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INTERNATIONAL REFERENCE CENTRE
FOR
COMMUNITY WATER SUPPLY AND SANITATION
IRC

PROGRAMME ON EXCHANGE AND TRANSFER
OF INFORMATION (POETRI)

POETRI PHASE I
July 1979 - December 1981

SUMMARY COMPLETION REPORT

May 1982

Ir. E.H. Hofkes
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1. INTRODUCTION

The POETRI programme is an initiative in the context of the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade (IDWSSD). The Programme has been designed to assist developing countries in the establishment and strengthening of systems and services providing technological information support to their community water supply and sanitation programmes. Careful investigation has revealed that existing general information systems do not adequately cover the field of water supply and sanitation.

POETRI aims at making available existing knowledge and experience, technology and methodology to manager and professional staff in developing countries in community water supply and sanitation. The goal is to achieve more effective and efficient planning, implementation and operation of facilities, and greater impact of water supply and sanitation programmes generally. POETRI is primarily focused on information delivery and services for operational purposes. The POETRI programme provides a framework under which national governments, international organizations and donor agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations can pool resources for information exchange and transfer. POETRI is intended as a joint effort of all participating organizations, acting in partnership.

This report summarizes the results of the 1st Phase of the POETRI-programme which started in July 1979 with financial support from the Government of the Netherlands, and with contributions in kind from WHO and IRC.

At the conclusion, in December 1981, of POETRI Phase I, about fifteen developing countries were participating, and consultations with another ten countries interested to join, were in hand. This is reflected in Table 1.

2. OBJECTIVES OF POETRI PHASE I *

The objectives of POETRI Phase I at the national level (POETRI country-projects) were:

(1) Appraisal

- (i) To assess the need for, and the aims and functions of national information systems and services in support of water supply and sanitation development.
- (ii) To survey users and sources of information
- (iii) To organise a national workshop on information support for the national water supply and sanitation programme.

(2) Development

- (i) To develop practical models for information systems and services suited to the capabilities and resources available, and the information outputs required.
- (ii) To field test specific services, and to develop an organizational structure for the information system and the communication means required.
- (iii) To produce plans for the accelerated strengthening of the information infrastructure (personnel, facilities, equipment), as well as its service operations.

* International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade, Second Consultative Meeting, Geneva, 16 June 1980, Background Document GWS/80.1, Paragraph 23 'Proposals for Improved Project Identification/Preparation Practices and Exchange of Information' - 'The need for a more systematic exchange of information on experiences and technology of water and sanitation development between countries and internationally is regarded as an urgent requirement. A system for dissemination of information is suggested to be implemented during the Decade. So far the development of the global information system has been funded by contributions of the Dutch government. It is suggested that a task force be set up with representatives from a small number of donors interested in supporting the system with the purpose of reviewing and promoting its further development. The Steering Committee could provide guidance and assistance for meetings'.

The objectives of POETRI Phase I at the regional level were:

(1) Institutional

To organize workshops and training courses for regional information system development, in three regions.

(2) Support

To prepare guidance material, in particular:

- (i) training modules for regional workshops and courses;
- (ii) training modules for national workshops and courses; and
- (iii) guidelines for specific national POETRI activities

The objectives of POETRI Phase I at the global level were:

(1) To provide central support to and coordination of national and regional POETRI activities

(2) To prepare methodology, guidelines and tools for information handling and exchange, in particular:

- (i) multi-lingual thesaurus of water supply and sanitation terms;
- (ii) standard basic library on water supply and sanitation.
- (iii) international directory of information sources on water supply and sanitation
- (iv) joint POETRI Abstract Journal
- (v) the POETRI Reference Manual.

3. STATE OF AFFAIRS

The POETRI activities carried out in Phase I of the Programme, may be summarized as follows:

3.1. Latin America

- (a) An agreement was signed between CEPIS (Pan American Centre for Sanitary Engineering and Environmental Sciences), at Lima (Peru), for CEPIS to function as Regional Focal Point for POETRI in the Latin American and Caribbean Region. During the period November 1980 to October 1981, CEPIS has been coordinating POETRI Phase I activities, linked up to the regional information network on environmental health 'REPIDISCA'.
- (b) Following consultations, agreements were signed with selected institutes in Colombia, Ecuador, Peru and Argentina, to perform the function of National Focal Point (NFP) in the POETRI programme. To each of these NFPs a financial contribution was made for national preparatory activities related to POETRI. With Jamaica, consultations on the scope of the POETRI activities were held, but did not yet produce a clearly defined national plan.
- (c) The POETRI Regional Workshop for Latin America and the Caribbean was held at CEPIS (in Lima, Peru), 11-13 November 1980. The workshop was attended by 29 participants from POETRI NFPs and REPIDISCA National Collaborating Centres, including representatives from Colombia, Ecuador, Peru, and Argentina; and observers from Brazil, Bolivia, Chile, Costa Rica, Guatemala and Venezuela. Further, delegates participated from the Comité Interafricain d'Etudes Hydrauliques (the POETRI Regional Focal Point for West and Central Africa) and the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (NEERI) of India.
The objectives of the workshop were to promote national information service development activities in the countries participating in POETRI; to assist NFPs in the organisation of national POETRI workshops, and to initiate the training of NFP management and staff in the operational functions of the POETRI NFPs.

- (d) A Regional POETRI/REPIDISCA Course for training NFP documentalists in document processing and library procedures was held at CEPIS from 2-6 March 1981. The course was attended by 15 documentalists and librarians from NFPs.
- (e) Technical cooperation visits by CEPIS staff, to assist in POETRI/REPIDISCA activities, were made in the period March - October 1981, as follows:

Institute/POETRI NFP

CERBI	Colombia	8-23 March 1981
IEOS	Ecuador	23-24 March 1981
CARIS	Argentina	13-17 June 1981
IEOS	Ecuador	22-25 September 1981
CERBI	Colombia	26-30 September 1981
ECD	Jamaica	1-8 October 1981
CARIS	Argentina	12-16 October 1981

- (f) National POETRI workshops were held, as follows:

Ecuador	22-25 September 1981
Colombia	26-30 September 1981
Argentina	12-16 October 1981
Peru	10-12 December 1981

3.2. Asia

- (a) For all matters, relating to POETRI actions in the South-East Region, full liaison was maintained with the WHO Regional Office (SEARO), in New Delhi.
- (b) An agreement was signed with the National Environmental Engineering Research Institute of India, with the approval of the Ministry of Science and Technology, New Delhi. A national action plan for POETRI activities in India was drafted, and a national workshop was tentatively scheduled to take place during 1982. The first POETRI activities will be focused on 4 or 5 states of India.
- (c) In Indonesia, consultations with the government departments concerned with water supply and sanitation, led to the designation of the Directorate of Building Research, CIPTA KARYA as the national POETRI focal point. A convention between the Centre

and IRC was drawn up, and approved by the Director General of CIPTA KARYA, Ministry of Works and Power, Jakarta. Further cooperative action was initiated to specify the requirements, ways and means for establishing the Indonesian information service system in water supply and sanitation.

- (d) In Thailand, consultations were held with the result that a proposal was made for the Environmental Research Institute to be designated as POETRI NFP. The various mechanisms of obtaining external donor support were investigated.

3. Western Pacific

- (a) Preliminary arrangements were made with the Philippines National Water Council (NWC) to act as POETRI National Focal Point. The NWC already operates a high-level literature review and abstracting service.

4. West and Central Africa

- (a) Comité Interafricain d'Etudes Hydrauliques (CIEH)
Regional coordination for POETRI activities in West and Central Africa was carried out by CIEH, based on a convention between IRC and CIEH, dated 9th April 1979. During 1979 and 1980, all CIEH member states were visited by CIEH staff for appraisal of the requirements, ways and means for information services development in water supply and sanitation in the respective countries. Contacts were made with the relevant regional organisations involved in information exchange and transfer in this sector. For instance, the involvement of the RESADOC Information system of the Club du Sahel/Comité Inter-état pour la lutte contre la sécheresse du Sahel has been actively promoted.
Preparations for the POETRI Workshop for West and Central Africa were made. The Workshop is scheduled for 7-9 June 1982, in Ouagadougou (Upper Volta).

- (b) Benin, Cameroun, Gabon, Ivory Coast, Mali, Mauretania, Niger, Senegal, Togo, Upper Volta.

All these countries were visited by a mission for 'sensibilisation' of the government authorities concerned, and the requirements, ways and means for information services development for water supply and sanitation programme support were investigated.

5. East Africa

- (a) Consultations were held in Kenya with the government departments concerned, and led to the National Action Committee for the IDWSS Decade endorsing POETRI as the official information services development programme in Kenya. An formal request of Kenya to participate in POETRI was issued in February 1981. At the National Decade Planning Workshop, held in September 1981, in Nairobi, the POETRI programme was presented and arrangements for the Kenyan participation were made.
- (b) For Tanzania, preliminary consultations concerning POETRI took place in 1979, and a convention between IRC and the Ministry of Water and Energy was signed. The workplan for POETRI activities in Tanzania was developed during 1980, in consultation with the Water Master Plan Coordinating Unit (WMPCU). The Ministry established a Reference and Documentation Centre in the WMPCU, inviting POETRI assistance to strengthening its functions and operations. Full cooperation was maintained with the WHO/UNDP Interregional Cooperation Project's programme of assistance to Tanzania.
- (c) In the Sudan, preliminary contacts for participation in the POETRI programme were established.

6. General POETRI programme activities

- (a) A comprehensive POETRI Reference Manual was prepared, in the period November 1980 - December 1981, in collaboration with ASLIB Research and Consultancy Service, of London.
- The Reference Manual comprises:

Volume 1

- * Planning for information support activities at national level
- * Design and setting-up of information services
- * National inventory of information sources on community water supply and sanitation
- * Compilation of user inventories and the survey of user requirements
- * Education and training for information support activities
- * Financial aspects of planning for POETRI at national level.

Volume 2

- * Guide for designing POETRI training events
- * POETRI Thesaurus of selected terms in water supply and sanitation (multi-lingual)
- * POETRI Guide for indexing and abstracting
- * International directory of information sources on community water supply and sanitation.

A French edition comprising all parts of the POETRI Manual, Volume 1, and several parts of the Volume 2 was prepared.

Arrangements were made for the Manual to be field tested and validated by the participating NFPs in the POETRI programme.

- (b) The intermediate POETRI Thesaurus of selected terms in water supply and sanitation was prepared, in collaboration with the Water Research Centre (U.K.). The POETRI Thesaurus was needed as a source of controlled vocabulary to support systematic exchange and transfer of information with a view to ensuring international compatibility. The first draft of the POETRI Thesaurus was completed in January 1981, and the second more comprehensive draft was finalized in July 1981. During the period July-October 1981, IRC organized an extensive external review. The POETRI Thesaurus was finalized in March 1982, and was circulated to the source institutions participating in the POETRI programme. Arrangements were made for a French and a Spanish version to be produced. The POETRI Thesaurus was very well received by the organizations participating in POETRI and other interested parties.

- (c) The Directory of Information Sources in Water Supply and Sanitation was compiled based on the existing extensive network of working contacts of the IRC, and an additional large-scale mailing survey. In respect of the information sources located in industrialized countries, only those relevant and directly accessible for developing countries' searches were included. The entry for each listed institute, and outlining the scope of work, size of information base, and services provided, was submitted to each institute for verification. The POETRI Directory lists about 200 institutions, of which 150 basically of national scope and some 50 providing services at the regional or global level. The activities related to the POETRI Directory may be summarised as follows:
- (i) Preliminary identification of relevant information sources; May-June 1980.
 - (ii) Mailing survey; October 1980-March 1981.
 - (iii) Final preparation of entries, compilation and indexing of Directory.
 - (iv) Further processing and finalization of Directory August-September 1981.
 - (v) Consultations with UNEP/INFOTERRA concerning the validation and cross-checking of the Directory. The Directory will be upgraded and completed with the assistance of the UNEP/INFOTERRA information network.
- (d) A 'Standard Basic Library' containing the 40 most relevant books, manuals and other documents on water supply and sanitation was carefully composed, and arrangements were made to obtain the selected volumes in sufficient number from the international organizations, bilateral agencies and other institutions who are controlling their distribution. For a substantial part, the documents selected for the 'standard library' dissemination activity will be contributed to the POETRI programme without costs.
- (e) A feasibility study for an integrated data base in support of the national and regional POETRI information services, was carried out in collaboration with the Water Research Centre (U.K.).

7. Task Force on Information Exchange

The 2nd Consultative meeting of multilateral and bilateral agencies involved in the IDWSS Decade, organized by WHO/GWS and held in Geneva, 16th June 1980, decided to establish a Task Force on Information Exchange, with the purpose of reviewing and promoting information services development in support of Decade programmes and projects, in particular the POETRI-programme. A Task Force meeting was held at IRC, 29-30 January 1981. There were 25 participants, from 18 different organizations, i.e. 8 bilateral donor agencies, 5 international organizations, 3 POETRI Regional Focal Points, and 2 non-governmental organizations.

8. Financial Support to POETRI

External financial support to the POETRI programme is required for both the country-specific programme activities and for the technical cooperation among the participating countries. Many of the national activities in the POETRI programme are part of the regular tasks of the institutes and centres concerned, but certain supplementary activities had to be supported with external financial and consultant inputs. In particular, the development of pilot information services, the preparation of training materials, and the organization of national POETRI workshops required external support.

9. Donor consultations

Following the consultations with donor agencies in the Task Force meeting for Information Exchange, held in January 1981, a comprehensive POETRI programme document was prepared, in close cooperation with WHO. This document was approved by the Steering Committee for Cooperative Action of the IDWSS Decade. Subsequently, it was submitted to the donor agencies who had expressed and interest to support the Programme. In the period June-July 1981, the donor agencies concerned were visited by a WHO-IRC mission. The findings were:

Netherlands

The Government of the Netherlands (Directorate-General for Development Cooperation) made a formal pledge to provide financial support towards the central functions component of the POETRI II programme. An amount of Dfl. 825.000, (approx. US \$ 330.000) was allocated for the 3 year period 1982-1984.

CIDA (Canada)

CIDA expressed interest to support the 'Immediate Services' component of the POETRI programme with approx. Can \$ 300.000,. This financial support was considered for certain parts of the Programme. However, eventually CIDA decided to channel its support to another project, outside POETRI.

International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

IDRC, through its Information Sciences Division, was already supporting information system and services development in water supply and sanitation (i.e. REPIDISCA in the Latin American Region). IDRC has expressed interest to expand its support in this area by supporting the start-up of the special 'Water Lines' Journal, and by providing initial funding for POETRI Regional Focal Points i.e. CIEH (West and Central Africa) and PEPAS (Western Pacific).

US AID

US AID is not in a position to financially support global or regional POETRI activities. It could, however, support national POETRI projects in interested countries, through the AID missions. Extensive technical cooperation is being developed with the WASH-project established by US AID to provide technical assistance to the AID missions in country project formulation and implementation.

World Bank

The Bank agrees to governments using (part of) World Bank loans for financing national POETRI projects and activities. The initiative for such use of funds rests with the borrower/country government.

UNICEF

UNICEF is prepared to include in country projects POETRI activities, as appropriate. Financing of POETRI central or regional functions is not possible, but the UNICEF Waterfront Newsletter is fully available as a source of information and as a medium for involving UNICEF field staff in POETRI activities.

Fonds d'Aide et de Cooperation (FAC)/France

FAC is prepared to fund regional and national POETRI activities in francophone West Africa. All requests for funding must be submitted through CIEH.

DANIDA

DANIDA is prepared to consider (co-)funding of POETRI activities in India, Kenya and Tanzania, provided the use of DANIDA financial assistance for POETRI purposes is officially requested by the government concerned. A coordinated approach with other Nordic donor agencies would be preferred, particularly for Tanzania.

NORAD (Norway)

NORAD is prepared to consider (co-)funding of POETRI activities in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Kenya. In several of these countries, a coordinated approach of Nordic donor agencies would be required.

SIDA (Sweden)

SIDA is prepared to consider (co-)funding of POETRI activities in several African countries, particularly in Ethiopia, Kenya, Botswana and Tanzania. Start-up of POETRI activities in those countries may be funded through the WHO/SIDA project for Decade planning and preparations. Requests for follow-up funds should be submitted for specific projects officially approved by the government concerned. Several SIDA-supported activities were carried out in Kenya, and POETRI work in Ethiopia could start at short notice.

GTZ (West Germany)

Consultations with GTZ led to the identification of possible POETRI-activities that could be included in GTZ-supported projects in a number of countries in West and Central Africa.

The external support (consultants, financial, etc.) provided in the context of the POETRI programme will, thus, be mostly 'country-specific', i.e. assistance to the governments in the development of national information systems and services for their water supply and sanitation programmes. General guidelines will be provided to ensure the compatibility of national POETRI activities, with a view to promoting technical cooperation among the countries participating in POETRI.

10. Cooperation with WHO

Throughout POETRI Phase I, WHO has given substantial technical assistance to the Programme, and has contributed to its formulation, implementation and the monitoring of progress. The basis for this cooperation was laid by WHO responding positively to the request of the Netherlands' government to assume joint responsibility for the continuity of the POETRI programme after its initial Phase I funded by the Netherlands.

Within the WHO Division of Environmental Health, a focal point for POETRI was established in the Environmental Health Technology and Support (ETS) Unit. The formulation of the Programme, preparation of POETRI planning documents and workplan, monitoring and review of progress, liaison with WHO Regional Offices and WHO-executed Interregional Projects, briefing of international organizations and others interested in POETRI, were carried out in close cooperation between WHO and IRC.

Within the WHO Division of Environmental Health, close liaison was maintained with the Global Promotion and Cooperation (GWS) Unit in the briefing of donor agencies, and consultations of donor support for the Programme. Presentation of POETRI in the Steering Committee, and reporting on progress was done by the GWS Unit. The

Task Force Meeting on Information Exchange held on 29-30 January 1981, in the Hague, was organized by WHO/GWS.

With the WHO Regional Office for the Americas/Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), close liaison was maintained concerning the involvement of CEPIS as the Regional Focal Point for Latin America and the Caribbean. Financial support for regional and national POETRI activities in Latin America was channeled via the PAHO Trust Fund.

11. Cooperation with UNESCO

Consultations were held with UNESCO Division of the General Information Programme (PGI), to coordinate POETRI with UNESCO programme work in information exchange and transfer. UNESCO is interested to provide assistance to POETRI, in the context of its support to the Decade, and because POETRI, as a (relatively) narrowly-focused information programme, is of relevance to UNESCO as a pilot for that type of special information system.

A UNESCO/WHO/IRC meeting was held on 30 October 1980, in Paris, to identify areas of collaboration, and to make arrangements for joint action. The meeting outlined cooperation mechanisms for national UNISIST Committees and POETRI National Focal Points in the countries participating in the Programme, specific technical assistance at the national level in information system development, and UNESCO support to the preparation of general methodology, guides and training materials for POETRI.

UNESCO financial support was allocated to the following POETRI documents produced by ASLIB Research and Consultancy (U.K.):

- (a) Planning for information support systems and services in water supply and sanitation
- (b) Guidelines on education and training for information support at national level.
- (c) Training manual for POETRI national workshops and short courses.

12. Resources Deployed in POETRI Phase I

The financial resources deployed in POETRI Phase I are specified in Annex B. As indicated, the total budget for the period July 1979-December 1981 amounted to Dfl. 900.000, (approx. US \$ 375.000,). The main allocations were:

- Financial support to six of the countries participating in POETRI I Dfl. 150.000 *
- Regional coordination, technical cooperation, from the RFPs, and regional POETRI workshops Dfl. 150.000
- Consultant inputs in POETRI general support activities, and country-specific assistance Dfl. 125.000
- Travel costs and per diem (incl. sponsoring of selected participants in POETRI workshops) Dfl. 75.000
- Central programme staff (salaries, office costs, communications, etc). Dfl. 350.000
- Publications (printing, mailing, etc.). Dfl. 50.000

* The requests for financial support recieved from the countries were on average 2 to 2.5 times higher than what could be allocated in view of the limited resources available.

Annex B

Government confirmation, or official expression of interest to participate in POETRI Programme, by country.

Country	Government confirmation to participate in POETRI Phase II	Officially expressed interest to participate in POETRI II	Agreement for POETRI support under Phase I of Progr.
<u>SOUTH EAST ASIA</u>			
India		x	x
Indonesia	x		
Sri Lanka		x	
Thailand		x	
<u>WESTERN PACIFIC</u>			
Malaysia		(x)	
Philippines		x	
<u>LATIN AMERICA</u>			
Argentina	x		x
Bolivia		x	
Brazil		x	
Chile		x	
Colombia	x		x
Costa Rica		x	
Ecuador	x		x
Guatamala		x	
Jamaica		x	(x)
Peru	x		x
Venezuela		x	
<u>WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA</u>			
Benin		x	
Cameroun		x	
Chad		x	
Congo		x	
Gabon		x	
Ivory Coast		x	
Mali		x	
Mauritania		x	
Niger		x	

Senegal		x
Togo		x
Upper Volta		x

EAST AND SOUTHERN AFRICA

Kenya	(x)	x
Tanzania	x	
Zambia		x

EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN

Pakistan		x
Sudan		x

Regional Focal Point	RFP Confirmation to participate in POETRI Phase II	RFP officially expressed to participate	Agreement for POETRI support under Phase I
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LATIN AMERICA

Pan-American Centre for Sanitary Engineering and Environmental Sciences (CEPIS)	x		x
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WEST AND CENTRAL AFRICA

Comité Inter-Africain d'Etudes Hydrauliques (CIEH)	x		x
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WESTERN PACIFIC

Regional Centre for the Promotion of Environmental Planning and Applied Studies (PEPAS)		x	
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ANNEX B

Resources Deployed in POETRI Phase I

	<u>POETRI Budget</u> ¹	<u>IRC Budget</u> ²
<u>Salaries</u>		
1. Programme manager	Dfl. 160.000	
2. Programme assistant	Dfl. 90.000	
3. Supporting staff (professional and sub-professional) ³		Dfl. 100.000
<u>Assignment to Third Parties</u>		
1. Short term consultancies	Dfl. 65.000	Dfl. 60.000
<u>Travel</u>		
1. Travel central programme staff	Dfl. 40.000	Dfl. 20.000
2. Travel STCs	Dfl. 15.000	
<u>National Focal Points</u>		
1. Argentina (CARIS)	Dfl. 20.000	
2. Colombia (CERBI)	Dfl. 20.000	
3. Ecuador (CENIRISCA)	Dfl. 20.000	
4. India (NEERI)	Dfl. 50.000	
5. Jamaica (ECD)	Dfl. 20.000	
6. Peru (DTIAPA)	Dfl. 20.000	
<u>Regional Focal Points</u>		
1. CIEH	Dfl. 60.000	
2. CEPIS	Dfl. 55.000	
3. South East Asia and the Western Pacific ⁴	Dfl. 30.000	
<u>Communication/Central Facilities</u>		
1. Logistic support	Dfl. 10.000	
2. Mail/Telephone/telex		Dfl. 10.000
3. Publications/printing	Dfl. 5.000	Dfl. 10.000
<u>Contingencies</u>	Dfl. 20.000	
<hr/>		
TOTAL	Dfl. 700.000	Dfl. 200.000

Notes

- ¹ Budget made available by the Netherlands Government for POETRI Phase I (duration 30 months; period July 1979 - December 1981)
- ² From IRC core-budget for period of 30 months
- ³ Staff from IRC Information Section
- ⁴ For regional POETRI workshop only
- ⁵ Budget figures are given in Dutch Guilders (Dfl.). Current exchange rate: 1 Dfl. = 0,5 US \$ approximately.