

Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age

**Global Forum on
Building Awareness and Capacity**

October 2002 to April 2003



International Records Management Trust

June 2003

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INTRODUCTION

This report outlines the work done between October 2002 and April 2003 to build awareness and capacity in the area of records management through a global discussion forum. The work is part of the wider World Bank/International Records Management Trust project on *Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age*. During the period covered by the report, action was taken to deliver the electronic discussions and video conferences, following on from the successful delivery of the training for trainers and training for archivists sessions held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in September 2002. This report focuses primarily on these two deliverables: electronic discussions and video conferences. For more information on the Johannesburg sessions, please see the previous report covering the period January to September 2002.

CONTEXT

The *Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age* project aims to tackle a highly significant global concern – the new requirements for managing records and information, particularly in electronic environments. Governments, donors and lenders have embraced the potential of information and computer technologies. However, they have tended to overlook the importance of managing records so that they meet evidentiary and accountability requirements, protect citizens' rights and support the rule of law. The project involves collaborating internationally to seek new solutions to the key issues involved in managing records as authentic and trustworthy evidence over time.

The project as a whole consists of three phases.

<i>Phase I</i>	Undertake diagnostic case studies and develop four assessment tools for records systems (one generic tool and three specific tools, one each for financial, human resource and court records)	This phase was funded through the World Bank Development Grant Facility.
<i>Phase II</i>	Global Forum, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• initial training for regional trainers• initial training by regional trainers for national archivists• electronic discussions• video conferences	This phase was funded by DFID with a contribution from the Commonwealth Secretariat.
<i>Phase III</i>	Establish a global programme to assess needs and build capacity: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a Records Management Capacity Framework as a basis for 'operationalising' records management as part of reform programmes• Upgrade and supplement existing Trust capacity building materials particularly in the area of electronic records management.	Negotiations are underway to cover the costs of this phase.

The funds received from DFID have been used to support the costs of Phase II, particularly in relation to the African and Asian regions. The Commonwealth Secretariat is also concerned about the management of records as evidence and provided funds to extend the programme to include Commonwealth countries in the Caribbean and Pacific. Below is an overview of the project funding provided to date.

The principal contributions to the Global Forum were:

<i>Funding Agency</i>	<i>Funds Received 2002-2003</i>	<i>Allocation of Funds</i>
Department for International Development	£300,000	Phase II, Global Forum, African and Asian participation
Commonwealth Secretariat	£50,000	Phase II, Global Forum, Caribbean and Pacific participation

Goals of Phase II, the Global Forum

The broad goals of the Global Forum are to increase awareness among senior public officials in developing countries of the significance of records as evidence in both electronic and paper environments. This includes initial capacity building for regional trainers and for senior archivists and records managers to equip them to participate actively in the new public sector environment. At the end of the Global Forum, it is hoped that the foundation will have been laid for mainstreaming the management of records as evidence in public sector reform programmes.

Specific Aims of the Global Forum

The specific aims of the Global Forum to date have been:

- to conduct training for trainers, through a face-to-face meeting with video conference inputs, in order to empower trainers to transmit core training to national archivists and to raise the profile and capacity of archival educators to take the lead in the training of record keepers
- to conduct training of national archivists by regional trainers, through a face-to-face meeting with video conference inputs, in order to equip national archivists to raise records issues with senior officials in their countries and to brief the officials in preparation for their participation in video conferences
- to hold a series of electronic discussions for senior government officials and records managers on the relationship of records to public sector reform, financial management reform, legal and judicial reform, and information technology (IT) systems development. The objective was to raise awareness of, and generate discussion about, the key issues involved in protecting evidence in paper and electronic form, particularly in relation to global aspirations for poverty reduction and accountability in a computerised environment

- to hold a series of video conferences for top-level officials in different regions and for records managers to discuss how their work is affected by the challenge of managing records created in a hybrid electronic/paper environment.

PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT

The management structure for the project was established in early 2002 and remained in place throughout the completion of the various components of the project. The World Bank remained a key partner in the project, and Mike Stevens, Lead Specialist in Public Sector Reform, and Andres McAlister, Archives Partnership Programs, Information Solutions Group, continued to offer valuable advice as overall task managers. Extensive consultations were held with other Bank officials.

Sahr Kpundeh of the World Bank's Institute's, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Division, continued his role as Task Manager for content and facilitation for the Global Forum, and Rod Macdonell, Manager of the Investigative Journalism Program at the World Bank Institute continued his work as the on-site facilitator. Debra Beattie, Sheila Jagannathan, and Juan Blazquez Ancin, educational experts from the World Bank Institute, continued to provide excellent support and guidance in developing methodologies and executing tasks throughout the electronic discussions and video conferences. Drew Stuart and Scott Yann of the World Bank Institute Global Development Learning Network provided expert guidance and technical support in the production of a video film covering the key aims of the project.

The World Bank Information Solutions Group (ISG) also continued to provide strong support. Extensive coordination, fact-finding, and consultation were provided by Andres McAlister at ISG, who also participated fully from Washington in all the electronic discussion and video conference activities during the months of February, March and April. Elisa Liberatori Prati, Archivist of the World Bank Group, provided guidance and support, and the input of Mohamed Muhsin, Vice President and Chief Information Officer, was greatly appreciated.

As noted in the October report, the core working team for the Forum comprised:

- Anne Thurston, Director, IRMT, and Project Director
- Andrew Griffin, Deputy Director, IRMT
- Laura Millar, Project Manager, IRMT
- Nicola Pyne, Project Coordinator, IRMT
- Jennifer Leijten, Documentation Coordinator, IRMT
- Andres McAlister, Archives Partnership Coordinator, ISG, World Bank
- Roderick Macdonell, Manager, Investigative Journalism Program, World Bank Institute
- Drew Stewart, Television Producer, World Bank Institute

- Sheila Jagannathan, WBIKL, World Bank Institute
- Juan Blazquez Ancin, WBIKL, World Bank Institute
- Debra Beattie, WBIKL, World Bank Institute
- Katia Macedo, Sites Service Coordinator, GDLN/World Bank
- Brigitte Kerby-Dia, Sites Service Coordinator, GDLN/World Bank
- Lalia Semmoune-Gallo, Site Service Coordinator, GDLN/World Bank.

Members of this team worked together to plan the content and delivery of the electronic discussions and video conferences. Specific action included identifying and coordinating information about participants; preparing background documentation, video films and instructional materials; and securing facilities around the world for video conference participation. Planning meetings with the Project Manager, other Trust representatives and the World Bank Institute team were held in Washington at regular intervals to work out specific project details and to develop project-related tools, such as video films.

In those meetings and through regular telephone conference calls and electronic discussions, decisions were made about issues such as:

- project milestones, performance indicators and requirements for each project activity
- appropriate timetables, critical paths and optimal schedules
- identification of participants for the video conferences and electronic discussions
- coordination of video conference facilities for the video conferences held in March and April 2003
- management of funds, expenditures and budgets
- technical requirements for video conferences and electronic discussions.

The four electronic discussions (EDs) were scheduled for early 2003 as follows:

- ED Session 1: Information Technology, Electronic Records and Record Keeping (27-31 January)
- ED Session 2: Financial Management Reform and Record Keeping (10-14 February)
- ED Session 3: Legal and Judicial Reform and Record Keeping (24-28 February)
- ED Session 4: Public Sector Reform and Record Keeping (10-14 March).

Eight video conferences were originally scheduled for March 2003 but timing issues required alterations to the schedule. Ultimately, the video conferences took place over a two-week period from 25 March to 4 April 2003. The video conferences (VCs) connected the World Bank in Washington with countries around the world, as listed below:

- VC Session 1: Kenya, Lesotho, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland (25 March, 0900-1000 EDT)
- VC Session 2: Malawi, Mozambique, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Nigeria (26 March, 0800-1000 EDT)
- VC Session 3: Botswana, Ghana, Tanzania, Zanzibar, Sierra Leone, Uganda (27 March, 0800-1000 EDT)
- VC Session 4: Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, St Vincent and the Grenadines (28 March, 0900-1100 EDT)
- VC Session 5: Bahamas, Cayman Islands, Trinidad & Tobago, St Kitts-Nevis, St Lucia (28 March, 1400-1600 EDT)
- VC Session 6: India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka (31 March, 0700-0900 EDT)
- VC Session 7: Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore (31 March, 2030-2230 EDT)
- VC Session 8: Cook Islands, Fiji Islands, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Vanuatu, New Zealand (2 April, 1700-1900 EDT)
- VC Session 9: Nigeria (4 April, 0900-1030 EDT).

ELECTRONIC DISCUSSIONS: PLANNING AND FACILITATION

Between October 2002 and January 2003, the project team worked together to undertake a number of tasks to prepare for the electronic discussions, including the following:

- developing preparatory and background documents for participants in the sessions
- determining appropriate content for the sessions
- developing lists of questions and discussion points and identifying key participants to assist with advising on the content or generate discussion and dialogue
- identifying participants from around the world, securing contact information and confirming their technical capacity to participate in the discussions
- planning back up mechanisms for forwarding information to potential participants in countries unable to join in the electronic discussions but involved with the overall project

- coordinating technical aspects of the discussions (registration of participants, preparation of discussion protocols, coordination of administration and logistics)
- transmitting invitations, background information, technical data and associated materials to all participants and following up as required
- arranging finance and managing budgets and expenditures for all activities related to the electronic discussions.

The purpose of the electronic discussions was to identify key issues emerging in relation to governance and records management, and to consider solutions and actions, particularly for the creation, management, use and protection of records that support the public sector and allow for efficiency and accountability in government. The ultimate goal was to create a dialogue between two key stakeholder groups in the care of government records and information: public sector managers responsible for the administration and reform of government at various levels and professional record keepers responsible for managing and protecting the records of the government.

The discussions were also intended to help all participants understand the challenges and opportunities of electronic information management more clearly and to share experiences and ideas for innovative action in the future. It is hoped that the dialogue also served as a basis for building a network of colleagues working in regions around the world, who share related concerns.

The discussions themselves were organised and delivered by Laura Millar, as moderator, with extensive and invaluable assistance from Sheila Jagannathan and Juan Blazquez Ancin of the World Bank Institute. Nicola Pyne of the IRMT was responsible for identifying participants and communicating e-mail address information to the World Bank, which hosted the actual discussions using the Bank's development forum electronic listserv and discussion software. Shadrack Katuu from the University of Botswana assisted with the identification of concepts to explore, and questions to pose, during the discussions.

To focus the dialogue and to ensure concrete results from the exercise, the electronic discussions were structured around four key themes:

- information technology, electronic records, and record keeping (ED 1)
- financial management reform and record keeping (ED 2)
- legal and judicial reform and record keeping (ED 3)
- public sector reform and record keeping (ED 4).

Each electronic discussion focused on one of these themes. Participants were provided with background information and presented with a set of questions related to each topic to guide the discussions. Given the short time frame available, a total of five days, the planners of the electronic discussions developed the following general framework for the sessions:

- Days 1, 2 and 3: identification of issues, along with solutions or suggestions, whenever possible, that arise as participants considered the key questions provided at the start of

each discussion.

- Days 3 and 4: consideration of specific options for action and for finding a way forward, based on the concerns raised during the first days of the discussion.
- Day 5: confirmation of key issues and discussion of possible actions participants could take as professionals and as representatives of their governments or that the participants felt governments or other agencies should consider.

More than 770 participants from 38 countries joined in the four discussions. Approximately 150 core participants, including national archivists and educators, were involved in all of the discussions. These participants actively involved themselves in the planning process and in the discussions themselves and served as ‘leaders’ who assisted the facilitators and moderators to guide the discussion.

In addition to these core participants, each discussion included representatives of the particular topics in question, such as information managers for ED 1; financial managers, accountants and auditors for ED 2; lawyers, judges and legal and judicial services managers for ED 3; and civil service reform coordinators and heads of human resources management for ED 4. The breakdown of participation by electronic discussion is as follows:

- ED 1: 170 participants
- ED 2: 193 participants
- ED 3: 193 participants
- ED 4: 217 participants.

The participating countries in the electronic discussions are listed below, in alphabetical order.

Bahamas	Nigeria
Barbados	Pakistan
Belize	Papua New Guinea
Botswana	Samoa
Brunei	Sierra Leone
Cayman Islands	Singapore
Cook Islands	South Africa
Fiji Islands	Sri Lanka
Ghana	St Kitts and Nevis
Guyana	St Lucia
India	St Vincent and the Grenadines
Jamaica	Swaziland
Kenya	Tanzania
Lesotho	Trinidad and Tobago
Malawi	Uganda
Malaysia	Vanuatu
Mozambique	Zambia
Namibia	Zanzibar
New Zealand	Zimbabwe

Unfortunately, technical and other obstacles prevented colleagues in Bangladesh and The Gambia from participating in the electronic discussions.

Given the pressure of their normal work responsibilities, the willingness of so many senior government officials to commit so much time to the meetings speaks of the high level of support given to the project.

A list of the participants in the electronic discussions is at Appendix A.

At the end of the discussions, a series of summaries was prepared and circulated to all participants. These summaries identified the key points raised and outlined the participants' proposals for action. The main questions posed and the points raised in each of the electronic discussions are outlined in the four tables which follow. Summaries of the electronic discussions are at Appendix B.

**Table 1: Questions Posed and Issues Raised in ED 1:
Information Technology, Electronic Records and Record Keeping**

Questions Posed

- 1 Does your institution or agency make provision for the long-term preservation of information held in the IT systems it develops or administers? If so, how? If not, why not?
- 2 Has admissibility of records as legal evidence been an issue for electronic records in your jurisdiction? If so, is the authenticity and reliability of such information protected in electronic systems? How?
- 3 Do you have concerns about how to create, manage, and safeguard electronically generated information so that its value as evidence is protected? Do you have ideas or suggestions for successfully protecting electronic records?
- 4 From your perspective, what would you say are the effects of good or bad record keeping on your area of administration in government?
- 5 Can you give examples of your record keeping problems, successes and needs?
- 6 What would you say is one major challenge in making the transition from paper-based record keeping systems to electronic record keeping systems?
- 7 Do you have suggestions about the pitfalls that should be avoided in making the transition or in processes that have been more or less successful in your own institution?

Issues Identified

- 1 The absence of legislation and policies for the management of information technologies and their products, including electronic records.
- 2 The lack of standards and systems for the management of IT products and electronic records.
- 3 The low profile of the record keeping profession, the misperception that information technology will easily solve all information and records problems, and the consequent lack of resources to support record keeping programmes and develop a sustainable environment for the management of the products of information technologies.
- 4 The lack of adequate training of, and human resource development for, records personnel.
- 5 The lack of coordinated action or closer relationships between IT and records management personnel.
- 6 The lack of clarity about processes for the preservation of electronic records and the products of IT.

**Table 2: Questions Posed and Issues Raised in ED 2:
Financial Management Reform and Record Keeping**

Questions Posed

- 1 In the area of financial records management, what would you say is one major challenge in protecting financial records so that they remain accurate and authentic source documents?
- 2 What would you say is one major challenge in making the transition from paper-based record keeping systems to electronic record keeping systems in the creation and management of financial records?
- 3 Can you give us examples of record keeping problems, successes, and needs you have seen or experienced, particularly in relation to financial records care or financial reform?

Issues Identified

- 1 The need to recognise the importance of protecting the authenticity and integrity of financial records.
- 2 The need for effective legislative and organisational frameworks for financial management and financial records care.
- 3 The importance of developing standards for financial records management and financial records care.
- 4 The central role of education and training for successful records care.
- 5 The need to raise awareness across government of the value of all records, including financial records.

**Table 3: Questions Posed and Issues Raised in ED 3:
Legal and Judicial Reform and Record Keeping**

Questions Posed

- 1 What, in your opinion, are the major challenges in protecting court records so that they safeguard individual rights?
- 2 What are the challenges you have experienced in protecting the authenticity of court and legal records?
- 3 In your experience, is the paperless court a realistic objective in the short- to medium- term?
- 4 Given the reality of limited resources, how do you think the recording of court proceedings (such as the proceedings of a trial or hearing) could be improved?

Issues Identified

- 1 The volume of records and the consequent problem of storage, duplication and obsolescence.
- 2 The management of electronic records and the need for systems to protect, authenticate, migrate and make accessible legal records in digital formats.
- 3 The need for an effective legislative framework to protect the legal record and ensure that justice systems remain accountable.
- 4 The need to balance privacy and access, particularly with regard to personal information.
- 5 The need for an integrated ‘continuum of care’ in the management of legal records.
- 6 The importance of education and training in record-keeping issues, not just for record keepers but also for all records creators and users, including judges, lawyers, clerks and others responsible for legal and judicial records.

**Table 4: Questions Posed and Issues Raised in ED 4:
Public Sector Reform and Record Keeping**

Questions Posed	
1	What categories of records do you think are more important to an effective public service? Do you think those records are well managed in your jurisdiction?
2	Given the reality of limited resources, how do you think the management of key public sector records could be improved?
3	How do you think the management of civil servants' personnel records affects the process of public sector reform?
4	What kind of steps does your government take to ensure that key government records are protected when one administration is replaced by another or when there is a period of considerable administrative change, such as during a public sector restructuring programme? What steps do you think should be taken to prepare record-keeping systems for such organisational changes?
5	Do you think the 'paperless office' is a potential reality in the short- and medium term? What do you think are the benefits and drawbacks of an electronically oriented public service?
Issues Identified	
1	The need to link accountability and efficiency with quality record keeping.
2	The need to protect critical government records.
3	The importance of ensuring a smooth transition to electronic technologies and protecting paper and electronic records in the process.
4	The need to manage human resources records so that the objectives of civil service reform are well met throughout government.
5	The importance of ensuring sufficient institutional capacity for quality record keeping.

At the end of the electronic discussion sessions, participants were asked for feedback on the content and process of the discussions. A small number of participants provided specific feedback. The comments received were universally positive; the only criticism received was that participants wished to have more time than just five days to explore the issues raised. Many people also expressed the hope that additional electronic discussions could be held on a regular basis to allow them the opportunity to exchange ideas with colleagues around the world.

VIDEO CONFERENCES: PLANNING AND FACILITATION

The project team began preparing in October 2002 for the video conferences to be held in Spring 2003. This work included:

- producing a background documentary video film to show to all participants during the video conferences and to distribute to the national archives in the participating countries
- determining the appropriate content and discussion issues for the video conferences
- developing a running order and list of questions for the video sessions
- identifying key participants to assist with generating discussion and dialogue
- identifying senior officials from around the world to participate in the video conferences, securing their contact information and confirming their technical capacity to participate in the discussions
- identifying video conference facilities around the world to host the sessions
- identifying audio facilities where no video conference facilities could be obtained
- coordinating technical aspects of the video conferences (dissemination of background videos, capacity for video or audio participation, and so on)
- transmitting invitations, background information, logistical information and associated materials to all participants and following up as required
- arranging financing and managing budgets and expenditures for all activities related to the video conferences.

The video conferences themselves were organised and delivered by Anne Thurston and Rod Macdonell, as moderators, with assistance from Andres McAlister of the World Bank and Laura Millar as Project Manager. The studio team, led by Drew Stewart, provided invaluable support throughout the sessions themselves. Nicola Pyne, as the IRMT's Project Coordinator, was responsible for identifying participants and communicating logistical and background information to them. The World Bank hosted the video conferences in their Washington studios and, as far as possible, made World Bank facilities available for use around the world.

Most countries involved senior government officials in the video conferences, including:

- heads of civil service
- auditors general
- accountants general
- civil service reform co-coordinators

- heads of IT services
- heads of anti-corruption bureaux
- senior officials with oversight of national archives/records services and the national archivist
- other relevant senior stakeholders.

The following people participated in the video conferences from the World Bank studios in Washington:

- Ejaz Ghani, Lead Economist, Malaysia Country Team, World Bank
- Michael Gillibrand, Special Adviser in Public Sector Reform, Commonwealth Secretariat
- Sahr Kpundeh, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Division, World Bank Institute
- Roderick Macdonell, Manager, Investigative Journalism Program, World Bank Institute
- Andres McAlister, Information Solutions Group, Archives Partnership Programs, World Bank
- Mohamed Muhsin, Vice President and Chief Information Officer, World Bank
- Joseph Rugumyamheto, Permanent Secretary, Civil Service Department, Government of Tanzania
- Mike Stevens, Lead Specialist, Public Sector Reform, World Bank
- Anne Thurston, Director, International Records Management Trust.

In addition to the representatives at the World Bank studios in Washington, a total of 292 participants from nearly 40 countries joined all the video conferences. Unfortunately, technical and other obstacles prevented colleagues in Bangladesh from participating in the video conferences, and Nigeria was unable to join on the original day scheduled so a special session was organised for Nigeria only. In a few countries, despite all efforts, it was not possible to find video conference facilities, and in these cases audio facilities were arranged so that as many of the participating countries as possible could be involved.

The participating countries in the video conferences are listed in the table which follows, in video conference order. The numbers in parentheses indicate the number of participants from each country.

Table 5: Breakdown of Video Conferences by Participating Countries

Video Conference	Participating Countries (number of participants)	Total Participants
1 / 25 March	Kenya (9), Lesotho (8), Namibia (11), South Africa (3), Swaziland (13)	44
2 / 26 March	Malawi (14), Mozambique (10), Zambia (12), Zimbabwe (6)	42
3 / 27 March	Botswana (8), Ghana (8), Tanzania (23), Zanzibar (5), Sierra Leone (12), Uganda (8)	64
4 / 28 March	Barbados (10), Belize (14), Guyana (3), Jamaica (10), St Vincent and the Grenadines (9)	46
5 / 28 March	Bahamas (9), Cayman Islands (6), Trinidad and Tobago (12), St Kitts-Nevis (5), St Lucia (7)	39
6 / 31 March	India (4), Pakistan (1), Sri Lanka (6)	11
7 / 31 March	Brunei (4), Malaysia (9), Singapore (3)	16
8 / 2 April	Cook Islands (4), Fiji (5), Papua New Guinea (2), Samoa (4), Vanuatu (1), New Zealand (2)	18
9 / 4 April	Nigeria (12)	12

A complete list of participants in the video conferences is at Appendix C.

Each of the video conferences followed the same general running order, as shown in Table 6 which follows.

Table 6: Running Order for the Video Conferences

Introduction and welcome from Washington
Introduction and welcome of all sites
Introduction to the video film on <i>Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age</i>
Video film
Introduction to Part 1: the significance of records as the basis for accountability and the protection of citizens' rights
<p>Cross-site discussion of the significance of records as the basis for accountability and the protection of citizens' rights and entitlements. <i>Questions for discussion:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What steps are in place in your administration to protect records necessary to provide a sound basis for accountability to citizens? • How would you like to see record keeping systems improved to support public sector management, particularly in the financial, legal and administrative sectors of government? • Whether or not your country has freedom of information legislation in place, how does your government assist citizens to access the information that they require to assess the government's actions on their behalf? What changes would you like to see?
Introduction to Part 2: the significance of records for electronic government
<p>Cross-site discussion on the significance of records for electronic government. <i>Questions for discussion:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What steps is your administration taking to protect evidence in the establishment of electronic government? • Do paper records have ongoing importance in an electronic environment? • What do you think should be done to improve the protection of evidence in the transition to electronic government?
Introduction to Part 3: the way forward in strengthening the management of records, paper and electronic, as evidence
<p>Cross-site discussion on the way forward. <i>Question for discussion:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What steps do you think are necessary to ensure that official records in your country are available on demand to support the needs of the government and of citizens?
Wrap-up and closing remarks
End of video conference

VIDEO CONFERENCE DISCUSSIONS: CURRENT ISSUES AND NEEDS

In the video conference discussions, participants raised issues in a number of key areas, including accountability; automation; awareness raising; funding and resources; legislation, infrastructure development and capacity building; politics and civil strife; services to citizens; standards; and training, education and staffing. A selection of key comments is included below under these categories. More detailed summaries of the issues raised in each video conference can be found at Appendix D.

Accountability

- Good governance is directly related to government progress, democracy and accountability. To that end, records management is or should be included in most initiatives intended to improve public service performance.
- It is important to relate records management to accountability. National governments need to commit themselves to record keeping, especially in finance, to maintain good quality records. Government must also provide ways to provide public access to information.
- Public sector reform is underway in many countries, and many governments recognise records management as part of the larger information management knowledge management concept. The relationship of records to public sector reform must be emphasised, particularly in relation to financial records, a large proportion of which are still created in manual form. It is important to recognise, however, that public sector reform programmes present new challenges for the managers of record keeping systems.
- There are different kinds of accountability, including to parliament, to citizens and to officials such as auditors. A strong legal system helps with accountability. Legislation needs to be strong to protect records.
- Technology alone will not solve issues. Governments want to take a common sense approach to records management, and information and knowledge management are seen as part and parcel of the issue of transparency and accountability in public sector administration.
- There are consequences for citizens when records are not well managed. Land records are a major example. These records are the basis for land claims and are needed to establish title and rights. Backlogs of information and records are a challenge, and governments lack the resources to manage paper records effectively, not just convert records to electronic form.

Automation

- The transition from paper to electronic records must be managed in a planned fashion. As governments develop ICT policies they need to take into account record keeping issues. Governments need to consider how they will store and retrieve the electronic records created by computerised systems, including legacy records, so that there will be a sustainable knowledge base.
- An aim of electronic government policy is to enable all ministries to work together effectively, drawing on collective knowledge. At the same time, e-governance policy should enhance public reform initiatives focusing on accountability, transparency, anti-corruption and performance improvement. The legal admissibility of electronic records must be addressed by governments so that governments can remain accountable as they move into the electronic age.
- ICT strategies are rapidly emerging around the world, and there is a strong momentum towards the adoption of e-governance. While in the past the introduction of information technology was largely seen as a facilitator of government operations, new technologies, particularly the Internet, are increasingly seen by government as a method of providing efficient, convenient and easily accessible services to citizens.
- Governments everywhere are seeking to computerise their core functions. Financial information is often the first to be automated, along with personnel and payroll information. Key government records are now being created digitally, for instance records relating to land, income tax and financial management, and it is vital that these should be managed.
- In some countries, governments have not developed systems for the regular destruction of records which do not have ongoing value. This adds to the difficulties of restructuring records systems. Paradoxically, there are large quantities of paper records that need to be processed as part of the move to 'paper-less' systems. The fact is that most records are still in paper form and these need to be managed.

Awareness Raising within Government and with Citizens

- Government and the public are not always aware of the enormous changes to the public sector which result from the introduction of electronic records, nor are they always aware of the importance of quality record keeping. Increasingly, however, citizens expect governments to be accountable for their actions and to provide value for money and quality of service. Policy makers need to be aware of the direct relationship between records care and the ability to provide accountable and transparent government services.

- Governments also need to recognise the rights of citizens to information and to help educate citizens on these rights so that the public is informed and able to participate in the democratic process. There is a need to find ways of sensitising the wider public to the importance of sharing and using information and knowledge effectively. There is a related need to raise awareness among broadcast organisations and media of the importance of information.

Funding and Resources

- Even if legislation is in place to govern records management, resources are still inadequate, for example, for storage and preservation, and training for staff. For example, some governments noted that they have received external support for records management but that they now need to be able to sustain their efforts internally, to maintain what they have achieved and to continue to improve. Donor aid will be crucial to the success of the transition to electronic records but governments must also accommodate quality record keeping as part of their ongoing responsibilities.

Legislation, Infrastructure Development and Capacity Building

- Underpinning successful record keeping is a strong legislative and organisational framework. In many countries in the world, action is crucial in such areas as institutional strengthening, capacity building and developing a stronger resource base.
- The legislative framework for the care of records and information is critical to protect records, provide access, ensure appropriate confidentiality and guarantee the reliability of public information. Such legislation should apply to both paper-based and electronic records. In many countries, for instance, there is still a time frame of 25 or more years before records are publicly accessible. With freedom of information and access legislation, this time frame is no longer relevant, but governments have not always recognised the need to establish quality record keeping systems in order to ensure public access can be provided. Access legislation and archives legislation, then, often need to be reconciled.
- There needs to be recognition that records management is the foundation of access legislation, and difficulties in implementing this legislation demonstrate that governments have not taken a systematic approach to managing their records. Archives needs to be involved in the management of records, both paper and electronic, from the time of creation throughout a continuum of care.

Politics and Civil Strife

- It is a reality that in many countries, a legacy of oppressive regimes is hindering the development of effective systems for managing public information. In many countries fraud is rampant, and those few people who know how records are controlled or managed can manipulate them, if they are not held to account for their actions. As a result, the public suffers and democracy is at risk.

- Even in countries where the government attaches great importance to records management, war, strife, or even natural disasters such as hurricanes or cyclones may result in the loss or destruction of large quantities of valuable records. Governments need support for the establishment of safe record keeping environments, so that critical public sector information is protected against natural or human-caused disasters.

Services to Citizens

- There is a crucial need to examine the relationship between records and the provision of government services to citizens as clients. Well kept records enhance public service efficiency, empower local communities, underpin electronic government initiatives and improve reporting. But while citizens have increasingly high expectations for public services, governments have not always established quality record keeping mechanisms that will allow easy access to public information.
- Government services, and the resulting records, need to be more accessible to citizens. The move to electronic government supports the desire for enhanced services and demonstrates the inefficiencies of paper-based systems. But if electronic systems are not well planned, the records created in those environments will not be secure, and citizens' rights may be compromised.

Standards

- At present, many governments are installing systems department by department or agency by agency. In an era of electronic records, there must be standards for the management of information otherwise the risk is that information will become inaccessible over time. Records management systems need to be standardised across the entire government service. Governments also need to look at comprehensive automation systems. IT and records management policies need to address records systems issues, including quality record keeping, security, sustainability, interoperability and accessibility.

Training, Education and Staffing

- Given the dramatic changes in information management in government, especially with the growth of electronic records systems and the increase in demands for accountability and transparency, a whole range of new skills is required for the management of recorded information. It can be argued that while the national archives may be responsible for records, and may have supervisory powers and powers of inspection, if it has limited staff and poor capacity, it cannot fulfil its functions.

- The professionalisation of records management work is critical, and training programmes need to be expanded. A formal records cadre can be a very effective vehicle to provide structure for officers working with recorded information. Human resources programmes in government need to address training and capacity in this area, so that quality record keeping personnel become a permanent part of the civil service. Further, the national archives needs to play a much larger role in decisions about staffing and training for records-related work across government.

VIDEO CONFERENCE DISCUSSIONS: THE WAY FORWARD

Following the discussions of issues and concerns, participants discussed their vision for the way forward. Using the same categories already defined for issues and concerns, the recommendations and suggestions made by participants are summarised below: Again a more detailed list of statements made during the discussions is available at Appendix D.

Automation

- Governments need to harmonise and standardise information technology across the public sector, and involve the national archives in decisions about IT and electronic records. Information systems need to be reliable, effective and secure.
- Preservation of electronic records must be a priority. Governments need to address the challenges of ensuring that electronic records remain accessible and authentic over time. For example, there is a critical need to look at the functional requirements for capturing electronic records as part of information technology systems, and archivists should be key players in such a task. It must be recognised, however, that there will still be paper records in government, and that it is unlikely any government will become completely ‘paperless’ in the foreseeable future.
- Governments also need to look at the advantages of using new technologies for communications, while recognising the record keeping issues that arise. For example, government should encourage ministries to make use of websites to provide more information to citizens and members of the public, including information about government regulations and policies. It is possible to move to on-line policy consultation, where policy papers are being put up for public consultation and for input and feedback from citizens and industry.
- Partnerships are key to the successful introduction of technology. Records professionals have an important role to play in safeguarding accountability and should be part of any government project to develop electronic information and communications systems.

Awareness Raising

- One of the challenges of ensuring that government records are protected is that national archives, and the records professionals that work in them, often have low profiles. In some countries, ministries simply discard records without involving the national archives in disposition decisions. In other countries, little attention is paid to the proper care of the paper or electronic records that are kept. Records professionals need to be closely involved in the care of records throughout their life cycle, so that the public sector remains accountable and its operations remain efficient and effective.
- It is encouraging that organisations like the World Bank and the Commonwealth Secretariat are taking an interest in records management. They can help to create awareness among policy makers of the importance of well managed records. Without this awareness by policy makers, records professionals will continue to be affected by poor funding and support.

Funding and Resources

- Governments talk about introducing accountability and transparency but often they do not recognise records as part of the process. Donor agencies need to emphasise the importance of records as central to quality services and accountable government operations.
- Further, governments need financial and technical support to enable the training and retraining of information technology staff and to provide infrastructure support. Donor agencies and international organisations can help ensure the success of public sector reform programmes by acknowledging the key role of records in government and supporting record keeping programmes as part of capacity building.

Legislation, Infrastructure Development and Capacity Building

- Governments need to strengthen their infrastructures for keeping records, especially their legal frameworks, particularly in an electronic environment. All countries need an information policy. Without an information policy, the management of information as well as e-government will be ineffective. There is a need for a strong policy on electronic records management supported by certification and standards to ensure good practice.
- Governments also need to ensure that records are accurate and reliable and can be retrieved easily. Internal controls and internal audit of records systems, along with other formalised strategies for the management of ICTs, will help improve the management of, and access to, information.
- Leadership is needed in the management of records, and it should be the role of the national archives to formulate policy and guide government through the development of record keeping programmes. Archivists and records managers should be involved in every stage of the development of computerised systems. Further, ministries must ensure they have trained staff to manage records and information. For example, there

could be someone in every ministry who is in charge of public information. This person would need to be highly articulate and highly literate and should be able to serve as a liaison officer with various departments for accountability.

- For electronic government to work, there needs to be national coordination of information and communications technology projects, along with a stable infrastructure such as electricity supply and telecommunications networks. Records must be managed in relation to electronic commerce laws, cyber crimes, intellectual property rights and the conditions and requirements that will make electronic transactions legal in a court of law. Governments also need to demonstrate political will. There is a need for active commitment and inspired leadership. In addition, records management needs to be mainstreamed in government plans and budgets.

Standards

- There is need for an integrated approach to electronic records management; national policies and government-wide initiatives are needed rather than ad hoc activities. Many departments are computerising records in a haphazard fashion. Standards and common formats are critical to generating and accessing information.

Training, Education and Staffing

- Education is critical. There need to be ways of defining clearly the kind of capacity that is needed. If there is no training and records staff are under-skilled, expenditure on records improvements will not achieve anything. In addition, it is essential to define a career path that will facilitate the training and motivation of records professionals.

VIDEO CONFERENCE EVALUATIONS

At the end of the video conferences, the World Bank conducted an evaluation by participants, to assess their experience with the video conferences.

The World Bank evaluation consisted of thirteen questions requiring a numerical rating, from 1 for minimum to 5 for maximum, followed by a space for comments.

The questions posed are repeated below.

- **Question 1:** relevance of this activity to your current work or functions
- **Question 2:** extent to which you have acquired information that is new to you
- **Question 3:** usefulness for you of the information that you have acquired
- **Question 4:** focus of this activity on what you specifically needed to learn

- **Question 5:** extent to which the content of this activity matched the announced objectives
- **Question 6:** overall usefulness of this activity
- **Question 7:** relevance of the activity to your future work/functions
- **Question 8:** relevance of the activity to your institution/organisation/enterprise's needs
- **Question 9:** relevance of the activity to your country's needs
- **Question 10:** extent to which you were exposed to concepts that were new to you
- **Question 11:** usefulness for you of the concepts to which you were exposed
- **Question 12:** focus of the activity on the issues that you need to address
- **Question 13:** effectiveness of the activity in maintaining your interest during its full duration.

The total number of evaluations returned was 188, from a potential return of 292. A review of the numerical responses revealed that over 75 percent of answers fell into the ratings of 4 or 5, the large majority of other answers were marked as 3. It was evident from a review of the questionnaires that most participants found the sessions extremely valuable.

A few participants identified 1 or 2 on their forms; in most instances these lower responses were in answer to questions 2 and 10. These two questions related directly to whether the information presented was new to the participants. Since a large number of the participants had discussed these issues earlier in the electronic discussions and in the Johannesburg meetings held in September 2002, it is likely that these were the participants who were indicating their previous knowledge of the subject. Therefore, it could be argued that the low answers are not indicative of a criticism of the sessions but simply a statement that participants were discussing issues already somewhat familiar to them.

More valuable than the statistical responses were the comments provided by participants. Many people found the sessions extremely useful, and many indicated they had never before participated in such a global approach to discussion and problem solving. The one consistent criticism was that there was a lack of time in the video sessions to deal with all the essential issues raised; participants overwhelmingly urged more time for future video conferences and asked that the exercise be repeated as soon as possible. A summary of various comments is included below.

Many people commented favourably about the sessions, with statements such as:

- overwhelming and highly appreciated
- exciting and useful

- innovative
- a crucial learning experience
- great opportunity to converse with regional colleagues
- well done!
- importance of video cannot be overemphasised
- a very important initiative to bring us a perspective of the global picture
- very important to share the present status of different countries
- an eye opener
- enjoyable and interesting
- very exciting
- most welcome
- laudable
- a rare opportunity to meet with senior officials
- awareness raising was critical
- a complete success.

One participant made the following supportive comment:

I would like to thank the team for hosting such a prodigious conference; it was a unique and new way of communicating which was very fascinating to me personally. I also congratulate them for the content of the programme and wish that we all can have these goals and objectives reached in our individual countries, thus providing a better service to our people.

Some were particularly concerned that technical challenges limited their ability to participate:

- audio only made it hard to follow the conversations
- technology failures let us down
- it would be more effective if all countries could connect via video.

Many participants complained that two hours was simply not long enough and that more time was needed to focus on the issues at hand and develop a full dialogue across several countries. Most of the conferences were extended for up to an additional hour, but this still was insufficient time. Others suggested that fewer countries or fewer participants per country should be involved, to allow for more dialogue.

Some participants asked that they be given more advance notice of the sessions so they could prepare and others urged that the programmes become an ongoing activity so that they could build relationships and continue to share information. Some pointed out, though, that as a 'pilot' for future events the video conferences were a strong success. Overall, the participants found the sessions very useful, interesting and informative.

A few participants commented that the World Bank registration form and evaluation form were clearly designed for students and not for senior government officials, and they urged that a more appropriate form be developed for the purposes of special events such as video conferences.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the experiences of the project team and the feedback from participants, a few recommendations can be offered for similar future events.

- Recommendation 1:** A longer planning time should be allowed for the development of a world-wide programme such as this; the identification of participants for the electronic discussions and video conferences was very time consuming, particularly given the challenges of dealing with senior levels of government. In the event that such a programme were delivered again with a new set of participants, the project team should have up to a year to identify participants, locate video conference facilities, and confirm logistics.
- Recommendation 2:** If possible, future electronic discussions should take place over two weeks, rather than one, to allow time for more in-depth discussions of issues. Questions should be provided to participants in advance and clear information should be provided about the structure of the sessions, particularly to encourage interaction and dialogue among the participants and to make people feel at ease with the technology and method of communication.
- Recommendation 3:** As appropriate, subject specialists should be brought into the electronic discussions and video conferences to help focus dialogue and raise key issues. These subject specialists could work alongside the moderator(s) to plan the sessions and assist with ensuring that the topics and questions chosen are appropriate.

- Recommendation 4:** If possible, any further video conferences should last for at least two and a half hours to allow sufficient time for wide-ranging discussion. Questions should be provided to participants some weeks in advance and preliminary discussions should be held, via electronic technologies if possible, to generate interest in the video conferences and prepare participants for the discussions.
- Recommendation 5:** Planners should consider holding sessions with fewer countries or fewer participants per country in future, depending on the topic in question, in order to focus discussion and allow for the widest possible participation in the time available.
- Recommendation 6:** Whenever possible, video facilities should be used exclusively, rather than audio or a combination of the two. The technical challenges of bringing together groups of people, some of whom cannot see each other, can limit the ability of participants to discuss issues freely with their colleagues.
- Recommendation 7:** Rather than use generic forms from the World Bank, project-specific evaluation and registration forms should be developed that are appropriate to the participants in question. Participants in events such as these are often senior government officials not students, and all programme-related activities, from invitations to evaluations, need to be structured in such a way as to recognise the level of participant within and across governments, and provide a suitably appropriate framework for their involvement that acknowledges their position in their country.
- Recommendation 8:** Evaluation and registration forms should be circulated at the beginning of the sessions or in advance, so that participants can complete them during the sessions themselves, ensuring a much higher return and allowing project planners a larger body of feedback on which to plan future events.
- Recommendation 9:** The network of participants in the electronic discussions and video conferences has now started to develop a relationship between participants as colleagues and peers; efforts should be made to continue the dialogue through additional video conferences or electronic discussions to promote this camaraderie, to share valuable ideas, and to raise awareness around the world of key issues in evidence-based governance and record keeping.
- Recommendation 10:** Press releases, project updates, and news bulletins should be circulated regularly to the participants to keep them aware of the issues raised through the project and to generate a sense of community so that they may be more inclined to share information and ideas amongst themselves.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A number of people and organisations contributed to the success of the electronic discussions and video conferences. The staff at the World Bank have remained committed and supportive throughout the project, and particular thanks go to Sheila Jagannathan and Juan Blazquez for their continual support during the electronic discussions, as well as to Drew Stuart and his audio team. The WBI video conference coordinators faced many challenges in working with a project managed outside the Bank, and their efforts were greatly appreciated.

The national archivists and archival educators remained committed participants in the project and deserve a special vote of thanks for their time, energy, and enthusiasm over the months of planning and the weeks of electronic discussions and video conferences. Shadrack Katuu, of the University of Botswana, deserves special thanks for his assistance in developing questions for the electronic discussions and in helping the moderator guide the discussions.

As noted in the first report, the success of the Global Forum was underpinned by organised administration. Nicola Pyne, Project Coordinator, provided strong support in all areas of project administration. Her commitment to the project and her ability to manage the details of planning remained strong throughout the year and were fundamental to the success of the initiative.

FINANCE

Spreadsheets showing quarterly actuals and final budget statements for the project are at Appendix E.

PARTICIPANTS IN ELECTRONIC DISCUSSIONS

Part 1: Core Participants in All Electronic Discussions

Part 2: Participants in Individual Electronic Discussions

**CORE PARTICIPANTS IN ALL ELECTRONIC DISCUSSIONS,
JANUARY TO MARCH 2003**

Bahamas

Ms Elaine Toote, National Archivist

Bangladesh

Prof Sharif Uddin Ahmed, National Archivist

Barbados

Annette Smith, Chief Librarian, National Library Services
Frederick Forde, Permanent Secretary, Training, Training Administration Division
Ms Sharon Alexander-Gooding, Archival Educator
Mr David Williams, National Archivist

Belize

Mr Charles Gibson, National Archivist

Botswana

Ms Kelebogile Kgabi, National Archivist
Ms Linda Magula, Records Manager, Botswana National Archives and Records Service
Ms Agneta Akhaabi, Chief Archivist, Botswana National Archives and Records Service
Mr Shadrack Katuu, Archival Educator
Dr Nathan Mnjama, Archival Educator

Brunei

Mr P G Omarali, National Archivist

Cayman Islands

Dr Philip Pedley, National Archivist

Cook Islands

Ms Justina Nicholas, National Archivist

Fiji

Mr Setareki Tale, National Archivist

Ghana

Dr Pino Akotia, Archival Educator

Mr Cletus Azangweo, National Archivist

Guyana

Mr Shevron Kellowan, Systems Development Co-ordinator

Ms Rita Portilio, Project Co-ordinator

Ms Grace McCalman, Information Systems Consultant

Ms Roxanne Barratt, Administrative Assistant

Abena Moore, Technical Officer

Ms June Dubissette, National Archivist

India

Dr Shitla Prasad, National Archivist

Mr Ashok Kapoor

Jamaica

Mrs Jacqueline McGibbon, Information Consultant, Cabinet Office

Mrs Shelley-Ann Porter, Assistant Coordinator, Cabinet Library/Document Centre

Mr George Briggs, Head, Permanent Reform Unit, Office of the Cabinet and Prime Minister

Mr John Aarons, National Archivist

Prof Fay Durrant, Archival Educator

Ms Elizabeth Williams, Archival Educator

Kenya

Dr Justus Wamukoya, Archival Educator

Mr Musila Musembi, National Archivist

Lesotho

Ms Ntina Qhobosheane, National Archivist

Malawi

Mrs Olive Chikankheni, Director of Information Systems and Technology Management Services

Mr Paul Lihoma, Director, National Archives

Mr Laita, Micrographics Record Management Officer, Department of Information Systems and Technology Management Services

Mr V Somba, Deputy Librarian, National Library

Mr J B M Chuma, Chief Documentation Officer, National Research Council of Malawi

Malaysia

Mr Sidek Jamil, Director, Electronic Record and IT Management

Puan Hajah Mahfuzah Yusuf, Head of Standard Development and Inspectorate Division, National Archives

Puan Daresah bt Ismail, Head of Electronic Record Division, Social and Economic Sector

Aslahiah, Official in Electronic Records Division, National Archives of Malaysia

Samuthararaj, Official in Electronic Records Division, National Archives of Malaysia

Mr Azemi bin Abdul Aziz, Head of Electronic Record Division, Administration and Security Sector

Ms Rusnah Johare, Archival Educator

Dato' Habibah Zon Yahaya, National Archivist

Mozambique

Dr Joel Das Neves Tembe, National Archivist

Namibia

Ms Ellen Namhila, Head of National Archives, Director Library and Information Service (Education)

Mr Jochen Kutzner, National Archivist

New Zealand

Mr Michael Hoyle, Archives New Zealand

Nigeria

Prof Olalere Ajayi, Director General Nigerian IT Development Agency, Ministry of Science and Technology

Mr Mustapha Bakar, Director of Planning Research and Statistics

Mr Madawaki

Dr Omotoso Eluyemi, Director General National Museum

Mr John Daramola, National Archivist

Pakistan

Mr Raja Mouhammad Ikramul Haq, National Archivist

Papua New Guinea

Mr Jacob Hevelawa, National Archivist

Samoa

Ms Amela Silipa, National Archivist

Sierra Leone

Mr Albert Moore, National Archivist

Mr P A Bell, Director of Information, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Youyi Building, Freetown

Singapore

Mr Kuan Wah Pitt, National Archivist

South Africa

Dr Graham Dominy, National Archivist

Mr Patrick Ngulube, Archival Educator, University of Natal

Mr Hennie Swanepoel, National Treasury

Mr Laal Rambaran, Accountant General's Office

Mr Wessel Pretorius, Auditor General's Office

Mr Ruan Kitshoff, Anti-Corruption Unit

Mr Henk Serfontein, Specialist Public Service Information Unit, Department of Public Service and Administration

Mr Selelepoo Sebaka, Archival Educator

Mr Joseph Ngoaketsi, Archival Educator

Ms Louisa Venter, Archival Educator
Mr Verne Harris, Archival Educator

Sri Lanka

Dr Garvin Wimalaratne, Director, National Archives of Sri Lanka

St Kitts and Nevis

Mr Douglas Wattley, Permanent Secretary, Civil Service Reform
Mrs Victoria Borg O'Flaherty, National Archivist

St Lucia

Mrs Margot Thomas, National Archivist

St Vincent and the Grenadines

Mrs Yulu Griffith, National Archivist
Ms Catherine Joyette
Ms Zenie Fredericks
Mr Jarvis Alexis
Mr Steve Stewart
Mr Godfred Pompey
Ms Gail Nurse

Swaziland

Mr Nathaniel Mahluza, Government ICT Manager
Ms Tsandzile Dlamini, National Archivist
Kabasa Kabundi, Ministry of Public Service and Information
Elliot Shilongonyane, Accountant General
William Lokotfwako, Auditor General
Mbuso Dlamini
Nomathemba Hloph, Head of Civil Service Reform
Mr S Oconor
Mduduzi Magongo, Ministry of Tourism

Tanzania

Mr Arnold Matoyo, Assistant Director (Management Information Systems), Civil Service
Department
Mrs Neema Mpenbe, Systems Analyst, Ministry of Finance

Mr Augustine Kowero, ICT Policy Coordinator, Ministry of Communications and Transport
Mr David Sawe, Director, Management Information Systems
Mr Dickson Maimu, Assistant Director, President's Office, Civil Service Department
Mr Peter Mlyansi, Director of Records and Archives Management Division, Civil Service Department

The Gambia

Ms Penda Bah, Acting Director National Records Service
Mr Alieu Jarju, Head of Computer Department, Management Development Institute
Mr Yusupha Dibba, Permanent Secretary, Personnel Management Office
Mr Yaya Sireh Jallow, Permanent Secretary, Department of State for Communication, Information and Technology

Trinidad and Tobago

Ms Jo Ann Georges, Lecturer, University of West Indies
Ms Ruth Coker, Ministry of Public Information
Ms Judith Edmund
Ms Helena Leonce, National Archivist

Uganda

Mr Robert Okusam, Assistant Commissioner for Records and Office Technology
Ms Salome Nyamungu, National Archivist

Vanuatu

Mr Tom Sakias, National Archivist

Zambia

Mr Chrispin Hamooya, National Archivist
Mr G Syakoola, Head, Registry Control Unit

Zanzibar

Mr Ramadhan M Mwinyi, Deputy Principal Secretary
Mr Abass Ibrahim Sanya, Head of Civil Service Central Registry
Mr Juma Haji Ussi, Chief Minister's Office
Mr Juma Reli, Finance Officer, Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs
Mr Othman Massoud Othman, Director of Public Prosecution
Mrs Fatma Moh'd Said, Auditor General

Mr Hamad Omar, National Archivist

Zimbabwe

Mr Chigwamba, Head of Information Technology

Mr Munyavi, Deputy Director of IT in Zimbabwe Civil Service

Mr Ivan Murambiwa, National Archivist

World Bank and Other Observers

Mr Blackys-Vincent Biande-Baguiwe

Mr Giogio Valentini

Ms Alicia Casas de Barran, Universidad de la Republica de Uruguay

Mr Tom Converse, Inter-American Development Bank

Mr Rod Macdonell, World Bank Institute

Mr Andres McAlister, World Bank Information Solutions Group

Mr Richard Valpy, Territorial Archivist of the Northwest Territories, Canada

**PARTICIPANTS IN INDIVIDUAL ELECTRONIC DISCUSSIONS,
JANUARY TO MARCH 2003**

Since many people participated in more than one session, their participation in each electronic discussion is indicated by the following abbreviations: (IT) = Information Technology; (FM) = Financial Management (LJ) = Legal and Judicial, and (PS) = Public Sector Reform.

Bahamas

Gia Cartwright (FM)
Wayde Watson (IT)
Dorothy Smith (IT)
Mary Mitchell (FM) (PS)
Charles Mckenzie (PS)
Antoinette Thompson (PS)
Mary Mitchell (PS)

Bangladesh

Masud Mahmud Khan, Personal Assistant to Secretary, Cabinet Division (PS)

Barbados

Mrs Avril Gollop, Cabinet Secretary (PS)
Leigh Trotman, Deputy Auditor General, Audit Department (FM) (PS)
Margaret Sivers, Accountant General (FM) (PS)
Ms Juliet Agard, Data Processing Professional (IT) (PS)
Charley Brown, Office of Public Sector Reform (IT) (PS)
Yvette Walcott, Director of Data Processing (IT) (PS)
Ms Mary Walrond, Treasury (IT) (FM) (PS)
Robert Simmons, Deputy Registrar of Supreme Court (LJ) (PS)
Guyson Mayers, Financial Intelligence Unit, Attorney General's Office (FM) (LJ) (PS)
Kenneth Forde, Corporate Affairs (IT) (LJ) (PS)

Belize

Jacqueline Trapp, Acting Finance Officer (FM)
Dean Flowers, Project Manager, Financial Management Development (FM)
Ms Leticia Torres, Records Officer, Belize Archives Department (IT) (FM) (LJ)
Ms Lizet Hegar-Thompson, Archives Assistant, Belize Archives Department (IT) (FM) (LJ)

Ms Rosalie Saldivar, Ag. Director of Management Services, Ministry of the Public Service (PS)
Ms Nuria Castellanos, Administrative Officer, Ministry of the Public Service (PS)

Botswana

Mr John Edby, Assistant Director, Directorate on Corruption and Economic Corruption (FM)
Mr A Bose, Bureau Strategy Advisor, Botswana Government Computer Bureau (IT)
Mr M Moreri, Strategy Officer, Botswana Government Computer Bureau (IT)
Mr A Ramaribana, Chief Systems Analyst, Botswana Government Computer Bureau (IT)
Mrs Kelebogile Dikole, IT Manager, Directorate of Public Service Management (PS)
Ms Letsema Selato, Under-Secretary, Directorate of Public Service Management (PS)

Brunei Darussalam

Mahmud Daud, Head of IT Department (IT)

Cayman Islands

Margot Brough, Chief Financial Officer, Ministry of Education, Human Resources and Culture (FM)
Mr Gilbert McLaughlin, Director, Computer Services (IT)
Mr Wesley Howell, Deputy Director, Technical Support, Computer Services (IT)
Mr David Archbold, Managing Director of ICT Authority (IT)
Mr Herman Simpson, Consultant on Business Planning and Development, IT and E-commerce Development, Representative of the Chief Justice, doing feasibility study for judicial website (LJ)
Mrs Delene Cacho, Courts Administrator (LJ)
Mrs Grace Donalds, Magistrate (LJ)
Mr Jan Liebaers, Senior Archivist, Cayman Islands National Archive (IT) (FM) (LJ) (PS)
Honourable George McCarthy, Financial Secretary (FM)
Jim Brough (FM)
Peter Gough, Director, Budget and Management, Civil Service Reform (FM) (PS)
Donovan Ebanks, Deputy Chief Secretary, Civil Service Reform (PS)

Cook Islands

Mr Geoff Stoddart, Manager, Revenue Management, Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (FM)
Ms Tepua Ngamata, Manager IT Division, Ministry of Justice (IT)
Mr S Davies, CEO, Telecom Cook Islands (IT)
Mr Robert McFadzien, Telecom Cook Islands (IT)
Ms Dorice Reid, Justice of Peace/President Loutunui (LJ)
Mr J K Kenning, Justice of Peace (LJ)
Mr Terry B Hagan, Secretary, Ministry of Justice (LJ)

Mr Navy Epati, Secretary, Ministry of Marine Resources (PS)
Mr Trevor Pitt, Journalist, formerly International Specialist, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (IT)
(PS)

Ghana

Mrs Helen Skia Jehu-Appiah, Senior State Attorney (LJ)
Mr Henry Jackie, State Attorney (LJ)
E F Ofosu Appiah (PS)
Mr Robert A Allotey, Director OHCS (PS)
Mr F Braimah, Director ICT, OHCS Office of Head of Civil Service (IT) (LJ) (PS)
Mr Benjamin Doku, Chief Accountant, Controller and Accountant General's Department (IT)
(FM) (LJ) (PS)

Guyana

Naresh Harnanan, State Counsel (LJ)
Joseph Agard, State Counsel (LJ)
Nanda Gopaul, Head of the Public Service (LJ)
Balraj Balram, Auditor General (FM) (LJ)
Linda Gossai, Accountant General (FM) (LJ)
Ms Rita Portilio, Project Coordinator (IT) (FM) (PS)
Mr Razach, Senior Deputy Auditor General (LJ) (PS)

India

Mr S K Bhargava, Director of Administration, Ministry of Finance (FM)
Mr Sounder Rajan, Undersecretary Administration, Record Officer, Ministry of Finance (FM)
Dr S S Chahar, Additional Legal Advisor, Ministry of Law and Justice (LJ)
Mr K Jaykumar, Director IT, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances
(IT) (PS)
Ms Shyamalima Banerjee, Director (Organisation and Methods), Department of
Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (IT) (PS)
Mr B K Gairola, Deputy Director General, National Informatics Centre (IT) (PS)
Ms Anjana Choudhary, Senior Technical Director, National Informatics Centre (IT) (PS)
Mr Sanjay Garg, Assistant Director, National Archives of India (IT) (PS)

Kenya

Mr George Nzioka, Programme Director, Civil Service Reform Programme, Directorate of
Personnel Management, Office of the President (PS)

Lesotho

Mr Kubutu Makhekhe, Principal Secretary, Lesotho (PS)
Ms Refiloe Keba, Information Officer, Cabinet Office (PS)

Malawi

Mr L S Gomani, Deputy Auditor General, National Audit Office, National Audit Office (FM)
Mr D Kandoje, The Accountant General (FM)
Mrs G Hiwa, Chief Systems Analyst and Programmer, Department of Information Systems and Technology Management Services (IT)
Mr Sajiwa, Chief Systems Analyst and Programmer, Department of Information Systems and Technology Management Services (IT)
Mr A E Nampota, Deputy Director, Anti-Corruption Bureau (LJ)
Mr A Kamanga, Chief Parliamentary Draftsman, Ministry of Justice (LJ)
Mr P Lungu, Change Management Advisor, Office of the President and Cabinet (PS)
Mr S Madula, Director of Management Services, Department of Human Resource Management Services (PS)

Malaysia

Mr Othman bin Abdullah, Deputy Accountant General (Operation), Accountant General's Office (FM)
Mr Pukhari Bin Samsur, Assistant Director, Information Technology Services (FM)
Mr The Ben Chu, Accountant General's Office (FM)
Puan Wan Selamah Wan Sulaiman, Official with Accountant General (FM)
Y.Bhg.Datuk Siti Hadzar Modh Ismail, Treasury (FM)
Y.Bhg.Datin Husnaiarti bt Tamin, Treasury Official (FM)
En Harun Othman, Financial Official (FM)
Puan nazirah bt Bahari, Financial Official (FM)
Mr Othman Bin Abdullah, Financial Official (FM)
Y.Bhg.Datin Nazarian bte Modd Khalid, Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit (IT)
Mr Mohd.Adzman bin Musa, Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit (IT)
Dr Nor Aliah bt Md. Zahri, Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit (IT)
Dr Azizah bte Abd Manan, Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit (IT)
Mr Abdul Rashid bin Yaakub, Deputy Director, Corporate Management, ICT (IT) (FM)
Mr Hamdan bin Mohd Dom, Chief Auditor, Advisory Services (IT) (FM)
Y.Bhg.Datin Paduka Zaharah bt Ibrahim, Attorney General Chambers (LJ)
Y.Bhg.Dato' Salmah bt Abdul Rahman, Attorney General Chambers (LJ)
En Modh Radhi bin Abas, Ministry of Energy, Communications and Multimedia (LJ)
Ustaz Abu Zaky bin Mohamad, Judicial (LJ)
Mr Zulqarnain Hassan, Prosecutor, Anti-Corruption Agency (LJ)
Vasantha D R Charles, Deputy Director, Inspectorate and Quality Management Division (IT) (FM) (PS)

Mr Mazlan bin Mohamad, Senior Assistant Director, Electronic Government Development Division, MAMPU (IT) (FM) (PS)
Datin Habibah bt Ahmad Termizi HRMIS (PS)
En Abdul Jalil bin Khalid, Director, Human Resource Information Systems Project HRMIS (PS)
Dr Zulkarnain bin Hj. Awang, National Institute for Public Administration (PS)
Puan Hajjah Maridah Hj. Md. Yusof, Public Service Department (PS)
En Awadz bin Mohamad, Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit (PS)
Dr Zulkefli bin Hassan, Deputy Director (Academic), National Institute for Public Administration (INTAN) (PS)
Dr Raja Malik bin Raja Mohamad, Deputy Director (ICT), National Institute for Public Administration (INTAN) (PS)
Tuan Haji Mustafar bin Hj. Ali (PS)
Mrs Zaharah bt Ali, Director, Information Technology Division (PS)
Tuan Haji Shamshun Baharin Mohamad Jamil, Head of Secret Registry, Investigation Department (PS)

Mozambique

Dr Salomao Julio Manhica, Executive Secretary, ICT Policy Commission (IT)
Mr Joao Rafael Noronha, Lecturer of Information System Management, Instituto Superior Politecnico E Universitario (IT)
Mr Lourino Chemane, ICT Specialist, ICT Policy Commission (IT)
Mr Antonio Roxo Leao, Consultant of Information Systems, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (IT) (FM)
Mr Rafael Simone Nharreluga, Senior Archivist, Educator and Consultant of Records Management, Mozambique National Archives (IT) (FM)
Dr Adelino Cruz, Director of UTRESP and Civil Service Reform Coordinator (PS)
Dr Higino Atanasio Longamane, National Director for Public Service (PS)
Mr Victor Antonio, Head of Department, Planning and International Cooperation (PS)

Namibia

Ms Nangula N Hamutenya IT Services (LJ) (PS)
Mr Justin Ellis, Permanent Under Secretary, National Library and Information Services, Education Department (LJ) (PS)
Mr Frans Kapofi, Secretary to the Cabinet (LJ) (PS)
Mr George Simataa, Under Secretary, Department of Public Service Management (PS)
Mr Gordon Elliott, Head of IT Services (LJ) (PS)
Ms Ellen Namhila, Director Library and Information Service, Education Department (LJ) (PS)
Ms Inge Murangi, Deputy Director, Efficiency and Charter Unit, Office of the Prime Minister (PS)
Ms Rachel Gowases, Deputy Director, Personnel and Administration, Office of the Prime Minister (PS)
Ms Pamela Hoebes, Deputy Director, Public Service Commission Secretariat (PS)

Nigeria

Dr Haruna Sanusi, Permanent Secretary, Budget, Office of the Federation (FM)
Mrs T A Osingua, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Justice (LJ)
Mr Olalekan Oyelakin, Permanent Secretary, Management Services (PS)
The Honorary Justice Akm, Chairman, Independent Corrupt Practices and Other Offences
Commission (FM) (LJ) (PS)

Pakistan

Mr Tanweer Ahmed, Director General PIFRA, Financial Mgmt Reforms, Office of the
Auditor General of Pakistan (FM)
Mrs Shahnaz Haider Raza, Director General AGPR, Office of Controller General of
Accounts (FM Reform) (FM)
Mr M Tariq Badshah, IT Systems Development, IT Division (IT)
Raja Akhlaq Hussain, Deputy Secretary PMU, Ministry of Law and Justice (LJ)
Mr Muzaffar Hussain Mohal, Director General MS Wing, Establishment Division (IT) (FM)
(LJ) (PS)

Sierra Leone

Dr Jonas A S Redwood Sawyerr, IT Systems Development Manager, Faculty of Engineering,
Fourah Bay College (IT)
Mr Jim J Robert, Deputy Accountant-General, Ministry of Finance (FM)
Mr Cyprian M D Kamaray, Director, Budget Bureau, Technical Assistance, Ministry of
Finance (FM)
Dr Jonas A S Redwood Sawyerr (IT)
Mr Abdul Azizi, Auditor, Auditor General's Department (IT)
Mr Tunde Cole, Solicitor-General (LJ)
Mr Emmanuel B O Coker, Coordinator of Public Service Reform, Public Service Reform
Unit, Governance Reform Secretariat (PS)
Mr S G Pessima, Establishment Secretary, Establishment Secretary's Office (PS)

Singapore

Ms Gladys Tay, Senior Executive IT Manager, Computer Information Systems Department,
Supreme Court (LJ)
Phua Wee Chuan, Civil Division, Dy Senior State Counsel (LJ)
April Phang, State Counsel/DPP, Criminal Justice Division (LJ)
Ms Debbie Choy, Coordinator (e-Government), Ministry of Finance (FM) (PS)

South Africa

Ms Empie van Schoor, Advocate, Advisor on Legal Issues (LJ)
Mr Kenny Govender, Public Service Reform specialist (PS)

Mr Cornel Yuys, Public Service Reform specialist (PS)
Mr Mashwahle Diphofa, Public Service Reform Department (PS)
Mr Ishara Bodasing, Anti-Corruption Bureau (LJ) (PS)

Sri Lanka

Mr Charitha Ratwatte, Secretary, Ministry of Finance (FM)
Mr N Pathmanathan, Deputy Secretary to the Treasury (FM)
Mr S C Mayadunne, Auditor General (FM)
Mr Sumith Abeysinghe, Director General, Budget (FM)
Mr T M K B Tennakoon, Director, Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (IT)
Mrs Dharani Wijetilake, Secretary, Ministry of Justice and Legal Reforms (LJ)
Mr K Kamalaseson, Attorney General, Attorney General's Department (LJ)
Mr Bradman Weerakoon, Secretary to the Prime Minister (PS)
Mr L G R Kariyawasam, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Public Administration,
Management and Reforms (PS)
Ms Dita Wimalasiri, Secretary, Public Administration, Management and Reforms (IT) (PS)

St Kitts and Nevis

Mr Levi Bradshaw, Budget Analyst, Ministry of Finance (FM)
Mr Al Edwards, Director of Audit (FM)
Mr Bertyl Crooke, Director of Telecoms (IT)
Ms Gail Gilbert, Assistant Secretary, Ministry of National Security (IT)

St Lucia

Mr Desmond Astwood, Information Technology Manager, FINMAN Project (IT)
Mr Lyndon Arnold, Assistant Comptroller, Data Processing and Tax Intelligence, Inland Revenue (IT)
Marlon Narcisse, Acting Manager IT and Systems Engineer/Network Administrator, Ministry of Education (IT)
Liota Charlemange, Data and Records Officer, in charge of Systems Network, Ministry of Public Service (IT)
The Hon Dennis Byron, Chief Justice (LJ)
Ianthe Leigertwood-Octave, Chief Registrar (LJ)
Justice Adrian Saunders, High Court Judge (LJ)
Gregory Girard, Court Administrator (LJ)
Claudette Valentine, Information Resource Manager of the Eastern Caribbean Supreme Court (LJ)
Heather Tull, OECS (Organisation for Eastern Caribbean States) Secretariat (LJ)
James Fletcher, Cabinet Secretary (PS)
Mark Louis, Public Sector Reform (PS)
Allison Jean, Public Sector Reform (PS)
Yvonne Greenidge, Public Sector Reform (PS)
Didacus Jules, Education (PS)
Wilbert King, Ministry of the Public Service (PS)

Stephen King, Health Sector Reform (PS)

Swaziland

Elliot Sihlongonyane (IT)

William Lokotfwako, Auditor General (FM)

Kabasa Kabundi, Ministry of Public Service and Information (IT) (PS)

Mr Nathaniel Mahluza, ICT Government representative (IT) (PS)

Nomsa Nsibandze, University of Swaziland (PS)

Tanzania

Mr Ferdinand L K Kwambali, Deputy Registrar, Court of Appeal (LJ)

Ms Matrida Philip, Principal State Attorney, Division of Public Prosecution (LJ) (PS)

Mr Mathias Bazi Kabunduguru, Assistant Director, Performance Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation (PS)

The Gambia

Mr George Okado, World Bank IT Consultant, Accountant General's Department (FM)

Mr Mustapha Darboe, Financial Records Management Specialist, National Records Service (FM)

Mrs Zeinaba Jawara-Alami, Senior State Counsel, Department of State for Justice (LJ)

Alhaji Haruna Jaiteh, Principal Registrar, High Court, Banjul (LJ)

Mr Philip Coker, Deputy Permanent Secretary (PS)

Mrs Juka F Jabang, Director-General, Management Development Institute, Kanifing (PS)

Trinidad and Tobago

Rea Razack, Records Manager (LJ) (PS)

Reeti Maharaj, Legal Officer (LJ) (PS)

Uganda

Mr Robert Muwanga (FM)

Mr David Turahi, Assistant Commissioner Communications (IT)

Amanda Serumaga, (LJ)

Ms Salome Nyamungu, Commissioner for Records and Office Technology (PS)

Zambia

Mrs P N Mawangala, Director, Budget, Ministry of Finance and National Planning (FM)

Mr Norman Chitundu Mwango, Accountant General, Ministry of Finance and National Planning (FM)

Mr S T Banda, State Audit Secretary, Office of the Auditor General (FM)

Mrs Jalasi, Secretary to the Commission, Anti-Corruption Commission (FM)

Mr K S Chipako, Director IT (IT)

Honorary Justice Ireen Mambilima, Supreme Court Judge, Judiciary (LJ)

Tandiwe Daka, Senior State Advocate, Ministry of Legal Affairs (LJ)

Mr Leslie Mbula, Secretary to the Cabinet, Cabinet Office (PS)

Mr C G Kaluba, Permanent Secretary, Public Service Management Division (PS)

Mr Kabasiya, Assistant Secretary, Administration, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services (PS)

Mr G Syakoola, Head, Registry Control Unit, Registry Control Unit, Public Services Management (PS)

Mr Peter Mumba, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs (PS)

SUMMARIES OF ELECTRONIC DISCUSSIONS

- Part 1: Electronic Discussion 1: Information Technology, Electronic Records, and Record Keeping**
- Part 2: Electronic Discussion 2: Financial Management Reform and Record Keeping**
- Part 3: Electronic Discussion 3: Legal and Judicial Reform and Record Keeping**
- Part 4: Electronic Discussion 4: Public Sector Reform and Record Keeping**

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION ONE: INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, ELECTRONIC RECORDS, AND RECORD KEEPING 27 TO 31 JANUARY 2003

Background to this Discussion

This was one of four electronic discussions organised by the International Records Management Trust and the World Bank between 27 January and 14 March 2003. The other discussions addressed the following topics:

- Financial Management Reform and Record Keeping (10-14 February)
- Legal and Judicial Reform and Record Keeping (24-28 February)
- Public Sector Reform and Record Keeping (10-14 March).

Once these electronic discussions were completed, the Trust and the World Bank hosted a series of video conferences with senior government officials around the world, to examine the issues raised in more detail and to seek concrete solutions to the challenges of electronic records management.

Participants in the Discussion

Participants in the invitation-based discussion included representatives of information technology departments and representatives of record keeping departments of Commonwealth governments around the world, as well as other invited officials involved with electronic records or information technology issues, and selected observers. Approximately 170 participants from over 30 countries were registered in the discussion.

Purpose of the Electronic Discussion

The purpose of this electronic discussion was to facilitate a dialogue among experts in their own fields about the relationship between information technology, record keeping, and accountable and efficient government and governance. The goal was to identify key emerging issues, and gaps in understanding, about the use of information technologies and the creation and management of records in governments in developing countries. The ultimate goal was to raise awareness amongst all participants of the information technology and record keeping issues involved with creating, managing, and protecting government information. The project organisers hope that the dialogue will start the process of building a network of professionals in regions around the world who share related concerns.

The Process of the Discussion

The discussion began with participants answering introductory questions about record keeping issues in general, both paper-based and electronic. These questions included the following:

- Does your institution or agency make provision for the long-term preservation of information held in the IT systems it develops or administers? If so, how? If not, why not?
- Has admissibility of records as legal evidence been an issue for electronic records in your jurisdiction? If so, is the authenticity and reliability of such information protected in electronic systems? How?
- Do you have concerns about how to create, manage, and safeguard electronically generated information so that its value as evidence is protected? Do you have ideas or suggestions for successfully protecting electronic records?
- From your perspective, what would you say are the effects of good or bad record keeping on your area of administration in government?
- Can you give us examples of your record keeping problems, successes, and needs?
- What would you say is one major challenge in making the transition from paper-based record keeping systems to electronic record keeping systems?
- Do you have any suggestions about the pitfalls that should be avoided in making the transition or in processes that have been more or less successful in your own institution?

These questions served as a starting point, but the participants introduced a range of other issues throughout the week. By the end of the week, six distinct issues had been identified by the participants as central to the current problems and future success of electronic records management and the protection of the products of information technologies. These issues are:

- the absence of legislation and policies for the management of information technologies and their products, including electronic records
- the lack of standards and systems for the management of IT products and electronic records.
- the low profile of the record keeping profession, the misperception that information technology will easily solve all information and records problems, and the consequent lack of resources to support record keeping programmes and develop a sustainable environment for the management of the products of information technologies
- the lack of adequate training of, and human resource development for, records personnel

- the lack of coordinated action or closer relationships between IT and records management personnel
- The lack of clarity about processes for the preservation of electronic records and the products of IT.

Each of these issues is outlined in more detail below, with suggestions for action raised by the participants.

ISSUE NO 1

The absence of legislation and policies for the management of information technologies and their products, including electronic records.

Background

There is a need for strong, integrated and effective legislation and policies for the development of information technologies and the care of the products of information technologies, including electronic records.

In many countries in the developing world, laws, legislation and policies are inadequate for the protection of electronic records and the products of information technologies. Indeed, in some countries, the legislative infrastructure does not exist to manage the paper record either.

The participants recognised the need to protect all types of records for legal and administrative purposes and to establish policies for electronically created information from databases to electronic mail. They also identified the need for wide-ranging ‘cyber laws’ for the creation and management of information technologies and their products, including policies for emergency planning, preservation and legal admissibility of electronically generated information and records.

Participants also recognised the importance of relating information technology and electronic records laws and policies with broader national objectives, such as human rights and health care, and they agreed that systems were needed to enforce any laws established.

Participants’ Suggestions for Action

- An international agency, such as the International Records Management Trust, could develop a publicly accessible resource base identifying legislation related to electronic records management, to raise awareness of actions taken elsewhere and help share experiences.

- National archives around the world could revise their existing legislation to accommodate the current need of managing electronic records. In the process of formulating or revising legislation, the legal departments, relevant ministries and departments of government will be involved, thereby raising their understanding of the issues.
- National archives need to realise that many top government leaders are concerned with IT development. The archivists should use the existing platforms of Information and IT councils or committees to move the government's agenda forward and ensure records issues are acknowledged throughout.
- National archives need to keep encouraging their governments to create enabling environments for the growth of a domestic information technology that supports socio-economic and human development, by, for example, developing national information and IT policies.
- Governments need to be encouraged to consider the following issues: establishing an effective regulatory framework with regard to IT training standards; changing the public service culture to embrace the strength of information systems by ensuring staff are competent; developing methods to stress commitment to training and upgrading within the civil service; and encouraging a change in the organisational culture.
- Governments also need to establish rules and regulations for the establishment of private institutions, in line with public-sector standards in information technologies and electronic records management, particularly for training of staff and the management of records.

ISSUE NO 2

The lack of standards and systems for the management of IT products and electronic records.

Background

Several participants suggested that standards are needed for the creation and management of IT and electronic records, including the development of technical and administrative standards and the implementation of formalised systems for management and preservation. This area can be perceived as different from legislation and policy development, as it is more 'technical', but clearly the development of standards or selection of systems should be linked closely to policy-level decisions.

Participants urged attention to security issues, IT infrastructure, processes for validating and verifying the accuracy of data, mechanisms for controlling the integrity of records that are backed up, copied, migrated or emulated, and the need for both data standards and digital standards. They also noted the need for standards for electronic workflow and electronic document management, and the need to control and systematise procedures and processes in the work place, particularly with regard to electronic mail and the protection of evidence of actions and transactions.

Participants emphasised that it was important to realise that standards were important for all aspects of record keeping, regardless of whether the system is paper-based or electronic.

Participants' Suggestions for Action

- An international agency, such as the International Records Management Trust, could develop or compile and disseminate international guidelines for the digitisation of records and information.
- An international agency, again such as the International Records Management Trust, could develop a resource base of information about 'best practice' in electronic records and information technology management around the world.
- Each country could study its own systems and standards and carry out a gap analysis and needs analysis. Then each country should try to develop its own standards and systems which can be shared by other countries. Such an initiative should highlight many of the 'lessons learned' around the world.
- National archives need to ensure that procedures for the management of electronic records are closely linked to effective and efficient management of paper-based records, otherwise any digitally oriented system will be meaningless.
- Similarly, national archives need to ensure that all systems and standards address the interface between paper and electronic records and do not ignore one or the other.

ISSUE NO 3

The low profile of the record keeping profession, the misperception that information technology will easily solve all information and records problems, and the consequent lack of resources to support record keeping programmes and develop a sustainable environment for the management of the products of information technologies.

Background

Participants noted the lack of awareness among senior government officials, and in society, of the important role of record keepers in protecting evidence for legal, administrative and cultural purposes. They also noted the lack of awareness of the effects of information technology on government, systems and society. As one participant noted, many archivists in developing countries are rendered 'dumb' in an Information Age because of the lack of support for even the acquisition of computer equipment for every day tasks, let alone the resources to develop electronic records management programmes.

Several participants noted that records managers and archivists have a low profile. Archival institutions are often viewed by senior administrators as cultural institutions rather than information centres. Archivists play a key role in developmental issues and in the management of electronic records. Archivists need to continue raising awareness of the importance of quality records care for the protection of evidence.

It was noted that a lack of understanding could be an age-related issue. Many senior officials are perhaps older and less experienced with technologies and so find it more difficult to embrace the new opportunities and deal with the challenges.

Several people identified lack of resources as a separate issue. While it is recognised that resources are particularly problematic in developing countries, it can be argued that a lack of resources generally signifies a lack of support from senior management for an activity or issue. Thus lack of resources is included as an issue of concern that goes hand-in-hand with a lack of awareness.

Participants' Suggestions for Action

- The records community as a whole could consider a new vision for its work, including a change in name and a readjustment of its public profile, away from 'records' toward information or evidence.
- The records community could broaden its responsibilities to the larger world of 'information management' and ensure the new profession is collaborative and inclusive of all those who care for information and records, including information technology professionals.
- National archives could ensure that they have implemented adequate systems for paper-based records management in order to prepare for the care of electronic records.
- National archives could develop outreach programmes to raise awareness of the role of records management. Examples from one country include sensitisation programmes on national radio and television; publication of a newsletter and a brochure for national archives users; updating and publication or dissemination of the national archives' finding aids, participation in international projects (such as the UNESCO funded Slave Trade Archives Project) and the development of a website for the national archives.
- National archives could work more closely with partners, including representatives of organisations as well as key individuals, to implement a stronger programme. In particular, national archives could look to create partnerships with key players in the industry.
- With the emergence of information technologies, the national archives should consider repositioning itself:
 - ◊ from archives to records
 - ◊ from records to systems

- ◊ from non-active to proactive
- ◊ from back room to front line.
- Records personnel should ensure their needs and priorities are considered in the design or procurement of information systems, in order to ensure record keeping functionalities are catered for in new and redesigned systems.

ISSUE NO 4

The lack of adequate training of, and human resource development for, records personnel.

Background

Several participants commented on the need to improve employment conditions in developing countries. This issue is clearly linked to lack of awareness of record keeping. But training is critical regardless of the profile of record keepers and so action must be considered even if the profile does not improve in the meantime. Intensive training, improved recruitment of new staff and the creation of a clear and respected career path for records personnel are critical.

Participants' Suggestions for Action

- National archives could consider whether they should press their governments to group information specialists under one scheme of service, which would allow for better opportunities for mobility and promotion, thus raising the profile and career prospects of record keepers and improving their ability to undertake their essential functions.
- National and international agencies could review educational programmes to ensure their relevance in the electronic age; for example, to ensure training addresses information technology policies and strategies as well as the management of electronic and paper-based records.
- Governments should develop information systems training policies that facilitate the training of information systems, information technology and records personnel in general.

ISSUE NO 5

The lack of coordinated action or closer relationships between information technology and records management personnel.

Background

Participants were keen to encourage collaborative efforts not only between information technology and records management personnel but also with creators, users, clients and others. They felt that an increased understanding by records management staff of information technology issues would raise the profile of records managers and bring them into the loop of digitisation. Records managers also need to recognise that information technology managers are not always keen on records management.

Participants' Suggestions for Action

- National archives and records oriented educational establishments could ensure that records personnel are trained in relevant areas of information technology.
- National archives could find ways for records managers to work more actively and closely with information technology managers to share ideas and expertise.
- National archives could formalise their terminology as record keepers and share ideas with information technology experts about relationships between the two professional lexicons, so each group understands the similarities and differences between one and the other.
- Professionals in information technology and record keeping could publish and distribute their terminologies more widely, especially to target groups in each other's discipline, to raise awareness.
- Government should encourage all information technology oriented staff, including records personnel, to work collaboratively on all automation projects. In particular, governments could find a way to ensure records management personnel are brought into the process of developing or revising information technologies and systems, to add their input about record-keeping issues.
- Professionals in information technology and records management could find a common definition of 'electronic record' and ensure that whenever an electronic record is in question during the development of a process or system, both groups are involved.
- The national archives could establish an information technology unit, to provide technical support and, formally or informally, to train record keepers on information technology issues.
- Government could encourage the establishment within the organisation of IT committees, consisting of IT specialists, users and other stakeholders, to help focus and develop IT policies and strategies.
- Professionals in information technology and record keeping could organise joint seminars on common issues.

- Records personnel could draw on the ideas and practices emerging from the geo-spatial community, including those people who work with geo-spatial data/geographic information systems, thematic map representations, spectral signatures, and so on. These individuals are involved in cutting edge technologies that can offer valuable lessons for other disciplines.

ISSUE NO 6

The lack of clarity about processes for the preservation of electronic records and the products of information technologies.

Background

Participants suggested that it was important to clarify what is meant by preservation and what exactly should be preserved. Not all digital creations are ‘records’ and not all records are worth preserving, whether paper-based or electronic. Backups are a short term option but not appropriate for the long term. Emulation, migration, retrospective conversion and transferring are all methods for protecting information, but do record keepers understand them and know how to select the best option? Many participants said they needed much more information on this topic.

Participants also noted that digital media have a limited life span: perhaps five to eight or ten years.

They also noted that security of the electronic record is both a standards issue and a preservation issue. There is a need for reliable and authentic information. The process of digital preservation involves the selection of a stable medium, preservation of the medium, providing a mechanism to refresh the data, and ensuring the integrity and authenticity of material.

Participants expressed concern about the serious incompatibility crisis. Software houses must be fully engaged in the process of upward compatibility of their software or promises of cheaper upgrades. Archivists, scientists and engineers as well as those in the arts should endeavour to acquire skills in digital recording using software that can stand the test of time. It is normal to be afraid of making decisions about such a volatile technology, but record keepers should learn to take calculated risks.

Participants’ Suggestions for Action

- Government could develop a centralised, well equipped reprographic and digital preservation unit to serve all arms of a government.
- National archives could provide training in record keeping issues for staff of a preservation unit.

- Government could also ensure that training is provided in digital preservation issues for record keeping personnel.
- Governments can undertake collaborative efforts within and across jurisdictions. They could involve all stakeholders concerned with information management and information technology and policy formulation.
- An international agency such as the International Records Management Trust could conduct a survey of the state of electronic records care around the world and make the results centrally known. *One participant in the discussion, Mr Shadrack Katuu of the University of Botswana, is involved in a survey relating to the challenges of managing electronic records in developing countries. See <http://64.73.24.48/s.asp?u=83025167093>.*
- An international agency, such as the International Records Management Trust, could develop an international database/repository of information regarding record keeping and the impact of information technology. Information in the database specifically related to IT and electronic records might include:
 - ◊ what aspect of life in the national community the record represents
 - ◊ what is the current state of the record, whether paper-based or electronic
 - ◊ what storage formats are used for database records
 - ◊ what storage formats are used for imaged records
 - ◊ who uses the output
 - ◊ what does archival legislation state about the management of those records
 - ◊ what laws are required/exist to support the care of those records
 - ◊ what successes/failures can be identified for this particular action.
- National archives should be sure to recognise and respect the value of ‘tried and true’ methods of preservation, at least as stop gap measures, including microfilm and microfiche.
- Archival professionals need to make sure that solutions to information systems issues are not technology led but are led by information needs, which are critical. Technology is a tool and should be managed as such.
- Records management professionals should examine the methods for preservation used most often by information technology professions to see what mechanisms are commonly used and are effective, including copying and migration.

- Anyone involved with preserving electronic records needs to be absolutely clear on the purpose of preservation, the types of records being preserved, and for how long. There is no purpose in using expensive technology to preserve records that do not need to be kept. It is important to focus on the business processes involved, the core information needed and the reasons for its preservation before expending funds on digitisation, migration or other technologies.
- Government should establish policies for the outsourcing of preservation work, to ensure that the services provided protect the evidence in the records and information adequately.
- Archival agencies should work collaboratively to consider sharing expertise and perhaps developing centralised systems for the management and preservation of electronic records. It may be possible to share responsibilities across a region and save resources.

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION TWO: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT REFORM AND RECORD KEEPING 10 TO 14 FEBRUARY 2003

Background to this Discussion

This was one of four electronic discussions organised by the International Records Management Trust and the World Bank between 27 January and 14 March 2003. The other discussions addressed the following topics:

- Information Technology, Electronic Records, and Record Keeping (27-31 January)
- Legal and Judicial Reform and Record Keeping (24-28 February)
- Public Sector Reform and Record Keeping (10-14 March).

Once these electronic discussions were completed, the Trust and the World Bank hosted a series of video conferences with senior government officials around the world, to examine the issues raised in more detail and to seek concrete solutions to the challenges of electronic records management.

Participants in the Discussion

Participants in the invitation-based discussion included representatives of finance management departments and representatives of record keeping departments of Commonwealth governments around the world, other invited officials involved with electronic records or financial management issues, and selected observers. Contributions to the discussion came from such diverse parts of the world as The Gambia, Fiji, St Kitts and Nevis, Tanzania, Malawi, Ghana, Malaysia, Sierra Leone and Pakistan. A total of 193 participants from over 30 countries were registered in the discussion.

Purpose of the Discussion

The purpose of this electronic discussion was to facilitate a dialogue among experts in their own fields about the relationship between financial management, record keeping, and accountable and efficient government and governance. The goal was to identify key emerging issues, and gaps in understanding, about the creation and management of financial records in governments in developing countries. The ultimate goal was to raise awareness amongst all participants of the financial, administrative and record keeping issues involved with creating, managing and protecting government information. The project organisers hope that the dialogue will start the process of building a network of professionals in regions around the world who share related concerns.

The Process of the Discussion

The discussion began with participants answering introductory questions about record keeping issues in general, both paper-based and electronic. These questions included the following:

- In the area of financial records management, what would you say is one major challenge in protecting financial records so that they remain accurate and authentic source documents?
- What would you say is one major challenge in making the transition from paper-based record keeping systems to electronic record keeping systems in the creation and management of financial records?
- Can you give us examples of record keeping problems, successes and needs you have seen or experienced, particularly in relation to financial records care or financial reform?

These questions served as a starting point, but the participants introduced a range of other issues throughout the week.

Results of the Discussion

Throughout the discussion, the common thread that emerged was the belief among all participants that the creation and management of authentic, reliable and secure financial records are critical actions, regardless of whether those records are in paper or electronic form.

As some participants noted, the overall objectives of financial records management are to

- meet the financial management needs of the government, including the development and implementation of economic and fiscal policy
- provide the audit trail and support the audit function
- enable government to meet its legal obligations for financial management
- protect the integrity of key records and the information they contain
- ensure the timely disposal of obsolete records.

Others emphasised that donor or funding agencies need to realise that without effective and efficient records management in place, the desired impact of financial and governance reforms is often minimal at best. Thus, raised awareness of the importance of records is critical to the success of international reform programmes. As one participant noted:

The keeping of electronic financial records is imperative since almost all active financial transactions in the now global village are now electronic. As far as the accounting profession is concerned, there has got to be a record of each financial transaction neatly protected somewhere – for auditing purposes.

By the end of the week, the participants had identified five distinct issues as central to the current problems and future success of financial records management, and the protection of records related to the administration and financial stability of government. These issues are:

- the need to recognise the importance of protecting the authenticity and integrity of financial records
- the need for effective legislative and organisational frameworks for financial management and financial records care
- the importance of developing standards for financial records management and financial records care
- the central role of education and training for successful records care
- the need to raise awareness across government of the value of all records, including financial records.

Each of these key issues is discussed in more detail below.

ISSUE NO 1

The importance of ensuring the authenticity and integrity of financial records.

Background

Many people raised concerns about securing electronic and paper records so that the evidence of financial transactions remains authentic and auditable. As one participant noted:

accountability is fundamental to good governance, and therefore records management must be fundamental to the financial management processes, since records management underpins financial management, which in turn contributes to good governance.

Ensuring authenticity requires active intervention to protect and preserve records. For example, several participants suggested that audit compliance systems had to be developed or strengthened so that there was a direct relationship between the identification of the information to be protected and the protection of the records holding that information.

One suggestion was that financial information had to be secure from the time of creation. To achieve that, perhaps only authorised personnel should be allowed access. Password protection was one way to ensure security, and the establishment of guidelines and checklists could also ensure that the control environment is maintained.

Participants' Suggestions for Action

- Development of audit compliance systems that incorporated record keeping requirements
- Control access to the creation, management and use of financial records
- Establish guidelines and checklists for the security of records, in a controlled environment

ISSUE NO 2

The importance of effective legislative and organisational frameworks for financial management.

Background

Many participants noted the importance of ensuring that adequate national and international legislation and policies were in place for financial management. Such legislative frameworks would help ensure that financial activities remained accountable, transparent and secure. Of particular concern was the need to link financial management with records management, and many participants emphasised that records are the underpinning of financial work in any government.

As one contributor noted, a stringent legal and regulatory framework is critical to the effective management of both paper and electronic records, both of which will need to be maintained in many governments around the world for years to come. If paper-based systems are collapsing, there is little chance the government can develop effective and reliable electronic systems.

Legislation needs to be robust and enforceable so that it is truly effective. Contributors from one country noted that legislative norms should be developed internationally, since most countries work with the same development partners, to strengthen each country's ability to secure financial information. Another participant suggested that an agency such as an international accounting standards board could come up with a new standard for the maintenance of the financial records, especially in relation to the format of the record, the length of time it needs to be kept, and the appropriate mechanisms for disposal or ongoing preservation.

Other participants emphasised that with the increasing use of electronic technologies, all governments needed to review their financial record keeping legislation, operations and programmes in a holistic fashion, so that both paper-based and electronic records were adequately protected.

Participants' Suggestions for Action

- Development of a stringent legal and regulatory framework for the care of both paper and electronic records, within and beyond financial management systems.
- Development of international legislative norms to strengthen the management of financial information world wide.
- Creation by an international accounting standards board of a standard for the management of financial records, including criteria for formatting, retention and disposal.

ISSUE NO 3

The importance of implementing effective standards for financial records care.

Background

Participants also noted the need for standards for the care of financial records. One of the initial challenges is to identify the aims and objectives of any electronic record keeping system. This process will involve identifying the specific problems encountered in the paper system that need to be, and can be, addressed by the electronic system. If problems are not clearly defined at the planning stage, it is likely that the functional requirements of the proposed system may not be satisfactorily identified. Thus the technical specifications will not be adequate, and the systems will not be effective. As one contributor noted:

One of the major obstacles in record management and archiving is the volume of the data; quite often the amount of information available becomes so unwieldy that the distinction between the essential and the peripheral is lost.

This contributor also indicated that, with an excess of information, those involved with records creation have difficulty focusing on the protection of key data.

A central issue is the need for standards in selecting information and communications technology and creating electronic records. As one participant stated:

The world is moving towards ICT driven technology. There are no short cuts to remain in the old technology which we thought was safe and easily understood.

Participants emphasised the need for more research into the development of user-friendly and effective software and hardware, so records and data can be preserved without fear of their loss or degradation over time, or their misuse by other parties.

Other participants also urged that responsibility for managing and validating data in electronic systems should not be concentrated in the hands of a few technical personnel. Records and financial personnel had a central role to play in developing, monitoring and reviewing all systems. Control mechanisms for the management of financial records must include all key stakeholders, so that the records remain retrievable and continue to support the audit trail and the audit function. Such decisions as the use of passwords, digital signatures, dedicated transmission lines and firewalls should be made not just by technical personnel but in consultation with financial and records experts.

Participants' Suggestions for Action

- Conduct research into practical, rather than theoretical, issues related to electronic records management.
- Develop user-friendly and effective software and hardware for electronic records management, within and beyond the financial sector
- Involve records and financial personnel in the development of systems and controls for inputting, validating, monitoring and reviewing electronic data to ensure reliability of information and protection of systems.

ISSUE NO 4

The importance of education and training in record keeping.

Background

Closely linked to the need for standards is the need for education and awareness raising. As participants indicated, a well-qualified, competent work force is essential to the application of standards. After all, if standards cannot be implemented, they are in effect not useful at all.

Several participants urged much greater attention by governments, international organisations, funding agencies and professional associations to the need for education and training. As many said, 'this issue cannot be overemphasised'. Overseas attachments, short workshops, distance-learning and other creative approaches to training should all be considered. One participant suggested that joint training be developed to bring together records personnel, finance officers and information technology staff to understand the key issues involved with financial management systems. Agencies such as a country's national institute of public administration or equivalent could be ideal suppliers of such educational programmes.

As another contributor noted, there is a compelling need to have trained records staff manage the financial records generated or received by the financial transactions of their institutions. National archives and government institutions can and should provide education and training to help strengthen the capacity of public servants to manage records in all media. Several confirmed that the principles and practices of records management do not discriminate against any discipline, subject or institution. When these principles are effectively applied to financial records, the full impact of good records keeping can be brought to bear on such records. If records staff were well trained, some participants argued, they could then work collaboratively with their colleagues in government departments to raise awareness of the importance of quality record keeping.

Participants' Suggestions for Action

- Identify opportunities for education and training in records and archives management throughout government.
- Diversify education and training opportunities to reach the widest audience possible.
- Develop joint training programmes to bring together records personnel, finance officers, and information technology staff to understand the key issues involved with financial management systems.
- Ensure the involvement of records staff in the development and maintenance of financial records programmes.
- Involve the national archives in any government educational or training initiative involving records care.

ISSUE NO 5

The need to raise awareness across government of the critical value of records, especially for accountable financial systems.

Background

The issue of raised awareness, mentioned above, was an important topic on its own throughout the discussion. The participants confirmed that many government officials did not recognise the importance of records for accountability and transparency in government, or their importance to financial management and financial reform. It was agreed that consultation and collaboration among information technology specialists, administrators and records managers all over the world were critical to success.

Suggestions were made to develop much stronger relationships between the national archives and the country's financial institutions, such as the audit department, accountant general's department and treasury. Joint projects, visits, collaborative discussions and shared training would all help each area understand the roles and responsibilities of the other. Increased publicity about financial and records issues, including the distribution of press releases or

other notification of successful enterprises, would help to raise awareness and highlight for government and citizens the role of financial managers and record keepers in the delivery of accountable and transparent government.

Ultimately, the role of the archivist and records manager as record keepers responsible for the protection of the government's documentary memory have to be emphasised throughout government, so that senior officials realise that if they do not support the national archives they are, in effect, ignoring the one agency in government that can and should be at the forefront of records protection for accountability and good governance.

Participants' Suggestions for Action

- Strengthen relationships between the national archives and the country's financial institutions, such as the audit department, accountant general's department and treasury.
- Develop joint projects, visits, collaborative discussions and shared training opportunities to help each area of government understand the roles and responsibilities of the other.
- Promote record keeping issues more widely within and outside of government, to highlight the importance of quality record keeping for the delivery of accountable, transparent government.
- Emphasise the critical role of the record keeper, in the form of the national archives and its staff, as the central agency of government that can and should protect records for accountability and good governance.

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION THREE:
LEGAL AND JUDICIAL REFORM AND RECORD KEEPING
24 TO 28 FEBRUARY 2003**

Background to this Discussion

This was one of four electronic discussions organised by the International Records Management Trust and the World Bank between 27 January and 14 March 2003. The other discussions addressed the following topics:

- Information Technology, Electronic Records and Record Keeping (27-31 January)
- Financial Management Reform and Record Keeping (10-14 February)
- Public Sector Reform and Record Keeping (10-14 March).

Once these electronic discussions were completed, the Trust and the World Bank hosted a series of video conferences with senior government officials around the world, to examine the issues raised in more detail and to seek concrete solutions to the challenges of electronic records management.

Participants in the Discussion

Participants in the invitation-based discussion included representatives of legal and judicial departments and representatives of record keeping departments of Commonwealth governments around the world, other invited officials involved with electronic records or legal and judicial issues, and selected observers. Contributions to the discussion came from such diverse parts of the world as Tanzania, Pakistan, The Gambia, Swaziland, Uganda, Singapore, St Lucia, Malaysia, Botswana, South Africa and Tanzania. A total of 193 participants from over 30 countries were registered in the discussion.

Purpose of the Discussion

The purpose of this electronic discussion was to facilitate a dialogue among experts in their own fields about the relationship between legal and judicial reform, record keeping, and accountable and efficient government and governance. The goal was to identify key emerging issues, and gaps in understanding, about the creation and management of legal and judicial records in governments in developing countries. The ultimate goal was to raise awareness among all participants of the legal, administrative and record keeping issues involved with creating, managing, and protecting government information. The project organisers hope that the dialogue will start the process of building a network of professionals in regions around the world who share related concerns.

The Process of the Discussion

The discussion began with participants answering introductory questions about legal and judicial administration and reform; the questions were designed to highlight possible relationships between legal and judicial administration and record keeping. These questions included the following:

- What, in your opinion, are the major challenges in protecting court records so that they safeguard individual rights?
- What are the challenges you have experienced in protecting the authenticity of court and legal records?
- In your experience, is the paperless court a realistic objective in the short- to medium-term?
- Given the reality of limited resources, how do you think the recording of court proceedings (such as the proceedings of a trial or hearing) could be improved?

These questions served as a starting point, but the participants introduced a range of other issues throughout the week.

Results of the Discussion

Throughout the discussion, participants emphasised the importance of the effective creation and management of authentic, reliable and secure legal records. Legal records were needed to protect citizens' rights and uphold the rule of law, and their security and integrity were critical to the administration of justice. The move from paper to electronic records was a major concern, as participants recognised the urgent need to ensure the records protecting legal rights and confirming obligations were safeguarded regardless of medium.

As some participants noted, the key issue in legal and judicial record keeping was not the protection of records but the provision of justice and the maintenance of an administrative environment that respected and upheld the rule of law. The protection of records was one mechanism for ensuring that citizens were protected and accused criminals tried and judged fairly. As a participant from Malaysia noted, efficient record keeping was critical, as governments ultimately had to ensure that legal and judicial systems served the ultimate goal of justice for citizens. As he added, 'justice hurried is justice buried.'

A contributor from St Lucia also expressed the overarching concern of all participants for the care of legal records.

[The] prevailing RM issues are basically the same regardless of the industry/specific group: inadequate training, lack of respect for the function of records management personnel, the exorbitant amount of documents, duplicate copies of documents, the storage of non-records, the reluctance to destroy, inadequate storage facilities, etc.

By the end of the week, the participants had identified six distinct issues as central to the current problems and future success of legal records management and the protection of records related to the administration of justice. These issues are:

- the volume of records and the consequent problem of storage, duplication and obsolescence
- the management of electronic records and the need for systems to protect, authenticate, migrate and make accessible legal records in digital formats
- the need for an effective legislative framework that protects the legal record and ensures justice systems remain accountable
- the need to balance privacy and access, particularly with regard to personal information
- the need for an integrated ‘continuum of care’ in the management of legal records
- the importance of education and training in record keeping issues, not just for record keepers but also for all records creators and users, including judges, lawyers, clerks and others responsible for legal and judicial records.

Each of these key issues is discussed in more detail below.

ISSUE NO 1

The volume of records.

Background

The participants identified the volume of records, and the consequent problem of storage, duplication and obsolescence, as major concerns for the care and management of legal records and the delivery of legal and judicial services. Several participants commented on the sheer volume of legal records and the lack of clarity about whether, and which, records need to be kept on file for future reference. As the contributor from Pakistan noted, in both criminal and civil cases, the volume of records created was in part a result of the lack of distinction in records systems between those documents needed for reference and those that can be destroyed after a stipulated time.

Participants also commented on the paucity of records storage areas, the question of whether duplicate records need to be kept in case the original is destroyed in error, and the mountains of records that are created in the course of administering legal and judicial services. As a participant from Malaysia noted:

There is no point of having a system that is incapable of giving justice, unable to produce the real evidence, [that practices] unsafe record keeping and causes dissatisfaction to the parties involved.

Several participants urged the development of policies for the retention of records, so that many records could be destroyed and only the minimal essential information could be retained after a legislated period. As a participant from Pakistan noted, it is possible to identify specific time frames for the retention of records in both criminal and civil cases and to establish processes for retaining only key documents and a short history sheet of the case.

As the contributor from Uganda noted, however, there are countries where the governments are 'less than democratic' and where destruction becomes a political choice, especially where there may be a prospect of future lawsuits. Of particular concern were the actions of 'truth commissions', human rights hearings and outgoing governments wishing to protect information about past actions from incoming governments.

Participants' Suggestions for Action

- Improve record keeping facilities throughout government, including records storage rooms and vaults.
- Formalise records retention schedules and policies so that only key records are retained and unneeded records are destroyed in a timely fashion according to established and approved criteria.
- Establish record keeping procedures that distinguish physically and administratively between records with long-term value and records to be retained only for the short term, so that disposal can be carried out efficiently and effectively.

ISSUE NO 2

The management of electronic records.

Background

Participants noted that the issue of digitisation was closely related to the problem of the volume of records. Many governments were turning to electronic records as a means of reducing the volume of, and improving access to, legal and judicial records, but participants agreed that the move to an electronic environment was not in fact reducing the volume of paper, or the quantity of records, regardless of form, that had to be dealt with. It was agreed that electronic records had to be managed more effectively and that systems were needed to protect, authenticate, migrate and make accessible legal records in digital formats.

As a participant from Uganda noted:

Computers are still a novelty for many levels of staff, and even then the procurement and maintenance of such equipment may prove a challenge for cash strapped governments. So there is need to consider the least expensive, but most effective technology in records management.

As a contributor from Singapore suggested, technology has not reduced the volume of paper produced. Quite the contrary, computer databases, photocopiers, faxes, e-mails and the Internet have all led to an increase in paper produced and filed in the court. The increase in volume is affecting the record keeping process, since all these additional records still have to be filed. Even more important, the increasing volume means that judges and lawyers have to spend more time reading the ever-thicker bundles of documents generated from electronic technologies and added to case files.

In Uganda, the commercial court is experimenting with the process of archiving records on CD-ROM technology and removing hard copies of records to a central storage facility. As the participant noted, the 'retrieval of the whole record remains possible, but only a minimum is actually stored on the premises'.

Appropriate policies and procedures need to be established in order to ensure the authenticity of the records. Several participants urged the development of centralised databases, with uniform case numbering systems to support the tracking of cases. Such databases would also make it easier to match information about previous offences or alleged criminals.

As a participant from Singapore commented, the challenge of electronic records involves getting all the stakeholders in the administration of justice to agree on the best method for protecting the authenticity of court and legal records. As noted, all stakeholders, including judges, lawyers, law society representatives, law enforcement officers, administrators, archivists, record keeping specialists, and others, have an interest in the planning, design and implementation of the authentication system. In an electronic system, the authenticity of the record is easily questioned, and so it must be protected throughout its life or else it will not serve its purpose.

Participants' Suggestions for Action

- Convince governments to understand that conversion of record keeping or administrative activities to an electronic environment will not improve systems if the underlying processes are not structured in an efficient and effective fashion.
- Encourage donor agencies to require effective record keeping mechanisms when funding the installation of computer systems or any related reform measure involving digitisation of activities or processes.
- Involve all stakeholders in the planning, design, and implementation of any administrative system involving record keeping or producing records, including judges, lawyers, law society representatives, law enforcement officers, administrators, archivists and record keeping specialists.
- As noted under Issue 1, formalise records schedules, policies and procedures so that, regardless of whether records are in paper or electronic format, decisions have been made about their retention and disposition; ensure those decisions are acted upon in a timely, efficient and planned fashion.

- Establish an advisory group to assist lawyers, judges and others with the selection and use of electronic technologies for records creation and management, and maintain a regular dialogue to ensure decisions are made that suit the government as a whole and not just one department or office.

ISSUE NO 3

The need for an effective legislative framework.

Background

Participants agreed to one overarching concern that affected both the problem of records volume and computerisation. This concern was the absence in many countries of an effective legislative framework that protects the legal record and ensures justice systems remain accountable. Several participants commented that important decisions about, for example, which records are classified, which are kept and which are destroyed, were often made in an ad hoc manner. The legal infrastructure often did not seem to exist to ensure records were protected.

While participants did not specifically discuss access to information and protection of privacy legislation, their concerns clearly related to the need for such laws in countries where they were not yet in place. Equally, there was a concern that, even when such laws existed, they may not be well implemented if they did not have sufficient power, by way of sanctions, to ensure satisfactory compliance.

A participant from Botswana demonstrated the importance of sanctions for inappropriate management of records by citing a case of the destruction of records at a private bank in Kenya, where, as cited in the news report, ‘vital records of transactions at the bank were destroyed just two days before fraud investigators moved in’ (Kenya, *Daily Nation*, Friday, 28 February 2003).

Participants hoped that an effective legislative framework would help ensure that records were maintained in a secure and confidential environment, that adequate measures were in place for their preservation, and that sufficient resources, including staff, were provided for their care.

Participants’ Suggestions for Action

- Develop effective legislation for the protection of legal and judicial records, including national archives or records acts, access to information and protection of privacy legislation, and related records and data protection laws.
- Develop the infrastructure necessary to enforce legislation and ensure compliance across government.

- Include in the necessary legislation provisions for
 - ◊ the management of records in a secure environment
 - ◊ the protection of privacy and confidentiality
 - ◊ the opportunity for citizens to know what information the government has about them and to correct misinformation
 - ◊ the provision of adequate resources for the preservation and care of records.
- Establish advisory or oversight groups to ensure that all stakeholders are consulted and that any legislation developed is regularly reviewed and updated as required.

ISSUE NO 4

The need to balance privacy and access.

Background

Participants were concerned that governments should ensure that mechanisms were in place to balance privacy and access in the management of records. This concern was especially relevant in the management of the personal information of citizens.

One participant expressed concern that archivists, as professionals, had to find a way to balance rival interests in information. How does an archivist provide access to records and ensure he or she is not participating in a misuse of that information or in a miscarriage of justice? As another participant from Uganda commented, the question hinges on equity and access: ‘if the information is deemed public then one must provide the information to whomever requests it’. Underlying the issue, again, is the need for access legislation which would clarify in law what records could be made available to whom and under what terms and conditions.

As a participant from Singapore noted, the choice of technology will have a significant impact on the protection of privacy and confidentiality in the management of records. Governments have to make sure that information captured in court records, or all records, are accurate and that the records are protected as the data is migrated or refreshed, depending on the technological choices made to manage record keeping systems.

Participants’ Suggestions for Action

- As noted under Issue 3, effective access legislation, with clearly outlined privacy components, needs to be implemented in order to ensure both privacy and confidentiality are balanced against access.

- If access legislation exists but privacy concerns are not fully addressed, separate privacy legislation may have to be introduced or access legislation expanded to include the protection of privacy.
- Decisions about electronic technologies need to be made with full consideration of the protection of privacy, confidentiality and security.

ISSUE NO 5

The need for an integrated 'continuum of care'.

Background

Participants agreed that there needed to be an integrated 'continuum of care' in the management of legal records. Record keepers needed to be recognised as key stakeholders and included in the process of strategic and operational planning in order to ensure records were well protected throughout their life cycle.

A participant from Pakistan outlined a project launched in his country entitled the 'Access to Justice Programme' (AJP), aimed at carrying out reforms in the judicial and police sectors of government. This project aims to facilitate the reform process. It was recognised that record keeping was an essential part of any such reform.

Other participants also noted the importance of involving record keepers in all stages of the justice system. In some countries, for example, local courts, attempting to offer quick and inexpensive justice for poorer citizens, tend not to keep written records. If the case in question is appealed, however, the formal justice process is stalled because of the lack of records of the proceedings. In Uganda, record keeping is seen as essential in the entire legal system, from 'entry to exit', including the work of the police, the prosecution, the judiciary and the prisons. The need for effective record keeping also stretches into the commercial justice system, such as in the creation and management of land registries or corporate legal records. The focus needs to be on the maintenance of 'best evidence', which requires the protection of quality records.

Participants' Suggestions for Action

- Establish a continuum of care for the management of legal records, including the following specific steps:
 - ◊ identify all records in question, including paper-based and electronic, and establish priorities for retention, from vital to obsolete
 - ◊ determine schedules for retention and destruction

- ◊ ensure the provision of adequate facilities and resources for the care of records during their life
 - ◊ ensure government is committed to maintaining records system and updating facilities as required to protect records, whatever their medium or form
 - ◊ establish adequate security protocols to ensure records cannot be accessed by unauthorised personnel
 - ◊ review systems regularly to ensure they remain efficient and adequate to the government's needs.
- Extend systems beyond individual offices or departments whenever possible and involve all areas of government, in order to develop coherent and harmonised records care across the public sector.
 - Whenever possible, involve quasi government agencies, regulatory bodies, and related organisations such as the Bar Council, legal firms, schools of law, legal organisations and so on, to encourage the widest possible consultation and consensus.
 - Review all mechanisms and systems regularly to ensure they remain effective and appropriate.

ISSUE NO 6

The importance of education and training.

Background

Participants agreed that education and training in record keeping issues were critical. Such training should not be limited to record keepers but should extend to all records creators and users, including judges, lawyers, clerks and others responsible for legal and judicial records.

As a participant from Pakistan noted, the lack of training in record keeping is one of the major problems in protecting legal and court records. No reform can be fully effective without effective and continuous training for key personnel. A contributor from Malaysia suggested that courses should be developed for judges and court staff, especially when electronic systems are implemented, to teach them the strengths and weaknesses of electronic information management. Equally useful in such teaching would be to get feedback from these participants about how record-keeping systems can be improved to support their core functions. Ideally, such courses could also be offered to lawyers and legal practitioners.

The lack of training programmes is closely related to the lack of appreciation for the importance of records management. As a contributor from Uganda noted:

In Uganda, records managers/store clerks are typically the lowest cadre of staff with minimal pay and little appreciation of the importance of their task. If we were to “professionalise” the role, then there is more chance that the reforms would be effective.

Government-wide records training would introduce all those involved in records care to the practical, legal, administrative and organisational issues relating to the protection of recorded information. Everything from records policies to the storage of files and destruction of documents would be introduced in order to raise awareness across government.

Participants’ Suggestions for Action

- Establish effective educational programmes for record keepers so that they are well qualified to perform their duties.
- Expand educational and training programmes to other stakeholders in government so that they understand the role of record keeping in providing accountable and efficient legal and judicial services. (Ultimately, as participants noted, such education and training should expand to all areas of government.)
- Introduce awareness raising programmes to educate senior officials, members of the public, interest groups and others in the importance of quality record keeping for accountability, efficiency and effectiveness.

**SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION FOUR:
PUBLIC SECTOR REFORM AND RECORD KEEPING
10 TO 14 MARCH 2003**

Background to this Discussion

This was one of four electronic discussions organised by the International Records Management Trust and the World Bank between 27 January and 14 March 2003. The other discussions addressed the following topics:

- Information Technology, Electronic Records, and Record Keeping (27-31 January)
- Financial Management Reform and Record Keeping (10-14 February)
- Legal and Judicial Reform and Record Keeping (24-28 February).

Once these electronic discussions were completed, the Trust and the World Bank hosted a series of video conferences with senior government officials around the world, to examine the issues raised in more detail and to seek concrete solutions to the challenges of electronic records management.

Participants in the Discussion

Participants in the invitation-based discussion included representatives of public sector reform divisions, administrative reform and governance offices, human resource departments, foreign affairs departments, legal departments and representatives of national archives and record keeping departments in Commonwealth governments around the world, other invited officials involved with electronic records or public sector issues, and selected observers. Contributions to the discussion came from such diverse regions as the Bahamas, Ghana, Namibia, India, Fiji, Sierra Leone, Botswana, Kenya, Zanzibar, South Africa, St Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and Swaziland. A total of 217 participants from over 30 countries were registered in the discussion.

Purpose of the Discussion

The purpose of this electronic discussion was to facilitate a dialogue among experts in their own fields about the relationship between public sector reform, record keeping and accountable and efficient government and governance. The goal was to identify key emerging issues, and gaps in understanding, about the creation and management of public sector records in governments in developing countries. The ultimate goal was to raise awareness amongst all participants of the legal, administrative and record keeping issues involved with creating, managing, and protecting government information. The project organisers hope that the dialogue will start the process of building a network of professionals

in regions around the world who share related concerns.

The Process of the Discussion

The discussion began with participants answering introductory questions about public sector management and reform; the questions were designed to highlight possible relationships between public sector management and record keeping. These questions included the following:

- What categories of records do you think are more important to an effective public service? Do you think those records are well managed in your jurisdiction?
- Given the reality of limited resources, how do you think the management of key public sector records could be improved?
- How do you think the management of civil servants' personnel records affects the process of public sector reform?
- What kind of steps does your government take to ensure that key government records are protected when one administration is replaced by another or when there is a period of considerable administrative change, such as during a public sector restructuring programme? What steps do you think should be taken to prepare record keeping systems for such organisational changes?
- Do you think the 'paperless office' is a potential reality in the short- and medium term? What do you think are the benefits and drawbacks of an electronically oriented public service?

These questions served as a starting point, but the participants introduced a range of other issues throughout the week. A topic of particular interest was the issue of whether governments protected their records when new administrations took over from old ones or when major reforms were enacted in the public sector, and what record keepers could do to protect public records during times of conflict or change.

Results of the Discussion

Throughout the discussion, participants emphasised the importance of quality record keeping for all aspects of public sector reform. As one participant noted, actions which enhance the government's relationship with citizens and clients, and which protect citizens' rights, need to be prioritised in government restructuring initiatives. Computers alone should not be relied upon to ensure strong record keeping in government. Institutional capacity needs to be strengthened overall, and top-level support is required to achieve the long-term goals of improved accountability and efficiency in government. It is critical for government to look beyond the technology, as one participant noted, to consider the management issues behind technology and to address critical issues in change management, work flow, standards and interoperability.

As a contributor from Fiji noted:

Public Sector Reform is almost a global phenomenon. The sad reality, however, is that reforms cannot succeed without proper, reliable and readily available records, and this fact is not recognised, at least in many developing countries.

By the end of the week, the participants had identified five distinct issues as central to the current problems and future success of public sector reform and the protection of records related to the public sector management. These issues are:

- the need to link accountability and efficiency with quality record keeping
- the need to protect critical government records
- the importance of ensuring a smooth transition to electronic technologies and protecting paper and electronic records in the process
- the need to manage human resources records so that the objectives of civil service reform are well met throughout government
- the importance of ensuring sufficient institutional capacity for quality record keeping.

Each of these key issues is discussed in more detail below.

ISSUE NO 1

Government accountability, efficiency and record keeping.

Background

The participants recognised the essential relationship between accountability in government and the importance of quality record keeping. They also discussed the relationship between accountability and efficiency, and the role of records in assisting with the provision of good government.

Several participants discussed the tragic problem of corruption in governments around the world, agreeing that record keeping was critical to public sector accountability. As one participant noted, ‘through the efficient management of public records it should be possible to establish who did what, when and how, and that should serve as a deterrent for any fraudulent or corrupt acts’.

The neutrality of the civil service, many argued, should be supported by assistance for record keeping. Government records are state property and must be protected even when there is dramatic change in the political environment, or anticipated change, such as the transition to a new government after an election. The challenge at the moment in many countries is that records are so disorganised that successive governments cannot access information and so cannot move ahead with a smooth transition. While some participants expressed concern for

inappropriate practices, others argued that the problem was more one of poor record keeping than wilful mismanagement of information.

This discussion led participants to question why governments seem to be so slow to see the relationship between record keeping and good governance or public sector management and reform. The low profile of record keepers was cited as one reason, along with the perpetual misunderstanding of the importance of information and evidence for government operations. In the transition to the electronic age, participants noted that it was critical to link paper and electronic systems, introduce standards and reform public sector business processes in order to improve accountability and efficiency.

Participants' Suggestions for Action

- Link e-readiness and e-government with a functioning paper-based records system to ensure overall accountability.
- Introduce and maintain standards for record keeping.
- Reform public sector record keeping systems, particularly payroll and human resources systems, to improve accountability and efficiency.
- Ensure that any systems established are well integrated and harmonised to gain maximum benefit without unnecessary cost.
- Ensure mechanisms are in place for protecting the security and confidentiality of records during administrative change.

ISSUE NO 2

The protection of critical government records.

Background

The participants commented specifically on the importance not only of keeping valuable records but also of not keeping unneeded records. They pointed out that often governments do not know how to decide which records are worth keeping and which become obsolete after a time. Record keepers are, or should be, well trained to make such decisions, but participants again noted that senior officials often did not acknowledge that these personnel had the expertise and were the key agents in government for making such decisions.

Many participants noted that, because governments are not sure which records to keep and which to destroy, and because they are not placing responsibility and authority in the hands of the record keepers, government offices are filled to overflowing with disorganised, poorly managed records, both essential and non-essential, leading to unnecessary use of limited space and great difficulty in accessing critical information when needed.

Participants expressed their satisfaction at the growing public sector focus on the management of personnel records, as discussed below, but they also were concerned that human resource records were not the only types of records needing effective management. As one participant noted, 'a records management programme should not be restricted only to personnel records but should encompass records relating to financial management, income tax, the legal and judicial system and teachers'. Many other categories of records were also identified as important, and it was generally recognised that an overarching records management programme was essential to the implementation of any kind of quality reform.

Indeed, participants extended the debate to encompass the management of non-government and quasi-government records. The operations of mining or gas companies, for example, can have an enormous impact on the functions of government, and the records of those companies can be crucial to understanding actions or transactions that directly affect citizens. As one participant noted, if non-government records are identified in, or encompassed by, the country's archives and records legislation, then the government archives has a responsibility to ensure their protection. The larger issue is one of enforcement, especially if the agencies in question are disinclined to welcome government involvement. When, for example, governments negotiate privatisation agreements, it was argued, record keeping must be a key part of the agreement so that the public interest is protected and that the level of resources and facilities required to provide the requisite service is recognised.

Participants' Suggestions for Action

- Recognise the specific speciality of record keeping and provide record keepers, including national archivists and their staff, with the authority and responsibility required to protect public sector records.
- Encourage and support training and education for record keepers, to ensure their skills are as up to date as possible.
- Recognise the importance of managing all types of records, paper and electronic, and from all agencies of government, for accountability and efficiency.
- Revise archives and records legislation as required to address the changing needs of government, particularly with regard to such changes as privatisation and decentralisation.

ISSUE NO 3

The transition to electronic technologies and the protection of records.

Background

The participants acknowledged the importance of addressing the move to an electronic environment for public sector work, in particular the political impetus for e-government and the search for the 'paperless office'. Most participants agreed that the 'paperless office' was not achievable in the short- or medium term but many did say that there was a need to make

the transition smoothly to the electronic age.

As one participant argued, four factors were hindering acceptance of electronic technologies by civil servants, including senior officials:

- lack of awareness of the capabilities of electronic systems
- lack of budget to support the installation of IT equipment
- lack of training and exposure to IT
- fear of the unknown and the fear of change in their familiar work environment.

Participants recognised the resistance by governments and the public to the use of new technologies and argued that citizens and civil servants needed to develop a level of comfort with, and trust for, new technologies before embracing them fully. As one participant noted, it was critical to look beyond the technology to the management issues behind it and ensure that business operations in the government functioned well before systems were automated, so that employees provided, and clients received, the best service possible. Several participants noted that e-governance was a priority in their government and that they were anxious to learn about pilot projects and examples of best practice to help them see the most appropriate way forward in their own jurisdictions.

One participant from the Bahamas spoke very positively of the experience of using Internet technology to store records and information, and encouraged other participants to investigate such creative solutions to record-keeping problems. He also noted that document imaging was proving to be very costly and also steered participants away from expensive and untested 'solutions' to electronic records problems.

A participant from Malaysia spoke specifically of their e-government initiative, launched in 1999. Details were provided about the human resource management information system being developed, which is a 'technology enabled human resource system [that] covers the whole human resource process from the creation of positions to recruitment, development, transfer, disciplinary, promotion and right up to separation or retirement'. This participant offered colleagues a reference to the government of Malaysia's websites www.mampu.gov.my and www.jpa.gov.my.

On the other hand, a participant from Sri Lanka emphasised the attraction people still had to paper. As this participant noted, 'I am sometimes impressed by petitioners who come up with letters, usually of a routine nature, sent to them several years ago, which they have preserved for posterity. So the practice of paper keeping will be difficult to dislodge.'

Other participants noted that there were other more pressing reasons why electronic records should not become the norm without extensive examination of all the technological and legal implications. As a participant from Swaziland noted: 'There are drawbacks to an electronically oriented public service which include the greater expense of setting up the system, the lack of expertise and frequent power failures common in our developing countries. Moreover, the courts of law in most developing countries such as Swaziland only recognise hardcopy evidence because it proves its authenticity with original signatures and stamps.'

In sum, participants agreed that broad principles must be in place to guide governance reforms with regard to electronic technologies. These included focusing on citizens' needs and rights as a priority, following a principle of equity in the application of services, seeking collaborative and cooperative solutions and recognising the importance of analysing potential solutions in depth so that decisions made are adequate for the long term.

Participants' Suggestions for Action

- Recognise the critical and inextricable relationship between records and accountability when considering electronic systems.
- Support initiatives in electronic government with sufficient resources to allow for record keeping and management issues to be addressed properly.
- Ensure all members of staff receive adequate training in and exposure to information technologies, so their 'computer literacy' skills are heightened.
- Make the transition to the electronic environment as smooth as possible and focus on priority areas, particularly client- and citizen-centred areas, in order to effect the most useful change in the short term.
- Ensure that management and infrastructure issues are fully addressed when considering changes in information technology; do not just assume computers will 'solve the problem'.
- Consider best practice examples emerging around the world, and seek information and cooperation from colleagues in other jurisdictions to find effective solutions and avoid 'reinventing the wheel'.
- Recognise the importance of indigenous knowledge and the limited exposure of many citizens to new technologies, and do not replace traditional systems without adequate methods to help the public make the transition.

ISSUE NO 4

Civil service reform and the management of human resources records.

Background

The participants considered human resources records as an area of particular concern in the management and reform of the public sector. The issue of ghost workers was raised by several participants, and the key issues of efficiency, accountability, liability and ethics were all identified as crucial to effective public service management. As one participant illustrated, without proper human resources records, it is difficult to deploy staff appropriately according to the reform challenges faced by government. If staff can be employed and promoted without any supporting record, there are opportunities for

corruption. Similarly, without controls, governments find that members of staff go on leave but there is no record of them taking time off, leaving the government liable and opening up opportunities for malpractices.

Several participants discussed efforts underway to manage civil servants' personnel files using information technologies. Advantages included reduction in duplication, reduction of delays in service delivery, enhanced capacity to organise, collate and coordinate data and disseminate information in a timely manner, and the imposition of standards and processes that would encourage conformity and the application of rules, and therefore efficiency.

Participants noted that decisions about government operations were often made without attention to human resource factors. The implementation of standardised protocols, as found in electronic systems, could enhance decision making, recruitment, selection, promotion, transfer and other human resource management processes.

Participants' Suggestions for Action

- Institute quality record keeping systems specifically for human resources management.
- Ensure that electronic personnel management systems include protocols and mechanisms for accountability, record keeping and authorisation, to reduce the opportunity for mismanagement and corruption.
- Relate human resources records management to the wider goal of public service reform so that governments recognise and acknowledge the importance of information and records for an effective and efficient public service.

ISSUE NO 5

Institutional capacity for quality record keeping.

Background

The participants recognised that governments had to support record keeping not just in the short term but as a long term objective. Institutional capacity had to be increased and sustainability had to be achieved so that record keepers could protect critical evidence of government actions and transactions.

As one participant noted, institutional capacity is not just a matter of hiring more people or providing specific training. Staff need to be hired, trained, given adequate salaries, given appropriate authority and responsibility and placed within a functioning effective infrastructure, so that they can achieve their goals and support their government. As another participant commented, many senior administrators think of reforms as high performance output, efficiency, performance-based rewards and so on. But these reforms cannot be achieved without effective and efficient record keeping systems. The processes of planning, monitoring, appraising and rewarding staff all require documentation to ensure continuity and uniformity. Records are therefore essential.

Other participants agreed that human effort is critical to any success in government. Governments are composed of people who perform to the best of their abilities. It is up to senior officials, the participants felt, to support their staff, in this instance, particularly record keeping staff, so that they can help government achieve sustainable changes and manageable, reliable solutions, regardless of the level of technology used.

Participants' Suggestions for Action

- Ensure basic administrative systems are in place so that the institution as a whole remains effective and efficient.
- Implement organisational change in a planned fashion, to allow for smooth transitions and better compliance within and outside of government.
- Encourage top level support for reforms by implementing manageable and planned changes, rather than sweeping but unachievable reforms, so that success can build on success for long-term sustainability.
- Recognise that officials such as national archivists, while key to the success of record-keeping initiatives, cannot solve major systemic problems alone; many issues reach beyond record keeping to the essential operations of government and have to be addressed in a collaborative and cooperative fashion, involving senior officials from a range of government sectors.
- Seek integrated, holistic solutions that ensure records are managed throughout their life cycle in an effective and sustainable fashion and that changes are not piecemeal or ad hoc.

PARTICIPANTS IN VIDEO CONFERENCES: ORGANISED BY COUNTRY

Bahamas

Hyacinth W Pratt, Department of Public Service
Mr Nelson Burrows, Police Inspector, Royal Bahamas Police Force, Computer Department
Ms Eugenia Cartwright, Treasurer, Treasury Department
Mr Terrence Bastian, Auditor General, Department of the Auditor General
Ms Irene Stubbs, Permanent Secretary, Department of Public Service
Wayde Watson, Deputy National Coordinator for Information Technology, Ministry of Finance
Charles Mckenzie, Administrator, Manager, Department of Public Service
Dr D Gail Saunders, Director of Archives, Department of Archives
Ms Elaine Toote, Deputy Director, Department of Archives

Barbados

Rommel Carter, Assistant Registrar Student Affairs, Barbados Community College
Patrick Rowe, Project Director, University College Barbados
Robert Simmons, Deputy Registrar of Supreme Court Registration Office, Registration Department
Guyson Mayers, Director, Anti-money Laundering Authority, Finance Intelligence Unit, Attorney General's Office,
Charley Brown, Management Development Officer, Office of Public Sector Reform
Yvette Walcott, Director of Data Processing, Government Data Processing Department
Kenneth Forde, System Analyst, Corporate Affairs
Frederick Forde, Permanent Secretary, Training, Training Administration Division, Ministry of Civil Service
Mr David Williams, Senior Archivist, Archives Department
Ms Sharon Alexander-Gooding, Campus Records Manager, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill Campus

Belize

Mr Henry Anderson, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Health
Ms Carmen Barrow, Accountant General, Treasury Department
Mr Paul Rodrigez, Ombudsman, Office of the Ombudsman
Ms Eliza Montalvo, Crown Counsel, Attorney General's Ministry
Ms Nuria Castellanos, Administrative Officer, Management and Training Services Division
Ms Lusiola Castillo, Librarian, National Library Service
Mr John Pinelo, President, Belize National Teachers Union
Mr Baxter Matthews, Ag. Auditor General, Office of the Auditor General

Ms Sharole Rose Saldivar, Administrative Assistant, Elections and Boundaries Department
Mr Wayne Lawrence Simon, Acting Assistant Auditor General, Office of the Auditor General
Egzine McFoy, Vice Chairperson/Secretary/Councillor, Public Service Union of Belize
Mr Edmund Zuniga, Under Secretary, Ministry of Finance
Senator Margaret Ventura, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Public Services
Mr Charles Gibson, Chief Archivist, Belize Archives Department

Botswana

Ms Mukani Pelaelo, Senior Assistant Director, DPSM (Compensational Benefits)
Mr Shadrack Kgomo, Principal Investigator, DCEC
Mr Sibnath Sengupta, Acting Accountant General, Accountant General's Department
Ms Alicia Ramaribana, Acting Computer Manager, Government Computer Bureau
Mr Shadrack Katuu, Archival Educator, Department of Library and Information Studies
Ms Mukani Pelaelo
Dr Nathan Mnjama, Senior Archival Educator, Department of Library and Information Studies, University of Botswana
Ms Kelebogile Kgabi, National Archivist, Botswana National Archives and Records Services

Brunei Darussalam

Pengiran Omarali bin Pengiran anak Hashim, Curator of Brunei National Archives, Brunei Museum Department
Ahmad Abdul Rahman, Deputy to Head of Civil Service
Sharifah Fatmah, Management Service Department
Mahmud Daud, Director of Information Technology and State Store

Cayman Islands

The Hon James Ryan, Chief Secretary, Portfolio of Internal and External Affairs
Mr David Archbold, Managing Director of ICT Authority
Mr Jan Liebaers, Senior Archivist, Cayman Islands National Archive, National Archives
Mr Peter Gough, Director, Budget and Management, Portfolio of Finance
Dr Philip Pedley, Director, Cayman Islands National Archive
Margot Brough, Chief Financial Officer, Ministry and Education, Human Resources and Culture

Cook Islands

Ms Carmen Temata, Senior Officer, Public Service Commission
Mr Framhein Koteka, IT Specialist, Ministry of Justice
Mr Terry B Hagan, Secretary, Ministry of Justice
Ms Justina Nicolas, Acting Archivist/Chief Librarian, National Archives

Fiji

Albert Rosa, Director of Corporate Services, Public Service Commission

Mr Eliko Bomani, Acting Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Information and Media Relations

Mr Samit Ambaram, Information Technology Officer, Ministry of Finance and National Planning

Mr Asneel Singh, Assistant Programmer, Ministry of Finance and National Planning

Mr Setareki Tale, Government Archivist, National Archives of Fiji

Ghana

Eugenia Adomako-Gyasi, Chief Records Officer, Public Records and Archives Administration Department

Grace Adzroe, Director of Audit, Controller and Accountant General's Department

Mr Frank Braimah, Director - ICT, Office of Head of Civil Service

Mr Benjamin Doku, Deputy Director, Payroll Division, CAGD

Dr Pino Akotia, Archival Educator/Lecturer, Department of Information Studies

Mr Cletus Azangweo, Director, Public Records and Archives Administration Department

Grace McCalman, Information System Analyst, Public Service Ministry

Alexis Felix, Accountant, Public Sector Modernisation Project

Guyana

Ms June Dubissette, National Archivist, National Archives

Mr Shevron Kellowan, Systems Development Co-ordinator, Information System Division

Ms Roxanne Barratt, Administrative Assistant and President, Guyana Public Service Registry Network

India

Har Deo Singh, Director General of Archives, Department of Culture

Mr Janki Ballabh, Vigilance Commissioner, Central Vigilance Commission

Mr Champak Chatterji, Additional Secretary, Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances

Mr Rentala Chandrashekher, Joint Secretary, Department of Information Technology, E-Governance Division

Jamaica

Mrs Rita Whittaker, Director of Information and Documentation, Ministry of Commerce, Science and Technology

Mrs Pamela Monroe-Ellis, Divisional Director of Audit, Auditor General's Department

Dr Jean Dixon, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Commerce, Science and Technology

Mr Lorrain Winston Dias, Accountant General, Accountant General's Department
Mr Joseph Manley, Head, IT Strategy Unit, Ministry of Finance and Planning
Ms Jacqueline McGibbon, Information Consultant, Office of the Cabinet
Mrs Shelley-Ann Porter, Assistant Co-ordinator, Cabinet Library/Documentation Centre
Ms Elizabeth Williams, Archival Educator, University of the West Indies, Mona Campus
Mr John Aarons, Government Archivist, Jamaica Archives and Records Department
Prof Fay Durrant, Head of Department of Library Studies, University of the West Indies,
Mona Campus

Kenya

Francis Oduor Ouma, Senior Systems Analyst/Programmer, Government Information
Technology Services, Ministry of Finance
Dr Wilson Kipsang Sionik, Director, Government Information Technology Services,
Ministry of Finance
Dr Justus Wamukoya, Archival Educator, Faculty of Information Sciences, Moi University
(Note Dr Wamukoya participated from Botswana)
Mr Joseph Nyangada, Assistant Accountant General, Ministry of Finance
Mr Nathaniel N Gekonge, Head of Preventive Services, Anti-Corruption Police Unit
Mr Daniel M Kitete, Assistant Director, Directorate of Personnel Management
Mr Titus Ndambuki, Deputy Programme Director, Directorate of Personnel Management
Mr Anthony Gatumbu, Director of Audit, Office of the Controller and Auditor General
Mr Musila Musembi, Director, Kenya National Archives and Documentation Services

Lesotho

Mrs Lerato 'Mamonyane Monyane, Senior Consultant, IT Division/LIPAM
Mr Tlohang Sekhamane, Government Secretary, Prime Ministers Office
Mr Kubutu Makhakhe, Principal Secretary (Administration), Cabinet
Ms Refiloe Keba, Information Officer, Prime Ministers Office
Mr Tseliso Mokela, Principal Secretary, Ministry for Communications
Mr Melao Mokuena, Head of Computer Department, Ministry of Finance
Ms Ntina Qhobosheane, National Archivist, National Archives of Lesotho
Melato Mokuena, Computer Manager, Computer Centre

Malawi

Mrs O T Chikankheni, Director, Department of Information Systems and Technology
Management Services
Mr Paul Lihoma, Director, National Archives of Malawi
Mr P Lungu, Change Management Advisor, Office of the President and Cabinet
Professor D Rubadiri, Vice Chancellor, University of Malawi
Dr C Mwiyeriwa, Secretary for National Research Council
Mr J H Chingwalu, Acting National Librarian
Mr P V Kachimera, Secretary, Department of Human Resource Management Services
Mr S D T Matenje, Solicitor General and Secretary for Justice
Mr Kamphambe-Nkhoma, Deputy Secretary to the President and Cabinet

Mrs B Kumangirana, Principal Secretary (Administration), OPC
Mr P Chilambe, Secretary to the Treasury
Justice Mtegha, Anti-Corruption Bureau
Mr H B Kalongonda, Auditor General
Mr D B Kandoje, Accountant General

Malaysia

Y.Bhg.Tan Sri Dr Samsudin Hitam (Mr), Secretary General, Federal Treasury of Malaysia
Y.Bhg.Tan Sri Jamaluddin bin Ahmad Damanhuri (Mr), Director General, Public Service Dept. of Malaysia
Datin Nazariah Mohd. Khalid (Ms), Director General, Malaysian Administrative Modernisation and Management Planning Unit (MAMPU)
Y.Bhg.Datuk Dr Hadenan bin Abdul Jalil (Mr), Auditor General to the Government of Malaysia
Y.Bhg. Dato' Zaitun Zawiyah bt Puteh (Ms), Solicitor General to the Government, Attorney General's Department
Y.Bhg. Datuk Dr Halim Shafie (Mr), Secretary General, Ministry of Energy, Communications and Multimedia
Y.Bhg. Datuk Hajah Siti Maslamah Osman (Ms), Accountant General, Accountant General's Department
Y.Bhg. Dato' Zulkipli bin Mat Noor (Mr), Director General, Anti-Corruption Agency
Dato' Habibah Zon (Ms), Director General, National Archives of Malaysia

Mozambique

Mr Rafael Simone Nharreluga, Documentalist, Mozambique National Archives
Mr Victor Antonio, Administrator, Ministry of State and Administration
Mr Joel Das Neves Tembe, Director, Arquivo Historico de Mocambique
Dr Salomao Julio Manhica, Executive Secretary, ICT Policy Commission
Mr Joao Rafael Noronha, Lecturer of Information System Management, Instituto Superior Politecnico E Universitario
Mr Lourino Chemane, ICT Specialist, ICT Policy Commission
Mr Antonio Roxo Leao, Consultant of Information Systems, Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology
Dr Adelino Cruz, Director of UTRESP and Civil Service Reform Coordinator
Dr Higino Atanasio Longamane, National Director for Public Service
Mr Victor Borges, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Planning and Finance

Namibia

Ms Elizabeth Asino, Deputy Director IT, Office of the Prime Minister
Mr Jochen Kutzner, Archivist, National Archives
Ms Ellen Ndeshi Namhila, Director, Namibia Library and Information Services
W W Hillebrecht, Acting Chief Archivist, National Archives of Namibia
Ms Inge Murangi, Deputy Director, Office of the Prime Minister
Ms Rachel Gowases, Deputy Director, Office of the Prime Minister

Mr Stephanus van Staden, Deputy Director IT, Office of the Prime Minister
Mr M Tjihumino, Director; Accountant General, Ministry of Finance
Ms A Sinvula, Deputy Director, Ministry of Finance
Mr D J Kotze, Director: Audit Services, Ministry of Finance
Ms E Dien, Deputy Director IT, Ministry of Finance

New Zealand

Mr Michael, Group Manager, Government Recordkeeping, Archives New Zealand
Mr Ken Scadden, Archivist, Archives New Zealand
Mr Greg Goulding, Archivist, Archives New Zealand

Nigeria

Frank Oguah, Deputy Director, Management Consulting
M L Ajanwachukwu, Assistant Director Records, Head of Service
Y M Sanusi, Assistant Director, Central Bank of Nigeria
Aso Orakporaye, Special Assistant, ICPC
O Samuel-Ojo, IT Consultant, National Information Technology Development Agency
NITDA
E O Ukueku, Director Treasury Services, Treasury Services
Nda Yakubu, Deputy Director, OAGF
Mrs G I Nwachukwu, Director (Revenue), Federal Ministry of Finance
J O Ajiboye, Acting Auditor General for the Federation, Office of the Auditor General for the
Federation
Tim A Bakare, Records Officer, HOS
Olu Fadaka, Executive Member, ICPC
Mr Buaji Tunki Olaopa, Head of Public Service Reform Programme Secretariat, Office of the
Head of the Service of the Federation

Pakistan

Mr M Mohsin Khan, Deputy Auditor General of Pakistan, Office of the Auditor General of
Pakistan

Papua New Guinea

Mr Hansel Kakimo, First Assistant Secretary, Corporate Services, Department of Personnel
Management
Mr Jacob Hevelawa, National Archivist, National Archives and Public Records Service

Samoa

Atesa Passi, Ministry of Justice and Courts

Avatea Solomona, Head Corporate IT Services, Ministry of Finance
Ulrike Hertel Akuino, Chief Museum/Archives Officer, National of Youth, Sports and Cultural Affairs
Ms Amela Silipa, Records Management Officer, Secretary, Public Service Commission

Sierra Leone

Joseph Kobba, Senior State Counsel, Law Officers Department
Tasmina Ahmed Jah, Economist, Budget Bureau Ministry of Finance
Leslie Sylvester Johnson, Deputy Auditor General of Pakistan, Auditor General's Department
Joseph P K Lamin, Secretary to the Cabinet and Head of Civil Service, Cabinet Secretariat
Dr Jonas A S Redwood Sawyerr, Dean/Lecturer, Faculty of Engineering, Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leon
Mr Valentine T Collier, Commissioner, Anti-corruption Commission
Mr William A Taylor, Director-General (Education), Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
Mr Beresford J Temple, Government Printer, Government Printing Department
Mrs Gina Banda-Thomas, Acting Director-General, Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS)
Mr Brima M Sowa, Civil Servant, Ministry of Development and Economic Planning
Mr Albert Moore, Senior Archivist, Public Archives Office of Sierra Leone
Cyprian Kamaray, Budget Director, Budget Bureau

Singapore

Charles Lim, Principal Senior State Counsel
Loh Khum Yean, Deputy Secretary (Services), Ministry of Finance
Kwek-Chew Kim Gek (Mrs), Senior Assistant Director, Records Management Service, National Archives of Singapore

South Africa

Mr Cornel Yuys, Public Service Reform specialist
Henk Serfontein, Public Service Information Unit
Graham Dominy, National Archivist, Chief Director, Department of Arts, Culture, Science Technology

Sri Lanka

Mr Bradman Weerakoon, Secretary to the Prime Minister, Prime Ministers' Office
Mr S C Mayadunne, Auditor General, Auditor General's Department
Mr L G R Kariyawasam, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Public Administration, Management and Reforms
Mr Ajith Ekanayake, Chief Executive Officer, Council for Information Technology

Mr V K Nanayakkara, Secretary, Human Resources Development, Education and Cultural Affairs
Dr Garvin Wimalaratne, Director, National Archives

St Kitts and Nevis

Ms Victoria Borg O'Flaherty, National Archivist, National Archives of St Kitts and Nevis
Mr Douglas Wattle, Permanent Secretary, Civil Service Reform
Mr J Llewellyn Edmeade, Chief Secretary
Mr Levi Bradshaw, Budget Analyst, Ministry of Finance
Mr Albert Edwards, Director of Audit, Audit Office

St Lucia

Mr Mathias Polius, Deputy Director of Audit, Office of the Director of Audit
Mr Agosta Degazon, Accountant General, Accountant General's Dept
Mr Cletlis Bertin, IT Consultant, Office of the Prime Minister
Ms Judith Crane-St Hill, Chief Personnel Officer, Personnel Division, Ministry of Labour Relations
Ms Glenda Polius, Deputy Permanent Secretary, Office of the Prime Minister
Margot Thomas, National Archivist, National Archives Authority of St Lucia
Desmond Astwood, FINMAN Project

St Vincent and the Grenadines

Mr Randolph Rogers, Assistant Superintendent of Police, Police
Ms Jennifer Glasgow-Browne, Director of Public Sector Reform Unit
Mr Edmond Jackson, Budget Director, Ministry of Finance
Mr Bernard Morgan, Chief Personnel Officer, Service Commission
Ms Gail Nurse, Librarian, National Documentation Centre
Mr Cecily Saunders, Director of Audit, Audit Department
Mr Jaundy Martin, Senior Crown Counsel, Legal Affairs
Ms Annis Horne, Deputy Accountant General, Treasury
Mr Michael De Silva, Permanent Secretary, National Security and Public Service

Swaziland

Mrs Futhi Mdluli, Secretary to the Cabinet, Cabinet Offices
Mr Nathaniel Mahluza, Director Computer Services, Government Computer Department
Kabasa Kabundi, Assistant Management Analyst, Public Sector Management Programme PSMP
Ms Khabo Mabuza, Acting Assistant Accountant General, Accountant General's Office
Mbuso Dlamini, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Housing and Urban Development
Mrs Nomathemba Hloph, Head of Civil Service Reform, Ministry of Public Service and Information

Mr Dan Dlamini, Chief Anti-Corruption Officer, Ministry of Justice
Mr Cornelius Lukhele, Director, Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs
Ms Thembekile Makama, Public Sector Management
Mr Mduduzi Magongo, Principal Secretary, Ministry of Tourism
Mr Andreas Dlamini, Acting Auditor General, Auditor General's Office
Mr Paul Nkambule, Under Secretary, Ministry for Housing and Urban Development
Ms Zodwa Simelane, Archivist, Swaziland National Archives

Tanzania

Ms Salome Sijaoma, Permanent Secretary, Lands and Human Settlement Development
Anthony Mwela, Archivist III, Civil Service Department, Records and Archives Management
Division
Malimo T Manyambula, Assistant Director, Civil Service Department
Mr Richard Lupembe, IT Manager, President's Office
Gaspar Kileo, Archivist, Records and Archives Management Division
Mr Mbua Firimin Msiangi, Archivist, Records and Archives Management Division
Mr Selina Mkonyi, Project Administrator, PSRP- Civil Service Department
Mr Thomas Simtowe, Archivist, Records and Archives Management Division
Ms Elizabeth Francis Kayanda, Records Officer, Civil Service Department
Mr Ekamaisaria Swai, Record Officer, Land Administration
Ms Evana Kipaga, Record Officer, Administration
Mr Fidelis Kivuruga, Record Managing Assistant, Records and Archives Management
Division
Ms Selina Macha, Archivist, Records and Archives Management Division
Mr Augustine Christopher Mhina, Administration Officer, Civil Service Department
Mr Dickson Maimu, Assistant Director, Management Information System
Mr Alphonse Mwangwale, Assistant Director, Records and Archives Management Division
Mr Saidi Rashidi Mwangi, Senior Archivist, Records and Archives Management Division
Alfred Ludovick Rubazimbwa Kabagire, Programme Manager, President's Office, Regional
Administration and Local Government
Mr Anatory Ruta Kamazima, Director General, President's Office PCB
August Kowero, Assistant Director, Communication and Transport
Mr Wilyam Kleiman, PMS Advisor, Civil Service Department
Mr Majid S Kikula, Government Admin Officer, Prime Minister's Office
Mr Peter Mlyansi, Director, Records and Archives Management Division

Trinidad and Tobago

Cheryl Lee Kim, Archives Assistant II, National Archives
Allison Wason, Records Manager II, General Administration
Saarman Ottley, Assistant Auditor General, Auditor General's Department
Velina Bhairo, Records Manager II, Ministry of National Security
Boswell John, Manager of Records Centre, National Archives
Sharon Imbert, Treasury Director (Acting), Treasury Division
Marlene Felix, Executive Director, National Information System Centre
Mr Gary Turpin, Information and Technology Manager, Corporate Services
Ms Donna Ferraz, Head, Freedom of Information Unit

Mrs Ruth Coker, Public Management Consultant ACS, Public Management Consulting Division, Ministry of Public Administration
Ms Nalini Mahadeo, Senior Policy Analyst, Public Service Transformation Division
Ms Helena Leonce, Government Archivist, National Archives

Uganda

Mr Aloysius Mayanja, Director, Office of the Auditor General
Ms Hilda Musubira, Deputy Head of Public Service and Secretary for Administrative Reform, Ministry of Public Services
Ms Deborah Katuramu, Director, Administration
Dr Godfrey Kibuuka-Kisuule, Commissioner for Communications, Ministry of Works, Housing and Communications
Mr Eugene Juba Wani, Government Archivist, National Archives
Mr John Mitala, Head of Public Service and Secretary to Cabinet, Office of the President
Ms Amanda Sserumaga, Senior Technical Advisor, Justice Law and Order Sector Secretariat, Kampala
Ms Salome Nyamungu, Commissioner for Records and Office Technology, Ministry of Public Service, Records Management

Vanuatu

Mr Tom Sakias, Chief Archivist, National Archives

Zambia

Mr Chrispin Hamooya, Acting Director, National Archives of Zambia
Mr C G Kaluba, Permanent Secretary, Public Service Management Division
Mr Kabasiya, Assistant Secretary, Administration, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Services
Mr G Syakoola, Head, Registry Control Unit, Registry Control Unit, Public Services Management
Mr Peter Mumba, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs
Honorary Justice Ireen Mambilima, Supreme Court Judge, Judiciary
Tandiwe Daka, Senior State Advocate, Ministry of Legal Affairs
Mrs P N Mawangala, Director, Budget, Ministry of Finance and National Planning
Mr Norman Chitundu Mwango, Accountant General, Ministry of Finance and National Planning
Mr S T Banda, State Audit Secretary, Office of the Auditor General
Mrs Jalasi, Secretary to the Commission, Anti-Corruption Commission
Mr K S Chipako, Director IT, Data Centre

Zanzibar

Mr Abass Ibrahim Sanya, Head of Civil Service Central Registry, Department of Civil Service

Mr Juma Haji Ussi, Head of ITC, Coordination Department Chief Minister's Office

Mr Juma Reli, Principal, Zanzibar Institute of Financial Administration

Mr Othman Massoud Othman, Director of Public Prosecution, Directorate of Public Prosecution

Mrs Fatma Moh'd Said, Auditor, Office of the CAG

Zimbabwe

Mr Ivan Murambiwa, Director, National Archives of Zimbabwe

Ms M C Mukotekwa, National Archives of Zimbabwe

Mrs V Matangira, National Archives of Zimbabwe

Mr Chigwamba, Central Computing Services

Mr Munyavi, Central Computing Services

Mr S Mazai, K2 Techtop

SUMMARIES OF VIDEO CONFERENCE DISCUSSIONS

Part 1: Summary of Video Conference 1

Part 2: Summary of Video Conference 2

Part 3: Summary of Video Conference 3

Part 4: Summary of Video Conference 4

Part 5: Summary of Video Conference 5

Part 6: Summary of Video Conference 6

Part 7: Summary of Video Conference 7

Part 8: Summary of Video Conference 8

Part 9: Summary of Video Conference 9

**EVIDENCE BASED GOVERNANCE IN THE ELECTRONIC AGE:
THE IMPORTANCE OF RECORD KEEPING FOR GOOD
GOVERNANCE**

**SUMMARY SESSION 1, TUESDAY 25 MARCH 2003
0900 TO 1100 EDT**

Sites

- Washington
- Kenya
- Lesotho (via audio)
- Namibia (via audio)
- South Africa
- Swaziland

The Current Situation and Present Needs

In the discussion of the current situation, participating countries began by outlining the current state of their records and access legislation and discussing the role of records in their societies. They then proceeded to discuss the following key issues:

- the importance of a legislative framework for the care of records and information, protecting records, providing access, ensuring appropriate confidentiality and guaranteeing the reliability of public information
- the importance of developing legislative structures to manage both paper and electronic records
- the significance of records for the provision of government services and the relationship between government and citizens as clients.
- the need to develop integrated information systems to allow information sharing between ministries
- the need to improve internal public service systems and make government services more accessible to citizens, for example, by reducing the amount of time records are closed so that government can be more open

- the related importance of ensuring the security of information and protecting confidentiality and privacy for citizens
- the need to modernise current systems, improve integration of government services and improve the quality of data and business processes
- the need to ensure that governments have the capacity to develop appropriate systems and institute new processes, including the need for appropriate funding, staffing and training
- the challenges of making government more open and accountable, particularly in those countries which historically have had less progressive or more oppressive regimes
- the problems involved with shifting from manual to electronic systems, especially the lack of adequate training and capacity for staff involved
- the reality that the national archives may be only nominally responsible for records, with supervisory powers and powers of inspection but with limited staff, poor remuneration and inadequate training
- the growth of internet usage as a means of providing the public with information about government activities and the consequences for government records care
- the problem of poor paper records management and the absence of coordinated efforts to move to electronic record keeping
- the reality of fraud and corruption in government, and the importance of developing records systems that reduce the chance of inappropriate manipulation and misuse of public records
- the need for a records cadre for officers and a scheme of service for records officers throughout government
- the role of quality record keeping to underpin democracy and accountability
- the need for IT and records management policies to regulate the conduct and use of information systems for security purposes, especially for undesired access
- the need to establish disaster recovery plans and quality assurance to secure quality of information
- the need for commitment by top management so that initiatives are sustained and improved and governments move to improvement of public service delivery
- the need for centralised information resources, so that members of the public can have access to the information they require

- the related need to educate citizens on their rights to information and to raise awareness among broadcast organisations and media of the importance of information.

The Way Forward

Participants then considered actions that could be taken to improve the record keeping environment in their countries and around the world. They identified the following central issues:

- the need for the national archives to establish or revise access policies for the management of electronic records
- the need to establish effective mechanisms for the management of land records
- the need to provide additional training in information technology skills
- the importance of securing financial, infrastructure and technical support to enable governments to establish training and capacity building programmes
- the need to harmonise and standardise information technology, government record keeping and archival activities, so they work together to manage information across a continuum of care
- the importance of establishing record keeping and information technology standards, including standard platforms for hardware, software and systems
- the need to secure, train and retain skilled staff, which requires matching salaries with the private sector and recognising the consequences of serious social issues, such as HIV/AIDS, which is affecting the most productive components of the population.

**EVIDENCE-BASED GOVERNANCE IN THE ELECTRONIC AGE:
THE IMPORTANCE OF RECORD KEEPING FOR GOOD
GOVERNANCE**

**SUMMARY SESSION 2, WEDNESDAY 26 MARCH 2003
0800 TO 1000 EDT**

Sites

- Washington
- Malawi
- Mozambique
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

The Current Situation and Present Needs

In the discussion of the current situation, participating countries began by outlining the current state of their records and access legislation and discussing the role of records in their societies. They then proceeded to discuss the following key issues:

- the fact that there had been many legislative changes in the last decade or so in records management, and the reality that still more had to be done to ensure proper control of records creation systems
- the move to provide more information to citizens and ensure the public sector is accountable, transparent and efficient
- the problem of civil strife and weak or fragile governments, but the value of strong political will in many governments to improve record keeping systems and make information available to citizens
- the close relationship between record keeping and public sector reform programmes
- the importance of developing ICT strategies and not just producing documents using new technologies, but also ensuring that people have access to relevant information in the most appropriate forms available

- the need to increase capacity in all electronic information projects and the importance of including human resources development programmes as part of infrastructure development
- the importance of quality records to combat corruption, such as the reduction or elimination of ‘ghost workers’ in government
- the need to maintain up-to-date records in both manual and electronic formats
- the importance of recognising that both paper and electronic records will remain valid forms of documentation over the long term
- the need to ensure that access legislation is effective and to understand that citizens access information in different ways; this means that in some jurisdictions, information may need to be published in vernacular, and communications systems may need to be developed so that they accommodate needs in both urban and rural areas
- the importance of engaging quality staff and ensuring adequate training, especially as the onslaught of HIV/AIDS has led to attrition and a loss of institutional memory
- the value of ensuring the national archives has the power to oversee the records creation process throughout government; records are important for accountable government but for that to happen the archives need to see records being managed by senior managers and not left just to registry clerks
- the importance of ensuring technology is up to date and employees across government remain ICT aware and ICT competent; and integrating ICT training and records training as an important step in managing new technologies effectively.

The Way Forward

Participants then considered actions that could be taken to improve the record keeping environment in their countries and around the world. They identified the following central issues:

- the need for a recognition of the professional expertise of people working in records management, so that records management is professionalised, in conjunction with information technology, as an integrated career path
- the need for adequate funding for records management institutions
- the need for improved security for records, especially electronic information
- the need to ensure a smooth transition from paper based records to electronic records
- the need to sensitise users to the value of records and information in government

- the need to harmonise government programmes in terms of developing information technology, including the need for information technology policies that incorporate record keeping requirements
- the need to ensure electronic records systems and information technology systems are well chosen, effective, secure and sustainable; for example, there needs to be capacity to maintain back up copies and ensure that electronic records are authentic over time, even if the technologies used to create and access them change.

**EVIDENCE-BASED GOVERNANCE IN THE ELECTRONIC AGE:
THE IMPORTANCE OF RECORD KEEPING FOR GOOD
GOVERNANCE**

**SUMMARY SESSION 3, THURSDAY 27 MARCH 2003
0800 TO 1000 EDT**

Sites

- Washington
- Botswana
- Ghana
- Tanzania
- Zanzibar (in Tanzania)
- Sierra Leone (via audio)
- Uganda

The Current Situation and Present Needs

In the discussion of the current situation, participating countries began by outlining the current state of their records and access legislation and discussing the role of records in their societies. They then proceeded to discuss the following key issues:

- the fact that governments deal with extensive bodies of records: managing the magnitude of records and also having to shift from manual to computer systems is not easy
- the recognition in many countries that records management is critical to good governance; without reliable and accurate records, it is very difficult to assure accountability, transparency and integrity on the part of public servants and government officials
- the fact that attempts at electronic records management have not yet gone far in many countries, but the knowledge that there have been attempts already to develop electronic records management policies and to institute access legislation; the reality, though, that the move towards electronic government is happening quickly, particularly with human resources and financial management

- the fact that financial information is often the first to be automated, along with personnel and payroll information
- the fact that, while governments may attach great importance to records management, war and civil strife, power failures or natural disasters can lead to the destruction of many records
- the challenge of managing records as government systems are decentralised or restructured
- the need to move from externally supported records management programmes to internally sustained systems
- the need to address the regulatory framework for electronic information, as well as human resources, funding, infrastructure and awareness across government.

The Way Forward

Participants then considered actions that could be taken to improve the record keeping environment in their countries and around the world. They identified the following central issues:

- the importance of ICT strategies to improve efficiency, resolve citizen queries and improve access to information
- the role of national archives and records management departments to assist government in providing guidelines relating to the retention for electronic records
- the need to improve record keeping needs to support anti-corruption initiatives and ensure quality records are available for legal purposes
- the need to raise awareness in government with regard to records
- the need to build capacity and professionalism for managing both manual and electronic records
- the need to strengthen infrastructures for record keeping, including storage facilities for paper and electronic records
- the importance of strong political will, so that records management systems can be strengthened: examples include upgrading the archives section and building a records centre
- the importance of strong and effective laws and policies for the protection of, and access to, information, including freedom of information laws and ICT policies
- the need for IT capacity, and the mainstreaming of records management into government plans and budgets

- the importance of addressing the management of land records as a specific issue, so that systems are in place to manage such records in paper and electronic format
- the value of raising awareness, not only so that the public understands and appreciates the importance of quality electronic records care, but also so that public officials recognise the need to introduce effective electronic government.

**EVIDENCE-BASED GOVERNANCE IN THE ELECTRONIC AGE:
THE IMPORTANCE OF RECORD KEEPING FOR GOOD
GOVERNANCE**

**SUMMARY SESSION 4, FRIDAY 28 MARCH 2003
0900 TO 1100 EDT**

Sites

- Washington
- Barbados
- Belize (via audio)
- Guyana (via audio)
- Jamaica
- St Vincent and the Grenadines

The Current Situation and Present Needs

In the discussion of the current situation, participating countries began by outlining the current state of their records and access legislation and discussing the role of records in their societies. They then proceeded to discuss the following key issues:

- the fact that many Caribbean countries have had democracies in place for many years and are moving forward on archives legislation and access legislation; in many ways countries in this part of the world have well developed government systems
- the reality that electronic records pose a challenge, especially as governments take steps to create a borderless society and interact with all countries of the world and share information
- the fact that while access legislation is emerging it is not always in place
- the fact that in many Caribbean countries there is a high level of consciousness and care attached to care of public records and information; transparency and accountability are seen as important for the protection of citizens rights
- the need for offices to be empowered to carry out the work of accountability, transparency and good governance

- the problem in the contemporary age, which challenges transparency and accountability in government, of the overuse and misuse of telephones; as a result there is a need for public managers to ensure that records are kept so they know what they have done and what they are going to do
- the need to reconcile access legislation and archives legislation; for example, in one country the FOI act contradicts the archives act, as the FOI act says the public can see indexes from archives or any agency, while the archives act says records must be 30 years old before they are publicly accessible; to ensure the effective management of all records, the national archives must be involved from the time of creation
- the need to review and revise archival legislation, so that there is institutional strengthening, capacity building and a stronger resource base
- the need for reform programmes specifically for human resources and finance records
- the importance of coordinated plans across government and greater consistency with the formulation and implementation of electronic systems, standards, procedures and policies.

The Way Forward

Participants then considered actions that could be taken to improve the record keeping environment in their countries and around the world. They identified the following central issues:

- the need to develop concrete electronic government strategies, including measures to manage records relating to accounts, human resources, customs, electoral affairs, business licenses, land issues, and so on, in both paper and electronic form
- the need to teach the public, especially children, about electronic records and automation
- the need for secure networks and the development of quality computer information systems that ensure the integrity of the information managed
- the urgent need to modernise and strengthen legislation that manages both paper and electronic records, and the related need to continue the restructuring of records management units in various ministries and departments to ensure records are properly managed and, where appropriate, are transferred to the archives
- the need to establish functioning records management programmes and ensure the maintenance of records regardless of format
- the importance of identifying someone in every ministry to be in charge of public information; this person should be highly articulate and highly literate and should serve as a liaison officer with various departments to ensure accountability

- the need for national coordination of information and communications technology projects, along with installation of a stable infrastructure (such as electricity and telecommunications) so that an electronic government can exist
- the need for active commitment and inspired leadership at the highest levels.

**EVIDENCE-BASED GOVERNANCE IN THE ELECTRONIC AGE:
THE IMPORTANCE OF RECORD KEEPING FOR GOOD
GOVERNANCE**

**SUMMARY SESSION 5, FRIDAY 28 MARCH 2003
1400 TO 1600 EDT**

Sites

- Washington
- Bahamas
- Cayman Islands
- Trinidad and Tobago
- St Kitts and Nevis (via audio)
- St Lucia (via audio)

The Current Situation and Present Needs

In the discussion of the current situation, participating countries began by outlining the current state of their records and access legislation and discussing the role of records in their societies. They then proceeded to discuss the following key issues:

- the fact that governments are moving from paper based systems to electronic systems, particularly to capture information in human resources and payroll; one major challenge is trying to get the right information to human resources managers so that they can make proper decisions
- the strong interest in computerising financial transactions and auditing in order to enable more efficient and timely reporting throughout government and better economic decisions; financial records must be managed as part of these initiatives
- the fact that there has been tremendous growth in the public sector in some countries, affecting the ability of departments to manage their staff and their records
- the difficulty of translating data from earlier paper-based systems to new electronic systems, resulting in inaccurate information

- the absence of standard records management policies in many governments, even though action is underway to automate records; in many countries, there is not a coordinated approach to automation, particularly with regard to the record keeping components
- the related absence of central policies for the management of registry systems, which means that ministries and departments can introduce automation independently without central control
- the fact that, while records management is the foundation of access legislation, many governments have not reconciled access and records legislation so that records are managed effectively
- the fact that public sector reform is underway in many countries, and many governments recognise records management as part of the larger information management/knowledge management concept
- the recognition that technology alone will not solve issues; governments want to take a common sense approach to records, information and knowledge management, as part of transparency and accountability in public sector administration
- the need for strategies to make the transition from paper to electronic records
- the need for adequate resources for all aspects of records management
- the need to sensitise people to information and knowledge sharing, both in relation to formal information sharing and in the wider public community.

The Way Forward

Participants then considered actions that could be taken to improve the record keeping environment in their countries and around the world. They identified the following central issues:

- the role of electronic records management policies as an important part of electronic government; such policies should take into account regulations, security issues, government controls of systems and electronic storage
- the importance of involving the archivist at every stage of development of electronic systems to be sure that the records these systems create are well managed
- the resulting need for archivists to receive adequate funding and training, as well as recognition from senior governments that they are not just keepers of warehouses but that they play a central role in the management of government records and information
- the need for an integrated approach to electronic records management, which requires the establishment of national policies and government-wide initiatives rather than ad hoc activities, especially for automation

- the fact that paper records will remain important to government operations and must be maintained adequately
- the continuing need for funding and financial support for all records-related activities.

**EVIDENCE-BASED GOVERNANCE IN THE ELECTRONIC AGE:
THE IMPORTANCE OF RECORD KEEPING FOR GOOD
GOVERNANCE**

**SUMMARY SESSION 6, MONDAY, 31 MARCH 2003
0700 TO 0900 EDT**

Sites

- Washington
- India
- Pakistan
- Sri Lanka
- Bangladesh (did not connect)

The Current Situation and Present Needs

In the discussion of the current situation, participating countries began by outlining the current state of their records and access legislation and discussing the role of records in their societies. They then proceeded to discuss the following key issues:

- the fact that there is a history of good record keeping in south Asian countries, based on the colonial British administration, and there has long been a stress on quality record keeping
- the recognition that the time is now right for the transformation to electronic record keeping, even though paper record keeping will still be essential to democracy, good governance and transparency until electronic records are well managed
- the recognition that regulations for record keeping are strong, based on western and Asian experience, but the fact that governments need advice from archivists and other specialists and need to include people involved with transparency and accountability, such as accountants general and auditors general, to find ways to ensure that vital information is acceptable not only in a court of law but also available to citizens
- the fact that steps are underway to automate accounting systems in many countries, but the knowledge that automating a record keeping system may not bring the intended results if governments do not address the issues involved in capturing and maintaining the integrity of evidence; the recognition that addressing these issues will help to

prevent corruption

- the fact that a tremendous change management initiative is underway in government, which will lead to the automation of financial records, budgeting reports and so on; the recognition that these changes will help many institutions, such as the public accounts committee, which needs data to form an opinion about the performance of a particular audited organisation
- the fact that there are different kinds of accountability, including accountability to parliament, to administrative officials including the auditor general, to justice delivery and so on; a strong legal system helps with accountability, and so legislation needs to be strong to protect records
- the fact that there is a strong momentum towards adoption of e-governance; with the advent of ICTs, electronic technologies are increasingly seen by government as a method of providing efficient, convenient and easily accessible services to citizens
- the fact that key government records, in areas such as driving licenses and accounting, are increasingly being held in digital systems; security, access and authenticity are more critical than ever, especially in relation to the chain of accountability for the records, who used them, what was done with them, how long do they have to be kept and so on
- the need to develop effective and reliable standards for records care as governments move to an electronic environment
- the need for training and resources for all records-related work.

The Way Forward

Participants then considered actions that could be taken to improve the record keeping environment in their countries and around the world. They identified the following central issues:

- the need to consider accountability in relation to information systems, including the need to install mechanisms that ensure reliability of information generated by any information system
- the need to ensure records are accurate and reliable and can be retrieved in a timely manner, as well as to have internal controls and internal audit in all the departments
- the value of encouraging government departments to develop their own websites, as part of a coordinate information plan, to help increase public access to information
- the critical importance of education for records professionals; capacity building and training for records staff is essential to achieving successful records systems
- the value of documenting good practices around the world and ensuring international standards are relevant to different regions; one example would be to develop a compendium of legislation on public records and FOI

- the importance of remembering that change cannot happen overnight and that electronic government cannot work in isolation
- the value of strong leadership in government to support records work, and the related need for resources and policies.

**EVIDENCE-BASED GOVERNANCE IN THE ELECTRONIC AGE:
THE IMPORTANCE OF RECORD KEEPING FOR GOOD
GOVERNANCE**

**SUMMARY SESSION 7, MONDAY, 31 MARCH 2003
2030 TO 2230 EDT**

Sites

- Washington
- Brunei
- Malaysia
- Singapore

The Current Situation and Present Needs

In the discussion of the current situation, participating countries began by outlining the current state of their records and access legislation and discussing the role of records in their societies. They then proceeded to discuss the following key issues:

- the fact that governments in this region of Asia have placed a good deal of importance on electronic records management; there is support for good records management and legislation to ensure that records are protected and managed
- the reality that governments have grown comfortable with the management of paper records in the last three to four decades but that with the development of electronic government there are new challenges
- the fact that various legal instruments have been put in place by government, but there is still a need to protect personal information and privacy of personal information; the national archives may be responsible for records care but may share that duty with other offices, such as a government secrecy department or public administration unit
- the fact that legislation can encourage the use of electronic records and electronic means of authentication, like digital signatures; it can also protect electronic records, first to ensure security against unauthorised modification or hacking, and secondly, to ensure the confidentiality of personal information that can be accessed in electronic databases

- the fact that legislation also encourages the use of secure records through acts such as the electronic transactions act; it was recognised that some governments have tried to keep their legislation technology neutral so that whatever new forms of technology are introduced, they will be accommodated by the legislation and there will be no need to go back to parliament each time new technology is used
- the fact that records management is a critical component of good government, but that records management must be closely linked to accountability; for example, auditors general reports are based on an examination of records and provide for parliament and citizens a statement on performance in the areas of financial management and accounting
- the knowledge that citizens have high expectations for services and there is a consequent demand for more information from the government; ICT provides the electronic means to supply these services to citizens through government websites
- the fact that any move to electronic government leads to a desire to enhance services and demonstrates the inefficiencies of paper-based systems; the recognition that electronic government is, and should be, included in national development plans
- the reality of challenges in the management of legacy documents and in the protection of paper and electronic records in new management systems; it is recognised that governments will have to redesign the ways in which they store and secure documents if they are to preserve their knowledge base
- the knowledge that the present challenge is to use ICT more effectively in the delivery of services and in the creation and management of records to support services; the irony is that there are large quantities of papers to be processed and yet there is a desire to go paperless
- the realisation that there is a need for trained personnel who can help to ensure that technology takes account of record keeping issues.

The Way Forward

Participants then considered actions that could be taken to improve the record keeping environment in their countries and around the world. They identified the following central issues:

- the fact that governments need to encourage all ministries to make use of websites to provide more information to citizens and members of the public, including government rules and regulations, and to promote on-line policy consultation, where policy papers are published for public consultation and to receive input and feedback from members of public and industry (a process that itself generates records)
- the need to ensure the integrity of information created in electronic form

- the importance of addressing challenges with respect to access, confidentiality and connectivity, finding the balance between the right to information and the right to privacy, and determining how much information the public can have
- the need to consider access now and in the future; when records are created electronically, and their survival cannot be guaranteed, there is a need to make sure that the hard copy is there to ensure that evidence will be protected
- the critical need for capacity building in records and archives management
- the related need for strong and effective policies on electronic records management, for continuous upgrading and improvement of systems, for a preservation strategy for electronic records and for certification and standards to ensure that agencies and departments are adhering to standards of record keeping
- the need to identify records management as the cornerstone of good governance and to address challenges in capacity building, hardware, systems and funding
- the need for standards to allow interoperability among stakeholders or agencies and to ensure there is a balance between security and access.

**EVIDENCE-BASED GOVERNANCE IN THE ELECTRONIC AGE:
THE IMPORTANCE OF RECORD KEEPING FOR GOOD
GOVERNANCE**

**SUMMARY SESSION 8, WEDNESDAY 2 APRIL 2003
1700 TO 1900 EDT**

Sites

- Washington
- Cook Islands (via audio)
- Fiji
- Papua New Guinea (via audio)
- Samoa (via audio)
- Vanuatu (via audio)
- New Zealand

The Current Situation and Present Needs

In the discussion of the current situation, participating countries began by outlining the current state of their records and access legislation and discussing the role of records in their societies. They then proceeded to discuss the following key issues:

- the fact that in the Pacific island states, records are largely paper based and space is a real problem
- the fact that in many Pacific countries, a public records act usually accounts for semi-current and non-current records but not for current records; guidelines may exist but there is no formal enforcement or monitoring to ensure standards are met and not enough is being done to protect the public record
- the fact that often there is a lack of awareness in government of records legislation, which means it is part of the archives' job to bring this issue to the public's awareness
- the need for training, resources, storage and financial support for all aspects of record keeping throughout government

- the fact that in some countries records management is not nationally regulated and there may not be access legislation; records retention schedules may be in place but they may not include all records
- the reality that countries in the region experience hot, humid climates and cyclones, which means that ensuring proper environmental conditions is difficult
- the fact that archival involvement in current records management is a new concept in many countries; archivists have had to persuade government and other agencies that they have to be involved if there are to be good quality records, but they have not always been successful in gaining acceptance
- the reality that many land records are over 100 years old and are being called upon daily, weekly and monthly; their care is not satisfactory, their physical condition is deteriorating and, given their tremendous importance, their care ought to be of the highest priority for government
- the fact that access legislation leads to complications in relation to records management; it is important to coordinate legislation, education, awareness and information systems, especially with regard to electronically generated records, so that records are well managed
- the reality that countries in the Pacific are competing in the global market place with countries that have different legislative statues, which raises a range of record keeping concerns that small Pacific countries have to consider
- the fact that Pacific island archivists need to be able to position themselves collectively so that they can manage the demands of electronic governance and develop effective record keeping systems
- the fact that donor aid is critical in the Pacific; further education and training need to be supported because a whole range of new skills is required for managing electronic records.

The Way Forward

Participants then considered actions that could be taken to improve the record keeping environment in their countries and around the world. They identified the following central issues:

- the need to use technology to streamline government operations, yet at the same time to get paper records under control and manage electronic records, which are starting to be produced rapidly
- the need for changes in records and access legislation to address record keeping issues more effectively

- the value of support from organisations such as the World Bank and Commonwealth Secretariat, who are taking such a strong interest in records management; it will help a great deal if international institutions can help to create awareness among policy makers of the need so strengthen records management; without this awareness by policy makers, countries in the region will continue to be affected by inadequate policies, training and resources
- the importance of raising the profile of archives, working closely with donors and partners to emphasise the importance of records and to seek new ways to support accountability through quality record keeping.

THE IMPORTANCE OF RECORD KEEPING FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE

SUMMARY SESSION 9, FRIDAY 4 APRIL 2003
0900 TO 1030 EDT

Sites

- Washington
- Nigeria

The Current Situation and Present Needs

In the discussion of the current situation, participants from Nigeria began by outlining the current state of their records and access legislation and discussing the role of records in their country. They then proceeded to discuss the following key issues:

- the fact that Nigeria's electronic government policy and evolving ICT strategy aims to bring all ministries on board, ensuring that as they introduce automation they draw on collective knowledge and move toward accountability, transparency, anti corruption and enhanced performance
- the fact that the electronic government policy is designed to end separation between agencies, avoid duplication, enhance public service efficiency, empower local communities, link government functions, improve reporting and help connect the state governments; electronic systems are being applied to managing education, statistics, the census, health care, the judiciary, legislative proceedings and land registration
- the fact that government wants to participate in global records networks
- the knowledge that record systems created at the local level need to be linked to record systems at the federal level, which will require attention to the infrastructure needed to create an electronic government continuum as well as trained manpower
- the knowledge of the danger that if donors dictate the nature of development, records systems may be created in an ad hoc manner; the recognition that changes in the way that information is handled should be planned and introduced in phases
- the fact that the Office of the Head of Civil Service links the different aspects of electronic government, such as the electronic economy or electronic statistics; it has a responsibility to promote efficiency and effectiveness, which includes the way that records are generated, used, stored and retrieved.

The Way Forward

Participants then considered actions that could be taken to improve the record keeping environment in their countries and around the world. They identified the following central issues:

- the need to make human resources records and financial records priorities for computerisation
- the fact that the application of IT to the problem of controlling ghost workers has made a real difference and the recognition that records professionals have an important contribution to make
- the need for government to encourage ministries to computerise their functions and impose sanctions on those that do not do so; civil servants and citizens need to be educated about what is involved; in this way the digital divide will gradually be bridged
- the need for the national ICT legislation committee to continue examining laws affecting electronic commerce cyber crimes, intellectual property rights and the processes that will make transactions legal in a court of law
- the importance of addressing the traditions of secrecy built up over decades and the recognition that records will need to be in good order if they are to be available to citizens and if they are to provide the basis for civil service reform
- the need to recognise that electronic government will develop slowly and that as part of the process, systems for managing records will have to be developed carefully, with career opportunities and respect for those who keep records and an end to the present pattern of treating registries like ‘Siberia’ and dumping problem staff there
- the need to ensure that the retrieval of both paper and electronic records is effective, so that when information is needed it can be retrieved quickly.

FINANCIAL SUMMARIES

Part 1: Contribution by Department for International Development

Part 2: Contribution by Commonwealth Secretariat

Appendix E, Part 1

Project: Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age
Building Awareness and Capacity
(African and Asian countries)

Funder: Department for International Development
IRMT Budget Code: 127

Project Dates: 1 January 2002 - 31 March 2003

Statement Date: 31 July 2003

Summary of Budget and Expenditure for All Activities

Budget Headings	Original Budget	Actuals Jan - Mar 2002	Actuals Apr - Jun 2002	Actuals Jul - Sep 2002	Actuals Oct - Dec 2002	Actuals Jan - Mar 2003	Actuals Apr-Jun 2003¹	Total Expenditure
Airfares/Travel ²	52,700	11,234	-7,812	22,986	3,712	4,081	354	34,555
Subsistence ²	44,880	12,305	-9,105	19,271	1,636	2,812	0	26,919
Video Links ³	31,000	0	0	9,655	-1,274	399	21,826	30,606
Local Facilitation and Other Local Costs	3,510	0	0	3173	180	0	0	3,353
Translations	2,000	0	0	0	1583	0	0	1,583
Preparation of Video Training Materials ⁴	0	0	0	2095	3669	623	2595	8,982
Communications/Couriers/Copying ⁵	11,710	5,600	675	5,000	4,405	3,052	447	19,179
Fees ⁶	154,200	71,000	22,000	31,500	16,338	27,304	8,231	176,373
Overall Totals^{7,8}	300,000	100,139	5,758	93,680	30,249	38,271	33,453	301,550

Notes

- ¹ Although activities were completed by the end of March 2003, some invoices, including fees for external consultants and video conference costs, were received after that date. These show in the April to June 2003 quarter.
- ² Funds for the cost of airfares and subsistence for the training of regional trainers in India were committed at the end of March. However, due to escalating violence in Kashmir the programme was kept under review and ultimately the venue was changed to South Africa. This resulted in savings on airfares and subsistence which covered the cost of preparing and distributing video training materials, thus increasing the impact of the global forum. Every participant in the global forum also received video tapes and transcripts of interviews with senior government officials and with advisers from the World Bank, DFID and the Commonwealth Secretariat.
- ³ Video links expenditure shows a negative figure in the Oct-Dec quarter. This is to amend a figure originally allocated to the Jul-Sep quarter in error.
- ⁴ This budget was created from overall savings on airfares and subsistence and was used for video training materials.
- ⁵ This total is high due to the necessity of using couriers to ensure safe and guaranteed distribution of training materials, videos and flight tickets.
- ⁶ The amount of time required to deliver the project was longer than planned, hence the overall fee cost was higher than originally budgeted. This was due to: the necessity of changing the venue from India to South Africa; the difficulty of establishing communications with participating countries; and the additional time spent developing video training materials.
- ⁷ Total project expenditure was marginally over budget, but these additional costs were absorbed by IRMT.
- ⁸ Overall savings on airfares and subsistence covered the cost of preparing and distributing video training materials which increased the impact of the video conferences. The budgets which were created or increased to cover this activity were: preparation of video training materials, communications and fees.

Project: Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age
Building Awareness and Capacity
(African and Asian countries)

Funder: Department for International Development
IRMT Budget Code: 127

Project Dates: 1 January 2002 - 31 March 2003

Statement Date: 31 July 2003

Activity A: Global Electronic Discussions

Budget Headings	Original Budget	Actuals Jan - Mar 2002	Actuals Apr - Jun 2002	Actuals Jul - Sep 2002	Actuals Oct - Dec 2002	Actuals Jan - Mar 2003	Actuals Apr-Jun 2003	Total Expenditure
Airfares/Travel	3,200	1,734	0	600	0	0	0	2,334
Subsistence	2,160	1,305	0	600	0	0	0	1,905
Communications/ Couriers/Copying	5,050	1200	0	0	1886	1,596	48	4,730
Fees	50,000	14,000	6,000	4,000	1,121	20,704	0	45,825
Overall Totals	60,410	18,239	6,000	5,200	3,007	22,300	48	54,794

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Project Dates: 1 January 2002 - 31 March 2003

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Activity B: Training for Regional Trainers

Budget Headings	Original Budget	Actuals Jan - Mar 2002	Actuals Apr - Jun 2002	Actuals Jul - Sep 2002	Actuals Oct - Dec 2002	Actuals Jan - Mar 2003	Actuals Apr-Jun 2003	Total Expenditure
Airfares/Travel ¹	10,250	9,500	-7,812	4295	1863	0	0	7,846
Subsistence ¹	13,500	11,000	-9,105	4962	0	0	0	6,857
Video Links ²	1,000	0	0	2,900	-2900	0	0	0
Local Facilitation and Other Local Costs	1,510	0	0	1,951	180	0	0	2,131
Communications/Couriers/Copying	1,810	1500	675	700	1886	0	0	4,761
Fees	25,200	12,000	8,000	13,500	6762	0	0	40,262
Overall Totals	53,270	34,000	-8,242	28,308	7,791	0	0	61,857

Notes

¹ Funds for the cost of airtfares and subsistence for the training of regional trainers in India were committed at the end of March. However, due to escalating violence in Kashmir the programme was kept under review and ultimately the venue was changed to South Africa. This resulted in savings on airtfares and subsistence which covered the cost of preparing and distributing video training materials, thus increasing the impact of the global forum. Every participant in the global forum also received video tapes and transcripts of interviews with senior government officials and with advisers from the World Bank, DFID and the Commonwealth Secretariat.

² Video links expenditure shows a negative figure in Oct-Dec. This is to amend a figure originally allocated to the Jul-Sep quarter in error.

Project: Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age
Building Awareness and Capacity
(African and Asian countries)

Funder: Department for International Development
IRMT Budget Code: 127

Project Dates: 1 January 2002 - 31 March 2003

Statement Date: 31 July 2003

Activity C: Training for National Archivists

Budget Headings	Original Budget	Actuals Jan - Mar 2002	Actuals Apr - Jun 2002	Actuals Jul - Sep 2002	Actuals Oct - Dec 2002	Actuals Jan - Mar 2003	Actuals Apr-Jun 2003	Total Expenditure
Airtfares/Travel	31,250	0	0	18,091	1849	0	0	19,940
Subsistence	22,500	0	0	12,869	1636	0	0	14,505
Video Links	5,000	0	0	6,755	1626	0	0	8,381
Local Facilitation and Other Local Costs	2,000	0	0	1,222	0	0	0	1,222
Preparation of Video Training Material	0	0	0	2,095	3669	0	0	5,764
Communications/ Couriers/Copying	2,000	1,700	0	4,300	633	0	0	6,633
Fees	25,000	10,000	8,000	14,000	8,455	0	0	40,455
Overall Totals	87,750	11,700	8,000	59,332	17,868	0	0	96,900

Project: Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age
Building Awareness and Capacity
(African and Asian countries)

Funder: Department for International Development
IRMT Budget Code: 127

Project Dates: 1 January 2002 - 31 March 2003

Statement Date: 31 July 2003

Activity D: Video Conferences for Senior Managers

Budget Headings	Original Budget	Actuals Jan – Mar 2002	Actuals Apr – Jun 2002	Actuals Jul – Sep 2002	Actuals Oct – Dec 2002	Actuals Jan – Mar 2003	Actuals Apr–Jun 2003	Total Expenditure
Airfares/Travel	8,000	0	0	0	0	4,081	354	4,435
Subsistence	6,720	0	0	840	0	2,812	0	3,652
Video Links	25,000	0	0	0	0	399	21826	22,225
Translations	2,000	0	0	0	1583	0	0	1,583
Preparation of Video Training Materials	0	0	0	0	0	623	2595	3,218
Communications/ Couriers/Copying	2,850	1,200	0	0	0	1,456	399	3,055
Fees	54,000	35,000	0	0	0	6,600	8,231	49,831
Overall Totals	98,570	36,200	0	840	1,583	15,971	33,405	87,999

Appendix E, Part 2

Project: Evidence-Based Governance in the Electronic Age
 Building Awareness and Capacity
 (Caribbean and Pacific countries)

Funder: Commonwealth Secretariat
 IRMT Budget Code: 128

Project Dates: 1 July 2002 - 30 June 2003

Statement Date: 31 July 2003

Summary of Budget and Expenditure

Expenditure Headings	Original Budget	Actuals Jul - Sep 2002	Actuals Oct - Dec 2002	Actuals Jan - Mar 2003	Actuals Apr-Jun 2003	Total Expenditure
Airfares/Travel	28,000	28,229	173	0	0	28,402
Subsistence	12,000	12,131	139	0	0	12,270
Training Materials, Video Conferences, Communications	10,000	395	584	0	9,067	10,046
Overall Totals¹	50,000	40,755	896	0	9,067	50,718

¹ Total project expenditure was marginally over budget, but these additional costs were absorbed by IRMT.