STRATEGIES OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN THE COMESA SECRETARIAT AND MEMBER STATES IN PROMOTING INTRA- COMESA TRADE

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By

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MAY, 2004

DECLARATION

I, ESTELLA MWENDALUBI MULENDA CHALI,

Solemnly declare that this Practical Attachment Report has not been submitted for a Degree in this or any other University.

Signed: .....

Date: 2nd June, 2004

Supervisor: .....

Date: 4-5-2004

ABSTRACT

In a bid to boost their national economies, countries all over the world seek to creat economic spaces through membership to appropriate regional economic groupings groupings offer greater chances for penetrating world trade and can, at their best, economic explosion at both the national and regional levels. However, to penet world market, there should be substantive trade within a grouping. This appears major problem in the common market for Eastern and Southern (COMESA). Docu evidence shows very little economic growth in COMESA, with very little intra- CC trade. This study was therefore, an effort to investigate the strategies of communicat COMESA was using in promoting intra COMESA trade, with a view to high possible shortcomings in the process. The main research method used was par observation where the student was on a six-month attachment in the Public Relatio at the COMESA Secretariat. A questionnaire and in-depth interviews were the ma used in the collection of data. This report is two-fold: it analyses the commu situation within the Secretariat itself (among the staff of the Secretarial); and the communication approaches employed by the Secretariat in promoting intra CC Trade. Findings of the study reveal that COMESA has no communication stra support strong advocacy in member states. At the same time, it has no unit or depart its structure, to specifically deal with the crucial issues of advocacy. As such, CC experiences numerous communication problems on trade related issues. This has hindrance on economic development of the region and needs to be corrected urgent report therefore, recommends that a clear, holistic communication strategy be put i and be executed by communication experts under one relevant unit or department.

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I shall always be greatly indebted to the Lord Almighty and to you all.

DEDICATION

To Mum, Dad (MHSRIP) and My Children.

ABBREVIATIONS IN THIS REPORT

ACIS	Advance Cargo Information System
ADB	Africa Development Bank
ASEAN	Association of South and East Asia Nations
ATF	Agriculture Trade Forum
AU	African Union
CBTAZ	cross Border Traders Association of Zambia
CDO	Country Desk Officer
COMESA	Common Market for eastern and Southern Africa
COMTEL	COMESA Telecommunications
DPI	Department of Public Information
EAC	East African Community
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EMI	Ethiopian Management Institute
ESCAP	Economical and Social Commission of Asia and the Pacific
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FTA	Free Trade Area
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product

HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Countries
IC	Intergovernmental Committee
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IT	Information Technology
ITC	International Trade Centre
LLPI	Leather and Leather Products Institute
MISA	Media Institute of Southern Africa
MP	Member of Parliament
MTCI	Ministry of Trade, Commerce and Industry
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
PIC	Productivity Improvement Centre
PRCT	Public Relations Officer
PRO	Public Reduction Strategy Paper
PTA	Preferential Trade Area
SADC	Southern African Developing Countries
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TCM	Trade, Customs and Monetary Affairs
TINET	Trade Information Network
UAPTA	Unit of Account for the PTA

UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programmes
UNIDO	United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
USAID	United States Aid
WTO	World Trade Organisation
ZAM	Zambia Association of Manufacturers
ZNUF	Zambia National Union of Farmers
ZNBC	Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation

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Chapter One

Introduction and Background to COMESA

1.0 Introduction

This chapter gives background information on The Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA). This information is meant to provide the necessary context for the study, which is essential in the understanding of the intricacies that are involved in large regional groupings such as COMESA.

1.1 Background to the formation of regional economic groupings

By the end of the last decade, 1990's, the world had seen a tremendous increase in the formation of regional preferential trading blocs among nations. The rationale behind the formation of such regional groupings has been to create larger market and economic space that would advance economic development of the member states as well as compete with bigger world markets. Subhash (1987:141) echoes this. He states:

> Regional economic cooperation is based on the premise that, while responding to global agreements to promote trade, nations in a region connected by historical, geographical, cultural, economic and political affinities may be able to strike more intensive cooperative agreements for mutually beneficial economic advantages.

The genesis of such trading arrangements among nations dates back to the 1950s when six European countries namely: West Germany, France, Italy, The Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg formed The European Common Market for the European Community in 1958. Later on, after noticing the imbalances in world trade especially in terms of failure by countries of the South in negotiating favourable terms of trade

with the countries of the North, the former started voicing their concerns, calling for a more balanced approach in terms of trade.

In 1964, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) was established to provide a forum for developing countries to negotiate for change in the world trading system. The strategy adopted by many nations since then has been to combine their economic efforts with other nations in an endeavour to boost the economic strength of member states as well as to build their region's capacity to compete favourably at the world market.

Since the formation of UNCTAD, a number of regional groupings have emerged all over the world. Notable examples include: The Association of South and East Asia Nations (ASEAN), with five member States namely: Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand. Examples from Latin America include Latin American Integration Association, formerly known as the Latin American Free Trade Association, which came into existence in 1980, with 11 member States; and, the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM), which was formed in 1968, with a membership of 14 countries.

The history of such regional groupings in Africa dates back to May 25, 1963 when the Member States adopted and signed the Charter of the Organization of African Unit (OAU) in which they agreed to combine the liberation and decolonisation struggle with the pursuit of economic development objectives. This will was expressed in the purposes and goals of the OAU and was further strengthened by the formation of UNCT AD the following year.

Following these arrangements, the East African Community (EAC) was established in June 1967 with Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania as member states. Although the EAC later went into oblivion for ten years, it re-emerged as East African Cooperation (EAC) and established its Secretariat in March 1996. West Africa formed the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in May 1975 comprising

16 member States before Mauritania pulled out in 2000. Other regional groupings in Africa include: the Afro-Malagasy Economic Union in 1974, with 12 member States and the Common Market for eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) with a membership of 20.

Yet, Subhash (1987:152) could not have been more correct when he observed, " Despite the fact that there are many market agreements in force in Africa, they have had no significant effect in promoting trade or economic progress...". In this, COMESA as a regional grouping seemed to have been no exception.

This seemingly slow economic development aroused a desire in the author, a masters student in "Communication for Development", to examine COMESA's communication strategy and approaches for promoting economic development in the region. The intention was to find out whether or not these strategies and approaches were effective enough to advance the causes of COMESA.

1.1.1 COMESA's historical background

COMESA was established in 1994 as an offshoot of the Preferential Trade Area for Eastern and Southern Africa (PTA), which had been established earlier in 1981. The PTA had existed within the framework of the OAU Lagos Plan of Action, and the Final Act of Lagos. Its aims were: to take advantage of a larger market size, to share the region's common heritage and destiny; and to allow for greater social and economic co-operation. Its ultimate objective was to create an economic community with high standards of living for its people. The PTA had a membership of twenty three republics: Angola, Burundi, the Comoros, Djibouti, Eritrea, the Government of Ethiopia, Kenya, the Kingdom of Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Rwanda, Seychelles, Somali, Sudan, the Kingdom of Swaziland, The United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe and Zaire.

The PTA was the first phase in the creation of the envisaged economic community. In January 1992, at its tenth Meeting held in Lusaka, the PTA Authority made a

decision to transform the PTA into COMESA. In conformity with this, the treaty establishing COMESA was signed on November 5, 1993 in Kampala, Uganda and was ratified a year later in Lilongwe Malawi, on 8 December 1994. COMESA has a membership of twenty (20) African states. This membership comprises all the former members of the PT A apart from Lesotho, Tanzania and Mozambique (see Map 1 for the COMESA region).

1.2 COMESA's aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of COMESA are:

1. To attain sustainable growth and development of the Member States by promoting a more balanced and harmonious development of its production and marketing structures;
2. To promote joint development in all fields of economic activities and the joint adoption of macro-economic policies and programmes in order to raise the standard of living of its peoples and to foster closer relations among its member states;
3. To cooperate in the creation of an enabling environment for foreign, cross border and domestic investment including the joint promotion of research and adaptation of science and technology for development in the region;
4. To cooperate in the promotion of peace, security and stability among the member states in order to enhance economic development in the region;
5. To co-operate in strengthening the region;
6. To contribute toward the establishment, progress and the realisation of the objectives of the African Economic Community, (*COMESA Treaty,* Article 3 page 15).

The establishment of COMESA marked a new stage in the process of economic integration and in the consolidation of the member states' economic co-operation through the implementation of common policies and programmes aimed at achieving sustainable growth and development (Ibiden).

On 31 October 2001, COMESA launched a Free Trade Area (FTA) with a view to speeding up regional integration and economic development. The FTA means zero tariffs in intra COMESA Trade and it also implies the removal of other physical and non-physical barriers to trade within the region. This, though not fully ratified by all member states at the time of the study, was envisaged as one that would be of great economic benefit.

1.3 **The Organs of COMESA**

For the purpose of fulfilling its functions, COMESA has a structure comprising eight Organs (see figure 1 for COMESA structure), which are hierarchically structured as follows: the Authority of Heads of State and Government; The Council of Ministers; the Court of Justice; the Committee of Governors of Central Banks; the Intergovernmental Committee; the Technical Committees; the Secretariat and; and the Consultative Committee (Kalangizi and Musonda, 2001:41).

1.3.1 The Authority of Heads of State

The Authority consists of the Heads of State or Government of the 20 member States and Governments and is the supreme policy organ of COMESA. It is responsible for COMESA's general policy direction and controls the performance of the executive functions of the Common Market in the achievements of its aims and objectives. The decisions and directives are taken by consensus and are final and binding on other subordinate institutions, except for the Court of Justice, on matters within its jurisdiction.

The Authority convenes once a year except for extraordinary meetings that may be held at the request of any member of the authority. Under its rules of procedure, the Authority elects a Bureau composed of a Chairman, Vice-chairman and a Secretary to hold office for a term of two years.

1.3.2 The Council of Ministers

The Council of Ministers is responsible for policy decisions on the programmes and

activities of COMESA, including monitoring and reviewing its financial and administrative management. It comprises Ministers who head coordinating Ministries in member states.

1.3.3 COMESA Court of Justice

This is the judicial organ of COMESA. Its jurisdiction is to adjudicate upon all matters, which may be referred to it pursuant to the COMESA Treaty. Specifically, it ensures the proper interpretation and application of the provisions of the Treaty. It also adjudicates any disputes that may arise among the member States regarding the interpretation and application of the provisions of the Treaty. Its decisions are binding and final and have precedence over decisions of national courts. When the Court is acting within its jurisdiction, it is independent of the Authority and the Council. It is composed of seven judges one of who is appointed President Judge. The Authority appoints all the seven judges for a five-year term, which is renewable only once. This Court could be compared to the Court of Justice of the European Communities, which was established in 1952 and has been successful in supporting and accelerating the European unification process (Ibiden, 45).

1.3.4 The Committee of Governors of Central Banks

The Committee of Governors of Central Banks is responsible for the development as well as ensuring implementation of programmes and action plans in the field of finance and monetary cooperation. It comprises governors of the monetary authorities designated for that purpose by the member States. The Committee reports to the Council of Ministers through the meeting of the ministers responsible for finance and economic development.

1.3.5 The Intergovernmental Committee (IC)

The IC is a multi-disciplinary body and is composed of permanent or principal secretaries from the member States in the fields of trade and customs, agriculture, industry, transport and communications, administrative and budgetary matters and legal affairs. The IC discharges the following three functions: development of

programmes and action plans in all the sectors of cooperation, except in the finance and monetary sector; monitoring and keeping the Common Market under constant review and ensuring its proper functioning and development; and, overseeing the implementation of the provisions of the Treaty and, for that purpose, requesting a technical committee to investigate any particular matter.

The decisions of the IC are by simple majority.

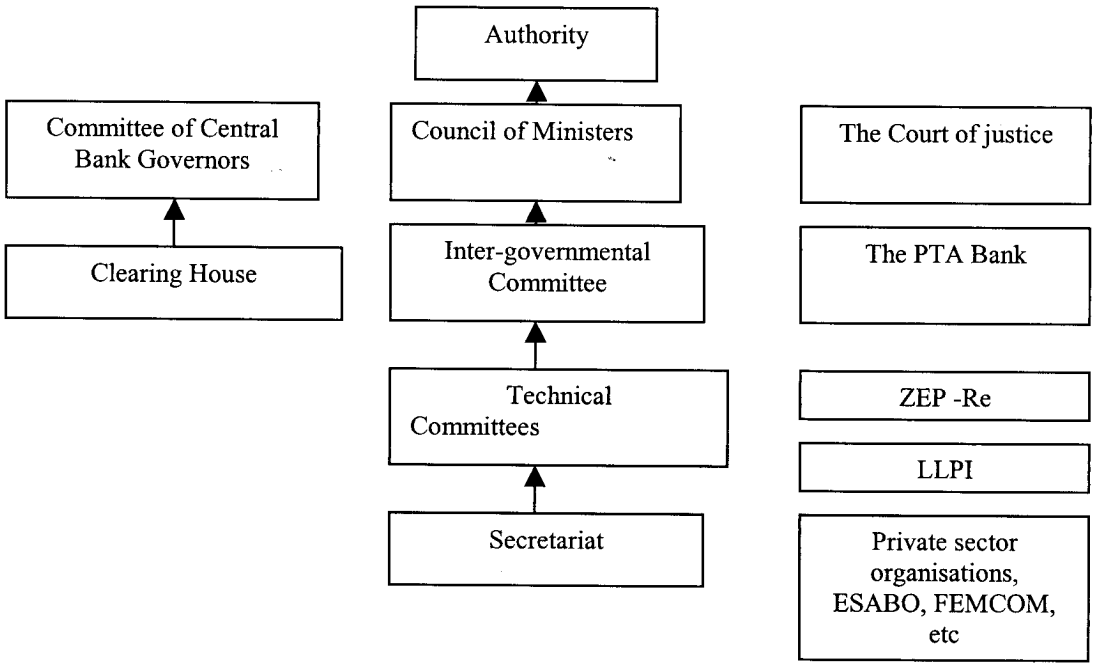
1.3.6 Technical Committees

These are separate Committees that are responsible for the various economic sectors and administration and budgetary matters. The main ones are: the Committees on Administrative and Budgetary Matters; Finance and Monetary Affairs; Trade and Customs; Transport and Communications; Agriculture; Industry; Foreign Affairs; and, the Committee on Legal Affairs. These meet as often as necessary for the proper discharge of their functions. Experts in the relevant sectors from the member States comprise these Committees. They make recommendations to the Council through the Inter-governmental Committees, and decide matters by simple majority.

1.3.7 Consultative Committee of the business community and other interest groups

This Committee comprises of representatives of the business community and other interest groups from the member States as determined by the Committee itself. The function of this committee is to provide a link and facilitate dialogue between the business community and other interest groups, on the one hand and COMESA organs on the Common Market the other. The committee became operational in 1997 and meets as often as necessary.

***Figure1*: THE COMESA STRUCTURE**



Source : COMESA Q & A

1.3.8 COMESA Secretariat

1.3.8.1 Location of COMESA Secretariat

The Headquarters of COMESA (the Secretariat) is located in Zambia's capital, Lusaka, at the COMESA Centre, along Ben Bella Road at the south end of the city. The selection might have been influenced by Zambia's central inland location and the country's long history in the region's liberation struggle, after attaining its own freedom from the colonial rule.

A Secretary General, who is appointed by the Authority for a five-year renewable term and is assisted by two Assistant Secretary Generals (although at the time of the study there was only one Assistant Secretary General), heads it.

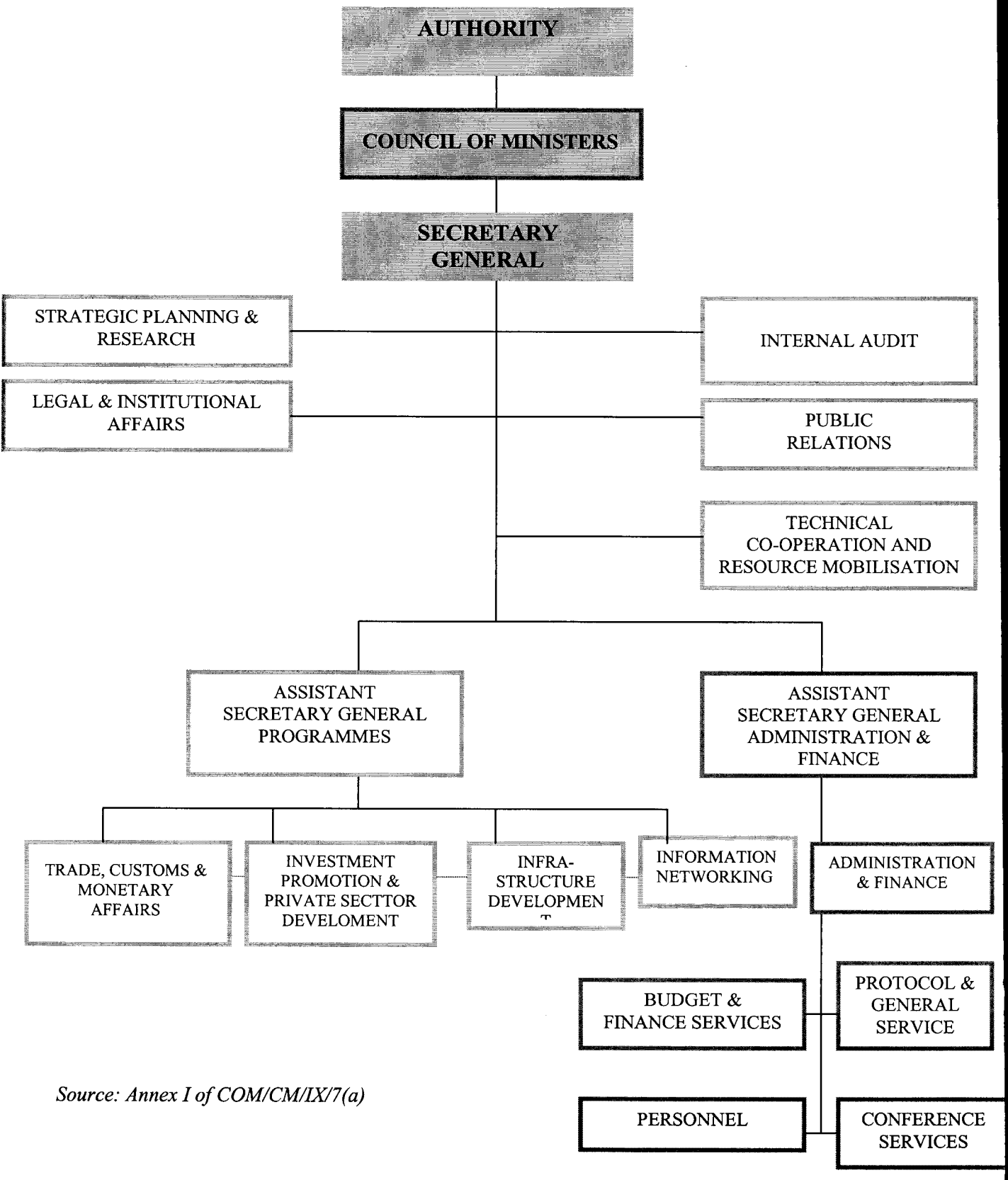
1.3.8.2 Functions of the Secretariat

The basic function of the Secretariat is to provide technical support and advisory services to the member States in the implementation of the Treaty. (See figure 2 for the structure of the Secretariat)

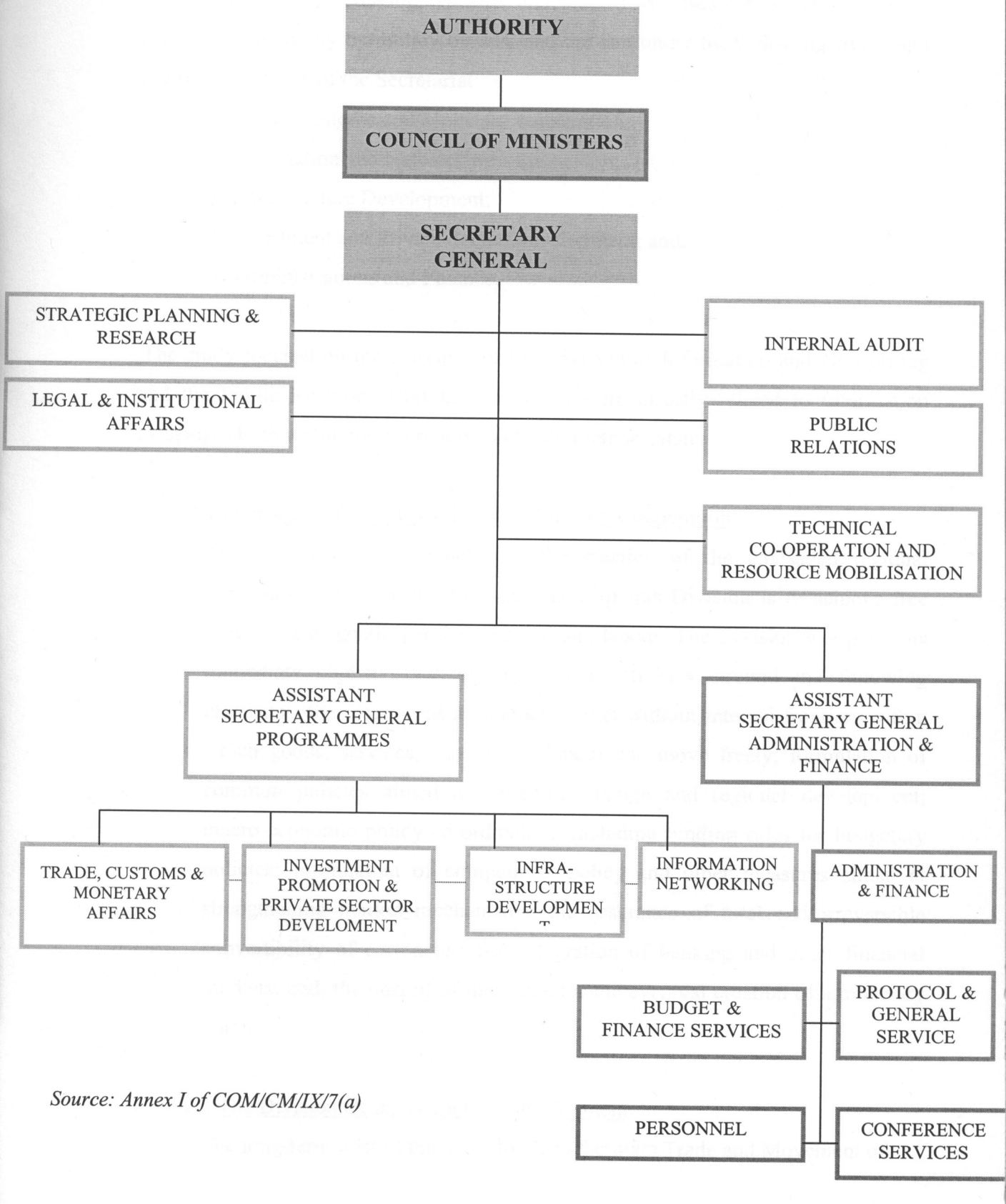
MAP 1: **COMESA REGION**

Source: COMESA Africa ad the World Trade Organisation, November 2001

(The shaded part is the COMESA Region)



Source: Annex I of COM/CM/IX/7(a)



Source: Annex I of COM/CM/IX/7(a)

This is done by undertaking research and studies as bases for implementing the decisions adopted by the policy organs, and are run under the following five major technical divisions of the Secretariat:

1. Trade, Customs and Monetary cooperation;
2. Information and Networking;
3. Infrastructure Development;
4. Investment and Private Sector Development; and,
5. Administrations and Finance.

The study focused on the activities of the Division of Information and Networking and the Public Relations Unit because these were directly related to information exchanges both within the Secretariat and with member State.

1.3.8.2.1 Division of Trade, Customs and Monetary Cooperation

Trade is seen as a vehicle for the creation of the envisaged regional integration. As such, the long-term goal of this Division is to achieve free movement of goods, services, capital and labour. The Division works out its immediate objectives, programmes and activities, around the following elements: the creation of a regional market without internal frontiers within which goods, services, capital and labour can move freely; formulation of common policies aimed at structural change and regional development; macro-economic policy co-ordination, including binding rules for budgetary policies; formulation of competition policy and other measures aimed at strengthening market mechanisms; the assurance of total and irreversible convertibility of currencies; full integration of banking and other financial markets; and, the pursuit of measures for the eventual creation of a monetary union.

1.3.8.2.2 The Division Of Infrastructure Development

The long-term goal of this Division is to facilitate Trade and Movement of

people, goods and services through the development of relevant infrastructure and programs on communications and transport.

1.3.8.2.3 The Division of Investment And Private Sector Development

The long-term objective of this Division is to increase the production of internationally competitive goods for local consumption and export through increased and sustainable investment and active involvement of the private sector. Hence, the Division's overall objective is to achieve self sufficiency in food production (crops, fish and livestock) and to strengthen the industrial base to produce high quality and competitive consumer, intermediate and capital goods for local consumption and export (COMESA, 1999).

The Division tries to achieve this by promoting investment, encouraging private sector development and women participation in business.

1.3.8.2.4 Division of Administration and Finance

The long- term objective of this Division is to provide high quality, efficient services to COMESA Secretariat and to the Policy Organs. The Division tries to achieve this long-term objective by ensuring that the Secretariat is manned, both quantitatively and qualitatively, by highly motivated staff that is, productive and task oriented. Team work is said to be the cardinal principle on which the operations of the Secretariat is based (*COMESA Work Program*, 1999).

1.3.8.2.5 Information and Networking

The long-term objective of the Division of Information and Networking is to establish a Common Market Information System, which should be a vehicle for promoting and facilitating intra and extra-COMESA trade. Its immediate objectives included the setting up of a functional and well maintained COMESA Website with full internet accessibility; providing expert support in computer applications for all COMESA programmes as necessary, and,

training COMESA staff in computer literacy (*COMESA Work programme, 1999*).

The Division tried to enhance communication in the region by building capacities in information technology, both in the staff and among member States. For example, at the time of the study, the Division had embarked on training COMESA Desk Officers in the coordinating Ministries in member States, in IT. At the same time, in-house training sessions in IT were being offered to the staff at the Secretariat. The IT training offered included software application and computer literacy.

Besides these, the Division would set up a video conferencing system that should cut down on travel costs to and from meetings within the region. This would also allow the media and other interested parties to easily access the deliberations of various COMESA meetings.

1.4 COMESA Institutions

COMESA has instituted independent institutions to foster its regional integration programmes. They include: the PTA Bank, which is the financial wing and has a structure similar to that of the Africa Development Bank (ADB), The Asian Development Bank and the East Africa Development Bank (EADB); PTA Re-Insurance Company (ZEP-Re), which provides reinsurance services within the region; The Leather and Leather Products Institute (LPPI), which promotes trade in Leather Products within the region; COMESA Banker's Association, which provides a forum for exchange of information on banking within the region; and others.

1.5 Sources of funding for COMESA

There are two main sources of funding for COMESA and these are: member State contributions, and donor (cooperating partners) funds.

1.5.1 Member State contributions

Each of the 20 member States contributes to the COMESA budget using the following formula (in percentage):

Gross Domestic Product (GDP)	30
Imports from non COMESA countries	30
Intra-COMESA exports	30
Gross National Product (GNP) per capita	05
Population	05
Applicable Upper Ceiling	13
Applicable Lower Ceiling	01

This formula is based on the following pillars:

1. The capacity of a member State to pay.

   The GDP, GNP and the population of a member State represent this. It is assumed that the larger the population of a member State, the bigger their market share and therefore, the more they should contribute. In addition to this, richer member States contribute more.

2. Benefits from COMESA Regional Integration Program. This is measured in terms of intra-COMESA exports. The more products a member State exports to other member States, the more the exporter country is seen to be benefiting from the regional integration program.

3. In order to discourage trade outside the region and encourage intra-COMESA trade, a member State pays 30 per cent of the total imports from non COMESA countries.

4. Upper and lower ceiling represents equity.

5. Other considerations like a member State's ability to negotiate for a lower contribution are taken into consideration, if found convincing *(Interview with Director Finance, Mr. Kankya).*

Statistics for payments are collected on the basis of five year moving average and are based on the International, Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank. IMF and World Bank figures are preferred because, among other things, they have a better mechanism for collecting accurate data.

Member State contributions mainly cater for salaries and various allowances like meetings and conferences, research, housing, maintenance, power and water.

1.5.2 Extra-budgetary funding

Projects, both long and short term, are sponsored by donors or cooperating partners. The EU, for example, funds Regional integration projects such as Competition Policy and Air Transport Liberalization. United States Aid (USAID) is another major sponsor of long- term projects such as World Trade Organization (WTO) Rules of Origin. The African Union (AU), direct member State contributions (for specific projects like COMESA Telecommunications (COMTEL)), UNIDO and UNDP (establishment of sub-regional business information centres), mainly fund short-term projects. Other sponsors include: NEPAD (Implementation of COMESA Irrigation Master-plan); ADB (review and harmonization of Fisheries Statistical methods); IDRC (Regional Integration Research Network Phase II); PGTA (Harmonisation of Agriculture Policy in COMESA); Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) (Investment Opportunities) and; Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) (upgrading quality and safety of Fisheries and Production and Marketing of value added fishery products).

1.6 **COMESA currency**

In the post-independent Africa era, governments controlled most economies of Member States. As such, it was extremely difficult for COMESA to obtain the foreign currency, which was needed for its smooth operations. To ease this problem, the Unit of Account for the PTA (UAPTA) was introduced in the form of traveller's cheques. One UAPTA was equivalent to 1.3 US$. The

strength in value of a UAPTA was due to the fact that COMESA accounts had British pounds ($), US$ Francs and other strong currencies, coming from various sources of funding. After liberalization of the economies in member States, there was easier access to foreign currency, and so COMESA introduced COMESA Dollar, equivalent to US dollar.

As a principle, the bank aims at maintaining an even regional distribution of investments in projects among its member states without compromising the quality of its project portfolio.

Membership of the Bank is open to all member states and the Africa Development Bank, which currently owns the capital stock of the Bank (the authorized capital stock of the Bank is UAPT A 400 million, equivalent to approximately US$45 million).

The Bank has a similar structure to that of the Africa Development Bank (ADB), the Asian Development Bank and the East Africa Development Bank (EADB). Its Headquarters are in Bujumbura, Burundi; although at the time of the study, it was temporarily operating from Nairobi, Kenya due to the security situation in Bujumbura.

1.7 Geographical background

In terms of geographical coverage, number of countries and population, COMESA is currently the largest regional economic grouping in Africa, stretching from Swaziland in the South to Egypt in the North, with a total area of 12.89 million square kilometres (*see Map 1* and *table 1* for the position of COMESA on the map of Africa, and the population of COMESA respectively). It has an estimated population of 380.4 million people (*COMESA*, Q and A, 1999 p.6). This is more than one third of Africa's total population of 813.7million. Ethiopia and Egypt are the largest single member States with populations of 61.7 million and 64.1 million respectively. Seychelles (0.1 million people), Comoros (0.6 million people) and Djibouti

(0.8 million people) are the smallest single member States. The average population density of COMESA is 28 people per square kilometre.

In terms of demographic statistics (*see Figure 3*), the average population growth rate was 2.45 percent per annum, life expectancy stood at 52 years and infant mortality at 77 per 1000 live births. Child malnutrition stood at 24 percent of children under 5 years. Only 52 percent of the total population had access to safe water. Illiteracy stood at 32 percent of the population over 15 years of age, and gross primary enrolment stood at 80 percent of the school age population (ibidem).

***Figure 3*: DEMOGRAPHIC STATISTICS**

• Total area	(12.89 million km^2)
• Population	(380.4 million'98 est.)
• Population growth rate, average	2.45
• Population density, average per Km2 (1997)	29
• Life expectancy, average	52 years (1998)
• Infant mortality pewr 100 live births	77
• Child malnutrition, % of children under 5 years:	24
• Access to safe water, % of population	52
• Gross primary enrolment, % of school-age population:	80
• Illiteracy, % of population over 15 years of age:	32

Source: COMESA Q and A 1999

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Source: COMESA Q and A 1999

1.8 Natural resources in the COMESA region

According to the *COMESA Q&A* (un dated), the general resource facts indicated that only 10 percent of COMESA's potential arable land was being exploited. The region has some of the world's largest rivers (the Zambezi, the Congo and the Limpopo) and the world's longest river (Nile), and these offer enormous potential for exploitation (for example, water transport, hydro-electric power; irrigation and fisheries). Besides these, the region has one of the world's largest fresh water lakes, Victoria, and some of the world's largest man made lakes namely Owen falls, Kariba and Aswan which were yet to be fully exploited.

1.8.1 Tourist sites

The region has the world's richest and most diverse supply of wild game and tourist sites such as the Great Pyramids, the Great African Rift Valley, the Serengeti Plains, Victoria Falls, the Great Zimbabwe and the Cradle of mankind (Kobi Fora, Lake Turkana etc), which offer great potential for further exploitation. Yet, apart from Zimbabwe, Kenya, Tanzania and Egypt, the potential of tourism as money-earner still largely remained undeveloped as the study was being done.

1.8.2 Mineral resources

The region had an estimated mineral wealth of about 300 billion metric tones of phosphates, 105 billion tones of iron ore, 200 billion tones of oil and large quantities of uranium, nickel, copper and cobalt. However, perhaps only with the exception of Zimbabwe and Egypt, the COMESA countries were largely producers of raw materials and the minerals only got processed into metal for export not finished manufactured good.

1.8.3 Livestock

In terms of livestock population, the region had 60.7 percent of Africa's livestock population, which was estimated at 300 million heads in 1997. However, subsistence farmers who only sold when faced by difficulties held some of the

livestock. Diseases such as East Coast fever, contagious Bovine Pleura Pneumonia and Corridor, continued to pose threats to the animal population.

1.9 Macro economic indicators

Table 1 shows macro economic indicators in COMESA according to the 1998 estimates. The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) stood at 165 billion US dollars while the Nominal GDP growth stood at 3.14 percent. The region's total imports (38.83 billion US dollars) were more than its total exports (27.97 billion US dollars). Intra-COMESA trade was at 4.2 billion US dollars. This was an indication that there was not much trade within the region as opposed to external trade, as indicated by the total COMESA trade of 62.80 billion US dollars. COMESA had a total external debt of 130 billion US dollars with 340 billion US dollars as its per capita debt.

Figure 41: **MACRO-ECONOMIC STATISTICS (BILLIONS US$ UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED)**

- GDP, at current prices (1998 est.): 165
- Nominal GDP growth (1998 est.): 3.14%
- Total COMESA exports (1988 est): 23.9
- Total COMESA imports (1998 est.): 38.83
- Intra-COMESA trade (1998 est.): 4.2
- Total COMESA trade (1998 est.): 62.80
- Total external debt (1998 est.): 130
- COMESA per capita debt (1998 est.): 340

Source: COMESA Q & A, August, 1999

These negative macro economic indicators were impediments to the envisaged regional economic development. (See appendix for more information on Intra COMESA Import (1997 to 2001) and Intra-COMESA total trade 1997 to2001).

Table 1: **COMESA POPULATION (IN MILLIONS)**

COUNTRY	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
Angola	10.0	10.3	10.6	10.9	11.2	11.5	11.8	12.1	12.5	12.8
Burundi	5.5	5.6	5.8	6.0	5.7	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.3
Comoros	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.6
Congo, D.R.	38.2	39.5	40.8	42.2	43.5	45.0	46.5	48.0	49.4	50.8
Djibouti	0.5	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Egypt	52.6	53.8	55.0	56.2	57.5	58.9	60.3	61.7	62.9	64.1
Eritrea	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	2.0	3.1	3.2	3.3	3.4	3.5
Ethiopia	49.4	48.4	50.0	51.6	52.9	54.6	56.4	58.1	59.9	61.7
Kenya	23.4	24.0	24.7	25.4	26.2	26.9	27.8	28.6	29.3	30.0
Madagascar	11.2	11.5	12.1	12.4	12.8	13.3	13.7	14.1	14.6	15.0
Malawi	8.3	8.6	8.9	9.1	9.5	9.8	10.1	10.4	10.7	11.0
Mauritius	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.2
Namibia	1.4	1.4	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.6	1.7	1.7	1.8
Rwanda	7.2	7.4	7.6	7.8	7.0	6.4	6.7	6.9	7.0	7.1
Seychelles	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Sudan	25.0	25.7	25.8	26.5	27.3	25.2	25.7	26.3	26.8	27.4
Swaziland	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.9	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.0	1.0
Uganda	17.1	17.5	18.1	18.7	19.3	19.8	20.4	21.0	21.6	22.2
Zambia	8.1	8.4	8.7	8.7	8.7	9.0	9.2	9.4	9.7	10.0
Zimbabwe	9.8	10.1	10.4	10.8	11.2	11.5	11.9	12.3	12.7	13.1
TOTAL	**270.0**	**270.0**	**282.8**	**290.8**	**300.5**	**305.8**	**314.7**	**323.4**	**331.8**	**340.2**

Sources: African Department database, September 2000 and WEO, 09/06/200

Chapter Two

Background of the Problem

2.0 Practical Attachment problem

This chapter outlines the perceived problem that is hindering quick economic progress in COMESA.

2.1 Definition of the problem

Although COMESA has been in existence for almost 10years, the region still lagged behind most other parts of the world in terms of economic development. Available information on the region painted a very gloomy picture of high poverty levels. For example, from COMESA's membership of 20, 11 had Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP) with the IMF and the World Bank. These were: Burundi, Union des Comores, Congo DR, Djibout, Ethiopia, Malawi, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia, Madagascar and Rwanda. Among these, eight were in the category of Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC).

In addition, the region continued to be afflicted by ignorance and starvation even though it had various vast resources that offered great potential for unprecedented economic and social development. For example, COMESA had vast land totalling12.89 million square kilometers and a huge human resource of 380.4million yet, 90 percent of arable land was not being utilized. As a result, the region had become perpetually dependent on food subsidies from donor agencies outside the region.

It was clear that, insufficient food, lack of access to clean water (48% of COMESA population) and high illiteracy rate (32% of COMESA population over 15 years of age) were all interconnected and greatly contributed to a high percentage of child malnutrition (25% of children under five), high infant mortality (77 per 1000 live births) and low life expectancy (52 years).

Furthermore, intra-COMESA trade, which should have been the mainstay of regional

integration and of economic development, remained at as low a level as seven percent (7 %) of the total global trade of the member States, against a theoretical 25% potential (*COMESA: Trade Information Dissemination Programme,2001*). In essence, COMESA imports (38.83 billion US$) were more than its exports (23.97 billion US$). This culminated in low nominal Gross Domestic Product (GDP), and low economic growth rate (4.5% in 1997 and 3.14% in 1998), (*COMESA Q&A undated*).

One of the major contributing factors to the low levels of trade within the region appeared to have been non-availability or insufficient trade related information on the region. It would seem that, even when such information was available at the Secretariat, there still appeared to be a problem in effectively availing it to intended beneficiaries in member States.

This situation had meant that the common person in COMESA, who should have been helped out of the poverty situation, had remained ignorant either of the whole concept of a common market or of the very policies they should have been taking advantage of. For example, a good number of the intended beneficiaries in Zambia had very little understanding of the COMESA institution and of the concept and benefits of the envisaged regional integration, at the time of the study.

This was evident from the random interviews the student had conducted at the COMESA Market in Lusaka (May, 2002) prior to the onset of the Attachment. (Traders at this market consist of small scale COMESA Cross Border Traders). The results of these interviews revealed that 70% of the traders interviewed (14 out of 20) had little understanding of COMESA. Yet, traders at this market were among the intended primary beneficiaries of COMESA programmes.

Throughout the Attachment period, the COMESA staff that came into contact with various stakeholders acknowledged the lack of awareness of COMESA programmes and activities. For example, one Trade Consultant at COMESA acknowledged that

most cross-border traders lacked information about COMESA policies such as duty exemptions on COMESA goods (Dr. Wells Victor, February 2003).

The following were some of the observations, which were made by some of the various people that were interviewed:

" The problem we have is how to reach people and convince them to take advantage of FTA and other trade related policies COMESA has put in place," stated COMESA Secretary General, Mr. Mwenche.

" At borders, some traders do not know about Customs Waiver," lamented the COMESA Director of Trade, Dr. Chantunya.

The Senior Economist in the Private Sector and Investment Promotions, Mr. Mkandawire felt that the main problem was how to make COMESA key agenda in Member State governments.
He observed, " There is very little buy in from member States. It is like COMESA issues have become government agenda like IMF but what is unique is that COMESA governments themselves do not see how it impacts on them."

" If you ask an ordinary person, they do not know about COMESA. Our own members do not know because information flow is not good," echoed Mr. Karangizi, COMESA Director for Legal Affairs.

As a result, most cross-border traders still suffered avoidable inconveniences and losses at borders. The result was that, most of these traders still engaged in the smuggling of even the goods that fell under the categories of goods that would merit duty exemption upon production of the COMESA Certificate of Origin (Mr. Kunda, Senior Economist, Regional Trade, MTC Zambia).

In addition, during Zambia's run up to 2001 presidential elections, some politicians

and non-politicians alike; were agitating for Zambia's pull out from COMESA. They were claiming that Zambia was benefiting very little from the grouping; and that it had been turned into a dumping ground for foreign products (Radio Phoenix 'Let the People Talk' phone in program, November, 2001). This happened notwithstanding the fact that COMESA's Headquarters is based in the capital city of this member State.

2.2 Statement of the problem

The problem in COMESA at the time of the study was that there was insufficient information flow, to and from the intended beneficiaries, on issues related to intra-COMESA trade. This had impacted negatively on the trade growth rate in the region. As a result, there was very little economic development in the region.

If this situation continued, COMESA would be of very little significance to the lives of the people in the region, and the region would sink even deeper into its poverty situation. To reverse this situation, COMESA ought to come up with a strong advocacy strategy for: "regional integration" as a concept; and, for "intra-COMESA trade" as a strategy.

2.3 Why the student chose to do her Practical Attachment at the COMESA Secretariat

As an institution, the only offices COMESA had were the ones at its Secretariat in Lusaka, Zambia. The student, therefore, decided to do her Practical Attachment at the COMESA Secretariat to critically analyse the problems that the Secretariat was facing in its advocacy role for intra-COMESA trade; and to assist in recommending solutions.

2.4 Rationale of the Practical Attachment

The reasons for undertaking the study may be summarized as follows:

1. The region is suffering from numerous life threatening socio-economic problems, which are mainly rooted in poverty. It therefore becomes imperative for students of Communication for Development to try and bring out the strengths and weaknesses in

the strategies and approaches that the COMESA Secretariat uses in its effort to promote regional integration. Such integration might help eradicate the poverty and other problems. The study also provides a basis for COMESA to evaluate itself and work out measures to strengthen its advocacy role;

2. To the knowledge of this student, there have not been scholarly studies examining the communication problems of integration at regional level.

   The research will, therefore, be of help by:

   a. Contributing knowledge to research in the field of Communication for Development and will provide a basis for further academic research in economic regional groupings;
   b. Helping COMESA policy makers formulate deliberate information policies for COMESA advocacy in the region;
   c. Appraising communication theories in the practical developmental context;
   d. Making recommendations to the COMESA Secretariat on how COMESA advocacy could be strengthened.

2.5 Objectives of the study

The following were the objectives of the study:

1. To examine the COMESA Secretariat's communication approaches and strategies promoting intra-COMESA trade, which in itself is the key strategy for attaining regio integration, in order to bring out its strengths and weaknesses.
2. To establish if the internal communication approaches at the COMESA Secretar reflected the overall communication approaches within COMESA, and if the approaches and strategies helped in enhancing quality delivery of services and generating interest in COMESA, both within the Secretariat and among member States
3. To find out the extent of awareness about COMESA programmes among Zambians.
4. To study communication theories in the practical developmental context.

2.6 Practical Attachment questions

The following were the questions to which the student was seeking answers during

her Practical Attachment:

1. What communication strategies and approaches did the COMESA Secretariat employ in promoting regional integration and intra- COMESA trade, and what were the strengths and weaknesses of these approaches in speeding up the attainment of COMESA goals and objectives?

2. a) To what extent were the communication approaches among the staff at the COMESA Secretariat a reflection of communication between the Secretariat and the member States?

   (b) How far could these communication approaches in 2(a) go in promoting quality delivery of services and in generating interest in COMESA, both within the Secretariat and among member States?

3. What is the extent of awareness about COMESA and its activities among Zambians?

Chapter Three

Methodology of the Study

3.0 Introduction

This study followed the triangulation approach suggested by some communication scholars. This involves using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

3.1 Methods

To collect data, four research instruments were employed: in-depth interviews, participant observation, document examination and a questionnaire survey.

3.2 Sampling procedure

For objective No.1, the population consisted of the five Divisions at the Secretariat. From this, a sample of 22 employees was made using random and stratified methods of sampling. Four people from each Division were interviewed from the following categories: Director, senior management, middle management and junior staff. Apart from these, the Secretary General and his assistant were also interviewed.

The decision to interview four from each Division, in addition to the Secretary General and his assistant, was made because their responses about communication within the Secretariat and that with member States would offer the student a balanced view of what might be obtaining in each Division. It would also offer insight into the nature of communication within COMESA. Besides, the five Divisions, which represent different programmes, were chosen because they offered different forms of assistance to member states and were, therefore, in direct communication with them. The student was trying to establish how each of these Divisions communicated its efforts to member states, and the difficulties they encountered.

For objective No.2 (see Chapter two), a questionnaire was administered to middle management and the junior staff at the Secretariat using both the stratified and random sampling methods as follows: one half of the questionnaire was randomly administered to junior staff while the other half was administered to middle management. The total

population of COMESA staff was 144. The initial sample for the questionnaire was 100. The intention was to obtain the views of all the staff, with the exception of those in senior management and the staff with whom the author had conducted in-depth interviews. However, due to the low return rate (36 out of 100), and the fact that a good number of this sample included consultants who did not really fit in the two categories (middle management and junior staff), the student settled for the sample of 36. This was 25% of the population and was still a good representation that yielded useful data.

With regard to objective No.3, the following categories of stakeholders from among the Zambian people were interviewed:

1) The Ministry of Commerce Trade and Industry
2) Zambia Manufacturers Association (ZAMA),
3) Economic Association of Zambia (EAZ),
4) Zambia National Farmers' Union, and,
5) Cross Border Traders Association.

All these are based in Lusaka. From these, a total of six respondents was picked with the spokes person being interviewed from each category.

ne categories of stakeholders from Zambia were chosen because they were the contact with the assroots that were expected to take advantage of COMESA programmes. The student was terested to know how these groups benefited from, and advanced the cause of COMESA nong the grassroots. The interviews were meant to bring out the extent of awareness of OMESA programmes among this Member State and the difficulties that these institutions ight be encountering in accessing and disseminating COMESA trade related information to rious beneficiaries. The interviews were expected to further help the student gain insight into nat might be obtaining in other member states.

Finally, for objective No.4, the student mainly relied on participant observation methods. She was assigned to the Public Relations Unit at the COMESA Secretariat, where she worked closely with the Public Relations Officer. Apart from carrying out some tasks, which the PRO assigned her from time to time, the student also participated in the work of the Advocacy Team, where she was a co-secretary together with the Desk Help Officer for the Secretariat. Lastly, as an insider during the attachment period of six months, the student had an opportunity to interact with the rest of the staff and had access to most of the documents relevant to her study.

3.3 Data analysis and interpretation

To interpret data from structured questionnaires, conclusions from frequencies and tabulations were drawn. Responses from structured questionnaires were analyzed using the Statistical Package For Social Sciences (SPSS), which, among other things, permitted the creation of tabulations and frequency distribution. This data was analyzed for trends and indicators of particular interest. Data from the In-depth interviews was also coded and analyzed by categorizing information to bring out themes and participant perspectives. Conclusions were drawn from trends and themes.

3.4 Limitations of the study

The COMESA organisation does not just confine itself to internal communication but is in constant communication with its environment including; cooperating partners; other regional groupings within and outside Africa; Donor Agencies; Multi-National Corporations; United Nations Institutions and World Trade Organisation. However, this study is centred on Intra-COMESA trade and so limits itself to internal communication. Future studies could focus on the role of communication in advancing the COMESA agenda outside the grouping.

Additionally, due to time and financial constraints, Zambia was used as a case study to establish the amount of awareness on COMESA issues, and to study the flow of trade related information from the Secretariat through the coordinating Ministry to the

intended beneficiaries and back. However, Zambia cannot be used as a model on which to base assessments for other member states. This is because there are such great differences in the economic, historical, social, cultural, and political situations in COMESA member States that such a conclusion would be too far fetched. It would therefore be useful to undertake a full-fledged comparative study of the communication situation in various COMESA member States.

Another limitation of this study is that it leaves out advocacy for intra- COMESA trade that might be carried out by COMESA institutions, associations and their networks. Rather, it concentrates on the one being done through the direct link between the Secretariat and the member States through the coordinating Ministries. This was due to time and financial constraints.

Of the selected beneficiary groups in Zambia, only the top officials were interviewed. However, it would have been useful to reach some of their general membership to get their views as well, but for the constraints imposed by time and finances.

Finally, the study would have also profited from the views of Bank of Zambia being one of the direct beneficiaries of COMESA trade related information. But due to bureaucracies at this institution, all efforts to secure an interview with the PRO proved futile.

Despite all these constraints, it is the author's belief that this study has provided the context in which to place future research

Chapter Four

Conceptual Framework

4.0. Introduction

This chapter gives the definition of key concepts as they relate to this study and explains the sense in which they will be used throughout this report. The theme for the student's six months Practical Attachment at the COMESA Secretariat was the principle of Communication for Development. The main argument of this principle is that effective communication leads to development.

4.1 Conceptual and operational definitions

What follow is the conceptual definition of the main terms that have been used in the report and an explanation of how they are measured in the field.

4.1.1 Communication

Scholars, both within and outside the field of communication, have seemingly failed to agree on one distinctive definition of 'communication' both as a concept and as an independent scientific field of study. They have come up with various definitions of communication as: the discriminatory response of an organism to stimulus (Stevens, 1950); the transmission of information, ideas, emotions, etc, by the use of symbols such as words, pictures, figures, graphs, etc. (Berelson and Steiner, 1964); the transmission of a massage to a receiver(s) with conscious intent to affect the latter's behaviours (Miller, 1996); the eliciting of a response through verbal symbols (Dance, 1967); responding to a symbol (Cronckhite, 1976); a process in which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding (Roger, 1983); and, as the manipulating of symbols to stimulate meaning (Infante, Rancher and Womack , 1997).

In these definitions, different scholars highlight different aspects of communication as being; the sending of messages (Berelson and Sterner); the securing of response (Stevens, Dance, Cronkhite) ; the affecting of the receiver's behaviours (Miller); and as , the sender and receiver influencing each other's behaviour through shared meanings (Rogers, Infante et al.).

The difference in definitions has led to the emergence of different approaches to the study of communication. Scholars mainly differ on their conceptualisation of the nature of communication. This difference centres on three arguments: whether communication is a linear process, as suggested by Stevens, Miller, Berelson and others; whether the transactional nature of communication (Rogers etc al) is more accurate than the other; and, whether communication can be said to have occurred where unintended messages have been transmitted and responded to.

However, despite all these varying views, there are noticeable commonalities in these definitions. For example, almost every scholar includes, either explicitly or implicitly, the following words and phrases: "to stimulate / elicit response," "Symbol," and " to transmit a message." These terms could be linked into a working definition as follows; Communication is a two way process of exchanging information between a sender (s) and a receiver(s) using verbal, (written or oral) non-verbal symbols or any combination of these so that the information shared is completely understood by the two parties as intended.

This is the sense in which the term ' Communication' will be used throughout this report.

4.1.1.1 Variables in the communication process

There are six main variables involved in the communication process (Husman, 1991). These are: sender(s), message, medium and channel, receiver perception

and feedback. The sender is the originator of the idea to be communicated. He selects conventional symbols (e.g. words) into which he encodes this idea. The massage is the idea to be communicated in its encoded form. Media is the mode used to express the message. It can be verbal i.e. the spoken or written word or it can be non-verbal (for example pictures, drawings, etc.) or a combination of verbal and non-verbal (such as a map showing physical features with names of such features included). Some scholars use media and channel interchangeably. However, in this report, channel is used to mean the physical instrument through which messages are conveyed between the two parties to the communication. The receiver (s) is the person for whom the message is intended. This person's roles include decoding (interpreting) the message, encoding the response and sometimes recoding the message (putting it in a form or language that is appropriate for the next person). For example, as messages pass down from top management to the bottom they are decoded and recoded before being passed down to the next person in the line in the organization.

Perception is the understanding that comes to a receiver after interpreting the message. With this understanding come reactions. Feedback or response is the receiver's reaction as communicated back to the sender. The process is only complete when the originator receives feedback.

Hence, the two parties to the communication have specific and interchangeable roles to play namely: properly defining the idea to be communicated to a particular receiver(s) choosing the right code and encoding the idea, selecting the right medium and method (e.g. in the written medium a letter can be used as a method), selecting the right channel (e.g. a radio can be used as channel for transmitting oral messages in the mass communication context, interpreting messages correctly and sending appropriate feedback. In giving feedback, the receiver's and sender's roles interchange).

4.1.1.2 Contexts of human communication

Measurement in communication research is inexact because of its psychological and sociological nature, which makes it highly unpredictable. This means, therefore, that communication can only be best understood in context. The following are some of the contexts of human communication:

1. **Interpersonal communication**, which is a face-to-face communication between two or several people.
2. **Small group communication**, which is planned face-to-face communication involving a reasonable number of people (e.g. 15) having a moderator to facilitate the discussion.
3. **Public communication**, which involves a speaker addressing a large audience.
4. **Organisational communication**, which is " communication between and among the individuals and groups which make up an organisation" (Infante, et al. 1997: 549)
5. **Mass Communication** involves large numbers of people that are often heterogeneous. Technological devices or machines like television and radio mediate it.
6. **Cross- cultural communication**, which is communication among people of different cultures.
7. **International communication**, which is communication between two or more countries.

This study centred on organisational communication though, a regional grouping like COMESA embraces almost all the other contexts of communications.

In COMESA, effective communication can be measured by: increased participation, by member states, in COMESA programmes; increased growth rate

in intra-COMESA Trade and in COMESA exports as a result of the communication between the Secretariat and member states.

4.1.2 Development

Similar to the concept of 'communication', the concept of development has had various definitions over the past 30 years. Shraumm and Winfield (1967), mass communication scholars, define development as economic and social changes taking place in a nation as it moves from a traditional to a modernized pattern of Society. These changes are associated with division of labour, growth of industry, urbanisation and income, and the growth of literacy and education. These scholars specifically look at economic and social aspects of the human environment.

Rodney (1976), the author of *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, splits development as follows:

a. Personal Development i.e. a many –sided process at the level of the individual. It implies increased skills and capacity, greater freedom, creativity, self-discipline, responsibility and material well-being; and,

b. Societal level, where development is seem as an economic phenomenon society is said to develop economically as its members increase jointly their capacity for dealing with the environment.

Wallman (1977), also splits the definition of development into two:

a. Economic development whereby it is perhaps inevitable that the more industrialised a nation becomes, the more developed it gets. Wallaman here agrees with the 1960's definition of development.

b. Philosophical development which is said to be a progress which itself implies evolution, change towards some ultimate good.

MacDonald (1981:561) identifies three main characteristics of underdeveloped countries as: the economic dependence on foreign countries; the draining of the national economy and social structures; and, the dual structures of such societies i.e. the urban rural imbalance. According to him, therefore, development is the reversal (undoing) of these underdevelopment dependency characteristics (ibid.: 57)

In this report, however, the term 'development' is used in the sense in which Kasoma (1994:405) defines it as:

> The improvement in the human life conditions at individual
> and societal levels which is achieved through desirable
> but fluctuating change or adjustments in the environment.

Since development is human centred and it is said to be an improvement on human life condition it is meant to satisfy human needs or wants. Development cannot be precisely measured because it is both qualitative and quantitative. As such, it is always accompanied by non material improvement which cannot be measured: partial and not total development, can be measured.

In COMESA, development can be measured by improvements in regional co-operation and in the economies of member states, which are a result of intra-COMESA trade, as noted in the responses to the questionnaire and in COMESA's own Documents.

4.1.2 Environment

According to Collins Cobuild English Dictionary (1995:555),

" Someone's environment is all the circumstances, people, things, and events around them that influence their life." This is the same sense in which this term has been used in this report.

The environment of the COMESA organisation comprises its customers, competitors, world trade organisation, co-operating partners, funders and economic, political and social factors surrounding the regional grouping.

4.1.3 External and internal communication

The distinction that existed before between external and internal communication is now outmoded. Earlier, external communication meant communication between an organisation and non-members of an organisation while internal communication was seen as communication among the staff that belonged to one organisation.

In recent years, however, this distinction has been blurred by organisations' on going links with suppliers, collaborative partners, consultants, contracted –out personnel and customers (Blundel 1998)

COMESA has established various close links with non-members of the organisation especially through out sourcing, whereby external experts are brought in to run non-core parts of its business. As a result, the staff of the Secretariat is a mixture of employees and various types of short-term contract staff that include consultants. Other links include collaborative partners especially those funding various projects. They include: the European Union (EU); Unites States Aid (USAID); Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO); United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP); and the New Partnership for Africa Development (NEPAD). They fund projects such as advance cargo

information system (ACIS); COMESA Telecommunication (COMTEL) project; upgrading quality and safety of fisheries products; establishment of a sub regional business information centres, and, implementation of the COMESA irrigation master plan, respectively.

4.1.4 The COMESA Secretariat staff

According to COMESA's staff Rules and Regulations (1999 edition) the staff of the Secretariat fall under the following categories:

4.1.4.1 Professional category

This is staff holding positions designated as professional posts and are internationally recruited.

4.1.4.2 General service category

This is locally recruited staff in contrast to professional posts. This category includes substantively appointed staff as well as temporary staff.

4.1.4.3 Project staff

This is staff employed under particular projects and are wholly supported with extra budgetary funding from cooperating partner(s)

4.1.4.4. Consultant

This is a person employed on ad hoc basis for technical or professional work on a short fixed –term contract for a period not exceeding six months.

For the secretariat, 'staff member' means a staff in either the professional or general service categories. This excludes project staff

and consultants. However, for this report, the Secretariat staff includes all the various staff categories listed earlier.

Internal communication is two-fold in this report. It includes communication between member states and the COMESA Secretariat, and that among the various staff of the Secretariat.

On the other hand, external communication is communication between COMESA and its environment.

4.1.5 Information

Information is a massage (s) communicated between individuals or among individual and or groups of people. Since communication is the 'process' of exchanging information (see earlier definition of communication) information is the 'product' (The Macdonald Commission, 1980) of this process. It is the output of the process: what is being exchanged.

In this report, information refers to massages aimed at promoting the concept of regional integration, that are generated and exchanged among member states of COMESA.

.1.6 Innovations

Innovations are new ideas, practices, conditions and services etc that usually offer better ways of doing things.

The concept of COMESA is in itself an innovation and it includes the various activities involved at the different stages toward the establishment of an economic community. These stages include FTA and the Customs Union. One practical innovation in the area of COMESA communication is the establishment

of COMTEL, a share holding company, whose mandate is to link national systems through ATM and optic fibre systems. This innovation arose out of the determination by member states to avail telecommunication facilities to the region at a cheaper rate than was obtaining before.

4.1.7 Organisation

"An organisation" exists where two or more people agree t o get together and co-ordinate their activities so as to achieve common goals" (Appleby 1994:132)

This concept is used in this report in the sense implied by Appleby. As an organisation, COMESA member states have agreed to co-ordinate their activities toward the creation of an economic community and, information is the principal commodity by which this object can be achieved. Therefore, the process used in the communication of this information is the key determinant of the effectiveness of this co-ordination and the consequent success of COMESA.

4.1.8 Secretariat

A secretariat is an administrative headquarters of a regional (usually a political) organisation.

In this report, the concept is used to specifically refer to the COMESA regional trading organisation unless stated otherwise.

4.1.9 Social Marketing

Social marketing is selling people on social products such as ideas and beliefs with a view to changing their behaviour, practices, attitudes, etc. usually for their own betterment as well as for the betterment of Society.

In COMESA the social product being marketed is the concept of regional integration. Therefore, social marketing in this sense refers to the strategies that the Secretariat is using to promote this concept. The major strategy for unifying the region is intra-COMESA trade. In this report then, by social marketing is implied the communication processes being employed to promote intra-COMESA trade in member countries.

4.1.10 System

Appleby (1994:19) defines a 'system' as " an organised combination of parts which form a complex entity, with interrelationships or interactions between the parts and between the system and the environment.'

In this study the concept is used in this same sense.

4.1.11 Communication systems.

Communication systems are sets of interdependent units, which work together (inter-link) to adapt to a changing communication environment so as to satisfy the different communication needs of both the members of an organisation and the organisation environment. Examples of communication systems include : Telex systems, fax systems, computer systems, conferencing systems (teleconference and radio conference), intra-net systems, and electronic mail systems.

The number of stakeholders in COMESA member states who can access the following can measure effectiveness of communication systems:

i. Information technology i.e. the use of computers to generate, process,

up date, sort out, transmit, analyse and store information about COMESA programmes and other issues of interest to the organisation.

ii. Telecommunications such as radios and telephones, fax, telex, teleconferencing, etc.

iii. Literature about COMESA, which is meant to satisfy individual needs of stakeholders. This literature include documents, magazines, newsletters, leaflets and pamphlets.

4.1.12 COMESA organisation as a system

Some organisation systems are said to be closed while others are considered open systems. Closed organisation systems feel they are self –sufficient and so do not depend on their environment for survival. On the other hand, organisations like COMESA are open systems. This is in line with the modern approach, which regards the organisation as a " structured socio- technical (open) system, which considers sub-systems and their interactions between each other and the environment " (ibidem: 178). The success of COMESA as a system depends on effective interactions between member states and between COMESA and its environment. Effective interaction can be measured by the success of COMESA programs as a results of directly applying itself to changes in its environment.

4.2 Theoretical Underpinning

What follows is the discussion of the main theories and how they apply to this study.

4.2.1 Communication Theory (White, A. S. and Nair, K. S., 1984)

This theory posits that all behaviours have communication value. Minimally, there are three reciprocal components to communication: a

sender, a message, and a receiver. If the receiver accurately perceives the message of the sender, communication occurs. If the receiver does not accurately perceive the message, a communication problem occurs. The focus of the theory has now shifted to "...communication transaction as a dialogic human interaction where the sender places importance on the needs of the receiver in formation of messages" (White et al., 1994:154).

This theory implies that the nature of the phenomenon under study is carefully delimited to planned human communication that is used in various forms and in [illegible] include regional organizations like COMESA.

[illegible] ariat is to market COMESA's central [illegible] to member states and to other target

[illegible] ıtra-COMESA trade. However, although [illegible] ıd have speeded up this integration, the [illegible] states to ratify this part of the treaty has [illegible] end of the student's attachment (July 31, [illegible] 20 had joined the COMESA FTA. These [illegible] ıscar, Malawi, Mauritius, Sudan, Zambia

[illegible] ıs and tactics, the Secretariat could address the concerns of the remaining [illegible] vidual member states, which might be preventing them from implementing such policies. For example, instead of the general reminders that are made at various intergovernmental meetings, each of these member states' economic problems could be studied with a view to assisting them with practical options. This should be easy given that the

Secretariat has experts in all necessary areas of development. Contrary to this theory that focuses on communication as a dialogic human interaction where the sender places importance on the needs of the receiver in message formation, most information from the Secretariat was shared generally with member states and stakeholders. For example, the student helped in dispatching the March 2003 summit reports to various stakeholders. The reports were forwarded without highlighting specific information of interest that would meet the individual needs of different groups of recipients. Planned communication according to this theory would require that particular information be targeted at specific groups of people to meet their individual needs. This way, even feedback would be assured. As the situation was, however, it would not be surprising if the Secretariat received little or no feedback at all from receivers of its numerous literature.

Feedback is a crucial aspect of communication and according to this theory; communication only occurs if the receiver(s) accurately perceive the message. Where there is no feedback communication is not complete and would seem to be linear and unhealthy. In fact the Secretariat would find it difficult to measure the recipients grasp of messages of interest that could foster economic development in these member states.

4.2.2 Organisational Information Theory (Karl Weick, 1969, 1978)

This is an example of a systems theory, and posits that individuals are open, living, behavioural systems that exchange energy, matter and information with the environment. If their behavioural systems are adaptive, system and subsystem goals are adequately met. If their behavioural systems are maladaptive, system goals are inadequately met.

The main tenets of this theory are that organisations come into being through continuous human activity; that organisations are made up of people who come together to organise themselves around a special interest. Weick considers

communication the crucial means by which organising occurs and information is seen as the key feature of the organisational environment.

In this theory, organisations use rules to process and react to information.

One key principle of Weick's theory is the principle of ***requisite variety***. According to this principle, organisations attempt to interpret information to reduce uncertainty to the most effective level for their members. For optimum effectiveness the organisation should use the process with the same level of clarity as the messages themselves.

The second key principle is ***selection***. During this phase, the organisation makes decisions about the information it has processed using rules or cycles.

The final phase is ***retention***. This is a record phase in which useful information is stored for possible future use. The repertoire of rules developed in the retention phase constitutes organisational intelligence.

Information is the 'lifeblood of an organisation ' (Baird, 1977). This is more so to large organisations like COMESA where appropriate and accurate information needs to be shared between and among member states, and various stake-holders, by, and through the Secretariat. Necessary information should keep both the internal clients and the organisation as a whole focussed on their vision, goals and objectives.

Needless to say, the Secretariat should ensure that effective communication processes are put in place to facilitate information sharing between both its internal and external clients. For example, message- making processes at the Secretariat should be centralised at the stage before information is disseminated to its clients so that the information shared not only meets individual recipients needs, but is well co-ordinated rather than fragmented. The practice during the student's attachment was that each of the five divisions of the Secretariat was at

liberty to formulate and disseminate information to member states and others regarding that Division's own programmes.

This practice may have its own advantages yet it may be to the distortion of the COMESA institution as a single unit.

According to the principle of requisite variety, the Secretariat should be seen to be taking an active role in interpreting information about economic development and integration so as to reduce uncertainty in member states especially regarding innovations in trade. Hence, it is of great importance that information sharing is very clear and is well co-ordinated.

In the retention phase, the Secretariat needs to keep a clear record of documentation especially of projects, studies and project/programme evaluations for each division, as these are an important part of its organisational intelligence.

A well co-ordinated information storage system would render such documented information useful in ensuring continuity as well as offering a basis for evaluating future undertakings.

In as much as there is a well-established special library, the process of storing information, especially studies and projects from each division needs more strengthening. The practice at the time of the study was for each division to forward such documents to the library for proper record keeping.

However, because the library had no authority to monitor which division was ready with particular project / study documentation it was difficult to ensure that a copy of each document was always submitted to the library for storage.

As the Librarian confirmed, sometimes some interested parties would need such documents and the library would have no record of such information. The student witnessed a painstaking search (by the library assistant with a staff from a certain division) for a document, apparently a study that had been conducted for the division, which was urgently required by some senior management. Each party to the search (in the library) blamed the other: the staff from the particular division claimed to have submitted a copy to the library for keeping while the library personnel denied receipt of the said document.

Surely, important information needs to be carefully treated and stored because it constitutes COMESA's organisational intelligence. With the development of a COMESA Website, storage of information should improve. Even then, there would still be need for central rather than fragmented preparation of input on the web site from various divisions. To enhance credibility and value of information on the web site, even information from individual member states would need to be verified before logging it on the web site

4.2.3 Structural Function Systems Theory (Richard Farace; Peter Monge and Hamish Russel, 1970)

Although a systems perspective was adopted, they suggested that organisation systems are governed by covering laws and not rules. According to them a structural functional approach to the system is adopted. They posit that an organisational system consists of interdependent parts that use energy to process environmental inputs (information and materials), produce throughputs, and finally outputs or products.

According to this theory, information among members of an organisation should be distributed according to the functions these individuals or groups perform in processing environmental inputs (Information and materials) through to the output

(product) level. Thus, the function of an individual member in the organisation determines that member's information needs in terms of its complexity, amount and rate of flow.

This means senior staff in the hierarchy receives and handles more complex information. For example, Professional staff, such as Information technology (IT) specialists at COMESA whose functions cut across divisional boundaries would need more information to serve the whole organisation.

To communicate, different informal communication networks can be used among staff at the same level in the organisation hierarchy, among peers and among staff belonging to the same division (e.g. departmental meetings). However, for information that is meant for, senior management (Director of Divisions, the Secretary General and his Assistant) and, information from the Secretary General to member states, formal communication networks are used.

Micro–Network links are used in interpersonal and small group communication while macro–network links are used to communicate information between groups and between the Secretariat and member states.

Information is categorised as absolute (total amount of knowledge present in a system) or distributed (information which is concerned with who knows it).

While it is true that not all information will concern everyone in the organisation, there is some information, which all organisation members should possess because they are an integral part of the organisation and should therefore be natural conduits for COMESA. From the student's observation, it was evident that some staff, especially those from the General Service category lacked basic information about the concept of regional integration on which COMESA is

founded, let alone the general knowledge about the major functions of the Secretariat. Since the major, communication network at the micro-level is the e-mail, staff that had no access to the computer system were often excluded from the general information sharing such as announcements, and other information concerning the routine activities of the Secretariat.

Information is crucial in any organisation to help members to direct, co-ordinate and control the work during the entire production process. Hence all the three essential activities of a communication system i.e. production, innovation and maintenance of various relations in the organisation must be sufficiently met through communication systems that are all embracing.

4.2.4 Uncertainty Reduction Theory **(Lester, 1987)**

This is an example of law approaches to organisation communication. Law theories posit that clear laws in organizations guide members to choose appropriate behaviours that enhance performance.

The basic goal of laws theories is to identify the antecedent conditions which lead to the prediction (Infante et al, 1990: 208).

Uncertainty Reduction theory was first advanced by Barger (1978), and Barger and Calabrese (1975) before Lester (19870 advanced it further. The theory posits that when strangers meet, they seek to reduce uncertainty about each other. Lester extended this theory to apply to the process of socializing new organisational members. He asserts that uncertainty is reduced in new members if they can predict how successful they are likely to be. This motivates them to learn the appropriate and effective behaviour and to make appropriate choices that would lead them to success. The result is self- confidence in the new members.

The following are some of the factors, according to Lester, that relate uncertainty reduction to confidence about evaluations: clear organisational identity and goals; participation in orientation programs; prior repeated stories from different sources about how the organisation has evaluated members in the past; communication; feedback; increases in status relative to other organization members. Finally, high degrees of previewed influence increase evaluative confidence.

This theory applies to COMESA at two levels: reception of new staff including students on attachment to the COMESA Secretariat; and; reception of new member states to COMESA.

In the case of new member states, the COMEA Treaty sets out clear identity for the organisation in terms of membership, goal, vision, mission statements and others that should help to reduce uncertainty in the new member states.

Another instrument of great importance in this area is the COMESA Court of Justice, which provides the legal framework for member states. This helps give direction to member states when they are in doubt or when they are aggrieved.

Furthermore, active participation of a member state in COMESA activities as may be reflected in the volume of Intra-COMESA trade, leads to increase in status in relation to other member states. This should translate into self-confidence in the new members.

New member states also receive relevant COMESA documents from the Secretariat and any other information that they may request. All necessary communication is done through a member state's co-ordinating ministry.

The major forums for relevant feedback are the various meetings of member states that are held at various levels through the different organs of COMESA.

It can therefore be seen that new member states are helped to easily fit in the COMESA institution, in accordance with this theory.

As regards new staff and those on attachments to the COMESA Secretariat, there were noticeable inconsistencies in induction and other areas. From the student's quick survey, for example, of those who had not been inducted into the COMESA Secretariat, a larger number came from the General Service category and the local students on attachment.

A member of staff, mostly from Administration, conducted the induction

the main part of which constituted introducing the new comer to the staff in selected Divisions. The author was taken around some Divisions and was introduced to the staff who were present at the time. She did not however, meet with the directors or the Secretary General and his Assistant. Other relevant information was also provided upon request. Newcomers usually needed such relevant information as internal directories, organisational charts as well as rules regarding what was expected of them in order to help them to quickly settle in.

In terms of material and financial assistance for local students on attachment, the student's experience was that the Secretariat tried its best to offer material help. That made it easier for students to apply themselves.

However, the student observed that there were no clear guidelines at the Secretariat regarding financial assistance to students on attachment in particular. Such assistance was offered at the Secretariat's own discretion and greatly

depended on the backing a student received from their immediate supervisor. The Secretariat would do well to recognise that these students too become natural conduits for the institution and as such a little financial token could help boost their confidence as they go about their work in COMESA. They could help students with little things like lunch and transport, which could go a long way in boosting their morale. As such, the Secretariat could work out some guidelines regarding their stay that could apply fairly to all students on attachment.

Generally, the Secretariat could have a uniform way of dealing with new members to the Secretariat because, according to this theory, these seemingly small gestures, induction and others, if they were offered systematically and applies fairly to all new comers could greatly lead to a new comer's increase in status, relative to other organisation members. It would help them to quickly fit in and this would enhance their performance.

4.2.5. Diffusion Theory (Rogers, 1983)

Diffusion theory identifies conditions, which influence the likelihood that a new idea, product or practice will be adopted. Research in this field examines how new ideas are spread among groups of people. It focuses on the following five elements: The characteristics of an innovation which may influence its adoption; The decision making process that occurs when individuals consider adopting a new idea, product or practice; The characteristics of individuals that make them likely to adopt an innovation; The consequences for individuals and society of adopting an innovation; and communication channels used in the adoption process.

In organisations, the innovation process can be divided into initiation and implementation. The initiation stage includes all of the information gathering,

conceptualising and planning for the adoption of an innovation, leading up to the decision to adopt.

The initiation stage consists of two phases namely agenda setting and agenda matching. In agenda setting, existing problems in an organisation are identified and potential innovations worked out. In agenda matching, the innovation is matched with the problem and the fit between them is planned.

The implementation stage deals with all of the elements, actions and decisions involved in putting an innovation into use. This stage has three phases namely, redefining/restructuring, clarifying and routinizing. In phase one, the innovation is modified to fit the problem and usually re-innovation occurs.

Consequently, the organisational structures directly relevant to the innovation are altered to accommodate the innovation. And, the usually obscure relationship between the innovation and the organisation is more clearly defined as the innovation becomes more operational. This being the case, routinizing occurs, as the innovation becomes a common feature of the organisation's ongoing activities.

Given that the concept of regional integration is an innovation in itself and most of the ideas in the COMESA institution are new, this theory is well suited to this study. Focus here is on the last two of the five elements in the diffusion process namely the consequences for individuals and society of adopting an innovation, and communication channels used in the adoption process.

For smooth progression toward the creation of the economic community, COMESA has introduced a number of innovations. One such innovation has been the creation of a Free Trade Area by calling for removal of both tariff and

non-physical barriers to trade in the region. Regardless of the prior decision by some members to adopt this idea, the consequences seem to have been underrated in some member states. In the member state Zambia, for example, groups like the Farmers Union and Manufactures Association seem to have been ill prepared for this, because later they claimed to have lost the local market for their own goods as the influx of cheaper goods invaded the Zambian market. If according to this theory, effective communication channels had been used by both the Secretariat and the member state in question, in both the decision-making and the adoption processes, these groups might have been better prepared to face the challenges they seem to be grappling with.

Secondly, COMESA's organisational structures directly relevant to the innovation could have been altered to accommodate the innovation. For example, COMESA could have spear headed both the decision making and adoption processes by opening up a country office in each member state to be run by COMESA's full time employees. These could have been addressing member states various issues of integration and all the difficulties arising from the particular innovations.

Currently however, co-ordinating ministries handle all issues in member states. This arrangement has got its own problems including insufficient attention being given to COMESA issues as priority is given to their core businesses.

However, in as long as communicating innovations to relevant stakeholders within a member state remains the major responsibility of each member state, deliberate effort must be made to strengthen the communication systems to keep various stakeholders well informed and involve them in the processes. This would lead to the success of most programmes. Active involvement of stakeholders at national level would lead to greater successes of member states, as they would benefit more from COMESA programmes. This is evident in some

member states that seem to be doing well. One notable example is Kenya. The student observed that some countries like Kenya had greater representation at most COMESA meetings that took place at the Secretariat. Participants from this member state came from various sectors of her economy. Such active involvement of target adopters is more effective than a lot of representation at the governmental level.

2.6 Multiplicity Theory of Development (Kumar, K. J., 1994)

This theory is also referred to as " multiplicity in one world", "culturalist", and as "another development"(White, 1994). The theory squarely focuses on the issue of getting out of a dependency mode. It rests on the assumption that there are no universal models of development but that a holistic approach to development should be embraced at all levels (social, cultural, economic, religious etc); in a manner that best suits the environment of a particular country (White and Nair,1994).

Individual and social determination is some of the central factors in " another development." And, as stated by Jacobson,

> ... this in turn makes participation of central importance in the development process. The route to individual and social development is seen precisely as being the route of increased participation, to a great extent enabled through individual and group communication" (Jacobson, 1994:66).

This theory is well suited to the study of COMESA as a region in the sense that a quick look at the membership reveals that a good number of countries in the region are classified as highly indebted nations. Over the years, these countries have become poorer as they have been spending the much needed merger resources to service the debts obtained from the world lending organisations like the International Monetary

Fund (IMF) and other donor countries and communities. This has flung these nations into a spiral of borrowings in order for them to meet their budgetary obligations.

Surprisingly, COMESA similarly borrows from various lending institutions adding to the already explosive debt burden in the region. These borrowings are done in order to meet its extra budgetary obligations especially to fund its projects.

However, in order for COMESA to make in roads into this dependency syndrome, it needs to embrace a holistic approach to development. It should be pointed out that COMESA does not need to be fashioned after any other regional grouping but it should have its own identity and should consider its own environment as it plans and works out its programmes. For example, using the SWOT analysis to identify the regions strengths, weaknesses opportunities and threats, COMESA could take advantage of its vast resources to score unprecedented success in such areas as tourism, mining, timber, livestock and agriculture industries.

This is a dream that could be realised but one, which would require great determination at both the individual and societal, levels; by member states singularly and by the region as a whole.

In all this, effective communication would be key in raising the people's conscious and in boosting their interest to take up active participation in COMESA programmes. Involvement of all people in member states would make this regional grouping a people driven organisation with its own identity. Currently, it would appear that COMESA is a collective forum for sourcing foreign loans and similarly a forum for implementing the demands of the donors since access to loans from IMF and the World Bank is made conditional to adoption of domestic measures and policies recommended by them (Dadzie, 1993). Watson (1992 : 305) expresses this more accurately. He states:

> The donor states offer the recipients increased economic security and a considerably faster rhythm of development, but at a price. The international financial institutions and the parallel consortia of ' donor powers' insist that, as a condition of continuing aid and investment, recipient states should observe not only external standards for debt servicing, currency and foreign trade, but also standards acceptable to the donor for the management of their domestic economies.

What scholars like Watson and others have been trying to make clear to countries that are heavily dependent on external borrowings is the fact that meaningful development cannot be sustained by these external forces. Regional organisations like COMESA must therefore be self-sustaining. In any case, by pooling the resources of member states, COMESA could be a pioneer in breaking this borrowing syndrome because, as a grouping, it can easily do what an individual member state might not do.

4.2.7. Effects Theory

Effects theory posit that mass media exert considerable influence on people's opinions and beliefs on their habits of life and on their behaviour " more or less according to the will of those who could control the media and their effects," (Bauer and Bauer, 1960).

This view hailed from the findings from studies on the effects of film (particularly horror and 'War of the World') on the audience, which were done by Paune Fund studies and studies by Cantril respectfully (http://du.edu/~mbasil /3020 - r1.html).

Conclusions drawn from these studies presented the media as being powerful and having huge universal effects while the audience was seen as gullible. These early theories

portrayed media, as having the direct effects of an 'hypodermic syringe, and that of the 'magic bullet' on the audience.

However, later researchers (up to early 1960's) notably Lazarsfeld concluded that media had limited effect in influencing attitude and behaviour change (Hovland et al., 1949; Trenaman and McQuail, 1961).

With the coming of television (1950s and 1960s), further research was done and it led to the emergence of the 'dominant effects' view of the mass media. This theory accepts that the media can be powerful depending on the operation of various factors present in the communication situation. But still, the magic bullet theory' was not and has not been redeemed.

This led Hovland to conduct further studies in search for 'magic keys', i.e. factors that should be present in the communication environment in order for mass media to have any meaningful impact on the audience.

From 1970s to present, a 'social constructivists' approach to media (Gamson and Modigliani, 1989) has been accepted as useful. Here, media is seen as playing a mediating role in the construction of meaning and in wider processes of change in Society (McQuail 1994). According to this scholar, this emerging paradigm has two main thrusts. The first one is that media ' construct' society formations and history itself, by framing images of reality in a predetermined and patterned way. The second one is that people in audiences construct for themselves the view of social reality and their places in it, in interaction with the symbolic constructions offered by the media.

Thus, there has been a shift from over–reliance on media, to use of diverse channels, for example, interpersonal and group channels, to realise desired effects.

In its efforts to market the concept of regional integration and the COMESA institution there is a heavy reliance on the media especially the press (mainly through press releases). This would appear as though the Secretariat still believes in the outmoded 'magic effects of the media' to bring about desired results.

In the light of the effects theories, COMESA could use the media to mediate its central messages of development. This though, would, require carefully planned use of media rather than use it for the general sharing of information or announcements of its events. Furthermore, the channels variables outlined by Hovland should be practical and the sincerity of messages of integration should be demonstrable. Emphasis should be on use of diverse channels not just the media. For example, interpersonal channels have proved to be more effective than the media for obvious reasons some of which are that they offer a chance to not only exchange important information but to listen with feelings to the needs of the people. They also provide a forum for immediate feedback if used in combination with other channels; interpersonal channels could be very effective to COMESA's situation.

4.2.8 Organisational Theory

There are three schools of organisational theory with each implying a distinct style of organisational communication. These are: Classical Scientific Theory, Human Relations Theory, and the Contingency Theory.

4.2.8.1 Classical Scientific Theory.

This theory began to develop before the First World War. The theory takes a mechanistic view of organisations based on the scientific assumption that workers need to be guided and coerced to work and that economic material rewards are the major source of work motivation.

The theory is therefore mainly concerned with departmentalisation, efficiency, measurement, structure, and functions of organisations.

In terms of information, it filters through the formally recognised channels in the organisation hierarchy through vertical (top to bottom or bottom up) or horizontal (between departments) channels. It is believed that the vertical channel is very important in promoting higher productivity. Even then, greater importance is placed on downward communication, which is meant to inform and direct the operations of subordinates. Consequently, " ... downward channel is better organised than upward communication," (Wang and Ordoňez, 1984:242). Unfortunately, this is at the expense of developing the upward channel which is of equal importance to the proper functioning of any organisation.

4.2.8.2 Human Relations Theory

A study conducted in the late 1920's at the Hawthorne Works at the Western Electric Company demonstrated that organisations are social and not mechanical systems.

The Human Relations Theory therefore refutes the assumption that human beings inherently resent working but suggests that material rewards are usually only one source of workers' satisfaction. It emphasises group dynamics, team effort, and the informal network of social interaction. It advocates openness, democracy, and decentralised control.

According to this theory, two types of communication are essential within an organisation, these are network communication and upward communication. Four types of messages are transmitted through upward communication: information about the employees (their performance and problems); information

about others and their problems; information about organisational practices and policies; and information about what needs to be done (Katz and Kahn 1996).

Over the years, upward communication has assumed great importance as a tool by which management can obtain feedback on the feelings and problems of the workers. It has come to be accepted as a viable tool for promoting participation and a feeling of involvement, both of which are essential in promoting greater productivity.

Network communication has equally gained attention since the early 1950s (Wang et al. 1984). According to Wang et al (Ibiden), researchers have found that differently designed networks have different advantages. For example, the wheel-structure could be best suited for speed, for a small member network; 'the circle' would be best for stability while the 'star' would be good for flexibility. They stress the fact that network communication works well in any organisation structure in promoting free communication among members, encouraging socialising among members, and in reaching conclusions and taking actions.

4.2.8.3 The Contingency Theory

This theory differs from the first two in that it suggests no universally applicable strategies. It is based on the assumption that communication within an organisation should be highly adjustable, and dependent upon the background and relationships among and between subordinates and supervisors. It therefore encourages management to react and adjust according to values, environment, and future opportunities.

However, although these three schools of thought suggest different perspectives, they may all be adopted and practiced within one organisation.

At the COMESA Secretariat downward communication is more pronounced as the organisation is programme driven. Management is more preoccupied with driving the workforce into meeting deadlines. Upward communication especially the one advocated by Human Relations Theory is given little attention in as much as it is not directly related to fulfilling one's core duty. Although COMESA gives its staff adequate material rewards in terms of salaries, this should not be a substitute for social interaction. Instead, more informal (social) networks could be promoted for healthier relationships among staff that would lead to more job satisfaction and higher productivity.

While some committees are established for various purposes, the feedback provided to management through these networks does not seem to be given due attention. For example, the Advocacy Committee, which is meant to help boost the image of COMESA to member states, has made several attempts at trying to establish the COMESA Soccer Tournament and has been forwarding its proposals and recommendations to management yet nothing has been forth-coming. The student was informed that management had good reasons for not sanctioning this. What was intriguing was that the management would not even explain why such a project proposal could not go through. The committee was expected to be satisfied with just the refusal. This has left them frustrated and wondering what they might have left out in the proposal. Such neglect of upward communication could be detrimental to the creation of a warm communication climate between supervisors and subordinates and might affect productivity. Cushman and King (1994: 149) echo this more lucidly. They state,

> Within every organisation there are tacit assumptions about how individuals and groups must share information and interact through communication in order to perform organisational tasks. These tacit assumptions create an

organisation's mind set and define how members of that organisation perceive and interact with an organisation's stakeholders. These assumptions that govern and guide perception and interaction create an organisation's information and communication climate.

COMESA could create a healthy information and communication climate if it took a holistic approach to communication and embraced the three organisation theories.

Chapter Five

Literature Review

.0 Introduction

To the best of this student's knowledge there is presently only a limited amount of published literature on the character and quality of information exchange within economic regional groupings in general and COMESA in particular. The only available literature is from United Nations studies; feasibility studies on COMESA's communication infrastructure; and from COMESA's own reports.

.1 Communication within the UN

Any organisation thrives on information about business threats and opportunities. This information is necessarily the basis for making informed decisions, taking appropriate actions and sustaining them etc, for the survival of an organisation. To coordinate all its efforts and organise its various potentials around profitable activities, an organisation needs an effective communication system.

Undoubtedly, effective communication leads to organisational effectiveness. A survey that was reported in *PR News* confirms that there is a correlation between outstanding management and good communication skills (Husman 1991:13), " All good companies seen as winners were also seen as good communicators", observed James Foster, President of Brouillard Communications (ibidem).

Certainly the larger the number of people engaged in a business undertaking, the more sophisticated communication approaches and infrastructure become. A good example is the communication within the UN. The role of the UN is to encourage International peace, co-operation and friendship. With its Secretariat based in New York, the UN has many divisions with a number of offices and departments scattered all over the world. It runs about 22 programmes for its large membership. Communicating relevant

information to the member states, about its activities, is an enormous task for the Department of Public Information (DPI)

Even then, the Un realizes that information provision to all stakeholders is not an option but it is its obligation to meet various information needs of member states. For this reason, the UN has a multiplicity of outreach programmes, as stated;

> DPI informs a global audience about the activities and purposes of the UN. It communicates the complex work of the UN system through a multiplicity of outreach efforts and campaigns, including the UN web site, radio and television, press releases, publications, documentary videos, special events, public tours and library facilities with the assistance of its 70 information centres and services and eight (80) Un offices with information components around the world (UN 200:30).

It can therefore be seen that the task of the UN is made possible through these outreach programmes.

In addition, for large organisations like The UN, networking between the various levels is of paramount importance for keeping in touch with reality on the ground; without such links, large organisations run the risk of becoming abstract and irrelevant to the members. For this reason the UN has set up Regional Commissions with a mandate to initiate measures that promote economic development of each region and strengthen the economic relations of the countries in that region, both among themselves and with other

countries of the world (Ibiden P 32)

These regional commissions include Economical and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) with 51 member states and nine (9) associate member states; Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), with 13 member states; Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), with the largest membership of 53 countries.

As can be seen, UN places great importance on communication as is evident from the number of approaches and strategies it has put in place. It is not surprising, therefore, that its programmes are well co-ordinated, with proper channels for input and feedback, using both top to bottom and bottom up strategies.

.2 The nature of organisational communication in the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN)

Wang and Ordonez (1984) conducted a study on the nature of organisational communication in ASEAN: Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, and Indonesia. The objective of the study was to examine paternalism in ASEAN Corporations, and its effects on interpersonal relations and communication behaviour in those organisation.

They reviewed a series of case studies on ASEAN corporations that showed that corporate styles in ASEAN nations reflected the persistence of paternalism. They identified several characteristics typical to corporate paternalism the most prominent of which were; emphasis on loyalty and obligations; the concept of organisation as one family; and a concentration of decision-making at the top with a weak middle management (Ibidem , p 245)

The effects of this organisation paternalism included: non-participation of middle and lower management in decision making as, " The information flow generally stops at the inner circle constituted by top management," (Ibid.: 249)

In addition, the nature of down ward communication was highly authoritative and often insufficient to solve problems at the lower levels, while upward communication was limited to personal problems.

Furthermore, the existence id 'Hidden agents' compounded the operations (the employer had personal information networks outside the main stream of the organization).

It was also noted that the lack of systematic and open channels of communication led to the development of rumours through often grapevine, which could be detrimental to an organisation.

It can therefore be said that paternalism greatly influences the structure, operation and communication patterns of an organisation in Asia. Yet in spite of the noted short comings, ASEAN corporations appear to be successful and, " Economically the fastest growing regions in the world," (Sub hash, 1887, P.154)

5.3 High –speed Management: Case Studies on General Electric Corporation and Illinois Bumper Works

Cushman and King (1994), proponents of "high-speed management theory", a new theory of organisational communication carried out a study in two corporations: the Danville, Illinois Bumper Works (a small local organisation), and the General Electric Corporation, a large multinational organisation, with a view to determining the practical bases of continuous improvement programmes. They explored the four dynamic processes communication processes, namely: a negotiated linking programme; a new

England Town Meeting; A Cross-functional Teamwork programme; and a best practice case study programme, in these corporations.

From their findings, they concluded that continues improvement programmes aimed at improving organisational coalignment through negotiated linking, cross-functional teamwork, improves both corporate climate teamwork and tremendously increases profitability of organisation (Ididem p. 155)

.4 Communication within regional groupings in Africa

Whereas the UN communication approaches and infrastructure may be well suited to the task of co-ordinating activities among member states, other large regional groupings may not be so successful. Usually, organisations with large memberships have to deal with the problems in communication, which are imposed by distance between member states, or between the secretariat and member states. Increased distance among the different levels of management and the distribution of information in turn may prevent the organisation from performing efficiently (Huseman et. Al. 1991 P9)

Undoubtedly, regional groupings in Africa are grappling with the difficulties in accessing or disseminating information on trade opportunities in the region. COMESA is no exception and it has acknowledged the problem. It states in its brief:

> One of the perceived problems facing the region as a whole is the lack of business and trade information on the region available to the business community in COMESA countries and potential investors from outside of the region. There is, however, within the COMESA Secretariat, a wealth of information, which would be of interest, and

> of use, to business communities, exporters, importers and investors. The problem is therefore not that information does not exist but that it is not readily available to potential users and it is difficult to up-date on a regular basis. (July 1997:1)

This problem appears to be common to most countries of the South and more also to Africa. A report by the United National Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO) confirms this lack and underscores the importance of accessing or availing appropriate industrial and market information to relevant people, it states;

> The availability of the right type of industrial and market information is critically important to increase productivity in a continuously changing and fiercely, competitive business environment. The existing industrial information infrastructure in most developing countries, especially in Africa, is not adequate to meet the demands arising fro both public and private sectors.

The report goes further and cites some constraints as being; institutional and structural weakness, insufficient qualified and trained personal, material inputs, lack of market orientation and inadequacy among end users.

5 Communication within COMESA

As mentioned earlier, documented, studies on communication in COMESA are mainly feasibility studies about communication infrastructure.

Having acknowledged the problems in communication, COMESA initiated a number of studies. For example, in 1997, a three- month feasibility study was conducted to look into the use of the inter-net as a means of improving communication and information flow within the members states, with the consequent need to look at the current status of Information Technology (IT) within the Secretariat (COMESA, 1997,2)

This is done with a view to Introducing Internet Technology, which would boost information flow within COMESA and its co-operating partners. This study revealed that communications were a real hindrance to the effective carrying out of the work of the Secretariat. This not only related to day to day operations, but there were also indicators that much information that they would like gathered on regular basis from member states was not being obtained.

In 1995/96, Africa development Bank (ADB) financed a study, which was co-ordinated by the Secretariat and executed by Telia Swedtel AB. One of the main objectives of the study was to: Appraise and inventory the existing network structure, traffic routing arrangements and physical facilities for inter-state traffic with a view to identifying areas requiring improvement in the network as well as the missing links (COMESA, 1994:1).

This study revealed, among other things, that large parts of the existing telecommunicates networks in the region were outdated and had to be replaced sooner or later (Swedtel Ab, 1996:1)

From COMESA's own meeting reports, it is clear that the organisation tries to use a number of forums to urge members to market COMESA services. For example, one of the recommendations made at the seventh meeting of the Council of Ministers was that member states should assist in articulating to co-operating partners the role of COMESA and the appraise them of the different responsibilities assigned to each institution (COMESA, 2000:9)

5.6 Conclusion

The structure and economic strength of the UN is well suited to effective communication. The ECA focuses among other things, on promoting regional co-operation and integration. This is a similar cause for COMESA and though its economic strength can not match that of the UN it could embrace a lot of ideas from UN.

The Wang studies on ASEAN corporations dealt with isolated corporations within a five member regional grouping. Its findings could however, shed some light on the advantages and disadvantages of membership in regional grouping with such diverse cultures and with such a wide geographical area as COMESA. The conclusions drawn would help COMESA to come up with a communication strategy that would suit different member states.

Although Cushman and King's High Speed Management studies were conducted on corporations with equally high information technology there are elements that COMESA and other organizations in developing regions like Africa could incorporate in their organisations for health relationships within the members of the organisation and for the sake of efficiency, an essential ingredient for high productivity.

Chapter Six

Data Analysis, Interpretation and Discussion of Results

6.0 Introduction

This chapter analyses, interprets the data and then discusses the findings of this study. As stated in Chapter Two, the aim of the study was to examine communication strategies and approaches in COMESA in order to establish their effectiveness in supporting intra-COMESA trade, which in itself is COMESA's main strategy for economic development.

Information in this chapter is presented under four main sections as follows:

1. Communication patterns within the Secretariat
2. Information Flow at the Intergovernmental level
3. Coordination of COMESA trade related information in member States: the example of Zambia
4. COMESA's advocacy strategy

6.1 Communication patterns within the Secretariat

A questionnaire was used to collect data on the communication patterns within the Secretariat. The sample consisted of 36 respondents. This was 25% of the total population of 144 staff.

One half of the sample was drawn from the "professional staff" category while the other half belonged to the "support staff category", which is referred to as "General Service," according to COMESA's own classification of staff (see Chapter Four). All the professional staff were males and had attained university education.

Of the 18 support staff, eight were males out of whom four had university education; three had gone up to Grade 12, while one had a grade nine qualification. The composition of the rest of the support staff, on the other hand, was as follows: 10 females with no university education; seven of whom had completed grade 12. The other three females had Grade nine education.

Analysis and interpretation of the findings

To analyse data, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), a computer software programme, was used. For example, to investigate the quality of information flow between senior management and the subordinates, cross tabulations were run on the existence of the grapevine against staff category, gender and educational level of the respondent.

These SPSS cross tabulations that were run on various aspects of communication were the main basis for the conclusions drawn on the communication patterns within the Secretariat.

What follows is a detailed presentation of the resulting data. This data is presented through a descriptive discussion (see Appendix 4 for cross tabulations of the same information).

5.1.1 **Formal channels**

Formal channels are those that are established by management for the flow of official information among the organisation members. These include the vertical and the horizontal channels.

5.1.1.1 The vertical channel

1. Information flow from management to subordinates

From the data obtained, it would appear that the flow of information from management to subordinates was not as desired. Only 22 out of 36 respondents, 61.1 percent, rated it as good. The rest, 14 respondents out of 36, and representing 38.8 percent of the total number of respondents, rated this information flow as bad. One could argue that this is too big a number to be

ignored in a critical matter such as satisfaction with organizational communication practices.

One notable thing here was that all the 14 who rated information flow as 'bad' were support staff and 10 among these were females. Eight of the 14 had grade 12 education and could, therefore, comprehend issues reasonably well. It is worth mentioning that every employee, regardless of one's gender or position in any organization, needs adequate information to successfully carry out the functions of one's office. As such, information should be distributed according to each organization member's needs (Farace et al., 1970).

The importance of the downward information flow cannot be over emphasised. In the main, management uses it to direct and control the operations of lower level employees. As such, with specific goals and purposes, it is usually better organized and more systematic (Wang et al. 1984, p.242) than the upward channel. In such a situation where the downward channel is not 100 percent effective, the staff miss out on vital information that could, otherwise help them to perform their duties effectively.

2. Information flow from subordinates to management

The data obtained here indicated that 24 out of 36 (66.6 percent) rated the flow of information from subordinates to management as bad. Of this number, 15 were males while nine were females, giving a gender representation of 60 percent and 81.8 percent respectively.

Out of the total number of 22 university graduates, 12 rated the upward flow of information as bad and represented 50 percent of those who rated this channel as bad. In addition, 83 percent of all support staff (15 out of 18) rated this channel as bad, representing 62.5 percent of all those that rated it as bad.

In comparison, the upward channel is even less developed than the downward channel. This would imply that the staff is limited in making either job-related suggestions to management or in presenting their performance problems and grievances to management, or both (Katz & Kahn, 1966). In a situation like this, rumours and a general lack of interest in the job come in and give way to indifference, a very retrogressive attitude. The upward flow of information should be accorded the same importance as the downward flow this is because, apart from creating a feeling of involvement and participation, it provides the necessary input on which management can base future decisions to carry the organisation forward.

.1.1.2 The horizontal channel

1. Knowledge of operations in other divisions

Results of the study revealed that there was need for more interaction at the inter-Divisional level more especially between the professional staff and the support staff. According to the data, one third of the total number of respondents was not familiar with the operations in other Divisions. All the 12 that responded in the negative were support staff with the majority being females (8 out of 12).

It should be pointed out that the Secretariat has a heterogeneous workforce representing differing frames of reference. This great diversity of workers posses fewer shared goals and interests. As Huseman, Lahiff and Penrose (1991,p.17) state, "With reduced commonalities communication problems are more prevalent."

2. Carrying out orders from supervisors in other divisions

Diagonal communication (where subordinates carried out orders from supervisors in other Divisions) was no better than horizontal communication. Data obtained indicated that 26 out of 36 respondents did not carry out orders from supervisors in other Divisions. This is 72 percent of the total number of respondents. Of the

other 10 (27.7 percent) that gave a positive response, six (60 percent) were support staff.

The Secretariat work force should be seen to be working towards achieving the same corporate goals and objectives. This should be demonstrated by the staff's desire to fully understand and be interest in the operations of other divisions of the Secretariat. This also usually helps in creating team spirit (see 6.1.3.2). As indicated, "The remedy for lack of team spirit is to give staff better education and knowledge of the other person's or section's problems and to make them aware of the fundamental interrelations between departments" (Appleby 1994, p. 203).

1.2 Informal channels

At their best, informal channels can provide information faster than formal ones and can play an important role in the coordination of organisational tasks (Huseman et al., 1991:41). However, positive information sharing is usually promoted through well established social structures like staff canteens and other social clubs and sporting activities. Even then, because of the amount of distortion of the information carried through this channel and because, by its nature, it weakens the established authority structures of an organisation, management should be wary of it and ensure that they effectively let out the official word on issues of importance.

It is almost a sure case that where there is insufficient flow of information from the official channels, the grapevine will thrive. Data revealed that the grapevine existed at the Secretariat to a larger proportion. Two thirds (24 out of 36) of the total number of respondents (66.6 percent) ascertained the prevalence of rumours at the Secretariat. Ten out of this number were all grade 12 females, representing 90.9 percent of all female respondents. In addition, 88.8 percent (16 out of 18) were support staff, representing 44.4 percent of the total number of respondents.

It would be best if this situation could be checked.

.1.3 Areas requiring more information from management

Data revealed that the staff required more routine and job related information from management. From the data obtained, routine and job related information ranked highest with 17 out of 36 (47.2 percent), followed by latest developments in the COMESA region and information related to world trade with 11 percent each. About eight percent of the respondents needed more information on the activities of the other Divisions of the Secretariat.

The fact that few respondents needed more information on the activities of the other Divisions might confirm the fact that there is little interdepartmental dependency at the Secretariat, a situation which, at its worst, might lead to fragmentation and dilution of the unity of purpose specifically for the Secretariat and for COMESA as a whole, in general. Since every organization is dependant on adequate information on various issues and for different purposes, information should always be supplied to all members in order for them to meet various system goals (Weick, 1969,1978).

1.4 Employees' preferred method of communicating with management

Results of the study showed that employees preferred face-to-face participatory methods for communicating with management. This was reflected by the respondents' choices, in which meetings ranked first with 25 percent. This was followed by the following choices: telephone conversation; and, e-mail plus meetings, with 11.1 percent each. Of those that expressed a preference for meetings, 66.6 percent (6 out of 9) were support staff and 55.5 percent of these nine (5 out of 9) were university graduates. This confirms a desire in the support staff to participate in the affairs that concern them.

As mentioned earlier, meetings, as a method of communication, offer various advantages to the parties involved. Among these are that they offer a rare opportunity for participation, airing and resolving contentious issues and others, if properly organised and conducted.

.1.5 Communication difficulties

Data revealed that the majority of the respondents, 26 out of 36(72 percent), needed technical assistance with information technology (IT). This group represented two thirds (14 out of 18) of the support staff and more than two thirds (14 out of 18) of the professional staff. The other areas of communication where staff needed technical assistance were on constructing effective memoranda, notices and letters. These were represented by 19.4 percent of the total number of respondents.

It would appear that, with such a large number of staff requiring technical assistance in IT, the staff at the Secretariat were not making optimal use of this powerful communication tool to support both the internal communication at the Secretariat level as well as communication with member States.

.6 **Participative management and team work: creating interest and involvement among staff**

6.1.6.1 Employees' involvement in decision making

The findings indicated that the majority of the staff (94 percent) were not directly involved in decision- making. According to data, only two out of 36 (5.6 percent) of the respondents, both of them belonging to the professional staff category, were directly involved in decision- making.

6.1.6.2 Job related suggestions from employees

Results of the study revealed that the majority of the respondents (94 percent) did make job related suggestions to management. This figure included all the professional staff.

6.1.6.3 Forum for input

From the data 58 percent cited meetings as the main forum for providing input to management while seven (19 percent) professional staff mentioned mission reports.

6.1.6.4 Management receptiveness to employee suggestions

According to the findings of the study, management was not very receptive to employee suggestions. This was according to 47.2 percent (almost half the total number of respondents) who gave a negative response. The majority of this number (15 out of 17) belonged to the support staff category.

6.1.6.5 Meetings as the major forum for participation

As indicated earlier, meetings are important forums for participation and for that reason; they are a natural choice by employees at the Secretariat and in many other organisations.

6.1.6.5.1 Frequency of meetings at the divisional level

According to the outcome of the study, meetings at the Divisional level were a routine particularly for the professional staff. This was according to 17 respondents all of whom were in the professional category. For the support staff on the other hand (16 out of 36), meetings were a rare occurrence.

These findings seem to divide the Secretariat staff into two, the participative (professional) and the non-participative (support) staff – a situation that would seem to be quite unhealthy and detrimental to team work. It would be more desirable for both groups to be participative, each at the appropriate level and quality of involvement.

6.1.6.5.2 Frequency of meetings at the Secretariat level

All the professional staff and half of the support staff revealed that general staff meetings at the Secretariat level were not a common feature. This represented 75 percent of the total number of respondents.

By their very social nature, meetings are a viable communication tool that provide a forum, not just for information sharing, but for creating the kind of

social interaction that is vital in promoting openness, democracy and decentralized control (see Human Relations Theory on page 62 of this report). Because the employees identify themselves with the collective decisions reached at such meetings, it creates in them a deep desire to achieve the set objectives. This sense of belonging is in itself a strong unifying factor among all organisation members.

.1.6.6 Amount of interaction within divisions according to office accommodation

The study revealed that there was a lot of interaction among the staff that belonged to the same Division. This was based on the assumption that the staff that was close to each other in terms of proximity interacted more than those who were far apart. This assumption was based on the study findings that revealed that 30 out of the total number of respondents (83 percent) had their office accommodation within the same wing where the Division they belonged to were located. This represented 88.8 percent of the total number of professional staff and 77.7 percent of the total number of support staff.

1.6.7 Methods used to create team spirit at the division level

There was no deliberate strategy put in place to help create team spirit at the Division level. This was according to more than half the total number of respondents (19 out of 36) accounting for 52.7 percent. However, those who gave a positive response cited consultative meetings, 22.2 percent (8 out of 36) and dialogue, 16.6 percent (6 out of 36) as some of the significant methods used for the said purpose.

1.6.8 Methods used to create team spirit at the Secretariat level

Findings showed that the Secretariat generally tried to create team spirit among its staff. Data obtained from the study revealed 61.1 percent positive responses on this issue with Christmas Parties (38.8 percent) and workshops (22.2 percent) being cited as the common methods for creating the said team spirit. However, 14 out of 36 (38.8 percent) indicated that there was no deliberate method being employed to create this team spirit.

6.1.6.9**Motivating Employees**

6.1.6.9.1 Timely issuance of orders

Almost half the number of respondents (47.2 percent) stated that they usually worked under undue pressure because directives were not issued on time.

If this practice became a regular feature in the operations of the Secretariat, it could create room for errors in the staff performance, a situation that could de-motivate the work force.

6.1.6.9.2 Acknowledging employees' efforts

From the data obtained, 24 out of 36 (66.6 percent) indicated that management rarely complimented them for outstanding performance. Among this number, 15 (62.5 percent) belonged to the support staff category. This should not be the case. Psychologists have for a long time now recognized the importance of positive reinforcement as a tool for motivating others. Acknowledging subordinates' effort and good performance encourages them to work even harder and helps promote confidence in the junior staff. In addition, it is one of the effective ways of building good relationships between employee and employers.

6.1.6.9.3 Visitations from management

The findings indicated that 61.1 percent of the respondents were visited my management. The larger number (68.1) of this staff belonged to professional staff.

The findings reveal a yearning for closer relationships between management and other staff. The fact that the subordinates need this face- to- face contact in addition to the other methods of communication already in place, shows that there could be other areas which the staff would like to discuss with management, but they may be limited. In this regard, the value of interpersonal communication cannot be overemphasized. Visitations could also provide a

spot-check on the employees working environments, which could in itself be more useful than having to depend on the reports from staff.

6.1.6.9.4 Employees' preference

It is worth noting that all the respondents expressed a desire to be visited by management at their work places. This is a natural tendency as people seek approval and recognition of superiors for work done. However, the next section gives specific reasons given by employees for wanting the visitations.

6.1.6.9.5 Reasons why employees wanted to be visited

According to the study findings, the main reasons why employees wanted to be visited by management were: to give and obtain information (38.8 percent); to create rapport between management and junior staff (33.3 percent); and, to listen to and solve employees' problems (22.2 percent).

As any business is essentially a collective activity, all of the individuals in an organisation have to collaborate with other people because the success or failure of an organisation depends on how well its various individuals and groups interact (Blundel 1998, p.81). Management could make use of Rensis Likert's (1961) systems 3 and 4 of management. These are consultative and participative consecutively. These encourage team work and full participation in reaching decisions. The result is a well motivated staff and a good communication environment. In this way, communication would play the vital role of linking all the various parts of the system (Appleby, 1994: 204).

1.7 The communication climate at the COMESA Secretariat

6.1.7.1 Rating employer/employee relationship

Results of the findings revealed that the relationship between employers (in this case senior management, including Directors) and employees needed to be strengthened. From the data, 69.4 percent (25 out of 36) rated this relationship as

bad with only 30.5 percent acknowledging it as good. Of the 25 who rated it negatively, 15 were professional staff while 10 were support staff.

It should be noted that the quality of communication largely depends on the prevailing relationship between the two parties to the communication.

6.1.7.2 Rating supervisor/subordinate relationship

While the relationship between the employers and employees was poorly rated, the one between the respondents and their immediate supervisors was quite highly rated at 69.4 percent. This included 83 percent of all the professional staff and 55.5 percent of all the support staff.

1.8 Reception of new members of staff

.1.8.1 Induction

The Secretariat was not consistent with the procedure it used for introducing new members of staff to their jobs. From the findings of the study, only three out of 36 (8.3 percent) had received full induction. Two of these were from the professional category. Twenty five percent (25 percent) indicated that they did not receive any form of induction. Others had only been given partial induction using one or two of the following methods: code of conduct, staff rules or they were taken on some form of induction tour to selected sections of the Secretariat where they were introduced to the staff present at the time.

Without adequate induction, new organization members take unnecessarily long before they can be well versed in the operations of an organization. The numerous uncertainties that they have to grapple with affect their efficiency and could be demotivating. Lester's (1987) views on this in his "Uncertainty Reduction Theory," suggest that COMESA should appreciate the importance of and move towards more efforts at induction for new organization members.

6.1.8.2 Rating the induction process

According to the results of the study, 58.3 percent of the respondents rated the induction process as bad. This was 61 percent of all the professional staff and 55.5 percent of all the support staff.

6.1.9 **Management communication**

6.1.9.1 The need to improve

What is worth noting from the results of the study here is that each and every respondent strongly believed that there was need to improve management communication.

From the results obtained and stated earlier in this report, management needed to boost the information flow to and from management and across all the Divisions of the Secretariat. One of the channels that required particular attention was the upward flow of information (67 percent said it was bad).

In addition, the staff lacked adequate information in many crucial areas such as routine and job related information, the performance of the other Divisions, the latest developments in the COMESA region and information related to world trade.

This is the essential information needed for any successful business and should be enhanced.

The results also indicated that the staff needed to be involved in the activities of the Secretariat and especially in deciding issues that affected them. This was evident from their preference for meetings as a means of communicating with management.

6.1.9.2 Suggested ways of improving management communication

The outcome of the study indicated that among the various methods, which the staff suggested, for improving management communication, the need for more social interaction between senior management and the lower level staff was more pronounced (44.4 percent). Regular meetings, 27.7 percent, and others like workshops and, one on one interaction followed this.

6.2 Information flow at the Intergovernmental level

6.2.1 The upward flow of information

Meetings provide a formal forum for debating and making consensus decisions on important economic matters and other matters affecting the region.

These meetings are held at different levels in the organisation, which reflect COMESA's pyramid organisational structure.

At the base of the pyramid are meetings of the various technical committees that comprise experts from both the private and public sector in member states (see Technical Committees in Chapter 1).

Recommendations from these committee meetings are forwarded to the Trade and Customs Committee, which synthesises them before forwarding them to the Intergovernmental Committee. The former debates these issues and forwards its recommendations to the council of Ministers. At this stage issues are debated further and those that are adopted are forwarded to the summit of Heads of State and Government, The Authority. The decisions adopted at this level become policy.

6.2.2 The downward flow of information

As way of feedback the various committees and others receive meeting reports. The Summit report is of particular importance as it spells out policy directives.

As a follow up to the decision adopted by the Authority, the Secretariat embarks on capacity building programmes for member states. Workshops, seminars and other meetings provide the forums for these programmes.

In addition, the Secretariat carries out needs Assessment programme in the region by way of research. This is followed up by project formulation ad implementation, where funds are available. Viable project proposals from members states are also helped to take off by way of linking them up to with possible funders.

6.2.3 Problems of information flow at the intergovernmental level.

The long chains of command, particularly in the upward channel, render information vulnerable to the common problems of distortion (Wang 1984). There may also be a tendency to downplay representation from the lower levels, the technical committees, if the Authority saw them as impediments to the attainment of the COMESA goals. For example, there is evidence to suggest that the pace at which COMESA was moving towards the formation of the economic grouping did not allow for much persuasion to let all the players come on board. In this connection, COMESA was going ahead with the establishment of a Customs Union (to be established by December 2004), even though, at the time of the study only eleven member-countries out of twenty had fully joined COMESA's Free Trade Area (FTA). When asked why the said phase could not wait for all the members to join the FTA first, The Secretary General was of the view that they could not wait because the region was already far behind major developments in world trade.

This seemed to create a conflict of interest between the two groups with national leaders on one hand, and the intended beneficiaries at the grassroots (in some member states) on the other. For example, while ZNFU felt it needed more time to strengthen its own position on agricultural trade at the national level before opening up its market to other COMESA products, the Zambian government had

already ratified its membership to FTA. According to the ZNFU staff interviewed, these internal disagreements were reflected in the confrontational attitudes that were usually displayed by some ZNFU members at workshops and seminars organized by COMESA. The conflict was that while COMESA conducted these seminars and workshops to help the beneficiary's implement policies that their governments would have already agreed upon, the beneficiaries, because they may not be in agreement with their own governments, saw these as the forums at which to air their grievances and explain why certain policies could not work. Such situations often led to frustration on both the Secretariat staff and the target beneficiaries and might have been avoided be avoided by establishing simpler channels through COMESA for input to and from the intended beneficiaries.

In addition, the general way of sharing information rendered communication less effective, because where the coordinating ministries lacked trained and sufficient manpower to sift through and sort out information relevant to particular target groups in their countries as was the case with Zambia (see next section), volumes of COMESA correspondence would either be forwarded to beneficiaries un-changed or just remain at these ministries. This, among others, led to waste of stationery and reduced efficiency, as some of the information shared may not be relevant to particular groups.

The best would be for the Secretariat itself to select and transmit to various stakeholders in the member-countries, only the information that is relevant to particular groups or individuals, but the present arrangement does not allow for this.

6.3 Coordination of COMESA trade information in members States: the example of Zambia

The ministry that coordinates COMESA issues in Zambia is the Ministry of Trade, Commerce and Industry (MTCI). A minister heads this Ministry and is therefore a member of the COMESA Council of Ministers.

At the national level, MTCI has the mandate to facilitate and promote the growth, development and competitiveness of commercial, trade and industrial sector in order to enhance socio-economic development. The ministry is therefore well suited to coordinate COMESA activities in Zambia.

The Senior Economist in charge of Regional Trade at MTCI, Mr. Kunda Boniface (as of 2003), was the Desk Officer for both COMESA and SADC. In an interview with him, he acknowledged the fact that the Ministry received a bulk of COMESA correspondence most of which was generally shared.

The desktop computer, printer and scanner that were received from COMESA had eased some problems of communication. The ministry could access information from the COMESA website and was utilizing other facilities like the e-mail and others. Information also flowed through COMESA meetings most of which the Desk Officer attended as a participant or as a resource person. In addition, relevant information was shared on a one on one basis with the concerned staff of the Secretariat.

6.3.1 Problems of information flow between the Secretariat and MTCI.

The Desk Officer at MTCI might be over stretched because, besides carrying out his duties as senior Economist in charge of Regional Trade, he also carried out duties of country Desk officer for COMESA and SADC. Given the similar goals that COMESA and SADC were pursuing having the same officer to coordinate information for the two groupings might render the functions of this office less effective.

Despite the heavy responsibility that this Desk Officer played, he had no direct access to such a powerful communication tool as the telephone, and so could not phone outside the ministry unless he used the Permanent Secretary's line. This situation could result in unnecessary delays in carrying out certain functions.

Finally, MTCI lacked sufficient funds to maintain and pay for service charges for the computer. As a result, this communication tool was not always in use, because operational problems took unnecessarily long to service.

6.3.3 Coordinating trade information among target audiences in member States: the example of Zambia

While COMESA's main function is to provide a conducive market environment, which the member states could take advantage of, issues of micro-economic stability remain a responsibility of individual member states.

In the case of Zambia, MTCI is still at the helm of trade. To facilitate trade in Zambia it coordinates COMESA trade information among its target primary beneficiaries.

Four of such COMESA beneficiaries are Zambia National Farmer's Union (ZNFU), Zambia Association of Manufacturers (ZAM), Cross Border Traders Association of Zambia (CBTAZ) and Economic Association of Zambia (EAZ). These associations were interviewed to find out whether MTCI adequately met their information needs regarding intra-COMESA trade. What follows is the report of the situation on the ground.

6.3.3.1 The Zambia National Farmer's Union (ZNFU)

ZNFU is the umbrella body for both the Small Scale Farmer's Associations, and the Large Scale Farmer's Associations. Membership comprises commodity or specialised associations, corporate members and

associate members. The ZNFU represents farmers' interest in order to achieve sustainable economic and social development.

Among other things, ZNFU represents farmer's interest with government institutions on trade protocols with COMESA and others. This is because trade agreements have a direct effect on the farmers. For example, ZNFU felt that the COMESA FTA had a negative effect on the Zambian market, which was said to have become a dumping ground for agricultural produce from the region. This was so because Zambia had opened up its market in a hurry before it was even ready to compete (interview with ZNFU Senior Economist).

Misunderstandings and mistrusts between ZNFU and COMESA are quite common notwithstanding the fact that there is a ministry responsible for resolving seeming disparities between COMESA policies and practical concerns of such beneficiaries as ZNFU, in the member state. When the Senior Economist for ZNFU, that the author interviewed stated, "COMESA is an organisation which is in the air. Even most members of parliament (MPs) do not understand it so even though they sing about member states, there is nothing on the ground" (ibid.), he was probably expressing the frustrations held by several other would be beneficiaries.

ZNFU had no direct contact with the Secretariat but relied on the MTCI for its information needs and representation at COMESA forums.

The major problem ZNFU cited was lack of a forum for exchanging their views with the MTCI. This had led to the formation of Agricultural Trade Forum (ATF) under MTCI in July 2002, a private forum chaired by ZNFU. It was hoped that ATF would scrutinize all proposals on agriculture trade, which were made at regional forums, before

government signed them. This, it was hoped, would help harmonize agriculture agreements at the national level.

It was noted that although COMESA had a lot of projects on agriculture, ZNFU did not have much information about them.

MTCI on the other hand, admitted that it lacked capacity and finances to adequately meet the farmers' needs (both information and capacity building). However, MTCI tried to attend some of the workshops and seminars organised by farmers, as a participant or resource provider.

On the other hand, MTCI expressed disappointment at the poor attendance by ZNUF to the work- shops , seminars and meetings that it (MTCI) organised. Such forums were for ZNFU's benefits. However, both parties agreed that very little trade information was being shared and this was mostly supplied on request. This meant that ZNFU remained ignorant on a lot of issues concerning agriculture trade because information on such issues reminded at MTCI.

It is worthy mentioning that there were noticeable disparities between the commercial farmers and the small- scale farmers. The former easily accessed information directly from the Secretariat, from the MTCI similar associations in the region, and did not necessarily have to go through ZNFU, while the latter greatly depended on ZNFU and MTCI for all their information needs on agriculture trade.

6.3.3.2 The Cross Border Traders Association of Zambia (CBTAZ)

According to CBTAZ Treasurer, Mr. Sikunjongana Bernard, CBTAZ was formed in 1988 under the patronship of COMESA's Secretary General. It is the voice of the small cross-border traders . Its role is to negotiate with the government, fair trade for its membership.

This membership comprises cross border traders in the SADC and COMESA region.

Although COMESA mainly operates at the national level, CBTAZ enjoys direct links with the Secretariat because of its previledge relationship with the Secretary General of COMESA.

It accessed relevant information about trade from the Division of Trade at the Secretariat.

After reading about information of concern from the press or learning about it from fellow traders, CBTAZ makes a follow up to seek clarification or confirmation from the Secretariat.

The Association is also invited to some COMESA capacity building meetings from which it gets useful trade information.

As regards links with MTCI, CBTAZ expressed concern that the Ministry seemed to underplay CBTAZ importance in national development and the little information that was obtained from them was usually sourced upon request.

However, MTCI claimed that it had been helping the association starting from its inception when MTCI helped the association to draw up its constitution. MTCI admitted that it had difficulties in trying to address the needs of this association due to inadequate resources and the composition of the Association (both Zambian and non Zambian).

The association coordinated information among its membership through its department of information and publicity. It was noted that this

association used powerful communication tools like radios and phones to share trade information among its membership in the region. At the time of the study, the COMESA market in Zambia was an open market with no permanent structures. However, the Secretariat had also promised them to help them with telecommunication infrastructure to help ease communication problems between CBTAZ branches in the country. The Secretariat was helping in resource mobilisation for the construction of permanent market structures.

Their major problem was lack of a common language among it membership.

6.3.3.3. Problems

Other problems faced by CBTAZ included high illiteracy and ignorance levels among its membership. According to MTCI, this made it difficult for them to quickly comprehend issues of trade. For example, many traders still smuggled goods into Zambia in an attempt to evade duty, even though most of such goods attracted no duty under COMESA's rules of origin.

6.3.3.4 The Economics Association of Zambia (EAZ)

As an NGO, EAZ was established in 1985 as an off-shoot of Lusaka Economics Club, which was largely the preserve of the Economics Department of the University of Zambia.

According to its constitution, the Association aims to promote the socio-economics development of Zambia and of the world at large, by providing a forum at which the civil society could discuss economic issues and policies of public interest. Since COMESA offers an opportunity of economic development, EAZ could be seen as a primary beneficiary that could also provide a forum for discussing COMESA economic policies.

Although professional economists from various fields dominate membership of the Association, it incorporates members with various expertises, provided they have a keen interest in socio-economic issues.

In addition to its individual membership, it is also open to institutions of higher learning and corporate bodies and the Bank of Zambia, Barclays Bank, Zambia National Commercial Bank, etc, are members.

The members are natural conduits for influencing sound economic policies in their on organisations.

EAZ also sits on a number of Boards where it offers its expert advice. These include Zambia Competition Commission, National Economic Advisory Council, Lusaka Water and Sewerage, Micro Bankers Trust; Permanent Human Rights Commission; National Airports Corporation; and, Central Statistical Office.

It also offers its services to the government when necessary. For example, it helps to draw up the national budget with the Ministry of Finance, and it also helped in the formulation of a national policy on Genetically Modified Mood staffs (GMOs), which was done with the Ministry of Agriculture. AEZ also networks with Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs), for example, together with other NGOs EAZ draw up a Poverty Reduction Strategy paper (PRSP) for 2002 – 2004.

Its Secretariat is situated on the 3rd Floor of Kulima Tower building in Lusaka. It uses the following channels for disseminating information: the media, monthly meetings, local and international workshops and monthly Newsletters.

Although this Association shares COMESA's vision, it has no official links with the regional grouping. At the time of the study, four of its members (2 Zambians

and 2 from Malawi) were employees of COMESA and were based at the COMESA Secretariat. However, they represent their own individuals views at discussion forum and were not an official channel for information flow from COMESA to EAZ.

Although EAZ does not have official links with COMESA, the latter acknowledges the importance of the association in economic development and COMESA invites the Association to some of its meetings, as resource persons or as participants.

EAZ can easily access the information it needs, especially on trade policies, on request because of its physical proximity with the COMESA Secretariat. Its relationship with MTCI is cordial although it does not depend on the Ministry for its information needs.

6.3.3.4.1 Problems

1. EAZ has got the capacity to boost Zambia's economic development and sits on a lot of boards. However, because Zambia does not have an institutional framework for policy formulation, implementation and monitoring, EAZ's role remains largely advisory with no say on the final decision on what budget guideline to follow

2. To benefit from COMESA Trade policies, a member state needs to have policy direction that should support a strong manufacturing base. Particularly, Zambia needs an institutional framework for research, policy formulation, implement and monitoring, where it could mobilise its capacities and develop an actual investment programme and policy that could translate into a strong manufacturing base.

3. Additionally, Zambia needs independent budget lines (from international lending institutions), which could support real economic development.

MTCI should establish formal links with this very well placed association in order to empower it to contribute in its national economic development.

In turn, the COMESA could empower such potential associations like EAZ by building their capacities to have a direct influence on the policy direction of their countries. COMESA should not just deal with governments but must build capacities in member states through such associations as EAZ that could help chatter smooth paths. These could be pillars for COMESA economic development.

6.3.3.5 **Zambia Association of Manufacturers (ZAM)**

This Association is an affiliate of the Zambia chamber of Commerce and Industry. It was founded in 1984 as a lobby for low production costs (in terms of favourable taxation and labour laws) that would make them competitive. It has its Secretariat in Ndola.

Its membership comprises between 150 to 200, medium and large leading manufacturing companies from 15 to20 different areas of manufacturing. These include: Unilever, Amanita, Zambezi papers, Trade Kings, Breakfast Food Zambia Ltd and others.

The Association is one of the primary beneficiaries of such COMESA trade policies as FTA, customs clearing and it takes full advantage of the COMESA clearing house.

The association finds COMESA trade policies good and is satisfied that these policies apply fairly to all member States.

ZAM has direct links with both the Ministry of Trade Commerce and Industry and with the COMESA Secretariat for all its informational needs. At the time of

the study, the Association's vice President, Mr. Dev Krishnan Babbar described the COMESA Secretariat as " very co-operative" and felt it was his Association that owed the Secretariat a regular update of its activities. ZAM's Secretariat is able to access information from the COMESA Secretariat by phone, electronic mail, and face –to-face contacts. These contacts are made easier through the members that are based in Lusaka, who include the President, Mr. Marck O'Donnel and his vice.

Although the Association lamented poor economic policies in the country, it was hopeful that "with the excellent communication it was enjoying with the government, things would work to their advantages" (Babbar)

6.3.3.6 Problems noted in the coordination of trade information between Zambia's coordinating ministry MTCI and some primary beneficiaries of COMESA

From these interviews, it was clear that the MTCI had no strategy for outreach programmes essentially aimed at intended beneficiaries of Intra- COMESA trade. The tendency to provide COMESA trade information only upon request makes the ministry appear as though they were merely consultants rather than national facilitators of trade development. This practice also excludes those would be beneficiaries who may lack basic information about COMESA trade and would therefore not come forward to request for this information.

MTCI could have a separate budget allocation for COMESA activities including external phone calls, computer maintenance and services and others. This would ensure effective service delivery and could speed up COMESA programmes.

MTCI need to employ two separate Desk Officers for SADC and COMESA on full time basis in order to strengthen coordination.

The COMESA Desk Officer at MTCI could be empowered with a direct phone line in which external calls could be made when necessary. This could further strengthen the communication process for better service delivery.

There can be no development where people are not furnished with relevant information on such important issues as trade policies and opportunities in the region.

The Zambian government should therefore work out a communication strategy to help its people understand and take advantage of intra-COMESA trade.

6.4 COMESA'S advocacy strategy

At the time of this study, COMESA had no particular strategy for promoting intra COMESA trade.

What follows is the presentation the efforts the secretariat was making in promoting Intra-COMESA trade.

6.4.1. The Public Relations Office

In any organisation, the core business of public relations (PR) is creating and maintaining goodwill and understanding wit the organisation's publics. This is done through planned communication. As such, the Public Relations Officer (PRO) essentially plans and co-ordinates all advocacy programmes.

The PR unit was only established about four years ago (about 1999/2000). Before them, the Secretary General and his assistant used to deal with issues of publicity and issued press releases once in a while. The Librarian used to do most of the other works of information dissemination.

A similar situation existed in the case of communication. There was no communications department per say except for the department of Transport ad communications that was limited to infrastructure development.

6.4.1.1.Information dissemination through the press

The press appeared to be the main target stakeholder. It was believed that journalists would help influence the perception of larger audiences through their mass media. As such, the PRO made special effort to invite them to cover COMESA's various meeting. Press conferences were also given for the same reasons.

One notable activity of the PR was the issuing of pres releases mainly to the Zambian Press. These press releases were both reactive and proactive in nature.

It should be pointed out that the press in question is mainly the Zambian press. The Summit was an exceptional event to which the press from various member States was invited.

6.4.1.2 Television and radio interviews

Occasionally, the PR organised radio and television interviews for senior management on issues of importance.

6.4.1.3 Distribution of marketing material

The PR was among the other units that were involved in the distribution of fact sheets, COMESA calendars, Research Network Publications, Annual Reports and others to various stakeholders both within and outside COMESA. In the case of Annual Reports, the PRO attached a covering note to each report sent. Essentially, the covering notes bore the same message.

It should be noted that this function was also being carried out by others units and divisions like the Assistant Secretary General's office.

6.4.1.4 Electronic News Letter and other related materials.

The PR produced an Electronic News letter twice a month. This was posted to all the addresses in the COMESA electronic database and on COMESA internet and websites. Press releases and other news of interest to COMESA were also placed on the website. Other staff like the Library personnel also placed issues believed to be of interest on the websites.

6.4.1.5 School Quiz

The PR had worked out modalities for a regional quiz Competition that would became an annual event. At the time of the study the PR was jus awaiting the Secretary General's Approval.

The first of its kind had been a pilot school quiz on Economic, Social and Historical aspects of COMESA and the region at large. It had been planned to celebrate 20 years of the existence of COMESA and two years of the FTA. It had been done in collaboration with the Zambia National Broadcasting Corporation (ZNBC) and 15 Lusaka based schools had participated.

6.4.1.6 Media Awards

To encourage interest and accurate coverage of COMESA issues, the PR in conjunction with the Public Relations Communication Team worked out modalities for an annual Media Awards programme. This was done in collaboration with the Zambia Chapter of the Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA). By the end of the student's attachment, this too was still awaiting the secretary General approval.

6.4.1.7 The Public Relations Communications Team (PRCT)

The Secretariat has neither a communication nor a marketing department to address the numerous communication needs of both the Secretariat and those of the various stakeholders in member States. In addition, the PR could embrace the whole communication function is limited by its job description besides lacking the capacity in human resource for such extended functions (it is manned by one person- the PRO).

The PRCT was therefore an initiative to try and meet some of the communication needs, particularly advocacy for the COMESA institution. PRCT comprised of staff from selected information disseminating units. They included, the Librarian, the PRO, the IT specialist, the COMESA Desk Officer and was chaired by the Systems Analysis and Project Co-ordinator , Dr, Kanyangarara Maclay

During her attachment, the student was privileged to belong to this team and served as a co-secretary with the COMESA Desk Officer.

By the end of her attachment, the team had worked out several project proposals, by which it had hoped to raise COMESA's image to member states. These included:

1. Preparation of uniform business cards and uniform letterhead on all COMESA stationery. This would present a unified image and give identity to the COMESA institution (Goodman, 1994, p.116). What was obtaining earlier were differently designed business cards and letterhead with different colours. These distorted the identity of the institution, but the proposed cards and letterhead should correct this.

2. Preparation of publicity material specifically pens, T-Shirts, and calendars for use by staff that were in contact with the public. These could also be distributed to selected audiences.

3. Following up on the issue of COMESA Soccer Tournament with the Administration at the Secretariat and the Coca Cola company that had earlier been willing to sponsor the event.

   This tournament had been held once before but could not be sustained because of unexplained obstacles.

   Soccer is a unifying game and a COMESA Tournament would surely raise the image of COMESA.

4. Working out modalities for a COMESA Media Awards by which deserving journalists in the Region could be awarded for consistent and accurate reporting on COMESA issues. This would encourage efficient coverage and interest in reporting COMESA activities in the mass media. Mass media could still have powerful influence on the audience as long as messages were systematically packaged.

5. Working out modalities for a COMESA school quiz with the Zambian Examinations Council (see PR advocacy activities).

6. Working out advocacy activities around the Summit. The Summit draws a lot of participants from both COMESA and the outside world and therefore presented a unique opportunity for advocacy. The activities planned for this event included setting up a COMESA Desk Production of Daily Newsletter to cover various events and others.

6.4.1.7.1 Problems noted in PR advocacy

The fact that this team lacked the official mandate in the Secretariat establishment hindered its progress in terms of what it could plan and the budget for its operations.

Besides, the members had other full time responsibilities for which they were appointed and so might feel overstretched.

PRCT is a very good initiative that could be enhanced by making it an official establishment. Such an establishment could come under the PR office. As such, it could boost the PR operations by widening the communications scope.

As was observed by Goodman (1994, p.61), although traditional PR function mainly included activities like the sponsorship of various sporting events and charitable causes and may have written and distributed press releases on company products, people, and activities of interest outside the organisation, and may have published the company newsletter for its 'internal publics'; in modern business practices PR should be a strategic element in the business plans of most corporations, whose plans must contain clearly articulated goals, methods, and measurements which coincide with larger corporate goals.

Finally, PR should reflect a regional function by, for example having target media links in all member States.

6.4.2 **The Research Unit**

This unit was established to carry out research in areas of economic interest in the region. Its research reports are published in *Research Network Publications*, which are dispatched to various audiences of stakeholders. One notable medium of these publications is the computerised Trade Information Network of COMESA (TINET). TINET is part of a project , " COMESA Trade Development and Promotions Programme,' which is executed by the International Trade Centre

UNCTAD / WTO ITC) (*COMESA , TINET*) The main funder is UNDP. TINET has its central unit at the Secretariat and has focal points in each of the member states. These are called National Focal Points and they coordinate TINET activities at the national level.

6.4.3 **The Library**

COMESA has a well- stocked specialized Library at the Secretariat. Books, Documents, newspapers, magazines and others offer a rich diverse resource of information for both its professional staff ad other library users.

Both paper and magnetic media are used for the storage of information

6.4.3.1 The role of the library in intra-COMESA trade advocacy

As one of the institutions that organise and disseminate information, the COMESA Library is involved in linking COMESA with information seekers from the business and consultancy fraternity (COMESA work programme, 1999). This is main done by updating the news and publications web page by way of announcing meetings, press releases, and other articles of interest and by answering queries on integration and trade. It should be noted that Information Technology Division, the PR and others also carry out these functions.

The Library unit is also involved in the production of the COMESA Bulletin specifically, it co-ordinates the collection of sectoral news and articles, editing them, arranging and circulating them to member states. This is a quarterly publication (January March , July and October). Of special importance is the COMESA Summit Bulletin.

6.4.4 The Division of Information and Networking (IT)

The main objective of IT is to establish a computerised common Market information system that can promote intra-COMESA trade. This is carried out in

three main ways namely: writing software to meet COMESA needs, capacity building in software application, and packaging information on the website.

6.4.4.1 Software

IT has established a COMESA Management Information Exchange System. This web-based system is meant to allow member states share information by storing and retrieving documents in an archive accessible through the COMESA website work programme, 2002.

6.4.4.2 Packaging information on the web –site

The division's role in intra-COMESA trade advocacy is to package relevant information on the COMESA web-site. For this, it depends entirely on a steady and systematic flow of input from the various Divisions and units of the Secretariat as well as the coordinating ministries in member states. For example, in collaboration with the Division of Trade, Customs and Monetary Affairs (TCM), it has established a database on web-based trade and economic statistics.

6.4.4.3 Problems noted with IT at the time of the study

1. The COMESA web-site was in English language only. This surely limited its use to English speaking member States. IT would do well to come up with a tri-lingual net-work so that the French and Portuguese speaking member states could also utilise the web-site

2. Information from the secretarial Divisions came in different formats and was package as such since, re-organising it might result in distortion. This same the web-site a unbalanced disjointed appearance.

There is need to harmonise the format for packaging information to reflect a unity of purpose.

3. IT is faced with the bottleneck of having to chase for information from various Divisions (a similar problem being experienced by the Library)

This could be avoided if the Secretariat had a central unit for editing all the input from various divisions. Such a unit could work out a programme for editing and forwarding information to IT.

4. Insufficient and outdated information on member States
Similar to (3) above, IT was receiving little co-operation from member States in terms of forwarding updated information about their country profiles. The COMESA web site therefore, had some outdated information that was unreliable. This situation would seem to be detrimental to the attainment of COMESA goals.

Through the Council of Ministers, the Secretariat could appeal for co-operation on this issue. It should be noted that IT has no mandate for message making and could therefore only be strengthened through the co-operation of all the possible information sources.

Lastly, it would seem that the information technology is being under-utilised when it could be a very powerful tool for intra – COMESA trade advocacy. COMESA could do better to create networks with several other networks with the region.

6.4.5 The Country Desk Officers (CDOs)

This was an administrative arrangement to facilitate information flow from the Secretariat to member States. Initially, CDOs were meant to furnish member States with information about COMESA's major meetings, particularly the Summit, in order for the members to make adequate preparations for these meetings. They also made follow up on member State contributions.

Later, after the establishment of IT, their functions included forwarding updated country profiles to the IT Division for the latter to update the COMESA website. At the time of the study, the functions of this office were still being debated.

Their main methods of communication included telephone, e-mail and personal contact especially when officials went for meetings at the Secretariat.

In order to ease language problems, the Secretariat selected from its staff, nationals of the country being represented, to serve as Country Desk Officers. However, other staff was used where this was not possible.

6.4.5.1 Problems with CDOs

The office of the Country Desk Officers is a function of the Secretariat with no official mandate to effectively carry out some of the proposed functions such as No.s 3 and 4. Besides, bureaucracies at national levels rendered this office weak as even their counter parts, the Desk Officers in coordinating Ministries lacked the mandate to provide some of these inputs outside the established channels in the COMESA structure.

The views of some of the country Desk Officers interviewed were that some of the governments they represented did not even know about their existence. In fact, most delegates to COMESA meetings at the Secretariat either ignored their Desk Officers or preferred to deal with the COMESA Official protocol officers like the PRO.

In the absence of COMESA offices at national level, this function of the country Desk Officers could be very useful in providing a direct link between the Secretariat and members states. Such a link would remove bottlenecks in the flow of information between the two parties.

6.4.6 Division of Trade, Customs and Monetary Affairs

The division of Trade, Customs and Monetary Affairs, communicated trade information to business communities both through COMESA Institutions and directly to the stakeholders. This was done through trade fairs which the division organised and facilitated; organising and conducting buyer/seller meetings; conducting trade information and dissemination programmes mainly through workshops; and lastly through sectoral publications like the *Bulletin*.

The channels for providing input/ feedback from the grassroots were left with government because 'COMESA Secretariat would not have the capacity' (COMESA Director of Trade).

Chapter Seven

Summary Of Conclusions & Recommendation

7.0 This chapter presents a summary of the conclusions drawn from the study. Thereafter, recommendations and the overall conclusion of the whole study is drawn.

7.1 Communication within the Secretariat

7.1.1 Problems of communication at the Secretarial level

1 As stated earlier in chapter 6, the vertical flow of information to and from management is not sufficient to effectively meet various information needs of staff, that was required for routine operations of the Secretariat.

2 This encourages the grapevines, which is usually detrimental to a health-working environment as it often hurts the relationship between those privileged with the information and those that lack it.

3. Whereas the downward flow of information is better developed than the upward flow, the professional staff seems to be better placed for reception of information from management and for sending feedback to management than the support staff. This has segmented the staff and can be a hindrance to teamwork.

4. There is little interdependence between divisions except for the Division of Administration and Finance in which every other division has direct interest. Consequently, communication among the staff is severely limited to members of staff within the same division.

5. The staff has a yearning for participation and involvement in the decision that affect then and in the general activities of the Secretariat. This is also reflected in their preference for oral, face - to-face methods of communicating with management.

6. The Secretariat needs a clear strategy for creating team- work at both the Division and the Secretariat level. Equally, it needs to develop a clear system for inducting new employees.

7. Management needs to make a deliberate effort to motivate the workforce. The staff would appreciate visitations from senior management, acknowledgement for good work and more social interaction with senior management.

8. The staff was not making optimal use of IT in their communication both within the secretariat and with member states because it was not very well versed in this technology.

9. There is need to improve management communication in order to enhance staff performance.

7.1.2 Recommendations

1. The Secretariat should boost up information flow through the official channels by making use of a variety of communication tools and media such as: interactive video on computers, corporate television, and could sharpen the staff's communication skills in a number of areas particularly in IT. They could start by enhancing this communication in such small ways like having a centrally placed notice board on which to announce major events, such as COMESA meetings, general meetings,

departmental meetings and others. They could even place a calendar of major events on such a notice board, as they do on the intra-net.

2. There is need to enhance the existing relationship between management and staff in order to create a conducive environment for information sharing and in order to help promote team work. Management could open its doors to more information sharing by providing forums for discussing and ironing out issues that affect the staff; and forums for making input and for providing feedback on various job related issues. Such a sound relationship would enhance staff performance.

3. Unity of the Secretariat is paramount in presenting a well-coordinated advocacy. As Goodman (ibid.) points out, 'for many organisations which operate globally, as well as local and regional ones, the value of a central management structure for communication makes sense (p.2).

   As such, management should encourage interdepartmental interaction among members of various divisions and ensure that all the staff had a reasonable understanding of operations in other Divisions. This is because apart from this being an effective way for building team work these are all natural conduits for advocacy to all the people they come into contact with. It therefore becomes essential to empower them with sufficient relevant knowledge.

4. A systematic approach for inducting new members of staff to their jobs and work situations should be established at the secretariat. Good induction helps create favourable first impression about an organisation, which become the cornerstone in forming positive attitudes about the organisation and its other members (see 'Uncertainty Reduction Theory' in Chapter five).

5. There is still a great need for capacity building in IT operations in order for the staff to make optimum use of the technology. Workshops and short training sessions could be regularly organised for staff in various fields.

7.2 Internal coordination of COMESA Trade information in member, states: The example of Zambia.

7.2.1 Problems noted

1. The Coordinating Ministry has no separate budget for COMESA activities, let alone carrying out advocacy programmes. As a result its role was rather that of the consultancy than active promoters of intra-COMESA trade. This situation meant that even when the computer, printer or scanner broke down, they could not be immediately repaired. All this culminated in disjointed advocacy efforts at the national level, and a distortion of the COMESA institution at the grassroots level.

2. The Desk Officer, apart from carrying out the duties of this COMESA Desk Office, also carried out the other functions of this office for which he was appointed. The fact that this officer was also the Desk Officer for SADC compounded the problem further. The officer was simply over stretched and this could affect his efficiency.

3. The Desk Officer lacked direct access to a direct telephone line that could ease communication with stakeholders. Unfortunately, he had to go through the Permanent Secretary to access the line. This again was a big hindrance to communication.

7.2.2 Recommendations

1. MTCI and other such coordinating ministries in member countries could have separate budget allocations to cover COMESA activities. This would help them to plan their own advocacy and outreach programmes

independent of the other ministerial programmes. This would ensure a more efficient information delivery system, which would speed up implementation of COMESA programmes.

2. There is need to have a team of officers who could take charge of coordination at the national level. With such an arrangement, an officer could be placed at each provincial head town. These would coordinate advocacy at the provincial level and would be reporting to the Desk Officer at the national level. The later would then be in a better position to link up these efforts with the Secretariat.

3. The Desk officers at the coordinating ministries need to be empowered with a variety of communication tools, especially IT and telephone, for easier and faster coordination of intra- COMESA trade both at the national level as well as with the Secretariat and other member states.

4. MTCI needs to employ two separate Desk Officers, one for SADC and the other for COMESA on full time basis in order to strengthen coordination.

7.3 Information flow at the intergovernmental level

7.3.1 Problems noted

1. There is too much bureaucracy in COMESA. The inflexible long chains of command make it difficult for the professional and business practitioners, who are the intended beneficiaries, to access trade related information, provide the necessary input, and receive feedback, within a short period of time. It would appear as if COMESA issues have become government agenda like IMF but what may be unique is that COMESA governments themselves do not seem to realise how it impacts on them.

2. The non-selective sharing of information common in COMESA is likely to lead to information overload on the part of the recipients. Such a situation makes it difficult for intended beneficiaries to sift through all the bulk of the material they receive for information relevant to their various situations. When the target audience loses energy for this, such materials cease to attract them and so, even with a bulk of correspondence in their possession, they will claim not to have the information.

In addition, generally shared information fails to address the communication difficulties that may be peculiar to certain target groups. Effective communication should take care of the specific needs of the recipient and should therefore be done from the recipients point of view.

7.3.2 Recommendations

1. The success of COMESA depends on responsiveness of the target beneficiaries. COMESA should therefore endeavour to systematically embrace these groups through practical programmes rather than speeding on towards the envisaged economic grouping. This way, these groups will identify with COMESA and the take up ownership of this institution.

2. There should be a forum for feedback where the people on the ground such as the business chambers and councils could debate the policies made by the Authority to ensure that their representations were reflected in these policies. These forums could also be used to debate the practical realities of these policies, the problems encountered and to suggest alternatives where necessary.

3. Communication should be refined to address the practical concerns of the private sector and other stakeholders. Responsible personnel at the Secretariat should therefore ensure that there is selective sharing of trade related information for maximum benefits of individual groups.

4. There is need to decentralise COMESA activities so that not everything is based at the Secretariat in Lusaka. For example, COMESA could have country offices in member states to coordinate COMESA activities, in addition to the coordinating ministries.

5. There is need for neutral interventions in the area of advocacy, from neutral bodies like COMESA. As such, COMESA Secretariat has a role to lead in this because it is a neutral honest broker of information. It should be noted that governments are not the beneficiaries but the grassroots are.

6. Government officials in Members States need to show more commitment to COMESA activities. For example, they should do their own meeting speeches to show commitment instead of these speeches being written for them at the Secretariat. In addition, all heads of state need to attend the Summit rather than sending representatives to such crucial meetings.

7. The governments should play 70% of advocacy role. This is because, should their people lag behind in the economic development of the region, the negative impact would be felt at the national levels down to the grassroots. For example, governments could mount information campaigns to promote awareness and appreciation of the COMESA institution, using both the mass media and small media like the community radio stations. By taking up such an active role in building up the COMESA agenda, the governments would not only be asserting the

importance of this institution but they would also be encouraging active-participation in its activities.

7.4 COMESA's advocacy efforts

7.4.1 Problems noted

1. Advocacy has no proper position in the structure of the COMESA Institution, but has been left in the hands of the various communication units at the Secretariat.

2. Advocacy was fragmented because almost all the sectors tried to market their efforts to stakeholders on their own. As a result there was little coordination, and in some cases, there were notable inconsistencies in the material content.

3. There is no continuity in advocacy programmes. Most of these programmes are short-term projects, which are discontinued as soon as the donor funding ended.

4. Opportunities such as those presented by special events, were not being optimally used for advocacy.

5. The COMESA seemed to view development as economic gains but these cannot be divorced from other aspects of life that contribute to the well-being of people. Such aspects as social and particularly cultural aspects may be cardinal in the changing of a people's attitude. Advocacy should therefore be given a holistic approach.

7.3.2 Recommendations

1. Advocacy needs to be institutionalized so that it becomes an established structure with a mandate to coordinated and execute advocacy in various areas of the COMESA agenda.

2. Although COMESA may be involved in multi-sector projects, it needs central coordination of information that will reflect unity of purpose.

3. There is need for continuity in advocacy programmes to create long impact on the audience. In order to ensure continuity the Secretariat should plan for both short and long term projects. These projects need a clear and steady budgetary allocation rather than donor funding.

4. COMESA executives should use every opportunity to sell the COMESA agenda. For example as the Chief Executive, the Secretary General carries 20 States, and he could use this privileged position to create more rapport with heads of State. Buy ins will not come at operational levels but at higher levels. To start with, for example, he could link with Chief Executives of key industries in Zambia through for example, breakfast meetings.

   Secondly, when the executives are given the platform on Radio and Television, they could stop the speech for 10 to 15 seconds and sell COMESA image.

5. There is also need to broaden the scope of PR to go beyond journalism and aggressively sell the COMESA image and advance its ethos.

6. There is need for a holistic approach to advocacy. For example, COMESA cultural exchanges could help expose member States to new ways of doing business. Kenya and Egypt, for example, are actively engaged in Intra-COMESA trade and so others could go and learn a lot of from them. This would also be in line with 'high speed theory' (see chapter 5)

7. Advocacy for Intra-COMESA trade needs diversification. For example, it could be done through outreach programmes, popular theatre, student exchanges and cultural exchanges as mentioned earlier.

8. Mass media such as COMESA Television / Radio could be very powerful tools for advocacy. COMESA could easily run its own TV and radio stations and could use them, not only to generate income but to market its own products, and create interest and involvement in its activities.

9. There is need for a press push such as a regional newspaper. For example, T*he East Africa,* a 36 page Newspaper, is said to have done wonders for the integration of East Africa. Similarly, a regional newspaper for COMESA would help advance the cause of this grouping.

10. There is need for COMESA to employ communication specialists to plan and execute the organisation's communication including advocacy

7.4 Conclusions of the study

COMESA advocacy was not institutionalized and lacked a particular strategy. Instead, various groups appointed at the intergovernmental level and the Secretariat level were employing various approaches. In fact, at the Secretariat various sectors were engaged in promoting their own activities to stakeholders. This had segmented advocacy instead of giving it unity of purpose.

At the inter-governmental level, communication was long and inflexible and particularly unsuitable for feedback from the grassroots. Similarly, the Secretariat's upward flow of information among its staff was not very well developed to encourage much feedback from employees. It would appear that information sharing at both levels was not very participative. This resulted in unequal distribution of information and a tendency to exclude certain groups seen as less useful, from message making. Unfortunately though, these disadvantaged groups at the national

levels are much more vulnerable and would therefore be the natural target for these trade-related messages.

Coordination of COMESA trade-related information in the member state Zambia was receiving very little attention due to financial and various constraints. This had affected awareness of COMESA trade related issues among the Zambian stakeholders in different ways. The large scale and some medium traders used their own efforts to access information from the coordinating ministry or directly from the Secretariat. On the other hand, the small-scale traders and those would be participants were not well informed about COMESA trade related issues.

The overall conclusion one draws about the communication situation in COMESA is that it needs much strengthening to support such a mammoth task of integration. The importance of information cannot be over emphasised. As one scholar observed, information plays a linking role between production and consumption, at the economic level, and has similar levels of influence in other areas, by virtue of its role in stimulating creativity, spreading knowledge, enhancing participation, promoting social cohesion, facilitating the measurement of change, etc. (Abete 1996, P.7)

From Abate's observation, it can be said that information empowers people to make progress in their lives by pointing out opportunities that people could take advantage of. As such effective communication is essential to support this empowerment. This study therefore concludes that, there can be no meaningful development without effective communication.

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APPENDIX 1

ECONOMIC INDICATORS FOR COMESA

Table 1 **: Intra- COMESA Import, *cif*, 1997 to 2001**

Member State	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Angola	55,013,723	59,065,592	55,267,218	68,144,706	96,567,723
Burundi	19,843,936	26,068,556	20,882,619	19,921,505	50,520,442
Djibouti	59,197,483	67,048,752	59,638,282	73,436,815	72,528,220
Egypt	138,646,459	124,641,779	140,194,104	186,319,885	236,354,150
Eritrea	1,054,976	4,892,098	3,754,280	7,803,974	1,557,337
Ethiopia	39,891,399	40,879,145	40,634,047	42,201,949	47,062,103
Kenya	99,953,257	36,809,246	48,919,925	77,502,572	144,574,054
Comoros	5,117,201	4,811,295	3,890,381	5,031,849	3,641,860
Madagascar	41,638,718	30,422,120	53,558,398	63,471,733	29,925,987
Mauritius	58,127,362	60,737,209	47,154,163	58,559,787	66,939,560
Malawi	103,860,586	95,924,520	89,586,290	52,906,792	57,834,833
Namibia	18,979,061	31,037,262	7,958,061	7,597,660	7,352,202
Rwanda	81,079,342	60,451,013	42,376,108	28,652,453	13,071,742
Seychelles	14,273,229	12,068,844	14,977,946	12,524,412	11,393,383
Sudan	10,839,293	26,939,872	8,640,480	101,477,283	108,941,144
Swaziland	2,313,233	3,629,713	2,759,574	1,746,577	469,066
Uganda	237,823,000	284,643,409	171,763,988	152,526,762	281,433,796
Zambia	77,623,257	121,460,059	91,621,872	86,707,103	139,492,575
Congo DR	96,995,559	110,757,767	94,744,037	107,292,297	51,309,998
Zimbabwe	85,011,870	64,410,400	56,692,716	62,649,120	104,347,329
Total	**1,247,283,144**	**1,266,698,652**	**1,055,014,489**	**1,216,475,145**	**1,525,317,505**

Source: National Statistical Offices and COMESA in COMESA annual Report 2002

Note: data for 2000 and 2001 is Provisional

Estimates for Angola, Djibouti, Eritrea and Congo are derived from partner Country trade Statistics

Tanzania ceased to be a member of COMESA in 2000. Hence trade statistics for Tanzania are excluded for all years to allow for annual comparison of overall COMESA trade.

Table 2: **Intra – COMESA Total Trade 1997 to 2001**

Code	Member State	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
AO	Angola	56,760,424	64,646,854	57,147,081	70,038,337	98,188,675
BI	Burundi	26,205,299	28,220,615	23,287,964	24,933,972	58,727,658
DJ	Djibouti	71,033,306	73,856,749	64,04,0862	77,515,561	83,286,652
EG	Egypt	175,408,337	156,230,561	179,081,200	237,879,409	304,853,224
ER	Eritrea	2,687,510	8,807,992	4,599,372	7,986,306	1,672,900
ET	Ethiopia	111,876,736	108,046,034	102,047,632	102,795,272	115,584,945
KE	Kenya	697,175,844	657,744,928	612,233,868	673,104,801	792,543,769
KM	Comoros	5,604,081	5,232,774	4,023,127	5,127,096	3,705,869
MG	Madagascar	56,616,636	51,935,323	68,749,674	82,517,682	39,725,231
MU	Mauritius	129,666,984	149,797,588	140,284,863	155,568,337	186,485,207
MW	Malawi	154,266,778	122,639,844	131,866,230	94,422,876	136,980,835
NA	Namibia	65,108,832	156,620,180	58,874,291	75,288,377	98,705,489
RW	Rwanda	129,356,876	88,547,153	80,029,399	63,720,317	172,198,674
SC	Seychelles	14,998,065	12,683,110	16,168,392	14,916,652	15,219,003
SD	Sudan	13,715,046	29,721,390	12,055,826	154,424,146	152,491,055
SZ	Swaziland	33,758,654	36,514,065	33,981,129	71,610,757	51,869,636
UG	Uganda	363,783,967	334,336,708	222,222,116	229,722,968	393,793,025
ZM	Zambia	174,001,442	272,458,502	188,652,192	240,291,261	227,076,955
CR	Congo DR	105,883,018	113,250,223	98,979,177	140,984,862	112,7677,652
ZW	Zimbabwe	340,762,541	326,798,392	258,441,264	255,664,282	153,176,941
	Total	**2,728,670,376**	**2,798,088,985**	**2,356,928,883**	**2,778,513,271**	**3,199,053,395**

Source: *National Statistical Offices in COMESA Annual Report 2002*

Note: Data for 2000 and 2001 is provisional

Estimates for Angola, Djibouti, Eritrea and Congo DR are derived from partner Country trade Statistics.

Tanzania ceased to be a member of COMESA in 2000. Hence trade statistics for Tanzania are excluded for all years to allow for annual comparison of overall COMESA trade.

Total trade is the sum of domestic exports, re-exports and imports

APPENDIX 2

LIST OF PEOPLE INTERVIEWED

Kunda Bornface	-	Senior Economist for Regional Trade, Ministry of Trade, Commerce and Industry (Zambia)
Babber Krishnan Dev	-	Vice President Zambia Association of Manufacturers (ZAM)
Sikunjongana Benard	-	Treasurer, Cross Border Traders Association of Zambia (CBTAZ)
Sanyikosa Robert	-	Senior Economist Zambia National Farmers Union (ZNFU)
Chapeshamano Chama	-	Acting Executive Director / Vice National Secretary,Economics Association of Zambia (EAZ)
Mali Emmanuel	-	Programmes Officer (EAZ)
Roger Ervin	-	Consultant / Managing Director, Global Market Solutions. – Washington D.C.

People Interviewed At The Secretariat

Mr. Mwencha, Erastus, J.O.	-	Secretary General
Mr. Ngwenya, Sindiso N.	-	Ass. Secretary General
Mr. Karangizi, Stephen R.	-	Director of Legal and Institutional Affairs
Dr. Chanthunya Charles L.	-	Director of Trade, Customs and Monetary Affairs
Dr. Kayagarara, Maclay	-	Coordinator, System Analysis and Design Project
Mr. Karake. Mwenshi	-	Public Relations Officer
Mrs Ichoya, Katherine	-	Senior Gender Affairs Officer
Mrs Manwele , Rosemary P.	-	Secretary, General's Office

Mr. Pearson, Mark	-	Regional Integration Advisor
Mr. Ngalande, Jifipa	-	Helpdesk Officer
Mrs Zulu , Catherine C	-	Librarian
Mr. Salamba, Evans	-	Temporary Library Assistance
Mr. Kayeyi, Felix	-	Senior Personnel Assistant
Ms Jere, Lolime	-	Secretary, Division of Administration and Finance
Mwendabai, Mwangala	-	Cleaner
Mr Kankya, Patrick Y.	-	Chief, Budget and Finance Services
Ms Manza, Nsandi	-	Project Accountant
Dr. Katongo, John W	-	Translator
Mr. Ngeleka, Gabriel K.B.	-	Temporary Translator
Mrs Malumani, Jorine M.	-	Acting Senior Secretary
Mr. Nkhanta, John	-	Documentation Clerk
Mr. Paraschand, Hurry	-	Senior Customs Affairs Officer
Mrs Chizyaka, Brenda M.	-	Secretary, Council of Bureaux
Mr. Mkandawire , Watipaso	-	Senior Investment Promotion Officer
Mr. McCoy Timothy	-	Consultant, Development of Investment Network Project
Mr. Simemba, Moses	-	AGOA Desk Officer
Mr. Kandolo, Pavice	-	Agricultural Intern
Ms Nshimbi. Isabel	-	Information Systems Analyst (WEBSITE)
Mr. Phiri, Matthew	-	Consultant, Information and Comm. Technology.
Mr. Ngoma, Aaron Support Specialist	-	Information and Coordination Technology

APPENDIX 3

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMESA SECRETARIAT INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

This project is an academic exercise and the information you give will be held in very strict confidence. Please answer the questions as completely and honestly as possible.

INSTRUCTIONS

Tick the answer or the number, which represents your answer.

SECTION A: Information About respondent

1. Sex Female 1 Male 2

2. Staff Category. Professional 1 Support Staff 2

3. Highest level of education attained. Grade 9 and below or its equivalent 1 Grade twelve or equivalent 2 University level 3

SECTION B: Job Related

4. What instruments were you given to help you settle down in the working environment here?

Induction tour	1
Code of conduct	2
Introduced to selected staff	3
Internal directory / staff rules	4
Full induction	5
None	6

For the following questions 5,6,7,8,9,and 10, use the ratings below for your answers.

1= Very Good 2 = Good 3= bad 4 = Very Bad

5. How do you rate the induction process at the COMESA Secretariat?

   1. 2. 3. 4.

6. How do you rate the flow of information from management to employees?

   1. 2. 3. 4.

7. How do you rate the flow of information from employees to management?

   1. 2. 3. 4.

8. How do you rate the relationship between management and employees?

   1. 2. 3. 4.

9. How is communication between your supervisor and yourself?

   1. 2. 3. 4.

10. In which areas would you like more information from management?

Routine	1
Job related	2
Latest Developments in COMESA	3
Activities in other Divisions	4
World trade	5
Other	6
Routine and latest information	7
Routine and job related	8
Routine and activities of other businesses	9
Routine and developments in COMESA	10

11. What methods would you like management to use **more** when communicating information to employees?

Notices / Memos / Letters	1
One-on-One	2

Meetings	3
Phone	4
E-mail	5
Notices, Letters, memos, and phone	6
Notices, letters, memos and one-on-one meetings	7
Notices, letters, memos and one-on-one	8
Email and meetings	9
Email and Internet	10
Email and notices, letters and memos	11
Meetings and phone	12
Email and phone	13

12. In which of the following methods would you like to receive technical assistance?

IT (email, Internet)	1
Notices, letters, memos	2
One-on-one	3
IT and Notices, Memos, Letters	4

13. Do employees suggest new ideas to supervisors on how work could best be done?

Yes 1 No 2

14. If your answer to question 13 is Yes, at what forum are these suggestions / recommendations made?

Meetings	1
Mission Reports	2
Other	3
Meetings and workshops	4
Meetings and mission reports	5

15. Are these suggestions taken into consideration?

Always	1
Sometimes	2
Rarely	3
Never	4

16. How often do you have meetings / briefings in your Division.

Weekly	1
Rarely	2
Never	3
Once in a while	4
When necessary	5

17. How often do you general staff meetings / briefing with all the staff at the Secretariat:

Once in a while	1
Once in a year	2
When necessary	3
Rarely	4
Never	5

18. What methods are used to create team spirit in your Division?

Dialogue 1 Consultative Meetings 2

Workshops 3 None 4

19. What methods are used to create team spirit at the Secretariat as a whole?

None 1 Christmas Party 2

Workshops 3 Other 4

20. Do supervisors give orders or information to subordinates on time?

Always 1 Sometimes 2 Rarely 3

Never 4

21. Does management consult employees on important issues before

implementing them?

Always 1 Sometimes 2 Rarely 3

Never 4

22. How familiar are you with the operations of other Divisions?

Very familiar 1 Quite familiar 2

Not familiar 3

23. Do you receive official information, or carry out orders from supervisors in other departments?

Often 1 Sometimes 2

Rarely 3 Never 4

24. Do you hear information from your colleagues before this information is released officially?

Yes 1 Sometimes 3

No 2 Never 4

25. How often do you receive complements from your supervisors?

Often 1 Sometimes 2 Rarely 3

Never 4

26. Does senior management visit you in your work place?

Yes 1 No 2

27. Would you like management to visit you in your work place?

Yes 1 No 2

28. Why do you think senior management should visit employees in their work places?

To:

Create Rapport 1

Resolve issues between supervisor and junior 2

Understand worker's situation 3

Give / obtain feedback 4

Listen and solve employee's problems 5

Give information 6

29. Is your office / desk housed within the same block where your Division is housed?

Yes 1 No 2

30. Do you think there is need to improve communication between management and employees at the COMESA Secretariat?

Yes 1 No 2

31. If your answer to question 30 is Yes, what would be the best way to improve this communication. (Tick only one in bold)

Regular meetings at both Divisions and Secretariat	1
Suggestion box for airing grievances	2
More social interacting	3
More in-house training on effective communication skills	4
More information sharing	5

Thank you for your cooperation

APPENDIX 4

CROSS TABULATIONS ON COMESA SECRETARIAT INTERNAL COMMUNICATION

ex * Areas requiring more Information from Management

Crosstab

Count

		Areas Requiring more Information from Management											
		Routine	ob Relate	Latest Development in COMESA	Activities of other Divisions	World Trad	Other	Routine and latest info	Routine+Job related	Routine + Activities of other Divisions	Routine + Development in COMESA	Latest Development in the regio World Trad	Total
ex	Femal	5	1	2				1	2				11
	Male	2	2	2	3	4	3	1	5	1	1	1	25
otal		7	3	4	3	4	3	2	7	1	1	1	36

ucational Level * Areas requiring more Information from Management

Crosstab

ount

		Areas Requiring more Information from Management											
		Routine	Job Related	Latest Development in COMESA	Activities of other Divisions	World Trade	Other	Routine and latest info	Routine+Job related	Routine + Activities of other Divisions	Routine + Developments in COMESA	Latest Development in the regior World Trade	Total
ucationa	GRD 9		1	2									3
vel	GRD 12	4	1	2				1	3				11
	Universit	3	1		3	4	3	1	4	1	1	1	22
tal		7	3	4	3	4	3	2	7	1	1	1	36

Educational Level * Knowledge of Operations in other Divisions

Crosstab

Count

		Knowledge of Operations in other Divisions			
		Very Familiar	Quite Familiar	Not Familiar	Total
Educational Level	GRD 9			3	3
	GRD 12	2	3	6	11
	University	1	18	3	22
Total		3	21	12	36

Staff Category * Knowledge of Operations in other Divisions

Crosstab

Count

		Knowledge of Operations in other Divisions			
		Very Familiar	Quite Familiar	Not Familiar	Total
Staff Category	Professional		18		18
	Support	3	3	12	18
Total		3	21	12	36

Sex * Knowledge of Operations in other Divisions

Crosstab

Count

		Knowledge of Operations in other Divisions			
		Very Familiar	Quite Familiar	Not Familiar	Total
Sex	Female	2	1	8	11
	Male	1	20	4	25
Total		3	21	12	36

Sex * Management Visits to junior Staff

Crosstab

Count

		Managent Visits to junior Staff		
		Yes	No	Total
Sex	Female	5	6	11
	Male	17	8	25
Total		22	14	36

Sex * Reasons Employees want to be Visited

Crosstab

Count

		Reasons Employees want to be Visited						
		Creat Rapport	Resolve issues between immediate supervisor and junior	Understand employees´ situation	Give/obtain Feedback	Listen to and solve employee´s problems	To give information	Total
Sex	Female	1	1	1	4	3	1	1
	Male	11			5	5	4	25
Total		12	1	1	9	8	5	36

ex * Communication Methods requiring technical assistance

Crosstab

Count

		Communication Methods requiring technical assistance				
		IT(e-mail, intranet)	Notices/Memos/Letters	One on One	IT + Notices/Memos/Letters	Total
Sex	Female	7	2	1	1	11
	Male	19	5	1		25
Total		26	7	2	1	36

lucational Level * Communication Methods requiring technical assistance

Crosstab

Count

		Communication Methods requiring technical assistance				
		IT(e-mail, intranet)	Notices/Memos/Letters	One on One	IT + Notices/Memos/Letters	Total
Educational Level	GRD 9	2			1	3
	GRD 12	8	2	1		11
	University	16	5	1		22
Total		26	7	2	1	36

aff Category * Communication Methods requiring technical assistance

Crosstab

Count

		Communication Methods requiring technical assistance				
		IT(e-mail, intranet)	Notices/Memos/Letters	One on One	IT + Notices/Memos/Letters	Total
Staff Category	Professional	14	3	1		18
	Support	12	4	1	1	18
Total		26	7	2	1	36

Educational Level * Orders from Supervisors in Other Divisions

Crosstab

Count

		Orders from Supervisors in Other Divisions		
		Yes	No	Total
Educational Level	GRD 9		3	3
	GRD 12	5	6	11
	University	5	17	22
Total		10	26	36

Staff Category * Orders from Supervisors in Other Divisions

Crosstab

Count

		Orders from Supervisors in Other Divisions		
		Yes	No	Total
Staff Category	Professional	4	14	18
	Support	6	12	18
Total		10	26	36

Educational Level * Frequency of Compliments from Supervisor

Crosstab

Count

		Frequency of Compliments from Supervisor				
		Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
Educational Level	GRD 9		2	1		3
	GRD 12			11		11
	University	7	2	12	1	22
Total		7	4	24	1	36

Sex * Frequency of Compliments from Supervisor

Crosstab

Count

		Frequency of Compliments from Supervisor				
		Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
Sex	Female		1	10		11
	Male	7	3	14	1	25
Total		7	4	24	1	36

Staff Category * Frequency of Compliments from Supervisor

Crosstab

Count

		Frequency of Compliments from Supervisor				
		Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never	Total
Staff Category	Professional	7	2	9		18
	Support		2	15	1	18
Total		7	4	24	1	36

Educational Level * Management Visits to junior Staff

Crosstab

Count

		Managent Visits to junior Staff		
		Yes	No	Total
Educational Level	GRD 9	1	2	3
	GRD 12	3	8	11
	University	18	4	22
Total		22	14	36

Staff Category * Management Visits to junior Staff

Crosstab

Count

		Managent Visits to junior Staff		
		Yes	No	Total
Staff Category	Professional	15	3	18
	Support	7	11	18
Total		22	14	36

Educational Level * Prefer to be Visited by Management

Crosstab

Count

		Prefer to be Visited by Management	
		Yes	Total
Educational Level	GRD 9	3	3
	GRD 12	11	11
	University	22	22
Total		36	36

Educational Level * Reasons Employees want to be Visited

Crosstab

Count

		Reasons Employees want to be Visited						
		Creat Rapport	Resolve issues between immediate supervisor and junior	Understand employees' situation	Give/obtain Feedback	Listen to and solve employee's problems	To give information	Total
Educational Level	GRD 9				2		1	3
	GRD 12	2	1	1	3	3	1	11
	University	10			4	5	3	22
Total		12	1	1	9	8	5	36

Staff Category * Reasons Employees want to be Visited

Crosstab

Count

		Reasons Employees want to be Visited						
		Creat Rapport	Resolve issues between immediate supervisor and junior	Understand employees' situation	Give/obtain Feedback	Listen to and solve employee's problems	To give information	Total
Staff Categor	Professional	8			3	4	3	18
	Support	4	1	1	6	4	2	18
Total		12	1	1	9	8	5	36

Educational Level * Rating Downward Information Flow

Crosstab

Count

		Rating Downward Information Flow				
		Very Good	Good	Bad	Very Bad	Total
Educational Level	GRD 9			2	1	3
	GRD 12		3	6	2	11
	University	1	18	1	2	22
Total		1	21	9	5	36

Staff Category * Rating Downward Information Flow

Crosstab

Count

		Rating Downward Information Flow				
		Very Good	Good	Bad	Very Bad	Total
Staff Category	Professional	1	17			18
	Support		4	9	5	18
Total		1	21	9	5	36

Sex * Rating Downward Information Flow

Crosstab

Count

		Rating Downward Information Flow				
		Very Good	Good	Bad	Very Bad	Total
Sex	Female		1	6	4	11
	Male	1	20	3	1	25
Total		1	21	9	5	36

Staff Category * Areas requiring more Information from Management

Crosstab

Count

		Areas Requiring more Information from Management										
		Routine	ob Relate	Latest evelopmer in COMES	Activities of other Divisions	orld Trad	Other	outine an latest info	outine+Jol related	Routine + Activities of other Divisions	Routine + evelopmer in COMES	Latest evelopmer in the regio World Trad	Total
Staff Cate	Professio		1		3	4	3		4	1	1	1	18
	Support	7	2	4				2	3				18
Total		7	3	4	3	4	3	2	7	1	1	1	36

Staff Category * Rating Induction Process

Crosstab

Count

		Rating Induction Process				
		Very Good	Good	Bad	Very Bad	Total
Staff Category	Professional	1	6	8	3	18
	Support		8	7	3	18
Total		1	14	15	6	36

Educational Level * Rating Induction Process

Crosstab

Count

		Rating Induction Process				
		Very Good	Good	Bad	Very Bad	Total
Educational Level	GRD 9		1	1	1	3
	GRD 12		4	5	2	11
	University	1	9	9	3	22
Total		1	14	15	6	36

Sex * Rating Induction Process

Crosstab

Count

		Rating Induction Process				
		Very Good	Good	Bad	Very Bad	Total
Sex	Female		4	5	2	11
	Male	1	10	10	4	25
Total		1	14	15	6	36

Staff Category * Rating Upward Information Flow

Crosstab

Count

		Rating Upward Information Flow			
		Good	Bad	Very Bad	Total
Staff Category	Professional	9	9		18
	Support	3	12	3	18
Total		12	21	3	36

Educational Level * Rating Upward Information Flow

Crosstab

Count

		Rating Upward Information Flow			
		Good	Bad	Very Bad	Total
Educational Level	GRD 9	1	2		3
	GRD 12	1	8	2	11
	University	10	11	1	22
Total		12	21	3	36

Staff Category * Rating Employee/Employer Relationship

Crosstab

Count

		Rating Employee/Employer R´ship			
		Good	Bad	Very Bad	Total
Staff Category	Professional	8	10		18
	Support	3	13	2	18
Total		11	23	2	36

Educational Level * Rating Employee/Employer Relationship

Crosstab

Count

		Rating Employee/Employer R´ship			
		Good	Bad	Very Bad	Total
Educational Level	GRD 9		3		3
	GRD 12	2	7	2	11
	University	9	13		22
Total		11	23	2	36

Staff Category * Rating Supervisor/Subordinate Relationship

Crosstab

Count

		Rating Supervisor/Subordinate R´ship				
		Very Good	Good	Bad	Very Bad	Total
Staff Category	Professional	7	8	3		18
	Support	2	8	7	1	18
Total		9	16	10	1	36

Staff Category * Existence of the Grapevine

Crosstab

Count

		Existance of the Grapevine			
		Yes	No	Sometimes	Total
Staff Category	Professional	6	10	2	18
	Support	16	2		18
Total		22	12	2	36

Staff Category * Managements receptiveness to Employee Suggestions

Crosstab

Count

		Management´s receptiveness to Employee Suggestions			
		Always	Sometimes	Never	Total
Staff Category	Professional	11	5	2	18
	Support		3	15	18
Total		11	8	17	36

Educational Level * Management's receptiveness to Employee Suggestions

Crosstab

Count

		Management's receptiveness to Employee Suggestions			
		Always	Sometimes	Never	Total
Educational Level	GRD 9			3	3
	GRD 12		3	8	11
	University	11	5	6	22
Total		11	8	17	36

Staff Category * Forum for Input to suggestions to management

Crosstab

Count

		Forum for Input to (13)					
		Meetings	Mission Reports	Other	Meetings and workshops	Meetings + Mission Reports	Total
Staff Category	Professional	6	5			7	18
	Support	15		2	1		18
Total		21	5	2	1	7	36

Staff Category * Methods for creating Team Spirit at Secretarial Level

Crosstab

Count

		Methods for creating Team Spirit at Secretarial Level				
		None	Christmas Party	Workshop	Other	Total
Staff Category	Professional		9	7	2	18
	Support	12	5	1		18
Total		12	14	8	2	36

Educational Level * Methods for creating Team Spirit at Secretarial Level

Crosstab

Count

		Methods for creating Team Spirit at Secretarial Level				
		None	Christmas Party	Workshop	Other	Total
Educational Level	GRD 9	1	2			3
	GRD 12	9	2			11
	University	2	10	8	2	22
Total		12	14	8	2	36

Sex * Methods for creating Team Spirit at Secretarial Level

Crosstab

Count

		Methods for creating Team Spirit at Secretarial Level				
		None	Christmas Party	Workshop	Other	Total
Sex	Female	6	5			11
	Male	6	9	8	2	25
Total		12	14	8	2	36

Sex * Methods for creating Team Spirit at Division Level

Crosstab

Count

		Methods for creating Team Spirit at Division Level					
		Dialogue	Consultative Meetings	Workshops	None	Workshop + consultative meetings	Total
Sex	Female				11		11
	Male	6	8	2	8	1	25
Total		6	8	2	19	1	36

Methods for creating Team Spirit at Division Level * Sex

Crosstab

Count

		Sex		
		Female	Male	Total
Methods for creating Team Spirit at Division Level	Dialogue		6	6
	Consultative Meetings		8	8
	Workshops		2	2
	None	11	8	19
	Workshop + consultative meetings		1	1
Total		11	25	36

Methods for creating Team Spirit at Division Level * Educational Level

Crosstab

Count

		Educational Level			
		GRD 9	GRD 12	University	Total
Methods for creating Team Spirit at Division Level	Dialogue		1	5	6
	Consultative Meetings			8	8
	Workshops			2	2
	None	3	10	6	19
	Workshop + consultative meetings			1	1
Total		3	11	22	36

Methods for creating Team Spirit at Division Level * Staff Category

Crosstab

Count

		Staff Category		
		Professional	Support	Total
Methods for creating Team Spirit at Division Level	Dialogue	5	1	6
	Consultative Meetings	8		8
	Workshops	2		2
	None	2	17	19
	Workshop + consultative meetings	1		1
Total		18	18	36

Preferred Method of Communication from Management * Sex

Crosstab

Count

		Sex		
		Female	Male	Total
Prefered Method of Communication from Management	Notices/Letters/Memos	1	2	3
	One on One		2	2
	Meetings	4	5	9
	Phone	3	1	4
	E-mail		1	1
	Notices, letters, memos and phone	1		1
	Notices, letters,memos + One on One + Meetings	1	1	2
	Notices, letters, memos + One on One	1		1
	E-mail + Meetings		4	4
	E-mail + Intranet		2	2
	E-mail + Notices,letters and memos		1	1
	Meetings + Phone		3	3
	E-mail + Phone		3	3
Total		11	25	36

Preferred Method of Communication from Management * Educational Level

Crosstab

Count

		Educational Level			
		GRD 9	GRD 12	University	Total
Prefered Method of Communication from Management	Notices/Letters/Memos		2	1	3
	One on One	1		1	2
	Meetings	1	3	5	9
	Phone		4		4
	E-mail			1	1
	Notices, letters, memos and phone		1		1
	Notices, letters,memos + One on One + Meetings	1		1	2
	Notices, letters, memos + One on One		1		1
	E-mail + Meetings			4	4
	E-mail + Intranet			2	2
	E-mail + Notices,letters and memos			1	1
	Meetings + Phone			3	3
	E-mail + Phone			3	3
Total		3	11	22	36

Preferred Method of Communication from Management * Staff Category

Crosstab

Count

		Staff Category		
		Professional	Support	Total
Prefered Method of Communication from Management	Notices/Letters/Memos		3	3
	One on One		2	2
	Meetings	3	6	9
	Phone		4	4
	E-mail	1		1
	Notices, letters, memos and phone		1	1
	Notices, letters,memos + One on One + Meetings	1	1	2
	Notices, letters, memos + One on One		1	1
	E-mail + Meetings	4		4
	E-mail + Intranet	2		2
	E-mail + Notices,letters and memos	1		1
	Meetings + Phone	3		3
	E-mail + Phone	3		3
Total		18	18	36

Staff Category * Need to Improve Management Communication

Crosstab

Count

		Need to Improve Management Communication	
		Yes	Total
Staff Category	Professional	18	18
	Support	18	18
Total		36	36

Sex * Suggested ways for Improving Management Communication

Crosstab

Count

		Suggested ways for Improving Management Communication					
		Regular Meetings at both Divisional and Secretarial levels	Suggetion Box for airing grievances	More Social Interractions	More in-house training	More information	Total
Sex	Female	3	1	6	1		11
	Male	7	1	10	5	2	25
Total		10	2	16	6	2	36

Staff Category * Suggested ways for Improving Management Communication

Crosstab

Count

		Suggested ways for Improving Management Communication					
		Regular Meetings at both Divisional and Secretarial levels	Suggetion Box for airing grievances	More Social Interractions	More in-house training	More information	Total
Staff Category	Professional	3	1	7	5	2	
	Support	7	1	9	1		
Total		10	2	16	6	2	

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APPENDIX 5: INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. **An interview guide for: The Economics Association of Zambia (EAZ); Cross Border Traders of Zambia (CBTZ); Zambia National Farmers Union (ZNFU); and Zambia Manufacturers Association (ZMA).**

   a. As an association, what are your contributions to Zambia's national development?

   b. What are your links with COMESA?

   c. What role does the ministry of Trade, Commerce and Industry (MTCI) play in the information sharing between your institution and COMESA?

   d. Does the current arrangement meet all your major information needs, related to trade within the COMESA region?

   e. If your answer to question (d) is 'no', what major difficulties do you face in the current arrangement?

2. **An interview guide for the ministry of Trade, Commerce and Industry (MTCI).**

   a. How do you coordinate COMESA trade related information among the various stakeholders in Zambia, particularly the following: EAZ, CBTZ, ZNFU and ZMA?

   b. What major problems do you face in carrying out this role?