

EB/CAM/86/20  
Correction 1

April 14, 1986

To: Members of the Committee on  
Executive Board Administrative Matters

From: The Committee Secretary

Subject: Electronic Data Processing (EDP) Support for  
Executive Directors' Offices - Summary of Main Issues

The attached page 4 of EB/CAM/86/20 (3/26/86) is being reissued to complete the blank on line 8 of paragraph (b) to read EB/CAM/86/21.

Att: (1)

Other Distribution:  
Members of the Executive Board



(iv) Any system proposed for Executive Directors' offices should be consistent with the Fund data processing strategy and, to the maximum extent possible, compatible with systems planned for Executive Directors' offices in the World Bank. The Fund's EDP strategy is still evolving, but the general directions are clear and they have been an important element in evaluating possible approaches to meeting the needs of Executive Directors' offices. A status report on the overall EDP strategy for the Fund will be provided for the information of Executive Directors as soon as practicable.

(b) Based on a thorough analysis of the proposals submitted by IBM, NBI, and DEC, the consultants concluded that:

(i) The IBM PCXT should be selected as the baseline system. This would be a comparatively low cost and low risk means of meeting many of the major requirements that had been identified. However, no baseline system would meet all of the requirements, or be able to provide the range of user friendly capabilities that would be available with a multi-user system.

(ii) The baseline system should be installed in all Executive Directors' offices which wish to utilize it. However, the baseline system should be seen as an interim step toward the acquisition of multi-user systems.

(iii) Up to three pilot projects should be established for testing and evaluating under working conditions the costs and benefits of a multi-user system. The consultants provisionally recommended the DEC Microvax II as the basis for the multi-user system. However, this recommendation was conditional on the testing of a DEC based, multi-user, pilot system scheduled to take place in FY 1987.

#### 4. Access to databases and systems

(a) Expanded access to Fund data would have several general implications including:

(i) The staff believe that some current sources of data (e.g. member countries) could decide to cease, curtail, or delay the submission of raw data to the Fund if access to that data is made available to all Executive Directors' offices. The staff is particularly concerned about the need to safeguard the confidentiality of statistics on international banking, of some Fund accounts data, and of some disaggregated data used in developing estimates and projections for World Economic Outlook exercises. Any impairment of security could lead to losses of information in areas vital to the Fund.

(ii) Executive Directors expressed widely differing views about the sensitivity of data from the countries they represent and about the possible effects of expanded access upon the security of that data.

(iii) The staff believe that in order to make effective use of facilities to access Fund databases, the staff of most Executive Directors'

offices would require considerable training in the use of databases and the associated software.

(iv) Some Executive Directors were concerned that if a number of offices regularly exploited facilities for constructing alternative econometric scenarios, discussions in the Board could become less policy oriented.

(b) The two databases of most interest to Executive Directors are the Economic Information System (EIS) and the Treasurer's Integrated Financial Systems (TIFS). The fact that these major databases are still in the process of development increases the difficulty of weighing possible options regarding access to them. For each of these systems the consultants, nevertheless, reviewed the advantages and disadvantages of three possible options for providing access (for EIS see pages 62-65 and for TIFS see pages 69-72 of EB/CAM/86/21). It would be for the Committee to decide which of the options, if any, it wishes to recommend for implementation. It should also be noted that the options for access to EIS reflect only those data currently available from the Data Fund System (DFS). No access to country desk data, staff estimates or projections are envisioned in the options presented in the consultants' report.<sup>1/</sup>

(c) The consultants also reviewed the advantages and disadvantages of providing access to the Document Management Facility (ibid. pages 74-75), the Cable Room System (ibid. pages 76-77), the Joint Library Information System (ibid. pages 78-79), and the World Bank Debt Statistics Database (ibid. pages 79-80). Again, it would be for the Committee to make recommendations to the Executive Board on the implementation of access and the timing of such implementation.

(d) The consultants thought it was likely that savings and improvements in efficiency could be achieved by centralizing the distribution to member countries of official Fund documents. They suggested that a detailed study be carried out to assess the feasibility of such a system (ibid. pages 83-85).

## 5. Implementation

(a) Phased implementation for the installation of office systems equipment and for providing access to Fund data and systems is necessary because:

(i) Many Fund systems to which access has been requested, are in development or early operational stages and thus subject to difficulties.

(ii) Training requirements for staff in Executive Directors' offices will be large and disruptive to the work of those offices.

(iii) Time is needed to plan and coordinate implementation and to develop adequate support arrangements.

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<sup>1/</sup> Country desk data and staff estimates and projections are not currently available in a form that permits accessing them through a computer system.