

Notes and News

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Research Information Liaison Unit

THE greatly increased volume of Africanist research over recent years has created a problem for institutions and research workers needing comprehensive and up-to-date information on current research activities. With the assistance of a grant from the Ford Foundation this Unit is being developed from the Institute's earlier work in this field in order to assemble, collate, and disseminate this information at an international level. It will be directed by Mrs. Merran Fraenkel.

Some of the countries engaged in research in African studies are already assembling and publishing such information on a national or regional level. Far from trespassing on their territory, the Research Information Liaison Unit hopes to benefit from their work, to make it more widely available, and also to assist them by providing co-ordination with other centres. In countries, regions, or subject areas for which the regular assembling of information is not yet undertaken the Unit hopes to be able to assist and collaborate with appropriate bodies in providing this.

The Unit will concentrate on those disciplines with which the International African Institute has been primarily concerned: i.e. on the social sciences and humanities. These will include ethnography, social anthropology, sociology, political science, history, human geography, language studies, art and literature, and also relevant aspects of research in economics, social psychology, education, and social administration. These limitations will not, however, be regarded as rigid, and other research including some in the natural sciences which is relevant to the social and cultural life of the peoples of Africa will be included.

As a first stage the Unit will produce an international register of institutions carrying out research in the fields indicated above. It is expected that future publications will include guides to sources of information on current research in various countries and reports on the aims, methods, and scope of research in progress or planned, on a subject and/or regional basis.

Centre d'Études et de Documentation Africaines (CEDAF), Brussels

CEDAF is being established to provide a centre where documentation and archives are accessible and researchers can seek the help of qualified personnel; where exchanges can take place between scholars and researchers; and where opportunities for research and publication exist. It hopes to co-operate with centres in other countries, universities, and African authorities who may wish to send their researchers to a study centre that will provide them with the information and facilities they need. While the founders are Belgian, they intend to work with experts from other countries—African and non-African—to ensure contacts with existing centres and access to documentation, and to co-operate in carrying out collective research programmes and in publications. M. Lucie du Bus de Warnaffe is responsible for the development of the Centre and the promotion of its external relations.

CEDAF will welcome offers of assistance and co-operation. Further information can be obtained from CEDAF, 35, rue Van Elewyck, 1050 Brussels.