

REPORT ON THE WORK OF ACCIS OF RELEVANCE TO THE WORK OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

Prepared by the Advisory Committee for the Co-ordination
of Information Systems (ACCIS)

The following is a brief overview of those activities of ACCIS which may be of interest to the members of the ACC Sub-Committee on Statistical Activities:

more detail on its contents

(1) Register of Development Activities of the United Nations system

The first edition of the Register of development activities of the United Nations system, covering development activities current in 1987 and carried out by 33 United Nations system organizations, was published at the end of 1988. This publication, which represents the coming to fruition of one the most important components of the ACCIS work programme, contains information on over 20,000 activities for social and economic development.

The publication of this edition of the Register is the culmination of five years of work. It was undertaken in response to a request by the Economic and Social Council in resolution 1982/71, and the General Assembly in resolution 37/226. Responsibility for producing the Register was given to ACCIS by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination.

The Register is available, price USD30, from the United Nations Sales Offices in Geneva and New York (United Sales Number: GV.E.88.0.4). Register data, augmented by subject descriptors, is also available on diskettes from the ACCIS Secretariat.

ACCIS is now in the process of preparing for this year's edition, which will contain information on activities current in 1988. It is anticipated that the Register will be published on an annual basis.

(2) Guide for United Nations database producers

have not seen this

In February 1989 ACCIS published Providing access to United Nations databases: a guide for United Nations database producers. As its title indicates, this publication is intended to provide guidance on the issues involved in making computerized data available through online services. It identifies issues to be considered in framing access policies, in addition to policies and practices already in existence throughout the system, as reported to ACCIS by September 1987.

The publication is available from the ACCIS Secretariat, free of charge while stocks last. Approximately 700 copies have already been distributed to a number of locations. Copies have been sent to producers of databases within the United Nations system which are included in the Directory of United Nations Databases and Information Systems (DUNDIS).

(3) Directory of United Nations Databases and Information Systems (DUNDIS)

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DUNDIS is a comprehensive information source on information systems and services and computerized databases maintained by the United Nations system. The DUNDIS database is now being updated in preparation for a new edition of the printed Directory of United Nations databases and information systems, scheduled for publication in the spring of 1990. Whereas the 1985 edition contained approximately 600 entries, the 1990 Directory will list almost 1,000 information systems, services and databases. It will also include a section on publicly available application software developed by the United Nations system.

(4) Trade Guide

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The ACCIS Secretariat is currently preparing the third in the series of ACCIS guides to information sources available within the United Nations system. The first two guides, on agriculture and the environment respectively, were published in 1987 and 1988. The ACCIS guide to United Nations information sources on international trade and development finance will provide a comprehensive overview of the organizational units of the United Nations system whose work relates to trade issues, covering their specific activities in the trade field, and the various forms in which the information which results from these activities is made available to the public. It is expected to be available in August 1989.

(5) Technical Panel on Electronic Records Management (TP/REM)

TP/REM was established by ACCIS at its 1987 meeting, with a mandate to look at the impact of new technology on archives and records management methods and services. The Panel is chaired by The World Bank. Three task groups, created by the Panel for this purpose, have examined aspects of its work programme and have now produced draft versions of reports, which, when final, will be amalgamated into TP/REM's final report. These include: a set of guidelines and a glossary of terms for electronic records management; a paper on technical standards, and a report incorporating analysis of results of a survey of United Nations system organizations on electronic records management practices. The final report will be submitted to ACCIS at its September 1989 meeting.

(6) Technical Panel on Computer-Supported Telecommunications Services (TP/COM)

*Refer to
our own
meeting
on
telecommunications*

TP/COM, lead agency of which is the World Health Organization (WHO), was created to deal with the impact of new communication technologies on the transmission of information within the United Nations system. One of its activities is the development of a Telecommunications Database which would provide online information on the telecommunication linkages available for use by the United Nations system between a number of locations throughout the world. A pilot, test database is currently being developed by the International Computing Centre (ICC). It is estimated that the test database will be operational by the end of summer 1989. A progress report, including usage statistics, will be presented to ACCIS at its September 1989 meeting.

(7) ACCIS meeting

ACCIS will hold its biennial meeting from 18-21 September 1989 in Geneva.