

Part 2:

OPERATING A CENTRE

The Day-to-Day Tasks

The Basic Tasks

This part of the guide describes the day-to-day tasks the Community Information Officer (CIO) selected by the committee should try to perform. The tasks outlined are only suggestions and can be changed to suit the local situation.

It is advisable for the CIO to work closely with one or two members of the committee or with a sub-committee which can give advice and assistance.

The tasks of the CIO, as given on page 25, are as follows:

- Consulting community members, extension workers and other community workers about their informational and learning resource needs.
- Gathering informational and learning resources to meet those needs.
- Developing activities in which community members can share ideas, information and concerns among themselves and with extension and other community workers, administrators and planners.
- Working with extension and other community workers to coordinate their activities in the community, and provide materials for those activities.
- Producing informational materials in written and non-written forms and providing duplicating equipment and supplies for community use.
- Organising and keeping a record of the informational and learning resource materials in the centre.
- Providing extension services and promoting these and other services.
- Assisting the fund-raising activities.
- Performing general administrative tasks including keeping accounts, developing lending procedures, keeping statistics, stock-taking, reviewing the materials, disposing of materials which can no longer be used, writing reports, and general maintenance and repair of the centre and the materials.

Consulting about Informational and Learning Resource Needs

From the community needs survey (see page 10) the CIO will have already learned much about the informational and learning resource needs of those who live and work in the community.

It is important, however, for the CIO to continue to consult regularly with these people about their needs and how the centre can help to meet them. This can best be done by being active in community affairs, for example by:

- Becoming a member of relevant committees in the community or asking them to keep the centre informed about their meetings and activities.
- Holding community meetings about the activities and services of the centre.
- Setting up information stalls at local meeting-places.
- Holding 'open days' at the centre.
- Talking informally with individuals about the community's information needs.

It is important for the CIO to inform people that the centre is there to serve them. If the right information is not in the centre, be sure to try to find it somewhere else: in the next village, from extension workers – from anyone, anywhere.

The Community Information Officer must:

- consult regularly with the community and those who work in it.
- try to find whatever information is needed by the community.

Gathering Informational and Learning Resources

Two main groups of people who will use the centre and its resources are:

- The community members.
- Agricultural and health extension officers, school teachers, community development workers, adult education workers, and others who work in the community.

There are two basic places to find materials and information for the centre:

- In the community.
- Outside the community.

In the Community

Within the community there are people with a great deal of local knowledge. They know the customs and beliefs. They know how to use the local resources. They know who is skilled at carpentry, fishing, growing crops, cattle-rearing, home-making, midwifery, etc. They know the weather, the local environment and the effects these have on their day-to-day lives.

This knowledge and these skills are often overlooked by people who plan and administer projects and services for rural communities.

Story

A village in a Commonwealth country wanted a school. The education planners agreed to have one built. They realised that it would be cheapest to build the school using local wood. But they decided to use their standard construction methods and sent workmen from the capital city who knew how to build schools to planners' requirements.

The workmen did not know that the local wood split very easily when nailed. The villagers knew this and watched as the carpenters used nails instead of tying the logs together.

If the local people had been involved in building the school, this mistake would not have been made.

Because local skills and knowledge are so important for community development, the centre should keep a record of them. This record can be used when a community problem needs solving or a task needs to be done.

Stories and traditions often explain why communities do things in certain ways. The CIO should record them in writing or on cassette. Where this is not done, useful information may be lost. This does not mean that *all* the knowledge and beliefs of a community are correct or good. The CIO should therefore seek advice about local practices and record any concerns expressed about them.

The results of a mistaken community belief are shown in the following story.

Story

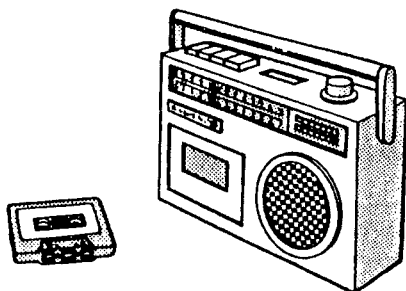
In a poor part of Papua New Guinea many new-born babies died. The health workers tried to find out why.

An old custom was discovered. When women became pregnant, they were not allowed to eat certain foods. These foods, however, were needed to keep the mothers and their babies healthy.

The health workers taught the women about the importance of healthy foods, especially during pregnancy. As a result, fewer babies died.

Outside the Community

People from other communities with similar problems and concerns may have useful information about them. The CIO should try to find out from neighbouring communities what knowledge and skills they have and are willing to share.



Cassette and cassette recorder

The CIO should also collect printed materials and audio-visual materials (such as tapes, films and slides) produced outside the community.

Sources of Materials

In most countries there are three main sources of materials. These are:

Government Departments

Many government departments have publications units or information offices. These often produce materials that are useful to the community.

Extension workers should be able to help the CIO to select and obtain the most suitable materials their departments produce. These materials are often free or inexpensive and may be in more than one language.

At first the centre may decide to order most of its materials from these sources.

Non-Government Organisations

There will probably be organisations in the country concerned with child welfare, women's issues, youth, literacy, library services, appropriate technology, nutrition, setting up co-operatives, etc. As part of their work these organisations also often provide inexpensive materials suitable for rural communities.

Commercial Publishers

Commercial publishers specialise in the business of producing materials for sale. Perhaps the best known commercial publishers are newspaper companies. Some of them publish special

magazines and supplements on agriculture, health, literacy, etc. (In some countries, governments and non-government organisations also publish newspapers.)

Other Sources

The CIO should try to collect materials from all the above sources. In addition to the materials produced within the country, the centre should consider obtaining materials from neighbouring countries with similar conditions and concerns.

Many international organisations are concerned with the problems of developing countries. They pay for or publish materials which are often of use in rural areas and which contain information on other useful materials. Some of these organisations are listed on pages 91 to 94.

Finding Addresses

From the fund-raising activities, the centre should already have the names and addresses of many government departments and other organisations. Use the telephone book again to obtain the names and addresses of commercial publishers.

ALSO:

- Look for useful addresses in pamphlets, posters and newspapers.
- Keep asking people who may have ideas of sources of materials.
- Check frequently with the nearest reference library.
- Listen to those radio programmes which tell listeners where to write to get certain information.

Writing a Letter asking for Publications Lists

The next step is to write to the organisations and businesses that are likely to produce useful materials and ask them to send a publications list and a complimentary sample of their materials. (Not all organisations will do this but it is worth a try.)

To write letters to each of them will take a very long time. To save time, a 'form' letter can be written and duplicated. A sample of a 'form' letter is on page 95. Each copy can then be completed by filling in the date, the name and address of organisation to which the letter is being sent, and the subject of the letter. Finally,

the CIO should sign each one and keep an extra 'file' copy for the centre. Duplicating methods are explained on pages 58 and 59.

The CIO should write a 'thank-you' letter for each gift the centre receives.

CHECKLIST FOR LETTERS

1. Make sure the postal address of the receiver is correct.
2. Make sure the overseas letters are marked 'Airmail'.
3. Make sure the postage is correct.
4. Keep a file copy for the centre.

Selecting Materials

Materials should be selected carefully so as to meet the needs of:

- Members of the community who are seeking information, knowledge and skills.
- Extension workers, literacy teachers and others.

The CIO should work closely with both of these groups of people so as to decide what materials will be of most use.

The Subjects of the Materials

The CIO will already have information about the concerns, problems and interests of the community obtained from the community needs survey, from discussions, and from day-to-day life in the community. Most of the materials selected for the centre should be about these subjects. Other materials, however, should be about other parts of the world and other people. They are interesting, and encourage people to be curious and maintain their interest in learning.

The subject of the material selected for the centre should reflect the needs and interests of the community.

Languages

Members of the community may speak more than one language. Select material written in the language which most people use. If few materials exist in this language, the CIO should look carefully at materials in other languages to see if they are useful. Perhaps they can be translated or adapted.

Materials written in the languages most used should be first choice.

Educational and Age Levels

Materials should be chosen to suit the various educational levels in the community. Those that are difficult to understand discourage people; those that are too simple can be boring.

People of different ages are interested in different things. There should be some materials for adults, some for young adults (teenagers) and some for children. For example, an adult who is learning to read may understand the words in a children's book but be bored by the subject and soon lose interest.

If there is any doubt about the educational level of the material, the CIO should ask the advice of the local school teacher (or literacy teacher) and the people who use the centre.

Obtain materials for the age groups and educational levels in the community. Do not choose materials only for those who use the centre most.

The CIO should not worry about making mistakes. It is almost impossible to choose materials that are perfectly suited to a community, especially if the only information available is a title or a very brief description.

Format

The word 'format' means type, form, shape or style. Information and learning materials can be in many different formats. For example, magazines, newspapers, books, booklets, pamphlets, news sheets, posters and charts all are print materials. Slides,

films, cassette tapes and filmloops are examples of audio-visual (AV) materials.

Print Materials

Print materials are produced for people who can read. Some print materials, such as posters, may also be used by people who cannot read. If designed well they can be used by individuals, by groups, or by extension workers in discussions and learning sessions.

The centre should obtain at least one national or local newspaper. It will provide up-to-date information on current events and matters of importance and interest to the community.

Audio-Visual Materials

Audio-visual (AV) materials are useful for teaching, discussions and workshops. They can be used by individuals and by groups and by people who can read and by those who cannot. However, most AV materials require special equipment and a source of electricity. The equipment is usually expensive and often difficult to repair. The centre should not buy AV materials until there are sufficient funds for the materials, equipment, repairs and electricity.

Choose materials for readers and non-readers. Decide if AV materials can be bought and how much to spend on them compared to printed materials.

Checklist for obtaining Print and AV Materials

	Yes	No
1. Is the language the same as the language most spoken in the community?	_____	_____
2. Is the subject useful to the community?	_____	_____
3. Is the subject of interest to the community?	_____	_____
4. Is the information accurate and up to date?*	_____	_____
5. Is the language easy to understand?*	_____	_____
6. Does the centre lack materials on this subject?	_____	_____
7. Can the format be used without expensive equipment?	_____	_____
8. Can the centre afford the cost of the material and the postage?	_____	_____

*These points are hard to answer if the material is not available to look at.

Ordering, Receiving, and Checking

When materials have been chosen and there is money to pay for them, follow these steps for ordering the materials, for receiving and checking them and for paying for them.

Ordering

Write to the organisation or department that has material the centre wants. Say what is wanted and how many copies to send. Ask for an 'invoice' or a 'bill'. A sample letter for an order is on page 96.

When ordering materials from other countries, say whether they should be sent seamail or airmail. Seamail (or surface mail) takes a long time, perhaps several months. Airmail is quicker but is much more expensive.

Sometimes the organisation will send a 'pro-forma' invoice. This means that the organisation must receive payment before they send the materials. In such a case follow the procedures for paying given on page 51.

Receiving and Checking

When materials arrive the CIO should:

- Check the order to see that every item asked for has arrived.
- Check that the bill is correct.
- If all is correct, pay the bill as described on the next page under the heading 'Paying'.
- If all is not correct, write a letter explaining the problem.

If the organisation says the material is 'out of print' this means the material is not being produced any more. 'Out of stock' means that there is none left but that there will be more.

Paying

If all is correct, pay for the material by sending a cheque, postal order, or money order with a letter. Do not send cash in a letter.

Cheques cannot be used to pay for materials from another country. Find out from the bank what to do. For example, it may be possible to buy an International Money Order (IMO) at the bank. If so, a copy of this IMO should be kept by the centre.

In some countries there may be regulations which make it difficult or impossible for the centre to pay for materials from other countries. If this problem arises, ask the national library service, a university library or an aid agency for help. They may have overseas bank accounts which they are willing to use to pay for materials for the centre. They will be able to make the payment in local currency instead of having to apply for foreign currency to make the purchase.

The centre will, of course, have to repay the organisation that makes the arrangements.

There is also a UNESCO book coupon scheme to help countries to obtain materials from other countries. The centre should apply to the UNESCO National Commission in the capital city for information.

Information-sharing Activities

Among Community Members

The centre should encourage people to ask for and share information. The CIO can do this by:

- Obtaining information and then letting the community know that the information is available.

- Helping people to find the information they need or putting them in touch with someone who can provide it.
- Organising study groups using radio, films, guest speakers, etc.
- Encouraging groups to use the centre as a meeting and activity place.

When people see that they can get information from the centre and that the information they receive is useful, they will use the centre more.

Between the Community and Planners and Administrators

Planners and administrators who are developing projects and services for the community may not have detailed information about the community. In turn, the community may not know what developments are being planned for them.

There is no way to be sure that the planners and administrators will talk with the community, work with them, and develop the projects the community wants. But the CIO can help by:

- Finding information about development plans.
- Encouraging discussions between planners, administrators and the community.

Co-ordinating Activities with Extension Workers

Often there are several extension workers in a community. Their work may include:

- Helping people to improve their crops and look after their animals.
- Introducing new methods of doing things.
- Helping people increase their knowledge of mother-child care, good nutrition, etc.
- Organising literacy and numeracy classes.
- Small business development.

In some rural areas these extension workers work closely with each other. In others they do not. This may cause problems.

Story

In Papua New Guinea a functional literacy co-ordinator encouraged his community literacy class to build community water tanks, sell firewood and raise chickens for sale. He did not discuss these projects with the extension workers dealing with agriculture, health or business development. Some of his advice was not the same as theirs. This confused the literacy class and angered the other extension workers.

The CIO can help prevent such a situation by:

- Keeping information about all the extension workers' plans and activities.
- Encouraging the extension workers to share their work plans and co-ordinate their activities.
- Providing information and appropriate teaching aids for the extension workers.
- Organising meetings at which the extension workers discuss their plans with the community.

Producing Materials

The centre will need to make posters and notices to tell people about its activities, community events, etc. It may also wish to:

- Start a community news sheet.
- Write down or record stories.
- Make copies of these and any special forms the centre requires.

Before beginning any of these activities, the CIO should decide:

- The purpose of the item.
- Who is going to design and produce the item.
- How many copies are needed.
- The best way of making the copies.
- The materials and equipment necessary.

- How to 'test' the item before making a large number of copies.
- How and where to display and distribute the copies.

Making Posters

Posters are usually pictures and words on large sheets of paper. They can be produced simply and cheaply by using marking pens of different colours and thicknesses. There are posters that:

- Introduce or support an idea. They do not explain anything. They are made to 'catch the eye'. Many big billboard advertisements are like this.
- Explain or announce something. A poster explaining how to vote is an example. So is a notice about the hours the centre is open.
- Are used as teaching aids.

A Note of Caution

Making good learning and training materials is a difficult task. They should be produced only by someone who has had special training.

Some things to remember when producing posters are:

- Present only one main idea.
- The words should be few, simple and easy to read.
- Do not use signs and symbols unless they are understood by the community.
- The drawings should be large.
- Do not put a lot of background detail in the drawings. This can be confusing.
- Make the drawings as real as possible. For example, clothes and houses should look like those in the community.
- Draw things in full. Drawings that only show part of a human body or other item can be confusing.
- Make the size difference of items similar to real life (e.g. do not make a fly the same size as a child).
- Use colours carefully because they have certain meanings for different people.

Here are examples of a well-designed poster and a poorly-designed poster:

A well-designed poster



Large, clear lettering.

Simple, clear picture showing an adult and child looking with interest at a book.

Short, simple message to say when people can visit the centre to use the materials.

A poorly-designed poster



Small and untidy lettering with too many words.

A drawing trying to show what the information centre offers. Why is it unclear?

Community News Sheets

Community news sheets give information about events and issues in the community and other items that are of use and interest. The news sheets can be produced simply and duplicated by the methods described in the section on duplicating, page 58. People who can read can share the information with those who cannot.

They can be produced at regular or irregular intervals (e.g. once a week, once a month, or when there is something to report).

Some of the topics that could be included in community news sheets are:

- Community concerns.
- Births, deaths, marriages.
- Meetings.
- Important visitors to the community.
- Adult education classes and how to become involved in them.
- Festivals, celebrations, forthcoming events.
- Transportation information.
- Articles by an extension worker.
- Achievements in the community.
- Folk stories.
- Reports from the local leaders.
- Essay competitions.

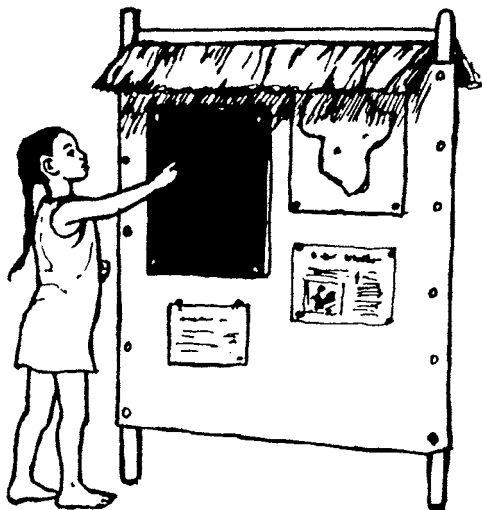
Points to remember when writing articles are:

- Use simple phrases and short sentences.
- Keep the amount of information short.
- Include a variety of topics.

Points to remember when producing news sheets are:

- Leave empty spaces between different sections of information and between articles.
- Leave empty spaces (margins) along all four sides of paper.
- Keep lines of writing straight.
- Write titles of articles in large print.
- Keep the length of the lines on the pages short (between 5 and 10 words) for easy reading.
- Use simple drawings and illustrations whenever possible.
- Add pictures and clippings from newspapers whenever possible.
- Decide how many copies will be needed.
- Decide if there is to be a small charge for each issue or whether they will be free.
- Print the news sheet on cheap paper such as newsprint.

After the news sheets have been duplicated, distribute them from the centre, the school, the place of worship, the market, shops, and at meetings. Pin them on walls where people can read them. If there is only enough money and supplies for one or two copies of the news sheet, display these copies on a notice board or bulletin board.



Bulletin board

Recording Stories and Skills

In many places, traditional stories, customs and skills have been passed on from the adults to the children by word of mouth and not the written word. Now that more people can read and write, the oral tradition is in danger of going out of use.

One of the most useful tasks a centre can do is to help preserve the oral tradition. If the centre has a cassette recorder, or can

borrow one, it can arrange to make recordings of community members, particularly elderly people whose knowledge and experience of life may otherwise be lost forever.

Here are some guidelines for making a cassette (or tape) recording:

- Discuss with the community what stories, skills, etc. should be recorded.
- Decide who will do the telling.
- Discuss how it will be done (e.g. by interview or by story).
- Practise with the machine and the microphone until the quality of the recording is satisfactory.
- When the recording is complete, make a second copy of the tape if possible.
- Write on each copy the details of the recording, including the person who is giving the information, the date, the subject, etc.
- Make a written record of the tape in case the tape is destroyed or wears out.

Duplicating Methods and Supplies

'Duplicating' (making several copies of the same thing) is useful because the centre will need to have several copies of certain items. Examples of these items are:

- Special forms for use by the centre.
- Information sheets for community workers.
- Community news sheets.
- Any item the community wishes to duplicate.

There are several ways to duplicate materials. Some are very cheap and simple. Others are more expensive and complicated. The cheaper and simpler methods include:

- Carbon paper.
- The gelatine duplicator.
- Hand silkscreen.
- Spirit duplicator.
- Stencil duplicator.

The CIO may need to have training on how to use some of these methods. There may be some of the equipment in a nearby school, place of worship or government office. The CIO can ask the people there how to use it and, if possible, to duplicate some of the centre's forms on it.

As the CIO learns the different methods of duplicating, he/she will learn more and more about such things as the choice of inks, the amount of ink to use, different types of paper and stencils, and making changes to the machine itself.

Note

There are some items that may be cheaper and easier to buy than to duplicate. For example, the date slips that will be pasted on to the materials. Another thing to remember is that it takes time to duplicate things. If the CIO is very busy, he/she may prefer to use the time for more important tasks.

Organising and Recording the Materials

One of the most essential tasks that a centre has to do is to organise and record the materials. Only when this is done can the centre:

- Tell people if it has any information on a certain subject.
- Tell people if the centre has a specific item in its collection.
- Know if more materials and information on a specific subject are needed.

There are several ways of organising materials. For example:

- By subject (e.g. agriculture, health, education).
- By size (e.g. big books on some shelves; small ones on others).
- Alphabetically by author or title.

The most common way is organising materials by subject (i.e. what the material is about).

Subjects

Some very complex subject systems are in use in libraries and resource centres all over the world. They are difficult to understand, and people need special training to use them.

The system for the centre need not be complex. Instead it should be simple so that the community members can easily find information and so that the CIO does not have to spend much time organising it.

First, the CIO must decide:

- The subjects of the materials already in the centre.
- Any other subjects that would be useful in the future.

It is not always easy to decide on the subject of an item. But it is easier to decide on the subject if there is a sample or guide. An example is given below. A more detailed description of this example is on pages 97 to 100.

Here is a list of subjects that a centre might use to organise the materials:

Agriculture	Money/Business/and Credit
Health	Systems
Food and Nutrition	Natural Resources
Shelter and Furniture	Government Plans/Policies
Appropriate Technology	Arts and Crafts
Machines/Technology	Sports
The Earth and Sky	Real Lives
Plants and Animals	Stories for Children
Working with People	Stories for Adults
Education and Training	People and Countries
	Religion

Reading/Educational Levels

The CIO may decide that it is helpful to show which materials are suitable for people who cannot read, for those who are just learning to read, and for those whose reading skills are more advanced. A school teacher or literacy teacher can help decide about these levels. A special mark or label can be put on the cover of the item to show the level. The CIO should try to be sure users know what level is best for them and what label is used for the materials at that level.

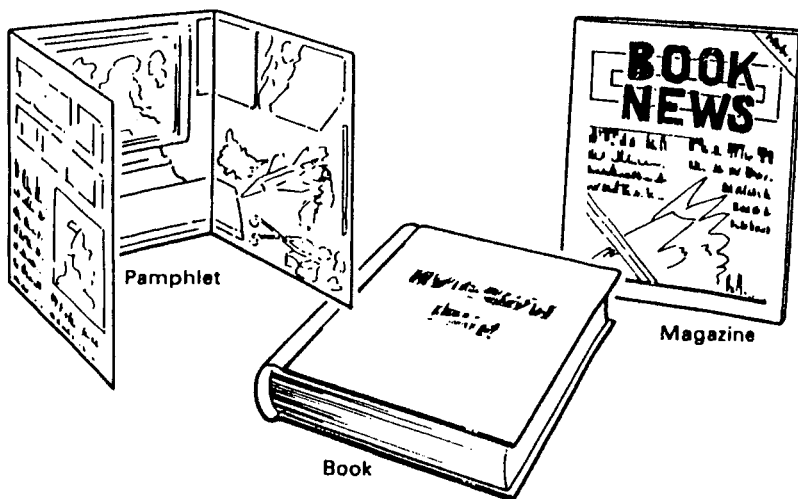
Where to put Materials

Materials on the same subject may be in different 'formats' such as books, pamphlets, slides, cassettes, posters, magazines.

Some people prefer to put all the material on one subject in one place. Then there is no need to go to different places for information on that subject. But this may not be easy to do. Shelves are suitable for books and for pamphlets which can be kept in boxes but not for posters, flip charts or newspapers.

There are other problems. Magazines and newspapers contain many subjects so it is difficult to decide where to put them. Cassette tapes, slides and other audio-visual materials can only be used with special equipment and these can easily be damaged if placed on open shelves.

For these reasons, it may be better to separate the material by type or 'format' first, and keep each format in a special place. Then divide them into subjects.



Some different formats: pamphlet, magazine, book

Keeping a Record

When each item is received and checked, it must be given a subject and then recorded. This is necessary so that the CIO will know if:

- The centre has something on a subject.
- The centre has a particular item.
- The centre needs material on a subject.
- An item has been lost.

There are several methods of keeping this record. A simple method for the centre is described on pages 100 to 104.

Simple Filing Rules

Filing means putting the record cards in an order. This order is usually alphabetical either by the author's last name or by the title. Using the title is suggested in this guide. Descriptions of filing by this method and for filing the copies of letters, orders and other items written for the day-to-day tasks in the centre, are given on pages 105 to 107.

Other Possible Services

In addition to the services just described, the centre may consider offering other services.

At the Centre:

- A toy corner where children can play with toys. Some of these may be made out of local materials.
- Story-telling sessions in the centre for children and adults.
- Materials for distance education students who have left school but wish to continue studies for further qualifications.

Extension Services (away from the centre)

Some people who would like to use the centre may not be able to visit it. These include the elderly, the disabled, those who are otherwise occupied when the centre is open, and those who live too far away. The centre should do whatever it can to provide

or extend its services to them. Some possible extension services are:

- *A drop-off service* Information and learning materials (not necessarily limited to books) can be taken to particular places such as someone's home or a school. Extension workers who make regular visits to these places may be able to help deliver the materials. They then can be returned to the centre and exchanged for other machines. A record should be kept of what is where.
- *Story-telling/reading sessions* These can be organised with teachers at the schools or at any place where people can gather. They are very popular with children and also appeal to adults, especially those who do not read.

Notice Boards or Bulletin Boards

Notice boards or bulletin boards can be put up in places where people gather (e.g. in shops, the school, the market). News and information of interest and importance to the community can be posted on the boards. The CIO should make sure that the information is kept up to date. A notice board should be protected with clear plastic, and a little roof built over it if possible like the one shown on page 57.

Promotional Activities

The centre should try to serve the whole community. It is therefore important to inform as many people as possible about its services.

Some ideas on how to do this are listed below.

- Open days can be held. These can coincide with local festivals, fairs, etc. Materials can be displayed and activities arranged that relate to these celebrations. On open days the whole community can be invited to visit the centre.
- Displays of new and interesting material such as posters,

games and local crafts can be arranged at festivals, agricultural shows, sports events, etc. These displays could include crafts made by local people with a description of how they were done and why they were used. (Always be sure to include the name of the person who made the items.)

- Stalls can be set up at places of worship, the market and other areas where people meet. At such a stall, display the types of materials in the centre and give information about how to use the centre, how to become registered, etc.
- Popular theatre groups could perform stories using the services of the centre as a theme.
- Puppet shows about these services could be taken to schools and other meeting points.

Continuing Fund-raising Activities

It is important that the community remains involved in raising funds for their centre even if long-term funds have been secured. Community fund-raising strengthens the feeling that the centre belongs to the community, and enables the centre to expand its services to meet community needs.

There are some other points to remember about continuing fund-raising.

- Be sure that people will be willing to continue to organise fund-raising events over a period of time.
- Be sure that the community will be able and willing to continue to give money and donations of labour, time, skills, etc.
- Be sure that the work of the centre comes first. If care is not taken, fund-raising events can become more important than the service itself.

Some examples of ways in which the community can continue to raise money for the centre are:

- Selling items no longer useful to the centre, such as old newspapers.

- Selling T-shirts, food, books, etc. at a stall in the market or at a place where people gather.



One community group in Papua New Guinea helped a centre by selling low-cost story books under a tree outside church every Sunday and had trouble keeping up with the demand. The profits went to the centre.

General Tasks

Keeping Accounts

Accounting is keeping a written, accurate and up-to-date record of the money the centre receives and the money it spends. Accounts must be kept for the following reasons:

- To know how much money the centre has.
- To know what the centre has spent.
- For reports to be sent to donors.

This record should be kept in a ledger book. There are specially-made 'ledger' books, but an ordinary notebook with lines drawn in it will do.

Each amount of money spent or received must be recorded by date, what was bought, how much it cost, and the amount of money left in the account. The entries should be entered in order by date and perhaps divided by months.

The CIO should keep receipts for all payments, including all purchases from shops, money paid as taxes, rent, rates, labour, etc. These receipts tell how much money was spent, when it was spent and for what. The receipts will be needed if the accounts ever have to be checked.

There may be confusion if the accounts are not up-to-date and receipts are not kept.

Donations of Money

When money is received, the CIO or the committee treasurer should write a receipt to the donor and a 'thank-you' letter, and keep a carbon copy of each. An example of a receipt is on page 107.

Donations in Kind

Donations 'in kind' are gifts of labour, learning materials, or other supplies or services such as wood from a timber merchant, nails donated from a hardware shop, or labour given by the community to build shelves. All these should be recorded in the accounts book but in a separate section. Again write 'thank you' letters for any donations in kind, and make sure to keep a copy.

Keeping a Record of Money from Several Organisations

The centre may receive money from more than one organisation. Each of these organisations may tell the centre how it wants its money spent. For example, a family-planning organisation may want the money spent only on family-planning materials or on mother-child health-care materials. Or an organisation may give money only for one item in the budget such as magazine subscriptions or a generator to supply the centre with electricity. They will want proof of these purchases.

In cases like these, the CIO should:

- Keep receipts of the items purchased.
- Show in the accounts that the money was spent in the way the organisation wished.

One way to do this is to divide the accounts ledger book into a section for each donor and one section for all accounts together (the main account). An example of keeping accounts in this way is given on pages 108 to 110.

Money from another Country

Money from an organisation in another country may be sent by a cheque in foreign money. Ask the bank to change it to local money. Then the CIO or treasurer should write a thank-you letter and indicate how much local money the cheque provided.

If the organisation has an office in the country, it can be asked to look after the money donated. If the office agrees, then the CIO should send the bills for items ordered to that office for payment.

It is, of course, still necessary for the centre to keep a record of how much money is spent and how much remains.

Petty Cash

'Petty cash' is a small amount of money kept in a locked box or safe place. It is used to pay for inexpensive items that are available locally. Such items include postage stamps, matches, kerosene, etc. Each of these purchases should be recorded in a special Petty Cash section in the accounts ledger book.

Remember not to keep large amounts of money in the centre.

Lending Procedures

People may wish to borrow and take home some of the centre's materials. A system must be organised so that the centre has a list or record of who has borrowed what. Without this record, the centre will lose items and no one will know where they are.

The things that have to be done before people can take items home are:

- Informing people how to borrow materials.
- Registering borrowers.
- Telling borrowers what can be borrowed and what cannot.
- Telling them how long they can keep the materials they borrow.

- Explaining the rules for returning materials and for lost or damaged materials.

How to Borrow

It is important that people should understand and follow the centre's rules for borrowing and returning materials. At first, some people may not understand the borrowing idea. Some may think they can keep the things they take home. It may be necessary to explain that everything belongs to the community as a whole and that the materials are to be shared.

There are several ways to tell people about borrowing:

- Posters explaining opening hours, showing types of materials and borrowing procedures.
- Information sessions at places of worship, in each class at the school, at group meetings and gatherings, and in the centre.
- Simple information sheets sent to each home. School children can take them home, and they can be handed out at meetings.

Borrower Registration Forms

Everyone who lives in the community should be entitled to become a registered borrower of the centre. It is important to have a register of the names and addresses of all those who want to borrow materials. It is possible that some community members do not have 'addresses'. There can be a different system for them (e.g. the name of the head of the house or the name of the compound).

Some centres charge a small fee when a person becomes a registered borrower. Some centres or libraries ask borrowers to pay a fee every year. Others provide their services free of charge.

These fees can help provide money for the centre. Sometimes however, this causes problems. Some people think that if they pay money, they own the materials and do not have to return them. Others may not have enough money to pay and will be too embarrassed to come to the centre. The committee should think carefully whether or not the centre should charge any fees.

It may be unwise to allow people who live far away from the centre to borrow material. If they do not return an item, it will be difficult to get it back again.

Sometimes people pay long visits to the community. If they want to become members of the centre, the CIO can ask an existing member to 'sponsor' the person. The sponsor will then take responsibility for the materials the visitor borrows.

Keeping Statistics

The CIO should consider keeping the following statistics for the centre:

- The number and type of community activities held by the centre (e.g. community meetings, discussions, film shows, story times, reading group sessions and the number of people who attended each activity).
- The amount and type of help given to community members (e.g. the number of enquiries answered and not answered).
- The number and type of extension and promotion activities.
- The total number of registered borrowers, perhaps broken down into the number of borrowers by age group (e.g. those under 10 years old; 10–20 years old; 20 years and older) and by number of males and females.
- The total number of items in the centre, and by subject and format.
- The number of items borrowed. (Each day a total is made, then added up to make weekly, monthly and yearly totals.)
- The number of items on each subject which are borrowed.
- The number of items produced/printed by the centre.
- The times of day and week the centre is most used and least used.

These statistics give information that is useful when:

- Reviewing policies and day-to-day tasks.
- Finding out if any changes are needed.
- Fund-raising (especially for long-term funding).

Keeping a Record of What is Borrowed

There are two simple ways to keep a record of what is borrowed. The first is very easy but takes time. It involves writing the title of each item and the borrower's name in a notebook. The second is done when the material is received and recorded and involves putting 'cards' in every item that can be borrowed. It takes less time when someone is borrowing an item but more time when recording the materials. It is also more expensive.

More detailed descriptions of these methods are given on pages 110 to 113.

Keeping a Record of Visitors

People who are not members of the community may wish to visit the centre. Some of them may come because they are interested in what the centre does, or they may wish to get advice and ideas on starting a centre in their own communities. Others may come from organisations who have made donations to the centre and may wish to see how a centre is progressing. The centre may want to keep a record of these visitors.

Stock-taking

The centre has a record of all its materials. About once a year the CIO should check to see if every item in the record is still in the centre. This is called stock-taking. It is used to find out if any materials have been lost and if any items need to be replaced. More details are given on page 113.

Insurance

It may be possible for the centre to insure its building and materials. To do so it will have to pay an insurance company a regular amount of monies called a 'premium'. Then if the centre is damaged by fire, water or vandals, or if something is stolen, the insurance company will give the centre money to replace the materials and fix the building.

For insurance purposes, it is necessary to keep a record of the furniture, and other equipment in the centre. AV equipment, typewriters, etc. have brand names and serial numbers. These names and numbers should be written down and kept in a safe place and given to the police and insurance companies in the event of a fire, theft, etc.

Reviewing the Materials

It is necessary from time to time to review the materials so as to find out what the centre no longer needs. The CIO must be sure to remove the record card or make a note of any item that is removed. If this is not done, when the next stock-taking is made, the item will wrongly be believed to be lost or stolen. The CIO should clearly write or stamp 'Removed' or 'Discarded' on every item removed from the collection.

Writing Reports

The CIO must report to the committee about the day-to-day activities held in the centre. The reports should include information about the use of the centre, the successful activities, and any problems that have arisen. The committee can then help the CIO where necessary. These reports are part of the monitoring process described earlier. The committee may wish the reports to be written. If they require only verbal reports, it is a good idea for the CIO to keep written copies in the centre's files for future information.

General Maintenance and Repair of the Centre and the Materials

Protection from Pests

There is no sure way to stop harmful insects and other creatures from invading the centre. Ants, cockroaches, bookworms, termites, woodworms, mice, and rats are part of everyday life. Insects like dark, damp places with plenty of paper, and they can do a great deal of damage. The CIO can, however, do some things to discourage them. Here are some suggestions:

- Do not have food in the centre.
- Keep AV materials and equipment dry and clean.
- Keep the centre as clean and dry as possible — dust and sweep it regularly.
- Block any holes in the floor, ceiling or walls.
- Do not leave materials piled tightly in corners or in boxes for long periods of time.
- If there is enough money, spray a long-lasting insect spray along the floorboards, but NOT on the materials.
- Use a rat poison in safe places, and perhaps an insect bomb occasionally.
- If there is enough money, put wire mesh or fly wire on the windows.

Security

The CIO and the committee should make sure the centre is protected as much as possible from people who wish to damage it. Have locks on door(s) and windows and secure them when no one is at the centre. If there are watchmen in the community,

they may be able to include the centre in their responsibilities. The cost of this should be included in the budget.

Care of the Materials

A successful centre is one where the materials are used often. Popularity, however, can cause problems. For example, the materials may quickly be worn or damaged. When encouraging people to use the materials, the CIO should also explain how to look after them.

Here are some do's and don'ts to follow and tell users:

- Do clean the centre regularly.
- Do check for bugs, mildew, pests.
- Do try to have clean hands when using materials.
- Do handle the materials carefully.
- Do try to get plastic bags in which members can wrap materials.
- Do explain to borrowers how to look after materials.
- Don't wash the materials or get them wet.
- Don't put them in strong sunlight.
- Don't pack books tightly on shelves for long periods of time.
- Don't let materials 'flop around' on the shelves.
- Don't write in the materials.
- Don't put food and drink on the materials.
- Don't let pets chew them.
- Don't put large items in between the pages.
- Don't use staples or paper clips in materials (they discolour and stain the paper).

Repairing Materials

No matter how much care is taken, materials are sure to be damaged and to need repair. Repairing materials properly however, is difficult. Special tools and skills are needed. It is unlikely that the centre will be able to do more than patch up the materials so that they can be used for a little longer. For example, torn pages in books can be mended with Scotch 3M Magic Tape (which is better than ordinary sticky tape). For broken spines, use a heavy cloth tape and slow-drying glue. To remove marks from paper, erase very carefully in one direction only.

If an item is very badly damaged, it is best to replace it. Remember to make a note on the record card if an item is thrown away.