

**FOR
AGENDA**

SM/03/69
Correction 1

March 3, 2003

To: Members of the Executive Board

From: The Secretary

Subject: **A Review of the Fund's External Communications Strategy**

The attached corrections to SM/03/69 (2/13/03) have been provided by the staff:

Page 10a, Figure 2: inadvertently omitted.

Page 47, row 10, column 3: add "H-2" and "W".

Page 48, row 6, column 3: add "W" below "H-2".

Page 51, para. 82, line 7: for "in some cases" read "in most cases."

Page 54, para. 95, last two lines: for "The World Bank....website." read "The World Bank indicated that it regularly posts documents in Chinese, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish on its website."

Page 57, para. 98, line 5: for "or least" read "or at least."

Page 58, footnote 44, lines 1 and 2: for "The FY 2003 administrative...in expenses." read "The FY 2003 Publications Budget, which is included in the Fund's administrative budget, showed a net outlay of \$3.83 million for the publications program (\$4.77 million in revenues and \$8.60 millions in expenses, primarily for external printing and postage and excluding in-house TGSIM costs and capital outlays, staffing, and overhead in all departments)."

Page 59: corrected for overflow of text.

Page 60, Table 3, footnote 1: add the following at the end “The cost may vary from one language to another depending on the format used to post the material.”

footnote 3, line 2: for “EXR estimates...Phases 1 and 2.” read “EXR estimates assume that IT funding and requisite EXR staffing would be in place for each phase.”

Page 63, para. 109, line 4: for “where they” read “where many of them.”

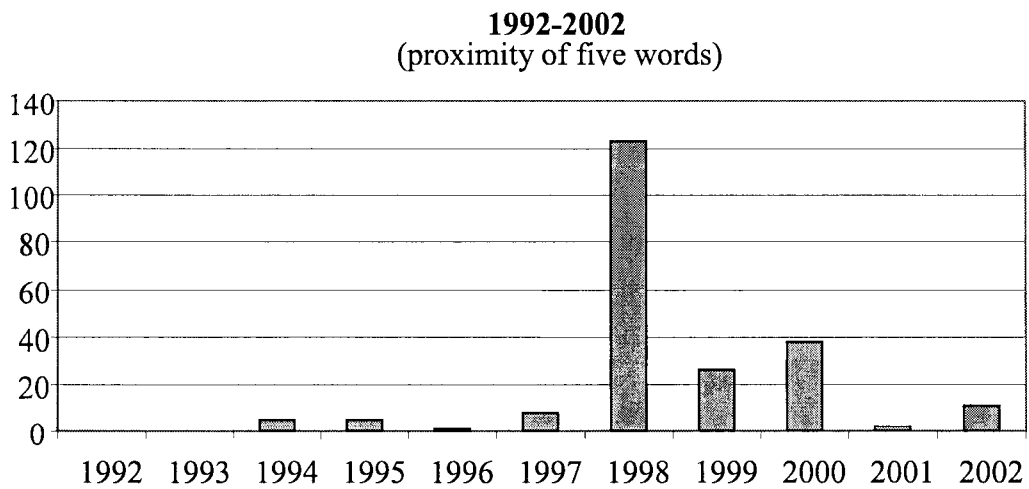
Page 64: corrected for overflow of text.

Questions may be referred to Mr. Hacche (ext. 37409) and Mr. Russell (ext. 37065) in EXR.

Att: (11)

Other Distribution:
Department Heads

Figure 2. References to the IMF and the Word "Secretive" in English-Language Publications



Source: Factiva database

IMF Pamphlet Series (1 a year)		H-3 W	F R S
<i>IMF Research Bulletin</i> (quarterly)		H-3 W	
<i>IMF Staff Papers</i> (3 a year, plus a special issue)		H-3 W	
<i>IMF Survey</i> (23 issues a year)		H-3 W	F S F S
<i>IMF Survey Supplement</i> (annual)		H-3 W	A C F G R S F S
Independent Evaluation Office reports (3 a year)		H-3 W	
Independent Evaluation Office reports (abridged versions) (3 a year)		H-3 W	
Independent Evaluation Office Annual Report		H-3 W	
Occasional Papers (approx. 8 or more a year)		H-3	
<i>Selected Decisions</i>		H-2 W	
Study Guide to "the Fabric of Reform" An IMF Video on Exploring Economic Change in Western Africa		H-3 W	F F
<i>Summary Proceedings</i>		H-3 W	
World Economic and Financial Surveys (WEFS)			
<i>World Economic Outlook</i> (normally 2 a year)		H-3 W	A C F S
<i>Global Financial Stability Report</i> (quarterly)		H-3 W	
<i>Official Financing for Developing Countries</i>		H-3	
Biennial Report on Exchange Arrangements		H-3	
Statistical			
Annual Report of the IMF Committee on Balance of Payments Statistics		H-3 W	
Balance of Payments Statistics Newsletter		H-2 W	F S R
<i>Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook</i>		H-2	
<i>Direction of Trade Statistics</i> (Quarterly)		H-2	
<i>Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook</i>		H-2	
<i>Government Finance Statistics Yearbook</i>		H-2	
<i>International Financial Statistics</i> ⁶ (monthly)		H-3 C D W	
SNA News and Notes		W	R

6/ STA, with the participation of TGS and EXR, is re-engineering the IFS production process, so much of it, including the preparation of files for an external commercial printer, will be automated.

Manuals & Guides			
Balance of Payments Codes for Standard Components and Additional Items, A Guide to		W	
<i>Balance of Payments Compilation Guide</i>		H - 2 W	ACFSR
Balance of Payments Manual		H - 2 W	ACFSR
<i>Balance of Payments Statistics—International Standards and Guidelines</i>		CD	
<i>Balance of Payments Textbook</i>		H - 2 W	CFRS
<i>Coordinated Portfolio Investment Survey Guide</i>		H - 2 W	FSR FS
<i>Direction of Trade Statistics, A Guide to</i>		H - 2	FS
<i>Equity and Efficiency in the Reform of Price Subsidies, A Guide for Policymakers</i>		H - 3 W	
<i>External Debt Statistics: Guide for Compilers and Users</i>		H - 3 W	
<i>Financial Derivatives: A Supplement to the Fifth Edition of the Balance of Payments Manual</i>		H - 2 CD W	ACRS CR
Foreign Exchange Reserve Management, Draft Guidelines		W	AFRS
<i>Government Finance Statistics Manual</i>		H - 2 W	CRS
Guide to SDDS: Revised Edition		H - 3	ACFSR
Guideline for Public Debt Management		W	AFRS
<i>International Reserves and Foreign Currency Liquidity</i>		H - 3 W	FRS
<i>Manual on Fiscal Transparency</i>		H - 3 W	ACFPSR
<i>Monetary and Financial Statistics Manual</i>		H - 3 W	F ACFS
New International Standards for the Statistical Measurement of Financial Derivative Changes to the Text of the 1993 SNA		W	
Producer Price Index Manual		W	
Public Expenditure Management Guidelines		H - 3 W	
<i>Quarterly National Accounts Manual</i>		H - 2 W	
<i>Tax Policy Handbook</i>		H - 3	R

Professionally Produced Publications

Nonstatistical publications

81. The Fund publishes most *nonstatistical publications* only in English; the exceptions are selected titles that are published in one or more of the other seven languages for which TGSLS has translators on staff (Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish).³⁹ These comprise primarily such major titles as the *World Economic Outlook* and the *Annual Report*, the *IMF Survey* and *Finance & Development*, and Economic Issues and some other pamphlets aimed at broad audiences. As a general rule, the decision to translate, publish, and distribute in languages other than English is taken by EXR in consultation with the authoring department, TGSLS, and other affected departments, taking into account the nature of the publication and its relationship to the external communications strategy. A decision to translate, publish, and distribute is taken only after it is clear that there is a significant benefit to be achieved and that the cost can be managed within the budget. These decisions are reviewed from time to time, to ensure that the benefits remain high and the costs affordable.

82. As for web publication, the *Annual Report* (in French, German, and Spanish, as well as English), *WEO* (and the *WEO* database), *Global Financial Stability Report*, *IMF Staff Papers*, and manuals and guides (in all languages in which print copies are produced) are posted (in English) in full text, along with all free or nominally priced publications (the latter including Working Papers and Policy Discussion Papers). For other priced publications—including books and all but a few Occasional Papers—only the list of contents and, in most cases, an introductory chapter appear on the Fund website, in the interest of maintaining sales revenues.

Statistical publications

83. *Statistical publications* are produced by STA, in cooperation with EXR and TGS. The Fund distributes them free of charge to official users in member countries and on a paid basis to others. Titles include *International Financial Statistics (IFS)* and *IFS Yearbook*, *Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook (BOPSY)*, *Direction of Trade Statistics (DOTS)*, and *Government Finance Statistics Yearbook (GFSY)*. Statistical publications appear in print and on CD, with the *International Financial Statistics* database also available to subscribers on the Internet.⁴⁰ Statistical titles, other than manuals and guides, are produced only in English, the French and Spanish versions of *IFS* having been discontinued in 2001 because of low demand and resulting high costs, which had risen above \$700 per copy.

³⁹ In special circumstances, selected works may be translated into another language, such as for the Prague Annual Meetings in 2000, for which selected titles were published in Czech.

⁴⁰ *IFS* online is available free of charge to individual subscribers in developing countries affiliated with academic or nonprofit institutions. Other categories of subscribers receive partial discounts. Commercial users in industrial countries pay full price. A table of rates and discounts for *IFS* is available from Publication Services Section EXR.

Manuals and Guides

84. Manuals and guides are published in hard copy and posted in full text on the Fund website. Many of the recent editions have been posted in multiple languages (Arabic, Chinese, French, Russian, and Spanish).

Other Publications

85. This category of publications—which neither originate as Board documents nor are professionally produced—includes Working Papers and Policy Discussion Papers, Press Releases, Factsheets and Issues Briefs, EXR’s quarterly NGO Newsletter, and mission concluding statements.

86. Working Papers and Policy Discussion Papers are written by staff, reviewed for sensitivity in EXR, and published in low-cost print format and on the Fund website. The Fund has in recent years published about 220 Working Papers and 8 Policy Discussion Papers annually. These are usually published only in English, but may be translated into one or more of the seven other languages handled in TGSLs upon request. Non-English-language versions have not been distributed by EXR’s Publication Services Section, nor posted on the website.

News Releases, Factsheets, and Issues Briefs

87. EXR prepares Press Releases, Factsheets, and Issues Briefs in consultation with relevant departments. EXR published 55 Press Releases and 133 News Briefs in 2002; the two series were merged into a single series of Press Releases in 2003, as explained in the main paper, “A Review of the Fund’s External Communications Strategy.” EXR also drafts Factsheets and Issues Briefs, in consultation with other departments. Press Releases are published in hard copy and on the Fund website, in English only. Typically, Factsheets and Issues Briefs are published in print format and on the website in English, French, and Spanish; other language versions have occasionally been prepared and posted on an ad hoc basis.

Mission concluding statements

88. Mission concluding statements describe the preliminary findings of IMF staff at the conclusion of certain missions; they are released at the option of member countries. These are posted in full text in English only on the Fund website; they are not published in print by the Fund, except sometimes as handouts to the local media.

C. Comparing Recent Practice at the Fund and Other International Organizations

89. The Task Force sought information from a number of other international organizations on their policies and practices regarding languages, translated documents/publications, and formats (see Appendix IV). Six international organizations—the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the United Nations (UN), the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization (WTO)—provided responses on their translation and publication practices. The UN also provided a report on “Implementation

of Multilingualism in the United Nations System,” prepared by the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit (JIU) in 2002.⁴¹

90. Policies and practices on publishing in languages are diverse and largely discretionary at these organizations. Policies seem to be partly determined by the designation of one or more “official” and/or “working” languages by the respective organizations—the Fund and World Bank have one “working” language, English, and no other language has any official status. The terms “official language” and “working language” are not defined consistently by international organizations, however, nor is there a clear pattern of translation and publication based upon such designations. Language and publication practices seem to a considerable extent to be determined by the availability and cost of translation services and publishing resources within the respective organizations.

91. **BIS.** Although the working language of the BIS is English, it publishes its *Annual Report*, *Quarterly Review*, some Committee Papers, the *BIS Profile*, and the *BIS Statutes* (both hardcopies and web) in its four official languages (English, French, German, and Italian). Its *Annual Report* and the *BIS Profile* are also published in Spanish. Some items are published only electronically, on the BIS website.

92. **FAO.** The FAO regularly publishes official documents in its five official languages (English, French, Spanish, Arabic, and Chinese) “where relevant.” Some items are published only electronically, on the FAO website.

93. **OECD.** The OECD publishes a wide range of documents (Reports, Surveys, Proceedings, Working Papers, Outlooks, and others) on the web and in print in its two official languages (English and French). The OECD publishes irregularly in nonofficial languages (German, Japanese, and Spanish), depending upon the “interest of the publication for specific countries/constituencies.” Some publications appear only electronically, on the OECD website.

94. **United Nations.** The UN has six official and working languages (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish) and is required by its rules of procedure concerning languages (adopted in 1946) to make available “all resolutions and other important documents” in all official languages. The UN General Assembly specified in 1981 (Resolution 36/117 B) that all official documents submitted to any of the principal organs “shall be given effective simultaneous distribution in the official and working languages.” UN publications are not considered official documents and are not produced in all six languages. Press releases, for example, are produced only in English and French. The UN Department of Public Information stated in a press release on May 3, 2001 (PI/1342) that “It

⁴¹ “Implementation of multilingualism in the United Nations System,” Geneva 2002, prepared by the United Nations Joint Inspection Unit (JIU/REP/2002/11).

would cost some \$6 million per year in additional staffing costs alone to produce [press releases] in all six official languages."⁴²

95. **World Bank.** Like the IMF, the World Bank does not have an official language; English is the working language. On a selective basis, the World Bank publishes hard-copy documents and other publications in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. The World Bank indicated that it regularly posts documents in Chinese, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish on its website.

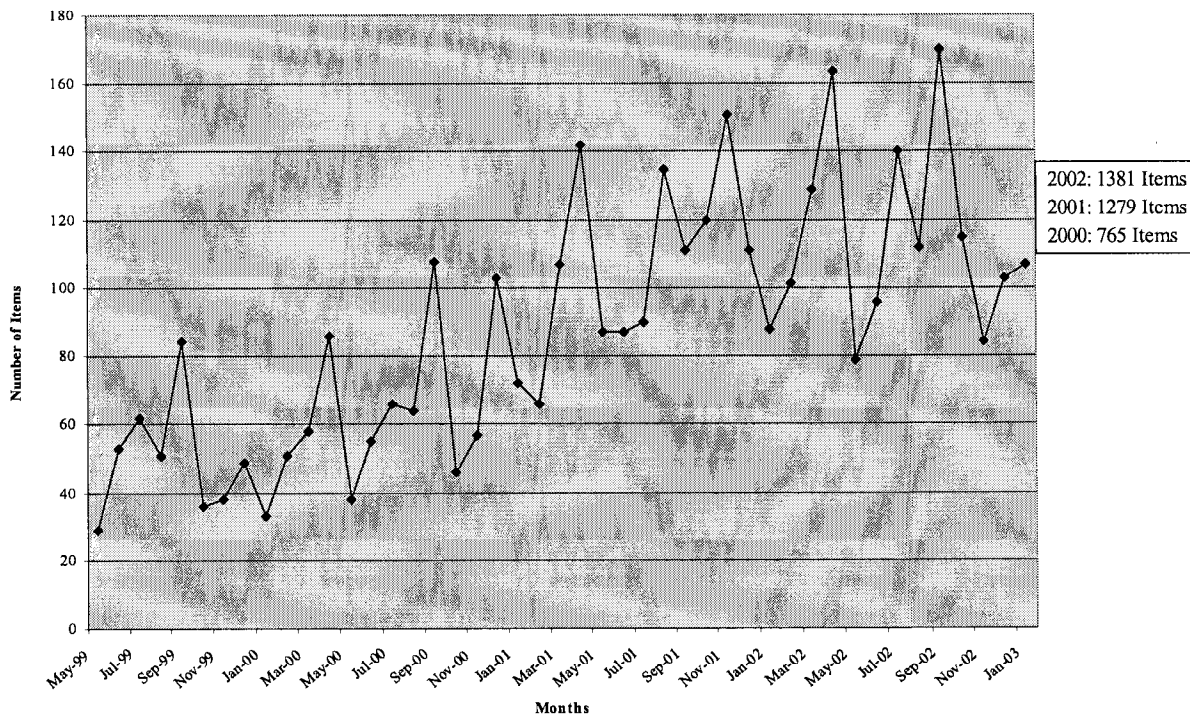
96. **WTO.** The WTO states that it publishes and posts all documents and publications in its three official languages (English, French, and Spanish). It has no web-only publications.

97. The language publication practices of the other international organizations surveyed are shaped by their designation of official and working languages with, at times, limited additions as a result of special needs or exemptions due to budgetary constraints. Most did not provide, and presumably do not have, formal policy statements governing languages or formats for publications. It would seem that the publication decisions of other international organizations, where they have discretion and are not mandated to publish, are made on the basis of judgments by management and staff of perceived utility, demand, and cost factors, much as they are in the Fund (see Box 3 on the Fund's publications program and Box 4 on the Fund's external website). No organization comparable to the Fund appears to have a policy of translation and publication extending much beyond a relatively small set of official/working languages. (The World Bank's practice appears to be the most extensive in this respect.) The Fund's practice of publishing mainly but not exclusively in English, its working language, therefore, appears to be well within the mainstream of current practices of comparable international organizations.

⁴² For more information on language publications in the UN system, see Appendix IV.

Box 4. (concluded). The Fund's External Website, www.imf.org

The IMF's External Website—Items Added 1/ to "What's New"
May 1999 to January 2003



^{1/} This chart underreports content added to www.imf.org. It excludes, for example, non-English language material, speeches by Governors at the Annual Meetings, and items posted on Resident Representatives' segments of www.imf.org. In addition, the count of entries does not reflect the volume of material posted—for example, one entry in "What's New" for International Reserves signals the addition of more than 150 web pages. Enhanced or updated pages are usually not counted either.

III. OPTIONS AND COSTS FOR LANGUAGES AND FORMATS OF PUBLICATIONS

98. **The Fund's policy of one working language, and its largely pragmatic approach to publication in languages other than English have hitherto allowed its publishing program to include a substantial number and variety of publications in such languages,** as indicated in Table 1. Non-English versions are translations from the original English version, and current practice is to have all translations from the English version done, or at least revised, by TGS Language Services prior to publication to ensure accuracy.⁴³ In addition

⁴³ Area departments and PDR report that translations (or original versions) of some Board documents, especially program documents, exist in local languages in many countries; however, in many cases it seems that such versions were not prepared or reviewed by TGSLS for accuracy and may not correspond exactly to the content of the Board document.

to the cost of *translation*, there are costs for *printing* (for both internal and external distribution), *web posting* (including conversion of documents and manuscripts into an appropriate format for posting, and costs associated with creating or improving access and search capabilities in non-English languages), and *distribution* (order and fulfillment). Non-English-language printed versions are sometimes produced in lower-cost formats (for example, in black-and-white rather than color, or with a less expensive cover) in order to reduce costs, given the more limited demand. In some cases, licensing or other arrangements are made for publishing houses overseas to produce, market, and distribute non-English editions.

99. As part of the work of the Task Force, the Office of Budget and Planning (OBP) prepared an estimate of \$11.2 million for the total *net* cost of the Fund's current *publishing* program (electronic and hard copy), after subtracting over \$5 million in annual revenue and adding a factor for Fund overhead for space, utilities, etc., in addition to staff time and direct outlays, but excluding authoring costs. This estimate also excludes the cost of printing, distributing, and web publishing Board documents (whether internally or for the public), which are currently printed for the Board in English only. OBP estimated the cost of printing and distributing *Board documents* during a recent 12-month period to be about \$2.8 million, when staff time, administrative costs (maintenance and amortization of equipment, for example), and capital projects were included. Thus, the Fund makes substantial outlays for publications and documents in the annual administrative budget, plus periodic outlays in the capital budget.

100. The Fund's administrative budgets for FY 2004 and the medium term do not assume any significant increase in resources devoted to the publishing program, although efficiency gains, together with some IT investments under consideration in the capital budget, may lead to higher productivity and possibly higher revenue over time.⁴⁴ Accordingly, there is little, if any room within current budget limits to translate, publish, and distribute additional material without undertaking cost reductions in either these or other areas.

101. Given the various possible combinations of languages and formats, and the range of publications to which any language/format combination could apply, whether selectively or on a blanket basis for given categories, the costs of any expansion of language publication would vary greatly depending upon the options chosen. As a base point for discussion, recognizing that printing and handling costs are a significant cost factor for publications, and that Internet access is increasing rapidly in many countries (although it is still quite limited in some low-income countries and although some users, even in industrial countries, must pay per minute for access), EXR, OBP, and TGS prepared **a cost estimate for the translation and web-only publication of a range of selected additional material in five languages: French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, and Arabic (see Table 3).** It is estimated that the *one-*

⁴⁴ The FY 2003 Publications Budget, which is included in the Fund's administrative budget, showed a net outlay of \$3.83 million for the publications program (\$4.77 million in revenues and \$8.60 millions in expenses, primarily for external printing and postage and excluding in-house TGSIM costs and capital outlays, staffing, and overhead in all departments). For FY 2004 an increase in expenses to \$8.81 million is assumed.

time “IT start up” costs for developing website access and search capabilities in each language, as well as templates and automated-site-management features, would amount to more than \$0.8 million. (Although the website currently has homepages for French, German, and Spanish, additional features would need to be added to enable persons not fluent in English to find and navigate the site efficiently. There are currently no homepages for Arabic, Chinese, and Russian.) **The *annual costs for publishing the additional selected items in the five languages*, however, which would need to be covered in the administrative budget, would total about \$7.8 million—a sum equal to about two-thirds of the total net cost of the Fund’s current publications program. As indicated in footnote 3 to the table, about \$3 million of this amount would be for additional staffing needs in EXR’s website section (5 full-time equivalents—FTEs) and in TGSLS (14.3 FTEs). About three-fourths of the total cost of \$8.6 million (over 90 percent of the annual “series costs” for selected items in Table 3) would be attributable to translation, although translation costs for specific items would vary considerably as a proportion of the total, depending upon the type of material translated and the language into which it was translated. Finally, where there are no costs or minimal costs shown in the table, this is because the indicated items are already translated and published (in print only in some cases) in the language indicated.**

Table 3. Estimates for Translating and Posting Selected Material on the Web 1/
(in U.S. dollars)

Series	Number of Items per Year	Languages					Totals
		Phase 1		Phase 2			
		French	Spanish	Russian	Chinese	Arabic	
WPs	6 to 20	60,718	70,462	30,924	1,694	74,769	238,566
PINs	25 to 35	24,996	30,979	31,834	3,628	33,823	125,260
PPRs and NBs	25 to 35	22,142	22,913	24,633	16,683	24,083	110,454
Views and Commentaries	5	1,993	1,993	2,790	2,890	2,830	12,497
Speeches	5	0	0	399	399	439	1,236
Issues Briefs	1 to 3	0	0	1,435	1,940	3,487	6,862
Transcripts	5	10,763	10,763	10,763	10,763	10,803	53,856
Country Reports	18 to 20	161,497	146,657	154,077	161,497	161,656	785,384
PDPs	2	5,884	5,884	5,884	148	5,884	23,683
F&D	4	0	0	957	177,071	177,623	355,651
IMF Survey	25 to 26	0	0	295,499	295,499	295,706	886,704
Factsheets	48 to 50	242	605	23,750	24,746	24,391	73,734
LOIs/MEFPs	9 to 20	20,937	23,225	14,836	23,225	23,385	105,609
PPRSPs	1 to 5	399	399	159	80	88	1,124
JSAs	2 to 6	13,002	15,437	15,437	5,146	5,394	54,416
Economic Issues	2 to 5	2,828	2,828	120	80	5,894	11,749
Occasional Papers	2 to 3	1,913	19,290	19,290	27,979	28,003	96,476
Pamphlets	1	0	0	80	655	663	1,398
Policy Papers	25	136,023	136,023	136,023	136,222	136,222	680,312
HIIPC papers	2 to 5	15,461	38,054	22,833	7,611	88	84,046
WEO	1 to 3	97,838	97,838	286,688	286,688	95,207	864,261
Annual Report	1	0	0	121,417	319	121,417	243,153
GFSR	2 to 4	9,267	16,301	16,301	2,232	16,301	60,403
Manuals, Guides	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
1. Series Costs		585,903	639,652	1,216,129	1,186,995	1,248,155	4,876,834
2. Development Costs							
IT Costs 2/		572,020			236,580		808,600
Non-IT Costs 3/		368,947	489,104	706,227	624,189	762,081	2,950,548
Subtotal (1 + 2 by Phase)		2,655,626			5,980,357		8,635,983
Grand Total				8,635,983			

1/ These costs take into account ONLY the expenditures related to posting the listed publications to the web. No expenditures related to printing hard copies of these publications and/or other related costs (such as postage and freight and supplies) are included. No cost estimate is given for series/items that are being posted now in the quantities indicated. The estimates assume that English material will be posted before other languages, i.e. not simultaneous posting. The cost may vary from one language to another depending on the format used to post the material.

2/ These are "one-time" costs. All other costs in the table would be annual costs.

3/ The "Non-IT Costs" category comprises the additional 5 Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs) which would be required by the External Website Section of EXR and another 14.3 FTEs by Language Services of TGS. EXR estimates assume that IT funding and requisite EXR staffing would be in place for each phase. FY 2003 standard costing for FTEs were used in compiling this table. Updated costs for FY 2004, which are not yet available, would need to be used if Phases 1 and 2 were considered for implementation.

international organizations, and has constructed illustrative estimates of the costs of additional language publication on its website.

107. The above estimates show that the **costs of translating and publishing significant quantities of selected additional material in five non-English languages** on the external website and/or in print **would be very large, including in relation to the costs of existing Fund translations and publications.** Such costs of expanding language publishing—which would comprise mostly recurrent outlays but also a large start-up cost for developing language pages on www.imf.org with search and other features needed for efficient use by non-English speakers—are not included in the proposed administrative budget spending levels for FYs 2004–2006. Therefore, in order to accommodate any significant increase in expenditures for this purpose, either corresponding reductions would have to be made in other planned outlays or the Board would need to consider raising the budget ceilings.

108. The **benefits** of a major expansion of Fund publications in non-English languages, whether on the external website or in print, **could include, in principle, reaching a broader audience, increasing country ownership of Fund-supported programs, and avoiding or reducing possible misinterpretations of the Fund’s or authorities’ views arising from inaccurate or incomplete translations.** In commenting upon a draft of this report, many departments and offices indicated that they find the existing program of selected translation and publication in various languages useful in supporting the Fund’s core outputs as well as increasing understanding of the Fund and its activities more generally. **Area departments and regional offices believe that extension of this translation and publication program—to include the publication of selected Board documents in non-English languages—would be useful in supporting the Fund’s outreach efforts, and the PRSP process,** in Sub-saharan African countries where English is not widely spoken.

109. **These benefits would be difficult to estimate quantitatively, and** actual demand for existing non-English publications provides some evidence that the benefits **might not be large, relative to the costs.** Sales of the Fund’s non-English language publications are insignificant even in Europe, where many of them are available from numerous sources. Surprisingly, demand even for the Fund’s complimentary publications in non-English languages also remains low in both industrial and developing countries. (As noted in the Board paper on external communications strategy, Fund staff and Executive Directors could help to distribute, or identify efficient channels for distribution of, *Economic Issues*, pamphlets, *Finance & Development*, Issues Briefs, and other material in non-English languages). Use of non-English material that has been on the website has also been relatively slight to date. In addition, it is notable that other relevant international organizations do not appear to be investing in major expansions of their non-English language publishing programs; nor do they report having experienced much increase in demand for their publications in languages other than English. With regard to web-only publishing, while Internet connectivity is growing rapidly in middle-income developing countries, it remains quite limited in low-income countries and in many cases users must pay per-minute access charges.

110. Nevertheless, to further the Fund’s communication objectives in selected countries with broad, non-English-speaking priority “Fund” audiences, the Task Force believes that

over time it may be possible and advantageous to **increase the non-English language publishing program selectively, where significant demand can be shown to exist, where benefits seem likely to exceed costs by a significant margin, and when resource constraints allow.** The Task Force did not find sufficient reason to recommend that additional resources, going beyond the established targets for the administrative and capital budgets, be devoted to the publication of translations. The Task Force noted that area departments and regional offices expressed differing views on which documents and languages should be given priority—ranging from limiting translation and publication to PINs and other short documents in the major “international languages,” to publishing all program documents in local languages (not necessarily international languages), to publishing any local-language translations of Board documents that may exist (that is, using local translations where they exist, without regard to whether they have been reviewed by TGSLs for accuracy and completeness). The Task Force recommends further exploration of options, and perhaps some experimentation.

111. One possible way to meet specific needs would be for area departments, usually through resident representatives to have short brochures prepared and/or translations of certain crucial documents done locally into the local language of their respective countries and, if feasible, posted on www.imf.org (possibly on the Resident Representative’s website) or, perhaps, on the authorities’ website. Preparing or translating material locally would depend upon the resources and work priorities of the area department and/or resident representative. Quality assurance for local language translations would also be a concern. With regard to posting on the Fund’s website, the setup costs of non-English website posting, referred to above, have to be borne in mind and could not be covered within current budget allocations. Limited local reproduction of hard copies, as needed, should be much less expensive than having material printed and shipped from Washington, D.C. or other central locations. An advantage of this “local option” possibility is that material could be custom made to a larger degree, being made available, for example, in Georgia in Georgian rather than Russian, and in Vietnam in Vietnamese rather than just English and French. But the “local option” has drawbacks. The amount of non-English material provided would be likely to vary from country to country, language to language, area department to area department, and from one overseas office to another, with Resident Representatives and country teams likely to have varying inclinations and resources to take on such a task, and with the possibility of some requesting the publication (including web posting) of material which, from a Fund-wide viewpoint, would be of low priority. The potential costs of such a “local option” could be substantial, and, in any event, what could be done on the website would depend on the resources available in EXR to manage material in a wide variety of languages. (EXR is not requesting any additional resources for this or other purposes at this time). Part of the cost of a “local option” might be covered by reducing or eliminating translation and publication of material for which there has proven to be little demand, especially time-sensitive material that is published with a lengthy delay.

112. In spite of these drawbacks, the Task Force recommends experimenting with the local option in a few targeted cases. It would also be worthwhile for EXR to continue its current practice of extending language publication on an ad hoc basis when resources and efficiency gains allow and when the priority of the material is high.