room in a more central location often suggested. It was felt that the Library should have a good reference collection and basic books on the subjects of interest to the League. Another staff member pointed out that better signage is needed in the Library. {See Appendix VI - Chart 6}

iii. Current Use of Department Files in the Basement

90% of the respondents answered the question on their use of the Department files maintained in the basement. Of these, 69% indicated that they did not use them themselves but such comments as "*historical files always become relevant for our work*", "*have asked for material which has sometimes (too often) been retrieved with difficulty*" and "*I have not personally searched the files but have asked department staff. Sometimes information is readily accessed and sometimes not*" were made. The number of respondents was low to the question of organizing the files using one system and the development of special files/data bases giving information. Of those who responded, 75% were in favour of having one system and 90% were in favour of specialized files/databases. A comment that "*we ought to know what is there but not really worthwhile to reorganize it - just provide the key to them*" was made. {See Appendix VI - Chart 7}

d. **General Comments Made by the Staff of the League**

There were some very useful general comments made at the end of the questionnaire.

It is realized that there is a start to a working library existing in the League but that for it to function effectively, the staff must have confidence in it. It was also stated that the Library must be accessible and provide access to material on National Societies and other relevant professional but non Red Cross material. At the present time, the high cost in time of obtaining information is always a factor in deciding how essential/important it is rather than having readily accessible information to improve work performance.

Institutional memory was proclaimed very weak and there is a need to identify League information which is no longer in Geneva but held by National Societies and other institutions. It was felt that the centralization of the archives, carefully organized by a professional person would be a great help to operations. The need to organize the information in the old files and selecting what is important and discarding the rest was also identified.

One interviewee believed that, as the National Societies are members of the League, the League should serve them and provide them with professional advice on library matters. Another stated that the League should enter into sharing arrangements with other organizations. Access to the bibliographic data bases of the libraries of ICRC and HDI was also considered desirable.

Another suggestion was that the League should consider providing a library/information service at three levels:

- i. League staff
- ii. National Societies
- iii. Non Red Cross persons doing research

It was also believed that library services should be available from the League to Delegates and Regional Offices. Judging from an interview with a delegate, this would be very much welcomed. In particular, he felt that up to date information on logistics and nutrition would be most useful.

**e. Summary**

A dissatisfaction with the current situation reflecting the difficulty in obtaining information was expressed. The need for services especially in obtaining access to current documents was identified.

## *ASSUMPTIONS*

The following general assumptions have been made in the approach to this Proposal:

- a. The League of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies has a requirement for information in order to function effectively as the Secretariat for the National Societies.
- b. As the Secretariat for the National Societies, the League plays a leadership role in the retrieval of information.
- c. The League needs to retrieve relevant information quickly in order to respond to crisis situations.
- d. The primary clientele of the service is the staff of the League, Delegates and National Societies.
- e. To ensure the success of an information retrieval service, it must be based on the information needs of the users and provide service to their satisfaction.
- f. It should be cost-effective and practical.
- g. Once the League has organized its own information resources efficiently and effectively, it will become the hub of an information retrieval network in which all National Societies can participate.

## ***PROPOSAL***

A Proactive Information Retrieval Service geared to the information needs of the staff of the League, the Delegates and the National Societies is proposed. A Proactive Information Retrieval Service is one which:

- a. interacts with its users, on an on-going basis, to permit them to keep abreast of their changing information needs.
- b. delivers relevant information when it is required.
- c. anticipates the information needs of its users.

A Proactive Information Retrieval Service will:

- a. provide a service based on the information needs of its users to their satisfaction.
- b. coordinate the information holdings of the League for quick retrieval by the staff of the League, Delegates, National Societies and researchers.
- c. coordinate an information network among the League and the National Societies.
- d. provide a link with the external database of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

### **1. CLIENTELE OF THE INFORMATION NETWORK**

The clientele of the Information Network will comprise three main groups:

- a. The staff of the League in Geneva and the Regional Offices.
- b. Delegates, staff of the National Societies and the International Committee of the Red Cross.
- c. Researchers, libraries, documentation centres and the international community.

## 2. INFORMATION NETWORK

The Strategic Work Plan of the League for the Nineties identified the need: to "*develop a professional cadre to support services*";

for "*an information development programme to provide information/communications facilities and training for staff in National Societies*";

for "*strengthening the quantity and quality of the continuous flow of information regarding development policies, plans, etc.*" and

for the "*establishment of an improved information and data system.*"<sup>2</sup>

The League is the Secretariat to the National Societies and represents them internationally. It has much valuable information on its activities and those of the National Societies going back over many years. Concurrently, developments in computing and telecommunication technologies mean that cooperative networks and improved individual access to information are possible.

It should be expected that the League would provide the leadership in the development of an information network to serve both the National Societies and itself. In planning for this Information Network, it is necessary for the League to develop its own effective information retrieval service first, keeping in mind this ultimate objective.

### Recommendation

*That the League develop its own effective information retrieval service as the first step in developing an information network linking the National Societies with the League.*

## 3. BENEFITS

The implementation of this Proposal will result in benefits for the League, National Societies and Delegates.

---

<sup>2</sup> League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Strategic work plan of the League for the Nineties. Geneva, 1989. Various pagings.

**a. The League**

- The League will become a leader in the provision of information for the National Societies.
- There will be an improvement in the productivity and quality of work of the staff of the League and Delegates, e.g. more thorough briefings for Delegates.
- The staff of the League will be kept up-to-date in their fields of interest.
- There will be better informed decision-making decreasing the vulnerability of League officials.
- The League will be able to learn from the results of its experiences.
- The League will be able to sponsor research on its activities and experience and publish the results.
- The League will be able to play a unique role in international and national information networks.

**b. National Societies**

- There will be regular access to information about all National Societies.
- The National Societies will have some assurance that, when information has been sent to the League, it will be able to be retrieved.
- For those National Societies where it is particularly difficult to obtain current information, a service will be provided by the League.
- There will be access to information about experiences of other National Societies e.g. in the field of disaster relief.
- The National Societies will be able to participate in an organized information retrieval service with sister organizations.
- The National Societies will be able to seek advice and guidance on the provision of a proactive information retrieval service within their own Society.



**c. Delegates**

- They will have more complete and up-to-date briefings before they go out into the field.
- They will be able to maintain an awareness of what is currently taking place in their specialty.
- They will have information which they need to make informed decisions in the provision of services in the field.
- They will have assurance that the information provided by them will be easily accessible to the staff of the League and to National Societies.

**4. LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RETRIEVAL SERVICE**

Service should be provided actively to the staff of the League in Geneva, the Regional Offices of the League, Delegates in the field and National Societies. The philosophy of a proactive service where the information is delivered to the user rather than the user being expected to visit and search for the information should be adopted. It will save the time of the users, who are not expert in searching for information, and, ultimately, improve the productivity of the League. It will also ensure that Delegates and National Societies receive needed information.

At present, much time is spent by many League staff members looking for information in various locations. There could be a large improvement in staff productivity by having an information specialist on staff who could:

- provide information needed in the decision-making process of managers, analysts and other staff members in a cost-effective and relevant manner;
- anticipate needs of both individual users and the League as a whole;
- utilize storage and retrieval technology to the fullest to acquire and deliver information useful to the user;
- publicize the services and educate users so that information resources and services are used to the optimum advantage for the benefit of the League;
- train staff to provide services in an efficient manner;

- interface effectively with other groups within the Movement as well as other libraries and documentation centres, experts and other sources of information.

Information specialists use their specialized education, knowledge, experience and communication skills to define a problem and solve it by observing the user, querying the user about the problem, searching for the data or information and synthesizing the results in order to deliver an information product. The measure of success is the degree to which the information helps the user solve the problem.

There are basically two types of information needs of users. One is for information to respond to a specific need and the other is to allow the users to keep up-to-date with what is taking place in their particular field of interest. Different services are required to meet these needs.

Specific needs for information should be met by:

- a. answering simple, factual reference questions, such as looking for an address in a directory.
- b. identifying titles of publications and verifying references.
- c. preparing on-line literature searches either from the internal database or external databases.
- d. selecting materials in response to a request.
- e. referring users to experts when the information retrieval service is unable to respond adequately to the request from its own collection and expertise.
- f. maintaining the profiles on each of the National Societies and countries of the world.

In the case of assisting users in keeping current in their field, this should be done in three ways by:

- a. preparing a subject profile to search against the relevant databases. This will provide a print-out, usually monthly, to inform the user what has been published in their subject of interest during the past month.

- b. establishing the subjects interests of users, scanning the material received and forwarding items of interest to the user.
- c. asking the users to select journal titles which interest them and then sending them photocopies of the tables of contents when the journal issues are received. Journal issues should no longer be circulated with the exception of newsletters.

Document delivery should be provided by:

- a. lending the document.
- b. photocopying the document.
- c. borrowing the document on interlibrary loan.
- d. lending documents on interlibrary loan to users external to the League.

In the case of Delegates, this information retrieval service should be involved in all briefings to establish their information needs while they are in the field. An especially valuable service to Delegates would be sending them material to assist them in resolving local problems and to permit them to know what else is happening in the world related to their work.

There are other more in-depth services which could be given. Some suggestions are:

- a. the location, synthesis and evaluation of information from newspapers and newsletters and provision of it in written form on a frequent and regular basis.
- b. the distribution of abstracts of the current literature received, especially that from the Third World, which has not been indexed in accessible external databases.
- c. the distribution of packages of information on predetermined topics to the Regional Offices and Delegates on a regular basis.
- d. the organization of lunch time presentations on subjects of particular interest to the staff of the League.

In order to provide an effective service, an orientation programme comprising at least two training sessions needs to be developed to inform new and current users and potential users of the services available.

**Recommendation**

*That an organization unit called the Library and Information Retrieval Service (LIRS) be formed within the League to provide an efficient and timely retrieval of information service relevant to the information needs of the staff of the League, including Regional Offices and Delegates.*

**5. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN**

The recommended implementation plan for the first year is based on the following priorities:

- a. Recruiting a well qualified and experienced information specialist as Director.
- b. Determining the specific information needs of the staff of the League and Delegates and providing them with proactive service.
- c. Providing a Reading Room with current issues of journals and up-to-date core reference collection.
- d. Providing access to the archival material.

**PROPOSED TIME-TABLE**

	1990				1991						
	DEC	JAN.	FEB.	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT.
1. Recruit Director	—	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
2. Establish role and objectives	.	—	—	—	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
3. Recruit two additional staff members	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
4. Start table of contents and photocopy services	.	.	—	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
5. Start interlibrary loan service	.	.	.	—	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
6. Design Reading Room lay-out and order furniture	.	.	.	—	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

	1990												1991											
	DEC	JAN.	FEB.	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN.	FEB.	MAR	APR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG	SEPT		
7. Plan for online access to external data bases	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.		
8. Commence analysis and recording of currently received material in the database	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.		
9. Provide reference services including online and referral services	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.		
10. Select material to upgrade the reference collection	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.		
11. Plan for implementation of selecting, analysing and recording archival material (Special Project)	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.		
12. Offer an orientation program on services to all staff	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.		
13. Commence Special Project	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.		

**6. REQUIREMENTS TO SUPPORT A LIBRARY AND INFORMATION RETRIEVAL SERVICE**

**a. Staff**

The success of a service depends on the personnel who are providing that service. The prime requisite for an effective Information Retrieval Service is well qualified and trained staff who have a strong service orientation.

The educational programmes for librarians and documentalists in Switzerland are undergoing major changes at present. Since 1987, the University of Geneva has offered post-graduate training in documentation leading to the Specialist Certificate in Documentary Information (CESID). This programme is in addition to specialised university training in library management and documentation for those responsible for documentary information. In 1989, a working group of the Swiss Association for Documentation started preparing a training programme to be coordinated over the coming years with the aim to develop a single training programme for librarians, archivists and documentation specialists.

The Geneva Library School is starting a new programme in September, 1990 which is intended to introduce a more user-oriented approach to librarianship. In planning this programme, a study group of specialists has determined the requirement profile of a librarian, documentalist and archivist in order to determine the teaching objectives. This is an exciting prospect as the Director of this Service will need all these requirements as well as having strong management skills.

The management of a service, such as the one which is being proposed, is a complex task. Its raison d'être must be to provide timely and relevant service to the users but much planning and organization must take place behind the scenes. It is absolutely necessary that the authority be given to the Director of the LIRS commensurate with this responsibility.

For the implementation of this Proposal to succeed, the Director for this Service should be recruited first in order to plan for an effective service.

#### **Recommendation**

*That a fully trained and experienced information specialist be appointed to manage the LIRS, to be responsible for planning, directing, controlling and evaluating the functions of the LIRS and managing its human and financial resources.*

#### **b. Sources of Information**

There are many sources of information available to an information specialist providing a service all of which will be tapped as needed in order to retrieve the information required.

##### **i. Sources Other Than the League's Holdings**

In addition to the League's own holdings, which will be discussed in {ii}, there are other information sources which are relevant to the information needs of the League. There are commercial and UN data bases which are relevant to the subject interests of the League and should be searched for information. In addition, the ICRC is developing profiles on the National Societies and the LIRS should be able to obtain this information as well as work closely with the ICRC on their development.

There are well developed library networks in Geneva to which the League can make a unique contribution and from which it can acquire useful information.

### **Recommendations**

*That the LIRS have access to external data bases.*

*That the LIRS be encouraged by management to be actively involved in the library networks available in Geneva.*

### ii. Collection

The League has much valuable information on its activities in its holdings going back over many years. However, as it is located in many places, there is no way at present to establish how complete it is. With a repository for this information, it could become a valuable resource not only for the League but also for the National Societies and the international community in general. Such information as the documents of the meetings of the General Assembly are of wide interest to the Movement as a whole and should be readily accessible at the League. However, the documents of the meetings of the International Conferences, and access to them, should not necessarily be the responsibility of the League. As the ICRC has a complete set in the process of being indexed in their database, it would seem that a duplication of effort in the League is unnecessary provided the League has access to that data base. Other documents related to the work of the League and National Societies should be considered as vital documents and retained in perpetuity.

Included in these are:

*Agreements between Societies*

*Appeals*

*Assessments*

*Audits*

*Constitutions*

*Consultants reports*

*Contracts*

*Disaster plans*

*Evaluations*

*Final reports*

*Guideline for disasters*

*Memoranda of understanding*

*Progress reports*

*Situation reports*

*Statutes*

At present, if a vital document cannot be found it is lost forever. The same is true for a publication but the likelihood of finding it outside the League is good except that it is very embarrassing for the League to have to ask for one of its own publications from another organization. Likewise, it is embarrassing for a staff member of the League to be told by a National Society that the information has already been transmitted to the League in response to a request. It is, therefore, essential that a security copy should be made of all League publications and vital documents.

The collection of the Photo Library complements the written documentation and should eventually be considered part of the information resource.

The handling of current records, other than vital records and the unpublished archives, is beyond the scope of this study. However, as they are a valuable source of information, it would be preferable that they be included as part of the collection of the LIRS .

In addition to centralizing the League's own information holdings, the staff of the League require access to material published outside the League. An up-to-date core collection of reference material, e.g. directories, should be maintained as well as current issues of selected periodicals. Basic publications on the subject interests of the League should continue to be acquired. A copy of all publications of the League and of the National Societies should be considered part of the collection of the LIRS.

The LIRS will need to keep informed about the developing information needs of the League in order to select materials in anticipation of the actual requirement for them. Reviewing announcements of new publications and subsequent consultation with staff members regarding possible purchase should be ongoing. As well, the collection will need to be constantly reviewed so that missing items or lack of required subject coverage in the collection is identified and the situation rectified. For instance, up-to-date country profiles developed by other organizations, such as the UNDP, was identified as a gap in the Library collection during the assessment of users' needs.

Each of the three sources requires different methods of ensuring that the material is acquired when it is needed. The most time-consuming should be the obtaining of material from external sources which may be acquired by purchase, exchange or gift. Procedures should be set up and followed for the deposit of the appropriate material from the League and National Societies. Internal procedures and records are needed to be set up to allow for the follow-up of orders and requests not received.



### **Recommendations**

*That the collection of the LIRS contain a basic reference collection, current periodicals, the Photo Library, the complete archives of the League of both published and unpublished material, copies of all active vital documents and publications of the National Societies.*

*That the League develop a Records Management Policy for managing active records.*

*That the League ensure that there is a security copy of all published and unpublished archives.*

*That the LIRS prepare a Disaster Plan in the event of fire or flood.*

### **c. Organization of the Collection**

Given this concept of information holdings, there should be an integrated system so that users can retrieve information from the records, the library collection, published and unpublished archives and the collection of the Photo Library using one system, preferably a computerized one.

In order to organize a collection, there are three main components. Each item has to be described, classified and indexed by subject. For each of these activities standards are required for consistency to ensure ease and relevance of retrieval of information from the collection.

The LIRS can either develop its own standards or adopt standards which have already been developed. There is also the choice of continuing with a manual system or having an automated system.

At present, the League has an AS400, which has the capacity to include the data base of the LIRS, to which all staff members of the League have access. It then becomes a matter of choosing the appropriate software and entering records of the material on the system.

The League is fortunate in that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been addressing the access to its information for the last four years and has been proceeding in an integrated manner to capture its information holdings. It has been using a software package, which is compatible with the AS400 at the League, and has developed a thesaurus for its records holdings which is presently being expanded to accommodate the subject needs of its Library and the Library of the Henry Dunant Institute. It is planned that within a year this thesaurus will be translated so that it will be bilingual French-English.

Therefore, much of the developmental work has already been done by a member of the Red Cross Movement. It would not be cost effective for the Movement or the League to proceed with developing a system from scratch or to customize a system available commercially when the ICRC has already developed a system.

#### **Recommendations**

*That the LIRS provide access to its collection using the centralized computer system.*

*That the League become a participant in an information network of the Red Cross Movement by approaching the ICRC to use their software and thesaurus for the recording of the holdings of the LIRS.*

#### **d. Space, Location and Equipment**

There is obviously a need to raise the profile of the value of information resources in the League. There are many studies which indicate that the further away the information resource is from its users the less it will be used. At present, the entry to the Library is most uninviting and off the beaten track far away from the staff who would use it the most. There is a need for adequate space which would allow for a flexible layout to include a reading area, an area to display recent additions to the LIRS collection, a work area for LIRS staff and a place to house the collection. There should be acceptable lighting, minimal changes in heat and humidity and a control on the amount of dust in the space to be used.

There was also a need identified for a reading room. In addition, a requirement for computer access to the records of the collection was stated.

Equipment will be needed for the LIRS to input and retrieve, with a printed copy, from an automated system, to photocopy articles, to receive information from external sources and to read optical disks or microfilm whichever medium is chosen to make a security copy of all the archives.

### **Recommendations**

*That a reading room be provided on the first floor to house the latest issues of periodicals received, the League publications and a core reference collection for consultation.*

*That the Reading Room be staffed by an information specialist to answer questions from both the staff of the League and the external clientele.*

*That the rest of the collection be housed together elsewhere but readily accessible from the Reading Room.*

### **e. Management**

At present, there is little coordinated management of the information resources existing in the League. Furthermore, the provision of an efficient retrieval service based on the use of these resources is not being considered. For the work of an organization to be really effective, a strong service oriented approach to the management of its information needs is required.

In addition, there has been a recognition of a need for information by the staff members of the League and Delegates. Extensive collections of books, magazines, reports and other materials are scattered around the offices and, despite the accumulation of publications and records, the ones needed often cannot be found. Professional staff are aware that they are not doing the reading necessary to keep up to date with the developments in their fields and many staff are spending a good deal of time trying to track down information. This diminishes the time that they have to spend using the information - if they find it - in their work. The staff of the League is, therefore, unable to take advantage of prior experience and does not have time to keep up with developments in their fields of expertise. Consequently, there is a need to manage the information resources of the League in such a way as to be able to retrieve relevant information easily. This requires completely different expertise from the management of the publication, translation, and public affairs activities.

The League is the Secretariat to the National Societies and represents them internationally. It should be expected that it would act as an information resource to all National Societies about others. In addition, experiences of other agencies similar to the League are not being captured.

There is an increasing complexity of all organizations, including the League, which is leading to a proliferation of records. In addition, there is an ever-increasing amount of published information available throughout the world. Coupled with this, is a decreasing availability of storage space and the need to locate specific information more quickly.

There are two approaches to the handling of information. The first is to organize the material containing the information individually or in small groups which means that much time is spent looking for the information when it is not available within that group. The second is to coordinate the organization of the information for quick retrieval by all staff. At present, the League is following the first course with the result that duplicate records are being kept and the staff are spending their time looking for information in crisis situations.

There is an increasing number of analysts who come to the League to work for short periods of time. This means that the people who follow have to start from scratch learning about the experiences of the League. They are also having difficulty keeping up-to-date in their subject fields without a well-developed information resource infrastructure.

The present approach within the League is no longer valid given the growing recognition that information work is not something which anyone can do but is rather a complex set of skills and understandings. The impact of the developments in information science and telecommunications over the last ten years has not only increased the complexity but also speeded up the retrieval of information.

The League has much valuable information on its activities and those of the National Societies going back over many years. It is believed that, by ensuring the cost-effective and coordinated management of League information holdings as a corporate resource, support will be given for effective decision making, meeting operational requirements and protecting the legal, financial and other interests of the League. The widest possible use of the information could be made by ensuring that it is organized to facilitate access by those who require it. The organization and conservation of information holdings would permit the League to reconstruct its evolution of policy and program decisions, learn from its experiences and allow

for historical research. The major benefit, however, would be that of saving the time of the many staff members of the League who look for information on a daily basis.

When someone wants information, that person is not concerned from where it comes. It could be from internal documents, published material, internal documents of other agencies, electronic records from databases, photographs or from consulting experts. A centralized information service would not only have access to all these sources but, with an information specialist who is trained to retrieve the required information efficiently, retrieval would be timely.

The material in the Library, Photo Library, published and unpublished archives as well as the information in the records are of interest to all staff members in the League and should be organized in such a way as to serve the organization as a whole including its Regional Offices and Delegates. By incorporating all this material under one organizational unit, it should ensure more efficient access to it.

An institutional memory system has to integrate the access to all the stored information in an institution for it to be efficient. It should be central to the way an organization functions for it to be effective. However, centralizing and organizing all the material by itself is not sufficient as would be the case in a documentation centre. There has to be a strong service orientation based upon the information needs of the League.

This organization unit must be placed in a position from which it can build and maintain effective communication with all the clients it will serve. In addition, the information resources of the League should be considered of as equal importance to its human and financial resources and should be given the equivalent profile. Policies should be developed within the League to reflect this.

There is a need to involve the staff of the League who have not been used to receiving a supportive information service in order to ensure that the LIRS meets their information needs. The present provides an excellent opportunity of ensuring that, during the development of such a service, League staff are involved. A Library and Information Retrieval Service Advisory Committee should be formed to:

- i. define, recommend and periodically review the role and objectives of the LIRS.
- ii. develop, review and recommend LIRS policies, e.g. a Collection Development Policy and Resource Sharing Policy both within the Red Cross Movement and on an international level, to the Secretary-General.

- iii. advise the Director, LIRS regarding service requirements.

Each organization unit within the League should appoint a representative on this Committee with the Director, LIRS being a permanent member.

### **Recommendations**

*That the LIRS report directly to the Secretary-General.*

*That a Library and Information Retrieval Service Advisory Committee be formed with representation at an influential level from all organization units within the League.*

## **7. RESOURCES REQUIRED**

### **a. Human Resources**

The success of a service depends on the personnel who are providing that service. In the case of the LIRS, there is a requirement for staff who must have very specialized training and a strong service-oriented attitude with the accompanying inter-personal skills. In order to provide an ongoing service as proposed, four people will be required. Two should have the qualifications of an information specialist, one should have technical qualifications and one general qualifications preferably with experience in a library or a documentation centre.

By ensuring that one of the information specialists is on duty at all times, an information service will be able to be maintained. **Suggested duties and qualifications are listed in Appendix VII.**

Additional resources will be required on a temporary basis to reorganize and move the existing collections once the implementation plan for the LIRS has been formulated.

**b. Financial resources****i. Start up Costs**Reference collection

Upgrade core reference collection .....	CHF 30'000
---	------------

Equipment

1 Personal computer and printer .....	CHF 7'000
2 Terminals and printers .....	CHF 7'000
1 Fax machine .....	CHF 3'000
1 Microfiche reader printer .....	CHF 10'000
Software .....	<u>CHF 23'000</u>
<b>Sub-total .....</b>	<b>CHF 50'000</b>

Furniture

Furniture for staff, display shelving and reception desk .....	CHF 20'000
Compact shelving dependent on configuration .....	CHF 200'000

Special Project

Salaries for 3 people for one year .....	<u>CHF 200'000</u>
<b>Total Set-up Costs* .....</b>	<b>CHF 500'000</b>

\* Does not include providing a security copy of the archives

ii. Annual budget

Salaries .....	CHF 350'000
Acquiring published material from external sources .....	CHF 60'000
Access to external databases .....	CHF 10'000
Supplies including the leasing of a photocopier .....	CHF 10'000
Travel (conferences and to the field) .....	<u>CHF 45'000</u>
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>CHF 475'000</b>
Existing annual costs are approximately .....	<u>CHF 110'000</u>
<b>TOTAL INCREMENTAL COST .....</b>	<b>CHF 365'000</b>



## ***CONCLUSION***

The League is unable to take advantage of its wealth of experience as this information is difficult to access. It is also unable to obtain information from external sources effectively. Many National Societies are in the same position. National Societies, especially in the Third World, are unable to obtain published information. In addition, Delegates in the field are completely cut off from current information.

It is absolutely essential that the staff of the League has the will to implement this proposal. Without a proactive information retrieval service, the League will continue to be outclassed by like-minded organizations. As Secretariat to the National Societies and being responsible for the coordination of the work of Delegates in the field, the League cannot justify its inability to learn from its own experiences and not knowing about the latest developments in its own fields of endeavour.

## ***BIBLIOGRAPHY***

Ahrensfield, Janet L., E. B. Christianson and D. E. King. Special Libraries: a Guide for Management, 2d. ed. rev. Washington, D. C., Special Libraries Association, 1986. 75 p.

Atherton, Pauline. Handbook for Information Systems and Services. Paris, Unesco, 1977. 259 p.

Brenzikofer, Theo. "Die aus- und weiterbildung des dokumentars; heute--morgen--visionen", ARBIDO-Special, v. 4, 1989, p. 40-42.

Couture, Carol and J.-Y. Rousseau. The Life of a Document: A Global Approach to Archives and Records Management. Trans. by David Homel. Montréal, Véhicule, 1987. 357 p.

Court, Jacqueline. "Ecole de bibliothécaires: nouvelles de la rentrée", Hors-texte, v. 26, 1988, p. 5-11.

Estermann-Wiskott, Yolande. "Une formation supérieure pour documentaliste: le CESID", ARBIDO-Special, v. 4, 1989, p. 35-38.

Farkas-Conn, Irene S. "Information as a corporate resource", Information Services & Use, v. 9, 1989, p. 205-215.

Flood, Stephen. "The small organisation model" in Information Management: from Strategies to Action ed. by Blaise Cronin. London, Aslib, 1985. p. 127-147.

Glutz-Ruedin, Brigitte. "L'Ecole de bibliothécaires de Genève restructure son curriculum", ARBIDO-Revue, v. 4, 1989, p. 5-9.

Grainger, Felicity and S. Ladyman. "Integrating library functions into a general computing network", Aslib Proceedings, v. 41, 1989, p. 109-117.

Ketelaar, Eric. Archival and Records Management Legislation and Regulations: a RAMP Study with Guidelines. Paris, Unesco, General Information Programme and UNISIST, 1985. 119 p.

League of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Strategic Work Plan of the League for the Nineties. Geneva, 1989. 15 p.

Matarazzo, James M. and others. President's Task Force on the Value of the Information Professional, Preliminary Study. Final Report. Washington, Special Libraries Association, June 1987. 53 p.

Moore, Nick. "Developing the use of a neglected resource: the growth of information management", Journal of Information Science, v. 15, 1989, p. 67-70.

Prytherch, Ray comp. Harrod's Librarians' Glossary and Reference Book of Terms Used in Librarianship, Documentation and the Book Crafts 6th. ed. Aldershot, England, Gower, 1987. 880 p.

Sangway, Diana. "Government approach to information management", Aslib Proceedings, v. 41, May, 1989, p. 179-189.

## DEFINITIONS



These definitions have been developed for the specific purpose of this report.

**1. Archives**

Archives are non-current records permanently preserved, with or without selection, by those responsible for their creation or by their successors.

**2. Documentation Centre**

A Documentation Centre is a place where publications are received, processed, preserved, summarized, abstracted and indexed; where bulletins relating to such material are prepared for distribution to those interested; where research is undertaken, bibliographies prepared and copies made.

**3. Information Centre**

An Information Centre performs the same functions as a working library but has a wider variety of nonstandard, information-containing materials and undertakes a greater depth of control and analysis of information.

**4. Institutional Memory**

The Institutional Memory of an institution is a historical record of the activities, decisions and experiences of that institution. It is located in the records of the institution, in its publications and in the memory of its staff.

**5. Published archives**

Published archives refers to the publications of the League and the National Societies since their inception.

**6. Records**

Records are recorded information, regardless of form or medium, created, received and maintained by an agency, institution, organisation or individual in pursuance of its legal obligation or in the transaction of business of any kind.

**7. Unpublished Archives**

Unpublished archives comprises those records of the League which are kept to reflect the policies, decisions and activities of the League for historical purposes.

**8. Working Library**

A Working Library provides services specialized to the information needs of a well-defined clientele usually in an organizational setting.

## GUIDELINES FOR CLEARING OF FILES BEFORE SENDING TO ARCHIVES

1. Eliminate all administrative and financial papers related to missions, invoices, vouchers, etc. Any queries should be referred to Finance Department.
2. Eliminate all courtesy letters.
3. Eliminate internal memoranda not having a direct influence on activities.
4. Eliminate copies of documents/memoranda/letters/telexes/telefaxes received from other Departments.
5. Keep only one copy of any document/memorandum/letter/telex/telefax.
6. Send any personnel-related papers and any training-related papers/materials to Human Resources.
7. Eliminate documents from other organizations. If these are required for reference they should be kept as current papers in the Departments and eliminated as they become obsolete.
8. Remove all plastic covers and all paper clips.
9. Where possible, amalgamate files. Any superfluous files/boxes to be returned to Administration.
10. Send any photographs, with appropriate captions, to the Photo Library.
11. Send any superfluous League documents/publications to Stock.



COMITE INTERNATIONAL DE LA CROIX-ROUGE  
GESTION UNIFIEE DE L'INFORMATION ET DE LA DOCUMENTATION

( G U I D )

---

1 .

POURQUOI LE GUID ?

2 .

QUI EST LE GUID ?

3 .

QUE FAIT -T- IL ?

4 .

QUE COUTE -T- IL ?



## 1. POURQUOI LE GUID ?

L'idée du GUID n'est pas neuve.

Elle remonte au début des années 1980, avec l'accroissement exponentiel des documents produits au CICR (1 Mio pages /an) et les disfonctionnements qui en découlent:

- > *insuffisance ou inadéquation des structures en place*
- > *prolifération sauvage de nouvelles structures très cloisonnées qui refont en double, en triple... ce qui existe déjà (démultiplication) des copies, des classements, sans toutefois combler les lacunes.*
- > *dérapage des coûts.*
- > *au bout du compte : difficulté pour l'utilisateur de s'y retrouver vite et bien sans trop de travail de recherche tous azimuts sans tâtonnements inutiles.*

J-P. Gaume, actuellement au MICR, a été le premier à tirer la sonnette d'alarme et à attirer l'attention des responsables sur la nécessité de mieux gérer cette masse documentaire.

La nécessité d'une GESTION DE L'INFORMATION au CICR s'est alors imposée, au même titre que la GESTION DES RESSOURCES FINANCIERES ou la GESTION DES RESSOURCES HUMAINES.

Plusieurs études (parfois contradictoires) ont été menées dans ce sens par des bureaux spécialisés (PMM, BATTELLE) pour aboutir en 1986, à la création du GROUPE ARCHITECTE, chargé de faire la synthèse de ces différentes études et, enfin, de conclure!

Le GROUPE ARCHITECTE était un groupe mixte composé de spécialistes des problèmes de gestion et d'organisation de la DOCUMENTATION et de collaborateurs CICR connaissant parfaitement bien le milieu. Le mandat de ce groupe était clair : proposer une politique de l'information interne au CICR accompagné d'un programme d'action pour sa mise en oeuvre (avec évaluation des coûts).

C'est ainsi qu'en 1987, le GROUPE ARCHITECTE a pu présenter un SCHEMA DIRECTEUR aux différentes instances décisionnelles du CICR et que ses conclusions ont été approuvées à l'unanimité en septembre par le CONSEIL EXECUTIF et en novembre par l'ASSEMBLEE.

Les principales conclusions sont présentées sous forme de schémas dans les pages suivantes.

FINALITE DU GUID

METTRE EN PLACE SUR UNE PERIODE DE CINQ ANS, UN SYSTEME UNIFIE  
D'INFORMATION ET DE DOCUMENTATION (essentiellement interne CICR)  
QUI PUISSE PERMETTRE A TOUT COLLABORATEUR CICR D'AVOIR ACCES

**FACILEMENT** ET **RAPIDEMENT**

A

**TOUTES LES INFORMATIONS UTILES**

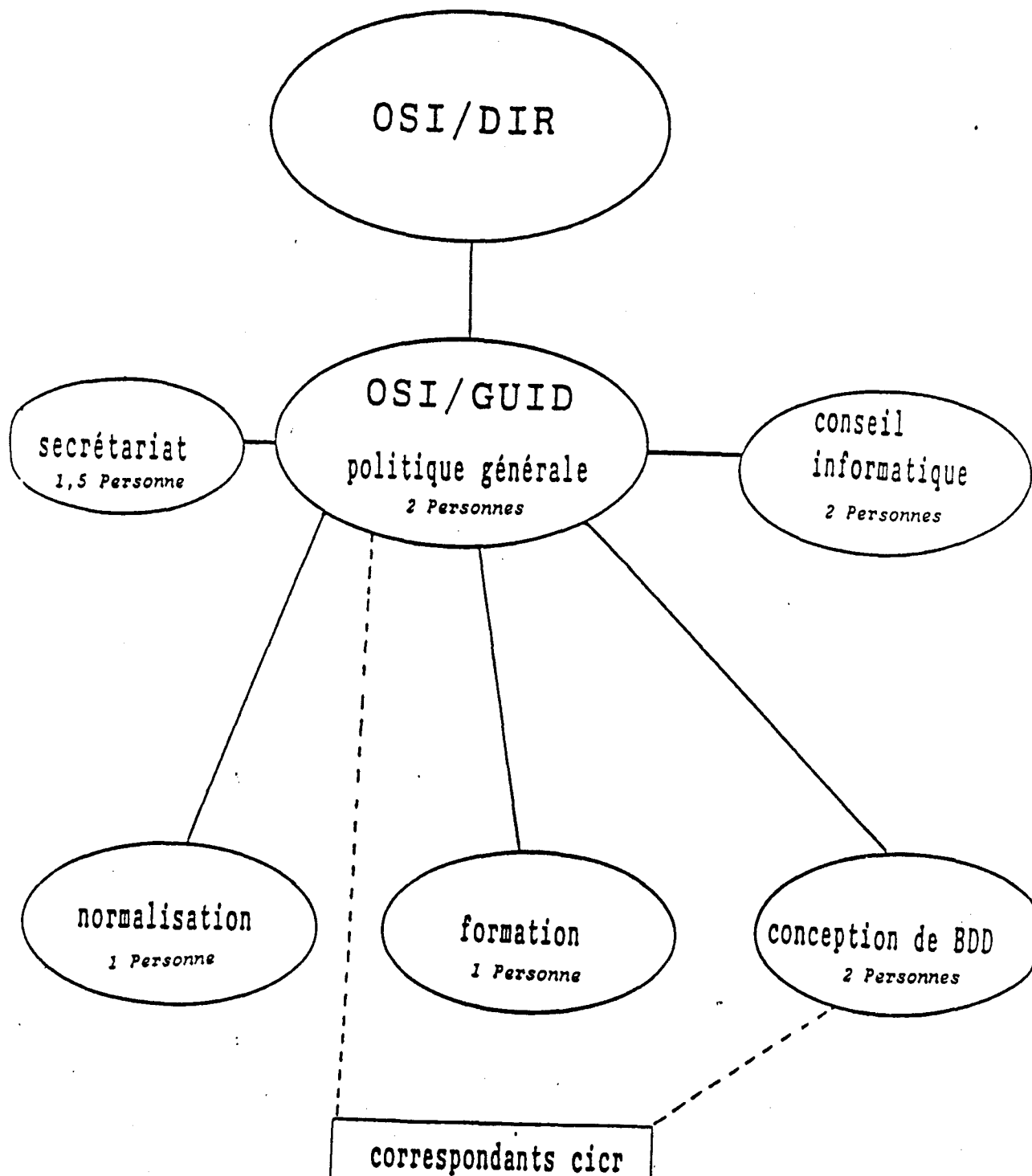
SUR

**LE SUJET DE SON CHOIX**

C'est-à-dire : CONTRIBUTUER directement et concrètement  
à l'élaboration et à la mise en oeuvre  
d'une POLITIQUE DE L'INFORMATION INTERNE AU CICR

2.

QUI EST LE GUID ?



3.

QUE FAIT LE GUID ?

**CREATION DE BANQUES DE DONNES :**

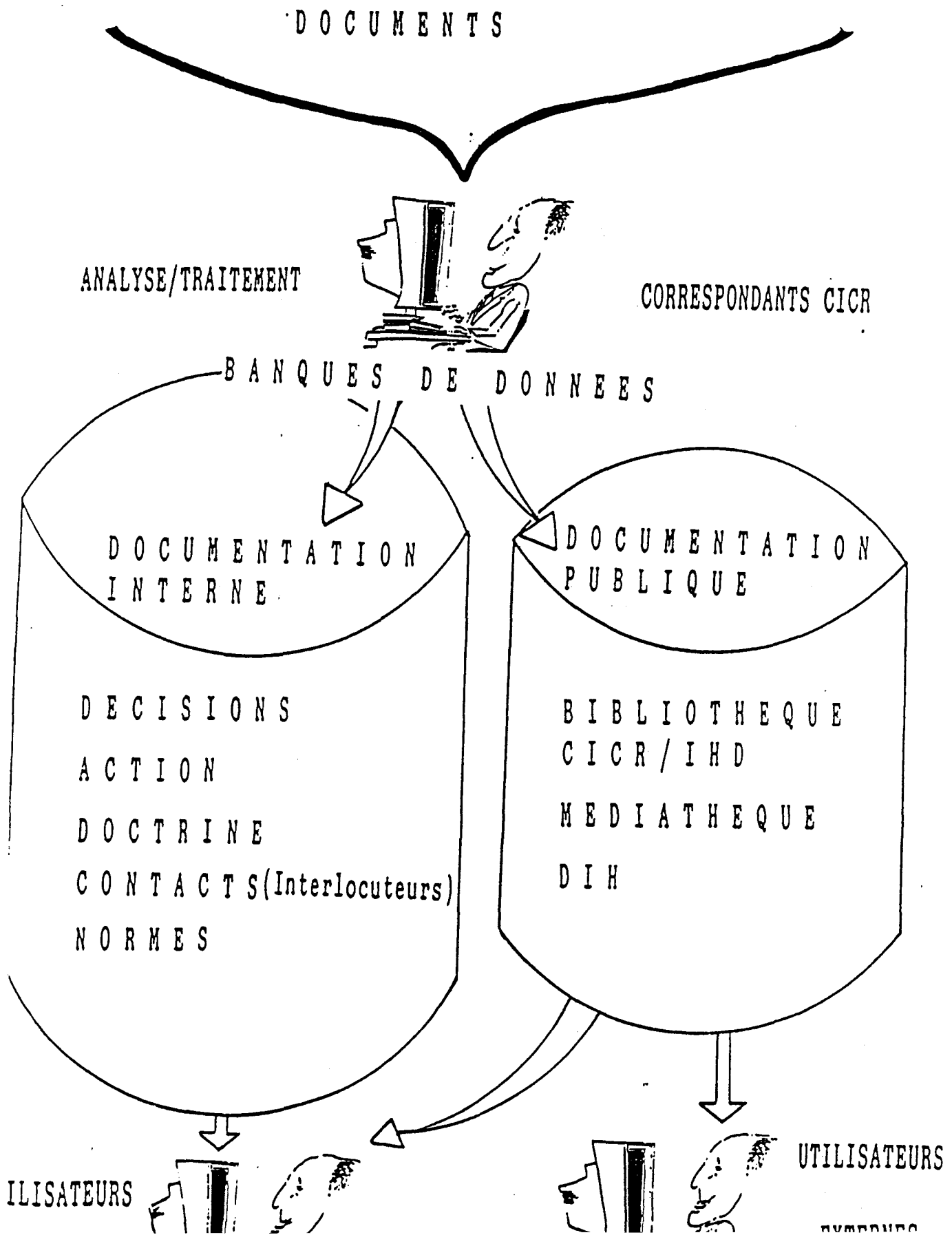
*garantit un accès rapide, direct et simple à l'information;*

**NORMALISATION DES METHODES ET PROCEDURES DOCUMENTAIRES :**

*garantit la cohérence de l'information signalée;*

**FORMATION :**

*garantit la fiabilité.*



## LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED AT THE LEAGUE

=====

<b>Beal,</b>	R.	Head, Blood programme
<b>Camporini,</b>	Y.	Technical Adviser, Statutory Matters/Dissemination
<b>Cassis,</b>	W.	Director, Administration
<b>Davey,</b>	S.	Director, Operations Division
<b>Dick,</b>	B.	Head, Health Department
<b>Eleghmary,</b>	S.	Head, Middle East/North Africa Department
<b>Ellak,</b>	D.	Administrative Assistant, Health Department
<b>Ferrario,</b>	G.	Delegate
<b>Guidera,</b>	J.	Archives
<b>Hagman,</b>	G.	Special Adviser, Secretary-General's Office
<b>Lloyd,</b>	J.	Refugee Service
<b>Luciano,</b>	R.	Administrative Assistant Asia/Pacific Department
<b>MacLean,</b>	J.	Head, Youth Department
<b>Marchetti,</b>	L.	Development Officer
<b>Masterson,</b>	H.	Head, Field Personnel
<b>McAllister,</b>	I.	Senior Advisor, Development
<b>Miserez,</b>	D.	Head, Refugee Service
<b>Moser,</b>	P.	Director, Human Resources Department
<b>Naef,</b>	A.	Officer, Public Affairs
<b>Ochsenbein,</b>	C.	Library
<b>Osman,</b>	I.	Head, Africa Department
<b>Parfenof,</b>	E.	Acting Head, Europe Department
<b>Persson,</b>	A.	Special Adviser, Secretary-General's Office
<b>Reiss,</b>	J-C.	EDP
<b>Rose,</b>	W.	Director, Finance Department
<b>Rueda-Montana,</b>	G.	Head, Americas Department
<b>Starey,</b>	C.	Information Officer
<b>Stenbäck,</b>	P.	Secretary-General
<b>Stoltenberg,</b>	K.	Senior Advisor, Women in Development
<b>Strijak,</b>	E.	Under Secretary-General, Technical Advisory Division
<b>Talbot,</b>	J.	Head, Asia/Pacific Department
<b>Vittani,</b>	J.	Senior Adviser, Relief
<b>Walker,</b>	P.	Operations Development Officer
<b>Wahlstrom,</b>	M.	Desk Officer, Africa
<b>Watanabe,</b>	K.	Under Secretary-General, Operations Division
<b>Wright,</b>	R.	Acting Director, Public Affairs Department



---

---

QUESTIONNAIRE

BESOINS EN MATIÈRE D'INFORMATION

1. Avez-vous besoin d'information sur les activités courantes de la Ligue? Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_  
Dans l'affirmative, de quel genre d'information (e.g. décisions)?

---

---

---

Dans l'affirmative, utilisez-vous cette information plus d'une fois par jour\_\_\_ semaine\_\_\_ mois\_\_\_?

2. Avez-vous besoin d'information sur les activités antérieures de la Ligue? Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_  
Dans l'affirmative, de quel genre d'information (e.g. décisions)?

---

---

---

Dans l'affirmative, utilisez-vous cette information plus d'une fois par jour\_\_\_ semaine\_\_\_ mois\_\_\_?

3. Où vous adressez-vous en premier pour obtenir de l'information sur les activités de la Ligue?

---

---

4. Avez-vous besoin d'information sur des sociétés nationales? Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_  
Dans l'affirmative, de quel genre d'information?

---

---

---

Dans l'affirmative, utilisez-vous cette information plus d'une fois par jour\_\_\_ semaine\_\_\_ mois\_\_\_?

5. Avez-vous besoin d'information sur certains pays? Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_  
Dans l'affirmative, de quel genre d'information?

---

---

---

Dans l'affirmative, utilisez-vous cette information plus d'une fois par jour\_\_\_ semaine\_\_\_ mois\_\_\_?



6. Sur quels autres sujets avez-vous actuellement besoin d'information courante?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Passez-vous du temps à chercher de l'information?

Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_

Dans l'affirmative, combien de temps par semaine?

1 h \_\_\_ 5 h \_\_\_ 1 jour \_\_\_ 3 jours \_\_\_

8. Avez-vous recours à des sources externes d'information à Genève?

Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_

Dans l'affirmative, cochez toutes les cases applicables

Institut Henry Dunant      Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_  
 Biblio des NU              Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_  
 Biblio UNHCR              Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_  
 Biblio de l'OMS            Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_

CICR                          Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_  
 Biblio UNICEF              Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_  
 Biblio UNIDRO              Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_

Autre (précisez) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Le personnel de la Ligue s'adresse-il régulièrement à vous pour ses besoins d'information?  
 Dans l'affirmative, de quel genre d'information?

Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Dans l'affirmative, à quelle fréquence? Plus d'une fois par

jour \_\_\_ semaine \_\_\_ mois \_\_\_

## SERVICES D'INFORMATION

10. Quelle importance accordez-vous aux services suivants (1 étant la cote la plus élevée et 5 la plus faible)?

Recherches documentaires approfondies sur certains sujets:	1	2	3	4
Service de signalement de nouvelles publications, comptes rendus de livres, etc.:	1	2	3	4
Photocopies de tables des matières de journaux choisis par vous et envoyées régulièrement:	1	2	3	4
Prêt de livres et journaux de la bibliothèque de la Ligue et d'autres bibliothèques:	1	2	3	4
Coupures de presse:	1	2	3	4
Photocopies d'articles:	1	2	3	4
Achat de livres et journaux:	1	2	3	4
Accès, de votre bureau, à une base de données bibliographiques sur les livres, journaux et archives de la bibliothèque de la Ligue:	1	2	3	4

11. Pour que tous les membres intéressés du personnel puissent voir les articles parus sans retard, accepteriez-vous une photocopie de la table des matières d'un journal au lieu de recevoir le journal lui-même? Des photocopies des articles vous seraient fournies sur demande. Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_

12. Utilisez-vous actuellement la bibliothèque de la Ligue? Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_

L'utiliserez-vous davantage si :

- |                                       |         |         |
|---------------------------------------|---------|---------|
| elle était située ailleurs            | Oui ___ | Non ___ |
| la collection était centralisée       | Oui ___ | Non ___ |
| la salle de lecture était plus grande | Oui ___ | Non ___ |
| le matériel était organisé autrement  | Oui ___ | Non ___ |
| autre (précisez):                     |         |         |

---



---

13. Utilisez-vous présentement les dossiers départementaux au sous-sol? Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_  
 Dans l'affirmative, serait-il plus efficace:

de les regrouper en un seul système: Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_

s'il existait des dossiers thématiques/bases de données (e.g., les activités d'autres ONG dans divers pays): Oui \_\_\_ Non \_\_\_

Dans l'affirmative, (précisez):

---



---

14. Observations

---



---



---

Merci d'avoir pris le temps de répondre à ce questionnaire.

Nom \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Titre \_\_\_\_\_ Service \_\_\_\_\_

Veuillez renvoyer le questionnaire à Loredana Marchetti, pièce 124.



---

---

## QUESTIONNAIRE

### INFORMATION NEEDS

1. Do you need information about the League's current activities? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
If yes, what type of information? (e.g. Decisions).

---

---

---

If Yes, Do you use it more than once a: Day \_\_\_ Week \_\_\_ Month \_\_\_

2. Do you need information about the League's past activities? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
If yes, what type of information? (e.g. Decisions).

---

---

---

If Yes, Do you use it more than once a: Day \_\_\_ Week \_\_\_ Month \_\_\_

3. Where do you go first to obtain information about the League's activities?

---

---

4. Do you need information about National Societies? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
If yes, what type of information:

---

---

---

If Yes, Do you use it more than once a: Day \_\_\_ Week \_\_\_ Month \_\_\_

5. Do you need information about countries? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
If yes, what type of information?

---

---

---

If Yes, Do you use it more than once a: Day \_\_\_ Week \_\_\_ Month \_\_\_

6. What other subjects do you need to have current information on?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you spend time looking for information? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
 If yes, during one week do you spend: 1 hour \_\_\_ 5 hours \_\_\_ 1 day \_\_\_ 3 days \_\_\_

8. Do you use outside information sources in Geneva? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
 If yes, please check as many as applicable:

Henry Dunant Institute	Yes ___	No ___	ICRC	Yes ___	No ___
UN library	Yes ___	No ___	UNICEF library	Yes ___	No ___
UNHCR library	Yes ___	No ___	UNDRO library	Yes ___	No ___
WHO library	Yes ___	No ___			

Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9. Do League staff members regularly come to you for information? Yes \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_  
 If yes, what type of information?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

If yes, how often? More than once a: Day \_\_\_ Week \_\_\_ Month \_\_\_

### INFORMATION SERVICES

10. Please rate the importance you give to the following services; ( 1 being the highest priority and 5 the lowest)

In-depth literature searches on specific subjects:	1	2	3	4	5
Alerting service to new publications, book reviews, etc.:	1	2	3	4	5
A photocopy of the table of contents of journals selected by you and sent to you on a regular basis:	1	2	3	4	5
Loan of books and journals from the Library and other libraries:	1	2	3	4	5
Newspaper clippings:	1	2	3	4	5
Photocopies of articles:	1	2	3	4	5
Purchase of books and journals:	1	2	3	4	5
Access to a database containing references to books, journals and archives in the Library using a terminal at your desk:	1	2	3	4	5

11. So that all interested staff members could see journal articles without delay, would you accept a photocopy of the table of contents of a journal instead of having the journal issue circulated to you? Photocopies of articles would be supplied upon your request. Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

12. Do you currently use the League Library? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Would you use the Library more if:  
(Please check as many as applicable)

it were located elsewhere? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

the collection was centralized? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

there were a larger reading room? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

the material were organized differently? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

other (Please specify):

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

13. Do you currently use the Departmental files in the basement? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
If yes, do you think that you could use them more efficiently if:

the files were organized using one system: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

there were special files/data bases giving specialized information, e.g., activities of other NGO's in a country: Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If yes, please specify

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

14. Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Thank-you for completing this questionnaire.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Department: \_\_\_\_\_



## RESPONSE TO QUESTIONNAIRE

### QUESTION

1. *Current information required about League activities:*

		<i>F R E Q U E N C Y</i>		
<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>DAY</i>	<i>WEEK</i>	<i>MONTH</i>
27	2	4	10	8

2. *Past information required about League activities:*

		<i>F R E Q U E N C Y</i>		
<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>DAY</i>	<i>WEEK</i>	<i>MONTH</i>
26	2	3	6	12

4. *Information required on national societies:*

		<i>F R E Q U E N C Y</i>		
<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>DAY</i>	<i>WEEK</i>	<i>MONTH</i>
26	3	3	6	13

5. *Information required on countries:*

		<i>F R E Q U E N C Y</i>		
<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>DAY</i>	<i>WEEK</i>	<i>MONTH</i>
27	2	1	10	13

7. *Time spent looking for information:*

		<i>F R E Q U E N C Y</i>			
<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>1 Hr.</i>	<i>5 Hrs.</i>	<i>1 day</i>	<i>1 Week</i>
25	3	8	9	4	



QUESTION

8. *Use of external resources in Geneva:*

<i>HDI</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>ICRC</i>	<i>14</i>
<i>UNLIB</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>UNICEF</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>UNHCR</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>UNDRO</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>WHO</i>	<i>7</i>		

9. *Information given to other League staff:*

		<i>FREQUENCY</i>		
<i>YES</i>	<i>NO</i>	<i>DAY</i>	<i>WEEK</i>	<i>MONTH</i>
<i>24</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>9</i>

10. *Rating of Potential Services: ( 1 being the highest priority and 5 the lowest)*

	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>In-depth literature searches on specific subjects:</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Alerting service to new publications, book reviews, etc.:</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>-</i>
<i>A photocopy of the table of contents of journals selected by you and sent to you on a regular basis:</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Loan of books and journals from the Library and other libraries:</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Newspaper clippings:</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Photocopies of articles:</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>-</i>
<i>Purchase of books and journals:</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Access to a database containing references to books, journals and archives in the Library using a terminal at your desk:</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>2</i>

QUESTION**11. Photocopy of Table of Contents:**

YES	NO
26	1

**12. Current use of League Library:**

	YES	NO
<i>Do you use the Library?</i>	10	16
<i>if it were located elsewhere</i>	5	11
<i>if the collection was centralized</i>	16	5
<i>if there were a larger reading room</i>	10	11
<i>if the material were organized differently</i>	17	4

**13. Current use of Departmental Files in the Basement:**

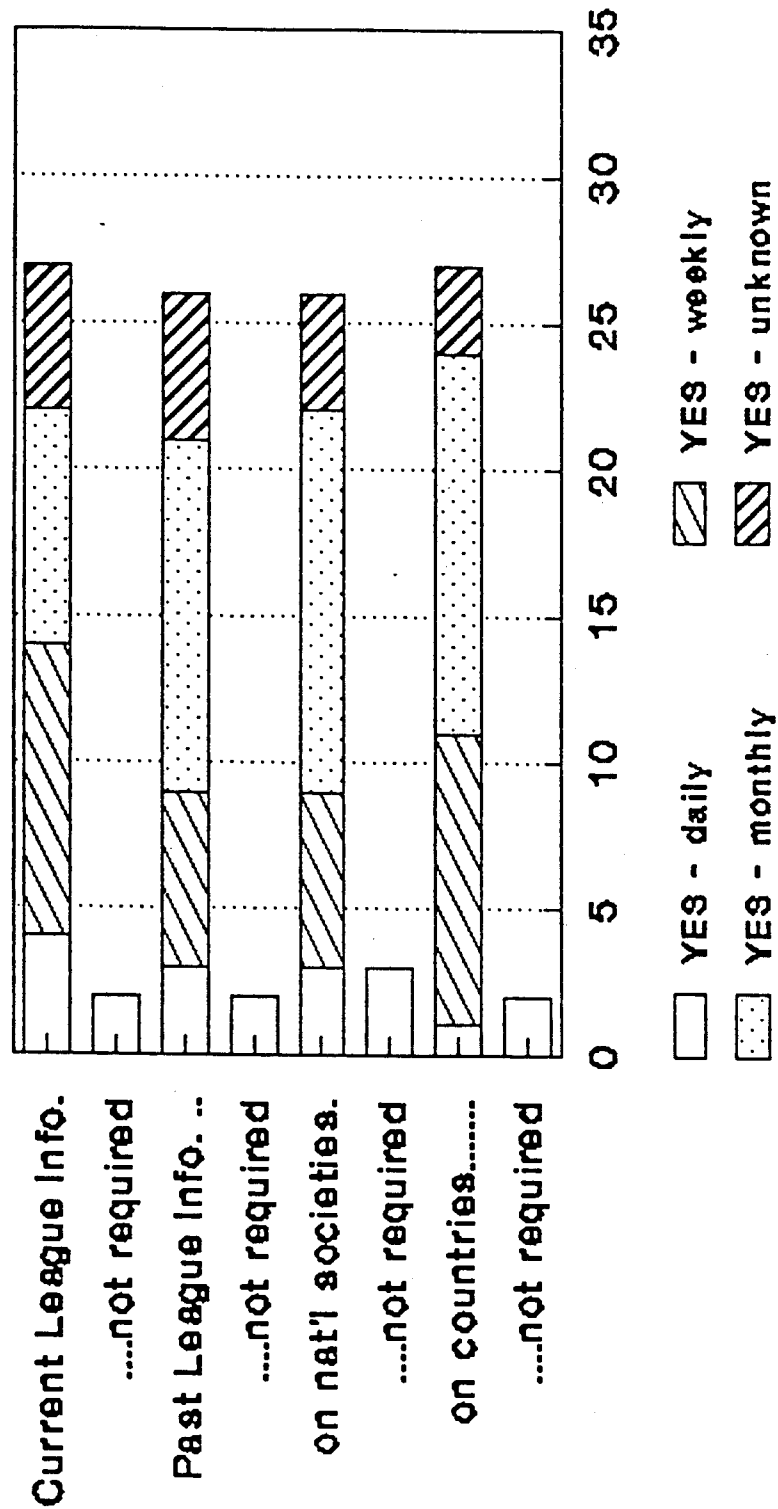
	YES	NO
<i>Do you use these files</i>	8	18
<i>if the files were organized using one system</i>	6	2
<i>if there were special files/data bases giving specialized information, e.g., activities of other NGO's in a country:</i>	9	1



# CHART 1

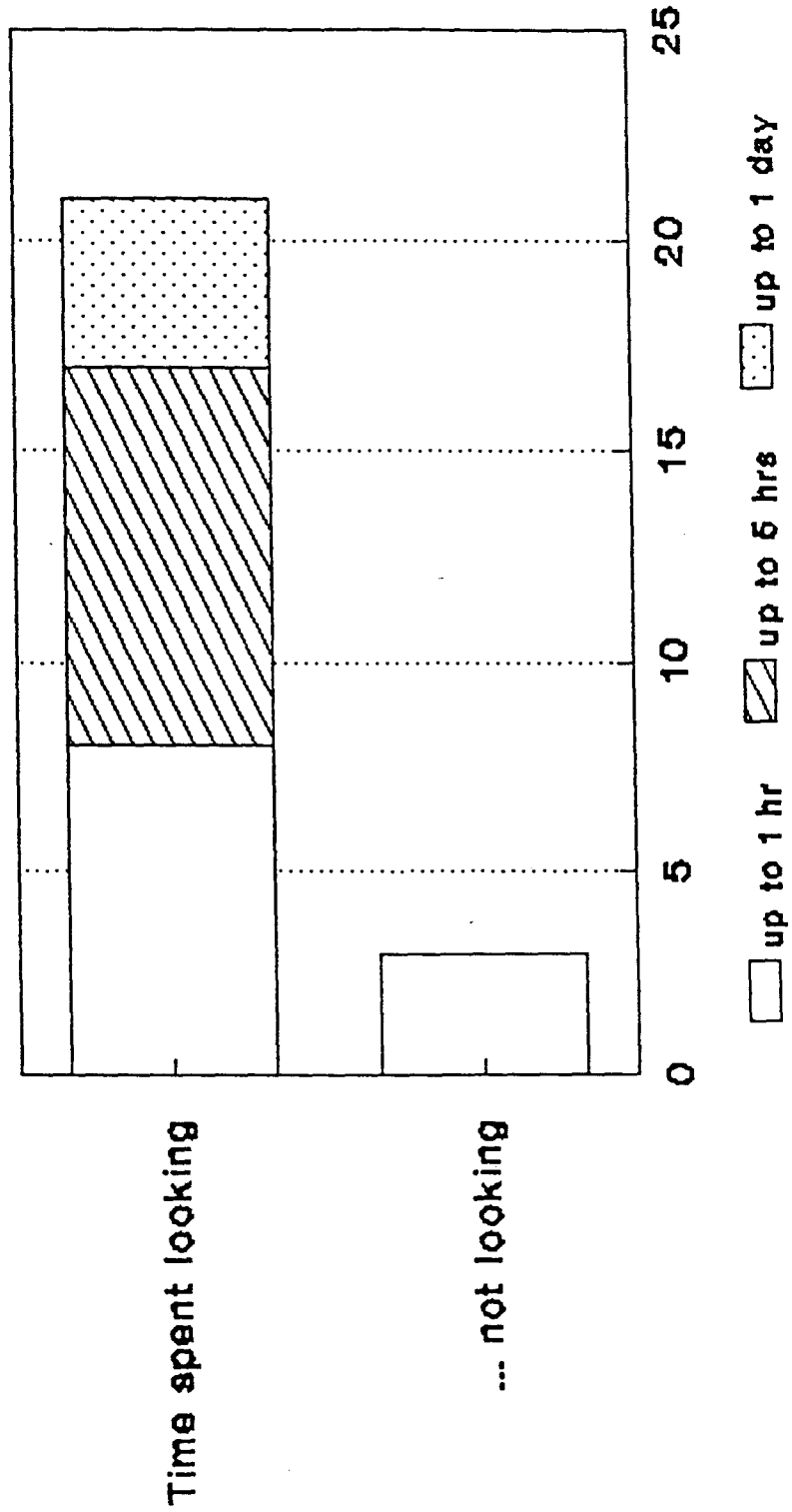
## Information Requirements

responses to questionnaires

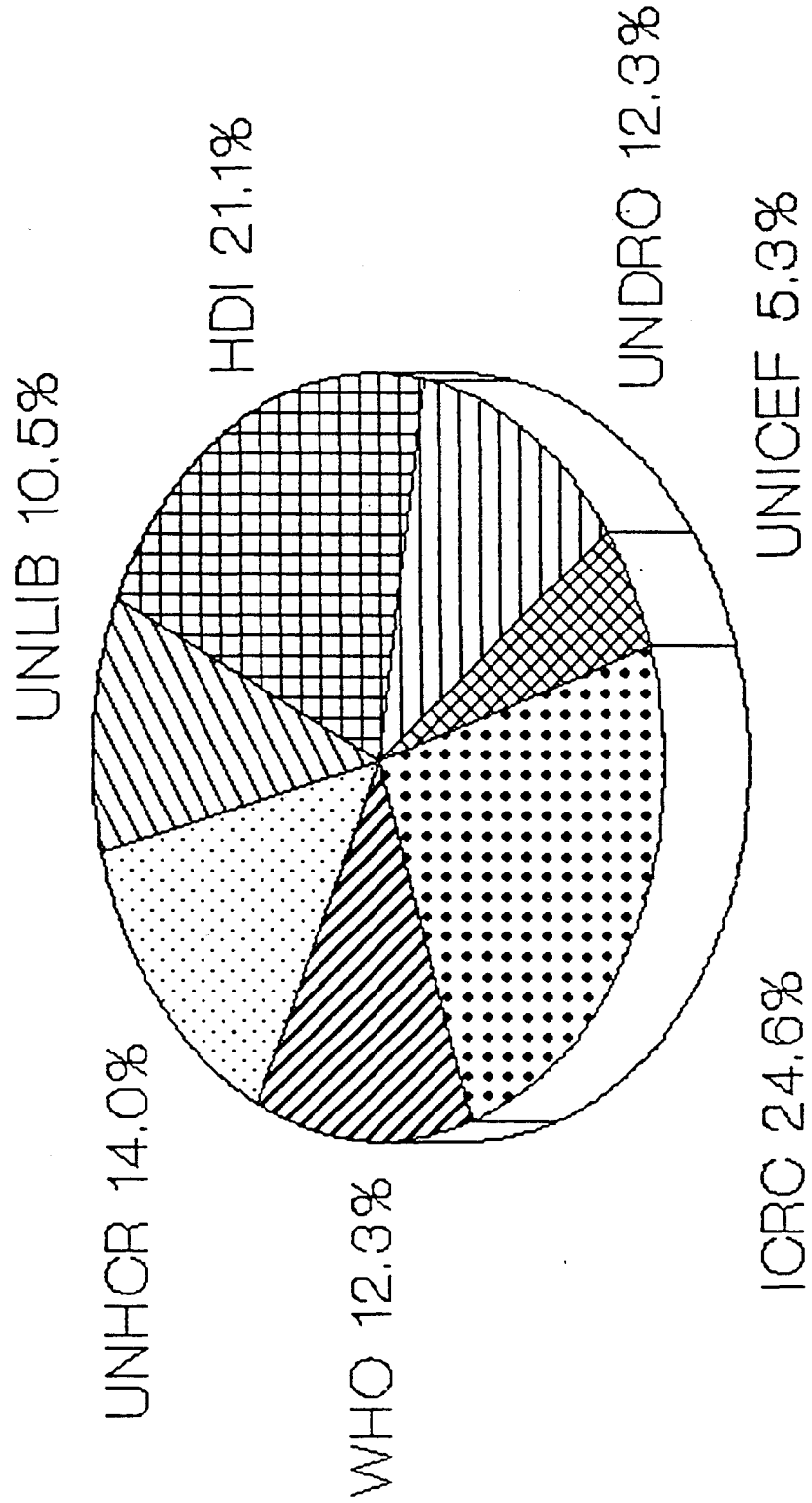


# CHART 2

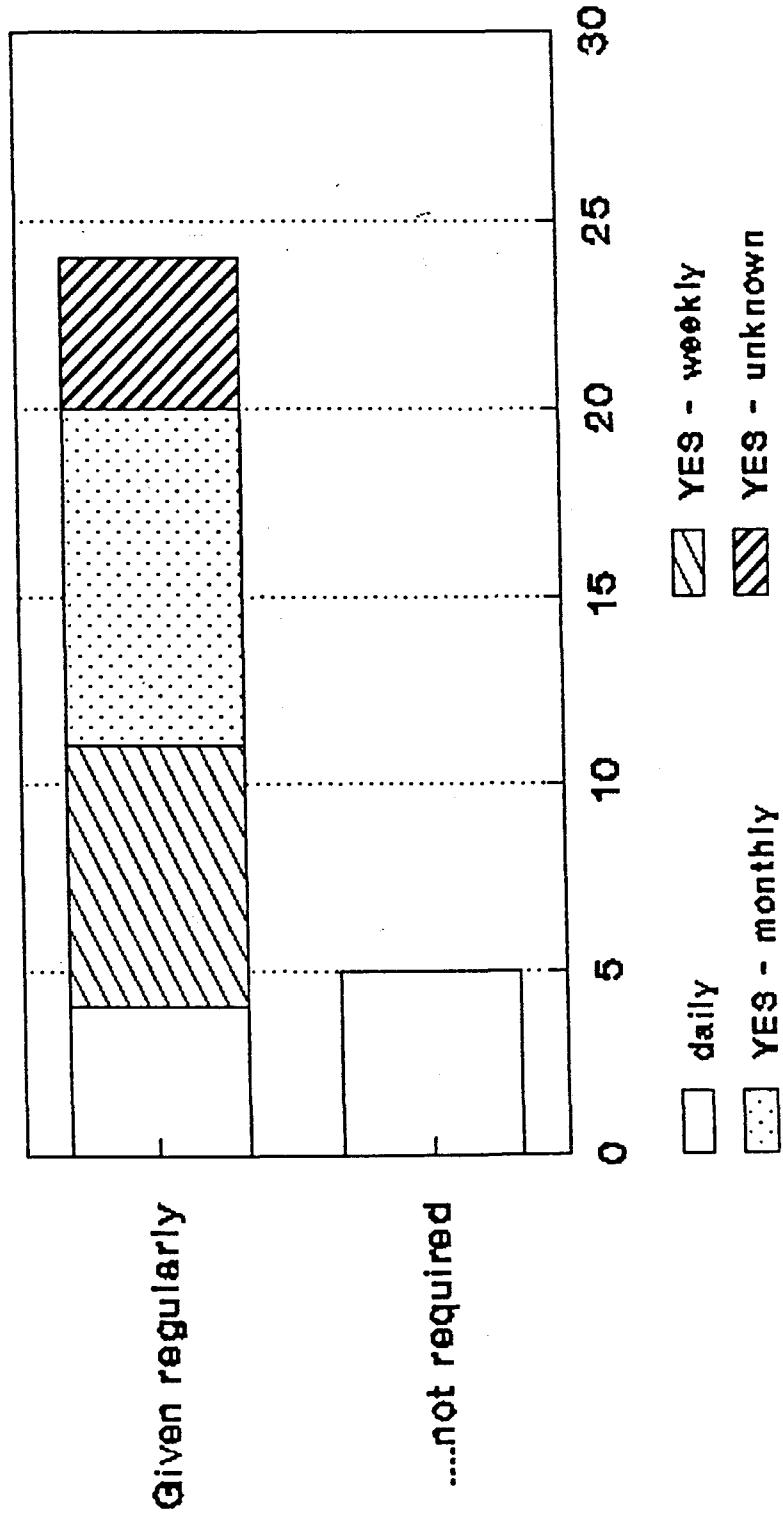
## Information Requirements responses to questionnaires



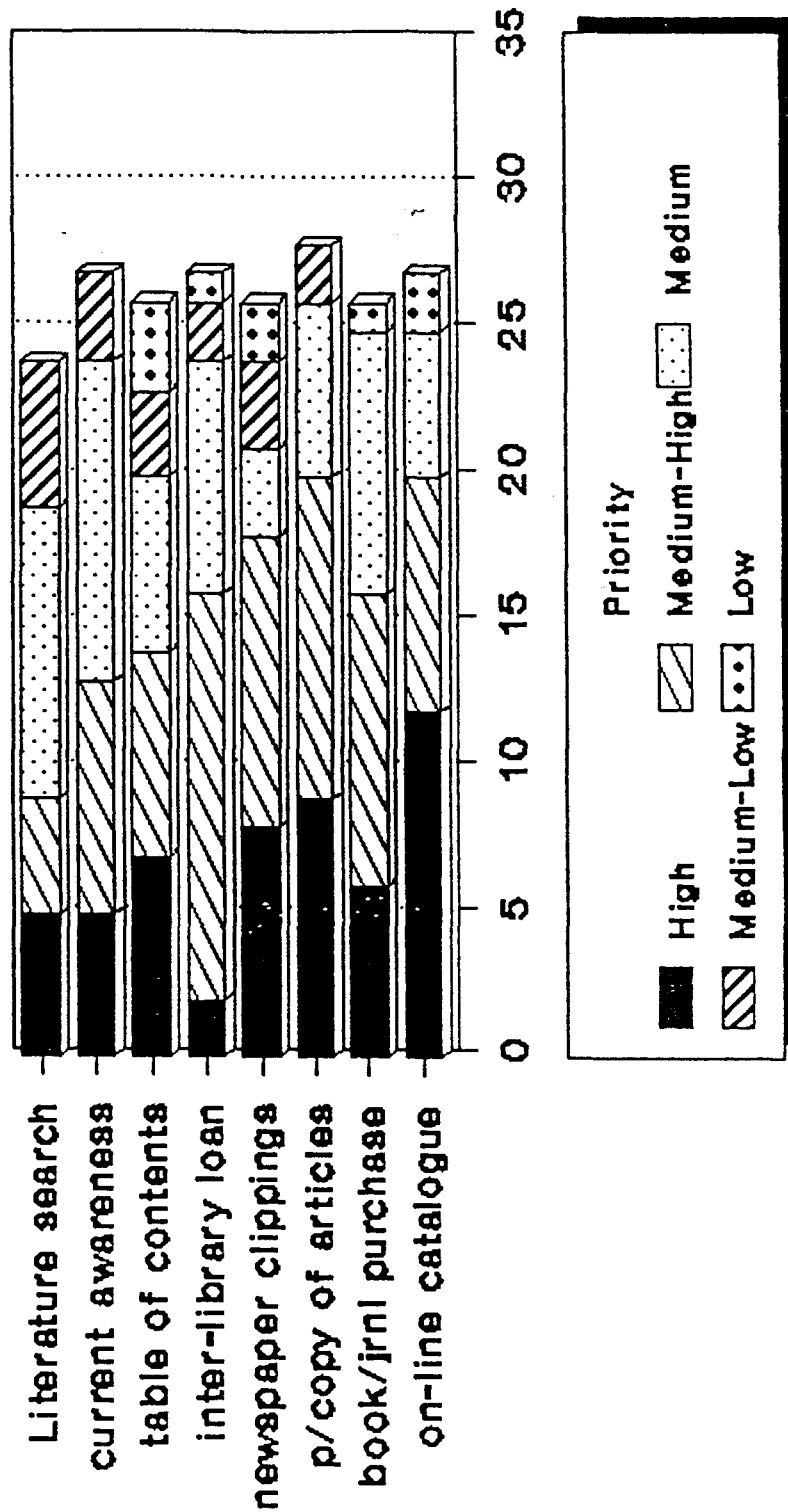
# CHART 3 Use of External Resources in Geneva



**CHART 4**  
**Information Given to other League Staff**  
responses to questionnaires

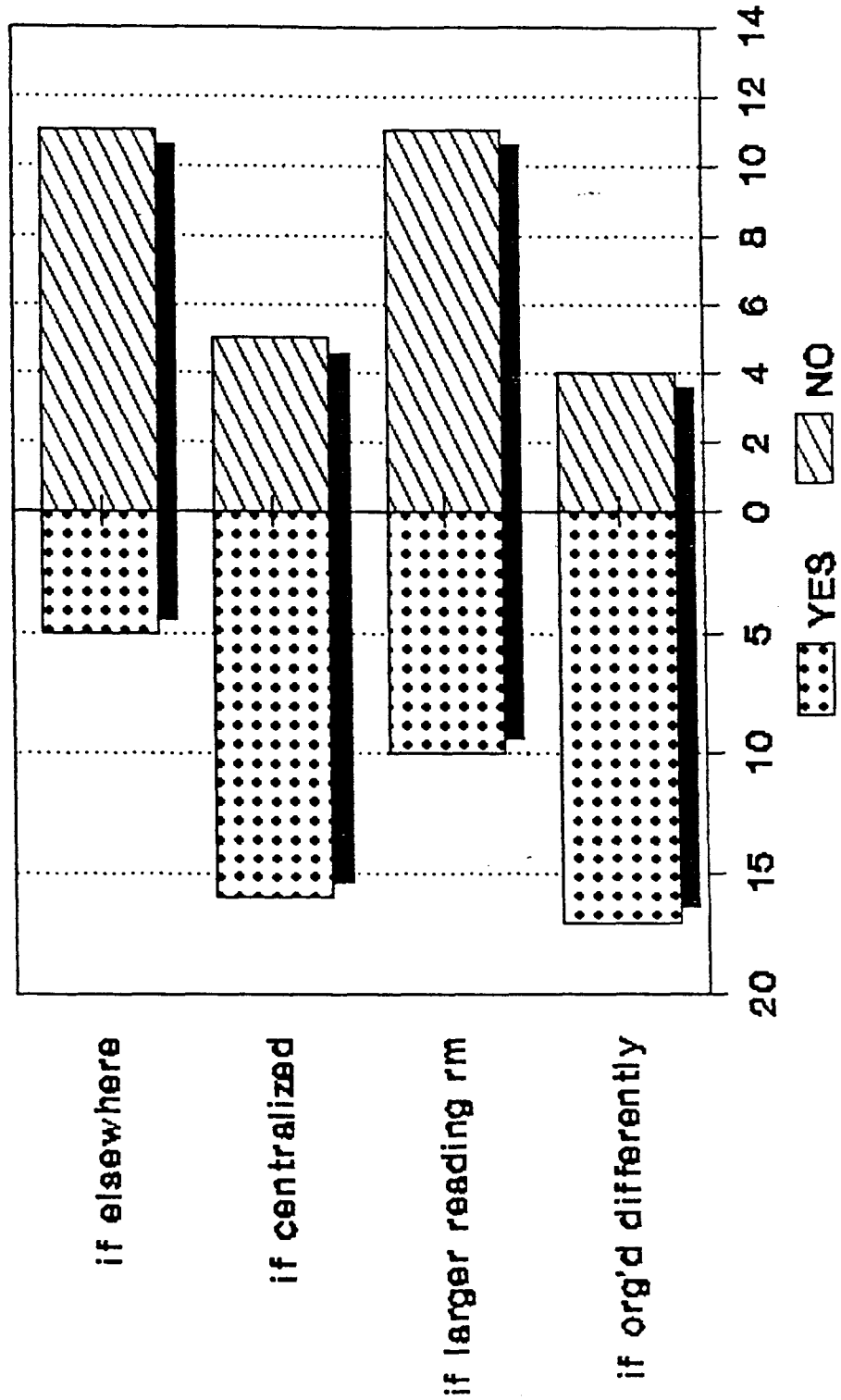


**CHART 5**  
**Priority Rating**  
**of Potential Services**

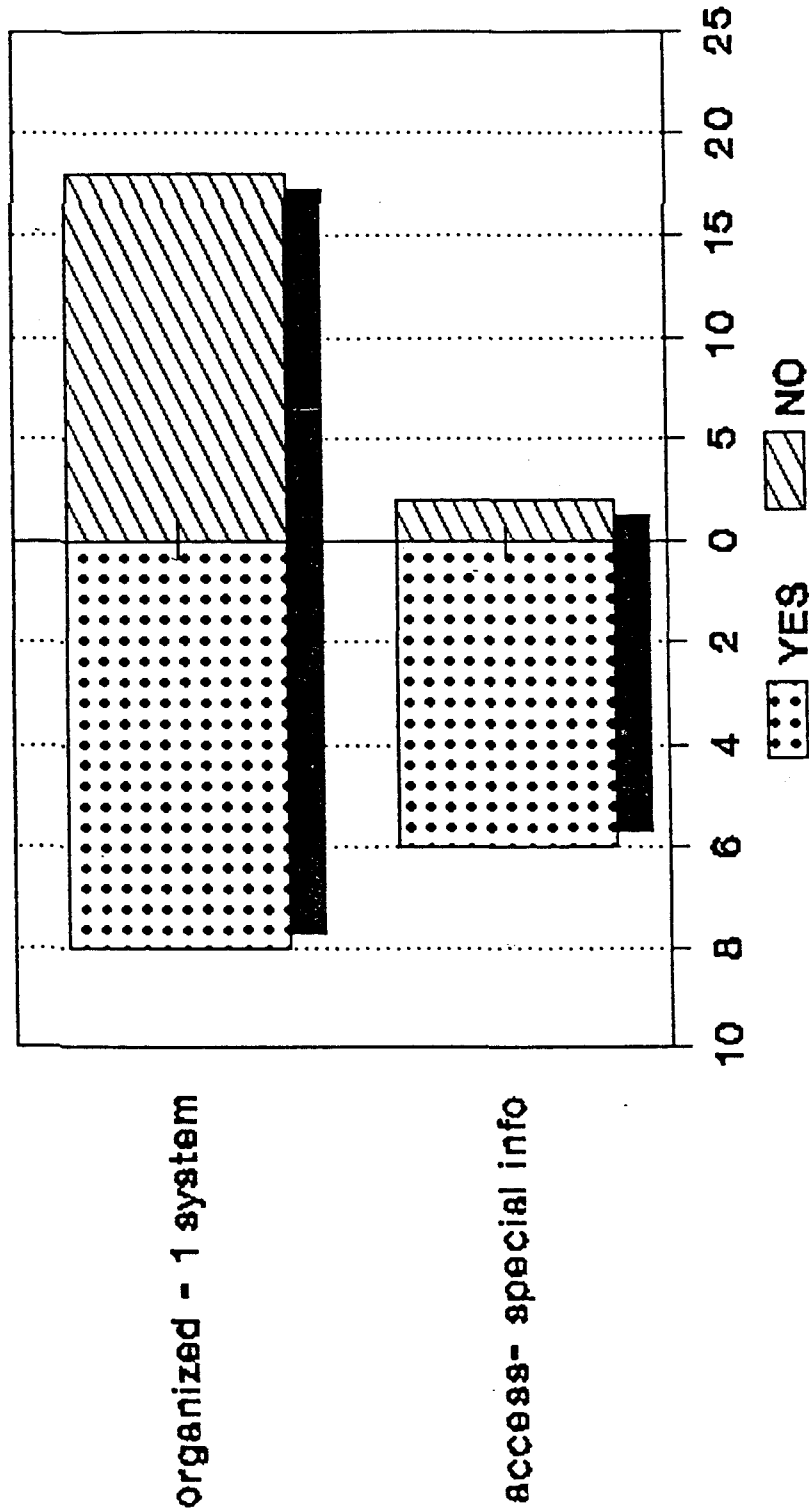




**CHART 6**  
**Would Use League Library**



# CHART 7 Would Use Departmental Files in the Basement If....





## **SUGGESTED DUTIES AND QUALIFICATIONS**



### **DIRECTOR, LIRS**

#### **Principal Duties**

1. Directs, plans, controls and evaluates the functions of the LIRS;
2. Is an active member of the LIRS Advisory Committee;
3. Selects, trains and appraises staff;
4. Manages the LIRS budget;
5. Provides in-depth information services to users;
6. Selects documents to be added to the collection;
7. Promotes the services of the LIRS.

#### **Qualifications**

- A university degree in library science/archival science/documentation;
- 10 years experience in a library/documentation centre of which at least 3 must be in a supervisory capacity; and,
- 4 years experience in in-depth information retrieval service preferably having used automated systems;
- Ability to manage a service;
- Excellent ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
- Must have a strong user service orientation.

## **INFORMATION SPECIALIST**

### **Principal Duties**

1. Acts for the Director in his/her absence;
2. Classifies, catalogues and indexes documents;
3. Provides in-depth information services.

### **Qualifications**

- A university degree in library science/archival science/documentation;
- 3 years experience in a library/documentation centre/archives indexing, classifying and cataloguing, preferably having used an automated system;
- Ability to work accurately;
- Ability to communicate effectively both orally and in writing;
- A strong user service orientation and flexibility required.

## **TECHNICAL ASSISTANT**

### **Principal Duties**

1. Acquires all material for the collection;
2. Loans material to users;
3. Provides the interlibrary loan service;
4. Answers simple reference questions.

**Qualifications**

- Training to the technical level (certificate) in library science, archival science or documentation;
- 3 years experience in a library/documentation centre performing in acquisitions/interlibrary loan service;
- Computer/typing experience;
- Ability to communicate orally and in writing;
- Strong service orientation and flexibility required.

**INFORMATION ASSISTANT**

**Principal Duties**

1. Receives all material for the collection;
2. Photocopies tables of contents and articles upon request;
3. Shelves;
4. Assists in preparation of material for the shelves;
5. Prepares archival material for reproduction.

**Qualifications**

- Secondary school graduation;
- 1 year experience in a library/documentation centre/archives environment;
- Ability to work quickly and accurately under minimum supervision;
- Strong service orientation and flexibility required.