

*The paper reviews the antecedents and evolving mission of the Africa Regional Centre for Information Science (ARCIS) at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, as well as its contribution of graduates from its Master of Information Science degree programme to the information science and human resources of Nigeria and West Africa in particular, and Africa in general. The review is based on the available data on ARCIS graduates as at late 2003. Among the main findings of the study is that ARCIS graduates appear to have attained significant market penetration in both the private and public sectors of the Nigerian economy, and are holding down jobs in some of the most competitive subsectors of both the public and private sectors, including banks and other financial houses, the oil industries and the universities. However, the employment of ARCIS graduates in other West African countries has been minimal because of the problems of inadequate applicants and graduates of other West African countries, a challenge for existing and new stakeholders in the ARCIS project.*

## **Introduction**

The world first learned of plans to establish an Africa Regional Centre for Information Science (ARCIS) at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria, from a 23-page brochure (University of Ibadan, 1984a). The brochure carried a Foreword by the University's Vice-Chancellor in which, among other things, the long-standing interests of the University in hosting such a centre were underlined. Additional information provided in the brochure included: the objectives and phased activities of the proposed centre, its organisational structure, as well as service and academic programmes.

Two international organisations, UNESCO and Canada's International Development Research Centre (IDRC), were quick to demonstrate an interest in the proposed ARCIS