

3: PLANNING

Section 3 looks at the planning context in which library literacy programs operate. One cluster of questions considers if and to what extent the state libraries are involved in statewide planning for adult literacy.

Another cluster examines the degree to which, in the eyes of state librarians and their literacy staffs, state libraries have regular working relations with key state and national literacy, library, and political entities, including SLRCs.

A third line of questioning focuses specifically on SLRCs, the groups established by the National Literacy Act as the state-level counterparts to the National Institute for Literacy.

SLRCs were included in the study because they were presumed to have the central statewide planning and resource development role envisioned for them in their enabling legislation. If they are operating as intended, it would be impossible to consider the present and future

circumstances of state libraries and library literacy programs without also considering theirs.

It should be noted that at the time the survey was taken, a few of the responding SLRCs had either already closed due to lack of funding or were on the verge of doing so. Their heads/former heads were invited to participate in the study anyway because of the valuable perspectives they could contribute.

STATE LIBRARIES IN STATEWIDE PLANNING

According to SLRCs in the 40 states involved in this study, **32 states (85%) have a statewide planning body** or some kind of coordinated mechanism for integrated planning and resource development (P1). On the face of it, this is very encouraging news. (The states reported *not* to have such a capacity are Connecticut, Kansas, North Dakota, New Hampshire, Ohio, and Tennessee.)

Moreover, **the majority of state library agencies appear to be involved in that statewide planning.**

P1. Does your state have a statewide literacy planning body or some coordinated mechanism for integrated planning and resource development? [SLRC, Q3]

		Yes	No	Not Sure
Q3	SLRCs (40 of 40 responded)	85%	15%	0

P2. Is your (state library agency, SLRC) a member of a/the statewide literacy planning body/structure in your state? [Q1-Q3]

		Yes	No	Not Sure
Q1	State Librarians (35 of 35)	86%	14%	0
Q2	Library Agency Literacy Contacts (34 of 44)	76	21	3
Q3	SLRC Heads (39 of 40)	77	23	0

P3. Which of the following organizations in your state are involved in cooperative statewide planning, policy, and resource development? [Q3 only]

Q3	SLRCs (39 of 40, 98% response rate)	% of Respondees Citing Item
	State department of education/ABE division	90%
	Other state agencies/departments	80
	Voluntary literacy groups (e.g. LVA, Laubach)	75
	State library agency	69
	Governor's office	67
	Community-based organizations	67
	Community Colleges	56
	Businesses in the state	49
	Local libraries	44
	4-year colleges/universities	44
	Schools	41
	State legislature	39
	State/local ESL groups	39
	State Center for the Book	5
	Other	8

The library personnel say (in P2) that most state libraries are members of this statewide literacy planning body (from 76%-86% of them). Curiously, there is a significant difference in the positive response rates of librarians and their designated literacy professionals. Moreover, *all* state

librarians responded to the question, while only 77% of library agency literacy professionals did. One can only speculate on the meaning of these differences. One group appears to be better informed than the other. Again, it would seem that communications between the two levels could be better than it is.

Not shown in Table P2, but evident in the

background data, is another curious inconsistency. Librarians indicate no involvement in state planning in Iowa, Maryland, New Mexico, Oregon, and Texas. But the library agency literacy personnel named only two of those states as uninvolved (Maryland and Texas) and added four others (Connecticut, Kentucky, New York, and South Carolina), none of which were cited by their bosses.

Furthermore, only one state named by state library literacy respondents as uninvolved, Connecticut, was also named by the SLRCs. This variance suggests again that a good many of the respondees aren't adequately informed about the library planning role—pointing again to inadequate communications between and among the groups, and also suggesting that many SLRCs may be sideline participants rather than active leaders of statewide planning, something that later data will show to be the case.

Nevertheless, the majority of state library agencies do seem to have at least some involvement

in statewide planning. And the point is further reinforced by the SLRCs in Table P3. Here they indicate that nearly 70% of state library agencies are involved in statewide planning, policy, and resource development.

Furthermore, their response indicates that **state libraries are more involved than all other groups in the state**—including governor's offices—except for state departments of education, other state agencies, and voluntary literacy organizations (LVA and Laubach).

Three other findings are significant as well. First and foremost, the dominant role of state education departments literally jumps off the page. Second, some 44% of local libraries appear to have a voice in statewide planning, a pleasant if unexpected finding. Third, according to the SLRCs, nearly 50% of the statewide planning that regularly occurs across the country has *business* involvement, a much larger involvement than expected.

Back to the main point, though, whatever the problems and incon-

P3a. Which organizations in the state regularly receive adult literacy services from the SLRC and/or from OTHER STATE ENTITIES? [Q3 only]

Q3 (39 of 40 responded, 98%)	SLRC	Other State Entities
Community-based organizations	95%	51%
Voluntary literacy groups (e.g. LVA, Laubach)	92	49
Other state agencies/depts.	90	51
State education department/ ABE division	85	46
Local libraries	77	39
State/local ESL groups	77	39
Schools	77	46
Community colleges	74	46
Businesses in the state	69	41
State library agency	67	33
4-year colleges/universities	62	39
Governor's office	59	31
State legislature	39	28
State Center for the Book	18	8
Other	13	3

P4. With which of the following organizations in the STATE does the STATE LIBRARY maintain ongoing working relations to plan for and otherwise advance adult literacy? [Q1-Q2]

Q1 (32 of 35 responded, 91%) Q2 (38 of 44 responded, 86%)	State Librarian	Library Agency Literacy Contact
SLRC	77%	70%
ABE/State Education Department	77	73
Governor's office	66	55
Voluntary groups	66	55
ESL organizations	43	32
Businesses in the state	40	39
State legislature	49	41
Community colleges	37	41
Other	26	27

sistencies, *more* involvement of the libraries is better than *less* from the standpoint of developing their role in adult literacy. There is evidently a substantial base on which to build. What is less clear is what that involvement adds up to in terms of having a real voice in the literacy affairs of the state. Data gathered elsewhere in the study suggest that although there are many firmly committed state libraries/librarians, the engagement of many others is superficial.

THE SLRC ROLE

Questions P3a, P4, and P5 look at the service and planning role of the SLRCs with respect to libraries and other groups in the states from two perspectives: that of library agency personnel and that of the SLRCs themselves. Four interrelated issues are probed:

Which groups most benefit from the SLRCs services? To what extent do the public libraries benefit? What is the nature and extent of the SLRC service/technical assistance role as compared to other state sources? And, if the

P5. Congress has cut funding for the SLRCs beginning next year. These centers were a major provision of the National Literacy Act of 1991 which recognized the need for state-level counterparts to the National Institute for Literacy. The centers are presently at various stages of development. Some will survive the federal funding withdrawal, others may not. If the library agency has a strong working relationship with the SLRC, please indicate as best you can what kind of help the SLRC gives you at present (e.g. planning and policy assistance, resource development, program/staff development, help in adapting research to practice). [Q1, Q2]

Q1	State Librarians (25 of 35, 71%)	Q1	Q2
Q2	State Agency Literacy Contacts (41 of 44, 93%)	(# of times cited)	
None (AL, NE, RI, FL, NJ, TX, VA)		3	4
Very little (FL, WI, HI, LA, MA, SC, TN, WV, WI)		2	7
Provides statistics, research data, and other information (AR, MS, TN, CO, ID, MD, MO, OR)		3	6
The State Library <u>is</u> the literacy resource center (DC, HI, IL, MT, OK)		4	2
The Center has closed/may close due to federal funding cuts (FL, GA, IL)		3	1
Resources/resource development (LA, ND, NH, PA, MN, ND, SD)		4	3
Provide/support training and staff development (MI, MS, NH, PA, MO, WA)		4	2
Planning and coordination (MI, PA, TN, CA, OR)		3	2
Sharing of staff, space, cataloguing, and other resources (MN, OH, SD, IN, OH, SD)		4	2
Give us access to instructional networks/help bring library services and materials collections to the attention of local literacy programs/ make hotline referrals to local programs (WV, IA, ID, IN, MS, NY)		2	4
Help in developing collections (CO, WA)			2
We can borrow from their materials collection (IN, NM)			2
Awareness/promotes understanding and awareness of need for services within the library community (MN, WY)			2
Disseminate data on effective techniques and programs (MI)		1	
They give us a presence in literacy circles (IA)		1	
Evaluation of programs (MI)		1	
They mobilize phone and letter campaigns for legislative influence (NH)		1	
Interlibrary loans (NV)		1	
Provide technical assistance to local library literacy programs (PA)		1	
Help adapt research to practice (PA)		1	
It is the lead agency in our state (IA)		1	
Provides basic consulting services (IN)			1
Program development help (NH)			1
They are a source of grant reviewers (NY)			1
They include their material in our database, thus increasing statewide access to literacy information and services (VT)			1
They sponsor conferences we attend (VT)			1
Don't know (OR)		1	
Not applicable (AK)		1	

Note: This table is a distillation of responses that appear in original form in the background data book.

P6. With which of the following NATIONAL organizations does the STATE LIBRARY maintain ongoing working relations to plan for and otherwise advance adult literacy? [Q1-Q2]

	State Librarian	Library Agency Literacy Contact
Q1 State Librarians (31 of 35 responded, 88%)		
Q2 State Agency Literacy Contact (33 of 44, 75%)		
American Library Association	80%	59%
U.S. Department of Education	80	59
National Center for Library & Information Sciences (NCLIS)	54	32
Center for the Book	54	43
LVA/Laubach	46	32
National Institute for Literacy	40	30
Businesses	31	11
National Center for Adult Literacy	29	18
National Coalition for Literacy	20	11
Clearinghouse for Adult Literacy/ESL Education of Center for Applied Linguistics	17	9
Other	6	9

P6a. With which of the following NATIONAL organizations does the SLRC maintain ongoing working relations to plan for and otherwise advance adult literacy? [Q3 only]

Q3 SLRCs (39 of 40 responded, 98%)

U.S. Department of Education	95%
National Institute for Literacy	93
National Center for Adult Literacy	83
LVA/Laubach	70
Clearinghouse for Adult Literacy/ESL Education of Center for Applied Linguistics	50
Businesses	48
National Coalition for Literacy	30
U.S. Department of Labor	28
National Governor's Association	25
U.S. Congress	23
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services	18
American Library Association	10
NCLIS	10
Center for the Book	10
Other	8

zations and voluntary literacy groups rely to an extraordinary degree on the SLRCs. So do state education departments and other state agencies. It is easy to see why considering that some 40% of SLRCs are units within (controlled by) state education departments (Table P9).

State and local ESL groups, schools, and community colleges also get substantial SLRC support, as do local libraries and the state library agencies. Indeed, library groups apparently get twice as much support from SLRCs as from all other state entities combined.

TIES THAT BIND: STATE-LEVEL LINKS

The library personnel were asked with which of several state organizations they maintain working relations *to plan for and otherwise advance adult literacy*.

SLRCs and state education departments (virtually the same thing in 40% of the cases) rank way at the top. Next in the ranking are governor's offices and voluntary organizations, though state librarians see a stronger

SLRCs have the key role now, can libraries (along with other literacy stakeholders in the states) count on them as a continuing source of leadership and help?

Of great importance, SLRCs and library personnel alike see SLRCs as the main source of planning and resource development help to libraries and other literacy

stakeholders in their states.

Beyond this, several of the specific findings are quite dramatic: Community-based organi-

P6b. In a sentence or two, what kind of national-level help not now being provided would the state library agency like to have? [Q1, Q2]

DE Grants to local libraries or state library agencies for literacy programming. (Q1)

DE More assistance in developing and promoting information on literacy programs. (Q2)

IL It would make life simpler if at least some of the national organizations could adopt a collaborative approach and future planning mechanism (i.e. decide jointly what they can offer to state and local programs after input from programs and then delegate functions so there's less duplication and their services get to programs). (Q2)

IN We need greater coordination of programs and efforts from the various national level organizations. Our resources are too limited to pick and choose who and what we can support. (Q1)

OH Over the years different staff have had the responsibility to work with literacy. An ALA-sponsored training program in the late 70's was attended by our staff. Staff have also written documents on literacy which have been distributed not only in state but made available to requesters across the nation. Not sure what is available from all the organizations. (Q1, Q2)

OK National awareness and promotion of volunteer and library-based literacy programs is needed. (Q2)

OR We are satisfied with our contacts at the national level. (Q1)

TX Funding and/or materials. (Q2)

working link in these cases than their literacy professionals do. Similarly, state librarians are much more likely to perceive a working relationship with ESL organizations in their states (43%) than do their library literacy personnel (32%). The differences are important, especially in the ESL area, though not directly explainable from the data gathered.

The two groups of

library personnel were also asked what *kind* of help they presently get from the SLRCs.

A number of respondents in both categories indicated that they receive no assistance or very little. It is odd, however, that in only one state (Wisconsin) do Q1 and Q2 groups both give this response. Again, there is reason to believe that some of the responses

here, as elsewhere, are guesses rather than informed answers.

Nevertheless, there is nearly total agreement on how they most benefit from the help of the SLRCs: research and information services... resource development assistance...staff development and training... and planning and coordination generally—the very services that SLRCs were legislated to provide.

The SLRCs are also seen as important to developing and providing access to library collections—with the libraries in some cases being able to draw on SLRC collections. Indeed, *sharing* of collections and other resources, including staff, is an oft-cited gain.

TIES THAT BIND: NATIONAL LINKS

One would expect *local* library literacy programs to work more with groups at the local and state levels, but effective leadership and planning by *state-level* entities requires strong ties to the national organizations where overall

policy and funding decisions are shaped.

Thus, in P6 and P6a state library people and the SLRCs were asked if they work on a regular basis with a wide range of key national literacy,

Coordination at the national level is critical since what happens there will determine the roles at the state level. The survey data includes comments again and again on the unrest of the future of funding, the need to maximize any available funding, and the need for coordination. [A quote from] South Dakota captures the dilemma: *The leadership for a secure funding base needs to come from the federal level. Illiteracy is not a Democratic or Republican issue. It affects all citizens and impacts our economic growth.* (Bridget Lamont, State Librarian, IL)

P7. Federal funding for the SLRCs was rescinded for FY95 and has not yet been appropriated for FY96. The centers are presently (as of 10/26/95) reauthorized for the period 1997-2002 in bills now pending in the House and Senate. There is thus some chance that funding will be restored in 1997. Moreover, one bill presently under consideration would not place the provision for the centers in block grant funding to the states. The SLRCs are presently at various stages of development. Some are more vulnerable than others to federal funding decisions. How has your center and the state's adult literacy affairs already been affected by current federal cuts; what does the future hold if funding is not restored? [Q3 only]

Q3 SLRCs (38 of 40 responded, 95%)

Note: The Georgia SLRC did not respond to the survey questionnaire at all, but a separate communication from a state official is included in this table for the information it provides.

AL N.R.

AK We (the SLRC) give 100% of our funds to our regional center (Northwest Regional Literacy Resource Center at network in Seattle) so the funding cut will not affect statewide operations.

AZ [The] Adult Literacy & Technology Resource Center, Inc. [has already] lost \$103,722.

CA SLRC-California is now in 3rd year of federal funding and is secure as exists now through September 1996. If funding is not allocated as specific set-aside in block grants, not yet clear at what level SLRC will be maintained. Clearly will not disappear but not sure at exactly what level funding will be. The State Collaborative Literacy Council, which was created to administer SLRC, is committed to continuing the effort no matter what happens to federal \$ but has not yet been able to develop a concrete plan for beyond Sept. 30, 1996.

CO Direct effects not yet felt, but since we are totally federally funded, loss of these dollars means our demise. Block grants to governor's office more than likely dooms us as well. We have lost adult education for homeless \$.

CT Funding for the position of state literacy coordinator and for materials is gone. If federal funding is not restored, the literacy resource center will continue to be funded by the Capitol Region Education Council and by sale of services to agency members of the Resource Center. This is the means currently being employed to sustain the Center for FY95-96.

DE Caused 50% staff reduction. Limited research time. Funding permits some operation until 9/30/96. Center will probably close if not funded.

FL The Florida Adult Literacy Resource Center closed July 31, 1995 as a result of the federal budget rescission of 1995. This took away a catalyst which was just beginning to inform a well-developed public/private partnership. This took the better part of three years. Loss of this resource will set the state's literacy delivery system back to its former random and inequitable approach to development. (former director, FL SLRC)

GA Letter from Asst Commissioner: The Georgia Literacy Resource Center is temporarily closed, due to termination of federal funding. Center activities will resume as funds are identified and made available, and program operations restructured to meet program goals. Currently, ongoing staff development workshops for adult literacy practitioners are being developed and conducted at the resource center as part of our adult literacy program activities. Specific program operations will resume contingent upon the new funding sources.

HI N.R.

IA No impact through June 1996. Then, 50-75% cut in funds anticipated: reduction in staff, services, acquisition. Operations will be restricted to maintenance level: check-in/out, little if any acquisition, promotion etc. unless funding restored.

library, and government organizations.

There are profound differences of opinion between the two library groups. A full 80% of state librarians say that they have strong working relations with both the American Library Association and the U.S. Department of Education. Less than 60% of the library literacy contacts think so. Some 54% of the librarians say that their State Agency also has strong links with the National Center for Libraries & Information Science (NCLIS). This tie is much lower according to state agency literacy professionals.

Both categories of library respondents are probably right. State librarians would reasonably be expected to have a larger sense, in general, of their organization's national working ties. But their literacy staffs almost certainly understand better whether the connections are for the purpose of "advancing adult literacy." Even granting this explanation, however, information gathered from consultations with the Office of Educational Research and Improvement and others

suggests that the library literacy respondents are too high in their estimates as well.

Consider the following: In the 1980s, the American Library Association visibly championed the cause of literacy, with its Adult Council campaign igniting an adult literacy movement that had remained on the march until recently stalled by federal funding and policy changes. Many persons interviewed, however, believe that the ALA “dropped the ball” and is not currently a major literacy force—at least not in a way that would call for substantial state library involvement.

[Note: In fact, the ALA’s focus over the past five years has been family literacy, with most of the adult literacy budget devoted to that. Moreover, the ALA has always been and still is the glue that holds together the National Coalition for Literacy.]

What about the U.S. Department of Education link? On the one hand, it is hard to imagine that the working relationship *for literacy purposes* is very deep, considering that Title VI of the Library

Table P7, cont’d

IL	Depending on the legislation which emerges related to State Resource Centers, our agency may or may not be the SRC in the future. If dollars for SRC’s go to SEA’s that agency in Illinois will probably operate the SRC. The work we’ve done over the past 3 1/2 years will impact the way that ISBE would run a state resource center. We anticipate that services of the SLRC would be open to all partners in the adult literacy/ education arena and not just LEA’s. There would also be an emphasis on funding projects or activities in the train-the-trainer mode. The Interagency Coordinating Committee of the Illinois Literacy Council would presumably continue in some form to ensure this ongoing coordination.
IN	Change of administration. Reduction in staff (from 10 to 2.5). Additional potential downsizing if funding not restored.
KS	Our SLRC was an expansion of the existing Adult Education Resource Center funded with 353 funds. When the federal funds dry up, it will go back to being the Adult Education Resource Center if Adult Ed funds can still be used for that purpose under the new legislation.
KY	The Kentucky Center for Adult Education and Literacy will continue services to local providers at a minimal level. The materials collection will be maintained, with few new acquisitions. Newsletters, publications, and trainings will be continued through cost recovery. Technical assistance, research, and policy planning will be continued as special project funds are received.
LA	Unless the 1996 Regular Session of the Legislature restores General Fund will take office on January 8.
MD	Federal funding for the SLRC ended June 30, 1995. As a result, services have been reduced. Currently monies are being used to provide a comprehensive professional staff development program. We have limited materials purchasing and distribution and have consolidated three regional centers into two.
MI	The State of Michigan immediately replaced much of the “lost” federal funds and our Dept. of Education will continue to do so. Budgets will be reduced by 1/2 in the future (beginning in January). Result: services to the field will be fee-based, graduate assistantships go from 2 to 1, will not be sponsoring dissertation research, will not be sponsoring teacher field-based inquiry.
MN	Our budget has been cut to about a third of its previous level, and our staff has been cut from two to one person. We are currently funded with section 353 money. Complicating matters in MN, our Department of Education was abolished as of 9/30/95, and we now have a Department of Children, Families, and Learning. The new department combines the old dept. of ed. with programs related to youth and families from Health and Human Services, and Labor. With this restructuring is a reexamination of how the agency is spending its dollars. Combined with the uncertain federal situation, I am pessimistic about our center’s ability to continue without the reauthorization and set-aside funding. Our center is too new to be effective at finding alternative (non-government) funding sources.
MO	We are a nonprofit and raise funds year round. State has begun giving small grant (\$70,000). State DESE helps with funds. Adult literacy has gone to the state for an increase in funding to compensate for loss of [federal] funds.
MS	Shaky. We have funding for some staff through June 30, 1996. We are writing grant applications for FY96-97. We have proposed legislation being written.
MT	So far, not affected. We did not use 1994 funding, and we have requested and received permission to extend period of time during which these funds may be expended.
NC	Because we are very new (June 1994) we are still using FY1994 funds and will be in business through Sept. 1996. After that our future is <u>unclear</u> . If federal funding is restored, we are likely to remain operative; if not I do not know what will happen. NC is undergoing changes in community college structures which would affect us, and the Workforce Commission may want to redesign our affiliation.

Table P7, cont'd

ND N.R.

NE Presently, we have already experienced a reduction in the kinds and amount of staff development opportunities we can offer. We have reduced Center staffing (some clerical support) and have reassessed our priorities in terms of purchasing materials for program use across the state. We anticipate continuing to function as the SLRC through next spring, using carry-over monies from FY94-95, but with a reduction in outreach. Future: When these funds have been exhausted, we will revert back to the primary research and development function which our Institute held prior to being identified as the SLRC for Nebraska. This would mean no longer purchasing materials for use in the lending library, further reductions in staff, and reducing or eliminating many other outreach efforts.

NH The Center was not funded for FY96. The Center will continue to be closed if funding is not restored.

NJ Our SLRC is currently operating on FY94 grant monies. Thus all SLRC functions related to training and technical assistance will continue. These functions are currently supported by funds provided through the Adult Education Act, Section 353, and will not be affected if funds are not restored. Activities related to governmental and agency cooperation will continue, but on a more restricted basis as other resources allow. Library services provided will become limited to the time staffing resources will allow.

NM The Coalition received a total of over \$130,000 over the past three years for the SLRC. No additional state funding has since been allocated to support this program. The approximate 30% increase in training, technical assistance, and related services realized in each of the past three years will be lost, and without other funding to replace the SLRC funds, cutbacks will be made in staffing, training, and materials purchases.

NY The Center is currently operating on "no cost extension" of FY94 SED and DSS Funds. As of 12/30/95 these extensions end, and the NY SLRC will cease to exist. The School of Education-SUNY Albany is seeking foundation funding to develop a resource center. However, should such funding be realized, the Center's relationship with NYSED will have to be determined.

OH We are continuing at 70% level this year with 353 funds and state match in state budget. We anticipate similar funding for another year after this one.

OK Caused reduction of staff (50%). Services are limited by lack of research time and preparation of papers. Funding adequate until 9-30-96. I anticipate that Center will close if funding not forthcoming.

PA Presently the SLRC function is being funded by carryover funds from the previous federal grant(s). The SLRC function in PA is being "scaled back," and other funding to support the functions is being pursued. Under current funding constraints it is expected that the SLRC function will be limited to just publication and dissemination of 353 projects for FY96-97.

SC Our funding has been cut by more than half, but our workload has more than doubled. We are finding ourselves providing training for regular K-12 teachers to justify the SDE picking up the slack in our funding.

SD No additional materials purchased for use by literacy councils. No funds for training are available. The literacy resource center will continue to assist providers with location and access to existing materials as its only responsibility. No state funds will be made available.

TN We have no SLRC funding for this FY, but the Center for Literacy Studies continues with other funding to do some of the same work (but not all). Without federal funding we expect future work of the Center for Literacy Studies to be less state-focussed, providing fewer resources to Tennessee literacy programs.

UT The bulk of our funds are federal; however, we remain very optimistic and are carrying on with same level of funds.

Services & Construction Act (LSCA) is the only funding ever designated for library literacy *and* that the bulk of the funds (94%) has been administered directly to local programs instead of state libraries.

On the other hand, it is significant that OERI has required all local proposals to be "commented on" by their respective state libraries as a condition of LSCA funding, so even though the state libraries have not had a review and approval role, OERI's local grants have been made with their full awareness and support. Moreover, national panels set up by OERI for proposal review purposes have had some state library representation over the years. So, the working relationship between the Department and the libraries is real if not extensive.

[Note: LSCA Title VI funding was recently shifted to Title I, but it is not earmarked for literacy, partly because the ALA's Washington Office doesn't favor earmarks in the present economic and political climate.]

The NCLIS, a major force in the library world,

Table P7, cont'd

VT Vermont received such a small SLRC grant - \$18,000 - that the loss of the money was not a crisis. The funding was used to implement the work plan of the Vermont Literacy Board (as outlined earlier). We need to fundraise to support the newsletter and our director is unable to attend staff development events (such as conferences), and our support of the New England Literacy Resource Center was cut.

VA Massive cuts in this year's budget meant personnel reduction (support staff) and reducing a full-time librarian's job into a part-time position—which will slow down the process of getting the Center's holdings (about 12,000 titles) online and converting records into MARC. Services are affected and certain components of our project (i.e., the field-testing and evaluation of instructional materials by some 25 teachers statewide) have to be deleted from the budget. Production of the Learning Resources Evaluation Manual and the AE Curricula Resource Catalog (an annually produced product) was also deleted from the budget. Travel for staff has been drastically cut (with some professional staff with no travel at all in the budget), thus restricting the training activities we'd aggressively targeted in our plan to a minimum. Also, there's no money for promotional products for the SLRC, and no money for external evaluation and marketing to build awareness. If the SLRC funding is not restored, our SLRC cannot meet the needs of our AE and literacy field. We cannot expand services and be state-of-the-art.

WA Budget reduced - RLC \$ replaced by 4 states, mostly w/353 \$. Intent for 7-1-96 to 6-30-97 is to continue to operate as a state center.

WI The WI Literacy Resource network staffing has been dramatically scaled back. Adult education program planning is conservative, with no planned increase in funded services. Volunteer literacy organizations are becoming more involved in local and state planning and service delivery. The state has adopted a posture which would not replace funds lost by federal cuts. The assistant state director of the WI Technical College System Board is actively involved in interagency planning.

WV Technically, our center no longer exists. Almost all of our funding went directly to providers for training, materials, and maintenance of an 800 adult education phone line (as well as a statewide newsletter, Networks). All of these services will be drastically cut or they will end without future funding.

highly promising new leadership initiative, which it helped shape. In a \$6.3 million library literacy grant program of the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, the ALA has just been funded for three years to give ongoing conference and other technical supports to a group of 13 local libraries which have been awarded demonstration grants to develop and publicize their adult literacy programs as national models.

NATIONAL SLRC TIES

The SLRCs were also asked about *their* national links. A few findings are worth highlighting.

Their strongest connections—to the U.S. Department of Education and the National Institute for Literacy—are to be expected considering that these federal organizations are their primary source of funding and guidance.

But their heavy contact with the University of Pennsylvania's National Center for Adult Literacy is a bit of a surprise considering the constraints under which they operate. They apparently make a serious effort to stay in touch with new research.

is another question mark. In 1990, the organization took a visible interest in adult literacy in preparation for the 1991 White House Conference on Library and Information Services. Working with the Public Library Data Service of the ALA, it gathered information on the nature and extent of adult literacy services in several hundred local public libraries. Armed with this data, it offered resolutions and recommendations at the

conference in support of both adult and youth literacy (though the focus then, as now, was on K-12 students).

However, with this statement made, NCLIS moved on to other things. It has done no further data collection on library involvement in literacy (and neither has the ALA's Public Library Data Service). Moreover, in the last four or five years it has undertaken no new literacy initiatives and

does not plan to do so in the future, according to a spokesperson there.

It should be noted, of course, that NCLIS' annual budget was reduced by 25% this year—to about \$750,000—making it hard for the group to pursue more than a few priorities at a time.

It should also be noted that whatever the ALA's recent role in literacy, the group is about to embark on an exciting and

P8. What is the SLRC's specific role in statewide planning, policy, and resource development? [SLRC, Q3 only]

Q3 SLRCs (39 responses of 40 possible, 98%)

Participate(d) in planning, policy, and resource development as a member of a council or commission (HI, NC, NH, NM, OH, OK, SC, TN, VT, WV)	10
Coordinate planning and resource development across agencies/ focal point for statewide coordination (IL, LA, AK, MI, MO, MS, MT, PA, VA)	9
Acquire/provide/disseminate materials to the field (CA, IA, IN, MS, ND, SD, VA, WI)	8
Initiate/provide(d) research services/information to inform state planning, policy and resource development (FL, IN, KY, MD, NE, NY, WI)	7
Responsible for/provide staff development/training (CA, LA, MD, ND, SD, WI, WV)	7
Assist State Department of Education, state advisory council, or other statewide body with planning and resource development (AL, CO, MN, NE)	4
Provide technical assistance to local and/or state groups (DE, ND, VA)	3
Conduct needs assessment (UT, WI)	2
Support staff development (IA, NY)	2
Advise governor's office (NE)	1
Promote new adult readers (IA)	1
Operate statewide hotline and referral service (VA)	1
Share resources (CT)	1
Promote/fund pooling of resources and training of trainers (IL)	1
Recommend acquisitions (UT)	1
Provide technical assistance to all state Even Start programs (SC)	1
Develop curricula for ABE/workplace programs (SC)	1
Facilitative role (NJ)	1
Provide access to literacy materials through online catalog (SD)	1
Work with Congressional delegation on public policy work (MI)	1
Policy development (MS)	1
Provide communications link (VA)	1
Virtually none (WA)	1

with the ALA and NCLIS. Only 10% of them work with these two groups. Once again, they do not seem to be giving much attention to libraries as agents for the delivery of adult basic skills service.

THE NATIONAL HELP LIBRARIES NEED

Next, in P6b, librarians and library agency literacy contacts were invited to consider what national-level help not now being provided they would like to have (to advance their agency's role in adult literacy). Very few answered the question, but those who did echoed refrains found throughout the study:

More—and more stable—funding! Providing information and materials! Conducting awareness activities! Help with program coordination and collaboration! Planning assistance!

URGENT NEED TO RESCUE SLRCs

All other questions in section 3 (P7-P11) were directed solely to the SLRCs. They look at the finances and financial health of the SLRCs and at the range and type

Their extensive contact with the national Literacy Volunteers of America and Laubach organizations is not

surprising, considering that many library literacy programs are actually LVA and Laubach affiliate operations.

But in light of this study's focus, the most provocative finding (in P6a) is the extremely *low* contact that SLRCs have

P8a. Please indicate the SLRC's current annual budget. [SLRC, Q3 only]			
P9. If SLRC is not free-standing please give name of organization it is technically part of (e.g. state department of education, state coalition). [SLRC, Q3 only]			
	P8a — Budget		P9 — Name of parent organization
Alaska	\$1,000,000		Nine Star Enterprises, a 501(c)3 literacy org.
Missouri	900,000		
New York	898,278	Terminated 12/31/95	School of Education, SUNY Albany
California	870,000	Plus \$80,000 in-kind staff	
Mississippi	389,000		Institutions of Higher Learning
Arizona	327,866		A nonprofit organization
Illinois	327,000	Enough to go to 12/96	Secretary of State Literacy Office, State Library
Ohio	304,000		Kent State University
Virginia	292,362	For FY 95-96	
New Jersey	224,642		NJ Dept of Ed, Employment & Training Comm
Hawaii	187,575	Payroll & supplies	Hawaii State Public Library System
Michigan	180,000		State Department of Education
Alabama	158,269		State Department of Education
Louisiana	153,907		Governor's Office of Lifelong Learning
Washington	131,000	For 7/95-6/96	Funds from Seattle Central Community College
Indiana	130,000		Indiana Literacy Foundation, Inc. as of 7/95; some new State Library administration
Utah	127,556		State Department of Education
New Mexico	120,000		Administered by the NM Coalition for Literacy
Oklahoma	100,262		State Department of Libraries
Wisconsin	92,000		Wisconsin Technical College System Board
Kentucky	90,500		KY Dept for Adult Education & Literacy, Cabinet for Workforce Development
South Carolina	90,000	Was over \$200,000	State Department of Education
Kansas	82,000		State Department of Education
West Virginia	76,369	FY94, -0- FY95 except carryover	State Department of Education
Maryland	75,722		State Department of Education
Iowa	74,000		Northeast Iowa Regional Library Sysem
Connecticut	62,000		Adult Training & Development Network, Capitol Region Education Council
Nebraska	38,000		Dept of Voc & Adult Ed, Univ of Nebraska
Montana	37,842		
New Hampshire	35,370	Last budget; Center dissolved	Was part of Nashua Adult Learning Center
Minnesota	35,000		Part of Literacy Training Network, which has own budget
South Dakota	25,000		SD State Library, Department of Education
Delaware	25,000		DE Assn for Adult & Community Education
North Dakota	24,000		State Department of Education
Pennsylvania	0	Using leftover 94-95 \$	State Department of Education
Tennessee	0	For 1995-96	University of Tennessee
Vermont	0		VT State Dept of Education, VT Literacy Bd
Colorado		Don't know. It varies.	State Department of Education
North Carolina		N.R.	353 proj. of Training Inst. @ Appalachian St. Univ.
Florida		SLRC closed 7/95, no \$	Was part of Florida State University
\$7,684,520			

of services the SLRCs provide to state and local groups.

As even a casual perusal of these tables will show, the SLRCs—at least in their current form—are in great peril. To put the bottom line first, without a substantial

and immediate federal initiative to save them and/or some bold new intervention by the states, most SLRCs will either die on the vine or become increasingly barren enterprises. Although there are some extraordinary exceptions (California and Illinois are examples), the

majority are already in an arrested state.

The dismal fact is that there has been no federal funding for SLRCs since their 1995 funding was rescinded. The National Institute for Literacy indicates that the best hope for restoration of funding is the Workforce Development Act now pending in Congress. But even if that Act passes, funds would not necessarily be earmarked for them and there is no certainty that they would get them.

Moreover, if some funding were to spring from that source, it would not be available until July 1997 at the earliest, more likely July 1998.

Even knowing that federal relief might be in the pipeline, how many can hold out another year or two? And, would the amount of future funding provided be adequate to sustain an effective range and level of service? In the few cases where SLRCs are on firmer financial ground, they may have a chance. But, for most, Tables P7 and P8a reveal that as things stand it is only a matter of time.

The best service is always provided closest

to home because needs vary substantially from community to community and state to state. Thus, the ideal response would be for the states to step in and save their own SLRCs. This probably is not likely.

The only feasible course, given the stark reality of the situation, may be for the federal government—perhaps in consultation with various stakeholders in the states—to reconceptualize the very structure of the SLRCs, at least those that are endangered. One option might be to transform those in peril into strategically placed regional centers around the country. Indeed, a few SLRCs are already part of such groups.

Moreover, an effort to structurally revamp the resource centers would provide an opportunity to rethink their fundamental role, something that their survival also appears to depend on. It could well be that in trying to do something for everyone—which many sections of this report show to be the case—the SLRCs are carrying too onerous a burden in any case.

P10. Please check any of the following specific services that your SLRC provides to literacy planning, policy development, and funding groups in the state. [SLRC, Q3 only]

Q3 SLRC (40 of 40 responded, 100%)

Lending library resources	93%
Professional staff development	90
Statewide conferencing	83
Evaluation, pgm dev, other tech assistance	75
Policy development & planning	70
State advocacy	66
Data collection & analysis	65
National advocacy	55
Other	25

P11. Please check any of the following services that the SLRC provides directly to local literacy programs (regardless of their institutional base). [SLRC, Q3 only]

Q3 SLRC (40 of 40 responded, 100%)

Professional staff development	90%
Lending library resources	90
Statewide conferencing	80
Public awareness	78
Curriculum development	75
Program development	73
Evaluation/assessment	68
Data collection & analysis	65
State advocacy	63
Policy development & planning	63
Training tutors or tutor trainers	60
National advocacy	53
Applying research to practice	55
Fundraising/resource development	53
Grant funds	45
Other	18

In their enabling legislation SLRCs were thought of—like the National Institute for Literacy—as overarching entities that were not primarily educational in nature and organization but that should include education, labor, human resource and development, and other kinds of entities as equal partners.

The basic philosophy was that literacy is not only an educational problem; it cuts across the legitimate interests and programs of many social and economic domains.

But, as Table P9 shows, not many SLRCs have been implemented according to this ideal, and the holder of the purse usually dictates the expenditure and its

purpose. Of the 40 taking part in the study, half are controlled by state education departments (i.e. located *within* them). The others are scattered within library systems (5), colleges and universities (8), and other organizations. One (in Louisiana) is under the direct jurisdiction of a governor's office. Only two or three are free-standing entities with independent leadership.

Thus, it is not surprising to learn (in P8 and P9) that, for the most part, the SLRCs do not operate as their states' lead coordinating and planning agencies at all.

This certainly does not mean that they never provide any leadership or that they do not have

active voices in important statewide forums. On the contrary, Tables P10 and P11 indicate that they provide a wide range of highly substantive analytic, resource development, and technical assistance services—to other literacy planning and policy groups and to a wide array of local literacy programs. (It is interesting to note the extent to which they are also a source of fundraising help to local programs.)

What is incredible is how *much* they have been doing—despite having been poorly implemented ...or politically beaten back...or financially starved...or sometimes all three.

Nevertheless, what all this comes down to is that,

in most cases, loss of the SLRC function would clearly deprive state libraries, library literacy programs, and everyone else (including community-based organizations and voluntary programs) of a vital resource at a time when it is most needed.

One of the main things this study sought to clarify was whether the SLRCs can be counted on as a continuing resource. The answer is unknown. Thoughtful intervention would have to take place quickly. The challenge is not easy, but if enough people in the right positions care enough, it could be met.

Perhaps SLRCs (state or regional) should concentrate on analyzing the policies and procedures of the different departments of their state(s) that have relevance to literacy, informing state legislatures about the impact of policies, and recommending new ways to make the literacy instructional and support systems more efficient and effective. They could become the data collection hubs for their jurisdictions and develop systems for communicating the information to all interested populations. They could advocate for collaboration, working with all appropriate groups, government and private, to identify gaps in services and facilitate planning to meet the changing needs. Unless there were no other resources, they would not provide direct services to providers. (Helen Crouch, LVA)