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A CASE-STUDY OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCES DIVISION, IDRC

(Case-Management in a Research Funding Organization)

Anne K. Bernard  
Gregory Armstrong

May 28, 1982

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	
THE DIVISION AS A SYSTEM.....	1
The Working Environment.....	1
Some Implications of an Uncertain Environment.....	4
The Case-Management System.....	7
Authority and Decision Making.....	10
The Division as a System.....	15
(a) Programme Officer/client.....	16
(b) Programme Units.....	18
(c) Division Management.....	25
The Division as a System: Comment.....	34
POLICY IN THE DIVISION.....	36
PLANNING IN THE DIVISION.....	43
COMMUNICATION IN THE DIVISION.....	47
(a) Internal Review Meetings.....	50
(b) Associate Directors' Meeting.....	51
(c) Staff Meetings.....	52
(d) Trip Reports.....	53
PROGRAMME OFFICERS.....	56
Workloads.....	61
Evaluation Activity.....	66
Regional Programme Officers.....	69
SUPPORT STAFF.....	74
Communication.....	77
Conclusions.....	81
THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS.....	84
Case-Management.....	84
Identification.....	85
Screening.....	86
Elaboration.....	88
Resolution.....	89
Travel.....	90
Selection Criteria.....	96
Project Summaries.....	101
Internal Review Meetings.....	109
Conclusion.....	117

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Project Development Schedules.....	120
ECONOMICS AND RURAL MODERNIZATION PROGRAMME.....	123
External Perceptions of the Programme.....	123
Communication and Consultation.....	124
The Autonomy of Macroeconomics.....	126
Administration.....	129
Project Size.....	130
Regional Focus.....	133
EDUCATION PROGRAMME.....	135
External Perceptions of the Programme.....	135
Programme Administration: The Culture of the Unit.....	137
Priorities.....	140
Relationships with the Field.....	143
Regional Concentration.....	145
POPULATION-URBAN PROGRAMME.....	147
External Perceptions of the Programme.....	147
Organization and Decision Making.....	149
Programme Priorities.....	154
Leadership in the Field.....	157
Policy Relevance.....	158
Project Size.....	160
Conclusions.....	161
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY PROGRAMME.....	162
External Perceptions of the Programme.....	162
Administration.....	163
Priorities.....	168
Regional Concentration.....	170
Project Size.....	172
Relations with the Division.....	173
ISSUES FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION.....	179
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	181

## INTRODUCTION

This is the final report of the results of our research on the work of the Social Sciences Division, IDRC. The research began in November, 1981, with discussions with both professional and support staff in the Division about potential directions for the research, and the types of issues it would be useful to investigate--from the general perspective of how the work of the Division is implemented. Some of these issues became the focus of the study; others have evolved during the course of the research.

A preliminary report of the research was made to the Division during the annual staff meetings in May, 1982, and the opinions of Division staff about the accuracy of descriptions and judgements included in the report were solicited. The final report incorporates some modifications following our consideration of reactions to the draft version.

### Focus

The focus of this research was on the processes of decision making by individuals and groups in the Division and on the nature of the Division, internally in Ottawa, as a system which identifies, considers and accepts or rejects project proposals from Third World researchers. Based primarily on qualitative information obtained from field research methods, it is a case study of the Division as it appeared during the six months from November to April. As a case study, it has important strengths; it also has certain limitations.

The study does, we believe, accurately represent the nature of interactions between individual Programme staff and their Programme Units; between Programmes and the rest of the Division; and between Division Management and the Programmes. It represents too, something of the processes in the Division for the development and implementation of policies concerning the nature of the research projects that are supported.

There are however, other equally important and interesting areas which have not been considered in depth in the research

because of limitations of time and money, and, in some cases, a lack of general concern on the part of Division staff.

The study has looked, only peripherally, at relations between the Division and the rest of the Centre. It has examined the relationship between Ottawa staff and the Regional Programme Officers only from the point of view of the Ottawa staff, and then only in general terms. The study has not dealt explicitly with issues such as the development philosophy of Division staff, with evaluating the substance of individual projects or with the history of the Division. Programme Units are in the process of fairly constant change, either dramatic or evolutionary. This study focusses only on what the Programmes looked like during one period in this process.

#### Research Methods

In studying any complex organization, qualitative methods offer a very distinct advantage. Quantitative methods provide a base of information that is either broad or controlled, and therefore, generalizable. Qualitative methods, on the other hand, provide a deeper, more detailed base of information, one that allows for a better understanding of the nuances of complex patterns of behaviour and attitudes. Qualitative field methods, borrowing from ethnographic and phenomenological approaches, are best used where the concern is not with answering preformulated theoretical questions, but rather with developing a portrait of a situation from the perspective of the people being studied.

A description of "objective reality", if such an entity could ever be provided, would be of little use in understanding organizational behaviour without an understanding of how the people involved perceive the context of their own work. People make decisions on the basis of their perceptions and their own judgements. To understand or interpret the work of an organization, it is necessary to understand what the perceptions and judgements of events and processes are, and how they differ. Field research

methods, using observation, documentary analysis and open-ended interviews, can provide the kind of detailed information, the insights into how people think about their work, that permit such an analytical description. What the approach loses in breadth or standardization of information, it gains in depth and validity of interpretation. Analysis is inductive, built from the data as patterns emerge; the focus is on the description of process rather than on proving or disproving hypotheses.

This research incorporates information from a variety of sources:

- a) observation and analysis of 26 Division or Programme meetings;
- b) analysis of 26 Division projects, involving several hundred documents;
- c) 40 informal, but substantive, discussions with 27 Division staff;
- d) 32 detailed, formal interviews with 23 staff members, resulting in almost a thousand pages of interview transcripts.

The use of multiple sources of data on any issue provides opportunities for checking the validity and consistency of information obtained from any one source. It also provides the opportunity to go beyond the superficial discussion of issues which are often characterized as "hallway gossip". The average interview with professional staff in the Division for example, lasted roughly three hours. These were supplemented, before and after, by observation of informal discussions among staff, by attendance at formal meetings, by informal conversations with staff and by detailed analysis of project files.

As a means of checking validity, and protecting confidentiality of interview material, transcripts were provided to informants who were asked to indicate what material should be kept off the record and to correct any inaccuracies of fact or meaning.

A variation of the constant comparative method of data analysis used in grounded theory was employed in the research.

From the beginning of the research process, information from observation, documentary analysis, and interviews, was systematically reviewed, coded, collated and integrated. It then served as a guide to the collection of further data and for the testing of the extent to which perceptions varied or were shared throughout the Division.

Quotations used in this report, unless otherwise specified, are presented because they represent a general viewpoint shared by others in the Division--a conclusion reached by the researchers after a systematic assessment of all data sources.

The report is divided into two sections. The first is an overall analysis of the Division as a case-management system, of the various roles played in the Division by different people, and of the project development process. This portion of the study is based on data obtained from all Programme Units and from Division Management, from professional and support staff. The analysis was based, for the most part, on the current literature and theories of implementation.

As a result of interest expressed by Division staff at the beginning of this study, the second part of the report presents a situational description of the four Programme Units, as they appeared during the period when the research was conducted. The focus of these Programme descriptions is on the operational style of the different Programmes, and while all areas of Programme work could not be treated in detail, these descriptions represent those characteristics most in evidence during the period of the study. Data collected for this portion of the report, as for others, was obtained from observation, documentary analysis, and interviews. The nature of the different Programme descriptions is a reflection both of the differences between the Programmes, and of the different levels of access we had to information from them.



## THE DIVISION AS A SYSTEM

### The Working Environment

Any organization operates within the context of its own working environment-- that particular combination of goals, values, resources, parameters, staff and constituency that influences the nature of the work done. In social service organizations, where the goals tend to be process rather than product oriented and where the tasks tend not to be technically routine, it is less likely that the organization will be able to control its environment or prespecify the details of its operations. People, and their problems, tend not to be "predictable".

The most immediately striking characteristic of the Social Sciences Division is the complexity of its working environment, and the rather limited control it is able to exercise over that environment. Including both the Centre itself, and the LDC research community, it is an environment that requires considerable flexibility and adaptability on the part of the Division, while in return, offering considerable ambiguity as to the appropriateness, or the effectiveness, of strategies pursued. To the extent that it is an environment that is not subject to Division control, it is one that significantly reduces the capacity of the Division to predetermine or to standardize its operations.

As part of IDRC, the Division shares its very broad mandate to "initiate, encourage, support and conduct" those kinds of research in the developing countries that are most likely to promote their social and economic development, and to strengthen their capacity to guide the direction of that development. More specifically, the task of the Division is to identify, to fund and to facilitate the development and conduct of research in the Third World, and to assist its researchers to develop their own skills. While it is a mandate that is laudable, it is also one that is far from straightforward in either interpretation or application in the field. It is a complexity that confronts the Centre as a whole, but seems particularly an issue for the Social Sciences Division because of the nature of the discipline. Few, if any, social problems are of a kind. Reflecting the particular population involved, their definition of the basic relationships underlying any problem and their capacity to act, research intended to solve social problems will, quite legitimately, vary both in design and implementation. For agricultural and health sciences, the relationship between research and product often seems clear (at least, where the product is technical). The relationship between research methods and intended outcome seems also much more stable in the "hard" sciences, where paradigms tend to be linear and variables controllable.

Social attitudes and behaviour, the ultimate subject matter of the social sciences, tend not to be either predictable or controllable. The link between

research and subsequent social change is tenuous both in theory and in practice. New developments in contraception may well be developed in a lab and in turn, prompt action on the part of ministries of health. To persuade families then, to adopt the necessary attitudes and behaviours to make the device effective is a much less certain undertaking. In that the immediate task of the Division is not actually to conduct this uncertain research into adoption patterns, but to support at a distance the research work of others, the gap between theory and practice becomes wider, and the ability of the Division to control the task environment further diminished.

The external working environment of the Division, the research community, adds to the uncertainty. It is both highly variable and not particularly stable. Policy interpretation and operations are subject to the diversity of geography, culture, economics--as well as research interests and capabilities. In conditions of serious economic pressure and rapid social and political change, and where the infrastructural supports available for the promotion of social development are minimal or ineffective, social science research seems especially vulnerable. Few "facts" about the research community are indisputable. The relevance of the research, the manageability of the methods, the ability of the researchers are all subject to varying interpretations of professional judgement. The priorities of the country and the local institution, activities within the professional and donor communities and the ability of the Programme to provide professional guidance also influence the decisions made, as do the context of the research and the needs of the researchers as perceived by Division staff. There can be, then, no easy assumptions about standardized research criteria, skills or procedures. While uncertainties about research institutions and their capacity can be reduced somewhat through travel and regional contacts, the timing of proposals, the topics or methods presented, the bureaucratic and professional problems to be handled can never be fully anticipated. New research areas, new institutions, new dimensions to the funding process continue to appear and operations become a continuing process of reconsideration and renegotiation. The more purposefully the Division attempts to be responsive to its constituency and to encourage local adaptation, the more directly its own working patterns will be influenced by the complexity it finds.

The Division also operates within the internal environment of the Centre. While certainly more regulated (some would say rigid) than the research community, it is nevertheless, an environment difficult to control. The administrative requirements it sets and the initiatives it takes create explicit and unavoidable demands on Division operations. Decisions taken elsewhere, based on beliefs the Division may

not always share, have a direct impact on the Division and present to it a mixed blessing. Most clearly, it provides staff and budget necessary to sustain the work. The Centre's control over the size and timing of these allocations however, influences directly the ability of the Division to plan, and to implement, its own operational strategies. The Centre also makes a number of demands on the Division. Requirements for specific planning documents, project evaluations and project summaries all imply pressures on the work of Division Management and therefore, in turn, on the work of the Programme staff.

The broad policy directives of the Centre, and its administrative style, also have an effect on the subsequent policies and working arrangements in the Division. The shift in the Centre towards a greater sensitivity for the diversity within development problems, and so towards granting fuller autonomy to the Divisions, is generally regarded in the Division as positive. At the same time, it is an approach which has left the Division to resolve within itself the many dilemmas and tensions involved in the development of a consistent, readily defensible, mode of operation.

Also of mixed blessing are the various programme initiatives taken in the Centre which, though they may offer the potential of supplementary budgets, require at the same time a considerable expenditure of energy and time. It must be ensured that the working philosophy of the Division is not harmed by the incorporation of these programmes (in the case of the Co-operative Programme, for example) and to ensure as well that all proffered benefits are made fully available to researchers.

Perhaps in a more subtle, but no less real way, the Centre affects the nature of the Division inasmuch as it acts in judgement over both the quality and the substance of the Division's work and over its value to the Centre. On a fairly small scale, for example, the development of projects has been influenced in part by the concern that they "not tread on anyone's toes", that they be clearly not within the domain of another Division or, if they are, that they be small enough in scope or budget not to draw attention.

The judgement of the Division's institutional environment

becomes more serious, however, to the extent that a negative verdict can significantly reduce the Division's capacity to act on the autonomy given it to evolve approaches best suited to the field and to the discipline; reduce its capacity to take risks. Whether the Division is regarded as "a laughing stock" within the Centre (as one officer suggested it once was), or as deserving of "the Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval" (as another suggested it now is), seems very much more than simply a question of "image". And the character of the Division continues to be formed, in part at least, by its efforts to develop further and to maintain credibility before its peers.

#### Some Implications of an Uncertain Environment

The Division operates, then, within an environment conducive neither to standardized, narrowly prescriptive procedures nor to narrowly defined, immutable, policy directives. The literature on the implementation of complex social service programmes such as this, suggests very strongly that, to be effective, programmes must be flexible. Priorities and strategies must be adaptive to diverse and changing work conditions. Programmes must be open to incorporating new information, new resources, new conceptual frameworks. Programmes must be ready to respond to the demands and interests of a clientele over whom they have little control and, in fact, in whom they seek to encourage self-reliance and independent initiative.

Such suggestions hold certain implications for the nature of the organization's internal working arrangements--for the authority and decision making patterns adopted; for the division of labour; for the kinds of staff employed; and for the ways in which policies are formed, plans made and communication fostered.

Whether because of planned good management or the serendipitous coming together of particular personalities (probably a combination of both), the overall character of the

Division seems quite consistent with the theory. The professional assumptions underlying its operations, and the style of these operations, do seem likely to facilitate the delivery of the programme in such a way as to meet the needs of both client and staff. The match is not a perfect one. But neither is it likely ever to be, given the size of the research community, the scope of development problems, the finite resources available and the continually ambiguous relationship between research funded and development advanced.

There are certain tensions inherent in this kind of non-routine operational setting as well. There are tensions, for example, between the needs of the field (the programme's "output" function) and the demands of the institution (the programme's "maintenance" function); between the concern of officers that the researchers themselves control the design and implementation of the projects, and their own responsibility to ensure that funds are well spent and that professional criteria are adequately addressed. The necessity of considering issues such as these is a continuing one. No "solution" is final.

Much of the strength of the Division is due, perhaps, to the apparent assumption that tolerance for ambiguity and the continuing need to balance among various competing demands are legitimate and necessary components to the maintenance of programme flexibility. One indication that this attitude exists is the general consensus in the Division that the programme's function lies somewhere in the middle of the research granting-research contracting continuum. Either end of this continuum would provide at least some degree of task clarity. To serve simply as a source of funds for research candidates who meet fairly objective criteria requires little professional involvement in any active sense. The task is to react and evaluate. To elaborate beforehand precise statements of preferred research problems and strategies, allows professional deliberation to occur (somewhat at least) in tranquillity, away from the muddying details of local relevance.

The inclination of the Division overall seems quite

clearly to be toward the granting end of the continuum in its support for the basic principle that, ultimately, it is the researchers who will and should determine the purpose and the methods of the research.

In accepting a position towards the middle of the granting-contracting continuum however, the Division (and the Centre, in general), has accepted the double role of both research funder and research developer. It has accepted a **position that** acknowledges both the right of the researcher to determine priorities, and the discretion of the Programme to evaluate those priorities in light of its own criteria, the prevailing social science and development theories, and the professional judgement of the officers themselves as to the viability and the relevance of the research. Officers do not simply respond to initiatives, but stimulate and build on those initiatives in order to improve the capacity of the researchers to achieve their goals. They have, therefore, both an evaluative function (to assess the technical and societal merits of proposals) and an educative one (to provide professional guidance and moral support). Their purpose becomes one, not simply of determining whether a proposal should be funded, but of helping to make it deserving of funding.

The particular way in which all of these functions or variables are balanced depends, of course, on the interpretation and style of the officer involved. Some of the variations in this balancing process will be discussed later in the report.

That the Division manages to survive amid all of this complexity seems in large part a result of its success at evolving an internal system of organization that is particularly congruent with the diversity it faces, the pressures from within the Centre itself and the particular mix of responsiveness, guidance and control it has adopted.

## The Case-Management System

The first, and probably most important element determining the effectiveness of the Division's programme is the management of its operations explicitly in terms of the diversity in its environment and its own concern with being responsive. It is a style of operation that is consistent with many other social service programmes, and with what has been described in the literature as "case-management".

Most simply described, case-management refers to the fact that the organization responds to each individual who participates in its programme as a separate case. Concern of programme staff is, then, not with ensuring uniformity in the application of its processing procedures, but with achieving a satisfactory match between the individual and the programme. The focus is on processing the "case" in terms of its own requirements. Variations among cases are assumed as both unavoidable and legitimate; it is the task of the programme staff to assess and to manage each case on the basis of the specific variations involved.

The case-management process is therefore, an interactive one, typically non-linear. It involves the staff, in fact, in a form of research--seeking information from the individual and translating that information into appropriate programmatic action. The process is an ambiguous one. Cases are opened often with only a vague conception of what the management process will eventually involve, what the final product will be or even if there will be a final product. It is the purpose of the case-management process to clarify this ambiguity, to help the client define his or her problems and to work with the client to determine the most appropriate mode of support--given the programme's own resource limitations and its own definition of purpose.

Case-management places the major responsibility for the successful implementation of the programme on the individual programme officer. By virtue of the fact that the process begins largely with the client, rather than with the concerns

of the programme, guidelines for action can be only general. The character of the programme is defined, most clearly, not through the official statements of policy, but through the daily decisions and actions of the individual officers, in relation to the particular demands and constraints of the case as it is presented, and in terms of their professional judgement as to the "best" response.

The case-management approach then, makes legitimate what implementation theory describes as happening anyway. And it makes it incumbent on the programme to hire professionally competent staff, who are able to generate their own initiative, and explicitly to accord that staff the discretionary autonomy necessary to facilitate independent, responsible action.

The various ways in which the Division operationalizes the case-management approach will be described in greater detail later in the report--although the similarities are clear. The purpose here is to make the point, in more general terms, that this kind of organization of the work in the Division is a particularly appropriate one for the functions it pursues.

In its treatment of research initiatives as individual case proposals to be developed and monitored on the basis of the character and needs of the proposal, with processing procedures determined in accordance with those characteristics, the Division quite clearly improves the likelihood that it will be sensitive to and will build on the diversity inherent in the research community. To the extent that it is sensitive, the research projects that are developed are more likely to suit the circumstances in which they are undertaken and results are more likely to be seen as both relevant and useful.

By employing a case-management approach, the Division also makes it more likely that the influence of the individual Programme Officer on the programme's implementation will be constructive, contributing to the quality of the research



projects themselves and to the overall strength of the Division as a cohesive system. This is because case-management actively promotes the professional autonomy of the staff involved. No one person is in a position to exercise directive control over a programme comprised not of a single, focussed set of activities, but of a diversity of quite separate activities each at a different point of completion and each involving a slightly different combination of factors, differently prioritized.

Working through the project development process, the Programme Officer accumulates more and more detailed information and so forms a clearer picture of the task involved. With knowledge, comes the likelihood that decisions will be sounder and the work more "successful". According to the literature, the opportunity to act independently, and the positive feedback from actions that succeed, contribute to professional autonomy and to a greater sense of satisfaction with and commitment to the organization as a whole.

The fact that projects in the Division are often managed by one Programme Officer, through the entire development and monitoring process, further strengthens the approach. Vertical integration increases the possibility that the Officer and the client will acquire over time and in changing circumstances a better understanding of each other and the particular elements involved in the proposal. It allows the exchange of information to be cumulative, to inform the process as it evolves. Individual control over the direction of case processing gives the Programme Officer a stronger position from which to initiate effective discretionary judgement.

The strength of this approach though, is also its weakness. Feelings of proprietary authority can increase the risk of manipulation by the Programme Officer; the line between guidance and directiveness is obviously a very fine one. Professional autonomy also makes it more difficult, it would seem, for the Officer to accept the intervention of other staff who may have quite different, albeit equally legitimate, judge-

-ments to make about the way the case is being managed. This may be particularly true where the intervention is perceived to reflect not the immediate needs of the client (who is the officer's focus of concern), but the demands of the "system", either the Division or the Centre.

These are tensions that are evident in the Division, but ones which are probably unavoidable in a case-management setting.

\* \* \*

Maintenance of the case-management approach is supported in two separate, although related, ways in the Division: first, by the particular authority and decision making patterns that have been developed (and are developing), and second, by the structural and functional organization of the Division as a "system".

#### Authority and Decision Making

In formal terms, of course, the Director has ultimate authority for decision making in the Division. He can affect significantly the nature and the direction of the work through the projects he approves, rejects or alters; through the travel he authorizes; through the staff members that are hired. He can also influence the nature of the case-management process by the amount of discretionary authority he allocates to professional programme staff.

Implementation theory suggests that formal, hierarchical authority is somewhat of an ephemeral thing. Decisions and policies will be made in the end by the individual officers in the course of programme operations as they occur. Nevertheless, theory suggests as well that the character of any programme will be formed, in large measure, by the degree to which its leaders attempt to apply a firm, controlling hand. A concern with

trying to ensure the precise implementation of policy decisions increases the need for supervision, for check-points, for "objective" criteria. These in turn, are likely to increase attempts to circumvent or subvert the system. From both sides, an excessive amount of programme time and energy will be concentrated inward, on the state of the work-place, rather than outward, on the issues of programme delivery.

Control from the top is also cited as a powerful disincentive to the development of professional diversity in a programme. Denied the room to exercise professional judgement in light of changing circumstances, qualified professional staff, with different perspectives to their work, will be less inclined to commit themselves to the programme.

In essence then, the theory says, centralized and hierarchical programme management directly contravenes the spirit and the value of case-management as an operational approach. Staff professionalism and commitment, programme diversity, and a primary orientation to the successful delivery of the programme are directly and positively related to decentralized decision making. Effective sharing of decision making is, in turn, associated with an authority relationship that is reciprocal, between the formal authority at the top and the informal authority that derives from professional expertise and a direct involvement with programme operations.

Uncentralized decision making and reciprocity are both characteristics applicable to the management style currently practised in the Division. It is a style that has been quite deliberately adopted by the Director, and it is one that has been both widely praised and institutionalized as an expected norm by the professional staff. The basic assumption underlying the approach taken by the Director, and generally reiterated through the Division's formal authority structure, is that given a programme staff that is responsible, professionally

competent and committed to the general philosophy of the Centre (and the Division), the programme will be strengthened if authority for day-to-day decisions is shared. It is a delegation of authority that implies, according to the Director, fairly wide parameters of freedom for the professional staff--"as much rein as they can handle without getting into trouble". It is an approach that takes cognizance of the realities in the Centre and the requirements of a professional staff.

Professionals are not motivated by the desire to earn money or to step up the hierarchy around here, because there is no promotion possible. There is only one Director and only one President....So, it's a question of giving professional cause to be satisfied and I think you do that by making sure they have a large say, and as much as possible, make a consensus. (Division Director)

It is an approach that is consistent with the view professional staff in the Division have of themselves, and of the kind of authority they should exercise. In the opinion of an Associate Director, "I think you only have satisfactory Programme Officers if they are doing what they want to, within the limits of the organization". Reflected generally in interviews with both Associate Directors and Programme Officers was the very clear message that, in the words of one, "I like being left to do my job".

From the perspective of programme staff, and other professional staff, the Director has been successful in promulgating the ideal of reciprocity. As described by the professional staff: decisions are, for the most part, arrived at through collegial negotiation; authority is shared; and, "exceptional" cases aside, Programme Officers, and Programme Units (through the Associate Directors and officers), exercise their professional judgement on the substantive issues of individual project development and overall direction of the Programmes, without interference from Division Management.

In the opinion of one Associate Director,

(The Director) provides all the autonomy that one could ever want in the planning process, in setting up Programmes.

And of another,

I must say that (the Director) is not rigid. His interests are in running a good Division, and if that means plurality within the Division, I think he is prepared to accept that.

There seems to be an impression, across the Division, that morale has improved in direct proportion to the delegation of authority to the professional staff, and that it declines to the extent that people perceive any encroachment on the autonomy they have come to see as their prerogative. Actions taken by the Director with respect to the internal management of a Programme or project--actions that in a more highly structured setting might well go unnoticed--seem to be highlighted by virtue of their being aberrations. Once delegated, autonomy is hard to rescind, and certainly not without notice.

An important implication of this kind of shared-authority agreement in the Division is that there can be fairly few definitive rules or guidelines as to what constitutes "appropriate", "sufficient" or "good". Such evaluations tend to become a matter of compromise among competing (and sometimes conflicting) perspectives, professional judgements, priorities. Because all professional staff members are acknowledged to be just that, each one's "professional opinion" is, theoretically at least, equal to that of another. Reflecting the general view,

...we work on a collegial basis in this institution. You can ask people to do things, but you only ask people to do things which you think they are likely to want to do, at least to a certain degree.

And it is a relationship that seems to obtain whether people are equal in title, or not;

If (the Programme Officer) thought this ...was a bad idea, I could not ask him to follow up on it; I would have to ask someone else. And, in fact, I might decide not to follow up on it at all, first of all because I respect his advice and secondly because it's very difficult to work on a team basis when one member is hesitant.

(Associate Director)

In this working situation then, a great deal of weight is accorded the ability to persuade, to be able to convince colleagues of the inherent merits of one's case, or of its merits as compared to the possible alternatives. Persuasiveness no doubt, involves a great many factors, including the cogency of the argument and the quantity of the facts; perhaps even the degree of self-assurance displayed or the diplomacy of the presentation.

One very important criterion for being persuasive in the Division is credibility. Officers have credibility to the extent that colleagues respect their professional judgement, and it is this respect, or trust, that in turn underpins discretionary autonomy as it is practised here.

While credibility is a function of knowledge and experience, it is also a function of adherence to important norms in the Division and of the quality of the work done. Where officers are perceived to have transgressed norms or to have allowed the quality of their work to falter in some way, "the credits they have accumulated", as one Programme Officer expressed it, are diminished.

There are implications, obviously, of a reduction in credits in terms of the work. Where projects are considered somehow "unusual" or where budgets are abnormally large--where there is some doubt about the viability of the proposed research or of its ability to get past the Centre's scrutiny--the extent of the presenting officer's apparent credibility

seems directly related to the benefit of the doubt accorded the project.

Units as a whole are also affected by the credits they have earned. Those Programmes that stay within the generally accepted parameters (particularly administrative parameters) tend to be given a wider scope for project innovation than those whose credits are perhaps fewer.

On a wider level, but the same issue, the Division also is sustained within the Centre very much on the basis of credibility. As for the Division's own staff, so too for the Division as a whole: insofar as one's reputation is sound,

...(you) can go a bit further out on the limb to do something that doesn't fall exactly into the Centre's parameters because (you) have the reputation of being able to pull things off, of knowing what you are doing. (Deputy-Director)

Without credibility, "you don't immediately inspire confidence".

### The Division as a System

As suggested earlier, there appear to be two reasons in particular which support the case-management approach in the Division. The first was the nature of the authority relationship between Director and professional staff. The second is the nature of the Division as itself a "system".

The term system is defined here fairly simply as a set of identifiably separate, but integrally related, elements. In an organizational system, these elements would include the individuals, roles, mechanisms, tasks and norms that come together in a defined programme of work. The Division is, in this sense, a system.\*

Programme Officers therefore, may well work on individual cases with a fair degree of autonomy, but they do not perform

(\* It is also, of course, a sub-system of the wider Centre, but that particular relationship lies outside the scope of this study.)

their functions in complete isolation from the rest of the Division. There is "system" too, in that there appears to be a Divisional sense of common identity and purpose. And the Division is a system in that it is treated as such by the Centre, acknowledged as a definably bounded entity, by being accorded its own set of resources and a considerable authority in determining how those resources should be used.

The Division is in turn divided into 4 sub-systems: Programme Officer/client; Programme Unit; Division Management; Division/Regional Officers. (Although the latter perform an integral function in the Division, it was not possible to include this perspective in this study). All are sub-systems in that each performs identifiable functions within the Division, despite a clear overlap in the individuals concerned (the Programme Officer is part of the Programme Unit) and in function (all 4 have a part in the project development process).

Although the concept of system is a somewhat abstract one, it seems useful to look at the Division in these terms because it helps to explain why the case-management approach works, and to clarify something of the complexity involved in that process. It is not simply a matter of the individual officer identifying, developing, funding and monitoring a project.

The idea of system helps, too, to clarify the nature of the relationships between staff members and to explain, in less personalistic terms perhaps, some of the tensions and the problems in the Division.

(a) Programme Officer/Client

It is quite clear that the Programme Officer/client relationship is the most basic, and the most important, in the Division. The essential purpose of the Division, its reason for being, is the development and maintenance of research work. In a case-management structure such as this, where projects are managed at a distance from the Centre and from one another, connected only through the Programme Officer, it is the Programme Officer who takes primary responsibility for this work. And it is the quality of



the relationship between the Officer and the researcher that will determine, in the final analysis, whether the Division is effective.

The Programme Officer is at the immediate point of connection between the Programme and the field and in terms of implementation theory, thus becomes the principle unit of decision making for the Programme. Although this authority may not be as formalized, in an institutional sense, as that of the Director for example, it is an authority that is no less real given the nature of the working situation. For, as one Programme Officer acknowledged, who really knows what the Officer actually does in the field: what is said, and how; who is contacted, who ignored; which proposals are encouraged as is and which modified; what new ideas are brought forward, what old priorities left unattended? Another Programme Officer had pointed out that Trip Reports and "chrons" do provide a tool for following what Officers do in the field. In fact, "we know more about what (happens) in the field than here at the Centre", where written reports of work are not done. The potential power of these tools is certainly there; the extent to which the value is realized however, is contingent upon how comprehensively they are written, how widely they are read. Neither reduce the authority exercised by the Officer in on-site decision making.

As suggested earlier, Officers create policy by the on-site, often spontaneous, decisions they make, and largely on their own i.e. separate from immediate input from the Division. Programme Officers to some extent determine even the nature of the more finalized decisions made by those with the formal authority in that they control much of the Programme information and activity on which such decisions are based.

Quite obviously, the authority of the Programme Officers is not simply situational. It has been explicitly allocated to them verbally and through the behaviour of the Director, and generally reinforced through the administrative style of Division Management as a whole. This delegation of the right of independent judgement acknowledges reality, and also the fact that a professional alliance between operators and the system can only be achieved through shared authority.

(b) Programme Units

Such a situation of discretionary autonomy is directly conducive to the flexibility and the responsiveness of the Division's programme of work. It can however, also lead to a programme that is seriously inconsistent and amorphous, undermining the potential strength available to the Division in acting as a cohesive system with a shared community of interests. The legitimate concern for flexibility needs to be balanced against the benefits of collaborative exchange and mutual support among professionals--independent actors though they may be.

That this balance is being maintained in the Division seems in part at least to be a result of the role of the second sub-system mentioned: the Programme Unit. By bringing together the Programme Officers of each sub-discipline to work together toward a more or less coherent programme of work, the Unit structure--as one Officer suggested--serves as a check on the unbridled enthusiasm of any one individual.

The Programme Unit does more than simply this, however. It serves as a mediating agency between the Officer and the Division as a whole--or, more specifically, Division Management. It has the responsibility for co-ordinating both the substantive issues and the administration of the various projects processed by its members. The Unit is the sub-system responsible for ensuring that there is a consistent, defensible line of reasoning--according to the Director, "some system of values and judgements"--underlying the individual initiatives of the Officers; of ensuring that while there may (and should) be diversity in the work, there is "not chaos"; of ensuring, then, a definable and maximum degree of professionalism in the Division.

Obviously, Division Management also has a role in ensuring professional standards and in the creation of cohesive programmes of work. The first level of responsibility however, appears to

have been given to the Programme Unit as the sub-system closest to the task itself, and so most up-to-date on daily developments, while at the same time more able than the individual Officer to provide a broad perspective.

The Programme also serves the very central function of providing the primary location for professional review, exchange and moral support, in the Division. Although Units seem to operationalize this function in slightly different ways (some inclined to meet on a more individual basis; others operating more as a team), they are nevertheless potentially, and to varying degrees in fact, the most dynamically cohesive of the sub-systems. Comprised of a small number of people, with a fairly shared disciplinary base, Programmes are in the best position--with a minimum of interpersonal defensiveness--to engage in a continuing exchange of information; deliberation about goals and methods and the quality and direction of the work; and negotiation of shared resources.

Where this kind of community of minds does not appear to exist within a Unit, in fact, expressions have been voiced in the Division as to whether the state of being a Unit exists at all. Certainly the quality of this second, community, function will have a direct impact of the quality of the first function -- professional management. Effective co-ordination is built on effective communication.

Formal responsibility for the Programme Units rests with the Associate Directors. It is their function to ensure the orderly, efficient administration of the work as a whole in the separate Programmes, and through their professional review, the professional competence of that work. It also falls to the Associate Director to provide the intellectual leadership for the Programme (particularly in terms of establishing and maintaining a coherent Programme policy, but also sometimes acting as something of a mentor to newer programme staff). It is his\*

(\*all four Associate Directors are male)

responsibility too, to promote the development of a co-ordinated, co-operative group--a basis for the professional support and development of Unit members. Finally, the Associate Director is the official link between the Programme and Division Management, principally through the mechanism of the Associate Directors Meeting in formal terms, but also through more informal exchange.

The Associate Directors are, potentially at least, in the strongest position to set the tone or style of operation in the four Programmes (given that each is also, in the role described earlier, a Programme Officer). Depending on their own preferred philosophy of management and their own professional interests and strengths, they do very directly determine the nature of decision making in their Programmes: the degree of openness to innovative or "risky" projects; the tolerance for diversity in the programme of work; and, by the kind of staff members sought, and initiatives encouraged, the particular aspects of the sub-discipline that are pursued.

Consistent with the authority patterns in the Division as a whole, however, the tendency in all the Programmes is toward shared decision making of some kind. While in most cases, the Associate Director continues to act as the principal co-ordinator and to assume final responsibility for Programme policy and administration, Programme Officers appear very much to be an integral component of that process. Because the most unassailable working assumption in the Division is, it seems, the sanctity of the Officer-client relationship, the extent to which the Associate Director can influence this relationship, and hence the Programme, seems as much a matter of his ability to persuade as his authority to direct.

One implication for the Associate Director (or any other Division officer) of this dependence on persuasion as a source of authority is that its power will be reduced through prolonged absence. This kind of authority does not exist in and of itself,

but through joint efforts with Programme Officers to work out the day-to-day administration of the Programme, to evolve Programme policies out of discussions about new proposals and contacts, Centre initiatives, budget and staff changes. Because of the generally responsive and flexible nature of the work in the Division, no Programme is likely to be able to stay "fixed" for long, regardless of how comprehensive its planning.

When the Associate Director is away, Programme Officers will continue to act and the Programme will continue to change. In acting, without a formal leader and with somewhat more authority than would otherwise be the case, patterns of interaction and communication within the Programme are also likely to change. Already inclined towards making independent judgements as individuals, as a group the Programme Officers may well move very easily into playing a more clearly executive role in the Programme. The returning Associate Director is, therefore, likely to find a different Unit, and a different set of colleagues. His ability to persuade, and his more general relationship with the Programme Officers will more than likely have to be re-negotiated--a situation that occurred in two Programmes during this study.

The absence of the Associate Director can have more clearly negative implications as well for the Programme if, while away from the operational life of the Unit, he continues to take initiatives or make commitments on behalf of the Programme. Because such activities require subsequent activities on the part of the Programme Officers, the Associate Director in this situation has, in effect, removed the planning "head" from the implementing "body". He participates in the iterative decision making of the Programme without the benefit of on-site understanding of the management realities of the Programme at that point in its history.

Structurally, the Programme Unit as a system is legitimized in several ways. Officers are allocated among the Programmes, it appears, on the basis of equity. Project budgets are allocated not to the individual Programme Officers, or, from a central pot, to the individual projects, but to "the Programme". Travel budgets, too, are on a Programme basis, although with the suggestion for a balanced sharing among Unit members. The position of Associate Director is further recognition that a specific grouping of officers exists in that it assumes the individual officer's concerns and interests can be fairly represented through this person. Individual Programme Officers do not, on their own initiative or at random, attend Associate Directors Meetings, for example.

There are also norms apparent in the Division that give credence to the idea that the Programmes are more than simply an administratively convenient way to group projects. These are norms which, in turn, strengthen the capacity of the Programmes to act as cohesive agents, but which imply as well certain responsibilities with regard to the rest of the Division.

While the Programme Officer has the first, and probably the most important say in the development of a proposal, and in the final decision of whether or not to fund it, he or she is nevertheless, it seems, expected to carry the Unit's support in general agreement. Certainly, the serious professional review of projects, in terms of professional standards, policy relevance, feasibility etc. is expected to occur within the Unit. It is also at this level, as much as possible, that any major problems confronting the project management process will be clarified and handled.

It is at this level that the projects, individually and collectively, are expected to be administered--a general accounting of budget balances maintained; letters answered; contacts followed up; files updated.

Finally, it is in the Programme Unit that professional differences are to be worked through with regard to the direction of the Programme's work, the strategies and the topics of research to be encouraged/supported, and the general style of case management to be followed.

The idea that these are "norms" of the Division with regard to the operations of the Programmes is suggested by the reaction to behaviours that appear to transgress them. Thus, for example, although there is obviously nothing to prevent an individual Programme Officer from circumventing the Unit and taking his or her concern about a project that is unpopular in the Programme directly to the Division level (and the case-management style would in fact, suggest this kind of action), in general, such behaviour seems to be discouraged. Instances where this has happened are described by both the Programme Officers and the Programmes involved as "exceptional". The preferred course of action is that the Unit rise to the occasion, and negotiate a compromise--allowing the Programme Officer to persuade colleagues of the merits of the case and vice-versa.

Where a project has been brought forward to the Division for approval (at the Internal Review Meeting), when quite clearly there is no consensus in the Unit concerned as to its merits--and where in fact, serious professional differences remain--the reaction among colleagues has been one of distinct unease. While they may not question the quality of the review done by the officer responsible, they do appear to disapprove of the failure of the Unit to present a united front.

Reflecting the more important norm that serious professional review of the projects takes place within the Programme, the unease of colleagues on occasions where a project has been brought forward in what is perceived to be an incomplete state of development is even more pronounced. When the Division (in the IRM) does not appear to feel that the Programme has

satisfactorily processed the proposal in terms of professional and/or Divisional criteria, the opinion seems to be that the Programme has abrogated its responsibility and at the expense of Divisional colleagues who are, in effect, asked to perform the function themselves. And, in that the Programme is seen to have transgressed this one norm, Division associates appear quite prepared to do the same. In normal circumstances, projects formally brought forward by a Programme member will not usually be rejected, nor will they be significantly altered--reflecting the general consensus that the Officer's approval is in effect, a commitment to the researcher. Where doubt is cast on the extent to which Officer and Programme have undertaken serious review however, criticisms made of the project are likely to be more severe, alterations more significant.

Although not a widely-described problem, a few Programme members have expressed, from their own side, an unease over instances which they regard as interventions by outsiders to the Programme into substantive Programme decisions. Because there is shared responsibility for Programme work between a Programme and the Division Director--the latter with overall responsibility for the quality of work done in the Division--it is not surprising that this unease is in reference most particularly to the Director. In part, the problem reflects a concern with general administrative order in the Programmes; unanticipated initiatives or directions taken on behalf of a Unit complicate an already complex time/workload balance. In part however, it reflects as well a more basic concern over a perceived breach in the integrity of the Unit, and a possible diminution in the right and responsibility of the Programme to determine its own directions.

As suggested above then, norms concerning the Programme Units apply in two directions. They facilitate the consolidation of the Programmes as viable entities by suggesting how the "Division" should treat them. They also make it clear that the



Programme Unit has a certain responsibility with regard to the "Division", ensuring a fair division of programme labour. When the norms are broken, few, if any, observable sanctions as such are applied. Rather, it seems more a matter of chagrin on the part of those who feel that, as a result, they are required to step in and take action, or who feel a slightly reduced degree of confidence in how the Division is evolving.

In a system where persuasion is a key to action however, inter-colleagial chagrin may well be sanction enough. It does not appear that any of these Divisional norms are often contravened. It was perhaps the very rarity of the infractions that made those that did occur stand out in the minds of people who described them, and so, in turn, stand out in this study as indications of what preferred behaviours are.

(c) Division Management

I think the key to administration is to delegate....I think you have to, or you don't survive in a professional organization. Having said that, you can't have chaos or total relativity. There has to be some balance. My tendency would be to be very tough on certain procedural and basic issues, and...the rest of the time, within certain parameters, to give them freedom. (Division Director)

Division Management is not a subsystem in the sense the other two more obviously are in that the four people who comprise it are basically outward, rather than inward, looking, in their orientation. The most important lines of communication are not within the group itself, but to the rest of the Division and then to the Centre. While the essential purpose of the other two sub-systems seems most clearly to be to facilitate the interaction of the members involved, i.e. to be a "group", the purpose of Division Management seems more to be one of support to the quality of these interactions and

providing them a link to the wider Centre. Designating Division Management as a sub-system is, in part then, a matter of descriptive convenience--or perhaps, analytical balance. It is also however, meant to reflect the fact that the work done by the Director, Deputy-Director, Financial Officer and Administrative Officer does represent the common effort of that part of the Division that is not "Programme".

Most simply expressed, the job of Division Management is "to keep the whole business going". While the basic unit of concern in the Division may be the individual "case" project, the processing of those cases would be impossible in isolation from the Division as the case-management organization. It is the function of the Division Management to establish an administratively and professionally secure basis from which programme staff will feel able to pursue their own professional directions without excessive or undue anxiety. Professionals, like people, are probably less likely to achieve their potential if their underlying survival, safety, belongingness and esteem needs are not addressed (with apologies to Maslow).

Division Management then, needs to attend to the maintenance of the system by maintaining, in turn, the orderly, efficient, and therefore credible administrative relationship between the Division and the Centre. In moving the creative i.e. the diverse, results of the project development process into line with a Centre administration that values fairly standardized and predictable routines, Division Management's role becomes one of encouraging and advising, wherever possible, on coherent and consistent internal administrative procedures.

At the same time, it must ensure, according to one staff officer (and reflecting most others), "that the interests of the Programmes are foremost....In no way can the projects become secondary to the efficient running of the Division". Here, the role of Division Management becomes one of protecting, as much as possible, the professional autonomy of the Division's

programme staff within an institutional framework which seems more inclined toward the traditional (harder) science paradigms and a somewhat more centrally-controlled management style.

It appears as well, to be the role of Division Management to connect an inherently divergent case-management system, to promote a sense of community or common culture within the Division. It is, then, the concern of Division Management, perhaps most explicitly through the support of firmly integrated Programme Units, to reduce the distance between policy and implementation, and, in general, "to make relationships among people flow" as one Programme Officer described it.

The functions of Division Management it therefore seems, are significant. Fortunately, they are also mutually reinforcing. Maintaining the good administrative order of the Division results in its being more credible. Credibility overall is likely to enhance the job security of staff members and to increase the Centre's tolerance for what appears risky or unusual. In other words, credibility allows for professional autonomy. Such autonomy leads in turn, to a higher level of satisfaction with the work, a stronger commitment to "community spirit" and probably more of a willingness to adhere to those initial, credibility-producing, administrative norms.

To the Director, and by extension the Deputy-Director, fall the principle responsibilities for establishing and implementing the management policies necessary to fulfill these functions. While these two positions are obviously complementary, they are somewhat different in emphasis.

The Director more explicitly performs an executive function in the sense of setting the overall practice of reciprocal authority in the Division and of determining the general criteria for what will constitute "acceptable" administrative procedures. It is therefore, a fairly precariously balanced role--between seeking collegial consensus on decisions while at the same time providing a sense of direction to the

programme.

I see my role vis-a-vis the staff as being a very symbiotic one. On the one hand, you have to exert some leadership. On the other, you have to try and reflect what people are thinking. (Division Director)

This executive function includes as well, taking an active, stimulative role in policy development, planning and budgetting; in maintaining a constructive relationship with the rest of the Centre; in assessing present, and especially future, trends in the relationship between the Division and its constituent environment. These are activities reflected, for example, in the Director's direct participation in the Programme of Work and Budget writing process and in staffing decisions; in developing the Division's policies on the Co-operative Programme; in his description of Economics as, potentially at least, the leading Programme in the Division; in his concerns about the Division's geographic balance in projects and the relationships between the Division, in Ottawa, and in the regions.

No one we interviewed disagrees with the Director's taking this role, although some would argue with him specific points of planning, policy etc. Most seem to feel quite comfortable with the balance between leadership and collegiality as it is practised. As described earlier, there is explicit praise for the amount, and the quality of autonomy delegated to all professional staff and to the Programme Units.

The Deputy Director's role is more clearly one of administrative implementation than executive decision, although the two are obviously inter-related and, as Deputy, she acts in the Director's absence and as advisor. Her immediate responsibility is for the day-to-day details of Division operations, those activities that affect most immediately the work of the programme staff.

The Deputy Director is regarded very highly throughout the Division both for her administration and for her professional review activities. There appears to be a considerable degree of openness and rapport between herself and the professional staff, a relationship facilitated perhaps by the close connection she has to the operational concerns of the Programmes. Several in the Division have described her position as a "lynch-pin" among the various elements of the Programmes and Division Management. She is seen by several to play at times a mediating role between Programme Officers and the Director, "almost as a court of appeal", as one person said, when decisions need to be clarified, or difficult cases made. Because the Director is sometimes perceived to be reticent in his relationships with some people (describing him as either "aloof" or "shy", depending on their own relationships with him) the Deputy Director has an important role to play in Divisional communications.

One function that is played by both the Director and Deputy-Director seems to be that of "fixer" in the Division, a function defined in the literature as "the selective intervention" of programme managers at "various points in the implementation process". Although the preferred management style in the Division is one of letting the Programmes handle their own work, exceptions are made when it is perceived by Division Management that problems are developing which cannot or are not being effectively solved at that level.

During the period of this study, such intervention has occurred in all four Programmes to a greater or lesser degree. Issues included the quality and size of projects; the administrative style of an Associate Director and the operational style of a Programme Officer; the internal morale of a Programme; the absentee role of an Associate Director. When the tradition in the Division is one of non-intervention, there is obviously inherent in this fixing role a degree of tension, and a risk of conflict. This has, in some instances of Division Management "fixing", resulted in occasional examples of resentment by some professional staff involved, although in other cases, the interventions have been welcomed by some of the participants.

One area of some tension between Division Management and a few of the programme staff remains the former's attention to the style or format of Divisional documents, particularly the Project Summaries. In the Director's judgement, care taken with the presentation of projects is a necessary component of the overall professional quality of the work and very much a reflection of the general state of order in the Division.

I feel...that one of the main reasons our relationship with the Board has been so positive in the last two years is that our projects are clear. I think it's an absolute necessity that the projects should be very clear. They must be logical and the English must be impeccable.

Complaints made against the editing of documents seems not so much a complaint against the fact of editing, but the extent of it; what some perceive to be an over-emphasis on literary elegance, at the expense of time for other things. But there is some ambivalence among even the more outspoken critics. According to one Associate Director:

There seem to be a lot of questions to be answered. It would be quite unfair of me to suggest however, that (the Director's) interventions are negative; there are times when he has a very good eye for the problems.

Most people seem to feel that, while time spent on phrasing in the Project Summaries may be somewhat excessive, the results have been positive; "the documents have the t's crossed and the i's dotted, and (those) which go forward to the Board look respectable" (Programme Officer). The overall image of the Division from outside is felt to be "at least neutral", if not good--although still, "I think we're regarded as something of the enfant terrible".

The remaining two officers in Division Management work fairly separately, one from the other, in roles that are more narrowly defined. Both are quite clearly involved, however, in that area of Division Management concerned with maintaining administrative good order in the Division vis-a-vis the Centre. While there have been some suggestions that the co-ordination of the work between the two officers could be better, to facilitate the more efficient processing of documents, in general, the creation of the two positions is seen as useful and necessary, given the increased workload of the Division.

Because the Administrative Officer's position is a new one, there remains some uncertainty among programme staff as to what they can expect, and ask, her to do. She herself has expressed a concern about the under-utilization of her time. But the responsibilities of the position are still evolving, particularly in the direction of a more active, advisory relationship with Programme staff. It is a development viewed by the staff as a very positive one, helping them anticipate, rather than simply react, to problems concerning the proper legal format of documents, or their routing through the Secretary's Office.

One problem concerning the Administrative Officer's role, raised by only a couple of programme staff, referred to their perception of delays caused by the over-detailed editing of documents and the frequency with which they are returned for "unnecessary" changes. It is a problem recognized on both sides, however, the Administrative Officer describing it as one of insufficient attention to editing by a few programme staff. In part, the problem may be one of communication. In part too, it seems a reflection of the more general tension between the needs of system maintenance and those of programme delivery.

The position of the Financial Officer is somewhat different. Certainly, there is no question about her workload. Both she and the programme staff recognize that there is likely too much work involved in monitoring the various Division and project budgets for one person to handle effectively, and that additional staff support is probably needed.

There is also relatively little uncertainty about the job of the Financial Officer. As she describes it herself, her role is to ensure that finances in the Division are in order, and that by the time any document leaves the Division, "it runs smoothly from the financial point of view". In terms of both functions, the work is perceived generally to be successful. The feeling is that the quality of accounting in the Division is high, and that there are subsequently few problems with Treasury concerning budget documents. According to one Programme Officer, "she keeps us honest".

At the same time however, there are obvious tensions between the Financial Officer and programme staff. Programme staff express concern about the delays encountered at the budget approval stage of their work, about what they see as excessive questioning as to budget details and to the sense they have of being asked to justify, rather than simply to report, their budget decisions. In general, there is a quite common concern among programme staff that, as currently interpreted, the orientation of the Financial Officer is weighted too much in favour of the demands of the Treasurer's Office at the expense of the needs of the Programmes in supporting the field.

From the other perspective however, the concern of the Financial Officer is that, if problems or gaps in the budget documents are not solved within the Division, they will be solved elsewhere. Documents will be returned, causing both delay and reduced credibility. Tension is created for her then, when she feels pressured by Programme Officers to deviate from guidelines laid down by Treasury or when she has to go back to Officers for missing details or for the explanations about expenses that she feels will preclude objections from outside the Division.

Such tensions are probably not surprising given the different constituencies of the two positions. The research community is diverse and requires flexibility and creativity in adapting "rules" Treasury, and accounting in general, is an environment that is much more inclined toward a strict interpretation of rules and regularity of decisions. To some extent, the problem seems one of a different interpretation of which constituency should be given precedence. The Financial Officer is perceived by many people



to be too much of a zealous watchdog for the CGT, rather than serving as the Division's advocate, helping the Division to circumvent some of the problems it faces in the budgetary process. The problems inherent in the role of Financial Officer, problems which we believe would accrue to anyone fulfilling the role, are exacerbated by the Financial Officer's sometimes acerbic responses to requests for information by other staff.

There is a feeling that several people in the Division have expressed, that the Financial Officer and the Administrative Officer could usefully take a more active, consultative role, helping professional staff deal with the CGT and with the Secretary's Office. As one person said:

I think they just respond to each specific question, and then when you run into a problem, they will tell you to call so-and-so. But they don't always help us to avoid the problem in the first place. I don't think the Division has a policy on this....I think someone in the Division should be more educated in bureaucratic issues, so we don't run into the kinds of problems we have.... You follow one line of thinking, and then the next time you do it, you find it's all been changed, and nobody told you!

People want advice on how to get the most out of the administrative system, rather than being restricted by it. There appears to be a clear role for someone in Division Management to play in this area. Those people who know the administrative system very well themselves have no problem, but there are a lot of people who do need well-informed advice on dealing with the bureaucracy.

### The Division as a System: Comment

In general, the Division would probably best be described as a fairly loosely connected system because of the case-management structure and because of the professional autonomy accorded programme staff as individuals, and the four Programme Units as the principle agents for establishing programme direction and conducting professional review. Although there appears to be a fair degree of cohesion in the Division in the sense that there seems to be a shared idea of being part of a common enterprise (all part of the "flakey" Social Sciences, as one Programme Officer described it) it is not at the level of the Division, as a rule, that the detailed work of project management occurs; that Programme issues are analyzed and synthesized; that an Officer's early ideas about a new area of funding are advanced; that the congruence between policy and programme of work is assessed. These are activities that are most clearly in the domain of the Programme Unit--or on occasion, of the Unit in co-operation with Division Management.

In the literature on systems, the kind of interaction evidenced in the Units (to a greater or lesser degree) is considered to represent a more "ideal", a stronger form of system than that which is apparent in the Division, as a whole. In theoretical terms, this may be true. Functionally, however, the particular combination of the 3 sub-systems obtaining within the Division in Ottawa seems a very useful one.

The strength of the Division, and the case-management approach it has developed, rests on the ability of the system to respond to non-uniformity in the research community, with diversity, flexibility and locally-relevant adaptation. Individual Programme Officers, working with individual researchers and with the professional support of a Programme Unit behind them, can provide this flexibility. The Unit acts as

a cautionary check on any excessive individuality of the Programme Officer and brings a level of consistency to programme development. In turn, it provides a relatively secure basis for collegial exchange for the Programme Officers-- a good "backstage" environment.

The Division, as a whole, because it does not enforce or encourage further consensus, re-establishes the balance in favour of flexibility. It cannot, as well as the Unit, respond to the Officer's concerns, but at the same time, it does not ask the Officer to fall into a particular line of action. There seem to be very few places where Programme Officers, once past the Programme level, are asked to speak with one voice. Even in the Internal Review Meeting, the focus is on the internal clarity or consistency of the Project Summary itself rather than on its consistency vis-a-vis other Project Summaries. The general philosophy of the Division seems to be much more one of how to work together than of how to work in unison.

POLICY IN THE DIVISION

You can be accused of being totally relativistic, of having no criteria or values at all, which is not the case really. We do have values; we do make judgements; we do have criteria. Their relative weight and the relative importance of these criteria in different situations, is much more variable than it is in the developed countries. That's a reflection of the under-development of research, obviously, and of the research environment... You have to define... what you can put into a project in a very flexible or elastic sense.

(Division Director)

Policy comprises those ideas, and ideals, that guide the substance and the style of a programme's activities. Policies are, in a sense, the working philosophy of a programme. All programmes incorporate some statement of officially espoused policy. Of more interest, and more influence, in a programme, however, are the policies that are usually not clearly articulated, but which guide programme staff in their daily operations and which are, in turn, created through those operations.

Official policies in the Division are fairly easy to find and occur at at least three levels: IDRC, the Division, and within each of the four Programmes. Although made somewhat more concrete in the Programmes of Work and Budget, in general official Division policies are very broad, ambitious and ambiguous. As such, they are open invitations to professional staff to apply their own interpretations, based on their own and the Programme's perceptions, values and professional expertise--and on the specific circumstances of the research proposal.

Aside from the obvious, written statements of programme intent, and in terms of something that might actually serve as a guide to practice, the general consensus in the Division seems to be that there exists no very clearly defined, readily identifiable Division policy. While there were some suggestions

of a common commitment to "intellectual pluralism" (accepting a variety of research interests) and "academic liberalism" (promoting the development of research capacity), to open inquiry and professional rigour, the general opinion seemed to be that there was not so much a Division philosophy as "a preferred line of action". For instance, there seems to be a growing emphasis in all Programmes, on research capacity building as an explicit funding rationale, in addition to an alternative emphasis on problem-solving or policy relevance, and there is an openness to including within that rationale the idea of capacity maintenance (institutional support in Latin America). Perceptions of preferred lines of action include too, support for weaker rather than stronger countries among the LDC's; for research that will touch a majority rather than a minority in the population; for better-known, established researchers rather than the untried; for projects that are under \$100,000 rather than over; for networks that emerge from a recognition of shared interests and experience among researchers rather than those that are created by the Division in order to undertake specific research work.

The point, of course, is that as individuals, programme members do have a philosophy or set of "ideals" that underlines their work--although some might be more clearly formulated than others. The examples given above are statements of what officers either believed themselves should be the case, or perceived to be the general trend in the Division. Few were ready to state unequivocally that their perceptions of policy represented the common view. No one suggested that any one line of action was implemented by all officers, in the same way, in all cases. Nor did anyone appear to believe that it should be.

The character of "policy" in the Division is very much consistent with what, theory suggests, will and should be the case for a social programme working in an environment that is diverse and unpredictable. For case-management to be effective, i.e. flexible and responsive, the guiding theory of action

should be one that is essentially "inclusive", rather than exclusive. It should be based on the assumption that any proposal will probably fit somewhere, rather than on the position that officers must look for reasons on which to reject it.

Inclusiveness appears very much to be a feature of the Division's Programmes. In one Unit, categories of research listed in its Programme of Work and Budget are, to begin with, very broad. In addition, Unit members are quite open in their admission that, the Programme of Work notwithstanding, the document would never be used to preclude a proposal they felt to be worthy of funding. Even those Units with more clearly defined areas of research interest have, in addition, "catch-all" categories for handling projects that do not fit within them.

That a precisely defined Divisional policy--one to which all would unanimously assent--does not appear to exist, does not imply that the Division operates in a state of disarray. As the Division Director and several Programme Officers have made very clear, "this is not chaos". And even outsider observation would support this position.

Policies are made, and they are acted on, but in a manner that is cumulative and interactive, involving programme staff, the research community and the various theories of the Social Science discipline. And it is linked directly to the project development process. As contacts with the field are made, decisions are taken which, collectively, come to represent the policy of the Division --policy through action rather than policy in the ideal. Policy decisions are influenced most immediately by the professional and personal characteristics of the Programme Officers in combination with the individual researchers involved. They are influenced as well by the respective Programme Unit, by Division Management and, on occasion, by the Division as a whole, acting through mechanisms like the Internal Review Meeting.

Policies are, therefore, evolutionary. They shift in emphasis and in content as changes occur in the field, or as new realities in the field are perceived. They change as each new "solution" to a problem leads in turn, to a new dilemma. For example, the recognition that Latin American researchers were in increasing jeopardy, and the subsequent policy decision of institutional support to the region, led to the question of whether project funding to those institutions would also be acceptable. A decision in the affirmative has led, for some Programmes, to the question of whether the same individuals in those institutions would be funded in phase 2 projects and to the question of whether this funding could begin prior to the completion of the first phase, so as to maintain salaries. It has to led too, to questions of what the implications are for project funding in institutions where the ability to apply that research (e.g. through development and dissemination) is reduced by virtue of their being unattached to government ministries that implement the suggested changes. As each question is answered, policy is "made" in that case, and the Division's policy becomes then a fairly fluid amalgam of all cases.

Policy becomes too, a reflection of the continuing and varied set of balances in the Division among methods, goals, values--all of which are accepted as legitimate but any one of which exists probably only at the expense of another. The security of clear operational regulations is measured against the flexibility achieved through few and ambiguous guidelines in determining management policy. Easing of workloads through large-budget projects is balanced against the ability to reach more recipients through small-budget ones, in determining Programme policy. Professional concern with research quality and accountability is measured against the capacity building power of researchers working through the steps of a methodologically (perhaps) less rigorous project, in a Programme Officer's determining how directive to be.

While such deliberation and balancing seems to be a constant in the Division, it also appears to be rarely the case that decisions made are ever used a precedents for future action. The

*... ultimate in flexibility*

policy wheel seems to be in a quite continuous state of reinvention. While this situation is obviously time and energy consuming, it also seems conducive to programme flexibility. Policies are broad enough at the outset to justify almost any undertaking that has the support of the Officers concerned; precedents for action need not be cited. Reference to precedents, in order to oppose action, would tend to undermine professional discretion, the ideal that every case deserves a hearing on the merits of its own particular combination of characteristics, and the use of those very special kinds of criteria that are considered important but are hardly objective--researcher enthusiasm, for example.

Given this situation, it is not surprising that policy in the Division seems not to be "learned" in any explicit sense. There is no corpus of policy to be learned; there is, instead, a shifting body of preferred practice. As with the policy development process itself, officers learn the preferences, and contribute to their formation, by trial and error--by osmosis, through meetings, reactions to Project Summaries and Trip Reports, informal conversations. While it is clear that this process occurs most immediately within the individual officer, it happens most collaboratively perhaps within the Programme Unit. Perhaps this is because "policies" in the Unit are expected to be somewhat more clearly articulated and consistent than in the Division overall. But it is also because it is in the Units that detailed discussions can occur, that policy "balloons" can be floated with a fair degree of assurance that criticism will be constructive, that the problems or issues that serve as the catalysts for policy are initially brought forward.

One implication of the way that policy is developed in the Division seems to be that the impact of any one officer in creating policy becomes unusually significant (given a bureaucratic organization). Everyone is, in a very real sense, near the top of the policy-making process. While any one officer may, of



course, be replaced, this replacement does not result simply in another person playing the same role. Discretionary autonomy means that there exists the possibility of a fairly dramatic difference in the role itself, where it counts: new research areas encouraged; new styles of interaction with researchers; new regions emphasized. These are, in effect, policy differences which will influence as well, policy in the Programme Unit and in the Division. Because of the shared authority in the Division, the openness of people to being persuaded and the nature of the system itself, even the most junior officers can have a direct influence on policy through the ideas they bring forward in the projects they develop, through the contacts they pursue and the issues they raise. Any one Programme Officer has to convince only three or four Programme colleagues who, as a Unit, can often take action. And with the strength of the Unit as support, the Programme Officer can move beyond these parameters to take a new idea to Division Management, and thence to the Division, for dissemination.

In general, people do not appear to feel ill-at-ease with the vagueness of policy in the Division, or with the lack of unanimity that seems to prevail. While some expressed an initial reaction to the question of policy that it would be "nice" to have more explicit policy directives from Division Management, on reflection they acknowledged that they did not know precisely what those directions should be, or what they could be, given the more fundamental need to maintain diversity in the Division.

Of somewhat more serious concern to a number of people is what they perceive to be a degree of "instability" in policy-type decisions taken by Division Management, and in particular by the Division Director. It is a situation in which decisions are seen to be made, and changed, as individual officers plead their cases. To a degree, this kind of problem is probably unavoidable in a case-management setting where the value is clearly on being responsive to the case, on case-by-case adaptation. A large part of the problem however, seems to be not with the fact of changing decisions, but with the failure to communicate these changes adequately through the Division. People are less

likely to feel uncomfortable with changing policies if they see themselves as part of the process that brought about that change.

In any case, people do differ as to whether these variations in decisions are, on the whole, negative or positive; whether the more appropriate description of the situation is one of instability or flexibility. Overall, people express satisfaction with the degree to which they are able to pursue their own "policy" directions.

PLANNING IN THE DIVISION

You have to work with what's there; it's never a clear slate. So it is always a question of knowing who you have around, what the strengths and weaknesses are, how the former can be capitalized on and the latter shored up.

(Deputy-Director)

(Planning is a problem) to the extent that we take seriously the interpretation that we are responsive to researchers' definitions of problems. Either they have priority or we have....We are not a business firm. We are not in the special production of such and such a product.

(Programme Officer)

Planning, like policy-making, presents something of a dilemma to a programme such as the Social Sciences Division, which--while it might well choose to be responsive--is, in any case, pretty much forced to submit to the vagaries of an uncontrollable, unpredictable working environment. In this situation, where so much depends on the idiosyncratic nature of individual behaviour--in the Division itself and in the research community--plans can do very little to direct or to control activity. Plans made, trips taken and budgets set aside to increase the number of new projects in Africa, for example, will remain unfulfilled if promised proposals do not arrive or if those that do arrive take a year or more to develop. Similarly, plans to reduce the number of new projects in Latin America will be hard to implement if there are a dozen or more interesting and technically sound proposals already waiting in the pipeline at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Through travel, through the mail, by phone, opportunities arise and are taken, irrespective of whatever the plans may be. As one Programme Officer commented when asked what the Programme planned, by way of encouraging further networks of researchers--that kind of intentionality did not really apply. "(We don't say) next month we're going to try to put the seed there to make it happen in the same way (as it did elsewhere)". If meetings come up, potentially interested researchers are invited; if ideas

are germinated through the process, well and good.

Planning seems, on the whole, to be a fairly discredited undertaking in the Division. The formal planning process as practised in the Centre is felt by many to be inconsistent with the realities of a constantly changing social, and social science, research environment. In the words of one Associate Director, "how in a responsive organization can we possibly know such things" as are required in a one, let alone a three, year planning document? Another Associate Director expressed the view that the three-year planning cycle is in fact, an impediment to innovation. To the extent that people take it seriously, there is a tendency, he feels, to want to stick with the plan rather than rock the boat by trying to change things in mid-stream. Most seem less worried about this danger though--perhaps reflecting something of the status of planning. Although the three-year system probably does constrain staff allotments and overall budgets, people seem to feel that within the substance of the Programmes themselves; manoeuvrability and innovation are possible.

It is also a planning system that is felt by several to be insensitive to the nature of the work done, to the fact that officer workloads, for example, are not adequately reflected in ratios such as numbers of projects developed to Programme Officers available, or person-years to appropriations. Neither figure accounts for the non-project work (on the Co-operative or Fellowships Programmes; in policy or professional development) or for the fact that at any one time, an officer's case-load is a combination of old projects monitored, new ones administered and potential ones encouraged.

Nor does the planning system do very much to alleviate the uncertainty in the Division's task environment. In fact, it contributes to that uncertainty because the Centre is unable to provide from its own plans, timely pronouncements as to upcoming staff and budget allocations. It was not until December 1981, for example, that the Division knew definitely the number

of new staff it would receive in 1982 and on what terms. The problem is seen as a serious impediment to any planning the Division might try to do. Without a clear idea of the resources that will be available, it is difficult to make even broad decisions about directions the programme might take. Will, for example, a subject specialist be hired for a Regional Office, with the expectation that new staff positions will eventually permit a 2-3 person Division representation? Or a generalist, who will serve more as liaison for the Division as a whole? There seems to be in the Division something of the sense that there is little value in engaging with rigour in a planning activity for which the basic pieces of information required to make sound judgements, are unavailable.

Most useful planning--although we have no specific data to support the idea--is probably done on an individual, short-term basis as officers gauge the time, money and energy available, against the professional interests they want to pursue and their own sense of what is happening in the field.

The most important formal planning appears to occur with the production of the yearly Programme of Work and Budget, a document that perhaps typifies the fairly low status accorded the current planning process in the Division. Variouslly described as "just a bureaucratic step", a recognition that "some bit of paper has to be put in the mouth of the machine" and as a mechanism "to help us work out for ourselves and to explain to others" some of the current issues being considered in the Programme, the PW/B is, essentially, done to satisfy CGT, the Centre's Board and Treasury Board (if required). It appears to be, in all Programmes, more of an information piece than a guide to action. It reflects several factors: current pipeline and project directions; the professional sense of the Officers and Division Management as to future research and development trends; the professional interests and expertise of staff; informal assessments of the probable life-spans of traditional and new problem areas.

In all Programmes too, the PW/B is developed fairly much as a co-operative effort, with the Associate Director taking

principal responsibility but the Programme Officers having a direct input as to the topic areas or funding strategies that should be emphasized.

Although Programmes do differ in how seriously they try to follow the plans laid down in the PW/B, there seems to be a general consensus that they do not consider themselves accountable for matching plans with reality at the end of the year, nor do most appear to refer to the document as a criterion in project development. Even budget allocations, perhaps the easiest "hard data" on which a planning document might be evaluated, are treated as general indications of priority among Programme sub-areas rather than as expectations of or intentions for the future.

Those are just figures of convenience.  
They may not be adhered to. You just pluck  
some figures out of thin air, so that it  
will look good. (Programme Officer)

There are some in the Division beginning to become concerned about the time spent each year drawing up these Programmes of Work. On the whole however, most people seem to feel they are quite proficient at writing them, and that because of discussions during the course of the year, that their content is pretty straightforward. A few people suggested that the timing of the process might be better, closer perhaps to the beginning of the fiscal year when trends would be clearer, or at the time of the staff meeting, when Regional Officers could be involved. Neither suggestion was considered likely however, given that the work had to comply with the Centre's schedule.

And several did describe the process of developing the document as a worthwhile one, if only as an exercise to help the Programme to "clarify what we consider issues of importance...an idealized version of what we would like things to be".

COMMUNICATION IN THE DIVISION

There are changes in the Programmes and bargaining goes on, but it is often shadow bargaining, because no one knows the rules. (Associate Director)

(There) isn't really a mechanism where one could go around and say "have you ever had experience with this kind of problem?".

(Programme Officer)

The Division, as a system, quite obviously functions, and to most people with whom we spoke, it functions quite well. Morale and job satisfaction are good. At the same time, the Division is a system that depends very much on the mutual good will and professional confidence of its staff, on people's ability to persuade and their openness to being persuaded as to the appropriateness of diverse, and often uncertain, courses of action. Given its working environment, it is a system that needs continually to maintain an effective balance among new information, changing demands and its own variable resources.

It is apparent that, overall, the Division is meeting these criteria. It seems unlikely however, that this kind of cohesiveness would evolve automatically. Diversity and individual autonomy are highly valued. Policy is developed largely out of discrete decisions, independently made. It is a system that appears almost by design, likely to have problems with its sense of identity, with its sense of constituting a common enterprise.

The literature suggests that, in order to be cohesive, such a system needs to "learn". While staff members, as individuals, learn--monitor their work, become aware of new issues, evaluate the congruence between intentions and actions--so too do they, as a collectivity, need to learn, if the Division is to develop more clearly as a shared community of interests. Such learning involves, essentially, communication--the exchange of experience, informed professional opinion (and doubt), reflected assessments, future plans.

Obviously, such communication is not likely to make decisions simpler; in fact, the more information available, the more complex problem solving can become. And it is certainly not to ensure uniformity of action. Rather its purpose is to improve the quality of decisions, the opportunity for reasoned response, by expanding the basis of intelligence from which the individual makes his or her decision. Communication helps to facilitate joint action on those issues that affect the Division as a whole. The quality of response to the Co-operative Programme, and to the recent job classification exercise, seemed very clearly enhanced by their being collectively made.

It can also smooth relationships at points of contact between the different sub-systems in the Division. The tensions between the Programme staff and the Financial Officer, tensions admitted on both sides, seem in large part a function of differing and unresolved definitions of Centre versus field orientation.

On a more basic level, a regular practice of exchange can help to bring into the open underlying resentments in interpersonal relationships or perceived inadequacies in the distribution of favours or resources. By increasing people's knowledge of one another, communication might also reduce what one officer sees to be an over-reliance on "gossip" as a basis for decision-making in the Division.

And shared intelligence about the nature of the work can ease what many see as a very difficult process of initial adjustment to working in the Division, given the fact that there is no formal training as to procedures for either support or professional staff. "Learning the system" becomes something of a sporadic, none-too-pleasant adventure. From a relatively new Programme Officer: "You have to do something and take the risk that it won't be correct, and that's a pain in the neck". Because the system is not a fixed one, these adventures tend to be on-going;

It's the inconsistent parent who one day will laugh about something and the next day, will slap the kid around because he's doing the same thing. (a relatively long-time Programme Officer)

On-going communication/discussion might reduce the uncertainty.



That the Division is perceived to be "working" suggests that to some extent at least, this kind of communication is taking place. In the opinion of Division staff, and supported by observation, most of this exchange occurs informally. Many feel that, perhaps because of this informality, the amount and quality of shared knowledge is too limited, however. "The lack of communication" was fairly commonly cited as the basic weakness in the Division, among staff at all levels. People reported, for example, a lack of clarity about administrative and general operating procedures on a variety of areas: rules for over-running DAPs; why, in a region, some MGC's are sent directly to the recipient and some are routed via the Regional Office; the relationship between accounting procedures within the Division and those in the CGT; the correct procedure for filling out TA's and maintaining project files.

There are issues that seem particularly relevant to all professional staff that are not, apparently, discussed in depth. What for example, constitutes a Programme Officer's "workload"? According to one Officer, "we haven't discussed that; we just keep accumulating...". What is the value and what are the problems in an intelligence-gathering mechanism like RRAG, or large-scale research stimulating exercises like those being organized by a couple of Programmes in Africa? What is the principle locus of funding, the researcher or the institution, and what happens to the Division's position if they have a falling out? Two Programmes faced the issue over the last year, albeit in different forms. Neither, it appears, was aware that their problem was shared.

Somewhat in contradication to all of this perhaps, although limited communication was seen as a weakness by many, they did not see it as a fatal flaw, or even a serious dysfunction. A few, in fact, expressed the opinion that the current level... "is as much as we can stand", given the time pressures. More discussion about policy and practice would be beneficial, but not at the expense of other work. Nevertheless, the comment of one Programme Officer (albeit in relation to his own Programme) is cause for thought:

One of my main questions about the way in which we operate is the responsibility that we have--that the basis for our decisions, though in probably 90% of the cases they are not wrong and this is not chaos--we don't have(a lot of) answers....Everything depends... on four people that are not at all experts on what is going on in developing countries. Probably they are not bad professionally, but what makes me able to be the judge of a researcher I don't know, in a country that probably I don't know, or I know through books-- whether that researcher is able or not to develop a research project. To me, that is a very important point and I don't know if it will be more clear after we sit and think and discuss, but for my own mental health, it's important.

While most, and probably the most important communication in the Division may be informal, there are as well several formal mechanisms for information processing and exchange. Four of these include the Internal Review Meeting, the Associate Directors' Meeting, the staff meeting and the Trip Report. (While the "chrons" are obviously important, we did not have the time to examine these in any detail).

(a) Internal Review Meeting (IRM)

The trouble is, that the way these Review Meetings work in the search for the perfect document, a criticism is seen as some sort of fundamental flaw. Therefore, I do pull my punches. We have our discussions outside of these Review Meetings. (Programme Officer)

The IRM is described in detail in a later section. The issue here is the extent to which it seems to serve as an effective forum for Division learning. Many people expressed the view that, while far from perfect as a medium of exchange in the Division, the IRM does provide the only occasion for Division-wide sharing. It gives some insights at least, into the kinds of projects being pursued by other Programmes, the thinking underlying those projects and a broader sense of the criteria Division Management applies to projects. And, according to one Programme Officer, "it helps us as individuals to have input into others' professional activities".

The depth of view is fairly shallow, however. Projects above \$100,000 may not at all reflect the kind of projects a Programme emphasizes most of the time. Smaller projects may be more "risky", for example. Also, perhaps because of the fairly common perception

that, once at this stage, policy decisions have in fact been negotiated and accepted-- detailed discussion of policy, philosophy or style of project development is unusual. Nor is there time. Many people agreed with the comment made by one, that they "would like to see (the meetings) go more into questions of substance". The only realistic answer seemed to be to have more such meetings.

(b) Associate Directors' Meeting (ADM)

They would be an appropriate forum to discuss general strategy issues, substantive issues about where the Division is going on particular topics....But they are hard to organize and then, tend to deal with administrative things, so there is not a lot of time left over for substantive issues. (Programme Officer/participant in ADMs)

It is generally agreed that the principal purpose of the ADM is administrative (keeping track of what's going on in each Unit with regard to budget, project loads etc.) and managerial (consideration of evolving issues such as relations with other Divisions, staff problems etc.). And, it does serve as a forum for Associate Directors "to advise" Division Management on policy, and for Division Management to share, in turn, new information, plans, concerns. As one Programme Officer described it, it's largely for moving information "up and down" and, in so doing, making Programme-Division Management decision making "somewhat collegial".

The real success of such a forum for Division learning, however, depends on the degree to which the substance of the discussions "filters down" to the rest of the Programmes' members and is informed by them. The assumption on the part of the Director is that this communication probably does occur. Several Programme Officers, however, feel that it does not. According to one, for example, "what we learn is not sufficient to let us know how the other Programmes are conducted". One Associate Director feels that the whole concept of the ADM is inappropriate in a

Division in which all programme staff are equally professional. Widening the participation to include Programme Officers would, of course, widen the dissemination of information. Unless the content of the Meetings were also widened though, to include more attention to substantive policy issues, their contribution to system "learning" in the way described here, seems doubtful.

(c) Staff Meetings

Few people commented in detail about the yearly Staff Meetings. Those that did, seemed to feel that they are chiefly a means of reducing the Regional Officers' sense of isolation.

It's a very good cross-fertilization. It's good for morale....It permits informed discussion of the programme from the African point of view, the Asian point of view. It's the only time the Asian and African representatives will ever see each other. The purpose really, is for the chaps in the field I think,...because the Regional Offices are very cut-off. They belong here; they can talk to everyone; they can find out what's going on...

(Deputy-Director)

The extent to which the Regional Officers themselves through the Staff Meeting feel more explicitly a part of the Division community, is not answered here--at least at this stage of the report. Informal conversation with one Officer however, suggests that the value is limited by the short time available with each Programme. Officers in Ottawa, while several felt the opportunity to talk with Regional Officers was valuable, regretted the limited discussions about policy and planning issues--partly a fault of time; partly a fault of timing (too far removed from the process of developing the Programme of Work and Budget).

Several people expressed their surprise at how useful they found the more ad hoc Ottawa staff meeting in January, and felt the value of such meetings would become greater if held 2-3 times a year--allowing for more cumulative, in-depth discussion.

(d) Trip Reports

It is not quite clear why you are writing Trip Reports. Is it to account for your time? To prove you weren't in massage parlors rather than whatever? Who are you reporting to? (Programme Officer)

Most people, it is clear, write Trip Reports primarily for themselves, as an opportunity to organize and record their impressions of people and institutions, intelligence gathered about the "research environment", action taken on projects being developed, formative assessments of research underway. Several write them as well, as a stimulant for discussion within the Unit about substantive issues, and as a documentary contribution to the Unit's "history".

People also write Trip Reports to inform Division Management of their activities. Generally speaking, the Reports are viewed by both Division Management and Programme staff as a legitimate way to allow the Director and Deputy-Director to keep track of what is going on in the Programmes. Both also acknowledge that, to a degree, the Reports are used evaluatively. Several people expressed surprise in fact, at the detailed nature of the review their Reports were given, especially by the Director.

Few people write Trip Reports with a view to informing the Division as a whole however, principally because most believe that, like themselves, colleagues read one another's Reports very selectively. "(I) just thumb through until I come to an institution I know or an individual--or a summary page--and then I read that".

A very small minority believes Trip Reports should be abolished. Most feel that they could be improved. There are complaints about length;

I think people around here feel that if they write a 60 page Trip Report, they'll impress the Director. ....(But) long Trip Reports are counter-productive because they take time away from working on the projects. (Programme Officer)

Support staff too feel the brunt of long Trip Reports, because they have to type them, and some have complained about the difficulty they cause for them in getting the rest of their work done. Length also seems to be a definite deterrence to potential readers.

People have also complained about the style of Trip Reports, claiming that many were boring. Although some are praised for their analytical content, many were criticized for being simply a catalogue of events. A number of people shared the Division Director's view that to be useful, some analysis of the implications of the trip for the Programme Unit or for the Division, should be included. As one Programme Officer said:

I don't think I get enough information from the Trip Reports...to make conclusions about policies and philosophies, either conclusions or even inferences.

A few regret that there is no Division-wide follow-up on Trip Reports, or even informal meetings to discuss issues raised either directly or indirectly in the reports.

The fact is that people use Trip Reports primarily as a means of keeping records of their interactions with potential or existing project researchers, and not primarily to serve a wider Divisional interest. Because people use the reports primarily for themselves, and because they have their own different styles of writing, there is probably no point in trying to overhaul the general style in which they are written. There are, however, several possible ways in which minor organizational changes might facilitate the use of Trip Reports by more people. We offer these suggestions as a result of our analysis of the problems people have raised concerning Trip Reports.

- 1-Collect Trip Reports in Division Management and organize them according to region of the trip. This would facilitate the creation of regional or country profiles, or, at the very least, would make it easier for people who want to find information on regional institutions or individuals to know where to look.

- 2-Provide a table of contents for each Trip Report. People read others' Trip Reports sparingly, if at all, looking for specific countries or topics, and ignoring the rest. A number of people do not now include a table of contents. As an addition of one or two pages to each report, written by professional or support staff, it would enable people to get what they want from the Reports, quickly.
- 3-Provide a list of contacts. Few people list their contacts separately. Most mention them in passing in the text of the Trip Report, often without a complete mailing address. Listing all contacts on a separate sheet of paper, with complete mailing addresses, would simplify things for readers, many of whom only read for the contacts they can pull out of the reports.
- 4-Provide a one or two page analytical statement at the beginning of the Report. This would describe not individuals or institutions, or projects, but summarize the judgements Programme Officers have reached as a result of the trip, on broad issues. A summary would suffice. If people disagree with the implications drawn, or want more information, they can turn to the text for supporting material. Because they will also have a table of contents to guide them, they will know where to look.
- 5-Copy all relevant pages of Trip Reports onto project files. The prime purpose of the Trip Reports as they now exist appears to be to serve as a record of developments for pipeline or project files. Yet many people do not copy relevant pages to project files. This makes it difficult for others handling the files to follow the development of the project. The way some files are organized, a reader might not even be aware that a trip was ever made to the site. If relevant pages are not copied to appropriate files, whatever existing utility there is for the Trip Reports as records of project discussions, is severely diminished.
- 6-If relevant portions of a Report are to be copied to the files, separate entries on new institutions or projects should be put on separate pages in the Trip Report. This makes the reading of Trip Report excerpts in the files much easier. Several staff already follow this procedure. One Associate Director has Trip Reports composed of memos and letters on relevant subjects, all copied to the files.

If some or all of these practices were instituted, it would mean the addition of four or five pages to Trip Reports, but might also greatly increase their utility, without demanding any changes to the basic, existing structures of Trip Reports, which vary from individual to individual.

PROGRAMME OFFICERS

Maybe it's like having children. I doubt if we really think, "This will mean one more project to monitor, one more thing to worry about for payments." You are thinking about who are the researchers, what is the problem they are going to examine, and does it make sense in that particular context. If it does, you go ahead. So, I don't think we are thinking about the consequences, that six months from now it is going to call for a trip, and there will probably be two payments lost....I don't engage in those calculations, and I doubt that others do.... (Programme Officer)

The role played by Programme Officers (and by Associate Directors, when they develop and monitor projects) is central to the functioning of the Social Sciences Division. They are required to match the individual circumstances of the researcher in the field to a) the administrative structure, routines and restrictions of the Centre as a whole; b) the norms of the professional field or discipline involved; c) the capacities of the Programme to support the research. It becomes a balancing of these three elements. As one Programme Officer said:

You have to sit down...and ask them what they really want to do, not what they think you want them to do. You have to probe and take some time to talk to them. It takes several discussions.

Programme Officers perform roles as both professionals, concerned with substantive and methodological aspects of research, and as administrators, shepherding projects through an intricate maze of organizational procedure. Programme Officers are case workers, not always privy to policy making (for things like the creation of the Co-operative Programme, for example) but as the front-line staff in relations with the field, they are expected to interpret and act upon policy, bring substance out of theory. They are part of a complex and sometimes unpredictable environment. They have been given the power to use their professional discretion in dealing with this relatively non-uniform environment, and in making effective use of the



ambiguity in the policies.

To perform their multiple roles effectively, Programme Officers appear to require several attributes:

1-They must have knowledge-of countries, institutions, individuals, development issues, research methods and substantive areas in their field or discipline.

2-They must possess good analytical skills- the ability to blend knowledge about national priorities, individual researchers, substantive issues and research methods, and to generate critical assessments of projects or institutions.

3-They must possess good communication skills- the ability to counsel, encourage and stimulate researchers, and to clarify their ideas. Communication skills are particularly important in a) eliciting information about development issues, national priorities, individual researchers' capabilities, institutional characteristics, and specific proposals, from researchers, bureaucrats and politicians in national and international institutions, in a variety of cultures; b) achieving rapport with researchers and with colleagues in the Division; c) reporting on the results of analytical exercises in a coherent manner, through the spoken and written word, in Project Summaries, DAPs, Trip Reports and in meetings within the Division and the Centre.

4-They must have good administrative skills- the ability to use knowledge of the Division, the Centre, and Third World bureaucracies, to facilitate the exercise of their analytical and communication skills, to get approval for projects, and to facilitate their implementation.

The chosen working style and approach of the Division in part necessitates some of these attributes. Programme Officers are, almost without exception, activist in their approach to project development. They do not wait in Ottawa for proposals to arrive, assess their paper merits, and render a decision on financial support. They become involved

actively in elaborating project proposals, and assessing researchers' ability to perform the proposed research. For this activist role, they require information. This is most easily available where the Programme Officer knows the researcher or the country personally, and when these conditions are lacking, Programme Officers often seem to become somewhat nervous about providing support to marginal research proposals. As one professional said about a proposal:

I read it, and I see some problems with it. It just doesn't hang together conceptually. We sent the proposer out for a study tour, and it's still relatively big when he comes back in. He's willing to cut (the size of the proposal) - nine villages to four, but I start to get worried. I don't know the context the project has been developed in. I don't know the...political structure and situation. I find it very difficult to assure myself that this is not just somebody developing a project. There may be a hidden agenda in the case of (this country).

The activist case-management role of the Programme Officers is legitimized by the structure of the Centre. The Division Director reports that 31% of the budget goes to technical support activities. In fact, if the funds put into large and small-scale training projects are included, the percentage going to support activities would probably be higher. The activist role of Programme Officers in the Division is thus a logical extension of the basic structure of the Centre. It is not a question of whether Programme Officers should take a role in defining the nature of proposals to be funded, but rather of the extent to which they should do so. Somewhere, someone is going to make a decision about whether a proposal will be funded or not. If the Programme Officer does not anticipate the decisions of the Board then Board members will make the effective decisions, and they will do so on far less information than Programme Officers currently use for their decisions.

Programme Officers in many cases clearly feel part of the research process, and they feel in some cases, responsible for research outcomes. "I would feel personally responsible if a project flopped," one Programme Officer told us. "Because (I) picked the people. (I) recommended them." This feeling of responsibility for outcomes of the research, and not just for the capacity building effects of the process of conducting research, are also occasionally reflected in the hiring of consultants to work on projects, although this does not seem to be a frequent occurrence. Said one person about a consultant hired for a project:

He's not doing the research. But he's helping to make the research a lot better, and the result is that the researchers are going to learn from it. They will do a good job and the project will be all the more credible.

People are fond of saying that the process of Programme Officer interaction with researchers is an "iterative" process. As one person explained:

...it's not just a question of looking at a proposal; it's a question of the interaction as the proposal is developed, from research idea through to a fully-fledged proposal. We talk about response capacity, but clearly, on a major proposal, it is very much an interaction between the project officers and the project proposers. My concern at the moment (about a specific proposal) is yes, they seem to be willing to take our suggestions, but I'm not sure that they have really absorbed them into their own research framework. And that's very difficult to know when you don't know the country, the research situation, you've never met the man.

Said another:

I think you can't help feeling part of the research team. That's one of the exciting parts of the work. You have to identify with them, or you won't have the heart to carry it out.

While everyone takes a relatively activist role, then; in eliciting workable and fundable project proposals, some people take a more active role in defining what a project will look like, than do others. This activism does not just take the form of reducing project budgets. One particularly

active Programme Officer, for example, has significantly increased the scope and value of some projects, in one case doubling an already large project budget, and in another quadrupling the size and cost of a proposal. This represents a strong concern for the outcome of the project, and a stronger than usual feeling that the Programme Officer's own professional research interests should be incorporated in the proposal. There are, however, no clearly stated upper limits on the extent of Programme Officer involvement in the definition of a research proposal. But it is clear that people begin to get uncomfortable when the involvement begins to overshadow the original needs or interests of the researchers. The danger is that researchers will enter a dependency relationship with the Programme Officer, and rather than growing in the relationship, will suffer for it. In one project in which a Programme Officer had had extensive involvement, substantially altering the nature of the original proposal, the researcher wrote, while waiting to learn if the Project Summary had been approved within the Division:

For the moment, I feel like a student who needs to take or pass an important examination, waiting to receive the final word from you.

The danger in an extremely activist or interventionist role for a Programme Officer is, as one person said, that:

...the people will still do it, because they want to do something, and if it's the only way they can get money, they'll do it. They won't have their heart in it, though, and you won't have as good a project.

Ultimately, however, the danger of creating a dependency relationship is mitigated by the realities of implementation. The people who conduct the research will have to deal with day-to-day problems, make decisions and use their discretion. And the research on implementation tells us clearly that with discretion goes power. Without a more detailed means of evaluation than now exists, Programme Officers will not be able to control researchers, even if they want to, and the vast majority do not want to, in any case.

Programme Officers do not have sufficient information about project implementation to apply sanctions against noncompliance with the proposal, even if they wanted to. Without sanctions, control is an ephemeral concept.

The issue is not an easy one for Programme staff. They can be faulted for both over-involvement and under-involvement in project development. Those who impose their views on researchers, without having earned the right to do so, said one person, can be accused of being "academic imperialists", and yet, if they do not actively investigate the proposal and the researchers' capacity to handle it, they may be accused by their colleagues of bringing in "shoddy products". And, in fact, one clear norm of the Division is that Programme staff are responsible for asking basic questions and solving basic problems in proposals, before they come to the Division. All things considered, it appears that Programme Officers take a greater risk within the Division if they are perceived by their colleagues to have been under-involved rather than over-involved in project development.

In 26 projects we examined in some detail, substantial changes to scope or nature of the proposal appeared to have been made in seven cases, and more moderate changes in another eight. In 11 projects there were only minor changes, or none at all to the original proposal. If this indicates anything, it is, once again, that the environment in which professional staff operate is unpredictable and non-uniform. Programme staff have to judge each proposal on its merits, in the midst of a sometimes shifting set of selection criteria.

### Workload

There is a common feeling within the Division that both professional and support staff are often overworked. While this may well be true, it also appears that the amount of work done is directly related to the the operational style of the Division, with its emphasis on an activist, leadership role for professional staff. The greater the

Programme's interaction with researchers in project elaboration, the greater will be the amount of work involved: asking questions, visiting researchers prior to project approval to gain more information; visiting them after approval to help work through problems during the monitoring phase. Many say that moving money is an important factor in programme operations, but few bear this out in their own behaviour. If moving money was important, work would be considerably easier. The dominant ethic within the Division now appears, somewhat perversely, to contribute directly to the workload of which people complain. People seek to fund a large number of small projects or, if they fund large ones, to get involved actively in the details of project planning.

Workload is a combination of many activities, primarily the development of new projects and the monitoring of existing ones. Our calculations indicate that at least 24 people in the Division, in Ottawa and the regions, were involved in developing 118 new projects in FY 81-82. Among those working full-time in Ottawa, the average number of new projects brought forward for approval in FY 81-82 was nine. The number of projects developed by full-time Ottawa staff ranged from 2.5 to 17.5, with the greatest range in Science and Technology Policy and the smallest variation in Education. This range reflects a difference, not so much in the amount of work undertaken, as in the specific nature of the work emphasis chosen; more emphasis on stimulative project identification than on project development per se, for example. It reflects too, differences among the regions in terms of ease of project development and operational anomalies in the history of a Programme (unexpected understaffing in one; a Programme Officer inheriting partially developed projects in another).

Projects which are aimed at building research capacity appear in particular to generate involvement by Programme staff during monitoring, through trips to the field, organization of workshops and hiring of consultants. The variability among the people and the institutions that the Division deals with generates unpredictable problems--consultants who do not do their jobs, or are not paid for doing them; recipients who leave their host institutions before the research begins; budgets to be amended; reports to be read; bureaucratic and political problems to be negotiated.

People described these activities to us as the most time consuming and the least satisfying part of their work. Many believe that they are being inundated with administrative trivia, which prevents them from putting more time on project development, or even on writing better Project Summaries. Division Management, however, sees the administrative role of the Programme staff as an important aspect of their work. Said the Deputy-Director:

I regard Programme Officers as people who should do all of their own work and should be on top of any single aspect of any project that they have anything to do with, including all of the boring stuff. I cannot tolerate a world where the Programme Officers get to do all of the neat things...while people like (the Administrative Officer) and (the Financial Officer) do all of the dull stuff. So, I'm just firm. I'm not permitting a separation of work in that way. It's not only the justice or the injustice of the case that makes me think that way. I also think it makes the work much better.

Most people we talked to agreed that familiarity with administrative issues helped them in the substantive aspects of project monitoring, but most also believed that some compromise on the issue of administrative work should be possible. There is a feeling in several quarters that Division Management, through the Administrative Officer, should be assigned more responsibility for handling some of the administrative work, and that, if necessary, another Administrative Officer should be added to Divisional staff to assist in this work. The people who support this position do not see it as an abdication of their administrative responsibilities, but rather as a way to maximise the potential impact of professional staff on more pivotal or strategic tasks within their Programmes and within the Division. In particular, there is a feeling that professional staff time could usefully be directed to planning and evaluation activities. People believe that support staff could handle many administrative activities related to projects, but that they do not now have the time to do it. Basic typing and filing activities now occupy most of their time.

The use of third parties and consultants has been suggested to reduce the administrative or monitoring load. But, if consultants are used widely, there is a fear that researchers will end up depending on them, instead of taking responsibility for decisions themselves. Most Programme staff can make only a limited contribution to solution of project problems when they visit a project site during monitoring, because of their tight schedules. But some people do spend more time on projects during monitoring, up to, or even more than, a week on a single project. If this kind of involvement is going to occur, some people feel, it might be as well to hire consultants, and free the time of the Programme staff. The hiring of consultants can in itself be a time consuming job, however, because not only their technical expertise needs to be assessed, but also the compatibility of their outlooks on development and teaching-learning relationships, with that of the Division or the Programme.

Although some people said they would use third parties to administer projects, if competent ones could be found, most people objected to the idea, because of the loss of personal contact with researchers that this would mean. Said one person:

It's all right, but it's not as satisfying...Then we're just brokers. We don't have the kind of immediate input, supervising input. You feel that you are just an administrator.

And another person who agreed, said:

...if you start to do that too often, then you really become a paper-pusher, a bureaucrat and you have no direct relationship with the investigators or the research. If the Centre comes to that, and it may some day, I suppose I'll say goodbye.

If the alternative was to go to fewer and bigger projects, to reduce the workload, then the feeling is that only more stable institutions would be chosen, the diversity of projects would be reduced, and there would be less innovation in the Division's work.



Programmes exhibit leadership in their areas in different ways. Some Programme Officers are more active in guiding researchers than are others. In one Programme, staff are actively involved in writing policy papers for international meetings exploring new directions for research activity. One Programme has a very large training programme which takes up a great deal of the staff's time, and in another the staff actively seek to publish the results of their own research in order to gain credibility with researchers as leaders in their field.

While some people object to professional development activities by Programme staff, on the grounds that they may interfere with the administrative jobs of Programme Officers, on the whole there is evidence that such activities are accepted as a legitimate part of the professional staff's functions. The job description for Programme Officers drawn up in the early part of 1982, which presumably represents the views of most Programme Officers, states that they should engage in "continuous updating of professional and methodological skills and knowledge in (their) own professional field and in areas relating to the programme," and should engage in "review of professional literature, attendance of professional meetings, preparation of papers and extensive contacts with professionals in the academic and donor communities."

Publishing activity is defended by its proponents, on the grounds that it gives the Programme Officer more credibility with researchers.

I think it's very important in this business. If you deal with research, you should stay in contact with what it's like to do research, no matter what area of research you actually do yourself. You have to be in touch, to understand the problems people face when they do research. Otherwise it's easy to remove yourself from the environment and just become an administrator.

People who do publish do not believe that they are given any particular recognition for the activity, but there is seen to be a more conducive atmosphere for publishing now, than under the former Director of the Division. The current Director is given credit for this.

...at least he is not putting any cold water on anybody wanting to pursue academic interests. He has a more liberal attitude and I think that is good. It helps maintain our credibility in the field. If you want to be anybody people will listen to, you have to keep up your visibility, in terms of papers, book reviews, attending meetings....

### Evaluation Activity

Many people seem to feel that their decisions are forced by the pace of events, the need to cope with a never ceasing supply of new project proposals and an unending stream of administrative minutiae. Time for reflection is rare, many believe. Project Completion Reports are viewed by some people as an imposition from the Office of Planning and Evaluation, time consuming reports which serve no useful Divisional purpose. The view is not universal, however. One Programme has hired students to do the reports during the summer, and some others have expressed guilt for not getting more of them done. Those who do them or arrange for them to be done seem to take the reports quite seriously. "I agonize over the fact that we don't have time to do them ourselves," said one Programme Officer, "because I think that's how they should be done." The Project Completion Reports may be time consuming, their supporters say, but "it is irresponsible to spend time and money on a research topic and not look very carefully at the end product of it."

Overall, however, evaluative or reflective activity is generally acknowledged to be rare.

...one works from 9 until 5:30 or 6, often not taking a lunch, and at the end of the day, one wonders if one has done anything very intelligent. One's helped people move contracts through and all the rest of it, but there isn't time to really sit and think, to synthesize all the sorts of leads and information that come across your desk. And that's everybody's problem. But in an agency like this, where one is expected to be thoughtful about serious things, it's a liability if you haven't got the time.(Programme Officer)

Division Management staff, who themselves expressed a sense of inundation with the details of daily work at the expense of reflection, would agree with this sentiment.

#### Staff Evaluation:

Several people have expressed the belief that they are being judged on quantitative performance in the areas of projects developed, money spent and trips taken. Although there does not appear to be a great deal of concern about how they are being evaluated, there seems to be no clear consensus among professional staff about the evaluative criteria used to judge them, however.

...nobody seems to know for sure how we are evaluated. Some people seem to have different impressions. Some will tell you the number of chrons you write...is important. And I'm afraid to a certain extent that is true. Nobody knows for sure;...How many projects you develop....How many projects you monitor....How many idea files....

People have also expressed the hope that more qualitative criteria, based on reflective activities, sharing of experience with colleagues, involvement in policy activities and evaluations, will be used to judge them. As one Programme Officer commented,

I think we have a Director who is quite tuned to qualitative differences....He won't just look at the number of projects. He'll look at the overall thing. How you relate to people; how you convey your ideas through correspondence; the quality of the projects you've got, not just the number. If they're sound projects; if you're encouraging institutions that are worthwhile; if you've done your work on time....I think he's very tuned to all of these small things.

The Director himself says that the criteria most important to him in judging his staff are the ability to communicate ideas clearly in writing; the ability to achieve rapport with researchers and

and with Regional staff, and the ability to look critically at themselves and their environment. The number of projects developed in a year was not of major importance to him, he said, and in fact, he was not aware of how many projects the professional staff did develop in a year. He was concerned, however, that Programme staff visibly communicate with members of other Units, sharing ideas and, where possible, monitoring activities. He was critical of Officers who stayed too much on their own, who did not make a practice of talking with other Programmes' staff.

When we asked the professional staff to tell us who they thought were the most effective people performing Programme functions, we found that there was no apparent connection between this peer assessment of effectiveness and either the number of projects developed or the amount of time spent in travel. One male and one female Officer, from different Programmes, were cited very frequently. One was seen as selecting relatively traditional projects; the other as working on less traditional, somewhat risky ones. One led the Division in travel time; the other travelled least of all the Programme Officers. One brought an average number of projects to approval in the Division; the other somewhat less than average. Both were judged to be effective by not just their peers, but also by Division Management, and it appears that quantitative criteria were not important in making this assessment. The effectiveness of these Officers, and others cited somewhat less frequently, was attributed to their contributions to Internal Review Meetings, and their ability to keep their own Programmes well organized. At Internal Review Meetings, one was described as making very clear, concise statements which helped organize discussions; the other, as making comments or asking questions which put a new light on discussions. Both were praised for a quiet, generally understated manner of presentation, and for a thorough knowledge of the Centre's bureaucracy--and how to get the most out of it for their Programmes. One was described as "getting work done efficiently, expeditiously, sensitively..."; the other as being organized, methodical and having a handle on projects.

### Regional Programme Officers

This report will deal only tangentially with the role of the Regional Programme Officers in the Division, as seen from the perspective of Ottawa staff.

The Regional Programme Officers' jobs share many of the attributes of their Ottawa colleagues. Their position in the organization is, however, more ambiguous. The Division Director sees their position this way:

I do think they play a pretty large role in deciding what should or shouldn't go. It's more than a liaison role. It also has a substantive and qualitative aspect. I think when it comes to judging not the actual project, the technical details, but the value and sincerity and viability of the project, institutions and researchers, and the kind of programmatic support they need or don't need, the kinds of approach that should be taken, their role is absolutely crucial....I think that's very important, because it's often those decisions which really militate for or against a project. Because, unless those things are right, the methodology really is irrelevant.

Several people in Ottawa have said that they believe that while the Regional Programme Officers should not be looked upon as simply mailboxes, that they clearly cannot make the same kinds of decisions on projects that Ottawa-based Programme Officers can. In terms of project development processes described elsewhere in this report, their role, as seen by Ottawa staff, is to perform project identification functions, and monitoring functions, but not, primarily, to engage in significant project elaboration work, prior to project approval. They have been described as "the front-line" of the Division and the arms of the Programmes, performing liaison, identification and initial screening functions. Some Ottawa staff are in favour of expanding the role of Regional staff. One Programme sent one of its regular Programme Officers to Bogota in January, 1982, and another will be sending one of its Programme Officers to Singapore early in 1983.

Regional Programme Officers can influence the direction of Programmes in Ottawa by their screening activities. What they do not pass on to the Ottawa staff can be as important as what they do pass on, and like all Programme Officers, the Regional staff do perform an initial screening of proposals which come to their attention during travel. As one senior Ottawa staff member said:

This is a matter of confidence. You have to have a high degree of trust in your Regional Programme Officers. There is always a weaning process. There is always a problem of having more proposals than you can fund.

But while Regional Programme Officers can influence Programme direction through the screening process, and can act as advocates for certain types of researchers or institutions, there are inherent tensions in their positions because they lie between the two principal actors in the project development process--the researcher in the field and the Programme Officer in Ottawa, and sometimes have to "take the heat" from both sides. Real power over project development, in the final analysis, lies in Ottawa, and Regional Programme staff often have to be satisfied with acting as brokers between researchers and Ottawa. The scope of Regional Programme Officers' discretion may be wide ( in terms of who they visit, and what new initiatives they decide to forward to Ottawa), but it is not deep. Any real influence which Regional staff have in Ottawa during project development, is largely controlled by Ottawa staff. Even for senior Regional personnel, if there is a disagreement with Ottawa-based Programme staff, the Ottawa staff will usually prevail, during project development. We have been told that this was the situation in the Division under its former Director, and that the situation still largely prevails. As one Ottawa-based staff member said about the Programme's relations with a Regional Programme Officer:

I might to some extent disagree with the kinds of projects he initiates; I might not have the same perception of his responsibility in the (Regional) Office as he does. He would see himself, probably, as having more autonomy than I would wish to allow him. Which is one reason for the tension - this difference in perception - because I would like to see other kinds of projects, in other kinds of institutions, developed, and therefore would tend to keep a closer rein on him....

Evidence of something of an adversarial relationship between some Regional staff and their Ottawa counterparts is found in the correspondence between them. Regional staff sometimes refer to Ottawa as a "bureaucratic jungle" or suggest that Ottawa staff do not understand field conditions, in their communications both with Ottawa and with researchers.

One Regional Programme Officer wrote to a Programme Officer in Ottawa, following the latter's criticism of a proposal:

Although I duly relayed your observations, I did so with many qualms, for I would have preferred to advance with even a poorer project than this, if only to open (the area) to your program. As it is, I think this proposal is better than nearly all the others we have received from...(this area) and I am frankly perplexed by your buckets of cold water. Now my chief anxiety is that (the researcher) will not be scared off by our demands. Let us live in hope.

Some Ottawa staff, for their part, in discussions of the relative functions of Ottawa and Regional Programme Officers during the job classification process, made it clear that they believed the jobs were not the same, that basic responsibility for Programme development and project approval rested with Ottawa, and this should be reflected in the job classifications.

There is also some sympathy for the problems Regional staff face, however. As one Associate Director said:

For anybody who is a professional, I think that is very frustrating....I think one has to understand they are working to the best of their ability. We are here, too, but we can disguise it with all kinds of things, but they are more naked. One sees their activities more clearly.

In particular, people sympathize with the plight of Regional staff who serve a number of Programmes simultaneously, and have to try to adjust to the different priorities and working styles of the Programmes. The position is widely viewed as being very difficult. The position of Regional staff who have been in the field a long time may even be more difficult than those who have recently gone to the field. For those who have been in the field for some time, the Division has changed around them, with shifting personalities, priorities and organizational understandings. Those who have gone out more recently may have less adjustment to make to the organizational climate, because they are closer to recent trends, and because the specific functions and responsibilities of recent appointees may be more clearly understood by both Ottawa and the Regional Programme Officer.

Because decision making in the Division and particularly within individual Programme units is very much a function of the personalities involved, those who are not in a position to engage in frequent communication and exchange of views with the Ottawa staff, become alienated and isolated from the evolving views and patterns of thinking and behaviour in Ottawa. They are not part of the group which makes incremental decisions and develops common understandings about priorities, through a process of adaptive planning. Those in the regions have less opportunity to share the common experiences of professional development which occur in daily conversation, sharing the writing of Project Summaries, and attending meetings for internal review of projects. They are not included in the establishment or the gradual alteration of unit cultures. This applies to anyone who is absent from the Programme unit for an extended period, but most obviously to Regional staff, who are basically permanently absent from the unit. Regional Programme Officers' assumptions about the basic directions of the Programme or the appropriateness of their activities, are likely, over time, therefore, to become less congruent with those of Ottawa Programme staff, because assumptions, priorities and working styles in Ottawa are dynamic, not static. The changes are informal, however, and grow through frequent personal communication, in incremental steps. Both Regional staff and Ottawa staff may thus be surprised to note, one day, that they seem to differ, sometimes fundamentally, on important issues. To a certain degree, then, Regional staff are indeed isolated, "naked" or unprotected in the face of changing Programme expectations.

Because the Regional staff have no basic right of demand over the activities of Ottawa staff, the alienation of Regional staff from the culture of the Programme unit in Ottawa has less obvious implications for the work of the Programme, than it does for the work of the individual Regional Programme Officers. The Ottawa staff may find themselves having to do more project development work than they would prefer, if Regional staff do not share their ideas of what should be priorities. But the real negative implication for the Programme lies in the fact that the Programme loses the ideas of an informed professional, which would otherwise expand its own community of interest, its own scope of action. Lack of communication limits the ability of the Programme to depend upon the Regional staff as an empathetic extension of its interests in the field.



Increasing the influence of Regional staff in decision making about project approval and Programme direction is not just a function of putting senior people in the Regional Offices. Influence is a reflection of the extent to which any staff member, in Ottawa or the Regions, is seen to be a part of the professional community of interests within a Programme. To be part of this community, the individual must be seen to share a) the professional expertise of the other Programme staff, and b) the attitudes and sense of purpose of the other people in the Programme. They must not be just objectively competent to make comments or decisions. They must be seen by Ottawa staff to share basic values and priorities of the Programme, if they are to have the confidence of the Programme staff. A Regional Officer with this confidence, will have influence. A sharing of attitudes and priorities without the professional expertise to assess proposals or problems in the research area will be insufficient to gain the full confidence of the Programme staff, because they may feel that the wrong questions will be asked or important substantive issues ignored. But by the same standard, a Regional Programme Officer who has a solid background of professional expertise in a Programme area, but who does not share the general orientation or priorities of Ottawa staff, will have a difficult time persuading Ottawa that even technically competent proposals are in institutions or problem areas that are worth funding.

Influencing the decisions of Ottawa need not mean writing the final drafts of Project Summaries from the Regional Office. It could also mean providing analyses of research environments, assessments of institutions, individuals and proposals, which will have credibility in Ottawa, because of the shared expertise and attitudes between Ottawa and Regional staff. It is logical to assume that if a community of interest exists between Ottawa and Regional staff, that over time Regional Programme Officers might begin to write more Project Summaries which would be accepted by Ottawa. This would require some continuity of Regional staff, and an attempt to keep them involved in discussions about new Programme directions. Similarly, if Ottawa staff, who already are part of the Programme's community of interests, and share the confidence of other members of the Programme, are sent to the Regional Offices, then their influence, and ability to write Project Summaries will contribute to the decentralization of real decision making.

## SUPPORT STAFF

### Overview

Support staff do not form a cohesive group within the Division. To the extent that they do belong to a group, it is within their particular Programme Units. Generally speaking, morale within the support staff seems to be good, but poor communication causes problems on several levels.

### Nature of the Work

Technically, the work of support staff in the Division seems not atypical of secretarial work done elsewhere. The particular working environment of the Division does put specific pressures on secretaries, however. They are subject to the schedules, demands and highly variable working requirements of the professional staff whose own working environment is very non-routine. At the same time, secretaries are required to conform to the more uniform, routine demands of the Division and the Centre as a whole, in terms of the administrative system. Support staff are not in a position to control the nature of these various levels of authority; their work, and their working schedules, are for the most part determined by the professional staff.

Support staff perform, of course, a variety of fairly routine tasks; typing and filing appear to take up most of their time. A complicating factor, however, is the number of formats that must be followed, for letters, Project Summaries, Travel Authorities, DAPs, expense forms, contracts. Learning the different formats takes time. It is also, apparently, an on-going process because formats change frequently. Several people said that they could rarely be certain that, in typing things like Travel Authorities, their work would be accepted by Division Management. This was true even for those who have been in the Division several years. One secretary said that, despite her years in the Division, she hesitates to give advice

to new secretaries because of the frequency with which she has found her own work returned for changes.

All professional staff have different styles of work, and different preferences for how they would like their secretaries to work. Support staff therefore, have to interpret the wishes, and sometimes the inscrutable handwriting and directions, of professional staff, translating these into forms acceptable to the Division Management and the administrative offices outside the Division. The process becomes difficult when guidelines for what is acceptable change; the difficulty is increased when these changes are inadequately communicated or communicated after the fact.

Workloads were not cited as a major problem by the secretaries with whom we spoke, although difficulties in organizing the work created problems for some. A common complaint was the "rushing" of work by Programme Officers (and other professional staff) in sporadic bursts, something which support staff believe could be made more manageable through better planning. Project Summaries, many felt, are too frequently produced just before the deadline. This puts an unnecessary pressure on the typing load, a pressure which, some believe, professional staff either are not aware of or are insensitive to. The time pressures are increased when Project Summaries are changed at the last minute; very small changes often require major retyping of the document. "For every change, almost, you have to retype the whole thing", said one person.

A particular problem for some secretaries is the fact that they have to work with illegible handwriting, or with trying to piece together scraps of information provided by supervisors for preparation of things like expense claims, TA's or letters. They are, not surprisingly, particularly frustrated when they are provided with such materials, or incomplete information, struggle to make something comprehensible out of them, and then find their work criticized either by those who gave them the original materials or by Division Management. There is

a feeling among some that professional staff, wrapped up in their own work, have no appreciation for the difficulties they create for support staff by demands that are casual or careless. Those secretaries who get along the best with their supervisors are those who feel able to explain these problems to them, and have them listened to seriously. Several expressed the fact that they would like to be told more of the nature and purpose of a task, so as to allow them to make decisions or adjustments of a secretarial nature, when these are needed.

One secretary in particular was concerned about the sense she had of working in something of a "void", apart from the professional staff who much more clearly "carry the weight of the purpose of the Centre" in their work. The interest and excitement inherent in much of the project development work is not, she felt, a characteristic of most of the fairly mechanical typing and filing work of support staff. Communication between supervisor and secretary contributes to both the quality of the work and the sense of participation in the process. As she expressed it, even 5 minutes of explanation about a project-- "look, this is a bit of the background and this is now what has happened"-- would go a long way to broadening the base of "excitement" about the work being done.

The issue is related too, to a concern expressed by some over the possibility of "pooling" of secretaries, an approach seen by some as already happening in the Division if not by design, at least through practice. There is a belief that pooling means secretaries will get only fragments of the work on different projects; the result being frustration and confusion.

(You) don't know what's going on. (You) could be doing anybody's work. You can't run things like that. People don't work that way....You are never on top of everything your Programme Officer does. You never know.

Because secretaries must adjust to the different styles of supervisors, there are some problems of adjustment when they are required to work for other Officers or with other Programmes. They sometimes feel that professional staff do not appreciate this, or the fact that when their own bosses are away, they may still have work to do for them; that they are not "free". Any sharing of work should be discussed with professional staff so there will be a

clear understanding of what the priorities will be. On the whole however, given some of the complications caused by supervisors, support staff are not always sad to see them leave on trips. "...When our bosses are away, we work so much better, because when they're here, you're continuously disturbed to get this or that; so you might start a letter five times."

While the work of support staff is not always routine, therefore, or predictable, they do not feel that they are required to exercise much discretion in their work. A common view is that room for the exercise of discretion in the Division by support staff is no greater than in any secretarial job. Although we have occasionally been told that support staff handle important discretionary activities while professionals are travelling, it is the professionals who have told us this. None of the support staff we have talked to believes their work during travel periods requires much exercise of their judgement. Some openly laughed when we asked if they had to use discretionary powers during travel periods. "I Write people letters and tell them we can't answer their letter until the boss gets back--big deal!" said one. "There's not much I find difficult," said another. "Boring, but not difficult...."

### Communication

We do not want to leave the impression that overall we found support staff morale to be poor. To the contrary, while their are individual and group complaints and problems, most support staff feel that morale in the Division is good. Although there are exceptions, most of the time, most support staff apparently feel they can handle their work, and their relations with professional staff are cordial, and open, although never collegial. But where there are problems, on both the individual and the group level among support staff, these almost invariably relate to communication problems.

Improved communication would be useful in several areas;

- a) Informing support staff what new administrative procedures are, and the implications of these for their work;
- b) Discussing workloads within individual Programme units;
- c) Clarifying the roles of different people in Division Management with regard to support staff;
- d) Building group identity at the Divisional level between support staff.

A number of people told us that, given the large number of different forms and procedures required to be used by support staff, better training for new staff is essential. Although there is apparently an existing handbook on some administrative procedures, no one we talked to thought that it was adequate. An orientation session for new staff, to explain what the different tasks are, the different forms to be filled out, would be widely welcomed. When asked what training she received upon entering the Division, one person told us: "...none whatsoever. They showed me where I sat, and that was it." People learn procedures, as a result, very slowly and incrementally, by working through each new task as it arises, encountering problems and trying to solve them. Support staff believe this is a very inefficient and frustrating procedure. Because there are no widely known, comprehensive or consistent guidelines for many forms, people learn by asking others how to do things, but even the relative veterans of the staff feel unsure about some procedures. "If you ask three people how to do it," we were told, "you get three different responses." And, particularly difficult for many people, was the perception that procedures may change without this information being conveyed to them. If they do the work one way one time, that doesn't mean it will be well received on another. This causes a lot of rewriting, and duplication of effort.

"Usually you find things at the last minute," we were told. "You do something and then you find there have been changes and they come and tell you after." A particular problem is the apparent discrepancy between, on the one hand, the requirement that all budget documents, Travel Authorities, etc., conform strictly to set procedures, and yet, on the other hand, the tendency for procedures either to be unclearly explained, or to change without notice. Support staff feel that problems with the budget of this nature are complicated by their relations with the Finance Officer, characterised by poor communications and often severe personality conflicts.

Ambiguity of some procedures may be conducive to flexibility of work for professional staff who are able to work with ambiguity and take the right to make, and act upon, their own decisions. But it creates confusion and frustration for staff whose work is controlled by others, and do not have that flexibility in their jobs.

Increased communication between Division Management and support staff, and between support staff of different Programmes, on a more formal basis than is now done, is also seen to be a way of working out differences of procedure, on, for example, active project files--which people might think would be more uniform:

There should be a system, because when you file for someone else, you find things on the file that shouldn't be there at all. There should be some set of rules for it. When I first started here, no one told me what went where; I had to look at things. And even then, there were problems because half the time, things weren't filed correctly. So now all of them have to be looked at and a lot of them redone--which is a great loss of time. We should have a meeting and decide...the whole Division should do it the same, because if you are filing for someone else, you should know how it's done.

Procedures may, in fact exist, but if they are not clearly communicated, their effect is reduced. And, while these may not seem like major issues to some people, they do have an effect on work. "Those are small things, but they affect us because they're every day,"

explained one person. "They don't bother the bosses because they don't go get the files."

The recent group approach to the job classification exercise in the Division appeared to boost support staff morale and group identity. Although there have been some informal social gatherings of support staff, this was reported to us as the first time they had met and worked at the Divisional level. Like some of their professional staff counterparts, almost all support staff appear to be unit-focussed in their group identity, rather than Division-focussed. While, originally, several reported, they had felt somewhat alienated by the Director's policy of not dealing with them directly, they have now accepted this, in relatively good humour, as his personal and managerial style, and we are told that this does not cause problems.

There is a real need for clarification of the roles of various people in Division Management, with regard to support staff, however. Responsibility for co-ordination of their work on Divisional basis remains an area of ambiguity. They have had no one to act as a linking agent, although people are perceived occasionally to be attempting to take this role, causing confusion and some hard feelings. Many people believe that the responsibilities of the Administrative Officer and the secretary to the Deputy Director of the Division with regard to support staff, have never been clearly specified, and they would like the situation clarified.

Most relations between individual support and professional staff within Programme units are generally fairly good, Even where relations are good, however, it was felt they could be improved by better communication within Programmes. In the Science and Technology Policy Programme, support staff are reported to sit in on Programme unit meetings dealing with administrative and professional issues. This does not occur on a regular basis, elsewhere in the Division. Several felt it would be a useful practice in their own Programmes.



Some support staff believe they are not told clearly enough about the working schedules of their supervisors, and they face embarrassment when they cannot tell visitors or callers where their bosses are. On a wider scale, people complained of frustration over ignorance about travel schedules of professionals in other Programmes, because they often had to answer phones if both support and professional staff were out of the office. The introduction of a Divisional memo on travel to be circulated to everyone, was widely welcomed, but amidst some skepticism that it would become a regular part of Divisional organization.

### Conclusions

Support staff's work and their integration within the work of the Division would be facilitated by better communication. Specifically, we believe that the following steps might be useful:

1-Programme units should consider monthly or bi-weekly meetings of all staff to review work schedules and upcoming tasks, or work-sharing assignments. These would clarify working priorities and reduce the misunderstandings between support and professional staff which occasionally give rise to minor conflicts.

2-There should be Divisional meetings of support staff two or three times a year, to clarify issues and identify common problems. But as one person told us, the meetings, to be useful, should include someone with authority from Division Management, but someone with whom support staff can attain rapport. "I think there should be some (meetings), but also including people besides just secretaries. The secretaries know what the problems are....Our bosses know; so what we need is someone like (the Deputy-Director) there."

3-A formal orientation session for new staff, and some refresher or in-service training sessions for existing staff should be organized to cover the multitude of tasks required of support staff, in programme, administrative and budgetary areas. If it is not workable to produce a useful written guide

covering all procedures, there should at least be a formal clarification of the requirements for tasks most frequently performed, or causing the most conflicts; Travel Authorities, for example. Any training programme or explanation of procedures should include the rationale for doing things in the way specified--a recognition that secretaries are intelligent adults who can make useful contributions to Division work if they are kept informed. It might be a useful contribution to the work, for example, if some secretaries themselves developed a manual of procedures from their own perspective of where the difficulties, where the "tricks", of the work lay.

A couple of people also raised the concern about the lack of opportunity for their own professional development, either through programmes within the Centre or through financial support for training taken elsewhere. Although no one gave any specific examples of what such training might involve, it is an area that could productively be explored further.

There are also more mundane improvements that could be made. Because so much time is spent in typing, anything which might improve this work will have a positive effect on the overall work of the Division. Self-correcting typewriters would be one example. Those who do not type regularly do not appreciate the time corrections take. A somewhat less expensive compromise might be a change in the current brand of correction-tape used--one acknowledged to be very difficult to use effectively. Word processors have the potential for making major improvements in the typing and correcting of documents, but only if provided in sufficient numbers and if their maintenance is good. There is some skepticism among support staff that either of these conditions will be met in the current approach to the word processors.

Another change suggested by some secretaries was the modification of the phone system to include some form of intercom between secretary and supervisor. According to one person,

...you have to get up every time; when someone calls,  
 ...I have to go and tell (my boss). We should have a  
 system where we could just call through....I always have  
 to get up and that means quite a waste of time.

There is also a strong complaint among secretaries that too

many random materials come across their desks each day. These include magazines, articles and circulars that are circulated to Programme Officers, who, they say, don't as a rule want to read them anyway. The materials circulated should be drastically reduced, we have been told, with the remainder perhaps being left on a central book table or bookcase for a couple of weeks for those who want to read them.

## THE PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

...it is necessary that we understand who these people are, what their problems are and how they deal with them. So, I think that the iterative process of conversation, letters, discussions, exchanging ideas, going to meetings, is an important one. I think it gives the Centre an edge, if it has an edge.

### Case-Management

Project Development in the Social Sciences Division is an adaptive process, which, through negotiation and compromise, matches the researchers' needs, interests and capacities with those of the Division's professional staff, both Programme Officers and Associate Directors. The process is an example of case-management, an approach which is consistent with the non-uniform nature of the Division's working environment (Third World research institutions), and with the Division's basic working policy that it be responsive to the diversity of its clients' needs. The project development process is subject to a number of variables, which can modify the manner in which an individual case under consideration by the Division will be treated. These include:

1-Client characteristics-the individual researcher's history with the Division, educational, professional or research experience or skill, and personal enthusiasm; also the history and reputation of the institution with which the researcher is associated.

2-Project characteristics-size (duration and money involved), topic, innovativeness, methods of inquiry, past links with the Centre, language of presentation.

3-Country characteristics-the relative wealth of the country, administrative and clearance procedures, political and professional freedom accorded researchers, research infrastructure, and the extent to which it is represented in the Division's current programme of work.

4-Division characteristics--the period of the budget year when the proposal is submitted; overall budget limits; perceived pressures from the Centre's administrative system.

5-Programme Unit characteristics--the extent of shared interests among professional staff; the variety of skills and interests, including language abilities, within the Unit; the Unit's relations with the Division; the scope and formality of the Unit's priorities.

6-Programme Officer characteristics--the professional and personal interests, research and language skills, professional operating style, energy, administrative skills and cultural orientation of professional staff.

There are four basic stages to the project development process which are related to the Division's particular approach to case-management. These are the processes of identification, screening, elaboration and resolution.

#### IDENTIFICATION

Identification of potential cases or proposals for consideration in any case-management agency can range along a continuum of passive to active. At either end, the institution can choose to wait for cases to be brought to it for resolution or it can actively seek out cases. While the Social Sciences Division remains, on the whole, responsive to researcher needs, this does not imply that in the identification of research proposals, or researchers, it remains passive. Some proposals do come to the Division unsolicited. But Programme Officers (and Associate Directors) do not simply react to initiatives from the field. Rather than remaining passive, each of the Programmes has chosen, instead, a fairly activist role in terms of stimulating the research environment. The extent of this active involvement varies, however, from the issuing of Programme brochures, through the gathering of information about the regions from travel and from Regional Programme Officers, to the holding of meetings and workshops explicitly to encourage researchers and invite research proposals.

## SCREENING

Once identified, a potential case is screened to determine whether it will be included in the case load of the organization. The screening stage is a critical point in decision making because it determines which cases, or in this case, project proposals, will be subject to subsequent steps of analysis or elaboration. The decision to exclude a potential project from further consideration is as significant as any subsequent steps of elaboration or alteration which might take place during project development for those proposals which survive the screening phase.

There are variations, among Programme Units in the Social Sciences Division, with respect to the specification of eligibility criteria for project funding. The tendency overall, however, seems to be to include rather than exclude proposals at the screening stage wherever possible, not necessarily to guarantee acceptance, but to pursue proposals to some point of positive reaction. They may not end up as funded projects, but they may result in some other potential further association between the Division and the researchers. There are several cases within the Division where proposals have been pursued for two or even three years before acceptance or rejection, an indication of the staff's reluctance in some cases to turn away from a case with potential. The inclination is, at the screening stage, to err, if error is to be made, on the side of including potentially inappropriate proposals, rather than excluding potentially appropriate proposals. The basic assumption seems to be that the role of the professional staff is active, educative and facilitating. The basic question about proposals is not whether they are "good enough" to merit support as they are submitted, but how they can be developed in a way that will increase their likelihood of success, either as a vehicle for professional development of researchers, or as a means of creating new knowledge, for application to problems.

The less uniform or standardised are the criteria for inclusion, the more open or inclusive the agency can be, but also the less consistent may appear its decisions. Consistency is an inappropriate evaluative concept in non-uniform environments, however. The purpose for the Division appears not primarily to be consistent, although that may be an acceptable outcome, but to be fair to those making proposals given the special circumstances affecting their needs. The Division appears to be concerned with the overall balance in favour of specific proposals, rather than primarily with the relative merits of proposals in relation to each other. Because the Division is to a large extent a responsive organization, it is not always possible to anticipate the quality of future proposals. Professionals must judge many of the proposals they are handed on their own merits, and in light of their own peculiar or idiosyncratic contexts. The more active professionals are in stimulating the submission of proposals from specific researchers on specific topics, however, the easier it becomes to apply more uniform screening criteria. Those Programme units which have a clear idea of what they think priorities should be in their professional research fields, may find the screening process a less ambiguous activity than those which have broader inclusive criteria.

The initial screening process is usually performed by individual professionals, in Ottawa or in the regions. Particularly where the screening criteria are left deliberately vague, the initial screening becomes very personalized and necessarily subjective. Where the Programme unit has the opportunity to review proposals which pass the initial screening, the basis for subsequent judgement invariably broadens. The Programme unit rarely has the opportunity, however, to review proposals which are rejected by the individual, particularly during travel, at the initial screening.

## ELABORATION

Proposals which survive the screening process at the initial stage go through a period of elaboration, during which more information is collected, the capacity of the researchers to handle new approaches to the research is tested, and changes are made to the proposal. Screening continues throughout the elaboration process. Once elaboration starts, however, and the longer it proceeds, the more difficult it becomes to reject a proposal, because it has become a part of the case load of the Programme Officer, involving professional and sometimes emotional commitments.

Elaboration involves in many cases the participation of the Programme Officer as a facilitator, guide or director, depending on personal style. Some Programme Officers are involved more heavily than others in altering technical or professional aspects of the proposals, where concern with the research outcome may be more important to them than the research process. Guidelines can reduce the diversity of response by individual Programme Officers to proposals, particularly in terms of the extent of their participation in defining or changing proposals. But within the Social Sciences Division, diversity is not a negative concept. Guidelines are not apparent except in informal and indirect forms, in individual discussions within Programme units, and occasionally appear vaguely in the background of discussions at the Internal Review Meetings. The norm is that professional staff will be involved actively in elaborating project proposals. The extent of their participation, at the upper end, appears undefined, although there is occasionally some uneasiness in Division Management where a professional staff is viewed to be excessively interventionist. The steps in the elaboration process are not clearly defined in order of performance, but elaboration is expected to clarify budget size, objectives, methods, institutional capacity to perform the research and other issues.



During elaboration, data collection will determine the scope and priority of the proposal. Data collection involves extensive mail, phone and telex communication, and almost invariably, personal contact with the researcher, prior to approval. Data collection will be affected by previous knowledge of or contact with the researcher, and by the faith Ottawa staff put in the judgement of Regional Programme Officers, if they are involved in the process.

Up until the point where a Project Summary is prepared, no two proposals may follow exactly the same process of elaboration. In terms of relative priority of proposals, some cases will jump the queue, if the researcher is well-known to the Programme Officer, if the proposals grows out of previous experience, or if it seems particularly interesting to the individual Programme Officer because of substantive, methodological, or regional concerns.

The scope of the proposal may be extended or limited, at the discretion of the individual Programme Officer, subject to review by the Programme itself and by the Division. Proposals will be accepted at their proposed size if they are viewed as sound, if researchers are seen to have sufficient skill to handle the scope, if the scope is seen by the Programme Officer to be sufficient to answer relevant questions, and if the Division and the Programme see the scope of the proposal as being financially or politically viable.

#### RESOLUTION

In most case-management processes, resolution of the case occurs after it is processed through data collection and assessment procedures, which we have referred to here as the elaboration process. At resolution, decisions are made, and judgements rendered, the case often removed from the case load of the professional. Resolution during project development, however, means approval of the project at Divisional level, or its rejection. If approved, the project remains a part of the case load, however, for monitoring.

## Travel

The principle here is the same as a banker. You never lend money to someone you've never met.

There are two striking characteristics of the work within the Social Sciences Division. One is the degree of personal involvement of the professional staff with the researchers submitting proposals. The other is the amount of travel done by professional staff during the course of their work. The two are closely related. Travel is widely, even universally, believed to be an integral part of both the project screening and the project elaboration process during project development. In a non-uniform environment, where flexibility of response is essential for successful programme implementation, the basic need for professionals assessing the merits of proposals, is for information. Professional staff are expected to use their own discretion in assessing a wide range of elements before making a decision on a proposal. Letters, telexes and phone calls can provide only a small proportion of the information needed, and can provide very little, especially, of the intangible insights which make up the judgement of enthusiasm, dedication and rapport with colleagues, which professionals need in order to judge the qualifications of researchers. One professional put the importance of travel this way:

very important....a key element in developing a project, to go there and meet the people and see what they are doing, how they are working, what the other people have to say....If you don't know the person as a person, it's important to meet him or her and to see their situation-it's a kind of personal rapport.

Where professionals know researchers from past associations, they have a reservoir of knowledge about the researchers' history and capabilities. With these people, referred to as "superstars" by one person, the screening process begins several steps ahead of what it would be for a proposal from someone unknown to the Programme. While this

helps, there is an awareness that there must be many more capable people in the field, unknown to the Division. The need is to expand the network of contacts and personal familiarity with the field, and travel therefore was cited by almost everyone we spoke to as an essential part of professional staff's work.

Quite clearly, not all travel is for project development purposes alone. A great deal is for monitoring of projects which have already been funded, to help researchers iron out methodological and administrative problems, to serve as consultants, in effect, in meetings and workshops dealing with development research issues. The mere fact of contact on a personal level with the field, in any capacity, will generate new knowledge for both programme and project development, however.

Travel serves institutional, as well as professional needs. Poorly written or developed proposals can embarrass the Division, the Programme unit and the Programme Officer. One person said, as a justification for travel, "There are a great number of con men in this game, and one would like to avoid them." Another echoed this, citing one purpose of travel as being "to make sure they're not pulling a fast one on you, that they're really committed to working on it, providing whatever information is needed, and so on." Travel and personal contact with the researcher, provides the Programme Officer with the ammunition to defend a proposal before both the Programme unit, and later, before the Division as a whole. It certifies that the review process has been taken seriously.

As one person wrote to a researcher, about the chances of getting a proposal through the Division: "It will probably strengthen my hand to have (visited) and talked with the group of researchers about the project." No Project Summary can provide all of the information to answer any question which can be asked during Divisional review. The Programme Officer or Associate Director who has met personally with researchers can respond more spontaneously and convincingly

to unforeseen questions about researchers' capacity, or ability to overcome situational difficulties. Even where research capacity is often viewed as being strongest, in Latin America, travel remains an important element of project development and monitoring. As one Programme Officer handling a lot of Latin American projects said:

...we still have to make at least one field visit there where we discuss and modify things, clarify...nor do we have a pattern of not knowing the researcher. You cannot show me a proposal, project, where we haven't been there and discussed it before accepting it. No. It's usually based on some negotiation, some initial knowledge.

Our review of 26 Divisional projects for which funds were appropriated or committed during FY 1981-82, confirms the high degree of personal contact important during project development. Of the 26 projects reviewed, personal contact was made in 25 cases. In many instances, there were two or even three separate occasions, the researcher visiting Ottawa, or the professional staff going to the field, sometimes with two or three people from the same Programme visiting a potential project site over a period of two years.

Programme Officers have different perceptions about travel policy. One told us that a trip couldn't be justified primarily for monitoring purposes, that more monitoring activity should take place, that trips were, unfortunately, primarily for project development and identification. Another Programme Officer told us the opposite, that monitoring existing projects made up the bulk of work during travel. It may be that the explanation for differences in perception are a reflection of the operating style of different professionals. A person who is seen to participate very actively in the implementation of projects may be discouraged by an Associate Director or by Division Management, from undertaking trips exclusively for more monitoring activity.

Division Management staff, primarily the Director and Deputy-Director, also travel. Their interests are less in individual projects (although exceptions to this have been reported) than in areas of research support, assessing research infrastructures in different regions. They also travel to keep in contact with Regional Programme Officers and to perform a diplomatic function, meeting senior officials in research institutions in the regions.

The Deputy-Director is a strong supporter of the need for travel by professional staff. As she told us:

...I'm an old hold-out on the question of travel. I regard it as a privilege....and will not for one moment lend any sympathy to anyone who complains about it....I have never known anyone to turn down a trip yet.

Other people are not convinced that travel is a privilege. Travel is a strain on many people, and has caused disruptions in family and personal life for several people in the Division. There are, of course, some people who thrive on travel personally as well as professionally, but everyone agrees that adaptability to travel is essential for work in the Division."Someone cannot last in this job if he or she is not adaptable or has a spouse who isn't as well," one person told us. ....

Only one person we spoke to among professional staff suggested there might be too much emphasis on personal contact with researchers, and this view was expressed more as a question or speculation, than as a firm view. Travel does place indirect strains and costs on professional staff, aside from the direct physical or psychological stresses in transit. Because project development tends to be a highly personal task, handled by individual Programme Officers, while the individual travels, other members of the Programme unit cannot deal in detail with work which accumulates. When the Programme Officers return, therefore, they are inevitably faced with a large backlog of work, in Ottawa, in addition to the work generated directly by their travel, in the form of contacts to write, Trip Reports, and proposals to review.

It is, therefore, a norm within the Division to say that extensive travel is important to the professional's job, and people have told us that a qualified person who did not want to travel as part of the job probably would not be hired to work in the Division. It would appear from this, that the only way to reduce individual travel schedules would, therefore, be to reduce the Divisional approach to the work, reducing the emphasis on personal knowledge of all potential recipients. In fact, however, the amount of travel done by professional staff in the Social Sciences Division in FY 1981-82, varied widely. A commonly expressed view was that many people travelled more than 100 days in a year. While this may have been true for past years (although we cannot confirm it) it was not true for FY 1981-82. We found that the average rate of travel for professional staff (excluding Regional staff) was 21% of available time, or roughly 77 days per person. Travel by full-time professional staff varied from 38 days to 112 days, with 6 out of 18 staff travelling at a rate which would exceed 100 days per year. In practice the value placed on travel was somewhat ambiguous. The two Programme Officers cited most frequently as being the most effective in the Division represent opposite ends of the travel-time continuum. One travelled the least of anyone in the Division, at 38 days, the other travelled the most, 112 days. Rates of travel for Programme units varied widely also, from an average of 17% ( a rate of 62 days travel per year for individuals in the Programme) to a high of 29%, or 106 days per person. This indicates that while travel is an important element in project development (because everyone engages in it) it is not the sine qua non for effective work as a professional, in terms of sheer quantity. Like other non-uniform elements of the project development process, the amount of travel required for effectiveness is a reflection of the individual or idiosyncratic characteristics of research environments, regions served, and proposals submitted.

An increase in travel money allotted to the Division would not necessarily mean more travel by individuals. It might well mean more efficient or humane travel schedules, with shorter, more focussed trips resulting. Many people feel that such an approach would minimise the build-up of backlogs of work caused by extensive absence from the office, leave professional staff less exhausted, and contribute to the efficiency of work. Travel funds are currently allocated on an apparently equal, proportionate basis among Programmes and Programme Officers, although Associate Directors get a bigger piece of the travel funds than others. This has met with some criticism from some Programme Officers, who see no clear justification for the difference. The fact that travel funds are allocated equally to Programme Officers regardless of their level of individual project cases for monitoring, indicates that Division Management consciously permits a diversity of approach by Programme Officers, to their work. Thus, people with fewer projects may use the travel budget for extended visits to a small number of projects with which their participation in decision making is quite high. Others with a large number of projects may choose to use the money for shorter monitoring visits to a number of project sites. No one complained about having too high a travel budget, although one person did suggest that travel budgets should be allocated in accordance with project load.

## Selection Criteria

...the real nitty-gritty is trying to put programme criteria and project criteria together in such a way that when you respond, you end up with a series of projects that reflect both among themselves and within themselves, in terms of those that have been refused...and accepted, some system of values, judgements, based on the knowledge of the field and the situation, which gives you a programme, which, if challenged, you could defend. (Division Director)

Programme criteria are established, as we have noted elsewhere, as a product of the demands from researchers, the state of the discipline, and the interests and research capacities of the professional staff comprising a Programme unit. Programmes vary in the importance they attach to their statements of priorities found in the Programme of Work and Budget, and in the importance they attach to the policy relevance or the capacity building potential of research proposals. Project criteria are more situational, related to personal characteristics of the researcher, technical judgements concerning the clarity of the phrasing of substantive and methodological issues and judgements about the capacity of researchers or institutions to handle the work involved in the proposal.

No one in the Division denies the importance of capacity building as a priority. Even the people or Programmes which seem to stress direct utilization of research results for policy purposes as their main concern, indicate that they do support capacity building activities also. Some Programmes, of course, place a more overt stress on developing research capacity rather than proving a direct link with policy. But even here there is an argument that utilization need not be measured solely in the extent to which it influences senior policy makers, but that where a field of study has a strong professional base of grass-roots practitioners, strengthening research capacity at the bottom can directly affect practice in the field.



For many people in the Division, the most important question to be asked is how important is the research issue to be studied in any proposal. If the basic topic falls generally within the scope of the Programme, and the scope does vary widely, as we will discuss in the sections dealing with individual Programmes, then how important, or innovative is the topic? One Programme Officer said 90% of the work is involved in narrowing down a workable problem:

What are they really trying to come to grips with? What are the issues? Narrow them down. Then, looking at how one designs a project, to respond to this. In this case, it's an interactive process. You don't impose your views, but at the same time, you have to sort of guide people, saying: "Well, look, what you're proposing to do won't answer this problem. It may answer another problem, but not this one!"

People want to know how important the research question is to the researcher--and how enthusiastic the researcher is about it, a very personal and subjective judgement. If the importance of the research topic is established, then other questions are asked.

Issues related to the discipline have to be addressed. The Programme Officer must ask whether the questions addressed in the proposal, the methods used, the models applied, the test approaches suggested, are relevant and competent in terms of the specific professional or academic field involved. They ask questions about the country context. Does the research fit within the needs of the country, and its national priorities? The "research environment" issue arises here. A project which may be viewed as unacceptable if it comes from a country with a stable and well-developed research community, where research capacity is expected to be high, or where the question may have been asked many times before, might be viewed as quite acceptable where it comes from a country with little previous interest in the topic, or with a weak research community. Standard criteria, covering all

situations cannot be applied. This is, once again, an example of the non-uniform nature of the working environment. If the proposal comes from a country which a Programme wants to enter, for political or administrative reasons, the proposal may also be given greater attention. Conversely, if a project proposal comes from a country where clearance procedures are known to be arduous, or where there is no support from Regional staff to sort out these problems, then it may be greeted with greater skepticism than it might deserve if judged solely on substantive or methodological grounds.

Personal interests and research experience clearly play a role in determining the attention a project will get. We have observed situations in which proposals were turned down because none of the professional staff had either the competence to judge the proposal, or monitor it, or an interest in the topic, even though the basic issues of competence of the proposal were not seriously dealt with. Where a topic becomes important because of researcher demand, all Programmes appear willing to try to acquire expertise. Different disciplines have different characteristics which affect decision making in the Programmes, too. The more established disciplines of Population and Economics have clearer, established priorities, than do Education (although it has some professional or practitioner concerns which are well defined) or Science and Technology. The latter two may, therefore, accept more diversity in the topics or methods presented to them.

Given the different characteristics of Programmes and individual countries within regions, generalizations about regional differences in applied criteria for project approval are difficult. But projects to virtually all of Africa, by all four Programme areas, tend to stress the building of research capacity over the quality of the research product. Projects there tend to be educative, stimulative in nature. In the Middle East, there are so few projects funded

by any Programme that it would be difficult to characterize Programme or Divisional trends. In Asia the criteria for project support vary from Programme to Programme, with some taking a very overt preference for policy-relevant research, but with others stressing capacity building, among practitioners or lower-level researchers. Support given to projects from Asia has fluctuated widely from year to year in some Programmes, a reflection of other donor activity, changing levels of submissions, and, in at least one case, differences of opinion between Ottawa staff and Regional staff over criteria for project support. In Latin America, a great deal of project support has been for sustaining existing research capacity, and Ottawa staff have been able to react to initiatives from researchers in the area, rather than having to stimulate submission of proposals. One person said that Latin American researchers, because of their sophistication "are able to write proposals--like we write postcards."

In other areas, proposals do not flow in, but do have to be sought out. Said one Programme Officer handling Africa and the Middle East:

I so rarely get a proposal unsolicited, that it's a big event when I do. Every project that I get, I have to work for, because of the area of the world.

Where the objective criteria (relevance of the topic to Programme priorities, nature of research methods) are marginal, the subjective element in selection criteria become important. If a project is weak, but there appears to be room for development of the proposal, it still may be developed. If the researcher is known to the Centre, and has a good reputation in the Division, a marginal proposal may be pursued. And, a number of people cited the personal enthusiasm of the researcher as an important element in determining whether to proceed with development. If a researcher can demonstrate personal commitment to a proposal, this enthusiasm can be transmitted to Programme staff. A researcher who is liked by Programme staff for this enthusiasm, and willing to work through what may be a lengthy development and elaboration process, will probably end up with financial support from the Division for some type of professional activity-project support, travel, or training support.

The Division does concentrate its efforts very much on the researcher, and not just on institutions, and this is the major reason for the frequency of travel in the Division, and the concern

for personal contact with the researcher prior to and subsequent to project approval. In three projects being developed in FY 1981-82 in the Division, the issue has arisen of whether the Division should support a researcher or an institution when there is a dispute between the two. Although no formal actions were taken, in all three cases, Programme Officers strongly supported the researchers as the focus for project support rather than their institutions or former institutions.

## Project Summaries

The litmus test I apply to a Project Summary is, on the basis of this, can I describe what this research is about in one sentence? If the Programme Officer falls under a bus tomorrow, or disappears, is this enough to allow me to monitor the Project? (Division Deputy-Director)

Proposals are not Project Summaries. They are written by researchers with their own concerns, problems, language and writing abilities, in a variety of formats. The Project Summary is a device which translates a proposal, which has been described as "...the accumulated set of notes, conversations and letters, together with the first (written) proposal," into a standard format for processing by the Division and the rest of the Centre. As such, it is clearly an attempt to bridge the gap between the diverse and non-uniform submissions reaching a Programme Officer, and the relatively uniform or standard environment of Centre administration. The Project Summary has been described to us as "a very rational piece that captures the logic of looking at that particular problem in that particular context." Given the large number of projects approved each year, not just by the Social Sciences Division, but by other Divisions as well, some standardizing device is seen as necessary by almost everyone, in order to facilitate the preparation of Grant Letters and budgets. The Project Summary for many people is just that--a summary of all of the implications of all of the transactions occurring between Programme Officers and researchers during the process of project elaboration.

It is seen by many people therefore, as both a professional document, and as an administrative document, representing the Programme Officer's and the Programme's efforts to the rest of the Division, and to the Centre. Since the current Director arrived in the Division, he

has been concerned primarily with establishing the Division's credibility within the Centre. Social Sciences have, we are told, because of the nature of the disciplines involved and the personalized nature of the leadership until 1978, been characterized within the Centre as unpredictable, and projects coming from the Division as of uncertain quality. The Director's intention has been to see that Project Summaries, the prime point of contact between project development work and the rest of the Centre, do not embarrass or attract undue attention to the Division. This has come to be established, we believe, as a Divisional norm. While it is important for all Project Summaries, it has come to be particularly important for those Project Summaries which will go before the Project Committee and the Board. Those projects which go to the President are carefully reviewed by the Director or Deputy-Director; those headed for the Board are given an additional Division-wide review by the Internal Review Meeting (IRM) within the Division.

The Director summarized his concerns with Project Summaries when he arrived in the Division:

...the quality of the English and the quality of the expression in many of the projects that were presented to the Board, to the Officers and the President, was abominable, and (I said) I would not tolerate this kind of writing. So, I've been very tough on that. I still am....

Later, he told us:

I think if you can't write clearly, if things aren't clear, then you don't really understand what they mean....That's an administrative type of decision one has to be firm on. That's a battle that is largely over.

One implication of the norm that Project Summaries present the Division in a good light, is that where projects may be seen to be risky (very large, or involving unorthodox topics or methods) some Programmes and individual Programme Officers find it politically useful to submit the Project Summaries in draft to the Division

Management for their comments and advice. This reduces the chance that Division Management may be faced with challenging the autonomy it has given Programmes, as may be the case if an unacceptable Project Summary makes it to the Internal Review Meeting. In fact, it is rare for a project which reaches the stage of the Project Summary to face a serious challenge from Division Management. Usually, when the Director or Deputy-Director review a Project Summary, it is more a case of approving the document than of approving the project--that is, it is a review of the Project Summary as an administrative device, rather than a review of the intrinsic, substantive merit of the project proposal. It is a clear norm of the Division that responsibility for judgement on substantive issues lies primarily with the Programme. By the time a Project Summary is presented to the Division, Management recognizes that a commitment has been made to the researcher. This does not mean that approval will be automatic. Division Management does represent the last line of professional review. But serious changes to Project Summaries will be made with reluctance at this stage, and with the feeling that the responsible Programme or Programme Officer has broken a norm by putting Division Management in the awkward position of having to make serious changes.

Most changes made to Project Summaries at this stage are, therefore, changes to the Division's presentation of the proposal to the Centre, not changes to the project design. If questions are raised about the project at this stage they will usually be conveyed to the researcher on an informal basis. Division Management is reluctant to produce clearly specified guidelines for the writing of Project Summaries for fear of reducing the diversity of proposals now accepted. Given the difficulty some professional staff have in producing Project Summaries, however, some people feel that some instruction on the translation of proposals into Project Summaries--particularly the budgetary aspects of the process, would be useful.

Division Management has the inescapable responsibility for the quality of the Division's work, and both the Director and the Deputy-Director appear adamant that the coherence and logic of the Project Summary must be high. At the current time people learn how to write the documents by a gradual process of observation, trial, error and editing. Both the Director and the Deputy-Director believe that with time and practice, the quality has improved. When they review documents, they want to see a logical flow of argument from the problem to research objectives, the relevance of research methods, and the utility of the research outcomes. If they see gaps in the logic, they want to know if they are caused by the Programme Officer's interpretation of the proposal, an issue of editing, or whether they represent a more serious substantive flaw in the proposal, an issue of professional review.

Project Summaries are perceived by Division staff to be growing longer with time. In the past, one person described the Summaries as being "absurdly short" for the large size of the projects, making them useless as a real summary of the project, or as a guide to monitoring activity. The increased length is seen as a product of the concern of Division Management for the improved image of the Division, an attempt to forestall possible criticisms of projects by answering them within the document. Most people in the Division accept the need for longer and more detailed Project Summaries than were presented in the past, and most support the Director's concern for the quality of the documents. This support is not unanimous, however. Most people find the writing of Project Summaries time-consuming and tedious. A minority believe they are too long. As one critic said:

If you have on the one hand a Director who is not interested in projects, but in project paper, you have to ask what are these pieces of paper for? What are these large, long pieces of paper actually doing? They are not read by the Board.... Indeed it would be rather a waste of their time to get them into the minutiae of projects.



Yet, we are asked to convert speculative ideas into very precise paragraphs and numbers.

According to the Director, however, many Project Summaries are closely read, and queried, by some Board members. For some, the social sciences remain "a very difficult area", he feels. He would allow, however, that in some cases the Summaries are overly long.

Given the editing and review processes, to what extent do Project Summaries really represent the research proposals, or what the researchers really want to do? We have been told that in the past, under a previous Division administration, Programme Officers were somewhat more directive in their relationships with researchers, and that they wrote the Project Summaries based on what they themselves thought should be in them. We have found that current Programme Officers are very sensitive to the possibility that the Project Summary may distort the intentions of the researcher. Yet, while professionals in the Division may be sensitive to the problem, most acknowledged that it still occurs, albeit in a minority of cases. In particular, because policy relevance is seen to be an important Division and Centre criteria for support of projects, many feel it is important to state that a proposal will have policy relevance, even when (a minority of cases) it does not. The proposal, it is felt, becomes more appealing to Division colleagues and the Centre if the Summary says it will have policy implications. Training, or capacity building, of researchers may be the real purpose of a project, but, particularly in projects going to the Board, it is sometimes seen as unwise to admit this openly, or alone. Such does not represent a fundamental change to the substance of the project, to the objectives or to the research methods, so much as it misrepresents the background of the project or its most important potential outcome. Said one senior person about the difficulty of writing Project Summaries which reflect exactly the intentions of the proposer:

Getting bureaucratically burnt sometimes, I have found that being honest on that kind of level really (makes it) very hard to move projects through the Division.

Everyone is aware of the potential dangers of approach.

The problem is not really whether the proposal could be made better. It can be done. Sometimes you can do it right here. I have done this for (the Regional Programme Officers) several times. But that doesn't solve the problems for the researchers when they have to design the questionnaires or do other tasks in the field. It just means, basically, that the Director would have fewer comments on the Project Summary.

One person suggested that those who write well may distort the meaning of proposals more than others, because they make the proposals sound more logical than they really are. Another said that the "selling" of Project Summaries to the Board had reached "baroque" proportions.

...they are not in any way frank enough. Reading through Project Summaries is an exquisite form of torture. There are, apparently, no doubts the researchers have in their minds. They are, apparently, successful. The probability of this project being a success are apparently high....One of the difficulties I have right now with Project Summaries is that we try to take out all of the risk. We try to take out those things that make the project worth doing.

Where a Programme Officer likes a proposal, yet it overlaps with the responsibilities of other Programmes or even of other Divisions, there is a tendency, on occasion, we were told, to "fudge" the implications of the research in the Project Summary. Although a couple of people told us they believed that changes or distortions in the nature of the Project Summary occur frequently, most people told us they believed it was still rare, and everyone expressed a desire to eliminate this tendency completely, where possible. A fact that is important to note in this connection, is that everyone agrees also that even when the Project Summary is changed for political purposes, this does not mean that the actual research design is changed, because the Project Summary is not the research. It is merely the device used to explain the research to the Centre.

As a rule, Project Summaries are not sent to researchers, unless major modifications are made to the Project Summary during review. The possibility thus exists that the understandings which the researchers and the Board have of the nature of the research, may differ. Most Programme Officers believe it is unnecessary to send the document to the researcher, because the Programme Officer and the researcher understand what the research is about. Some people also feel that researchers might take the Project Summary too seriously, as a guide for research and evaluation of the project. The Division expects good research to involve modification during implementation of the research, to meet changing circumstances. "People who are young and inexperienced in the research field will take the written word more seriously than it is intended," we were told, "and try to conform to it." If knowledge is power, however, IDRC retains the upper hand in its relations with researchers. Nowhere in most files is there any final document, other than the Project Summary, which brings together the collective understandings about the research, reached after months or even years of negotiation between researchers and Programme Officers. The Division retains the Project Summaries, and with exceptions, does not send them to the researcher. The only final and comprehensive summation of the proposal is thus usually unavailable to the researcher. The Memorandum of Grant Conditions summarizes the objectives of the research, but in a perfunctory and isolated manner.

While the majority of people within the Division accept and support the Division Management's concern for the written quality of Project Summaries, and report that they believe that this has had a positive effect on the Division's reputation within the Centre, we also found a widespread feeling that this perceived concern with style was on the verge of becoming dysfunctional. Many people feel that while some attention to style is definitely important, too much attention is now being paid to the "cosmetics"

of Project Summaries.

...the document is being mistaken for reality....Sure, one wants to correct things stylistically, but if it's a weak document because it's a weak project, then I think it should be presented that way.

Said another:

The tuning and polishing of the documents has a very heavy cost on the Division....We spend a lot of time writing these things, reacting to people's criticisms on editing, on fine nuances of wording, in reworking the structure of documents.... I think it is largely unnoticed and unappreciated. Insofar as good documents do have an effect, it can't help but help. But I think we've probably gone a little too far, a little too constipated, if you like.

Some people believe that rewriting a Project Summary over differences in style, not grammar, is a waste of valuable time by professional staff. There was a general desire for a less fastidious attention to style by those in Division Management involved in editing, whether senior or more junior personnel.

The Project Summary, then, is the administrative mechanism for the translation of a very non-uniform process (project development) into a product which meets the needs of a relatively more uniform bureaucratic environment. It is at the boundaries of the relationships between the Division and the Programme, and the Division and the rest of the Centre. As the contact between different points of the system, it is a natural area of tension. It is not unusual for such contact points to generate some conflict within complex professional organizations, and within the Division, the issue of editing is where the conflict is most visible.

### The Internal Review Meeting

...the researchers must pretty well do what they want to do. It is our job to give a professional opinion that what they want to do is viable, and will be somewhat useful, and can be done, and also to see that it is as strong as it possibly can be in the context of what is being done.

The Internal Review Meeting broadens the Programme and Division Management review of Project Summaries to to encompass a Division-wide peer review of projects headed for the Board of Governors. It is essentially the last stage of professional review of project proposals within the Division, and presents a substantially greater professional test of a project than do either the Centre-wide Project Committee Meeting or the Board of Governors Meetings.

When the current Division Director arrived in the Division in 1978, he perceived a lack of awareness among Programmes and staff about each others' work. Some say this was the result of the previous Director's directive style of management, which made the Director, rather than professional peers within the Division, the arbiter of daily decisions in all programmes. Because he wanted more sharing of information about projects, because he believed that projects were problem-centred, and that social scientists from different disciplines could make useful comments about each others' projects, he instituted the Internal Review Meetings, to assess project proposals destined to go to the Project Committee and the Board. The meetings are usually held shortly before the Project Committee Meetings. The Director believed that the meetings would provide an opportunity for professionals with diverse regional experience to make useful comments on proposals, and that the meetings could increase the sense of group identification in the Division among professionals.

The fact is that the meetings and the review by the Division, do not take place until so late in the project

development process, that most--although certainly not all--changes or contributions to proposals made at the Internal Review Meeting remain minor. As we have noted earlier, basic professional review in the Division takes place first at the individual level of the professional staff member developing the project, then at the Programme level, and only at the very end of the development process, at the Internal Review Meeting. In fact, the meetings represent something of a borderline between the end of project development and the beginnings of the formal Centre-approval process. Only in very serious cases will important changes in project development take place at this stage. For most projects, the IRM serves as merely a "dry run" for the formal process of presenting the project to the Project Committee and the Board.

In terms of the total appropriations of the Division, the Internal Review Meeting reviews projects worth roughly more than half of the Division's funds. In terms of the total projects the Division approves in a year, however, the IRM reviews a minority. Projects under the Board limit do not go before the IRM. Because of the meetings, however, the Director believes that there is no serious problem with the quality of any projects now going to the Board. Most people agree with him. The Director is the person who represents the Division to the Centre. He is not himself trained in the social sciences, and the meetings give him a chance to review the main professional issues, strengths and problems of projects before they go to the Centre. The meetings help to maintain his, and the Division's, credibility outside. As such, the IRM is partly, a mechanism therefore, for meeting the Director's needs. The meeting, then, is to a certain degree a product of the demands not of the Programme Officers' environment, because the researchers in the field basically don't care about Divisional procedures, but of the demands of the Director's working environment and his political task, defending the Division's interests, within the Centre. With his increased experience in the Division, however, this particular role of the IRM has become much more minor.

Most people agree that the IRM serves to improve the presentation of documents. One Programme Officer said the purpose was "...not the support of the researcher, but mutual support for the staff...an external political purpose in terms of presenting a solid front vis-a-vis the Board's criticisms." At least one Programme Officer believed that project documents were not substantially improved by the meetings, however, noting that projects under the Board limit were reviewed by the Unit and Division Management, producing equally good documents. Another disagreed, stating that Summaries in her Programme had been substantively changed at times, and thereby improved.

Clearly, detailed discussions of projects do occur at the IRM. Whatever the motive for these discussions, on the whole, projects receive a much more serious and informed review within the Division than they do at broader Centre meetings. This is not to say that there is agreement within the Division about how projects should be discussed, however, at the IRM. Because the Divisional norm assigns basic review responsibility for proposals to the Programme Officer initially and then to the Programme unit, unless the Programme Officer and the Programme unit are seen to have themselves abrogated the norm of serious professional review, the Division as a whole will accept their judgement on the basic merits of a project. As one Programme Officer observed:

...unless there are major problems of substance, the IRM is not the time to raise major questions of substance. It is, if you want to clarify or understand what they are doing. But don't expect that the person who wrote the Project Summary will all of a sudden change the whole thing, the whole idea, because you think it should be done in a different way.

This view was widely shared among professional staff. The coherence and logic of a Project Summary were open to review, said another, but methodology would be questioned only "where it is obviously erroneous". We have observed, however, many discussions in these meetings, where methods were discussed, if not seriously criticised, and where alternatives were explored. But while other aspects of the

proposal might be questioned, one aspect which most people would not get into is "the meaningfulness of the research in the context of the country. That," we were told, "we leave to the discretion of the Programme Officer."

Not everyone agrees with the norm or abides by it. Discussions sometimes become quite acrimonious. One person described the meetings, in November, 1981, as "a bearpit". The Deputy-Director observed: "Those meetings, of course, are like swarms of bees; they're always going to settle on something." The acrimony occurs when Programme Officers feel that their professional judgement and their autonomy in the project development process have been challenged, when criticism goes beyond questions of style, into basic issues of project merit. In fact, there is general, although not universal agreement, that questions asked in the meetings should be primarily to seek information, that questioners should accept the basic judgement of the Programme Officer responsible for presenting a project, unless they really mean that the project has fundamental flaws. There is general agreement again, that people should not lightly offer fundamental criticisms, that unless they have seriously considered the project, comments should be offered as constructive suggestions for consideration in the development of future proposals, or for the informal modification of a proposal after negotiation with a researcher, following project approval. This opinion is general, as we said, but not universal. One Associate Director commented,

It's quite obvious that some people have a different concept of the purpose of those meetings. My view is that they should take a really close review of whether a project should go through....I don't think it's being realized right now. The presumption by most participants now is that a project that is "rejected" is a black mark towards the unit....the assumption is not that you're going to drop the project altogether. You can have a very different emphasis coming out of it. You can go back to your researcher...and cut down the size, the focus.



Although two projects were reduced substantially in size during the 1981-82 fiscal year, overall, there is a feeling that there is not enough time for most people to read the documents submitted to the meeting in a serious manner. People are very critical of Programmes or individuals submitting Project Summaries for review on the morning of the meeting, or even at the beginning of the meeting. Even where documents are made available the evening before a meeting, most of the people we spoke to believed there was insufficient time to provide a serious review prior to the meetings. The result, we were told on several occasions, was that many comments made during the meetings display an ignorance of the details of the Project Summary. A number of people complained of the time wasted during the meetings answering questions based on only a superficial reading of the documents, a reading conducted in some cases while the meeting was under way. There is, on the whole, a realization that everyone cannot read all documents in detail. But this is accompanied by a feeling that unless a document has been carefully read, sweeping criticisms of objectives or methods should be avoided.

The organizational format for the meeting is credited for some of the unnecessary questions. There is a widespread belief that, because the Director goes around the table, asking for comments individually from professional staff, that this encourages people to make comments, even if they have nothing new or useful to say. There is a recognition that the format helps people who may be shy but have something worthwhile to contribute to the discussion, but on balance the great majority of people in the Division would be happier if the format were changed. Peer pressure, the need to be seen to say something, even if it is not new, and a perception that the Director is using the meetings to evaluate the performance of professional staff, both contribute to the glut of questions. Said one person:

I think it is unfortunate that they think they are being judged because then you get the comment, "I have read this project and I have some professional input to it."...That can become very destructive, rather than constructive. Comments may not contribute to the project at all.

A number of people said they believed that if they had nothing to say on a number of projects, it would hurt their reputation with their colleagues and with Division Management.

The Deputy-Director believes the meetings do result in some assessments, but that these are not lasting or long-term impressions. The Director says of the possibility that he uses the meetings to evaluate his staff:

I don't use them consciously for that, but I do think it does indicate the intellectual qualities of different people. I don't see it that way, basically, though.

Because the meetings do sometimes go into detail about project documents, it is widely felt to be unwise for Programme staff to take them lightly. Several people have noted that it is prudent to turn up in person to defend your Project Summaries, and sometimes to ensure that Project Summaries do not go forward in your absence, because changes may have to be made to the documents. If someone else has to make the changes, the documents, we were told, may be "mangled". Submitting documents late for review at meetings is also no guarantee that they will be passed without comment. Some of the most serious criticisms of projects we have observed, in fact, at the IRM, have been on documents submitted at the last minute. Because most people in the Division do take the IRM's seriously, even if their attention to any individual project submitted to the meetings may vary from intense to very superficial, there is not a chance that the Division as a whole will permit any individual who is perceived not to take the meeting seriously, to process projects without serious review.

Programme units are expected to refine project proposals internally before presenting them to the Division. Basic questions about the scope and methods of the study are expected to be handled by the Programme Officer or by the Programme unit prior to the IRM, and any project which displays signs of not having been thoroughly reviewed by the Programme will face serious examination. Furthermore, even where the professional review of the project is seen to be competently performed by the individual, it is expected also that the proposal will have been discussed within the Programme and serious disagreements worked out prior to the IRM. People find it annoying and somewhat embarrassing to witness serious disagreement by members of the same Programme unit over one of their own project presentations at the IRM.

Said one person:

So, that's a policy in our unit, that we circulate a Project Summary before it goes so there is no surprise or backstabbing by colleagues in (our) unit at the meeting. Generally we have resolved differences at that stage. If they have to be worked out still, they will be worked out. Give the opportunity to other units to express their views at the meeting. You assume there should be a priori consultation within the unit.

Said another: "...maybe you don't resolve issues, but you resolve not to disagree in public about them...."

And as with the potential "problem" projects on which there is often useful consultation with Division Management before a Project Summary is submitted to the Director for signature when below the Board limit, so too, it is politically wise for people with potentially controversial projects (unusual size, topic or methods) to seek informal support prior to the IRM, both with Division Management, and sometimes with other professionals, in other Programmes. Those Programmes which have the easiest passage through the IRM for potentially controversial projects, are those which observe Divisional norms of serious professional review prior to the meeting, informal consultation external to the Programme, and presenting a united front at the IRM. Those who challenge the system or treat it lightly, will find themselves challenged by the system.

The Internal Review Meetings provide two types of suggestions to Programme Officers. The first is on elements of grammar, style and presentation of the document itself, a function played by Division Management alone for smaller projects. Some of these suggestions are seen to be useful preparations for presentation of the documents to the Project Committee and the Board, but people believe a great deal of time could be saved by having these suggestions conveyed in writing, without much discussion at the meetings. The second type of suggestion made at the IRM deals with substantive issues. Short of a clear consensus of serious problems in a project, there is no clear guideline for which suggestions a Programme Officer should incorporate in a Project Summary when the meeting is finished. In the course of discussion of any one project, ten or twenty different suggestions, ranging from possible reorganization of paragraphs, to issues of definition, to methodological alternatives and occasionally major changes in project direction, will be proffered. There is rarely

any kind of summation of the discussion, reviewing the suggestions and deciding which should be incorporated by the Programme Officer. The conclusion is usually left ambiguous, and the decision regarding which changes to make, left to the individual Programme Officer.

"You have to use your own judgement," said one person.

Another said:

The first advice I got when I arrived here was, "Look... don't get defensive. Don't waste your time giving lengthy answers, because it doesn't make any difference. Just say, "Yes, thank you," you appreciate their comments. Then you go back to your office and select. If you want to incorporate all, you do. If you want none, fine.

In fact, there are people whose views are most commonly appreciated or monitored during the meetings. These are from the people who avoid both the very small stylistic comments, and the sweeping and sometimes superficial criticisms of the basic need for a project at all. Those whose questions are most respected tend to make suggestions indicating a basic organizational "savvy" about how to get the document to the Board, and those who offer innovative incremental suggestions on methods, or political advice on dealing with researchers or research "environments" in different regions. The most respected suggestions are those made in a clearly supportive and positive manner, one which gives evidence that the person making the suggestion accepts the basic validity of the proposal.

We have observed, however, that people also pay close attention to the reaction of Division Management, particularly the Director, to suggestions. Many people, in fact, look not at the person making comments about a project, but at the Director, apparently to judge his reactions to the suggestions. Most of the people we talked to confirmed that in fact, whatever the intrinsic merits of a question or suggestion, the Director's assessment of that merit will to a large extent determine whether the resulting suggestion is incorporated in a rewritten Project Summary. After the meetings people often come to talk to the Director or Deputy-Director to get their assessment of what comments should be incorporated in the revisions. In most cases, therefore, where suggestions are minor, or where the consensus of the meeting is clear, the Programme Officer can make the changes without seeking advice. The function of Division Management (the Director and Deputy-Director) appears to be to provide leadership in helping to

form a consensus among professional staff, or to determine what the implications of that consensus are for the rewriting of the Project Summary. They do not, as a rule, make major substantive suggestions on their own.

## CONCLUSIONS

By our observation, there appear to be four basic functions currently performed by the IRM:

- 1-To make editorial adjustments to the Project Summary.
- 2-To perform a serious professional review of the basic value and viability of a project proposal.
- 3-To clarify concepts, relationships and purposes as presented in the Project Summary, as a dry run for the Project Committee and Board of Governors meetings.
- 4-To serve as a forum for information exchange between Programmes both about individual projects, and the general programme directions these projects represent.

Complications arise when there is a lack of clarity about which of these four functions is being addressed when a question is asked or a suggestion made, during the IRM. If someone asks a question about the methods, objectives or assumed relationships between variables in a project, they may be asking because, as professionals, they have serious reservations about the project, and would not want the Project Summary to go forward without serious modification, probably involving renegotiation with the researcher, (making a case-study into a survey design for example, or seriously modifying the scope of a project). The same question, however, might be asked not because the questioner has any fundamental doubts about a project, but because he or she wants to clarify ambiguous terms or concepts in the Project Summary, anticipating questions which may be raised at the Project Committee or Board meetings. Or, the question might simply reflect a desire to learn from the work of colleagues, about different approaches to research problems, to add information or exchange lessons learned from comparable experiences. In this case, no real change may be intended for the Project Summary.

Perceptions of the motivation or intention behind a question or comment will affect the length and strength of replies and discussion. A question or comment intended to elicit information to satisfy professional curiosity, may be treated as a serious challenge to a proposal, eliciting lengthy or heated responses by Programme Officers defending the proposal. If the motivation were clear, the response might be short, or left until the end of the meeting, to permit fuller discussion of more serious challenges to the project. If the question or comment is meant to serve as a dry run for the Project Committee or Board meetings, then discussion could centre on suggestions for rewording, rather than on the basic merits or viability of the project.

The general agreement within the Division is that questions or comments designed to serve function number 1, to make editorial adjustments to the Project Summary, would best be left until after the IRM, because they waste valuable time which could be spent on bigger issues.

Clarification by the questioner of the motivation or intention of the comment or question would probably reduce tensions within the meetings and make them more productive. The ambiguity at the end of the questions and comments about a project may have a positive value however. We are tempted to say that those who make suggestions should at the end summarize what they expect to be done with them. But the existing ambiguity at the end of the process does leave the individual Programme Officer with a much needed flexibility. It allows them to incorporate what is really useful, without being tied into changes which might hurt the proposal. And any really serious criticisms are recognized within the Division by the evolution of consensus during the meetings, and by the mediating influence of the Director and Deputy-Director after the meetings.

There is a real need, however, for some change in the format of the meetings. The meetings take up a significant amount of Division time, perhaps 130-140 professional working hours a year, if preparation and meeting time are considered. Anything which will help to focus discussion will help make this use of time more productive. If the meetings are really intended to serve a purpose of serious review of projects, then Project Summaries should be submitted far enough in

advance for people to have a chance to read them before the meeting, preferably two or three days before the meetings. It would probably be dysfunctional to set a rigid deadline for the submission, because this would add just one more bureaucratic barrier to the processing of projects. But if the Division does believe, as it appears to, that the IRM does serve a useful purpose, then there should be a commitment to providing documents on time. Those who continue to miss informal deadlines for the submission of documents can expect, of course, to face the criticism of their peers during the meeting, a criticism which can sometimes delay project approvals.

The Division might also consider dropping the process of soliciting comments in turn from everyone around the table. People feel obliged to make comments, often on projects about which they know little, and have less interest. It might be useful to consider having one or two people responsible for the main analysis of a Project Summary, focussing discussion and clarifying the motivations for suggestions. Others could then be invited to make comments if they felt like it, but without pressure. This approach would allow people to concentrate their reading and analysis on projects of real interest to them, thus making better use of existing reading time, and would save time during the meetings. The use of "principal' readers" might lead to shorter, clearer discussions.

While there are one or two people who have expressed doubts about the Internal Review Meetings, the vast majority of professional staff see them as essential to the functioning of the Division. While one person has suggested they be terminated completely, many others have suggested that the number might usefully be increased, to reduce the workload at any individual meeting. There is a general consensus that the meetings are held too close to the Project Committee meeting to make changes possible, and that there are usually too many projects presented at each meeting. The double meetings held in January and February of 1982 were viewed by many people as very useful, and some variation of this procedure is suggested for future meetings--dealing with projects as a sufficient number are ready for review, perhaps. The meetings do provide a useful point of contact between professionals in the Division, in our opinion, and serve to strengthen both the professional credibility of the Division's work, and the cohesiveness of the Division as a functioning organizational system.

### Project Development Schedules

In the course of preparation for interviews, we reviewed a number of projects, both those which were in the "pipeline" or "idea" stage, and those which had gone through the complete cycle of project screening, elaboration and approval within the Division. Some of the projects we reviewed did not get to the stage of approval. But 26 projects did get to that stage in FY 1981-82 (that is, to Divisional approval, or signature of the Project Summary by the Division Director). We have attempted, on the basis of analysis of these 26 projects, to determine how long it takes to move a proposal through the Division, and on to first payment to the researcher. The 26 projects were described to us as being, on the whole, representative of many other projects the Division processed during the year, but of course we can make no claim that they are statistically representative of the Division's projects. At best the figures we present here can be taken only as rough estimates of processing time.

We were interested in the total time it takes to go through project development, from initial submission of a proposal, to Divisional approval, to the sending out of a Memorandum of Grant Conditions by the Secretary's Office, to receipt of the signed Memorandum, and, finally, the mailing of the first payment to the researchers by the CGT. This is what we found:

- A) Time from initial proposal to first payment--16.5 months (minimum - this was calculated on 14 projects which had made it to first payment and 12 others which had made Divisional approval and for which we assigned a very conservative estimate of first payment by April 30, 1982. The average for real completion including these 12 would probably be higher).
- B) Time from receipt of initial proposal within the Division, to Division approval--11 months (based on 26 projects which had reached this stage).
- C) Time from Division approval to the sending of the MGC--2.6 months (based on 24 projects having made it to this stage).
- D) Time from the sending of the MGC to the researcher, until its signed return to the Centre--1.4 months (based on 19 projects).
- E) Time from receipt of the signed MGC until first payment sent--1.2 months (based on 15 projects making it to this stage).



Six of the 26 projects we reviewed were for amounts over \$100,000. At 23% of the projects we analysed, this was very close to the Divisional average which was 24.5%. Calculation of averages based on six projects could be very misleading, but with this caveat, the schedules for the larger projects were:

- A) From initial proposal to first payment--21.75 months (16.5 for all projects).
- B) From receipt of proposal to Division approval--15.5 months (11 months).
- C) From Division approval to sending of the MGC--3.4 months (2.6 months).
- D) From sending of the MGC until its signed receipt--1.5 months (1.4 months).
- E) From MGC receipt until first payment--1.1 months (1.2 months).

These figures were affected by the presence of one project which was 46 months in development. If it were removed, the average for the remaining five projects for the length of time from receipt of the initial proposal until first payment would be 16.9 months, just slightly above the average for all 26 projects. The additional processing time for the larger projects is primarily accounted for in development time within the Division, not outside processing, although an extra month was needed at stage C--getting the MGC sent out. This can be accounted for by the extra time needed for review by the Projects Committee and the Board.

The major delays in processing within the Division appear to be due to changes negotiated between the Programme and the researcher, mail delays during this process of project elaboration, the need for more detailed budget information than first acquired by Programme Officers, and clearance procedures. Not all clearance delays are found at the period of sending the MGC's out for signature. Because of previous problems, some Programme Officers will not bring a Project Summary to the Division until the researcher has obtained clearance from the relevant government agency. We have also come across at least three projects which were delayed in processing for several months because the responsible Programme staff were travelling and unable to write the Project Summary or to handle other administrative problems which arose in project development. As long as the relationship between researchers and Programme staff remains as personal as it is now, and as long as extensive travel is required, there will continue to be some delays caused by travel.

Part of the delay from the approval by the Division of a project and the mailing of the MGC can be accounted for by delays in obtaining clearance from government agencies, a responsibility of the researcher. In some cases, Programme Officers apparently forgot to tell the researchers to obtain government clearance, or to send in the official letter of request, earlier in the project development process, and the Regional Office or the Secretary's Office had to wait for this to arrive, before sending the MGC. One project faced a delay of two months when a clearance letter sent in early in the project development process was misfiled by the Regional Office, and the Programme Officer, who was travelling, was unaware of the problem.

There is also a feeling among some people that the staff in the Secretary's Office is overworked. As one Programme Officer said, of the relations between the Division and the Secretary's Office:

I think we often believe that they can act quicker than they can. We may make unreasonable assumptions. We work like crazy to meet some deadline and our deadline is to get it to the Secretary's Office. They then have a second set of pressures. I'm not for a second suggesting that they are inefficient, but they have their own problems.

Several people have mentioned to us that they believe translation of the MGC prior to sending it, is a factor in delays, and there is a great deal of confusion within the Division about who makes the decision to translate the documents, and on the basis of what criteria. There is a feeling that most researchers can speak reasonably good English or French, and would prefer to get the MGC quickly rather than waiting for it to be translated into Spanish. Some people have also expressed the view that sending the MGC through a Regional Office in phase A or B may slow down the process.

The mail strike which occurred during the 1981-82 fiscal year may have lengthened the time it took researchers to sign the MGC and return it, but at an average of roughly six weeks, it is difficult to know how this could be speeded up much.

## ECONOMICS AND RURAL MODERNIZATION PROGRAMME

I think people see a lot of tensions within this Programme, partly style and partly substance.

### Overview

In 1981-82 the Economics and Rural Modernization Programme was an organizational system in disarray. Its individual components operated reasonably well on their own, but did not form a cohesive group. The Programme now functions to a large extent as two autonomous areas of work, each with its own separate set of research priorities and style of work.

### External Perceptions of the Programme

There are no illusions within the Economics Programme about the image it presents to the rest of the Division. Both the Associate Director and the Programme Officer believe that the Programme is perceived as having serious organizational problems, and, in this belief, they are right. External perceptions of poor interpersonal communication between the Programme's professional staff, disorganized decision making and administration, and, in some cases, unfocussed, or at least unclear criteria for project development, have resulted in the Programme being described as "probably the most incohesive unit" in the Division. Staff from other Programmes note with considerable surprise, and some concern, the apparent failure of the Economics staff to iron out their differences over Economics Project Summaries before presenting them to the Internal Review Meetings. As one outsider to the Programme commented, "they act as though they have never met before." As individuals, the professional competencies of the Programme staff are not disputed. However, as one person expressed the problem, while as individuals, each obviously has strengths, as a Programme unit, it is harder to see many.

In addition to the concern about the lack of effective communication within the Economics and Rural Modernization Programme, there are also differences of opinion expressed within the Division over the nature of the Programme itself. Chiefly, these involve the relative merits of the two sub-disciplinary areas into which the Programme has become divided, and the idea that the Programme as a whole might be expected to play a role of leadership in the Division.

Although the Programme Officer responsible for the macroeconomics projects believes there are some doubts in the Division about the utility of his projects, opinion is in fact divided on the topic. Several people said they felt uncomfortable with macroeconomics as part of the Division's work. One considered the field to be perhaps inappropriate for IDRC at all. But, given the fact that the Division had decided to go into the macro area, the projects which have been presented are seen as being professionally sound studies. Some people, in fact, see the macro studies as the most interesting part of the Programme's work, deserving increased support. Opinions on the relative merits of the micro and macroeconomics projects were evenly split in the Division.

There are different perceptions within the Division about the role the Economics and Rural Modernization Programme should play in the Division as a whole, perceptions which have served, perhaps, to give the internal problems confronting the Programme, a somewhat higher profile than they might otherwise have had. The Division Director believes that the Programme should be the natural leader in the Division, because economics as a discipline provides a common thread to the analysis of many development activities. Not everyone shares this view. While there is a general recognition, particularly in the Population and Science and Technology Policy Programmes, that economic methods of analysis are an important component to the study of many problems in their areas, many people do not believe that this means that the Economics Programme as a Programme, should be the natural leader in the Division.

#### Communication and Consultation

Morale in the Economics and Rural Modernization Programme has been very low for some time. Two Programme Officers operated without a full time Associate Director during a period described as "very stressful", by one person. Even after the arrival of a new Associate Director, morale did not noticeably improve, according to members of the Programme. In particular, there have been hard feelings over the transfer of one staff member to a Regional Office. Internal relations between the two Programme Officers and the Associate Director were at best uneasy, exacerbated by personality clashes among all three, and differing perceptions about the direction for Programme operations, as well as about personal styles of operation and interaction with researchers.

The striking thing about the Programme is that there is remarkably little communication between its members, about project development. The outside perception that Programme staff do not discuss the relative merits of their projects prior to presentation to the Division as a whole, is substantially correct. The Programme staff meet as a unit infrequently and tend not to discuss the projects in any detail. The lack of prior discussion of the projects before they go to the Division is reflected not just in the occasional problem this causes when a project under the Board limit goes to the Director for signature, but more obviously in the Programme's visible disunity at the Internal Review Meetings. Even on a one-to-one basis, discussion of projects in the Programme has been perfunctory. Programme staff have not felt constrained to get the approval of colleagues before presenting a Project Summary to the Internal Review Meeting, and even where colleagues raise serious or fundamental criticisms of the projects, differences of opinion frequently remain unresolved before the project is presented to the Division.

Many people in the Division have commented critically on this, and the Programme is widely regarded, for its performance at the IRM, as disorganized and fragmented. The disorganization does not appear to cause serious problems for the Programme in its relations with other professional staff, because although it has abrogated a Divisional norm that projects should be reviewed at the Programme level before being presented to the Division, the basic quality of the projects themselves, is not in question. Programme staff are perceived to have performed on an individual basis, a careful review of their own proposals prior to writing the Project Summaries, so no additional work by the rest of the Division is required.

The Programme's Associate Director acknowledges and defends the fact that internal differences regarding the Programme's projects are not worked out prior to the Internal Review Meetings.

It's deliberate on my part. The whole point of having an internal Division meeting, it seems to me, is to provide professional social science input. If you're really trying to be helpful and give your views, then you shouldn't try to seal yourself off as a unit.

The Associate Director said he would be surprised if in other Programme units all Programme Officers knew exactly what was going into

others' projects. "To me, a show of apparent knowledge and information, that's not what it's about."

Group meetings in the Programme, when it included three or three and one-half professional staff, tended to deal more with scheduling questions, or the queuing of projects for approval, rather than with objectives, methods, or the phrasing of Project Summaries. The Associate Director has taken major responsibility for the microeconomics side of the Programme. Since January, however, Economics has had a Programme Officer in Bogota. From the Programme Officer's position, some tension has developed because of his concern that, in order to be effective, he needs more autonomy in the development of projects. In general, however, since there have been only two full time staff members in Ottawa, decision making on projects has become primarily, and in some cases exclusively, the domain of the individual. In all Division Programmes it seems quite clear that the individual Programme Officer is the most important unit of decision making, but the Programmes do nonetheless play an important review role in the process. In Economics and Rural Modernization however, the essential review function of the Programme unit, has, for the time being, been allowed to lapse. This has been partly a reflection of the fact that the Programme has a small staff, with often overlapping travel schedules (and the highest rate of travel in the Division), which impedes communication. But other Programmes with small staff and overlapping travel have managed a much more collegial approach to decision making. In the final analysis, therefore, the rather individual, isolated approach to project development found in the Economics Programme, seems to be a reflection of personality clashes, divergent professional interests, and a deliberate managerial philosophy espoused by the Associate Director. He has pointed out that a commitment to decentralization, or at least to a wider use of Regional staff, tends to make the achievement of a unified Programme direction, difficult to achieve.

#### The Autonomy of Macroeconomics

Whatever their differences of opinion in terms of style of operation and the direction of the Programme, there was a

feeling in the Programme, between the Associate Director and the macroeconomics Programme Officer, until early April, that they had a modus vivendi about the overall operations of the Programme. Specifically, both believed that the macroeconomics component of the Programme should be autonomous. Both quite clearly preferred that the macroeconomics component be viewed as a formal sub-Programme, similar to the position of the Urban sub-Programme in the Population Programme.

When the Associate Director arrived in Ottawa, it was his perception that the Programme was predominantly macroeconomic in nature, and that, as a result, the rural development component of the Programme was being downgraded. A major goal of his has been to reverse this situation, and he now feels, that, with macroeconomics limited to 30% of the Programme budget, a more equitable balance is easier to maintain. Pipeline projects are now beginning to reveal this new emphasis on microeconomic and rural modernization projects.

Perhaps indicative of the differences of perception within the Programme, the Programme Officer does not share this view of the history of the macroeconomics component of the Programme. He feels that, prior to the current Division Director, economics in general was held in fairly low repute in the Division, and that, although there are now growing numbers of macroeconomics projects in the pipeline, such projects have never been a dominant factor in the Programme. He sees the need, in fact, to build up this area of research, as one inadequately addressed in the past--research on economic policy and structural change.

Although the Associate Director does not feel comfortable with macroeconomics as a component of the Programme, and is not himself convinced that macroeconomic projects really match the Centre's mandate, he feels he has no power to reduce the money going to the macroeconomics projects, largely because of the Division Director's commitment to that component of the Programme. The best solution, he feels, is to explicitly recognize the macro component as having a separate

and independent base of support in the Division, and to give it autonomy, both in terms of the nature of the projects developed and the operational style of the Programme Officer. He views his acceptance of this autonomy as simply a recognition of reality. The Programme Officer, for his part, welcomes this autonomy, and shares the belief that macroeconomics should have independent status within the Division. Both see this as a means of living with their personal and professional differences, and the Associate Director hopes that by FY 1985-86, macroeconomics may be its own Programme, with its own Associate Director.

This view of autonomy for macroeconomics was not shared by Division Management. Although viewing the existence of macroeconomics itself as a nonnegotiable part of the Economics and Rural Modernization Programme, Division Management, until early April, 1982, was entertaining no notions at all of separate Programme or sub-Programme status for it. The Director, when interviewed, was in fact unaware of the growing consensus within the Programme, about autonomy for macroeconomics.

It was the Division Director's opinion that the Associate Director of the Programme should exert more control over the Programme unit. The Associate Director, however, feels that this is unworkable, given the existing structure of the Programme. In particular, the Director has been concerned that the Associate Director see and approve macroeconomic Project Summaries before they are presented for signature. Neither the Associate Director nor the Programme Officer is happy about this. As the Associate Director said on this issue:

I can see why he's asking at times, and I'm willing to look at (them), but it's a difficult time to enter the battle or fray....I see this as a professional unit....The only way we can even start to cope with the workload is if, indeed, we by and large run most things autonomously.

The autonomy of the macroeconomics component as it has been operating recently, is in fact fairly clearly evident in the nature of projects being developed. While the Associate Director has disagreed with the regional and substantive focus



of some projects, with the use of consultants, and the substantial degree of participation of the Programme Officer in the preparation of proposals, for example, projects characteristic of the Programme Officer's particular style of operation have nonetheless proceeded and been approved by the Division. In preparing the 1982-83 Programme of Work and Budget, the Programme Officer had sole control, within the Programme, over the macroeconomics component. The role he played, therefore, is consistent with the job description of Senior Programme Officers: "specific responsibility for conceptualizing, developing and monitoring the implementation of particular segments of the programme as defined on a topical or geographical basis." With the proposed promotion of the Programme Officer to Senior Programme Officer status, the autonomy of macroeconomics is likely to take another step forward, given this tacit, if inadvertent recognition and encouragement of the informal operational autonomy of that Programme.

Following the circulation of a preliminary draft of this report in early May, 1982, it appeared that the working agreement between the Associate Director and the Programme Officer might be collapsing, and Division Management was considering new organizational arrangements for the Programme. This situation remained unresolved while the final report of this study was being prepared.

#### Administration

The Economics and Rural Modernization Programme has faced problems with internal administration. The Associate Director, who, by his own assessment, is not a good administrator, is concerned primarily with professional issues, sometimes at the cost of organizing responses to project proposals. The result of this has been a situation described as "a potentially serious problem" in project development and staff recruitment.

Because of the lack of a full time Associate Director for the Programme prior to January 1981, the Division Director became involved in Programme management, an involvement that has not yet ended. When, in March, administrative problems became particularly evident, Division Management decided that short term administrative intervention was required (recruiting short term help) and that, in the long run, a new professional

staff member soon to be recruited, should have a strong administrative background. The Associate Director did not object to receiving administrative help, and when we talked to him shortly after this decision had been made, he appeared visibly relieved to have this assistance. Nor did he object to the addition, by Division Management, of "administrative ability" to the criteria for selection of a new professional staff member for the Programme.

A second issue in staff selection, however, has caused him more concern. It is clear that the professional interests of individual Programme staff members have a major influence on the types of projects developed, and therefore on the nature of Programme work. The selection of staff is therefore an important, if not the important lever for influencing the direction of a Programme. In Economics, given the split between the rural development and macroeconomics elements of the Programme, choice of a new staff member became extremely important in determining not just the substantive direction of the Programme, but the operational style, as well. In February, 1982, the Associate Director expressed his firm intention to consolidate and expand the position of the rural development component of the Programme, by recruiting someone who shared his interests and expertise in this field. Division Management in March considered stating that the new staff member should clearly not fall into either of the two substantive areas of the Programme, that whoever was recruited not tip the balance between the two.

This issue remained unresolved at the end of data collection for this study, in early April, but Division Management's involvement in the process has implications in two areas. First, it implies a limitation on the control available to an Associate Director for determining the direction of the Programme. Second, that Management is concerned that the new staff member be independent of the two Programme areas, suggests again a tacit recognition of the relative equality of the two groups, and supports the operational autonomy of the macroeconomics component of the Programme.

### Project Size

The size of projects is a factor in decision making in the Programme. Priorities, reflected in the categories in the Programme of Work and Budget, are, as in other Programmes, derived from a combination of professional staff

interest, pipeline projects and feedback from researchers about what is important. In the rural development portion of the Programme of Work and Budget, the Associate Director has included a category for "other rural studies" as a catch-all for interesting proposals which do not fall within the categories listed in the Programme of Work. It is also a place where projects with some flaws but with capacity building potential, can be placed. The Associate Director, in judging the acceptability of these projects, carefully considers the size, and he will be unlikely to take forward a capacity building project with research flaws, if it is large enough to have to go to the Board.

My judgement is that I don't think that the researchers can do the kind of research they're proposing and get substantive results. However....it might be very useful to have that group undertake some research of that kind of nature, primarily as a learning process.... I was willing to entertain it as a project that would not go to the Board, and therefore I could put it more into the category of capacity building....It means that the language in the Project Summary does not have to be ambitious.

He will consider a weak project, if it has capacity building potential, but only if it does not have to go to the Board and thus to the Projects Committee. Rural development projects could be seen as infringing on the territory of the powerful AFNS Division. Experimental, or easily criticized projects can thus more safely be processed when approval stays at the Divisional level.

One common perception about projects from the Economics and Rural Modernization Programme, is that they tend to be large. Macroeconomic projects are usually cited as the largest. An analysis of the Programme's project appropriations confirms that the average size of the Programme's projects, including the Co-operative Programme project in Tunisia, in FY 1981-82, was the highest in the Division, at \$89,940. This was roughly 22% higher than the average for other Programmes. Almost 60% of the Programmes's appropriations in 1981-82 were accounted for by projects priced at over \$100,000, the highest level for such projects in the Division. The Programme also had the greatest per centage of its new, individual projects (28.6%) in the over-\$100,000 category, compared to other Programmes. The common perception in the Division is that macroeconomic projects, because of their large scale and expensive salaries, are the most expensive.

The average size of the six projects brought forward in 1981-82 by the macroeconomics Programme Officer was \$132,714, 47% more than the average for the Programme as a whole, and 62% above the Divisional average.

The size of the macroeconomics projects is to a certain extent a reflection of the cost of proposals submitted in this field. But it is also a direct result of the chosen style of operation of the Programme Officer. On two occasions, in projects approved during the 1981-82 year, he played a major role in substantially increasing the size of project proposals, in one case doubling the budget of a project, and in another, quadrupling it. This factor, and the use of consultants in some of his projects, has been a topic of some dispute between the Programme Officer and the Associate Director. The Programme Officer sees a strong role for outside consultants, and for himself, in guiding project development and project implementation. He believes that Programme Officers, because of their access to information and expertise, can help particularly the weaker researchers to improve the results of their work. His high degree of involvement reflects as well, however, his perception that macroeconomics research continues to be viewed by the Board as a "risky" area, and that it is therefore important that the professional quality of the projects and project documents be high. "I tend to believe a bit more in professional intervention during the projects," he told us; and his role in forming project proposals and providing advice appears to us to be one of the most active in the Division.

The Associate Director is concerned about the use of consultants in projects, particularly when the consultants are expatriate westerners, and when their participation is at the initiative of the Programme Officer. Consultants have also appeared in mon-macro projects, developed prior to the arrival of the Associate Director in the Programme. He hopes that by directing some macroeconomics projects into the Co-operative Programme, it can be made clear to western participants that they are not consultants, but participants. Overall, however, he favours the reduction of the number of consultants used in projects, and the degree of involvement of Programme staff in implementing projects.

It would not necessarily be true, to draw, from the fact of the large size of macroeconomics projects, the inference that this results in less work for the Programme Officer. The macroeconomics projects which were increased in size by the Programme Officer involved also a substantial degree of his professional involvement, and thus of his time.

The Economics Programme staff in Ottawa in FY 1981-82 engaged in more travel than staff in any other Programme. The unit average for travel was 29% of available time, considerably above the Divisional average of 21%. Two officers travelled more than 100 days. Within the Programme itself, travel was very evenly spread, with a range for the three staff members present for most of the year, of 28-30% of available time. This reflects, perhaps, the high degree of interaction between Programme Officers and researchers which is seen to be desirable in the Programme. As a Programme, Economics and Rural Modernization does not manifest its tendencies for leadership in overt policy activities, such as the writing of papers for donor groups, or in active professional development activities, such as publishing, as do some other Programmes. The leadership role of the Programme Officers is instead most clearly demonstrated in the didactic or educative relationship between the professional staff and researchers, particularly in the macroeconomics projects.

#### Regional Focus

The Programme's projects in FY 1981-82 were fairly evenly distributed between Asia and the Latin America-Caribbean area, with African projects also at a fairly healthy level. In fact, if the Co-operative Programme grant to Tunisia is included, the Programme's expenditures in Africa, as a per centage of total Programme appropriations, are the highest in the Division. The relative balance between the Asian and Latin American projects and the position of African projects, is maintained if we consider the number of individual projects brought forward for Divisional approval in 1981-82. The Programme had no appropriations for the Middle East in 1981-82, and the

Associate Director says that the area is currently a low priority for the Programme. The current relative balance between the regions, represents a change from 1979-80 when Africa dominated the Programme, and 1980-81 when Asia was dominant.

Although the balance between Asia and Latin America in terms of project approvals was surprisingly even, in terms of travel time, Latin America was far behind both Asia and Africa. This can in part be explained by the need to monitor existing projects in Asia, but travel also generates projects, and it is clear that from the amount of travel to Asia by Ottawa staff, plus the active role in Economics played by one of the Asia Regional Programme Officers, that Asia will remain a leading area of new project development for the Programme. It is important to note, however, that Economics also had part of the travel time of one Population staff member, and this was predominantly in Latin America. The Programme has also exhibited its commitment to increasing Latin American projects by the appointment of a new Regional Programme Officer to Bogota, and in the Associate Director's preference for a new Ottawa staff member with Latin American interests.

The 23% of travel time devoted by the Programme to Africa, combined with the presence in Nairobi of a Regional Programme Officer with strong interests in the Economics Programme, should help to maintain the relatively high level of African projects for the Programme. With Regional Programme Officers of its own in Asia and Latin America, and with an economist in Nairobi, the Economics and Rural Modernization Programme, whatever its other problems may be, appears to have the strongest regional representation in the Division, and this is consistent with the Associate Director's preference for decentralization of the Programme.

## EDUCATION PROGRAMME

They can sniff out a possible source of funding, and how to get it, at 500 yards. By the time you've blinked your eyes, they've gotten it.

### Overview

The Education Programme in 1981-82 was a collegial, cohesive unit, stressing group decision making, and a fairly open funding agenda. Their Programme was diverse, and their projects smaller than the average. The Programme was successful in obtaining approval for projects with unorthodox objectives or methods, in part because of its attention to administrative detail, and its observance of the most important Divisional norms. The very cohesiveness of the group meant, however, that people outside the Programme in Ottawa had an observably diminished influence upon the mode of operation in the Programme, and on the general direction of its programme of work.

### External Perceptions of the Programme

The Education Programme is perceived by the Division to work in a field without a strong academic or disciplinary base, and without a strong research community, but within a well developed professional network. As a field, educational research is perceived to have problems with the quality of its training, the tightness of research methods and the applicability of research outcomes. As a Programme, serious criticisms of the Education unit are rare, but do occur:

It seems to me that what they do is always the same kind of thing. You wonder, well, "So what?"...How is it going to help solve any problems? Sure, the problems of education are of a qualitative nature but it's mainly a question of not enough resources to do it. All of this fancy research, I wonder where it leads?

Other criticisms of the Programme reflect the concern that the research funded tends to be too theoretical, by the general standards of the Division, without enough practical or policy relevance. This view seems to represent a minority opinion, however. Most people believe the Programme's projects do serve a useful purpose.

On the whole, most people in the Division believe that the nature of the educational research field requires an eclectic approach by the Programme, and that this is what is being provided. The field is viewed as a difficult one with which to come to grips in a substantive sense, because of its weak disciplinary, but strong professional and bureaucratic base. Because it is what some people refer to as a "loose" social science, it is seen as appropriate that capacity building, one of the advertised purposes of the Education Programme, should be stressed. The Programme is seen as being open to a variety of different approaches to research and research capacity building. Programme staff are viewed as imaginative and more responsive to new research topics than most other parts of the Division.

The Education Programme is also seen as very collegial and internally decentralized in its decision making, and, albeit in a subtle and unobvious way, as being very well organized. One person described them as, "collegial, democratic, communal....definitely a sharing of the load, sharing of ideas, and being very good friends." The collegial and nonhierarchical organization of the Programme does bring varied responses, but almost all have a positive flavour. One person expressed surprise that the unit continued to function at all given its uncentralized management structure. An Associate Director commented,

I think it's incredible what they do, given that (the Associate Director) is away, (incredible) in a good sense. They seem to be very much on top of what they're doing....I have less experience in that area than others, and therefore it's hard for me to judge. But it seems to me that they have: 1-a functioning Programme; 2-one that's well appreciated in the wider field....

This view was shared by others:

A very good unit. They think things through. They're on top of their subject. They're not subject to... interference and I think that's basically because they're under the protective arm of (the Deputy-Director), who understands what they're doing and lets them get on with it. The people are very good, and they do some exciting things.

The Programme is viewed, for the most part, then, as comprised of professionally competent people, with a good array of professional skills and approaches, handling a very diverse Programme. They are also seen as occasionally working a bit too fast on new ideas, failing to allow sufficient germination time.



Programme Administration-the Culture of the Unit

Education Programme staff on the whole seemed aware that their Divisional image was good, that they are perceived as risk takers dealing with researchers who are sometimes less proficient than those found in Economics or Population; as in general, supportive of "soft" methods; and as being occasionally grasping in their search for money. They see themselves as collegial, friends on a social level, and generally free of competition or defensiveness interpersonally, within the Programme.

Whether as a cause, or as an effect of this, the Education Programme is most obviously characterized by its "team-effort" approach to work, especially in evidence in the frequency of its informal group meetings. In a four month period, we personally observed eight such meetings, and were aware of two or three others. In large measure, it seems to us, that it is through these meetings that the particular community of minds or interests evident in the Programme has been established. Through discussion and sharing of work at these meetings, there has quite clearly developed within the Programme an understanding of and tolerance for different approaches to problem solving and workstyles, as well as a fairly consistent approach to the development of project proposals. Agendas for the meetings are largely informal, a matter of what the co-ordinating Programme Officer has collected during the preceding week or two. Discussion in the meetings is informal and highly interactive. Topics are not overtly ordered in terms of any visible set of priorities, although these may well exist in the mind of the co-ordinator. The most important purpose of the meetings appears to be the mutually-informed development of project proposals. As one Programme staff member said:

We want very much that the projects are projects as a result of a development process that the group is involved in. One person takes the lead, and another person makes the argument and not everyone is always satisfied, but at least one finally agrees to go ahead with that project.

Discussions involve the exchange of "regional intelligence", updates on the status of pipeline files and individual applicants for awards, or on new initiatives of the Programme--attempts, for example, to get research reports published. The meetings involve a sharing of the workloads through a circulation of reports and Project Summaries

for Programme review, negotiation on project proposals, and discussion of Centre or Division initiated activities. Finally, these meetings involve quite specific policy development activities--explicit suggestions for new areas of Programme focus, or incremental decisions on Programme focus through decisions to support or reject proposals in new substantive or regional areas.

There seem to be several advantages accruing to the Programme as a result of these meetings, despite the obvious time they take. In part at least, the meetings facilitate the movement of the Programme into new directions of work. Detailed discussion and sometimes criticisms of project proposals are not left until a Programme Officer has taken too many steps to make adjustment possible. Consultation on projects is thus a real, rather than a pro forma event, something which has contributed, perhaps, to the success the Programme has had in getting its projects approved.

Discussions tend to build incrementally, sometimes over several meetings, into a common understanding about issues. This has made it more possible for policy to be developed and plans to be adapted fairly responsively to the field. The recent move into an explicit focus on women's action research issues was perhaps a good example of this process. Another, suggested by one of the Programme Officers, has been the ability of the Programme to develop, relatively quickly, alternative funding mechanisms for support of researchers.

The meetings also help to ensure that messages about Programme Direction coming from different staff members either to researchers in the field, or to the Division, are fairly consistent. It does not seem so much to be a case of everyone thinking alike, but rather of members of the Programme knowing generally how their colleagues will react to certain issues. The meetings serve too, to ensure the transmission of information through the Programme itself. Although it does happen that new pieces of data, new initiatives within the Centre or new procedures are not made available to all Programme staff, in general this problem seems to be rare, and the "awareness gap" among Programme staff is small.

The frequency of meetings has also appeared to make it easier and more effective for staff to act for Programme members who are travelling. Advance notice about travel schedules, about upcoming project activities or about various Programme issues has meant that the work of absent

staff has not had to be left pending. It seems also to have mitigated against any feeling of fellow staff having work unfairly "dumped" upon them-a problem that was raised elsewhere in the Division.

Despite the generally positive rating the Education Programme receives from both within and without, there are some problems apparent. The Programme has still not come to terms with evaluation. Programme staff feel that they have not managed to turn their attention to systematic self-analysis of what the Programme is doing and where it is going. Nor are project evaluations being handled effectively. Project Completion Reports have not been done. And while there is a feeling within the Programme that a more detailed assessment of project implementation and the relation of projects to policy should be undertaken, so far no action in that direction has been initiated.

Because much of the information exchanged at the Programme's meetings is mentally registered, and because there are delays in getting the latest information on paper in the files, it occasionally occurs that colleagues who go to the files for information when someone is travelling, sometimes act on information that is out-of-date. Programme staff also feel that a related problem is the lack of a systematic procedure for tracing documents through the Centre's administrative system, recognizing and rectifying blockages as they occur.

The informal, incremental and group nature of administration and decision making in the Programme bring strengths to those who participate but it also highlights the isolation from the main streams of thought within the Programme, of those people who are away from it for extended periods of time. This has been the case most visibly with the Associate Director, who is on sabbatical, and with some Regional Programme Officers. The Associate Director's role had been described as one of "intellectual leadership" in the Programme while he was present on a regular basis, and administrative activities were often performed by other members of the Programme. His strength was seen as his ability to mobilize his staff for activities in new areas, a strength that worked well when he was part of the Programme community in Ottawa, where the link between new initiatives and the mundane details of implementation could be clearly established and communicated. But with his absence, the Programme has begun to change; intellectual leadership, and the co-ordinating, linking roles played by the Associate Director, have been assumed by the Programme

as a whole, as demonstrated in the wide-ranging nature of its discussions. The Associate Director accounted for 33% of the Programme's travel time in FY 1981-82 and continued to make Programme commitments. Because of his absence he ceased to be a part of the Programme's evolving community of minds, a community based on frequent meetings and group discussions. There appear, therefore, to have been discontinuities between the commitments the Associate Director made, and the Programme's ability, given limitations of human and financial resources, or willingness, given new priorities, to handle the subsequent implementation activities required. That is, once isolated from the evolving patterns of thought and shared priorities within the Programme, intellectual leadership becomes less effective.

The existence of two poles of policy creation or leadership caused some uncertainty within the Programme, and has, to some extent, reduced the capacity of the Programme to finalize policy initiatives. The Associate Director has been credited with a strong rapport with support staff, and his absence has, in the view of both Programme Officers and support staff, resulted in less effective communication between the two.

A lingering dissonance between some Regional Programme Officers and the Education Programme may also have been in part a reflection of the decision making style of the Programme. Again, because of the importance attached to communication between Programme staff in determining funding priorities, people not a party to that communication become isolated from the developing trends. One Regional Programme Officer with a preference for quantitative, more policy oriented development projects in the Programme, for example, has had reduced impact in the Programme, because Ottawa-based Programme staff do not share his view of priorities or strategies. Membership in the community of minds in Education is an important prerequisite for influence. That membership is difficult to maintain at a distance.

### Priorities

The current Education Programme of Work and Budget was drawn up in draft by the Associate Director and reviewed by staff members, but it was not a major policy review. "...we didn't engage in an exercise by which we evaluated our implementation of the plan for the

previous year and then proceed from that to the second year," said one person. As in other Programme units, the Programme of Work and Budget reflected primarily a mixture of existing pipeline files, perceptions of demand from the field, and the skill and interests of professional staff. While some other Programmes pay attention to the document and its priorities, Education does this rarely.

We don't go to the field selling this issue here and this one there, because it's in our plan. If they sent a proposal to us that has any merit, we'll go back and talk to them and if we think it's of enough importance substantively, and well-enough elaborated, it will be funded. So...congruence between the projects and the plan doesn't really emerge. If it does, it is by chance, but certainly not by making sure that it will happen.

The substantive areas in the Programme of Work are not really factors in the review of proposals from the field. If a proposal interests a Programme Officer, if it seems in some way to be an important or innovative piece of research, it can usually be fitted into the Programme, whether or not a rationale for this is available in the Programme of Work and Budget. In general, more attention is paid to the research methods and to the nature of the institution or researcher proposing the research, than to whether the topic fits into the Programme of Work for the unit. This is not to say that the substantive area of the proposal is not important. But the Programme of Work is not the benchmark by which the suitability of the subject matter will necessarily be judged. All other Programmes have an "escape hatch" written into their Programmes of Work, which will allow them to fund areas not initially anticipated. Education appears to view the whole Programme of Work as something of an escape hatch.

The result has been the diversity of education projects funded by the Programme, a diversity which is well-recognized throughout the Division, usually as a major strength. A great deal of this diversity, and the overall receptiveness of the Programme to innovative ideas, has been attributed to the leadership of the current Associate Director. When he arrived in the Division, the Education Programme had only a small number of fairly expensive projects, in one region. It has since become, as the Division Director describes it, "...a tremendously diverse Programme, whose mechanisms and responses meet a very different set of conditions."

To fund this variety of activities, the Education Programme has become what one person called "the original raiders", seeking out new sources of money from within and outside of the Division. They have no apparent awe for guidelines limiting the use of such funding and seem quite prepared to test the tolerance of both the guidelines and potentially competing Programme Officers, in their effort to extend their operating budget. According to Division Management, the Education Programme is the most innovative in this regard, and it is a reputation worn with some pride.

Despite the sometimes unorthodox nature of the topics or the research methods in the proposals developed by the Education Programme, they have little problem in obtaining Divisional approval for their projects. The Education staff take their risks in the "right" places; their projects may sometimes be nontraditional, but in terms of the basic system maintenance needs of the Division, they stay well within Divisional norms. Their projects are not flagged by high budgets. The average value of Education projects, at \$58,519 in FY 1981-82, was 28.5% below the Divisional average for all projects, or 20% below the average if IRRN and Institutional Support projects are eliminated from the Divisional average. Education also has the largest per centage of its project appropriations in FY 1981-82 accounted for by projects valued at under \$100,000. This was 62.7%, substantially above the Divisional average of 45%. The per centage of actual new projects brought forward in the year under \$100,000 was highest in the Division at 83.8%. Furthermore, the average value of those Education projects which were over \$100,000, was only \$135,400, 21% below the Divisional average, and again, the lowest in the Division. While the small size of the Education projects may mean, dollar for dollar, more work for Programme staff, it also means that the Programme is less likely to attract attention at the Divisional and Centre levels. Smaller projects do not go to Centre-wide review, and even for those projects at the Board limit, smaller size attracts less attention.

Project Summaries from the Education Programme are consistent with Divisional expectations; clearly written, in a traditional format, and providing appropriate budget information. Programme staff observe the Divisional norm that the real, substantive work of project review

and development, and the resolution of basic problems, is handled at the Programme level. Doubtful or difficult projects are informally broached with Division Management before any public, final presentation for signature, or before discussion at the Internal Review Meeting.

The Programme's administrative reputation is good. Documents are rarely stopped for missing information, nor do they require excessive work by others in the Division. Programme staff believe that "stands have to be taken" to adjust the administrative system to the needs of the field. They also appear to understand and to be prepared to abide by Division Management's insistence on presenting a credible face to the rest of the Centre. They use the system effectively and appear to accept rather than challenge Division Management's consultative role in project review. The result is that the Programme staff are self-confident, and easily assume the full degree of the discretionary powers available to professionals within the Division. As one said,

We don't have proposals that are rejected by the Director or the Deputy-Director. We have proposals that are read for precision of terms and clarity of expression, and to make sure the key elements are there, but we don't have a judge who will say to us that this proposal doesn't fit within the policy.

### Relationships with the Field

While Education may, on the surface at least, appear to be more responsive to new topics than some other Programmes, staff members are no less active than most other professional staff in the Division in the extent to which they will work with researchers to modify proposals which fit into their areas of interest. Like others, they work actively with researchers in narrowing or expanding the scope of proposals, redefining methods, reducing budgets or adding training components. They may not, as some other Programmes do, actively define acceptable topics for funding, but they will suggest alternative research methods. On the whole, then, they do not appear in their interaction with researchers to be any less involved or directive than most Division professionals.

They view themselves as having an activist, stimulative, "fixer" role, attempting to develop local research capacities in a variety of ways. They believe their responsiveness at the initial stage of screening projects means increased work for them, because they have to respond to a wide

variety of people, it is difficult to determine where a cut-off point should be. We have found that the Programme does have areas it will not fund, rejections the result of a lack of interest or expertise in a topic on the part of the Programme staff, but explainable also in terms of more general, policy concerns: service to the wider population, rather than to a minority group; service to the least advantaged; the opportunity for new, more innovative learning on the part of the researchers concerned.

There seem to be, therefore, more or less explicitly agreed upon areas of interest or disinterest within the Programme, and decisions may not be as spontaneous as they initially appear. The failure of the Programme to examine critically these underlying assumptions or tacit agreements is, however, seen as a fairly serious flaw in their work, by at least one of the Programme's staff members.

The Programme is definitely constrained less by any formal document such as the Programme of Work, or the Programme statement sent out to researchers, than by the interests of its staff. Certainly, if a proposal fits within one of the established areas, it will be considered in detail. If it falls outside and yet compels interest, it will also be seriously considered. What the relatively unstructured approach to priorities of the Programme does, it seems, is to increase the discretionary scope of the staff for approval of topics, without reducing their discretionary ability to reject proposals.

As outsiders perceive, the Education Programme does have as a main priority, the building of research capacity. Those development projects which are more utility-oriented are expensive. Although the Programme is now considering moving more into this area, the attitude remains that before more useful development activities can be undertaken, more knowledge about education has first to be created. The Programme's commitment to capacity building activities is suggested by the number of its DAPs (at 23, well above the Divisional average) and their nature: bibliographical support, publishing the results of research seminars, producing manuals for researchers, promoting research exchange across regions, and workshops.

Education takes an active leadership role in its field, although perhaps in a slightly different way than some of the other Programmes. While not engaging in extensive personal research or publishing nor inserting much of their own professional preference into predefining researchable areas, much of the publishing done through the Division is through Education, and



they do spend a considerable amount of time on broad policy activities in the field of education. This is manifested in their continuing support for RRAG, their active participation in the Bellagio meetings, and in the response they have drafted to a recent initiative by the IEA-World Bank for new approaches to funding international educational research. Within the Division, this policy participation is demonstrated by their responses to the development of the Co-operative Programme. Their activity in policy areas is related not just to the interests of the staff, but also to the nature of the field. As in Science and Technology, research issues and agendas remain to be clarified in Education, and the impact of the Programme can be increased through participation in these more general policy discussions.

### Regional Concentration

Geographically, Latin America has dominated the development of new proposals in Education for the past two years. The level of African projects has ranged from a high in 1979-80 (44% of project appropriations and 39% of new projects) to a low of seven per cent of appropriations and 19% of new projects in 1980-81. In 1981-82 African projects and appropriations again increased to take a moderate share of the Programme's budget. Asia has trailed both Africa and Latin America for three years, in per centage of Education projects developed, declining from a 22% share three years ago, to 13% this year, although appropriations in 1980-81 were 35% of the total. Travel patterns, both a reflection of existing project loads, and an indication of future project development, indicate that slightly more attention was paid to Latin America in 1981-82 than to other regions. On the whole, Programme staff travelled an average of 24% of possible travel time, above the Divisional average of 21%. Two of the four Programme staff travelled over 100 days in the year.

Although the Programme has been making an effort to reduce the Latin American proportion of its projects, the presence of a very active Regional Programme Officer in the region has helped to keep the numbers from the region high (over 50% of the Programme's projects over the past two years). Latin American projects and Project Summaries tend to be well written, and present little work for the Programme. Existing pipeline projects and the development of phase-two projects will probably make reduction of projects from the area, difficult.

African project levels have been relatively high (27% of appropriations) because of the Programme's emphasis on capacity building. In both Ghana and Sierra Leone, Education has sponsored project development workshops, recognizing that projects do not arise as spontaneously from Africa as from elsewhere. The surprisingly low level of new project development in Asia (17% of appropriations and 13% of new projects) may be in part due to the difference of opinion between the Regional Programme Officer and Ottawa staff over appropriate areas for Programme Activity.

## POPULATION-URBAN PROGRAMME

Back in the days when the rest of us were wandering around with little pieces of paper stuck together with clips, they had their pipeline files, and it was all rather dazzling.

### Overview

The Population Programme, including the Urban sub-Programme, is remarkable primarily for the degree to which it meets the basic norms of the Division. It is a cohesive, professionally competent group, which does not make any negative claims on the attention of the rest of the Division. Traditionally viewed as well-organized and somewhat hierarchical, during the 1981-82 fiscal year changes have occurred in the style of leadership in the Programme, and in its approach to organization of work.

### External Perceptions of the Programme

The Population Programme is widely regarded throughout the Division as being the best organized working group in the Division. Leadership is seen to be vested primarily in the Associate Director, who is believed to "run a tight ship". Programme staff are viewed as being fairly directive in their relations with researchers in the field, and projects are seen as being professional, but unexciting. "A lot of mainstream population stuff, not adventuresome intellectually," said one person. "If there is anything adventuresome, I think it has to come out of the researchers." Said another:

But it fits; they have their Programme, they know what they want to do and they make their decisions.... My impression is that it is important for them to spend their money and...my impression is that each one of them has tasks or a slice of the budget, and they go out and they spend it, and it's important for them to do that.

Some doubts occasionally creep into the perceptions others have about the Programme's level of organization.

"I don't know whether they are as well organized as they sometimes appear to be," said one person. "At the Internal Review Meetings, for example, they tend to be super-organized. I wonder whether they are?"

The Programme is viewed as being interested primarily in the policy relevance of research rather than in capacity building.

Programme staff are themselves aware that they are seen as a generally conservative, but competent group, but they think their projects are very interesting. The Programme has been described by people outside as, in one person's words, "...terribly conventional...one theme with variations, but one theme." The Programme staff do not agree. They feel that while their projects may appear conservative to others in the Division, that in the Population field and among other donors, the Programme is viewed as being very innovative, rejecting many "mainstream" population research proposals and taking a lead in opening new areas for research. The Associate Director believes that it is the cautious approach to administration and use of funding mechanisms, rather than the areas of research they support, which gives them their reputation for conservatism. He says that the Programme goes through periods of change, but has found a routine which works for itself and for the Programme's clients. The Programme rarely goes forward to the Division with any document which staff believe could raise objections. We were told that their tendency is to polish all documents with potentially controversial issues, until they present a bland image to the Division. One person in the Programme has suggested that the Programme should consider presenting some projects without polishing the rough edges.

Programme staff believe that others see them as somewhat academic, methodologically-oriented; "tough, having control groups all of the time," as one Population Programme Officer said. They see themselves as a fairly cohesive group with a good understanding of the major issues in their field, and of what is going on among researchers and other donors.

Three of the five people in the Population-Urban Programme have been with the Division since the previous administration, and this gives them the greatest perspective and continuity of any group in the Division. The Senior Programme Officer in the Urban sub-Programme worked for a number of years as a Regional Programme Officer in Asia, and came to the Population Programme within the past two years. The Programme has the highest concentration of Canadians in professional positions of any Programme in the Division, four of five people, including the Associate Director. Two of the five professional staff are women, also the highest proportion in the Division.

#### Organization and Decision Making

The Associate Director of the Population Programme has been with the Centre for approximately eight years, and with the Division for seven. For a long period he exercised very directive leadership over the Programme. His own expertise in his field was superior to that of anyone around him, and both he and his staff, who were fairly junior, felt comfortable with this directive style. The result was a hierarchical, but well organized Programme, described by one person outside the Programme as being comprised of "a guru and his acolytes".

When the Associate Director went on sabbatical in 1980, the visible level of organization in the Programme at first declined, but the Programme's four remaining staff members soon found a new style of operation, under the leadership of one Programme Officer, who acted as a coordinator and unofficial acting Associate Director. She is credited by people both within and outside of the Programme, as holding it together during this period. At the beginning of this period, the coordinator is reported to have taken a strong leadership role, training new staff, but as the staff became more comfortable with their roles, decision making became more collegial than it had previously been in the Programme. Formal quarterly meetings were scheduled to review pipeline projects, and Programme priorities, on a regular basis, and the Associate

Director attended these.

Within the Division as a whole, however, informal discussions dominate the decision making process, and in the Associate Director's absence, individual Programme Officers began to take a greater role not just in approving projects, which had largely been the decision making domain of the Associate Director in the past, but also in determining the division of work and the priorities for the Programme. This Programme, in fact, provides an interesting example of the importance of the individual to decision making in the Division. Because of the non-uniform and sometimes unpredictable nature of decisions that have to be made by Programme staff, often on short notice, decision making style tends to be defined by the personalities of the people involved in individual instances. Without the dominant presence of the Associate Director for the daily, incremental decisions that are inevitably made during project development and monitoring, the accepted norm for decision making within the Programme shifted visibly from one of herarchical, somewhat directive style, to a more collegial style, in which the professional judgement of individual Programme Officers was given increased credibility.

A new set of priorities and procedures evolved during the Associate Director's absence, and when he returned in the summer of 1981, he returned to a Programme which was different from the one he had left. The Associate Director had some clear ideas of things he wanted done. He wanted to expand the Programme's activities in Asia, and he wanted to put through some larger grants to a few, well developed institutions, replacing some of the smaller grants in the Programme. He intervened in the project development process to delay some projects he did not particularly like, at a stage in the process he thought was early enough to avoid inconvenience to the researchers or Programme staff. The Programme Officers objected to this limitation on their decision making abilities. The Associate Director saw this not as authoritarian intervention, but as a reflection of the views he held on the projects.

The return of what Programme staff nevertheless saw as a directive style of leadership was met, however, with some resentment in the Programme.

The Associate Director made a fact finding trip to Asia to gather evidence in support of his wish to expand operations there, and he was able to convince his staff that the move was appropriate. But he accepted the judgement of the Programme Officers about the projects they were developing, and with this, recognized the new professionalism within the Programme.

The Change within the Programme was not easy. The much-praised organization of the Programme suffered during the autumn of 1981. The demarcation of project and area responsibilities was fuzzy and overlapping, with some projects getting no coverage from Ottawa staff for a brief period, and others getting overlapping and sometimes conflicting coverage. The dissension in the Programme, although mild by the standards of at least one other Programme in the Division, contrasted with the usually placid image the Programme presented to the Division, and news of the problems reached Division Management, who urged the Programme to work out the problems. The period was a difficult one for everyone in the Programme. The Associate Director said of the changes:

It was a difficult period to work through, for everyone. Essentially what you have in the Freudian scenario where the kids have grown up and they face Daddy with the fact that they aren't kids any more --which was true, and it was therapeutic for me to get over that. Because, even though you want to support autonomy, you get into a mind-set and need a jolt to change it.

In late December, an ad hoc meeting of the Programme was held, a month before the regular quarterly meeting, to work out the difficulties, face-to-face. The meeting clarified responsibilities for monitoring projects, eliminating most overlapping coverage, clarified who would be the Programme's nominee for the post of Regional Programme Officer in Asia (an issue over which there had been some confusion), helped people to work out a timetable so they could use up their

accumulated leave before they lost it, and approached the question of how Programme time could be divided up to allow for personal research and publishing.

The meeting did not solve all the problems of overlapping responsibility, particularly with regard to preparation of Project Summaries and some monitoring activities, where occasional difficulties still arise. But overall, all members of the Programme have reported that the meeting cleared the air, and opened the door to a new and more consensual style of decision making in the Programme. Morale in the Programme returned to a relatively high level after the meeting, and the general level of organization returned to near normal. Programme staff have applauded the Associate Director for a flexible and positive response to changing circumstances, and he himself has described the affair as "a growth process." He sees this as just one stage in a continuing process of evolution within the Programme, during which it goes through periods of stasis, and periods such as this, of more formal change.

Internally, the Programme does indeed appear to be the most visibly organized of the Programmes in the Division. At quarterly meetings of the Programmes, charts outlining substantive and regional responsibilities of professional staff abound. Programme Officers are assigned, based on their interest, expertise and consent, responsibility for reviewing proposals from the regions, in certain substantive fields, and for monitoring existing projects in those areas. They are also assigned to "backstop" certain specific areas for their colleagues. Travel budgets are calculated at the quarterly meetings in January, and, matching responsibilities with pipeline projects, a chart of projected travel by Programme Officers to different parts of the world is prepared. Projects discussed in the meetings at the pipeline stage are listed on another chart, indicating clearly what the status of the proposals is, and what degree of certainty there is that any given project proposal will be brought to the stage of approval. Programme staff can therefore determine relatively



easily, at different stages of the year, after these meetings, what the overall status of the budget is. In execution, operations may be, and are reported to be less systematic than the plans, but the plans do guide the behaviour of the staff to some extent, and are certainly more concrete than those prepared by any other Programme. The Associate Director has noted, however, that he does not see the planning process as "target planning", but rather as a device to facilitate information sharing, to formalize Programme review and coordination of work among staff.

The existence of the Urban studies component as a sub-Programme with its own distinct set of research concerns and operating style, within the budgetary framework of the Population Programme, has placed the staff of both groups in a delicate situation. The sharing of the project and travel budgets, and of one staff member, means that there have been several areas where conflict can develop. While this has not been a serious problem in the Programme, some subtle tensions have developed during the 1981-82 fiscal year. With Urban in 1982 getting its own distinct budget, tensions should decrease, although as long as one Programme Officer works for both the Urban and Population Programmes, the potential for conflict will remain. On a theoretical level, the skills applied to most Population, Urban and Economics projects may overlap, but the existence of administrative divisions with different priorities means that misunderstandings about the use of the staff member's time, do develop. The problems lies not with the disciplines, but with the realities of administration.

The Urban sub-Programme is a sub-Programme only in name. With the beginning of the 1982 fiscal year, and the establishment of a separate budget, the Urban area has become a de facto Programme, autonomous in all but name. The Senior Programme Officer now informally has the authority of an Associate Director. Internally the Urban sub-Programme is divided along regional lines, with the Senior Programme Officer handling Asia and anglophone Africa, and his one

Programme Officer handling Latin America and francophone Africa. The operation in Urban appears very smooth, with little overlap or conflict between the two staff members.

The Urban sub-Programme, contrary to the opinion some outsiders may have, is the only part of the Programme which operates with a separate budget. In Population, professional staff, for the most part, operate much like their counterparts in other Programmes, developing projects, bringing them forward, and claiming what money is available and politically appropriate for them to claim. Their planning and monitoring organization is at such a stage that they may have more accurate information about what is happening than do some other Programmes, but individual Programme Officers do not operate with individual budgets.

#### Programme Priorities

The Associate Director of the Programme at one time dominated the process of setting priorities, as he himself acknowledges:

There was a time when I was the centre of all the information, I was the source of information, so I had more influence and went ahead and established things. Now we are in a situation where I rely much more on the others to provide that information to all of us, and we put that in the middle and try to reach a consensus.

Today the priorities for the Population Programme are, as in other Programmes, a reflection of the interests of individual Programme Officers, demand from the field, and perceptions about new topics. If there is disagreement within the Programme about fundable areas, it appears to be settled by compromise. People appear to agree that they will work for consensus, and that, with the right supporting arguments, if a Programme Officer wants a topic included for a specific region, the desire will in some fashion be accommodated. This situation is, as the Associate Director says, "a consensus on fitting everyone's interests, so everyone feels that their view of the world is represented in significant measure." Change tends to be evolutionary, a result of assessments of what research has already been

done, a search for new topics, and analysis of the activities of other donor agencies.

The topics listed in the Programme of Work and Budget of the Population Programme, are regarded by the staff as being broad enough to give great scope for potential proposals. The Programme has listed its areas of work in what some staff see as order of priority. While they remain open to proposals outside of these areas, the restricted list of topics and fields established in the Programme of Work and Budget does affect the Programme Officers' views of proposals. They make no apology for their attempt to define important areas in the field of population studies, and they take their Programme of Work and Budget fairly seriously. If a proposal is too far outside of the topics listed in the Programme of Work, or in the three-year overview, it probably will not be pursued by the individual Programme Officer, and if pursued, may not be approved by the Programme as a whole. The Associate Director has said that priorities for research change more quickly than the Programme of Work itself does, however, and that there is room for new ideas. The areas of Programme concentration are a function of priorities of researchers in the field, and the Programme response capacity. The Programme observes the Divisional norm of Programme professional review of proposals, although this is done by circulating Project Summaries or proposals to members of the unit on an individual basis, except for the quarterly meetings, when the review is conducted by the group.

Programme staff sometimes write researchers, making clear suggestions of the areas of research which will be supported, if they are turning down a proposal in an area which is not a Population priority. Population staff tell researchers, sometimes in detail, what types of research they will be likely to support, matching this with what they know about institutional research capacities. The Programme Statement for the Programme also clearly indicates substantive interests of the Programme. These are subject to evolution in future, but once established, they do have a definite guiding influence on project development decisions.

One member of the Programme defined the Programme's role in an area where it was difficult to find projects, this way:

It's not selling the project, but taking the good ideas, which would sell themselves, taking ideas that somebody out there had developed, or enhancing them here, or vice-versa, but working with a few key people...Taking (ideas) around to institutions and saying, "Look, here's an important topic; how can we get some research going, where are the people who can do this?"

The Division Director played a role in drafting the Programme of Work and Budget statement for the Urban sub-Programme. And because the Urban budget in FY 1981-82 was subsumed under Population, the Associate Director wrote the brief statements on these areas. The Urban Senior Programme Officer did not pay much attention to the sub-categories, however. He was, he said, only concerned with the total budget figure available to him, and felt no pressure from the Population Programme for using the funds in any particular way. Urban became a separate sub-Programme through gradual consultation between the Senior Programme Officer and others in the Division. During the summer of 1981, more intense activity leading up to the preparation of the 1982-83 Programme of Work and Budget was undertaken.

For FY 1982-83, the precise areas of work for Urban have been determined through compromise. Given his own choice, the Senior Programme Officer would have broadened the areas of work for Urban to include other urban studies and urban planning topics. But because other Programmes had parallel interests in some urban areas, he defined his areas of operation so they would not overlap into areas which might cause political problems within the Division. The escape hatch for the Urban Programme in the 1982-83 Programme of Work and Budget lies in a category called "Other Urban Topics", which allows the sub-Programme to support small, exploratory topics in a number of urban fields, topics which may in subsequent years take more attention in the sub-Programme. In this way, the groundwork is laid for

expansion of the sub-Programme into new areas, through an incremental process. The new areas for the Urban sub-Programme's operations in future, may in part be discerned by watching what comes out of this category during the next year.

### Leadership in the Field

Programme staff agree that they stress their own role in leadership within the field of population studies. They identify important areas for research, and encourage proposals in these areas. Professional development is an important factor in this Programme, perhaps more so than in any other. All of the professional staff are encouraged to publish their own research, and during the process of this study, all five professional staff members were actively engaged either in writing or publishing articles. Most believe that doing personal research and publishing, and attending professional conferences, gives them credibility in dealing with researchers in the field. They feel they need this credibility because they take a leadership role in defining important research areas. Direct RRAG-type policy activities are not common for Programme Officers, but their professional competence in the field gives them, they believe, influence as individuals, with the researchers. As one Programme Officer said:

We always try to cut out for ourselves, for professional reasons, a couple of areas in which we become involved in a substantive way....So, you pick a couple of areas and you try to make some kind of contribution to the literature and also provide some kind of guidance, if it's a pioneering area of research...to researchers who want to work in the area but have very little knowledge or background.

The Associate Director says that there are additional personal and institutional justifications for encouraging research. He believes that people who do their own research are able to maintain their personal research credentials, an important factor for professionals who for the most part cannot expect to build long-term careers with the Centre.

He also believes that maintaining research skills helps the Programme staff avoid isolation from the realities faced by researchers in the field.

There is common agreement that academic papers will be done on the Programme Officers' own time, but that publishing directly related to IDRC projects or programmes can be done, in part, on the job. If the memberships paid by the Centre for professional organizations, or subscriptions to journals are any indication, Population takes this aspect of the work somewhat more seriously than do other Programmes. The average number of such memberships or subscriptions financed by the Division during 1981-82 for the other three Programmes, was four per Programme. In Population, it was 14, perhaps partly because the Programme has several staff who have been with the Division for many years, and therefore have more membership renewals coming up than do other Programmes.

### Policy Relevance

Views within the Programme diverge on the relative weight to be assigned to the policy relevance of proposals, or to their potential for increasing research capacity. For some, policy relevance is the major test, but others reflect the general Divisional trend to balance both factors evenly. Some staff favour strong, established institutions; others look for weaker institutions with a need for research experience. The fact that policy relevance is an important factor is demonstrated by the increasing importance the Associate Director attaches to operations in Asia.

...it is the one area of the world where governments really take population issues seriously.... So, given that we have a policy-research Programme, that is, a research programme that is supposed to have a bearing on policy, you want to be active, and work in areas where governments are interested, and the research, presumably, will have a benefit.... If you work in an area where things are exciting and dynamic, you're on top of the issues, you know what is going on.

Asia has in the past had a more important position in the Programme than it had in FY 1981-82. In both the proportion of individual projects developed and in the per centage of total appropriations going to new projects in Asia, in both 1979-80 and 1980-81, it was far more important than in 1981-82. In 1981-82 only 22% of project appropriations and 23% of new projects were in Asia. Latin America and the Caribbean, which two years ago formed a small part of the Programme's projects, for the last two years has dominated the Programme.

African projects have increased over the past year, close in fact, to the per centage of appropriations going to Asia, and exceeding the Asian area in terms of the per centage of new projects brought forward to approval during the year. The current goal of the Associate Director is to reduce the Latin American projects to 40% of appropriations (from the current 51%) and to bring Asian projects up to 40% from the current 22% of appropriations. The commitment to increasing the Asian presence of the Programme includes reducing the staff level in Ottawa by transferring an experienced Programme Officer to Asia. This policy initiative will undoubtedly affect the regional emphasis of the Programme. Perhaps more importantly, it may also affect the locus of decision making in the Programme, when project proposals originating in Asia are discussed. As we have indicated earlier in this report, the most significant area of decision making in the Division lies with the individual Programme Officer. Where a Programme Officer has the confidence of the Programme unit, where he or she shares the common attitudes and priorities of the Programme, and is, at the same time resident in a region, it is possible that effective decision making on regional projects may eventually shift from Ottawa to the region.

Africa remains less of an immediate priority for the Programme, because projects there do not have as much immediate policy potential. African projects in Population, as in other Programmes, remain primarily capacity building in nature. With 27% of new project approvals in 1981-82 in Africa, however, it is clear that the region has not been forgotten by the Programme. With more African proposals currently in the Population pipeline, it is possible that the area will maintain its level of funding.

Travel generates new proposals, and last year's travel may indicate what will come during the next fiscal year. If the Senior Programme Officer in Urban is included, Population's travel to Asia in 1981-82 was significantly higher than to any other Third World region. Excluding the Urban Senior Programme Officer, whose interests lie primarily in Asia, travel patterns for the remainder of the Programme staff show a fairly even split between Asia, Latin America, and North America-Europe, with Africa somewhat further behind.

Overall, the Population Programme, with Urban included, travelled roughly 20% of available time, or approximately 73 days per person. This ranged, however, from 10% to 28% travel within the Programme. The Programme as a whole was very close to the Divisional average for travel of 21%, and was third in terms of Programme travel averages.

### Project Size

The Programme's projects in 1981-82 were predominantly small, under \$100,000. The average size of the Programme's new projects, brought to approval during the 1981-82 fiscal year was \$63,185, 13% below the Divisional average, excluding Institutional Support and IRRN, or 23% below the average including these. This made the Programme's projects the second smallest, on average, in the Division. Furthermore, the average size of the projects which were over \$100,000, was, at \$150,288, 12% below the average for similar projects Division-wide. The average size of projects brought forward by individual staff members who were working full time in the Programme varied considerably, from a low of \$56,750 to a high of \$92,228.



The value of total project appropriations under \$100,000 as a per centage of total appropriations, was 61% for the Programme, while for the Division as a whole, it was only 45%. Of the individual new project approvals in the Programme, 83% were under \$100,000. The Programme appears, therefore, to be seeking to fund a number of smaller projects, perhaps to increase the diversity of the projects. The Divisional average for full-time staff members in Ottawa for new projects brought forward to Divisional approval, was 9. In the Population Programme, this ranged from 6 new projects to 15.5.

### Conclusions

The Population Programme complies very closely with the norms of the Division, and in fact, by their conduct, they help define those norms. This is why the Programme attracts little attention within the Division. Programme Officers make basic decisions about projects, but there is also a mechanism for professional review of projects within the Programme, prior to sending the Project Summaries on to the Division. Projects are smaller than the Divisional average, and this is generally regarded, if not as a norm, then as a positive factor, within the Division. Project Summaries are generally well written, and do not attract the ire of Division Management. Although the project proposals brought forward by the Programme are not regarded within the Division as innovative, they are viewed as well considered, competent pieces of work, which will not embarrass the Division. The Programme presents a united front at the Internal Review Meetings. Projects blend a concern for policy and capacity building, the Divisional norm, and at the Divisional level, the Programme's documents do not place a burden for new work on other professional staff.

The only Divisional norm on which the Programme differed, was on collegial decision making within the Programme. This may not have been a norm prior to 1980, but it certainly is now. Two of the other Programmes in the Division adhere to this norm and the third is decentralized, if not collegial, in its decision making. Population, in the autumn of 1981, briefly differed from the norm of egalitarian decision making. The Programme adapted quickly to the new situation it faced, rather than fighting it, however, and has therefore not attracted significant negative attention from the Division. In short, if the Programme is seen by others to be predictable and boring, it is largely because it has not abrogated any of the Divisional norms which it has helped to create. It does not impose on others.

## SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY PROGRAMME

...we deal with policy, and it has no discipline behind it....There is no guarantee that in fact the issues can be satisfactorily resolved. I think people outside the Programme tend to look at it with their own Programme eyes.

### Overview

The Science and Technology Policy Programme appears internally cohesive, and there seems to be good "esprit" within the Programme. Whether this translates into high morale is another question, because the feelings of the Programme staff about their relationships with the rest of the Division, can at times be defensive. The most notable single characteristic of the Programme, in fact, is the difficulty of its relations with the rest of the Division. The Programme's challenge to several important Divisional norms lies at the root of this difficulty.

### External Perceptions of the Programme

Some S&T Programme staff profess no interest in what others in the Division think of their Programme. The views of the Division are, in fact, directly related to the problems the Programme has in implementing its programme of work. Perceptions of the Programme vary from the very critical--feelings that the Programme has no sense of direction, that projects are poorly developed and presented, that proposals are ambiguous and difficult to understand, to the favourable--that despite its problems, the Programme is intellectually adventuresome, and promotes interesting, but risky projects, protecting the interests of researchers in the face of bureaucratic demands, and deeply committed to the researchers' welfare. The Programme is viewed as being very "hands off" in its relationships with researchers, avoiding manipulation of projects into "safe" areas. This is viewed as both an asset and a liability, with sometimes the same people both praising the Programme's intentions and criticizing the results of the process. One person described the Programme as "...intellectually very adventuresome, perhaps a bit weak on follow-through."

It is widely recognized within the Division that the ambiguity of the Programme's project proposals is to a large extent a reflection of the nature of the field it works in, a field in its infancy, without either a professional or disciplinary base. The Programme is seen as going through a difficult process of trying to define the field it works in, and to increase the capacity of people to work in the field. Some projects, such as the Technology Policy Workshops, are easy for people to understand. But many other projects are viewed as being vague in the statement of objectives, methods, or expected outcomes. While people sympathize with the problems inherent in the field of study, some also feel that the Programme contributes to the ambiguity it suffers from, by refusing to narrow the field of interest in order to be able to focus their attention and achieve more practical results. Similarly, while the vast majority of people in the Division sympathize with the Programme for the problems caused by staff shortages, some also believe these problems have been exacerbated by an unwise allocation of existing staff time.

Several people have commented about the fact that the Programme does not spend its yearly project budget. People do not basically object to the principle that a Programme should have money left at the end of the year, but rather that they apparently cannot plan well enough to determine how much money they will in fact spend during the year.

The most sympathetic view of the Programme, shared by several people, is represented by this comment:

I think their projects are horribly difficult to write up. Intellectually they're honest. People try to get Brownie points, score points off them. I think that's wrong. I think they can clean up their style, but that's just editing. Big deal!...Basically they're sound.

### Administration

The physical separation of the Programme from the rest of the Division, while viewed as an asset by Programme staff, is generally seen as a liability by others in the Division. As one person said:

...I think a definite problem is that we don't see them as much as the others, because we are separated. If we (were) together again, it would be helpful. Then they would not be seen as separate. They have pretty well a sub-Social Sciences Division.

The Programme has been variously described as being "beleaguered", and having "a siege mentality", although Programme staff think this is overstating the case. One S&T staff member said that even if the Programme were on the same floor as the rest of the Division, the doors to their offices would often be closed, because they did not have the time to engage in casual conversation. Programme staff feel that their current physical separation contributes to the high degree of group solidarity they enjoy, and gives them control over random distractions in the environment. They point out that they were told to move to another floor by the Division, and had no choice in the matter. The Programme was in the process of rejoining the Division on the 14th floor as this report was being completed.

Today, even the project files for the Programme are maintained separately from those of the rest of the Division. This is partly a legacy of the history of the Programme and partly for administrative convenience. When the current Associate Director arrived, the files for the Programme were badly maintained. The previous Associate Director, while described as a very talented man, was at best, idiosyncratic in his administration of the Programme. The new Associate Director had to reorganize the filing system for the Programme. He wanted the files nearby for this, and also so that the Programme staff would grow familiar with them.

During the period of reorganization, we were told, the Programme also led the way in establishing a system of Programme-related filing, keeping Programme Officers in touch with project administration, and played an important role in developing the (blue) internal document control sheet used in the Division. Part of the legacy of this period of reorganization is a functioning filing system, and a greater than usual attention, in S&T, to copying Trip Reports and other documents into the relevant project files. But this period of reorganization took a great deal of the time and energy of both the Associate Director, who worked alone in the Programme for some time, and of the one Programme Officer who later joined him. The current Associate Director is credited with holding together and reorganizing a Programme which was at one stage in disarray. "It was," says one person familiar with the work he did, "a remarkable performance."

The Programme, in its most recent incarnation, therefore, has emerged from an intellectually creative, but administratively chaotic past. At a time when the Programme staff thought they were beginning to get a grip on the administration of the

Programme, a number of factors intervened to disrupt what might have been an evolution into administrative order. The best administrator in the Programme, the lone Ottawa-based Programme Officer, took responsibility for managing the Technology Policy Workshops, which took more than half of his working time. The other Programme Officer, based in Sussex, became involved in the development of a new energy studies initiative in the Division, at the beginning of 1981. The Associate Director was himself involved in the Institutional Support Programme. A new staff member was recruited, and expected to arrive early in the fiscal year, but immigration problems delayed his arrival for many months. As one person observed:

Exactly at the moment when we thought things were coming together, we were all going off and doing other things. This puts terrible pressures on (the Associate Director. He) has been prepared to take on much more than most human beings would, and I think that has added to the pressure.

The net result of all of this--some things the inadvertent result of the mundane details of implementation and recruitment, but others the direct result of deliberate administrative and policy choices by the Programme--was a severe problem of understaffing. This has exacerbated many of the other problems the Programme faced during the 1981 fiscal year. In particular, severe understaffing has meant that the Associate Director has had to personally shoulder a very large part of the burden for project development and the writing of Project Summaries. On average within the Division, full-time professional staff in Ottawa during the 1981-82 fiscal year wrote nine Project Summaries each, which were given Divisional approval. The S&T Associate Director wrote 17.5 Project Summaries, including several in the Institutional Support category.

The Programme's Project Summaries are widely criticised as being unclear, and to some extent that may have been complicated by the fact that the Associate Director was writing roughly twice the Divisional average of Project Summaries. The Associate Director sees the issue on his Programme's Project Summaries as not basically a problem of clarity, however, but as a result of his disinclination to specify in detail the nature of research methods. He believes that precision in specifying detail in project documents is not necessarily equivalent to clarity. He feels that excessive requirements for specificity of details in research methods are unrealistic, given the nature of empirical research, which demands flexibility. He thinks that such specificity can only limit the freedom researchers need in order to do good research. He thinks this specificity in project documents is required not to improve the research, but in the belief that it will help Division Management defend the projects as they proceed through the Centre. Because of the variety of disciplinary and practical backgrounds of the people who conduct research in science and technology policy studies, from lawyers, to economists, to sociologists, to peasant leaders or scientists, and because of the problem-centred nature of projects in the field, people in the Programme believe that the kind of specification of detail, particularly in research methods, required in the Division, is not feasible for all projects. Furthermore, they fear that the requirement for such specification will eventually reduce the ability of the Programme to fund research which requires flexible methods.

The workload the Associate Director has had may also in part explain the problems the Programme has had in getting documents to the Division by established deadlines. The problems the Programme has had in handling basic administrative issues which touched the rest of the Division, such as the apparent disinclination of the Programme to make all of the editorial, spelling and grammatical changes in project documents, required by Division Management, may in part have been due to a feeling within the Programme that they had too much work to do on substantive issues to worry about style. Whatever the reason, it is clear that the issue of editing of project documents, which affects most staff in the Division to some extent, is at its most controversial between this Programme and Division Management. While others may disagree with some of the editorial changes they are required to make in project documents, they usually make the changes anyway. S&T staff have said that they remain reluctant to

to make changes to documents, even when requested by Division Management, unless they personally agree that the changes make sense. Their disinclination to make the changes requested, has caused conflict and some delays in the Programme's work.

The Programme has also faced some conflict in its relations with Division Management over interpretation of procedural and budgetary rules for projects. Programme staff believe that they know the rules of the Centre at least as well as other people in the Division, including those in Division Management. They believe Programme staff have an obligation to know the rules well, and they believe they cannot abdicate responsibility for interpreting these rules, when they apply to S&T projects. When problems arise, we were told, they sometimes circumvent Division Management and go straight to the Secretary's Office or to CGT. Interpretation and application of rules are, therefore, causes of conflict between the Programme and Division Management.

Internally, the Programme is reported to be very democratic in its decision making. Meetings of the Programme, often including support staff, are reportedly held on a regular weekly or biweekly basis. The Programme is the only one in the Division to involve support staff in such meetings. The meetings deal with maintenance issues, such as the processing of documents for the Division, upcoming events and issues which staff should be aware of, and the initial screening decisions for some projects, determining who will handle project development. Communication in the Programme appears to be open and convivial, with no major interpersonal problems reported. Free discussion and argument are encouraged. Less formal meetings between individual staff members, to discuss project issues as they arise, are frequent, usually on a one-to-one basis.

The Associate Director's approach to decision making is collegial:

I strongly believe that hierarchic, bureaucratic positions are largely a matter of luck. Ideas aren't a matter of luck. They are a matter of mixing in and talking things over. So, I've always seen our Programme as a collegial one. In the end, I do have the final voice, but we can all disagree with each other....I don't see any alternative to us having constant communication with each other in Ottawa. So, we are centralizing.... We have not worked with a critical mass of people here for some time, and that is reflected in the quality of our work, which I don't think is anywhere near as good as it could be, should be, or has been. We need time to get a set of understandings about what we're doing.

Decisions on project proposals are made exclusively by Ottawa staff in S&T. Throughout the Division as a whole, Ottawa staff dominate the process of project development, for all Programmes. But all of the other Programmes have a share of some Regional Programme Officers' time. In the 26 projects we examined in detail for the Division, in 11 cases Regional Programme Officers were involved in the early stages of project identification. None of the five S&T projects we examined had this initial regional input. So, while the move to centralization, the desire to build up the critical mass of professional talent in Ottawa is undoubtedly to some extent a product of a philosophical commitment, it is also no doubt in part due to the fact that the Programme has not been offered the option of putting its own representatives in the Regional Offices.

### Priorities

The Science and Technology Policy Programme sees itself as being primarily responsive or reactive to researchers' interests, rather than defining what the priorities for research should be. As one Programme staff member said:

...it doesn't have its own agenda in terms of development work. It has a completely



open mind about the work that can be done under the rubric of Science and Technology Policy. And, therefore, (it) is prepared to consider a wide range of proposals, institutions, individuals.

The Programme's approach is well known throughout the Division. Some regard it as a strength, and others as a problem, for the resulting ambiguity they see in projects. The Programme does not send out a Programme statement, because it does not want to limit the scope of potential topics arising from what it sees as an emerging field, and also because, until recently, it did not have the staff time to devote to such an activity. Programme staff see themselves as encouraging innovative, even "risky" projects, and they feel that it is the innovative nature of some projects which leads to criticism in the Division. "Curiously", we were told, "as we have had more money in the Division, we've been less willing to undertake relatively risky projects, and I think we've become rather rigid in the way we deal with risk."

The Programme has taken a definite lead in the field, in the Technology Policy Workshops, a training programme of considerable scale. This project is probably the most highly regarded part of the S&T Programme. While Programme staff may define the potential areas of research less carefully than some other Programmes, the staff do actively participate in project development. The Associate Director calls his approach "Socratic", but the Socratic method is still one used by teachers. Although the staff view professional development as an important element in their job, this is reportedly limited to reading, and the occasional attendance at conferences. They do not engage in individual research or publishing activities.

Looking at the Trip Reports from the Programme, examining the initial drafts of some Project Summaries, and listening to the Associate Director at Internal Review Meetings, the observer is struck by the visible emotional commitment of the Programme to the problems not just of researchers, but

of people generally, in the Third World. Throughout the Division there is an intellectual commitment to the solution of development problems, and we have no doubt that many people have an emotional commitment also. But this emotional response to the solution of development problems is most frequently and overtly expressed by S&T staff. It is reflected in the background statements to some of the Project Summary drafts presented to the Division, although these sections are sometimes edited out of the documents. It is also reflected in the Programme's impatience with administrative requirements which they think make the bureaucracy unnecessarily complex.

For some, this makes the programme the "conscience of the Division," helping to remind people that the researchers' needs come before those of the organization. "In a way," said one person, "Science and Technology Policy keeps us all honest, I think." But for others, there is a vague annoyance at what is seen as the presumption that other people do not understand the needs of the Third World. People do not differ with the Programme on the merits of the emotional case they make to the Division. Some do think, however, that the appeal to the emotions "muddies the issues" without solving the real administrative problems which will continue to exist in the organization, whether the Programme recognizes them or not. "If they took a slightly more objective approach, maybe they'd get the facts down on paper, which is what people are looking for," said one critic of the Programme's Project Summaries.

### Regional Concentration

It is clear that Latin American projects dominate the Science and Technology Policy Programme. Figures for total appropriations for S&T can be somewhat misleading because the large level of appropriations made to Africa in 1979-80, have in fact been spent primarily during the 1981-82 fiscal year, and will continue to be spent over the next year. While appropriations for new projects in Africa in 1981-82 totalled only 11% of the total for the Programme,

and the per centage of new projects approved for Africa was only nine per cent, the Programme in effect made a major commitment to the development of new African projects through the large amount of time one staff member devoted to the Technology Policy Workshops project, which is predominantly African. While some members of the Programme feel that the development of new projects from the workshops is not important, the Programme Officer responsible for the workshop disagrees.

There is a sense in which the entire Technology Policy Workshop is project development...and therefore it's a huge front-end investment in terms of both money and staff time.

Seen in these terms, the commitment to the development of research capacity and the generation of new projects in Africa, is probably the greatest in the Division.

...because three of (the workshops) are to be held in Africa, it's really, if you like, I don't like to say do-or-die, but that's what it is. What else can we do to get the Africans involved in the exercise if this doesn't work? If we can't reach them through this?

The decision to put three of four workshops and a large part of its professional staff time in Africa, is the most visible manifestation of a deliberate policy decision to increase activities in Africa, that can be seen anywhere in the Division. Although the Associate Director says that regional spread of projects is not an issue in the decisions on proposals, he also says that activities in Africa are based on "a sense that perhaps we had failed in Africa". The commitment of staff time to the project has certainly meant that less time was available for other topics. The Programme Officer working on the workshops is recognized as an excellent administrator, and there is some feeling in the Division that his administrative skills would be very useful to the Programme in clearing up some of its problems with the Division.

Whatever the hidden priority of Africa may be in the Programme, it is clear that to date Asia has been a very low priority for the Programme. At no time in the last three years have Asian projects accounted for more than 13% of new appropriations for the Programme, and over the last three years, the number of Asian projects being approved, as a percentage of the Programme's total new projects, has declined from 20% to 10%. Asian projects may increase now that staff levels are increasing, and in particular with the addition of a Programme Officer with some familiarity with Asia. The Middle East is apparently not a priority at all for the Programme.

Latin America, with its 71% of new projects in 1981-82, and 57% of project appropriations, clearly remains the main area of operation in the Programme. This is due first to the extensive contacts the Programme has in the area and to the fact, as one Programme Officer said, that researchers in the area are more sophisticated and ready for this research than those in other parts of the world.

Curiously enough, the travel patterns of S&T staff do not show any preference for Latin America. If the travel of the Sussex-based staff member is included, travel to Latin America took less Programme time than travel to Africa or Asia. If the Sussex-based staff member is excluded, Latin American travel was almost the same as that to Africa and less than that to Asia. This may indicate that in future more projects will be developed in Africa and Asia. Overall, S&T staff travelled less than any other Programme, at 17% of the possible travel time during the year, as opposed to the Divisional average of 21.5%.

### Project Size

There is a widespread impression within the Division that Science and Technology Policy projects tend to be very large. In fact, overall, the average size of the Programme's projects approved in FY 1981-82 was 10% above the average for the Division if Institutional Support and IRRN

are excluded from the Divisional average, or slightly below the Divisional average when they are included. Only 20% of S&T's projects were for more than \$100,000. The Division average was 24.5% of projects over \$100,000. But the question of size does become important when we consider the average size of those projects approved which were over \$100,000. This is a category where the Division as a whole reviews projects, and it is here that Divisional impressions are formed. In the Division as a whole, projects over \$100,000 had an average cost in FY 1981-82, of \$171,462. S&T, with an average size of projects in this category of \$232,250, was 35% higher than the Divisional average, and by far the highest in the Division. This had an effect on the percentage of the Programme's appropriations accounted for by large projects. While only 20% of S&T projects were over \$100,000, they accounted for 57.5% of its appropriations. The value of DAPs presented to the Division was also significantly higher than the Divisional average.

#### Relations with the Division

The most striking fact about the Science and Technology Policy Programme, is the poor state of its relations with the rest of the Division, not in personal terms, primarily, but in professional terms. The Programme is subject to severe criticism when its projects are presented for Divisional review. This is particularly evident at the Internal Review Meetings, where Board-headed projects make their Divisional debut. The general assessment of the Programme's performance at these meetings is quite negative, and it is likely that both personal and professional concerns play a role here.

The Programme's Associate Director has a sometimes acerbic presentation of himself, and seems to thrive on conflict, as he himself acknowledges. He is often very rough in his comments to others, and has undoubtedly alienated some people. When his proposals come before the IRM, people pay particular attention to them. One person has observed that there may well be a double

standard used to review Science and Technology Policy's projects in the Division. This is not to say that people who criticize these projects dislike the Associate Director. But they do undoubtedly, because of his own approach to interpersonal relationships, consider him "fair game" for criticism. If there is a double standard in the Division, it is this: While projects from other Programmes are given a benefit of the doubt, those in Science and Technology Policy are not.

In particular there is a widespread view within the Division that, although both the Division Director and the S&T Associate Director would deny it, there is a very definite personality conflict involved in their frequent professional differences of opinion. Both of these individuals would argue that their differences concern managerial style of the Division, and the quality of projects submitted to the Division. But it does appear to most people that personality differences exacerbate these other problems.

The S&T Associate Director himself has little time for Divisional meetings, and particularly for the Internal Review Meetings. He believes that a lot of criticisms of his projects are "grandstanding". He basically believes that, by the time a project gets to the IRM, commitments have been made to the researchers, and the projects should be approved largely as they stand. He thinks projects should circulate and get written comments, but not be reviewed by the Division in Internal Review Meetings. Several projects presented to the meetings by the Associate Director, have received serious criticisms this year, and have, contrary to the usual practice at these meetings, been substantially changed. In one case a project was reduced in size from roughly \$900,000 to \$200,000. In another, a Project Summary for \$328,000 was reduced to \$70,000. Both projects received severe criticism on methodological grounds, and for the general "obscurity" of the Project Summaries. The large size of both was also a factor. People expect that proposals for this amount of money will be very clear, and the objective and methods beyond question.

The Associate Director says that he himself had questions about the merits of the projects in their original states, and at their original budgets, but that he decided to present them to the Division anyway.

It comes back to what we're here for.  
My own idea is that we must present the ideas as clearly as possible in the way they have been set up. I would like to see the Project Summary as a reflection of the proposal, and that is what the proposal was.

Speaking of the Divisional decision to reduce the budget of one of his projects, substantially, he said:

It was probably a wise decision. I get very enthusiastic about researchers and research. It is true, when I reflect on it, that I really had not dealt with them, or knew them very well. It's probably more sensible to proceed that way.

While the Associate Director may have philosophical reasons for presenting projects he himself sees as flawed, to the Division, and whatever the merits of this approach, the net result of this has been to seriously damage the Programme's credibility within the Division. This, more than any personality factor, is why the Programme's projects are not given the benefit of the doubt at the Divisional level. The Programme is perceived by some people as the *bête noire* of the Division, and there is an expectation that flaws will be found in its proposals. This is, therefore, to a large extent a function of the chosen style of operation of the Programme itself. The Programme actively abrogates several important norms of behaviour within the Division, and pays the price for it. They themselves view their activity as reflecting a disinclination to "play the game" with the bureaucracy, but the norms of any organization are often more than a game. They are, in positive terms, a set of mechanisms and patterns of behaviour which permit the organization to function as more than just a disparate collection of separate elements. When they are abrogated, difficulties may be caused for other members of the organization, who will react to this situation.

One of the norms of the Division is that by the time a project reaches the Project Summary stage, and leaves the Programme unit for Divisional review, by Management or by the Internal Review Meeting, the project will be accepted in principle, although clarifications and minor modifications may be sought. The Division operates on the understanding that the professional judgement of the Programme staff will be given the greatest weight at the Divisional level, in any decision to approve the project. But that norm itself is predicated on another--that before projects come before the Division, a basic level of screening will have been done by the Programme, that basic flaws will have been eliminated, basic questions about such things as project size will have been asked. Obvious structural or substantive problems are expected to be dealt with at the Programme level, and not passed on to the Division. The problems which the Science and Technology Policy Programme faces with some of its projects, when they come to Divisional review, is that the Division perceives that the Programme has not adequately fulfilled these review functions. Where the Programme is seen to have abrogated norms regarding its professional review function, the Division as a whole feels justified in abrogating the Divisional norm of accepting the judgement of the Programme. People believe that the first two levels of the project screening and elaboration process, involving serious review by the Programme Officer and by the Programme unit, have not been adequately executed, and they believe they are being asked to do more review or screening work on the projects at the Divisional level, because of this.

The Programme abrogates other norms in the Division also. Project Summaries are expected to be clearly written, and to be delivered by certain deadlines. Corrections are expected to be made to grammar and style when the Division edits the documents. Programmes are expected to know how much money they can spend, and to deliver Project Summaries when they are expected, particularly at the end of the year. To some extent, S&T abrogates all of these norms.



It is not just a question, therefore, of the Programme presenting innovative proposals to the Division, and these proposals receiving criticism for their unorthodox nature. At least one other Programme presents proposals with innovative methods or structure to the Division, but generally gets these things through without problem. It is successful because it observes the other norms of the Division, norms which help the Division function, and in so doing, the Programme builds up a store of credibility. S&T, on the other hand, through deliberate or inadvertent abrogation of norms, has exhausted much of credit or credibility it has had in the Division, and for this reason, can expect to get a more serious review of the projects it presents.

The Associate Director of the Science and Technology Policy Programme does not believe that his Programme's relations with the rest of the Division are as difficult as we have suggested. He believes that what conflicts do occur can be traced not primarily to abrogation of norms or to personality issues, but to basic differences of outlook between his Programme and many other people in the Division. These differences occur in several areas. Their view of science or empirical research, as we have noted earlier, is that it requires flexibility, and they believe this view is not widely shared in the Division. Because their projects are what they see as more problem-oriented than some others in the Division, they believe the objectives, outcomes and research methods are often more difficult to specify before research begins, and this causes problems for their Project Summaries. They also believe that because they are not "academics", as they see many others in the Division as being, they talk in less abstract and blunter terms than others, and this causes them problems. Finally, they believe that because they are willing to go with what their researchers want, their project documents sometimes appear unpolished, and raise challenges in the Division.

The Programme has been understaffed for some time, and with the large load of Project Summaries the Associate Director has personally had to write, it was perhaps inevitable that some problems would occur. If the problems the Programme has faced are traceable to a pattern of challenges to Divisional norms, as we have suggested, and if the abrogation of these norms was partially a result of understaffing in the Programme, then it is possible that with an increase in staff levels, the Programme's relations with the Division will become smoother. If the problems are traceable, however, to a basic difference in outlook or philosophy between the Programme and the Division (a difference which could be connected to challenges to Divisional norms), and are complicated by poor communication about these differences, then staff increases alone will not reduce the difficulties many people see in the Programme's relations with the Division.

ISSUES FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION

This report has described some of the main decision making and communication patterns within the Social Sciences Division. There remain, however, issues which may deserve further consideration by the Division. These were issues either outside the basic focus of this study, or those suggested by Division staff in reaction to a preliminary draft of this report:

1. What will be the implications of changing career patterns (from short-term to relatively longer-term affiliation of individuals with the Centre) for the work of the Division, and for the professional orientation of the staff concerned?
2. What implications will increasing professionalism and autonomy of Programme Officers have for the future role of Associate Directors?
3. If new staff appointed to Regional Offices are subject specialists affiliated to specific Programme units in Ottawa, rather than generalists with a Division-wide affiliation, what will be the implications for decision making in project development, and for communication between Ottawa and the regions?
4. What implications does continuing devolution of responsibility from Division Management to Programme units, have in terms of a shifting of administrative workload from the Division Director to other staff?
5. What is the historical background to changes in the Division?
6. What are the philosophical views about development and research held by different Division staff, and how have these affected behaviour and interaction?
7. What criteria are used for staff recruitment?

8. What level of interaction or intervention by Programme staff is desirable in determining the scope and nature of research projects funded by the Division?

9. To what extent are there identifiably different "cultures" in the different Programmes? What sustains the culture of a Programme, and how does it change, over time? Are Programme and Divisional cultures compatible?

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