INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES NETWORK

(LISN)

FINAL ASSESSMENT REPORT
(1995)

IDRC TO CIDA

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A)   INTRODUCTION

1)   FOREWORD

In September 1991, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) approved a grant of $2 million dollars to the **International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC)**, through its representative in Canada - the Canadian Red Cross Society - to strengthen the institutional capacity of the IFRC in its humanitarian assistance efforts and role as Secretariat to the Federation.   In February, 1993 the International Humanitarian Assistance Division of CIDA entered into a technical and management services agreement with the Information Sciences and Systems Division of the International Development Research Centre (the Centre) with the purpose of enabling the Centre to provide technical and management services to the "Library and Information Services Network (LISN)" project.

On 13 October 1994, CIDA officially approved an amendment to the agreement with IDRC to allow a project extension of 10 months - 31 December, 1995. No additional grant funds were requested to accommodate this time extension.

It is a requirement of the agreement between CIDA and the Centre, that the Centre provide a LISN Project Assessment Report every six months. This report represents the 6th in the series, and the Final Project Assessment Report.

2)   REPORT FORMAT

The presentation of this report is in two parts.   The first is a narrative report providing background to the LISN project; and detailing the achievements and results of the project compared to the original proposed objectives. The second part contains a narrative financial report on the project. A final financial statement of all funds expended on the project will be forwarded under separate cover, after the actual termination of the project and on receipt of the same from both the IFRC and the Canadian Red Cross. Included within this report is the independent Report of the Final Assessment Mission, undertaken 16 to 20 October, 1995.

A complete archive of the previous five Semi-Annual Reports and copies of the Monitoring Mission Reports, plus reports of project related meetings and trip reports are maintained by IDRC and will be retained as part of Canadian Federal Records for a duration of at least 10 years. During the implementation of the LISN project these reports have been forwarded to CIDA as part of the normal reporting procedure, and are therefore not replicated as part of this Final Report.

B)   PROJECT INSTITUTION BACKGROUND

1)   ORGANIZATION

To understand the complexity of the implementation of the LISN project, it is necessary to understand the organizational culture and context in which it resides. The Red Cross is not a single entity, and understanding at least the structure of its many parts assists in appreciating the difficulty of implementing the LISN project activities

There are several acronyms and organization names used in the documentation surrounding this project, and as a whole these represent the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement. Confusion can arise if they are used interchangeably. The component parts of the Movement, with a very brief background synopsis, follows:

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS (ICRC):

A private, non-political, independent institution, founded in 1863 by a Swiss National, Henry Dunant. The ICRC acts as a neutral intermediary in humanitarian matters during international conflicts, civil wars, and internal disturbances. The Committee itself is composed of a maximum of 25 Swiss citizens. The ICRC is based in Geneva and has a staff of over 600 (mainly Swiss). It has an additional 600 "delegates" in the field who are assisted by approximately 2,500 local employees. The ICRC is financed by the Swiss Government as well as voluntary contributions from Governments and National Societies. The annual operating budget of the ICRC is approximately 749 million CHF ($913 million CAD).

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION (Formerly the League) OF RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES (IFRC):

In 1919, the leader of the American Red Cross, Henry P. Davison, convened an international medical conference, at which he proposed to federate the Red Cross Societies of the different countries into an organization comparable to that of the League of Nations (also founded in 1919). The League of the Red Cross was established in Paris and subsequently moved to its permanent home in Geneva in 1939. The IFRC is the permanent liaison body of the National Societies and acts as their spokesman and representative internationally. The objective of the IFRC is to prevent and alleviate human suffering through the activities of the National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. The IFRC has a Secretariat staff of approximately 275 (representing some 50 nationalities) and maintains about 380 "delegates" in the field. The IFRC is financed through annual dues from member National Societies and voluntary contributions for relief and development. The annual operating budget of the IFRC is approximately 265.5 million CHF ($320 million CAD), plus additional "appeals" for special humanitarian assistance. The current Secretary General of the Federation Mr. George Weber. Mr. Weber, formerly Secretary General of the Canadian Red Cross Society, is the first Canadian to be appointed to the post of Secretary General of the Federation.

NATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT SOCIETIES:

There is a National Red Cross or Red Crescent Society in almost every country of the world today. Membership is open to everyone and services are provided on the sole criterion of need. Societies must however fulfil stringent conditions to achieve international recognition by the ICRC and obtain Federation membership. Among them is respect of the Movement's 7 Fundamental Principles (humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity and universality) and they must also be recognized by their governments as voluntary aid societies as auxiliaries to the public authorities.

INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS AND RED CRESCENT MOVEMENT (INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS - IRC):

The "Movement", or IRC, consists of three main components - (1) ICRC, (2) IFRC and, (3) National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The IRC has three statutory bodies which guides its operating philosophy and work and to provide the links that are vital to unity among its components. These are: the Standing Commission, the Council of Delegates and, the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent.

The Standing Commission comprises nine members (2 from ICRC, 2 from the IFRC, and 5 elected in a personal capacity by the International Conference). The Standing Committee meets every 6 months and its main task is to prepare the International Conference and ensure co-ordination.

The Council of Delegates constitutes the assembly of the "Red Cross Family". Its members are the representatives of the ICRC, and IFRC as well as the delegates of all the recognized national Societies. It meets every 2 years. The last meeting was held in Birmingham, England in October, 1993.

The International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent is the highest decision-making body of the Movement. It meets every 4 years, bringing together delegates of the ICRC, IFRC, National Societies , as well as the representatives of States party to the Geneva Conventions. It also invites observers from government, non-government, regional or specialized organizations particularly interested in humanitarian problems. I determines major policy options on questions of principle and in the field of international humanitarian law. The last Conference was held in 1986. A Conference was scheduled for 1991 but was cancelled a day before the Conference was to begin, due to potential political interventions on the Palestine question. Conference organization is under way for the 1995 Conference to be held in Geneva in December.

C)   **IDRC BACKGROUND**

IDRC first became involved in the information activities of the IFRC during the Summer of 1990 with the provision of the services of the then Centre Librarian, Valerie Monkhouse to undertake a review of the library and information services of the IFRC. This was an initiative by the President of IDRC in response to a request from the Canadian Red Cross (CANCROSS). The output from this consultancy (September, 1990) was a report entitled *"The Key to the Future: Access to Information"*, which provided a conceptual framework for an improved information and library service to the IFRC.

In March, 1991, funds were approved by the Information Sciences Division to allow a further consultancy mission (four person team) to advise the IFRC on the implementation strategy of the recommendations embodied in *"The Key to the Future: Access to Information"*. This was a joint activity with CIDA, and the Mission had a secondary role to provide CIDA with responses to technical and managerial questions, pursuant to potential larger-scale funding to the IFRC by CIDA. This mission took place in May/June, 1991 and was subsequently followed by *"A Proposal for a league Information Services Network (LISN)"* via CANCROSS to CIDA. In September, 1991, CIDA approved the funds ($2 million CAD) for the LISN project. These funds were to be administered by CANCROSS and the project monitored by CANCROSS.

In September 1992, after experiencing some concern on the technical implementation of LISN, IHAD opted to transfer the technical administration and management of the project to IDRC/ISS and on October 22, 1992, the IDRC Board of Governors authorized the Centre to "enter into an agreement" with CIDA, for the purpose of administration of the LISN project. The Memorandum of agreement was signed between CIDA and IDRC on 8 February, 1993.

D)   **PROJECT BACKGROUND**

1)   **GUIDING PRINCIPLE**

> *If the Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is to fulfil its statutory functions, ie. to act as the permanent body of liaison, coordination and study between the National Societies and become a leading international humanitarian organization, it must have a quick and easy access to information that is relevant to its work inside the Red Cross/Red Crescent Movement.* (quote from the original project proposal)

2)   **PROJECT OBJECTIVE**

The objective of the project is to strengthen the institutional capacity of the IFRC in its humanitarian assistance efforts and role as Secretariat to the Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

3)   PROJECT FORMAT

LISN was presented in four distinct phases, to be undertaken and implemented over a period of three years:

Phase I: Establishment of an Information Resource Centre.
Phase II: The design, development, and implementation of several specialized information databases.
Phase III: Automated access to the Federation's and external databases and the services of the Information Resource Centre.
Phase IV: Network linkage of selected National Societies (pilot).

4)   PROJECT FINANCING

The approved CIDA grant for these activities was $2 million (CAD), with approximately $180,000 designated from project funds for IDRC administration. The agreement with IDRC was for a period of 2 years from 8 February, 1993 and subsequently extended by 10 months to 31 December, 1995. It is significant that the IFRC financial contribution to the project was originally stated at approximately 25% of the budget but has adjusted throughout the project to a direct contribution of 50% of the budget and with a peripheral contribution of capital equipment which brings the actual contribution of the IFRC to about 75% of the total expenditures.

5)   PROJECT ENVIRONMENT

The Federation is housed in an old School building in Geneva, with a modern annex building and several small out-buildings adjacent to, and in the same grounds. In addition, some Federation staff are housed in two other areas of Geneva. In 1995, approval was received to commence the building of a new wing onto the existing school building and once completed will allow the consolidation of staff in one location. During the construction phase a temporary building has been erected. The Director of the Information Systems Department and most of her staff are housed in offices in the annex with the Information resource Centre housed in the temporary annex and the Telecom Services housed in two of the out-buildings. This dispersion of staff has added additional complications to the implementation of the LISN project.

Traditionally the Federation has operated on an immediate need basis according to the humanitarian crises of the moment. As a result, the "corporate memory" of the Federation and indeed the day-to-day correspondence, was housed in boxes in the basement as each Federation staff person left the organization. Likewise, the Information Resource Centre (as such) was also housed in the basement of the main building, far from the staff of the Federation. The only databases of information were those created by individual staff, with no relationship with any other database or standardized system.

6) PROJECT FOCUS

The project has two main thrusts. First, to improve the collection, handling, access and use of data within the confines of the Federation Headquarters, and to establish normal office operating practices and procedures for more efficient and effective conduct of business. Second, to connect through electronic means the Federation with its membership in order to allow the Federation to better implement its mandate as the liaison and international representative of the National Societies. This latter thrust of the project was to be partially implemented through pilot projects in two regions.

7) LISN MANAGEMENT

The Director of the Information Systems Department (Ms. Linda Stoddart) is the Director of the Information Services Department, and reports directly to the Secretary General of the Federation. It is stated in the original project proposal design document that:

> *The management of the system is perceived as a shared responsibility between the Federation, the National Societies, the Canadian Red Cross and individuals engaged by the Federation to design, develop, implement and operate the system.*

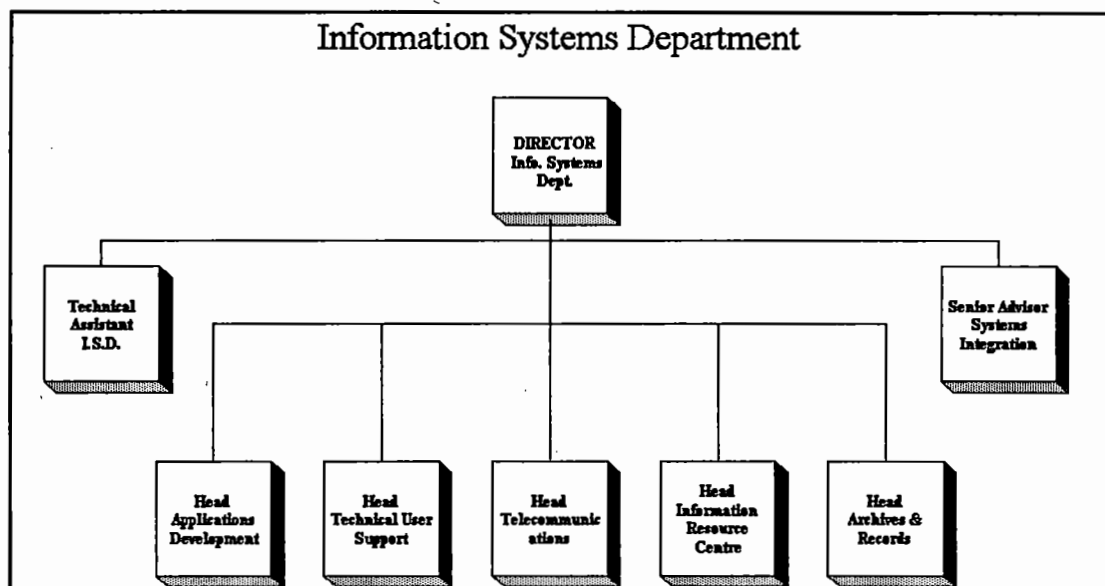To achieve this end, two steering committees were established:

A Strategic Steering Committee - Chaired by the Secretary General of the Federation and comprised of representatives of three National Societies (currently Canada, Netherlands and Philippines), the Chair of the Technical/Users Steering Committee, and, the LISN Manager. The IDRC Project Manager also sits on this Committee. The SSC meets twice per year and is required to approve the project work plan, review progress and resolve resource, operational and organizational issues. There have been five Strategic Steering Committee Meetings conducted throughout the project.

A Technical/Users Steering Committee - comprised of Federation staff who are, or will be, responsible for databases and their impact, within the Federation. The TUSC meets monthly, or more frequently, if required, to review and discuss consultant's technical reports, and recommendations, to advise the Director of the Information Systems Department on Technical issues and to provide Federation staff feedback on implementation issues. Originally the Chair of the TUSC was a non-technical, information user but mid-way through the project this position was given to the Director of the Information Services Department. To date there have been 27 documented Technical/ Users Steering Committee Meetings.

8) LISN ORGANIZATION

The Information Systems Department now consists of six main segments, Information Resource Centre (IRC), Archives and Records Management, Telecommunications Service, Systems Integration, Technical User Support Service, and Applications Development Services, as

indicated in the following organization chart:

Information Systems Department

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                        DIRECTOR
                        Info. Systems
                        Dept.

   Technical                                              Senior Adviser
   Assistant                                              Systems
   I.S.D.                                                 Integration


        Head        Head          Head         Head         Head
    Applications   Technical User Telecommunic  Information  Archives &
    Development    Support         ations       Resource     Records
                                                Centre
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E)   PROJECT ASSESSMENT

1)   STATED OBJECTIVES

   a)   Set up and operate an Information Resource Centre (IRC).
   b)   Develop Federation "special topic" databases.
   c)   Develop internal (Federation) automated network.
   d)   Develop and implement National Society Network pilot project.

2)   ACHIEVEMENTS

a)   Set up and operate an Information Resource Centre (IRC).

The establishment of the IRC as an efficient, and pleasant operating library and resource centre has been completed.   The first milestone was the official opening of the new Information Resource Centre in February, 1993 on the main floor of the headquarters building of the Federation.   New shelving was purchased and the relevant material moved up from the basement to stock the shelves. An IRC Librarian (Lynda Allen) was recruited and she is assisted by a Documentalist (Ian Roberts), a Network Specialist on Internet (Jeremy Mortimer), and two support staff (Catherine Ochsenbein and Helen Bina).   Due to the commencement of the new building wing on the main IFRC building, the IRC was again moved, in the Summer of 1995, to new (temporary) quarters in an annex building.   However by this time the variety of information services being offered by the IRC had been well established and entrenched into the

"culture" of the organization so the temporary move had little negative effect on the impact of the IRC on the staff of the organization.

Through the life of the project, the IRC has been the focal centre for the development work of the various specialized databases and information products of the Information Services Department. It is also now the Coordinating point for information being added to the established world wide web (www) site for the Federation home page and internal Secretariat home page. The IRC and its products, is the "visible" aspect of the information activities. The IRC database (FEDOC) has been created using CDS/ISIS and it now contains over 3,000 records.

The printed outputs of the IRC are added to, and changed as needs dictate and as the staff of the IRC receive feed back from staff of the departments of the IFRC. These include the following:

i)   Directory of National Societies (formerly the "Red Book") - printed from the FED data-
        base 2 times per year.
ii)   "New Acquisitions"- a monthly digest of the new books and periodicals received by the
        IRC - 20 issues produced up to October, 1995.
iii)   "General Current Contents" - a bi-weekly digest of the contents of current periodicals
        received by the IRC - 26 issues have been produced up to October, 1995.
iv)   "Messages from the Information Resource Centre" - an occasional publication to
        announce new "happenings " or services of the IRC - 4 issues distributed to date.
v)   "Focus on the Regions"- a series of publications of articles gleaned from periodicals,
        newspapers and internet sites focused on specific geographic regions. - 3 for each region
        has been produced to date.
vi)   Various brochures announcing IRC services.

The IRC has established a direct link to the bibliographic collection of the ICRC and discussions continue on the establishment of deeper links with the ICRC on the exchange of information. This is an extremely sensitive area as much of the work of the ICRC in its "conflict" and tracing programs is highly confidential. A good working relationship has been established at the technical level between staff of the IFRC and the ICRC for the exchange of information, particularly bibliographic information. Staff changes within the ICRC have however impeded more formal cooperation at the Management level. The IFRC continues to seek closer ties with the ICRC and indications are evident that as a result of this information project the cooperative relationship between the two organizations is improving markedly. The most significant indications of this improved cooperation is the active participation of 3 staff members from the ICRC in the June, 1995 "Working Together Workshop"held in Guildford, England, compared to the poor representation in the first of these workshops held in Geneva in December, 1993. And most recently, the joint cooperation of the ICRC and IFRC in mounting information demonstrations at the December, 1995 Red Cross Conference.

b)   Develop Federation "special topic" databases.

A Canadian information consultant residing in France, Anne Di Lauro, was engaged to assist the IRC with the fine tuning of its bibliographic database, FEDOC, and to provide training to

the staff on the use of CDS/ISIS. This information consultant was also engaged to assist with the conversion and establishment of the institutional database of national Society "vital statistics" (including fund raising activities). There are currently 155 recognized National Societies with about 20 additional in formation stage. The database fields were defined for this database and the data from the original "Red Book" transferred to the new Institutional Database - FED.

Work was also undertaken on the re-design of a database to contain information related to the appeals and projects of the Federation. This was created using FoxPro as the basis and incorporated the information originally contained in a D-Base program. This database is linked directly to the financial database and uses the financial figures input by the financial department. This operating database is known as the Federation Appeals and Budget System (FABS). In the original project design, a separate database was envisioned for the projects of the Federation but in the designing of the Appeals database it was decided to incorporate both the appeals tracking information and the project management function into one pro-active database.

A FEDPOL database was designed to capture the corporate memory of the policies and doctrines of the Federation to be used in future strategic planning and Red Cross research activities. This database contains over 400 such entries.

c)   Develop internal (Federation) automated network.

Studies were undertaken within the Federation to review several options for incorporating a Financial and Accounting Management Information System (FAMIS) into LISN. The final choice was a system called CODA for the main financial system of the Federation, and SCALA, a microcomputer system, for use by the Delegations in the field. SCALA and CODA are compatible and allow transfer of files back and forth. Financial data in CODA is down-loaded nightly to the FABS database (Appeals information).

Staff training on the use of the PC's continues in house, and as applications are added to the system. Several training modules have been developed which allow staff to take short, specific training courses, as their time allows. A "help desk" was established in the second year of the project and this is "manned" throughout the day, allowing for immediate response to staff computer problems. The "help desk" also responds to phone calls, faxes and e-mail from the field on specific computer problems and applications.

A consultant team (from the USA and U.K.) was engaged to study the Federation's needs for an improved records management system. This study was allowed for within the LISN project but the implementation of the recommendations will be done outside the existing project budget. An active search for suitable candidates to fill the recommended positions in the Records Management area is currently ongoing and Canada is a likely source for qualified personnel in this area.

d)   Develop and implement National Society network pilot project.

A consultant from the University of Guelph Ontario (Mr. John Black) was contracted in

September, 1992 to produce an introductory paper on the use of electronic networking by the Federation and its membership. An additional consultant from the Volunteers in Technical Assistance (VITA), Mr. Gary Garriot, was engaged in November, 1992, to undertake a first study of electronic networking for the Federation. FIDONET technology, for day-to-day communications is currently being used by Delegates in the former Yugoslavia.

The original concept of introducing electronic connectivity to the National Societies through two major pilot projects was in fact superseded by the growth in electronic mail (e-mail) world wide. The IFRC promoted, and continues to promote, the use of e-mail at its gatherings of National Society information and telecommunications staff. This, together with the project funded assistance to National Societies and IFRC Delegations in Southeast Asia and East Africa (during the initial phases of the Rwanda crisis) has resulted in the implementation of e-mail connectivity in over 15 National Societies and 30 Delegations in over 34 countries. The most significant use of e-mail is by the Delegations who by the nature of their work, have a greater need to be connected on a daily basis with the Federation. This is followed by the growing use made by the National Societies in the developed world (especially the Nordic countries who have embraced this technology whole heartedly). Use of e-mail within the developing country National Societies has been slower, mainly due to the "culture of information exchange" within these countries, as well as a slower acceptance of the need to "communicate" internationally.

The introduction by the Federation of its world wide web site (www), has increased the awareness of the work of the Federation and the Movement. It has also contributed to the development of a National Society network as more and more National Societies (usually the Chapters of National Societies), begin to create "Home Pages" on the www.

3)   ASSESSMENT

In the original project proposal submitted by the Federation to CIDA, Annex "F" listed a number of "key milestones" against which progress would be measured. The following chart lists these milestones and indicates the STATUS of the activity (completed, on going, or re-planned). It should be noted that "completed" in this case refers to the activity being satisfactorily completed as far as CIDA funding is concerned. In many cases the activity (especially within the IRC) are of an on-going nature now carried on by the Federation. At the end of the chart there is a list of milestones which were not included in the original project proposal but which were undertaken in parallel with the project and results in an overall improved and more complete set of activities.

In general the project can be considered a strong success. The project has met, and in many instances surpassed its original planned objectives. The most significant indication of the success of the project is the "melding" of the information activities of the Federation into the day to day fabric of the organization. Information systems are in place that were not there before; information flows where none flowed before; linkages have been made with Delegations and National Societies which were weak before, and "information" has become an integral part of the Federation's disaster response program.

ORIGINAL PROJECT OBJECTIVE	END OF PROJECT STATUS	END OF PROJECT RESULTS
PHASE I - INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTRE		
Finalize working arrangements with ICRC	Ongoing arrangement to cooperate at working levels	ICRC and IFRC cooperate in some shared information activities (www site, Conference cooperation, participation by ICRC in IFRC information network meetings. Judgement decision made by IFRC NOT to use ICRC computer configuration and services.
Recruitment of staff (includes reorganization of existing staff	Completed	Logical organization of staffing to meet demands has been established. Staff positions in the ISD increased from 13 to 26 and reorganized into consolidated Department. All positions (except 3) have been absorbed into IFRC budget.
Refine scope of project and Quality Assurance Program.	Original scope of project redefined. No formal benchmarks were identified.	Regularly revised Workplans were reviewed by the Technical Users Steering Committee (TUSC) and the Strategic Steering Committee.
Physically relocate and revamp the Information Resource Centre.	Completed	IRC officially opened in new premises, Feb. 93. IRC moved to temporary building Summer 1995 due to building reconstruction.
Connect to ICRC automated system	Revised plan	IRC connected by modem to bibliographic system May'93, but decision made NOT to use the IRC computer system due to high cost.
Identify and obtain access to external databases of information	Completed (IRC continues to explore access to additional databases and acquire CD-ROMs appropriate to needs of IFRC.)	IRC Connected to external commercial databases on "as needed" basis. Connected to "Datastar/Dialog" and UNINET. Cooperative arrangements with UNHCR and UNDHA. Acquisition of CD-ROM databases.

PHASE II - DATABASE DEVELOPMENT

1. Business and data analysis	Initial completed. Ongoing to meet needs	Systemhouse International - Study and Report on LISN Pilot System Architecture. Ongoing review of information needs of Operations Depts. of IFRC.
2. Design documents database (FEDOC)	FEDOC designed and implemented in IRC.	FEDOC currently holds over 3,000 records. Input is on-going activity as new documents acquired by Federation. Plan to include all IFRC documentation for last 6 years
3. Design projects database (Federation projects in development)	Amalgamated with the "Appeals" database	Database using FoxPro created for use by the Appeals Dept.
4. Design National Society database (Institutional database)	Completed	All data from the "Red Book" transferred to Federation Database (FED). Printed version published 2x yearly.
5. Design disasters database	Revised - Creation of database considered duplication of existing sources	IFRC providing data to international databank in Brussels (Centre for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters - CRED. Arrangements made to link to existing databases to avoid duplication of effort.
6. Design appeals database	Completed on FoxPro	Operating database linked to financial system and updated nightly (FABS - Financial Appeals and Budget System)
7. Design policies database	Completed	FEDPOL database with over 400 entries of doctrines and policies.

PHASE III - INTERNAL NETWORK

1. Select and obtain hardware/software	Completed	All project hardware required to operate system and network at a reasonable level in 1995 has been purchased. Software and hardware guidelines have been established.
2. Connect to ICRC automated system	ICRC and IFRC have different operating systems. ICRC uses BASIS, IFRC uses Micro ISIS.	Information shared between IFRC & ICRC but not through automated connection. Working arrangements with Geneva based International Agencies obtained.
3. Develop user interface to link FAMIS / LISN databases	Completed	CODA implemented for financial control of IFRC. Micro version (SCALA) used by field Delegations. Both systems interlinked and connected to Appeals database.

PHASE IV - NATIONAL SOCIETY PILOT

1. Select National Societies for pilot	Completed	Pilot introduction to SEAsia and Africa undertaken.
2. Provide technical assistance in set up	Completed	Assistance provided to Delegations and National Societies in SEAsia and East Africa.
3. Training	Completed	Training undertaken at time of installation. E-mail training provided to Delegations prior to posting.

MILESTONES NOT INCLUDED IN ORIGINAL PROJECT DESIGN

1. Electronic Networking <FEDNET = Federation Network>	Ongoing study on use of INTERNET, PACTOR and FIDONET technology	Tested FEDNET using FIDONET technology for communication with former Yugoslavia Delegates.
2. Federation Staff Training	Ongoing as required.	Training modules created for short, specific courses as required. Help desk created for immediate response to inhouse questions and response to field questions by e-mail and fax.
3. Professional Development and Workshops	Ongoing activities as they occur	ISD staff attended professional workshops (eg."Rethinking Information Technology" Sept.'93; Executive Briefing on LOTUS in Washington,USA Aug.'93) Sensitivity workshops undertaken for Management of IFRC on information use in the work of the IFRC.
4. Records Management Study	Completed	Records Management strategy completed and accepted by Senior Management. 2 staff positions approved.
5. Provision of Technical Assistance to National Societies.	Ongoing activity	3 Workshops undertaken with Information Officers from National Societies. Results in increased implementation and use of e-mail and electronic communication with IFRC and National Societies.
6. Current Awareness Service (IRC)	Completed and ongoing	IRC constantly "advertising" and revamping its services to its clients. Public awareness of information sources available.
7. Acquisitions Bulletin (IRC)	Ongoing activity	Monthly publication from FEDOC database
8. Project Management	Completed	TUSC met on regular basis during project implementation (28 meetings to date) 4 SSC Meetings have been held to date.

9. Funding Database	Completed	Incorporated into the Appeals database on FoxPro.
10. Set-up CD ROM Network.	Completed	CD ROM "tower" established in the IRC and number of CD ROMs on Humanitarian and Development Assistance accessible to IFRC staff.
11. Set up CDS/ISIS User Group.	Completed	Regular bi-monthly meetings held of the Geneva users group.
12. Explore use of country profiles	Ongoing	Survey completed of available resources to be tapped for country profile information. Much available via the Internet www.
13. Review prototype results.	Completed	Evaluation report completed
14. Develop sustainability strategy.	Completed and Ongoing	Concept paper completed and sent to donors. Phase II project design completed.
15. Staff Awareness Program	Ongoing.	Information notes on internal www. Personal contact.

3.1) EVALUATION REVIEW

From 16 to 19 October 1995, Fred Carden , Senior Program Officer in the Evaluation Unit of IDRC and Ronald Archer, Project Manager in the Information Sciences and Systems Division of IDRC, undertook an evaluation of the LISN project. The following is the report of this mission:

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this end-of-project review is to explore how the achievements of the project have strengthened the IFRC and to identify the weaknesses which:

a)   may not be addressed by the project but affect its capacity to deliver
b)   which could be integrated into the activities of the federation in future and
c)   which could be part of any future projects supported by CIDA and IDRC.

This review will not examine the specific activities of the project and the achievement of each specific objective. This aspect is adequately addressed in the regular reporting on the project, to the full satisfaction of all the parties. The focus is on overall objective of building the capacity of the IFRC.

THE LISN PROJECT:

The project is a key element in the development of an adequate information system for the IFRC as will be evidenced by the outline of the state of information in the Federation at the beginning of the project, and nearing its conclusion. The work was carried out through document review and a series of individual meetings with members of the IFRC staff in Geneva (see complete list at the end of this section).

REVIEW METHODOLOGY AND OBJECTIVES:

The review will be carried out through the development of an
institutional profile of the IFRC through the optic of the role of
informatics in achieving its mission.

The objective of the review is:

*to assess the impact of an improved informatics system on the ability of
the IFRC to fulfil its mission.*

The review will:
*   develop an institutional profile of the IFRC (based on a rapid
     assessment approach);
*   assess the progress in development of informatics at IFRC;
*   assess the contribution of the project in meeting the needs of
     IFRC; and
*   recommend on areas of future work.

The review should be seen as an opportunity to reflect the knowledge and
experience of the project team and IFRC Geneva in future planning. It
does not include any field work or meetings with IFRC membership. It
provides a different perspective on the project by bringing the IDRC
Evaluation Unit into the assessment.

The first presentation of the results was made in oral form to the LISN
group at the Federation in Geneva on 20 October.

The overall objective of the LISN project is to:

*Strengthen the IFRC institutional capacity in humanitarian
assistance and its role as a secretariat.*

This is a very large mandate, and an objective which is too vague to
help one understand the role of the project. In looking at the specific
objectives and activities of the project, it becomes clearer what the
project is undertaking, why, how and for whose benefit.

A review of the achievement of the specific objectives of the project
quickly demonstrates that the project has successfully created the
enabling conditions to meet the specific project objectives, from a
technical point of view.   This is amply documented in the regular
reports and monitoring missions.

The Director General of the Federation is of the view that an evaluation
of the project is not necessary at this stage; and from the perspective
of the achievement of the objectives of the project, he is correct.

Of the common threads which emerge across the movement are the strengths
of the movement in "bringing people together". This humanitarian aspect
of the role and purpose is central in the views of a number of members
of the staff of IFRC.

THE IFRC - AN INSTITUTIONAL OVERVIEW:

The Federation, founded in 1919, relies on its members for its
operation Its members define the information it receives, support it in
its local work, and guide the work in-country. It is a representative
body, serving the requests of its member societies and taking its
instructions from them. The Federation does not deal directly with
organizations (ie donors and recipients) in other countries, except
through its members, whether it is to receive funds for its work or to
assist in a humanitarian effort.   The Geneva-based professional staff

are in a challenging position of helping to build the capacity of the national societies to provide disaster relief at the same time as they are trying to build a relief operation. This is combined with the challenges which face all professional staff working in a representative organization taking their instruction from a voluntary body. This raises very clearly the need for strong and effective communication and information linkages.

There has been a very recent shift to a team approach in disaster management. This is in part to address the fact that many disasters now have many dimensions and probably should not be dealt with largely from one point of view (i.e., medical.) This has so far not been institutionalized within the Federation, with the consequent tensions amongst the professionals, and the emergent realization of the importance of information.

The role of technology in information in the Federation is very new. There has been some form of e-mail for about four years now, but the systems have not been very "user-friendly" until the current introduction of Lotus Suites with its links between e-mail, text and data management in a Windows environment.

THE INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT:

The Federation relies on voluntary contributions. It must now compete for funds and compete for profile in demonstrating its capacity in disaster relief. This has necessitated not only an examination of how disaster relief can be delivered more effectively, but how information about the operations of the Federation and its member societies can be more effectively delivered through the media - and this necessity is viewed with some distaste by many of the professionals within the organization, who find this focus on public affairs a difficult one to balance with the need to spend resources on the disasters themselves, rather than information about the disasters. The immediacy of the public information to access about a disaster means that the public expects decisions to be made almost before an assessment of the situation has taken place. This has perhaps as many risks as taking too much time in making an assessment; but with the ability of some organizations to move into filling the media demand for information and decisions on what is to be done, a considerable effort needs to be made to find the appropriate strategies to educate the public about humanitarian relief efforts, both in the context of a disaster in the making and on an on-going basis in between situations.

The Federation continues to be well regarded by most of its stakeholders. A critical change in its environment is that there has been an increasing number of organizations involved in humanitarian work and disaster relief; at the same time, there has been an apparent increase in the number of disasters occurring over recent years. This may be explained by the movement of more and more people into disaster prone areas, either because of refugee movement or population pressures causing more demand on land areas previously avoided. A final pressure on the IFRC is that donors are also coming under increasing financial pressures, and are therefore making increasing demands for information on the use of funds they have provided: the donors themselves must be able to justify to their constituencies that resources are being well used. Because of these changes, some of the IFRC's traditional contributors have been splitting their donations with other humanitarian relief efforts. This has increased the pressure on IFRC resources, and increases the pressure to be able to effectively publicize the work of the Federation and its member societies.

Many of the factors outlined above have been important in the

realization of the necessity to shift to an information-based
organization - both for internal management purposes and for external
presentation of the organization. The Federation needs to have good
access to all parts of the Red Cross family, good information about a
country situation, good information about what decisions have been made
about how a disaster is to be dealt with, good information about what
progress has been made at any point in time, and so on. Often
information is difficult to obtain; it is therefore critical that
whatever information exists be rapidly and accurately available to all
parts of the organization. The public information group cannot present
the information they do not have, and the coordinators of various
aspects of the supply effort need to know the status of logistical
problems and issues. Those who seek out the information which is needed
to keep the relief effort operational need to be kept apprised of the
information needs of the team managing the disaster.

MOTIVATION:

The Federation has had few major struggles in its existence. It
maintains a continuing dialogue with the ICRC and over time there has
been some tension between the two organizations. They operate in
similar environments but with very different operating styles. The ICRC
is by necessity much more secretive as it is dealing in situations of
conflict in which it must take all precautions to protect the people it
is seeking to assist; it must ensure that no adverse publicity takes
places and ensures that information on people with whom it is working
remains confidential. The Federation on the other hand is working in
disaster relief where there is a need for a sharing of information in
helping people to locate relatives and family members.

A key struggle is probably that going on at present, with the major
changes in the structure of the program delivery and the changing
structure of the funds available to the Federation.

The professional staff are committed and highly motivated; they operate
largely as individuals, and in the past have had individual
responsibility for specific disasters. As such the primary information
linkages which were important, were the communications with the national
society(ies) and IFRC delegations involved in the disaster and
communication linkages with the disaster site (often radio or satellite
linkages.) The stress in the past therefore was on effective
communication at the time of a disaster, through phone fax, radio,
satellite or whatever could be made available to serve the needs at the
time. The development of mobile communication systems which can be
taken quickly to disaster sites has been an important component of
disaster management. There is some resistance to change which is rooted
in this self-confidence in the primacy of the Federation in disaster
relief.

CAPACITY:

From the perspective of information management, the Federation is in a
very strong position. Information needs are clearly perceived by the
management of the Federation and full support has been given to the
development of the information capacity. The fact that so much of the
information function has been routinized, for example in the movement of
staff from project charge to core budget, demonstrates a clear
commitment by management to a strong and effective information support
system.

The rapid progress which has been made to date (demonstrated by the
existence of some electronic information systems after a short period of
time and growing demand for bigger and better by the operations staff)

demonstrates a team which has a clear sense of direction and a capacity to build on previous successes and efforts.

The capacity, through the "Help Desk" for the information group to provide support both in Geneva and in the field operations, appears to have been excellent to date. A full-time service function is maintained, with every effort made to fulfill requests in a timely and complete manner.

In some areas, operations staff remain somewhat weak in the use of information systems, at least in some parts of the organization. This reflects some typical resistance to change, and a concern about the de-humanization of the work which is always a potential threat when computers are introduced into a very human process. It also reflects the fact that the systems are in the middle of being installed, so not all sectors of the organization have yet been touched by the full extent of what the information group is working with. (Those who are the most "plugged in" to the new systems are, of course, those who are the easiest to plug in: they have actively sought to be involved. A higher and higher proportion of those not yet plugged in are those who will resist.)

An issue which was not explored in depth in the short period of this assessment was the overall organizational capacity to absorb the changes and the level of effort which will be required to manage the change.

Infrastructure is being put in place in a coherent and consistent manner; there are no apparent concerns about weaknesses and limitations at this stage. That may change if some aspects of various information projects cannot be fully funded on the schedule as foreseen. There is no reason to believe that this is more at risk than the normal funding risks associated with operating an international organization reliant on voluntary contributions.

PERFORMANCE:

In the past the Federation has operated on a series of discrete "events," providing support in the event of a disaster and then closing the file on that activity when the Federation ceased to be involved. The Federation has been extremely effective in this fashion and has a very good record of operation in humanitarian assistance efforts. There are few blemishes on its record, and the organization commands a great deal of respect.

Most information management within the Federation has tended to operate on the same principle. This explains the lack of archiving of material and the reliance on individuals for corporate memory. There has been little effort put into systematization of information and "lessons learned" and little effort put into the organization of information (prior to the initiation of the LISN project.)

Thus, performance has been measured in terms of response to an event when it occurs. Preparation is in general terms in maintaining a set of contacts, general information about the usual countries of operation, individual expertise, experience and recall from previous events.

This assessment did not address the question of efficiency of resource use within the Federation.

The relevance of the Federation is, in an overall sense, maintained. The need for the type of support and assistance it provides, both the immediate humanitarian assistance and the longer term capacity building with member National Societies to provide services directly over the

long term, has never diminished. Where the relevance of the Federation is called into question, is in its awareness of the changing context within which it is operating. The realization that it was too focused on discrete events, was in part the motivation for the LISN project. It is perceived as helping to provide the capacity to see the big picture as well as provide additional support to the "event management."

KEY ISSUES:

Seven key issues are identified around two themes; the first relates to the strategic management process, and the second to the socio-technical issues of implementation of an informatics system.

1.   **A sense of place:**

Because of the focus on the management of discrete events, there has been little reliance on information in the past. It has also meant a very discrete focus on events rather than context. The implication is that when the environment for delivery of humanitarian assistance began to shift, the Federation was not prepared for that shift and while it may have continued to provide the bulk of the assistance, it was not perceived as the leader in the media - and in the donor countries. Management information therefore has two key challenges to strengthen the Federation:

1.1   one is internal, making it possible for the lessons from the past to be applied to the future (in terms of what works in disaster management and what does not);

1.2   and the second is external, making the Federation aware of the environment in which it is operating and the changing context within which it has to deliver its product;

Both of these elements suggest an extension of the role and responsibilities of the information systems group, to an information officer role. This strengthens the substantive dimension to the information function and somewhat diminishes the importance of the technical aspect of the function.

2.   **Creating a demand:**

2.1   The potential for ongoing resistance to change in the building of an information capacity suggests the need for strengthening the marketing function of the group. This capacity is amply demonstrated in the Information Resource Centre, which has made itself useful by anticipating needs and by demonstrating across the Federation why they want an effective and well staffed Resources Centre.

2.2   It is perhaps less well demonstrated in other parts of the information system. Libraries have a traditional niche in marketing information; the electronic information systems niche has tended to be much more technical and the expertise of the individuals tends to be more technical than substantive, more system design-oriented than service oriented.

2.3   In effect, both sides need to develop the other skill: for example, in order to sustain an ongoing capacity to provide more and better information, the Resources Centre will need technical back-up (assuming they are unlikely to receive additional human resources;) and the electronic information systems group needs to start identifying the additional ways

in which it can reach into its constituency and extend the
demand for the service.

2.4   The group can make effective use of the resistance in the
       organization as a "straw poll" to know what the issues are
       which are bothering people about current systems (what is
       e-mail about, a call to an urgent meeting with the Secretary
       General or a staff member's plea for a home for lost
       kittens?) Responding to the individual concerns is not in
       itself effective; however, a clear understanding of the
       context of the problems and responses to ones which can be
       dealt with on an organization-wide basis can go a long way
       to extending the demand for and support of, information
       services as a vital planning and management tool for the
       Federation.

THE FUTURE:

Among the implications for the future work of the project and the
informatics function in the Federation, the following appear to be key:

1.   Expanding the net:

The context of bringing the national societies into the
informatics approach is not so much a technical issue as a
socio-technical one. While some technical support will be needed,
particularly for the weaker societies, it is sensitization to
information and education about the use of information which will
require the most work.

2.   Benchmarks:

It is now possible to consider the establishment of benchmarks in
informatics at the Federation. Now that, in this initial
three-year period, the Federation has put itself on the map and
has a partially functioning system, there is a working system to
measure. It will be important as new plans are put in place, to
be able to have a clear picture of what the improvement are. It
is at this stage that the overall objective of the original
project can begin to be considered as there is enough of an
information system in place that it could begin to contribute to
institutional strengthening.

3.   Strategic Planning:

There is a set of strategic planning issues which surround the
role of information in institutional strengthening. In the
initial design phase there is an obvious need to focus on the
technical questions and basic "education questions on the use of
information. This next phase calls for a strategy to bridge the
program-information gap.

INFORMATION FOR DONORS:

The access for donors to information about the use of their specific
resources in a disaster is an emerging issue for the IFRC. As part of
their own processes of accountability, an increasing number of donors
are seeking information at a more specific level, either because they
want their resources used in a certain way, or because they specifically
do not want their resources used for certain activities in a disaster
management situation. They are asking the IFRC for more specifics on
where their resources are used. Technically there is no constraint to
the provision of this information. The greater the level of detail, the

higher the cost to manage and deliver the information to donors; therefore an increasing proportion of the funds for a disaster must be allocated to administration in order to be able to follow a contribution through to its end use.

Two issues must be considered by both the donors and IFRC in determining an acceptable level of accountability:

First, what is necessary for audit purposes of the agencies involved; as these requirements change, mechanisms must be put in place to address the audit needs. These audit requirements are separated here from the political and evaluation requirements of agencies, which are addressed in the following point.

Second, is the move towards a results-based accountability and evaluation system in most donor agencies and national governments. Such an approach opens the opportunity for both the donors and the IFRC to put forward a more comprehensive view of the impact of the support of any one donor on the overall effectiveness of the IFRC in achieving its result - humanitarian relief. Consistent with approaches to 'results based contracting,' on which accountability is for the product required by the consultancy rather than the number of days taken to produce the product, it might be feasible to approach some aspects of accountability for support to disaster relief in this way.

This opens the door to a focus on more effective disaster relief overall, rather than a process of micro-management which is often a logical reaction to requirements for increased accountability on spending.

IFRC STAFF INTERVIEWED

Ahluwalia, Rachim	Officer, External Relations.
Allen, Lynda	Head, Information Resource Centre.
Bina, Helen	Assistant, Information Resource Centre.
Carr, Chris	Officer, Operation Support Service.
Clemente, Lilyane	Officer, Technical User Support Service.
Davey, Stephen	Under Secretary General, Communication and Policy Coordination.
de Bois-Brillant, Stéphane	Head, Technical User Support Service.
Hagman, Gunnar	Acting Head, Planning Unit.
Hayes, Michael	Senior Officer, Resources Development.
Manley, John	Head, Logistics Service.
Mortimer, Jeremy	Network Specialist - Internet.
Murat, Sylvie	Officer, Technical User Support Services.
Nielsen, Dag	Head, Field Support and Telecommunications.
Ochsenbein, Catherine	Clerk, Information Resource Centre.
Pechner, Christian	Director, Finance Department.
Piper, Ian	Director, Communications Department.
Reiss, Jean-Claude	Senior Advisor, Information Systems Department.
Roberts, Ian	Documentalist, Information Resource Centre.
Stoddart, Linda	Director, Information Systems Department.
Talbot, Jerry	Director, Asia/Pacific.
Thomas, Brian	Senior Officer, Applications Development Service.
Voeltzel, Luc	Head, Appeals and Reporting Service.
Wahlström, Margareta	Under Secretary General, Disaster Response and Operation Co-ordination.
Weber, George	Secretary General.
Zak, Martin	Senior Officer, Operations, DROC.

4.)   PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND MONITORING

In the design of the project a Technical Users Support Committee (TUSC) composed of representative staff of the various departments of the Federation, including the Information Services Department, and a Strategic Steering Committee, chaired by the Secretary General and including a member of the TUSC, the Director of the Information Services Department and representatives of three National Societies, was proposed to assist in the implementation of the project activities. In the beginning the TUSC was chaired by a user but this position was later held by the Director of the Information Services Department.

In principle the TUSC was to review implementation plans, and review the various studies commissioned by the Information Services Department. The Strategic Steering Committee was to review information policy as it affected the Federation and the Movement. In practice the TUSC was considered to be an effective mechanism and forum for discussion of major shifts in responsibility of the various information activities which were beginning to be assumed by the Information Services Department and it provided an ideal opportunity to gain the support of the staff of the Federation for the changes which were taking place in modern office practices (as an example, the shift from the use of Wordperfect to the Lotus Suite, and indeed the use of computers in day-to-day operations).

Towards the end of the 3 year project the TUSC became more of a technical reporting meeting and the less technically inclined users found that they had less in-put to the meeting than previously. It is felt within the Federation that this is partially due to the evolution of information services which has taken place over the three years and also perhaps due to the meeting being chaired by the Information Services Department. It is felt that the TUSC still has a useful role within the Federation, but that it should return to being chaired by a user and that it should be a committee focused on the use of Federation information and information services, not on the technical aspects of handling the information or designing the information systems.

The Strategic Steering Committee was less beneficial to the implementation of the project. Again, at the outset of the project it offered the opportunity of input by the National Societies (and the Donor, through the IDRC representation on the Committee), to ensure that the focus of the project did not become internally, and narrowly focused, but rather to focus on service to the National Societies and the Movement. As the information services and systems within the Federation became stronger, and the natural evolution was to begin the process of expanding the Federation network to service some of the needs of the Delegation and the National Societies, this Strategic Steering Committee became less necessary. It is recommended that the Strategic Steering Committee be restructured to reflect the changing reality of information within the Movement and that in future the National Societies have a stronger voice, and "buy-in" to the Movement's growing information network.   One possible vehicle for this may be to formalize the "Working Together for Information and Telecommunications" group as a Red Cross, Red Crescent Information Advisory Committee. With the increasing advent of e-mail connectivity among the Membership, it is possible to create a Listserv which could become an inexpensive medium for discussion and specific information dissemination.

Since the initial involvement of IDRC in February, 1993, there have been 8 LISN project monitoring missions undertaken - essentially every six-months.   In all but one the mission team consisted of the IDRC Project Manager and a representative from CANCROSS, and all missions were carried out at the IFRC Headquarters in Geneva. These missions have proven to be useful to all parties.   They have obviously provided IDRC with the on-site ability to review project activities on a regular basis; they have provide the CANCROSS with an active participatory role in the implementation of the project (as was envisioned in the design of the project); and, they provided the Federation with a structured discipline against which retrospective review and reporting could be undertaken.   They also provided the Federation with a visible proof of interest by the donor in the implementation of the project which in turn provided positive reinforcement, specifically to the staff of the Information Services Department, as well as the general staff of the Federation.

5.)   ROLE OF THE CANADIAN RED CROSS SOCIETY

This final report on the LISN project would not be, complete without a few words on the role of the Canadian Red Cross. It is perhaps best exemplified as a "symbiotic" one. In the original project design, approved by CIDA, the multifaceted role of CANCROSS in the LISN project was clearly and firmly entrenched as an integral part of the implementation of the project. The administration and "executing agency" role was a part, but only a part, of the designed involvement of CANCROSS. Indeed, this role of a National Society acting as an auditor of the Federation (of which it is a member) was unique, and often proved to be uncomfortable for the players in both the Federation and the National Society. The role of "advisor" is much more acceptable to both CANCROSS and the Federation.

An important benefit to the project which CANCROSS staff have provided from the beginning, and continue to bring to the project is "corporate memory" and continuity. This is not only a corporate memory of the project design and principles, but more importantly a corporate memory of the complex institution(s) structure in which the project must reside and operate. This has been useful to IDRC, particularly at the point of it's involvement in the project, and also to the staff of the Information Systems Department of the IFRC. It should be noted that the staff involvement from CANCROSS has remained constant throughout the pre-project, approval and implementation phases of the LISN project, while frequent personnel changes have occurred both within CIDA and the Federation. This in itself has been a steadying influence during the implementation of the project.

The LISN project has two major thrusts; the establishment and operation of "information systems" within the Federation Headquarters; and, the establishment and operation of an "information network". When implementing the former, it is very easy for an institution to "internalise" the development of systems and build them to the exclusion of "external" users. The involvement of three National Societies representing both developed and developing countries, on the LISN Strategic Steering Committee was an attempt to ensure that the development of systems and network would consider the needs of National Societies in the project design. The representative of CANCROSS has presented, and continues to highlight, the role of the National Societies. This is clearly documented in the reports of the discussions

from the Strategic Steering Committee. It should be noted that of the three National Societies represented on the Steering Committee, the CANCROSS has been the most vocal and provided the most useful input .

The success which LISN has achieved is in large part due to the strong support the Information Systems Department has received from the top Management of the IFRC. New information systems and procedures of work can be implemented without this support, but take much longer and with many more difficulties if the institutional management is apathetic or critical. The Canadian Red Cross holds a unique position in its relationship with the IFRC Secretary General and the Operations Division of the IFRC. Although it would be unfair to state that undue influence was achieved through this relationship, it is true that the involvement of CANCROSS has reinforced the direction and decisions taken by the Management of IFRC in the implementation of the LISN project.

From the beginning of the LISN project, and indeed for the first year of IDRC's involvement in the project, the main thrust of the methodology has been on the development and implementation of the technical aspects of the project; primarily the development of the systems and database outputs. The mounting and use of these in a National Society environment, as a test site, has been and continues to be, the role of CANCROSS. The staff of CANCROSS, both within the International Services and the Computer and Communications Divisions, have been able to provide valuable feed-back to the staff of the IFRC on the system implementation and data quality from the perspective of a National Society. To some degree it has been a symbiotic relationship. As the development of systems, databases, and electronic network connectivity, has been developed by the IFRC, it has encouraged the National Society (in this case, CANCROSS) to move ahead with the implementation of more modern "information tools" for the day to day conduct of its operations. A direct example of this is the introduction of the use of Internet for communication , where the International Services Division of CANCROSS subscribed to a single Internet access, as a test and example for the rest of the institution. A full Internet service (including a www home page) is now implemented within the Canadian Red Cross Society for use by all the staff. Reports of this experience has, and will be of immense benefit to the IFRC as it moves forward to implementing its information network in the membership of IFRC. As a direct benefit to Canada, CANCROSS now has the capacity to rapidly provide a wealth of information from the IFRC and the Movement, to Canadian requesters - this is particularly germane in the times of natural and human disasters world-wide.

Due to its participation in the LISN project, CANCROSS is activating several information related activities of its own (eg. retrospective collection and organization of training materials; automation of its Library; and, study of natural disaster tracing systems, etc.). These collaborative projects are using the systems and network developed under LISN, and in turn the outputs of the CANCROSS work will be used as examples and models for use by the IFRC and Red Cross Movement. In addition, the CANCROSS activities and projects on disaster preparedness with "twinned" developing country National Societies (particularly the Philippine Red Cross) has the potential to include information components modeled on the outputs of LISN. Indeed, an information component should rightly be included as an integral part of any and all externally funded projects .

It is clear that CANCROSS is committed to improving the processes for information flow among the membership of the Federation, and improving the role of the IFRC and its relationship with the National Societies - both Canada and developing country societies. The very nature of its involvement from inception, through implementation, of the LISN project, indicates a sustaining participation by CANCROSS in information activities of the IFRC; - - long before the commencement, and after the conclusion of the CIDA/LISN project. This commitment shows not only on the philosophical level, but also on the direct financial level as the CANCROSS has contributed and continues to contribute considerable staff time to achieving the ends of LISN and reinforcing the relationships between the National Society and the Federation.

In the view of IDRC, the continued active participation of the staff of the Canadian Red Cross Society in the LISN project has been, and continues to be, beneficial to the success of the LISN project and the minimal cost associated with its involvement is worthwhile.

PART II -- FINANCIAL REPORT

F)   BUDGET STATEMENT

The overall allocation of CIDA funds to the LISN project is $2 million Canadian dollars. No change to this amount is anticipated although a financial loss to the project has occurred due to the stronger Swiss Franc versus the Canadian Dollar. This currency exchange loss has been absorbed by the Federation with an increased contribution from its statutory budget.

In the original budget this was divided over three years as $1,925,000 CAD to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies for the implementation of the activities listed for LISN, and $75,000 CAD to the Canadian Red Cross Society for evaluation and monitoring of the project on behalf of CIDA.

With the signing of the Agreement between IDRC and CIDA in February, 1993, it was agreed that IDRC's costs to undertake its responsibilities under the LISN project would amount to $189,502 CAD ($126,600 direct costs and $62,902 of indirect costs).
A statement of final actual expenditures to the end of the project will be submitted early in 1996 after the conclusion of the project activities and upon the year end reporting by the Federation, the Canadian red Cross, and the IDRC.

Five project payments have been made by CIDA towards the implementation of the LISN project:

● First payment to the Canadian Red Cross ($500,000 CAD) in January, 1992.
● Second project payment to IDRC ($315,351 CAD) in March, 1993.
● Third project payment to IDRC ($373,529 CAD) in August, 1993.
● Fourth project payment to IDRC ($492,664 CAD) in September, 1994.
● Fifth project payment to IDRC ($304,772 CAD) August, 1995.