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EBAP/83/307

December 12, 1983

To: Members of the Executive Board

From: The Secretary

Subject: Guidelines for Electronic Data Processing (EDP) Support
for Executive Directors' Offices

The attached memorandum by the Managing Director is circulated in connection with the Mid-Year Review of Expenses in FY 1984 and Budgetary Outlook for FY 1985 (EBAP/83/296, 12/6/85), scheduled for discussion on Wednesday, December 14, 1983.

Att: (1)

Other Distribution:
Department Heads

December 12, 1983

To: Members of the Executive Board

From: The Managing Director

Subject: Guidelines for Electronic Data Processing (EDP) Support
of Executive Directors' Offices

In recent months several Executive Directors' offices have inquired about the kinds of EDP support that the Fund might provide for them. Because the technological environment both in the Fund and elsewhere is undergoing rapid change, it has been difficult to provide satisfactory answers to many of those inquiries. Therefore, it seems appropriate to suggest that, in order to facilitate the provision of EDP services to Executive Directors' offices on a consistent and effective basis, the following guidelines might be followed while the computer environment in the Fund is in transition. In proposing these guidelines it is recognized that they will need to be modified as the computer environment evolves. For example, at the present time the Fund's existing systems do not have the technical capability to provide general on-line access for either Executive Directors or staff and the resources available for providing data processing support are severely limited. However, the major changes being initiated, including the development of more readily accessible economic information systems and the beginnings of office automation, are likely to permit a larger range of facilities for Executive Directors within the next two or three years. In the interim, it is suggested:

1. Word Processing equipment

Each Executive Director's office would be entitled to one word processor. Currently the Fund finds it necessary to limit the choice of word processing equipment to four products: IBM Displaywriters, Lexitrons, NBI's and CPT's. The limitation on the choice of equipment is necessary to ensure that compatibility and technical support can be generally maintained while still permitting some degree of flexibility. Word processors are now being evaluated in the Fund's office automation pilot projects, and equipment recommendations will change as a result of these studies. Requests for word processing equipment should be directed to the Executive Board Services Unit which will coordinate with the Bureau of Computing Services in advising offices on the equipment best suited to meet their needs.

2. Access to Fund EDP systems

As mentioned above, at the present time it is not practicable to provide on-line access to Fund systems for all those Executive Directors and staff members who have requested it. Nor is it possible at this time to be certain when or in what form on-line access could be made more generally available. In the meantime, it is proposed that existing procedures should be maintained whereby Executive Directors who wish to utilize Fund EDP systems may direct their requests to the Bureau of Computing Services, which will arrange for the staff of the Bureau to carry out the necessary work. As in the past, sufficient funds will be included in the budget for the next fiscal year to meet the estimated costs of computer use of this type. In addition, it is proposed that a very small number of personal computers should be made available for lending to Executive Directors' offices for limited periods of time. This facility would parallel the arrangements for lending personal computers to staff members for use on missions. The pool of personal computers would be held in the Bureau of Computing Services which would make them available to Executive Directors' offices on a first-come first-served basis. If an Executive Director's office requested the use of a personal computer and one was not available, that office would be put in touch with those offices to which personal computers were on loan.

3. Access to data bases of members countries

Because of the technological difficulties and high costs likely to be involved in linking up to computers located outside of the United States, the Fund should not provide or pay for any facilities to enable Executive Directors to access data bases of member countries that appointed or elected them. Should an Executive Director decide that such access is necessary for the work of his office, it would be his responsibility to make the necessary arrangements with his authorities. The Bureau of Computing Services would be available to provide technical advice at the Fund's headquarters but not elsewhere.

I trust that the above arrangements are agreeable to Executive Directors. It is, of course, intended that the guidelines would be modified as the computer environment evolves.