

DESIGNING A BUSINESS INFORMATION SERVICE

- A PROPOSAL FOR ZAMBIA -

by

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Dedicated to

*My dear wife Ma-Mwangala Mampi
and children Mwangala, Namuchana,
Wakumelo and Silimwe with love*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACE:	Appropriate Choice of Equipment
CCI:	Chamber of Commerce and Industry
CSIR:	Council for Scientific and Industrial Research
CSO:	Census and Statistics Office
DBZ:	Development Bank of Zambia
DTEVT:	Department of Technical Education and Vocational Training
DTO:	Dansk Teknisk Polysningstjeneste
EEC:	European Economic Community
FID:	International Federation for Documentation
FINDECO:	Finance Development Corporation
GPI:	General Information Programme
IDA:	Industrial Development Act
IFLA:	International Federation of Library Associations
INDECO:	Industrial Development Corporation
INFOTEC:	Technical Information Service
INSDOC:	Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre
ITC:	International Trade Centre
LIDS:	Libraries Information and Documentation Services
MCI:	Ministry of Commerce and Industry
MEF:	Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation
MIMSU:	Mining Industry Manpower Services Unit
MINDECO:	Mining Industrial Development Corporation
MIS:	Management Information Systems
MSB:	Management Services Board
NATIS:	National Information Systems
NCSR:	National Council for Scientific Research
NIPA:	National Institute of Public Administration
PCC:	President's Citizenship College
PTA:	Preferential Trade Area
SADCC:	Southern Africa Development Coordinating Conference
SCOHLZA:	Standing Conference of Head Librarians of Zambia
SDI:	Selective Dissemination of Information
SENDOC:	Small Enterprises National Documentation Centre
SIDO:	Small Industry Development Organisation
S & T:	Science and Technology

STI: Scientific and Technical Information
TDA: Trade Development Authority
TIDC: Trade Information and Documentation Centre
TNDP: Third National Development Plan
UAI: Universal Availability of Information
UAP: Universal Availability of Publications
UBC: Universal Bibliographical Control
UNCTAD: United Nations Conference for Trade and Development
UNDP: United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO: United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNIDO: United Nations Industrial Development Organisation
UNISIST: World Science Information System
UNZA: University of Zambia
WIPO: World Intellectual Property Organisation
ZCCM: Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines
ZIMCO: Zambia Industrial and Mining Corporation
ZINCOM: Zambia Industrial and Commercial Association
ZLA: Zambia Library Association
ZLS: Zambia Library Services

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undergoing in-service training courses at Mindolo's Industry and Commerce Programme. From the lectures and talks on sources of information delivered to course participants, there emerged the desire to study the patterns of information use, needs and its sources by business executives in Zambia. This need arose because it was noticed, by this writer, that course participants demonstrated a lack of appreciation of the value of information to industry and ignorance of the various sources of information. This study provides the opportunity to re-determine future lectures based on the experiences, practices and opinions of managers who use information in Zambia for industrial and commercial purposes.

Thirdly as a contribution to the development process, it was apparent that the library profession in Zambia has not made any meaningful and constructive contribution to the country's development aspirations. Recognising that economic success depends largely on how the business community is supported, since it creates wealth, this study is also an attempt to foster an understanding of the information needs of management in industry and commerce and the role LIDS can play in information provision. Thus this study is a contribution to the literature on user needs, awareness and value of information for business in Zambia.

Objectives

The objectives of this study are summarised as follows:

1. To discover the information needs of industrial and commercial enterprises in Zambia and the sources of their information.
2. To investigate and analyse the provision of information services to commercial and industrial users.
3. To stimulate and provoke further discussion on the needs of users of information for business within and outside the library profession.
4. To open a dialogue between users of business information and its providers.

5. To suggest and enlighten the business community in Zambia of the usefulness and role of information services available at their disposal.
6. To propose a nation-wide business information network that would cater for the information needs of all those engaged in commercial and industrial enterprises.
7. To suggest the most effective methods of alleviating the difficulties inherent in using and finding sources of industrial and commercial information.

As the central theme of this dissertation is to design a nation-wide business information service, the formula developed by Dr Maurice Lundu, Librarian of the University of Zambia (Ndola Campus) on developing nation-wide library services was tested. The formula which could be applied to any society states:

Library institutions + library roles/functions + library users = National Library service.²

In applying this formula, this thesis attempts to identify the role of LIDS in Chapters 4 and 5; users of business information in Chapter 3; sources of business information in Chapter 4; and goes on to suggest a nation-wide business information service in Chapter 6.

The thesis begins with a general outline of background information on the economic situation and structure of industry and commerce in Zambia (Chapters 1 and 2). This includes brief descriptions of the mining industry, manufacturing and agricultural industries, industrial policy and legislation; the structure of the para-statal and private sectors, banking and non-banking financial institutions, small scale industry developments and research and development services.

Chapter 3 analyses business information in Zambia based on a questionnaire distributed to the business community in Zambia. The findings of this investigation are presented and consist of types of information used, difficulties of obtaining information, acquisition

problems, and how information is used. Chapter 4 discusses the providers and potential providers of business information obtainable from various sources (ie government departments and ministries, professional, trade and commercial organisations, chambers of commerce, research institutions, trade literature and training institutions).

The fifth chapter debates the need for a business information centre, advances the advantages it would provide, and gives examples of information services in four different countries. The role of international organisations in promoting information services for industry in developing countries is also mentioned.

The concluding chapters dwell on the proposals for nation-wide information services for industry (Chapter 6); discussing possible options, the implications of establishing such a centre, and considers accessibility of information through provincial access points. It also considers creating an advisory board, and the functions and structure of the proposed network. The thesis concludes with Chapter 7 which draws observations and recommendations towards an information service for the emerging entrepreneurs to make economic and industrial diversification a reality.

This study was approached without a specific hypothesis to test.

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CHAPTER 1

ECONOMIC SITUATION AND STRUCTURE

CHAPTER 1

ECONOMIC SITUATION AND STRUCTURE

1.0 General

A glance at Zambia's economic development indicates that at independence, almost 20 years ago, the country had inherited from the Central African Federation an economic structure which had characteristics of a dependent economy. Dependent because economic services which constitute the essential infrastructure for development (i.e. power, transport, health and education) were all concentrated in Southern Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe). Industrial activities before independence were centred on the mining industry and its supportive enterprises. The abundant natural resources were not exploited for her own industrialisation. Thus the majority of industrial and commercial companies operating in Zambia were subsidiaries of Rhodesian and South African based multi-nationals. Zambia and Malawi were reduced to the position of a market for the products of the industrialised south. Hence her continued dependence on the south and elsewhere for all her imports.

After independence, Zambia found she had immense problems despite a favourable and flourishing mining industry. Her position as a land-locked country was further worsened by:

- a) the dual economy and dominance of copper.
- b) shortage of skilled manpower.
- c) dependence on the south for all her trade routes.
- d) dependence on the south for over 60% of imports¹.

Like most other developing countries, Zambia's aspirations were to attain economic independence without which political independence is in itself meaningless. In order to solve the problems above, Zambia took important steps to embark on a process of planned economic and social development, in the form of periodical national development plans. The first initial plans were the Emergency

Development Plan (1964) and the Transitional Development Plan (1965-66). Subsequent national development activities have been on five year periods. The strategies and activities of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd national development plans were geared to development of the infrastructure and diversification of the economy. Broadly, much emphasis was laid on:

- a) diversification of the economy (away from copper).
- b) rapid development of the rural economy and spread of rural economy.
- c) development of transport networks.
- d) development of human resources².

Successful implementation of these plans yielded a growth in the manufacturing sector. The programme of industrialisation resulted in the establishment of several new industries such as sugar, textiles, milling, nitrogenous fertilizers, fruit canning and metal fabrication.

On the other hand, a worsening international monetary and economic situation, the energy crisis and the Rhodesian problem, the continuous fluctuations of copper prices, inflation and critical shortage of manpower, delayed the implementation of the 3rd national development plan³.

1.1 Economic Reforms

The most significant aspect of economic development has been the introduction of a series of measures giving the government participatory status in industry and in some cases complete take over. These measures were imperative as whole sectors of the economy from retail and wholesale trade to manufacturing and mining and even agriculture were in the control of expatriates. The expatriate companies derived substantial profits from their businesses, most of which were repatriated abroad, rather than being re-invested for the future development of Zambia. This was detrimental to Zambia's

interests and led to the realisation that Zambia should manage, control and own her own resources.

The economic reforms introduced by President Kaunda in 1968⁴ were designed to:

- a) acquire state control of most major means of production and services.
- b) set a firm foundation for the development of genuine Zambian business.
- c) reduce the influence of foreign and resident expatriate control of business in the country.

In the same reforms the government acquired controlling interests in 26 major companies in the fields of wholesaling, retailing, building materials and transportation. Companies were directed to plough back profits for re-investment in Zambia. In 1969 and 1972 further economic reforms were made. This time the government assumed controlling interest of 51% of the giant mining companies. A state owned commercial bank was created and all foreign owned insurance companies and building societies were nationalised.

Successes have been achieved in ensuring that ownership of industrial and commercial enterprises was Zambian based, including the development of Zambian indigenous entrepreneurship.

1.2 The Mining Industry

In spite of the genuine efforts made by the government towards economic diversification, the copper-mining industry continues to be the main-stay of the Zambian economy. Copper exports account for 30% of the total GDP and 95% of all foreign exchange earnings⁵. Other minerals mined in Zambia, either alongside copper or separately, include zinc, lead, vanadium, manganese, coal and cobalt, a by-product of copper and nickel processing. Revenue from copper depends on world prices which are subject to fluctuations. Coal

production has made Zambia self-sufficient in her coal requirements.

1.3 Manufacturing Industry

There has been some growth in the manufacturing industry, but commercial and industrial activities have yet to become truly Zambian based. This sector of the economy still heavily depends not only on imported foreign technology but also on raw materials, intermediate and finished products, leading to excessive foreign exchange spending. With the exception of food and drink products, production of manufactured consumer goods is still insufficient.

Manufacturing output is growing steadily. Outstanding in this sector are chemicals, textiles, clothing, foodstuffs, beverages and tobacco industries. Others include copper refinery, sugar refinery, edible oil products, rubber moulding, fertilisers, explosives and sulphuric acids for the mines. The Industrial Development Corporation (Indeco) plans to embark on major industrial projects such as weaving of cloth made from synthetic fibres, production for phosphates based fertilisers, wood pulp and paper, steel and iron manufacturing⁶.

1.4 Agricultural Industry

Agricultural industry stands second only to the copper mining industry in importance in the national economy. The major objective of this sector of the economy is to increase national agricultural production so as to achieve self-sufficiency in food products and, as President Kaunda put it, "*to make agriculture the basis of industrialisation and industrialisation the basis for agriculture*"⁷. Whilst aiming for self-sufficiency in crop and livestock production, the agricultural policy also lays emphasis on the need to improve the standard of living of the rural community.

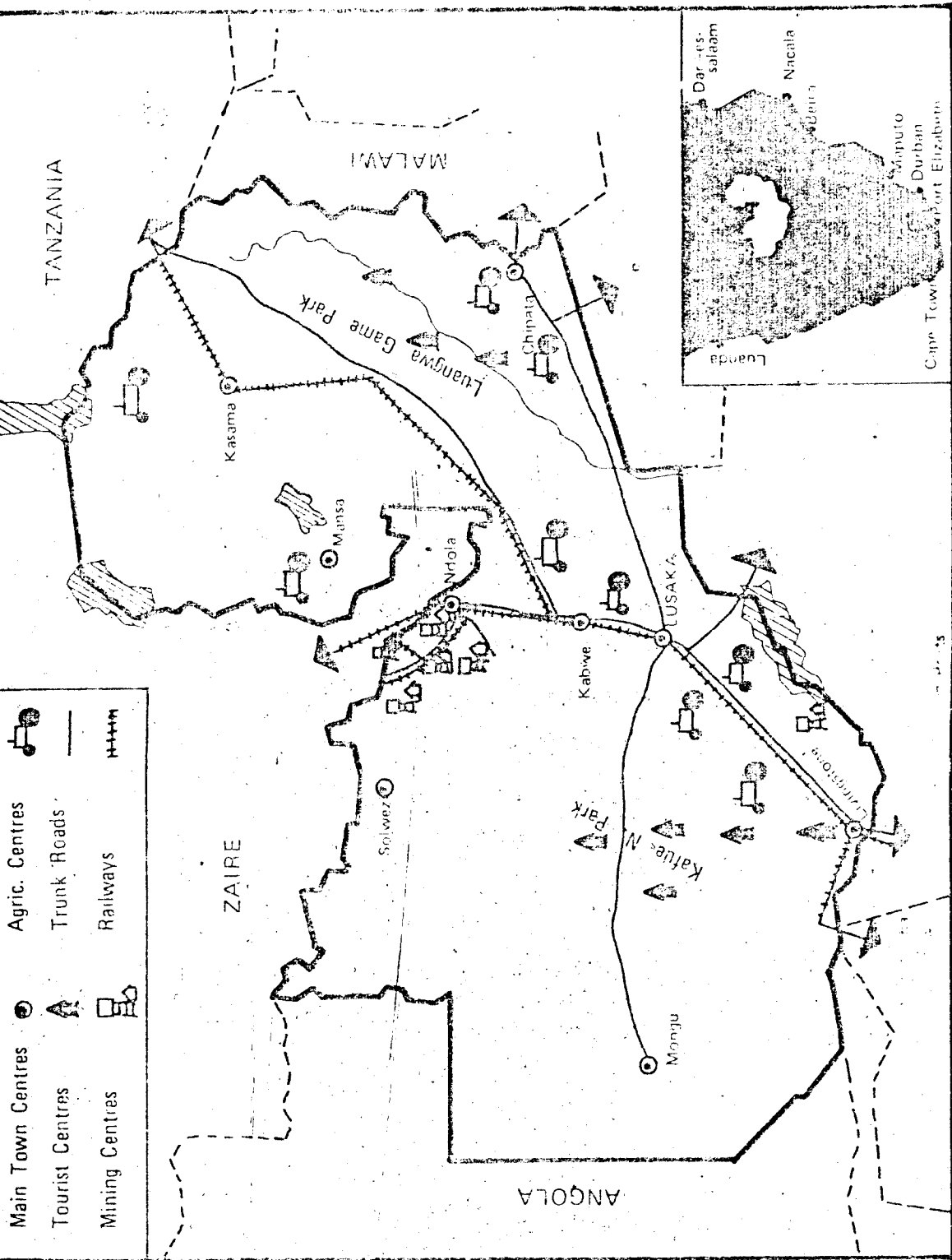


FIGURE 1: Agricultural, Commercial and Industrial Areas of Main Concentration

Source: Zambia in Brief HGM '79 Souvenir Booklet

The commercial farming sector produces mainly maize, beef, milk, tobacco, pigs and poultry, groundnuts, cotton, and vegetables. This sector is mainly concentrated along the line of rail, near to the urban areas in Southern, Central, Copperbelt and Eastern provinces (see map Figure 1).

The contribution of the rural farmer is significant, as 60% of maize, the staple food of the Zambian people, is produced by rural small farmers⁸. Despite this, Zambia still imports maize to meet the national requirements. On the other hand, Zambia is an exporter of sugar and day old chicks to neighbouring countries.

1.5 Trade and Tourism

In 1980 Zambia exported K74,000,000 (£46,620,000) worth of Zambian products⁹. The products included cement, raw and processed ivory, tobacco, bottles, copper ware and cables, vegetables, day old chicks, clothing, tyres and tubes and gemstones. Zambia's trading partners include the United Kingdom, West Germany, the United States of America and South Africa as the main suppliers of finished goods and machinery; neighbouring countries in the region; Japan and China.

In addition to being a signatory to the Lome Convention (1975), which gave African, Caribbean and Pacific countries unlimited tariff-free access to the European Economic Community, Zambia is also a signatory to the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) for Eastern and Southern African region. The PTA aims to promote cooperation and development in all fields of economic activity, particularly trade, customs, industry, transport, communications and agriculture in the region¹⁰.

Tourism is emerging as a thriving industry following the political settlement in Zimbabwe. Apart from earning the much needed foreign exchange, tourism contributes towards the development of other industries such as the handicrafts industry, which has tremendous

attractions to tourists, the clothing industry, agro-industries and hotel expansion.

1.6 Industrial Policy

Zambia's industrial policy has changed little since independence. The policy seeks to pursue vigorously rapid and sustained industrialisation. Divided into manufacturing, mining, private sector and state participation the broad guidelines stated by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (1966) and Party guidelines (1974) are:

- a) to encourage industries that produce import substitution goods.
- b) to support the establishment of industries that have a large potential for employment opportunities using local raw materials.
- c) to encourage industries which are export oriented as well as making the country self-sufficient¹¹.

The policy provides a series of incentives designed to stimulate rapid expansion of existing industries and attraction of new industries. These incentives are provided through various legislation, viz the Customs and Excise Act, Income Tax Act, Pioneer Industries Act, and the Industrial Development Act.

On mining, the policy seeks to expand local secondary industries to utilize to the maximum the primary products of mining. It also encourages the manufacturing of equipment and tools within Zambia to meet mining requirements; and diversification into other minerals through the operation of small mines.

Under the philosophy of humanism¹², state participation is designed to guarantee the control of the economy by Zambian people, and to reduce foreign influence in shaping national destiny. It is also designed to prevent exploitation of the masses. The policy on state participation aims at directing new industries to depressed areas of the economy, thus reducing the imbalance between the regions

including new ventures involving private investors. In addition the policy encourages local entrepreneurs to move away from retail and distributive trade into manufacturing fields.

1.7 Industrial Legislation

The Industrial Development Act¹³, which has become the drive behind the government's programme of achieving economic independence, was enacted in 1977. Under the Act foreign private investment in new industries is encouraged to generate employment, especially in the rural areas. Potential investors enjoy a 10-year guaranteed immunity from nationalisation. Investors who set up "priority industries" receive incentives such as preferential treatment with respect to government purchasing, granting and processing of import licences and rebates on customs duty payable on capital equipment, raw materials and other intermediate goods. Such industries include those which utilize raw materials and production of raw materials and intermediate goods which are used by other industries.

Since its enactment, manufacturing licences issued under the Act have been increasing steadily. For instance, 308 licences were issued in 1980 out of which 226 were for new establishments, as opposed to 269 licences issued in 1979¹⁴. However, since investors seem to prefer the line-of-rail, where good communication facilities exist, the Act has had to be amended, with the intention of offering more attractive incentives for industries in rural areas.

In addition to the Industrial Development Act (IDA), the Small Industries Development Act¹⁵ was enacted in 1981. This aims to supplement the IDA in accelerating the development of rural areas, the diversification of the economy and the development of Zambian entrepreneurship. The Act provides for the creation of the Small Industries Development Organisation (SIDO) which has since been established with the assistance of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO).

The development of this legislation is a result of the government's realisation that large scale monopolies were not the answer to the country's industrial aspirations.

The functions of SIDO are discussed in Chapter 2 within the context of the structure of Zambian industry.

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CHAPTER 2

STRUCTURE OF ZAMBIAN COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

CHAPTER 2

STRUCTURE OF ZAMBIAN COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

2.0 General

In Chapter 1 I have discussed in brief how the economy is structured and the influences that led to the participation of the government in industry and commerce. In this chapter I shall discuss the organisation of industry and commerce; particularly the activities of the major para-statal organisations as well as the private sector. Mention is also made of the small-industry sector and research and development activities in industry.

Zambia's industrial and commercial structure is seen in the light of the economic reforms of 1968 and 1972 which have been described in Chapter 1. The reforms effectively divided industry and commerce into two major camps: those run by the state (para-statal) and those run by private companies (private sector). The former consists of large leading undertakings controlling key areas of the economy while the latter consists mainly of small and medium-sized firms.

Following the economic reforms, the government created a number of agencies to run the nationalised and partially nationalised firms according to their nature of operation. Thus the Industrial Development Corporation (Indeco), which was created during the federal era mainly to provide industrial loans, was re-organised to look after the manufacturing sector. Similarly other organisations were created to take charge of various sectors of the economy, viz the National Transport Corporation took charge of the transportation sector; the National Import and Export Corporation took charge of the retail and wholesale trade sector; the Mining Development Corporation took charge of the mining industry; the Rural Development Corporation took charge of the agricultural and rural development sector; and the Finance and Industrial Development Corporation took charge of the financial sector. The National Energy Corporation

is concerned with energy and the National Hotels Development Corporation with hotels. All these corporations were put under the umbrella of the Zambia Industrial and Mining Corporation (ZIMCO) which dominates industrial and commercial activities in Zambia.

2.1 The Para-statal Sector (ZIMCO)

This sector, as mentioned above, is controlled through ZIMCO. With net assets of over K2600 million (£1638m) and a turnover of K2100 million (K1323m) in 1981, ZIMCO is the largest company in independent Africa¹. ZIMCO's organisational structure and activities are described below.

2.1.1 ZCCM and MINDECO

Mining in Zambia started some 80 years ago with the advent of European explorations and settlement. Before that there is evidence that the local population had mined low grade oxide on a small scale over 700 years ago². Mineral exploitation started with a gold mine while copper mining started in 1923. Large scale explorations have led to the discovery and development of rich and extensive sulphide deposits underlying the oxides.

There are now eight giant copper mines, one lead and zinc mine, one coal mine and a few mines of manganese, gypsum, silica, sand, feldspar, and other products. The mining industry has undergone major re-organisations since 1970 with the transition from foreign control to state control. The former foreign controlled companies, Anglo-American Corporation and Roan Selection Trust, were re-organised to become the Nchanga Consolidated Copper Mines and Roan Consolidated Mines. Recently in March 1982 these two giants were merged to become the Zambia Consolidated Copper Mines (ZCCM), transforming it into one of the largest mining companies in the world, (possibly the 2nd largest)². ZCCM is 60% state owned.

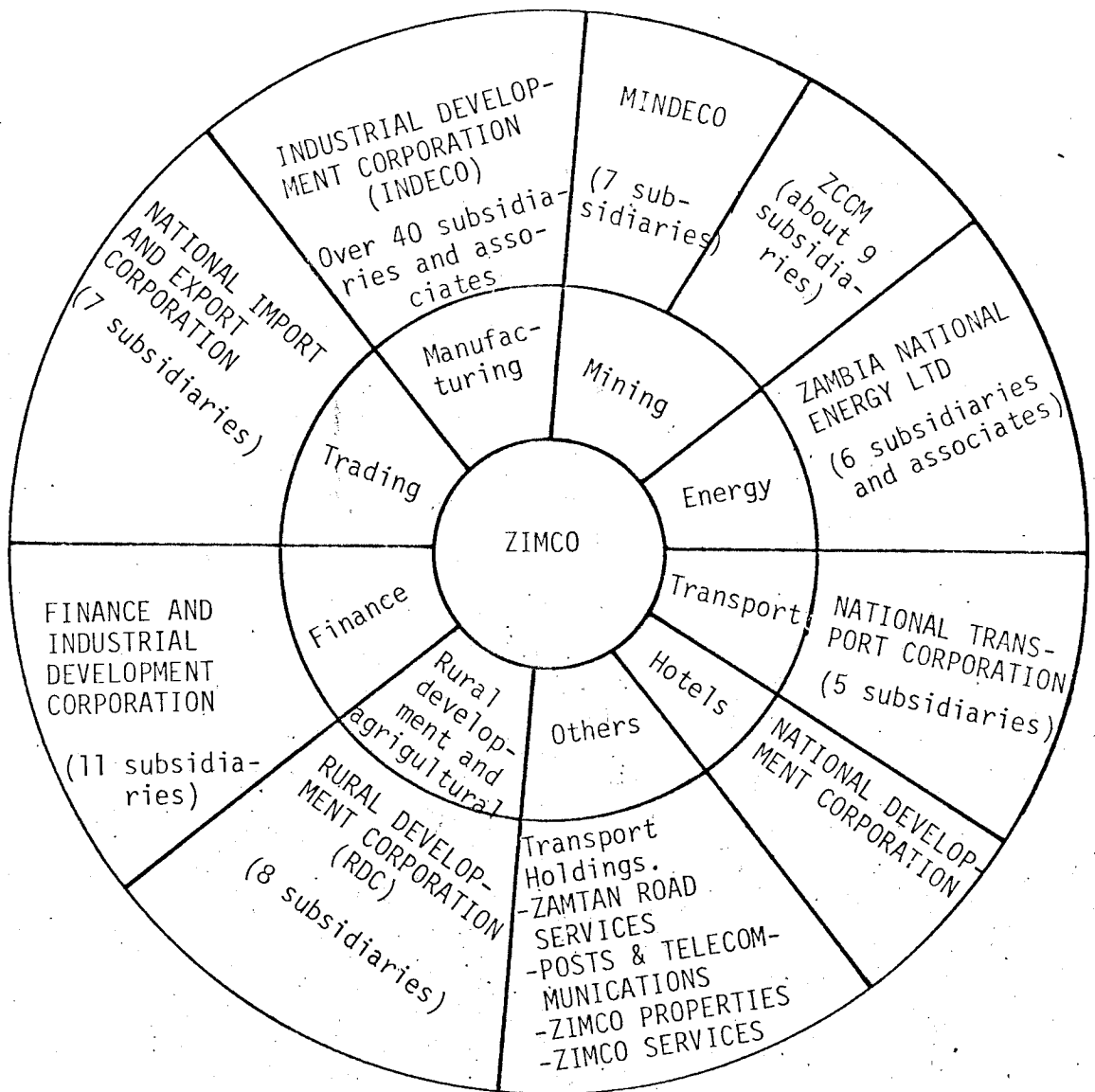


FIGURE 2: ZIMCO and its major holding companies

Source: ZIMCO Annual Report 1981

The mining industry, especially copper, has been operated at a highly sophisticated technological level, both in mining and metallurgical operations. This high level of technology is a result of direct importation of plant machinery and equipment, development of an adequate research and development infrastructure and existence of some foreign controlled supporting engineering and import based manufacturing companies, such as in explosives and chemical manufacturing.

Apart from ZCCM, the Mining Development Corporation (MINDECO), another subsidiary of ZIMCO, controls all the other small scale mines. The most notable being MINDECO Small Mines and Maamba Colliers. MINDECO Small Mines is engaged in mining and processing minerals mainly for domestic industrial use. For example, MINDECO supplies the glass industry with limestone mined and processed in Lusaka and feldspar and flourspar mined at Kariba dam. The cement industry is supplied with gypsum and the coal industry with magnetite. Others include the paint industry which uses calwhite; and the foundry industry with tin concentrates. Maamba Colliers mines coal at an open pit in the Zambezi valley. The country's coal reserves are estimated at over 21 million metric tonnes.

Ndola Lime Company, another MINDECO subsidiary, exploits a large limestone deposit and supplies the mining industry's metallurgical requirements of limestone, quicklime and hydrated lime⁴.

2.1.2 Industrial Development Corporation

ZIMCO's manufacturing sector is handled by the giant Industrial Development Corporation (Indeco). Indeco, a conglomerate of over 40 subsidiaries and associate companies, had a turnover of K527 million (£332m) in 1981⁵. This corporation dominates the manufacturing scene in Zambia. Wholly owned by the government through ZIMCO, it is the spearhead of the government for the implementation of the industrialisation policy. Indeco commands influence in the manufacturing industry, which means that no business information pertaining to investment potentials is complete without examining

areas in which Indeco participates or intends to participate. As the hub of Zambia's manufacturing industry, its main objectives are:

- To promote the advancement of the economy by establishing, conducting, guiding and assisting profit-making industries, industrial undertakings and ancillary enterprises.
- To assist the manufacturing and service industries which productively pursue and develop the economic resources of the country.
- To assist in creating conditions conducive to industrial development and to acquaint the public and foreign investors with the potential industrial concerns in the country, as well as to advise the government on matters relating to industrial development⁶.

Indeco's industrial development programme has enabled it to embark on establishing, on its own initiative, a number of import substitution manufacturing industries. In addition, Indeco carries out surveys and investigations into manufacturing enterprises which could provide opportunities for industrial developers in the private sector and supplies information to businessmen, industrialists and potential investors.

The corporation is made up of companies representing the backbone of Zambian industries and is divided into fourteen groups of products that are used in the home and industry, representing 75% of the country's total industrial activity⁷. The diagram in Figure 3 illustrates the relationship of the companies and their products. An analysis of this corporation therefore gives a general trend in the performance of the manufacturing sector in Zambia. The Indeco group of companies produce the following products:

Sugar products: Sugar processing is undertaken by the Zambia Sugar Company. It involves growing sugar cane and refining sugar into white and brown sugar. Special products include icing sugar, soft brown

sugar, golden syrup, maple-syrup, treacle and jams. Nakambala sugar estate, which belongs to the company, also grows maize, soya beans and wheat, which are sold on the home market, except maize which is used to feed employees. Molasses, a by-product of sugar refining, is one of those products which, perhaps due to a lack of technical expertise, is exported. Some, however, is used by local manufacturers of yeast and stockfeed.

Maize and wheat milling: These products, including rice and salt, are products of a group of four companies specialising in milling maize into mealie meal, wheat flour, producing stockfeed and baking bread and confectioneries. Two of these companies are importers and processors of rice and salt.

Edible oils, detergents and toiletries: The products include cooking oil, edible fats, oil seed cakes, toilet soaps, toothpaste and detergents. ROP, which manufactures these, still heavily depends on imported raw materials.

Pharmaceuticals, chemicals, fertilizer and explosives: The three companies in this field produce various types of intravenous liquids for hospitals, ammonium nitrate fertilizer, carbon dioxide, ammonium nitrate dense and porous for explosives, nitric acid and compound fertilizers. Also produced by Kafironda factory are nitroglycerine based explosives and blasting accessories from imported components.

Glass and plastics products, dry cell batteries: Four companies are involved in this group producing beer and soft drink bottles, medicine jars and bottles, beer mugs and crates; bottles for cooking oil, tea cups and saucers; baby bottles, basins, buckets and jerry-cans. Dry cell batteries for radios and torches are produced by Mansa Battery factory, a rural based industry. Rucom Industries on the other hand grows and processes coffee, cans pineapple chunks and makes pineapple juice and many other products in factories scattered throughout the rural areas.

Textiles - natural and synthetic: The textile industry is dominated by the Kafue Textiles of Zambia which produces twill cotton, chitenge and poplin dress prints from locally grown cotton; and Kabwe Industrial Fabrics specialising in manufacturing polypropythere bags from polymer and hessian cloth. Polymer is imported as a raw material.

Industrial and medical gases, welding and copper products: There are two main companies in this group. Metal Fabricators of Zambia produces copper rods, unarmoured and armoured cables, telephone cables etc. Zambia Oxygen produces oxygen and acetylene for industrial and medical uses. There are plans to produce dry ice and nitrous oxide.

Engineering products: Indeco's two major engineering companies are Lusaka Engineering Company (Lenco) and Monarch Ltd. Lenco's products are classified into heavy and light engineering:

- heavy engineering - includes production of road and farm trailers, fuel tanks, scotch carts, van bodies and truck bodies.
- light engineering - includes production of door and window frames, metal furniture, fly screens, nails and conduits.

Monarch produces:

- pressed steel door frames, steel doors and window frames, welded/wiremesh for reinforcements.
- various galvanised holloware which include household buckets, watering cans, refuse bins and also geysers and wheel-barrows.

Indeco's subsidiaries are engaged in the production of a large number of other products which include cement, lime p bricks, timber products; steel and builders' ware; opaque beer. Other subsidiaries deal in property rentals; travel and automobile assembly, tyre and motor parts.

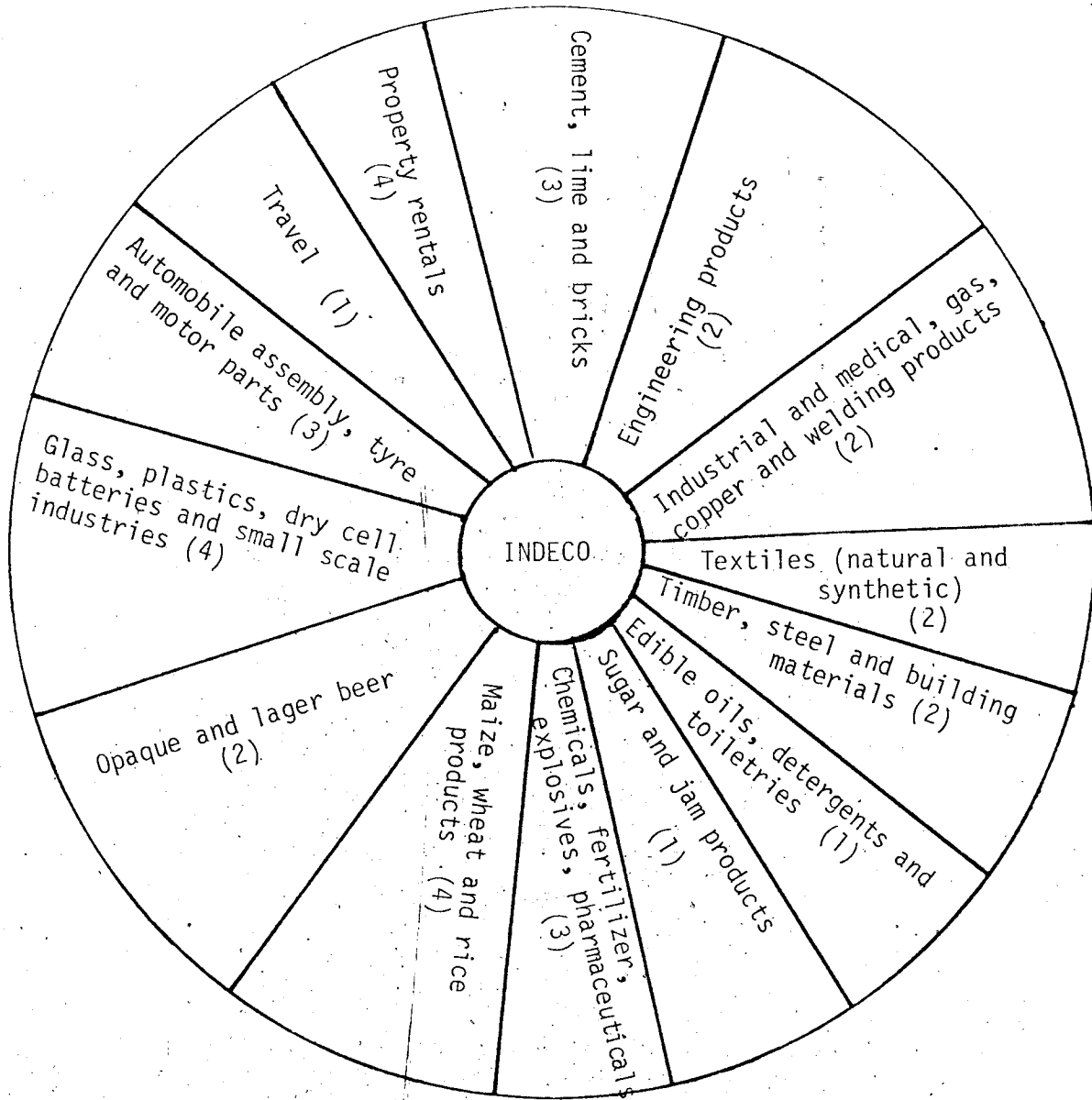


FIGURE 3: Indeco's major products and services. The figures in brackets indicate the number of companies in each group.

Source: Indeco Annual Report 1979/80

Twenty of Indeco's companies are owned 100% by the state. In the rest, the state holds controlling shares up to 80%, including associated companies.

It has been necessary to write in detail about Indeco, ZCCM and MINDECO because of their role in the industrial development of the country.

In the following sections brief mention is made of ZIMCO's other giant subsidiaries, viz the Rural Development Corporation, which has interests in agro-industries, and the National Import and Export Corporation, which dominates the distribution sector.

2.1.3 Other Major State Companies

The National Import and Export Corporation (NIEC) is Indeco's counterpart in the retail and wholesale trade. NIEC is in charge of the importation and distribution of a wide variety of consumer commodities, through seven large subsidiaries. These subsidiaries operate large departmental stores and supermarkets in urban and rural areas to ensure equal distribution of commodities.

NIEC's operations are influenced by such factors as the performance of the manufacturing sector, the transportation system and the foreign exchange reserves, which enables the country to import those goods which are not produced locally.

Established in 1970, the Rural Development Corporation (RDC) is the spearhead for rural industries. It has eight subsidiaries engaged in a variety of activities concerned with the direct production of food crops, beef, milk and pigs or involved in agro-industrial business. Some of the activities include agricultural credit, crop-spraying and tsetse spraying. RDC operates both as a service institution and a commercial organisation. This mixed objective implies that its performance may be measured not only in strictly profit terms, but also in terms of services rendered to farmers and in turn the farmers' contribution made in the form of high productivity.

2.2 The Private Sector

An attempt has been made above to explain the role and activities of the state in Zambia's industry and commerce, which as we have seen is incontrovertibly dominant. This dominant situation in no way means that the private sector has no role at all. Neither does it imply that the private sector's position supplements the para-statal sector. Its position, as seen in Chapter 1, is in fact encouraged by the state through the provision of various legislation which affects industrial development. The government's supportive attitude to the private sector is underlined by the various incentive schemes that it provides, such as the pioneer status and tax exemption for a limited period to new bonafide industries and to export-oriented and import-substitution manufacturers. The private sector therefore exists side by side with the para-statal sector, concentrating in those areas in which the state cannot participate.

The ZIMCO Directory of Zambian Industry⁸ published in 1976, listed over 3000 private industries in the manufacturing and construction fields. It revealed that the private sector dominates the construction industry and surpasses the para-statal sector in the manufacture of food products, soft drinks, carpets, leather and footwear products, furniture and iron and steel basic industries.

The private sector is also involved in commercial enterprises, particularly in the retail and wholesale distribution of consumer commodities and industrial equipment. There is no data available concerning their exact major areas of operation, but an example of companies which have embarked on development projects is reported in the 1980 annual plan of the Third National Development Plan⁹, which is an indication that the private sector is as much involved in national development aspirations as the para-statal sector.

2.3 Banking and Non-banking Financial Institutions

The banking system comprises the central bank - Bank of Zambia - and six commercial banks. Apart from the Zambia National Commercial Bank all the commercial banks are foreign owned but locally incorporated. The Bank of Zambia is the government's banker, sole note issuing authority and administrator of the foreign exchange control, as well as controlling the operations of commercial banks.

Banking and related financial institutions have a vital role in development by providing credit facilities to entrepreneurs. As with the manufacturing sector, banking and non-banking financial institutions were affected by the economic reforms. All foreign banks were ordered to be incorporated locally so that the central bank could have effective control over their activities. For example, the reforms barred lending to non-Zambians without approval of the Exchange Control Department of the Bank of Zambia, and also liberalised the traditional bank lending practices to conform with Zambia's development aspirations, as local businessmen could not get bank credit without the orthodox requirements of security.

In addition to mobilising savings, providing insurance and social security services, non-banking financial institutions are an important source of investible funds for lending to the industrial and commercial sector. They consist of the Zambia State Insurance Corporation, Zambia National Provident Fund, Agricultural Finance Co, Zambia National Building Society, National Savings and Credit Bank, the Agricultural Development Bank and the Development Bank of Zambia. They all fall under the Finance Development Corporation (Findeco), a ZIMCO subsidiary, with the prime objective of generating credit for development purposes.

The Development Bank of Zambia is perhaps the most important to the businessman. Established in 1973, it is an autonomous institution and its shares are held by the Government, para-statal and private organisations. The main functions of the bank include:

- mobilisation of foreign and local funds and making them available in the form of term loans and/or equity investments to business enterprises.
- undertaking industrial surveys to identify projects and promote investment activities and provide technical assistance and managerial advisory services¹⁰.

The bank can also enter into financial arrangements with clients either singly or in conjunction with other domestic or foreign investors for financial projects. The policy does not seek to acquire a controlling interest in any enterprise it assists. Equity participation is normally not more than 10% of paid up capital or a maximum of 25% of share capital.

2.4 Development of Small-scale Industries

The development of small-scale industries and village industries is an important landmark in the country's efforts to diversify. This new development is part of the government's effort to correct the lop-sided industrial development structure which favours the urbanised line of rail, leaving the rural areas without industries. As a result the rural population is not only deprived of employment opportunities but also of economic development leading to the continued urban influx of migrants in search of employment.

As part of its programme to combat urban migration and to develop rural areas, the Zambian government sponsored the Small Industries Development Act in 1981. This in turn led to the creation of the Small Industries Development Organisation (SIDO) within the Ministry of Commerce and Industry¹¹. SIDO was established with assistance from the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation which provided an expert for its initial stages.

According to the Act, a small scale industry is defined as an enterprise having capital assets not exceeding K250,000 (£157,500), while a village industry including cooperatives should have an

investment of K15,000 (£9500) and below on plant and equipment¹².

Some of SIDO's main functions are to:

- formulate, coordinate and implement national policies and programmes relating to the development and promotion of small industries.
- carry out research projects, surveys and market research on any aspect connected with small industries.
- provide extension, management and consultancy services for small industries.
- assist in locating and developing industrial estates, common facility centres and ancillary services¹³.

These functions will obviously generate the need for information in the small industry sector. They also mean that a new breed of local entrepreneur will be developed for as Nanjappa, SIDO's Director, expresses it, "*small industries are the seed-beds for the creation of entrepreneurial expertise in the country*".¹⁴ The industrial extension and research division of SIDO renders technical, economic and industrial management services to small industry. It also provides information including publication of bulletins, pamphlets, model schemes, and answers queries on economic and commercial problems.

Since its establishment SIDO has issued manufacturing licences to small-scale industries for the manufacture of detergents, clothing, maize milling, jewellery, confectionery, vehicle accessories, furniture, dairy produce, agricultural implements and stationery. It has also identified a number of projects in which small industries could be established.

2.5 Research and Development Services

The main feature of industrial development in Zambia is dependence on foreign technology, viz machinery, process know-how and

personnel. With the exception of the mining industry, the manufacturing sector has not developed commensurate research and development services. There is also no evidence of private organisations engaged in market research and industrial surveys on a commercial basis; instead the country has had to rely on foreign consultants. In recent years Indeco, the Development Bank of Zambia and the Commission for National Development and Planning have set up market research and industrial survey sections. These are being joined by SIDO when it becomes fully operational.

Indeco on the other hand has been assigned by the government with the task of developing genuine domestic technology with a view to reducing the country's absolute dependence on imported technology. This task involves setting up research and development units in some of its subsidiaries in close cooperation with the National Council for Scientific Research (NCSR). The units will concentrate on product development, making various adaptations of existing technologies or technological processes to use local raw materials and will embark on process and equipment design. There is no evidence that this directive has been implemented.

Research institutions such as the University of Zambia, through its product development units, and the National Council for Scientific Research do undertake research on short and long term projects. So far research has been conducted in food technology, building and road research, materials development and testing in relation to industrial development. The NCSR's thrust in industrial research and development activity had been to promote import substitution by finding ways of utilizing local raw materials in industry. Unfortunately, these activities have no direct and vertical association with the production sector.

2.6 Conclusion

The account of Zambia's economic, industrial and commercial structure in Chapters 1 and 2 has provided data which is essential for an understanding of the state of her business enterprises. The

nation's desire to attain economic independence through industrialisation prompted state participation in industry and commerce but there is still a long way to go in resolving the problem of heavy dependence on foreign know-how and raw materials. The dependence on foreign technology, which is inescapable, is a reflection not only of the historical development of the economic and industrial infrastructure, but is also indicative of the state of skilled manpower and entrepreneurship. Therefore the development and subsequent emergence of indigenous local entrepreneurs and business executives with skills and managerial competence, and the emphasis on industrial diversification through the establishment of medium and small scale manufacturing industries, provides a fertile ground for the provision of business information services.

The new industrialists, research and development centres, business and government executives will require the support of business and related information services as an aid amongst other things to innovation and decision making in planning. Otherwise, dependence on foreign imports of finished and semi-finished goods, consultants, skilled personnel, research and development services and raw materials will continue unchallenged.

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CHAPTER 3

ANALYSIS OF BUSINESS INFORMATION IN ZAMBIA

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3.1 Information and Business

Chapters 1 and 2 have given a general picture of the economic, industrial and commercial development of Zambia since its attainment of independence almost twenty years ago. This background information sets in context the main focal point of this study, the information needs of Zambian industry and commerce. In this chapter I shall attempt to explore and discuss the business information needs of Zambian industrial and commercial organisations. This will include a definition of business information, a consideration of the structure of business information, the problem of users and their needs and a discussion on problems of acquisition.

The chapter is based on the results of a questionnaire that was distributed randomly to a number of industrial and commercial organisations, from the private and the para-statal sectors, in Zambia.

The objective, therefore, is to analyse the information needs of these organisations and to try to show whether or not managers, company executives and other professional workers engaged in business enterprises are starved of information. The study also tries to identify their information requirements and sources of information.

3.1.1 Value of Business Information

Zambia, like all developing countries, is striving hard to industrialise her economy in order to improve the living standards of her citizens. This desire to step up economic and social development through accelerated industrialisation and agricultural expansion has been the driving force behind President Kenneth Kaunda's policies and speeches; and he predicts that:

*Zambia will be a nation with a high industrial base developed on the basis of her copper and other various minerals in the next ten years.*¹

To meet this challenge, Zambia will have to observe the laws of industrial development which have been described as consisting of three stages:

- a) Primary - extraction of raw materials.
- b) Secondary - processing and manufacturing.
- c) Tertiary - distribution of finished goods and services².

In all these stages information will be required.

The United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO), in a report on industrial information, advises developing countries that sustained and rapid economic and industrial development will depend on the proper utilization of the country's resources³. One of these resources is "information", without which extraction of raw material, processing and manufacturing and distribution of finished products is impossible. This makes information a primary resource while technology is a secondary resource; in other words information comes first before technology.

In the industrialised "north", information is considered an important component to development. Both the USA and USSR as well as Europe spend vast amounts of money on scientific and technical information every year, not for window-dressing or prestige but for continuation of development. The north's superiority in industrialisation could be attributed to information⁴. Therefore, it may be argued that the economic and industrial growth of any country will largely depend not only on the rate of industrial and scientific research but also on the availability of research information. More important perhaps is the ability of its policy makers, planners and technicians to transform research results into production quickly and effectively, and that will depend on the availability of information.

The major problem in many a developing country, Zambia included, is that some policy makers tend to overlook information and think of development only in terms of visible economic, industrial and social activities without appreciating the role and importance of information. Information can be used to speed up industrialisation as an instrument to development,

Francis Inganji⁵, editor of a seminar report on Use of Documentation and Information for Planning and Decision Making observed in the introduction that information and documentation services are becoming important ingredients to the development of every nation in the world. More and more policy makers and planners in government, industry and commerce are becoming aware of the importance of information and documentation services in economic, social and industrial development. This realisation, if indeed it is true, will result in more reliance on information, for decision making and planning.

In Zambia the role and importance of information in development, to aid decision making and planning, has been acknowledged publicly at high levels in the Party and Government. Remmy Chisupa⁶, then Minister of Commerce and Industry, stated in a conference paper in 1974 that because economic growth is connected with development and innovation, industrialists and management staff can only improve their operations, production methods, processes and services by using accurate facts and data as tools of decision making. More recently in 1981, participants at the Prime Minister's economic symposium resolved to recommend the creation of an 'investment information centre' which would be responsible for the collection and dissemination of information to prospective investors⁷. It is worth noting that the participants came from all sectors of the business community, representing the private and public sectors, and the party and government.

This realisation of information awareness is not a recent development. In 1974 UNESCO undertook a study of the Situation and Needs of National Information Systems (NATIS) in Science and Technology.⁸

This study covered Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia. It found that government officials in Zambia felt that coordination of information requirements and resources was indispensable, implying that they recognised the need and importance of information. Ironically the study also reported a UNIDO project to establish an industrial information unit within the then Ministry of Mines and Industry. This unit has not been established (see also Section 5.3.1).

On the use of information for decision making and development planning, Chisupa made a valid point when he said:

Some governments and industries have made decisions not based on accurate information and these blunders have cost countries and businesses concerned millions of Kwacha in losses.⁹

Ad' Obe Obe, editor of Popular Technology, reinforced this view when he said the key to Africa's problems of industrial advancement lies in information. What Africa needs and at the same time lacks are:

sound and effective decisions based on adequate knowledge and knowledge consists essentially of information.¹⁰

What these two writers are saying is simply to underline the importance of information in industrial development. Whereas Chisupa implies use of information meaning that information is available, Obe implies non-existence of information. According to Obe, information is a subject of communication; in other words information constitutes knowledge.

Therefore it can be argued that in the modern world an executive in a company or decision maker in government must be a good communicator and most of his time is spent communicating, a process involving passing on and generating information. Communication is impossible without information. Thus those who value information and communicate make persistent efforts to look for it. As Dr Maurice Lundu, Librarian

of the University of Zambia Library, expresses it: "*information is problem-oriented*";¹¹ and the problem that Zambia and indeed Africa has, is development through industrialisation. Information therefore is the most powerful instrument of development and should be exploited fully.

Information plays an important role in the economic and social development of a country. It is required at every stage of industrial development, from the selection of a business enterprise to all the steps following its growth. It is also necessary for the definition of policies and objectives of industrial developments.

With the present accent of the Zambian government's policy of building an independent national economy, and the need to accelerate the tempo of economic activity in the country, the role of information for industrial and commercial enterprises assumes added significance. Zambia, therefore, cannot afford to ignore what has made industrialised countries what they are. She must join in the 'information revolution' which is felt in many countries of the world today if she is to attain the aspired economic and industrial development; otherwise she will remain retarded.

3.2 Business Information Defined

The task of defining business information is not easy. This is so largely because the term 'business' has a variety of meanings. For the purpose of this study, I shall attempt to define business information in the context of its application to industry and commerce.

There are several conventional definitions of business. French's 'Dictionary of management' defines a business enterprise as an organisation which is engaged in:

Buying and selling of goods and services; manufacturing goods or providing services in order to make a profit. 12

Madkour quotes the 'Robert Dictionary' as defining a business enterprise or company as:

an organisation that makes use of natural agents, labour and capital in order to produce wealth or services for sale. 13

These two definitions imply that business enterprises are concerned with the exploitation of raw materials, manufacture of these raw materials into finished goods and the distribution of finished goods to consumers. Exploitation and manufacture are industrial activities while distribution and sale of goods are commercial activities. Therefore a business enterprise may either be an industrial or a commercial concern.

Some writers on this subject have tended to separate commercial information from business information, or industrial information from management information. This may be relevant in certain contexts, but it has rendered the definition of business information difficult. If the definition of business enterprise given above is followed, it will be seen that business information embraces commercial, industrial and management information. Various authorities have attempted to define these kinds of information. Angela Haygarth Jackson, has discussed 'industrial information' and defines it as:

information embracing a company's own internal and external collections of information ... ranging from research data to marketing information ... including technical intelligence, economic information, political and legal information. 14

Henderson on the other hand has defined 'commercial information' as:

information about (a) business enterprises other than one's own (b) the environment in which the business operates (c) information required to solve routine problems that arise in the course of business enterprises. 15

These broad definitions Hazneder¹⁶ argues, are all concerned with:

- activities of enterprises and organisations especially those concerned with trade, commerce and manufacture.
- techniques and methods available for managing these activities and solving problems which arise.
- the environment within which the business operates.

Hazneder defines the third type "management information" as concerned with:

- policy and planning, organising resources including personnel.
- all aspects of decision-making and problem solving.
- those aspects of the environment especially the economic and social conditions which affect business decisions.¹⁷

Close examination of these definitions reveals that they are all inter-related and overlapping. They are all concerned with information that a manager requires in decision-making. The information may or may not lead to action and is obtainable formally or informally, encompassing a wide range of published and purchasable sources and services. It may therefore be concluded that business information includes all that is considered to be commercial, industrial or management information.

For the purpose of this study therefore business information will be defined as *"all that type of information relevant to industry and commerce including items of scientific, technical, economic, trade, engineering, management, and legal interest that are communicable and applicable in order to facilitate planning, decision-making and management of an enterprise"*.

3.3 Elements of Business Information

Having defined business information, it is now possible to produce a list of subject areas that constitute business information. The list has been taken from the British Library brochure on information for industry and commerce¹⁸, mainly because business information in Britain is relatively sophisticated and well-organised since she is one of the pioneers in introducing techno-commercial information services to industry. This is discussed in Chapter 5. The list has been re-organised to fit the definition above in order to throw more light on the supposed distinctions between commercial, industrial and management information. These subjects were used in the questionnaire sent to the business community in Zambia to represent the most likely topics often used and required by managers and company executives.

- a) Commercial information - concerned with legal information about import and export regulations; trade licensing (both retail and wholesale licencing regulations); price control regulations; marketing and market intelligence. Also statistics and competitive information about other companies and their products.
- b) Industrial information - concerned with new developments in manufacturing and production technology; scientific and technical details; production information on machinery, and quality control, standards and specifications. Also production targets, industrial health and safety regulations.
- c) Management information - concerned with financial, accounting, economic, political, legal and social aspects of the environment in which the company operates. Also investment incentives, taxation laws; manpower planning and personnel training. Financial and population statistics; research and development, industrial surveys and market research. Organisation and methods and work study.

3.4 Information Needs of Industry and Commerce

3.4.1 Methodology

Brief mention has already been made of the methodology used to investigate business information services for industry and commerce in Zambia. A fuller explanation of the methodology and of the constraints encountered in the investigation is given below.

Two questionnaires were used in this study. They are reprinted in Appendices I and II. The first questionnaire on "Business Information needs" was directed to managers and business executives in industry and commerce. It covered the following topics:

- Adequacy of current information requirements of managers.
- Types of information needs.
- Constraints in obtaining information.
- Sources of information.
- Difficulties of using sources of information.
- Channels used to obtain information.
- Use made of information obtained
- An open question on their views regarding the creation of a business information service.

The second questionnaire was directed to librarians, information and documentation officers. The aim was to survey the current state of industrial and commercial library/information services in public libraries, research institutions and commercial and industrial enterprises. This questionnaire is discussed fully in Chapter 4. It consists of the following topics:

- Type of services provided (i.e. library, documentation or information services).
- Subject fields covered by the service.
- Users of the service.
- Nature of material provided by the service.
- Methods of information dissemination used.

- Facilities and other services provided to clients.
- Future plans for the library/information service.

The first questionnaire was distributed at random to 80 industrial and commercial firms in Zambia, drawn from the para-statal and private sectors. It was decided to use a random distribution for the following reasons. First, it was not possible to cover all business enterprises because the population was unknown. The only published Directory of Zambian Industry by ZIMCO is outdated (1976) and the Zambia Directory which is published annually by Directory Publishers could not be located in England. The list was taken from firms that use the Management Services Board and Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation management and supervisory training facilities. Second, the technique of random sampling is ideal for allowing an equal chance of selection by dividing the firms into categories or strata from which random samples could be selected; in this case para-statal and private companies. The stratification sampling technique¹⁹ which would have produced a more representative sample with less variation was not employed, as there was no reason to believe that differences existed in the information needs of para-statal and private companies. The sample represented rural and urban firms, as well as medium and large companies, the majority of which came from the industrialised and urbanised line of rail.

Since small-scale industries are just emerging, no questionnaires were distributed in this sector because of lack of identity. This area deserves a separate investigation, which lies outside the scope of this study.

A questionnaire was felt to be both the most convenient and the most thorough way to uncover the information needs and information seeking behaviour of the business executive in Zambia. It also has the advantage of providing respondents with the opportunity to give frank and anonymous answers. Close scrutiny of the literature reported in the Zambia Library Association Journals and Newsletters, Radials Journals, Dissertation Abstracts, Aslib Proceedings, LISA

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Abstracts, UNESCO Bulletins and Journals and even UNIDO publications revealed that no literature is known to have been published on this subject emanating from Zambia. This study therefore claims to be the first comprehensive attempt to examine the business information situation in Zambia.

The main constraint I had with this study was my inability to follow-up the questionnaires with interviews, due to lack of time and resources. I feel that personal interviews would have thrown more light on those answers which were partial or contradictory.

80 questionnaires were sent; of these 37 were returned fully completed, representing a 46.25% response rate which is slightly less than half of the total. Although the response was low, it was encouraging considering that this study was not commissioned by a government authority or other agency with the objective of solving a specific problem, which would have added more weight. Nevertheless, it is felt that meaningful analysis can be made of the responses. A more detailed study would require a large scale research project, beyond the present means.

The results of this questionnaire survey are based on the analysis of the 37 respondents. Attention is focussed on the adequacy of information provision, the types of information needed by executives, the difficulties inherent in obtaining needed information, sources of information used and on how information is brought to the attention of the user.

3.4.2 Business Information Provision

The first question addressed itself to every business executive who uses information. It asked whether their information requirements were being met adequately. The object was to establish if information is used and sought by Zambian business executives. The responses revealed that 24% of the respondents were satisfied with their information requirements while 76% were not.

The same question demanded respondents to give reasons or explanations of how or how not they felt their needs were being met. Some interesting answers were obtained from both groups (the satisfied and dissatisfied). The satisfied group was not entirely happy. It has some problems, as the following explanations indicate:

Yes: sometimes you get all the information you require in good time; No: sometimes information needed cannot be obtained in good time.

Though not regularly due to lack of an effective information service unit for this purpose.

Some para-statal organisations, however, appear to feel that they are adequately provided with information, thus giving them an advantage over their counterparts in the private sector. The following remark is typical:

this being a para-statal organisation we get our information from the government media,

One puzzling reply came from the respondent who said:

"Anything I don't receive I do not know I need it!" Another satisfied respondent said that he receives his technical journals regularly, and it is from these that he obtains his technical information.

Various explanations were also obtained from the 76% "dissatisfied" respondents, the majority complaining about timely presentation of information, particularly statistical information. Others felt some government departments are too bureaucratic towards information provision to industry. Some of the remarks were:

not knowing where the information could be found

unwillingness by suppliers of information to disclose information

information not being provided at the right time

It is difficult to obtain up-to-date information. Sometimes even with updated information there is conflict among different organisations supplying the same type of information.

On statistical information, most respondents felt that this vital information, including financial statistics, is published late. In some cases it was three to four years late, thus rendering it obsolete by the time it is published. Statistics it should be noted are not only published by the Central Statistics Office. The Bank of Zambia publishes statistical information quarterly. Others felt that the business columns in the two national daily newspapers - Times of Zambia and Zambia Daily Mail - do not run adequate business information.

To a large extent these results confirm the prejudice with which I started the study, that business information in Zambia is inadequate. As pointed out earlier concerning the need for a follow-up with an interview, it was difficult to interpret; what, for example, did this respondent mean by "*anything I don't receive I do not know I need it*". This it would appear implies lack of knowledge of his information requirements and therefore a reliance on whatever he receives as the only source of information, or that he does not make efforts to seek information as and when the need arises. Moreover, perhaps the nature of his work does not entail constant reference to information. Whatever the interpretation, this is a clear case of lack of information awareness or user education. It also applies to the respondent who frankly states "*not knowing where the information could be found*".

As for the respondent who mentions "*... conflict among different organisations supplying the same type of information*", it appears this requires more clarification on the "conflict" he mentions. For instance, what kind of institutions would be suppliers of the same type of information and how did this duplication of resources arise? More important perhaps is the "conflict". On "bureaucracy" and "unwillingness by suppliers of information to disclose information", it was not possible to identify these

unwilling suppliers; and as for bureaucracy it is a well known problem associated with the civil service.

The following factors are suggested very strongly by the responses to the questionnaires: business personnel are not adequately provided with information, timely presentation of information is a problem, information for industry and commerce is needed, there exists ignorance among managers on sources of information, user awareness and education is lacking and finally absence of an effective information service contributes to the irregular supply of information.

3.4.3 Types of Business Information

The second question presented the respondent with eleven main areas of business information most likely to be used by business executives. The purpose was to find a consensus of the most needed information common in business management. The measure used was to grade the level of importance of each type of information so that a total score could be derived from each type. Secondly, respondents were asked to indicate if there were types of information omitted from those on the list; and these will be discussed later in this section.

The ratings used were: 0 = not important; 1 = less important; 2 = important; 3 = very important. To find the score the number of ticks were multiplied for each rating and then added to produce the total score for each kind of information. The results are presented in Table 1.

It was found that "news of developments in own field" emerged as the most needed information with a 95% score. This was followed by "product information" and "import and export information" with 78%. The lowest score was "investment information" - 50%. The average need for information came to 72%. The hierarchy of need in order of preference is as follows:

	Responses	Responses Not important	Responses Less important	Responses Important	Responses Very important	Responses TOTAL
		%	%	%	%	%
Legal Information	37	3 (0) 8%	7 (7) 19%	15 (30) 41%	12 (36) 32%	37 (73) 66%
Training Information	37	1 (0) 3%	4 (4) 11%	16 (32) 43%	16 (48) 43%	37 (84) 76%
News of developments in own field	37	0 (0) 0%	0 (0) 0%	5 (10) 14%	32 (96)*86%	37 (106) 95%
Scientific and Technical Information	37	3 (0) 8%	5 (5) 14%	12 (24) 32%	17 (51) 46%	37 (80) 72%
Investment Information	37	8* (0) 22%	10 (10) 26%	11 (22) 30%	8 (24) 22%	37 (56) 50%
Marketing and Marketing Intelligence Information	37	2 (0) 5%	5 (5) 14%	12 (24) 32%	18 (54) 49%	37 (83) 75%
Competitors' Information	37	9* (0) 24%	7 (7) 19%	8 (16) 22%	13 (39) 35%	37 (62) 56%
Statistical Information	37	2 (0) 5%	6 (6) 16%	15 (30) 41%	14 (42) 38%	37 (78) 70%
Product Information	37	3 (0) 8%	3 (3) 8%	9 (18) 24%	22 (66)*59%	37 (87) 78%
Company Financial Information	37	4 (0) 11%	3 (3) 8%	10 (20) 27%	20 (60)* 54%	37 (83) 75%
Import/Export Information	37	0 (0) 0%	8 (8) 22%	8 (16) 22%	21 (63)* 56%	37 (87) 78%

TABLE I: Results showing how business information is used by Zambia's Managers

1.	News of developments in own field	95%
2.	Product Information	78%
	Import and Export Information	
4.	Training Information	77%
5.	Marketing and Market Research	75%
	Company Financial Information	
7.	Scientific and Technical Information	72%
8.	Statistical Information	70%
9.	Legal Information	66%
10.	Competitors' Information	55%
11.	Investment Information	50%

In addition to these types of information respondents also indicated that the following were important: industrial relations information, foreign aid information, political and economic analysis at national level, development planning information by government and para-statal organisations. Others mentioned agricultural information, current information on rural development, government regulations on foreign exchange, general environmental information and government-business relationship.

This high yield in reply to the question on information needs confirms the tempo of economic and industrial activities discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. The demand for "news on latest developments" suggests a desire by executives and managers to keep up-to-date with developments in new technology, manufacture and innovation. Similarly information for import and export suggests that the country still highly depends on importation of raw materials and finished goods. Export information on the other hand reflects the emphasis on the establishment of export-oriented firms to supplement copper exports in earning foreign exchange.

The need for training information is also a reflection on the need for trained local personnel to replace expatriate manpower. The Zambianisation policy is rigorously pursued in technical and other skilled jobs.

The low result on 'investment information' is not surprising. The figure, although last on the list, is still high in absolute terms. Further, the questionnaire was addressed to companies which are already established and affected by the recession, and therefore would be more concerned with improving present operations than with starting new ventures. The recommendation stated in section 3.1 of this chapter therefore should not be confused with the results reported here. It is to be assumed that the respondents in this study were rating their most needed information of the day, rather than a nation-wide information requirement.

Slater and Fisher's²⁰ study on Use made of Technical Libraries in the UK reported that "keeping up-to-date" as reason for using libraries was lower among industrial users, although it ranked second in the overall evaluation. The point here is that although information is generally required, the degree of need varies from country to country. The Zambian example is typical of such difference.

This section has established the great hunger for information that Zambian managers experience. Their requirements are very high and yet these requirements are inadequately met, as seen in the previous section.

3.4.4 Sources and Methods of Seeking Information

Question 5 required respondents to indicate the types of information sources used when seeking information. Question 7 asked about methods used to obtain information, and since these two are closely related they will be discussed together. The sources were divided into two main categories:

- a) Documentary sources included trade journals and directories, house journals, manufacturers' catalogues, techno-commercial journals, patents, standards, industrial and market research surveys, bank and company reports, publications from chambers of commerce and industry, statistics, newspapers and magazines.

b) Non-documentary sources included libraries, government ministries and departments, foreign trade missions, chambers of commerce and industry, commercial and industrial associations, professional associations, conferences and meetings.

The principle of rating the usage of each source is the same as that used in the previous analysis of information needs. The results are expressed in Tables 2 and 3.

It is shown in these tables that "newspapers and magazines" and "bank reports" shared the top marks both at 75%; followed by "trade journals" (68%). The lowest scores, or less useful sources, were "patents" (31%) and "house journals" (33%). This result on newspapers and magazines concurs with the Fernandez study which found that newspapers were most consulted by businessmen in the City Business Library in London²¹. Newspapers, magazines and journals also received high percentages in Spencer's study on Business Information in London²² and in Slater and Fishers' Survey quoted above²³.

As regards non-documentary information sources, "colleagues" emerged as the most useful source of information (76%) followed by "banking and financial institutions" (71%). Libraries, Information and Documentation Centres (LIDS) received the lowest rating (41%); only 13% thought they were very useful (see column 4 in Table 2).

The use of newspapers, magazines and colleagues as sources of information confirms what has already been found in other countries, "*that business executives are always in a hurry, generally busy and need information quickly*"²⁴. This urgency or time pressure was also most noticeable in the industrial group by Slater and Fisher²⁵, and so Spencer found the same urgency²⁶.

The similarity in the figures for "bank reports" and "banking and financial institutions" is remarkable. The use of bank reports and banks suggests that executives rely on banks for information. Banks regularly produce economic reports which are clearly well regarded.

	<i>Not useful</i>	<i>Less useful</i>	<i>Useful</i>	<i>Very useful</i>	Value
Trade Directories	22% (49%)	27%	32% (51%)	19%	50
Trade Journals	8% (22%)	14%	46% (78%)	32%	68
House Journals	41% (65%)	24%	30% (35%)	5%	33
Manufacturers' Catalogues	13% (27%)	14%	32% (73%)	41%	67
Techno/Commercial Abstracts	19% (41%)	24%	41% (57%)	16%	51
Patent and Other Industrial Property Literature	43% (73%)	30%	16% (27%)	11%	32
Standards	22% (46%)	24%	30% (54%)	24%	52
Industrial Surveys and Market Research Reports	22% (33%)	11%	35% (67%)	32%	59
Bank Reports	-	16%	43% (84%)	41%	75*
Statistics	19% (43%)	24%	27% (57%)	30%	56
Company Annual Reports	11% (33%)	22%	24% (67%)	43%	67
Reports from Chambers of Commerce and Industry	8% (30%)	22%	35% (70%)	35%	66
Newspapers and Magazines	3% (8%)	5%	57% (92%)	35%	75*

TABLE 2: IMPORTANCE OF DOCUMENT BASED INFORMATION SOURCES

	<i>Not useful</i>	<i>Less useful</i>	<i>Useful</i>	<i>Very useful</i>	Value
LID Services	24% (65%)	41%	22% (35%)	13%	46
Government Ministries and Departments	13% (32%)	19%	30% (68%)	38%	70
Foreign Trade Missions	30% (54%)	24%	35% (46%)	11%	47
Chambers of Commerce and Industry	8% (32%)	24%	49% (68%)	19%	65
National, Commercial and Industrial Societies	11% (38%)	27%	43% (62%)	19%	62
Professional Associa- tions	30% (46%)	16%	38% (54%)	16%	52
Financial and Banking Institutions	5% (19%)	14%	43% (81%)	38%	79
Conferences and Meetings	19% (42%)	24%	35% (57%)	22%	59
Colleagues/Personal Contacts	8% (16%)	8%	41% (84%)	43%	84

TABLE 3: USE OF NON-DOCUMENTARY SOURCES OF INFORMATION

The answers to question 7 indicate that discussions with colleagues is the most used method of obtaining information. A survey of these sources is fully discussed in Chapter 4. However, it may be useful to explain here that in question 7 the respondent was presented with five methods and had a choice of ticking one or all of them. The object was to discover the variety of approaches to information seeking. The five various methods were: "discussions with colleagues", "departmental service" (viz office services), "own personal searches", "company library or information services", and other methods not among these.

It was found that 62% of the respondents favoured "discussions with colleagues" and "own personal searches" received 57%. Other results are presented in Table 4. This result should be seen in relation to results obtained in question 5 on sources of information (Table 3) where "colleagues" emerged with the highest rating as a source of information.

Discussions with colleagues	62%
Departmental services	43%
Own personal searches	57%
Company library or information service	30%
Other (unspecified)	11%
No response	5%

TABLE 4: Percentages of methods used by managers to obtain information

This section has established the main sources of information used. These are the sources which must be taken into account in any plan to establish an information service and more especially by those who provide business information. The use made of colleagues was not surprising in a developing country like Zambia where information systems are struggling to evolve. This source, which is also referred to as the "invisible college", is extensively relied upon by other professionals in developed economies. For example, in the

United Kingdom many studies on user needs and behaviour have been carried out, such as the INFROSS report on teachers and lecturers²⁷, Hounsell's Information and the teacher²⁸, Slater and Fisher's Use made of technical libraries²⁹, and the more recent report on Information and the Small Manufacturing Firm³⁰, and these all revealed that personal contact is a vital source of information. It is therefore not unique to Zambia's business executives, but what is unanswered as yet is the type of information concerned and the depth or seriousness of that information.

Moreover, the average use of document-based sources (58%) and non-document based sources of information (63%) is an indicator that the business executive in Zambia is not only conscious of information but that he uses information in his work. It is noticeable from both tables that some of the most likely sources of up-to-date technical information, such as patents and other industrial property literature, are under utilized. Parallel to this is 'Professional Associations'. Under-usage of professional associations could be attributable to two factors: (a) that most managers probably do not belong to a professional society and (b) that such associations or societies are inactive and therefore incapable of generating worthwhile information or of undertaking research projects. These perhaps confirm the contention advanced by a respondent that *"Zambia is not sophisticated enough to generate information"*.

Some digression may be necessary here to illustrate how information may be passed on in business. In the recent study on Information and the Small Manufacturing Firm, already referred to, it was found that small firms and their banks and accountants keep close relationship; and this relationship often leads to increased flow of information and can provide substantial support for the firm. It was also found that response to published information is unlikely unless it is closely related to day-to-day needs or to market openings. The report continues that *"conventional sources of information such as public libraries, chambers of commerce and research associations play only a small role in helping small manufacturing firms ... and*

that libraries are not used because of ignorance of the actual resources available"³¹. Can the same be said of Zambia? Another UK study by Slater and Fisher³² found that technical information transfer is channelled through desk collections of handbooks, current periodicals and personal contacts with colleagues and with people in other organisations. The study also found that textbooks, periodicals and journals, abstracting journals ... standards and specifications, conferences, trade catalogues and patents were used in that order with the first three receiving the highest percentages and the last four received the lowest percentages by the following groups of users: Scientist/Engineer, Technician, Teacher, Post- and Undergraduate.

3.4.5 Use Made of Information

Question 8 demanded some considerable effort from the respondent to indicate the use made of information once obtained. It was answered by 94% of the respondents, a good response considering the nature of the question. The answers given conform to what might be expected, as illustrated by the following typical replies:

Plan to introduce new products on the local market.

Used to ensure that engineering designs and contract documents are up-to-date in regard to technological advances.

A wide range of investment, planning and processing decisions ... compliance with new legislation, investment, marketing and training policies, new processes etc.

Used to assess the developments in the economy and to have these developments documented in our quarterly and annual reports ... in turn used as sources of information by national and international bodies.

Decision making, planning, investment, production processes, legal, marketing, training, technology, policy making, engineering, products, and reporting appear prominently not only in the above selected answers but also in those which have not been quoted. This confirms the contention that decision-making which embraces every aspect of management is the most important function of a manager.

Therefore, as the discussion in Section 3.1 has shown, information is needed in order to enable better decisions to be made. Those decisions fall into two categories: tactical decisions and strategic decisions³³.

- a) tactical decisions involve choice between a small number of alternatives in answer to known problems.
- b) strategic decisions involve either finding out what the situation is or changing it, i.e. it is concerned with facts of environment and often affect the organisation's long range and medium range planning.

3.5 Acquisition Problems and Difficulties of Using Sources of Information

In this section I shall discuss the problems of acquisition of business information as well as the problems found in using the various sources of information. As follow-up to Questions 2 and 5, respondents were requested in Questions 4 and 6 to state whether they experienced difficulties in obtaining information or using the sources of information listed in Question 5. The object was to try to discover if there was a common type of information that respondents were unable to find or a common source of information difficult to use.

3.5.1 Types of Information Difficult to Find

43% of the respondents replied that they had no difficulties at all in finding the information required; while 57% admitted to having difficulties. Since the question was designed to ignore the non-difficult replies, only those who found difficulties are considered. The following types were the most difficult to find:

- a) Statistical Information: This proved to be the most difficult field for many. I detected a tone of exasperation and frustration in their comments, citing the lack of currency and timeliness

of publication of statistics as well as inconsistencies between different publications (see also Section 3.4.2 on satisfaction). This is a common problem in the UK as well; it is perhaps in the nature of statistics that their collection and compilation is a costly and time-consuming process. This reply is typical: *"We often have conflicting statistical information from our different sources - this makes analysis of economic developments difficult"*.

- b) Competitors' Information: Here, secrecy and unwillingness to disclose information were the main complaints. *"Lack of skill to extract such information"* is another major constraint in obtaining information about competitors.
- c) News of developments in own field: Although this ranked as the most needed information (see Section 3.4.3) respondents complained that there was a lack of available literature.
- d) Marketing and Market Intelligence Information: Reasons given for difficulties in this area were *"lack of skilled personnel able to gather such information"* (note similarity with (b) above) and unavailability of published market research reports (also (c) above).

Other constraints were observed in the following areas: legal and taxation information, training information, import and export information. Some respondents thought that Government departments were "too secretive and bureaucratic" about information on import and export regulations including foreign exchange regulations (see also Section 3.4.2). Lack of publications available on aid organisations, and scientific and technical information was also mentioned. The problem of availability of literature was probably summed up by this respondent who said:

Most of the books (reference) and professional publications require payment in subscriptions and foreign exchange restrictions make it difficult to externalise funds.

What is evident from these replies is lack of locally generated literature, especially STI. It is a reflection on Zambia's embryonic state of research activities and professional and technical literature; and thus tends to confirm the contention that Zambia is not yet able to generate its own information (see Section 3.4.4). The difficulties inherent in extracting competitors' information implies an absence of intelligence units in companies. But surely some of this information could be unearthed in LIDS, which again leads us to conclude that user awareness and education is absent in managers. Therefore by ignoring LIDS, managers are depriving themselves of the information they need so much. Why, for instance, should a company bother to subscribe to journals or other reference works when the same are probably available, unused in LIDS?

3.5.2 Difficult Sources of Information

In contrast to the above, respondents appear to have less problems in using the various sources mentioned in Section 3.4.4. 65% said they experienced no difficulty in obtaining information from both documentary and non-documentary sources. 35%, expressed some difficulties, which are worth closer scrutiny.

Information from Government departments and ministries was said to be unorganised, unreliable and out of date (citing statistics from the Central Statistical Office). Chambers of Commerce and Industry *"do not publish anything"*. On conferences and meetings, some said *"conference reports are never published"* and those who attend complained of *"falling asleep during the conference sessions"*; and *"sieving relevant information from the data collected from meetings and conferences was a problem"*.

Unavailability of manufacturers' catalogues and leaflets was mentioned as another constraint, blamed on the *"inability of some manufacturers to produce catalogues"*. LIDS were said to lack relevant publications and therefore unable to provide information. This was in particular reference to public libraries, institutions

which do not have special departments for industrial and commercial information.

The problem here is neatly summed up by the respondent who thought "*some of the sources scarcely exist*" and that "*most organisations do not send their publications to various departments and commercial and industrial organisations*".

3.6 Observations and Conclusions

Eight years ago Polinière³⁴, in a UNESCO sponsored study of situation and needs of national information systems in science and technology, claimed that the majority of users of information on manufacture - who were mainly managers and engineers - were foreigners or non-Africans. It is not the intention of this writer to prove or disprove what Polinière concluded as there is no means of determining the nationality of those who responded to the questionnaire, considering Zambia is a multi-racial society. However, it is worthy of note that the situation on manpower has changed with a sizeable number of indigenous Zambian managers and executives running companies. This is noticeable in the parastatal sector where the policy of Zambianisation is vigorously being pursued. The demand for training information in Section 3.4.3 underlines that clearly.

In Chapter 2 mention was made of the vigorous government policy on industrialisation of the rural areas. It was argued that the establishment of more industries and the emergence of new entrepreneurs in the small business sector is likely to accelerate the demand for information. Although this study reflects mainly established industry, the high points awarded to each type of information in Section 3.4.3 has established a hunger for information.

The demand for information on news of developments, product information and import/export information is another indication of the tempo of industrial and commercial activities in the country. It may also be interpreted as meaning that industrialists and

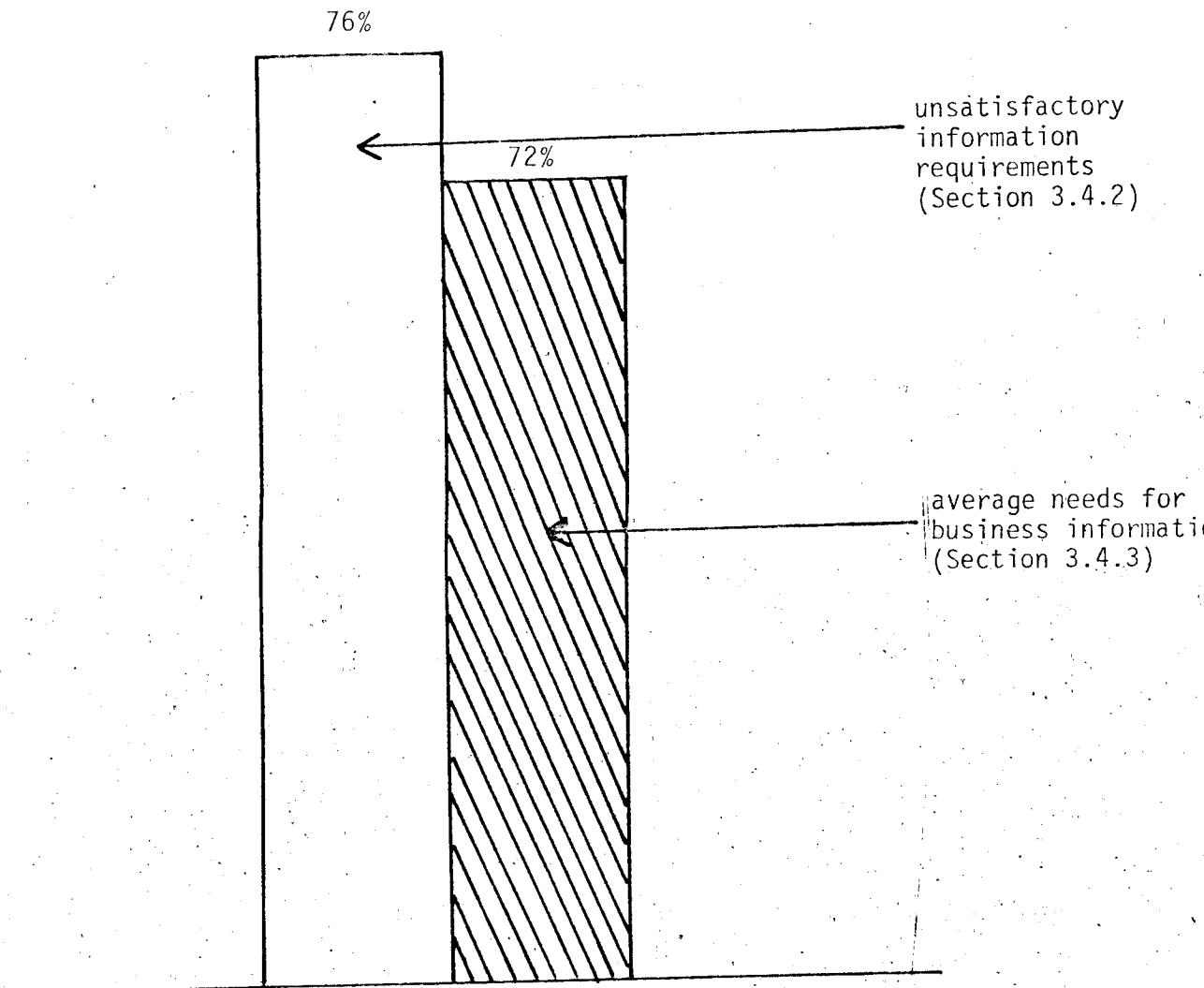


FIGURE 4: Relationship of Information requirements to the information needs of business managers in Zambia

commercial enterprises are taking full advantage of the incentives in the Pioneer Industries Act and the Industrial Development Act to establish export-oriented industries.

The country's needs for business information in relation to unsatisfied demand is expressed in the diagram on Figure 4.

In Section 3.5.3 it has been established that colleagues (or personal contacts), financial and banking institutions, newspapers and magazines, bank reports, and trade journals are the most popular sources of information. On the other hand, LIDS, foreign trade missions, house journals, patents and industrial property literature are less used as sources of information. Non-utilization of patents, standards and other similar literature could mean that the manufacturing industry is less innovative and probably that the industry is not actively engaged in new ventures to produce products of Zambian origin, thus perpetuating the continued importation of finished goods. For instance, the MCI 1980 Annual Report³⁵ indicated that only 5 industrial designs were registered; 90 patents lapsed due to non payment of renewal fees, an indication of obsolescence; and only 112 new patent applications were lodged (see also Section 4.2.4).

This study has, it is hoped, established that business information is valuable and is needed by Zambian entrepreneurs for industrial, economic, commercial and social development in Zambia. Therefore the following should be noted.

3.6.1 Provision of Information

The need for business information in Zambia exists. User satisfaction is not being met adequately as information is generally not available. Untimely presentation of information poses a problem. There exists ignorance among managers on sources of information because user awareness and user education is absent. Many firms have no information units, and where these exist they are ineffective. Added to this is the lack of a single national agency to provide information, thus contributing further to the irregular supply of

information. Daily coverage of business information in national newspapers is inadequate.

There is also a communication barrier between the information user and the supplier and bureaucracy is identified as the culprit. The supplier therefore requires some form of orientation towards information provision (Section 3.4.2).

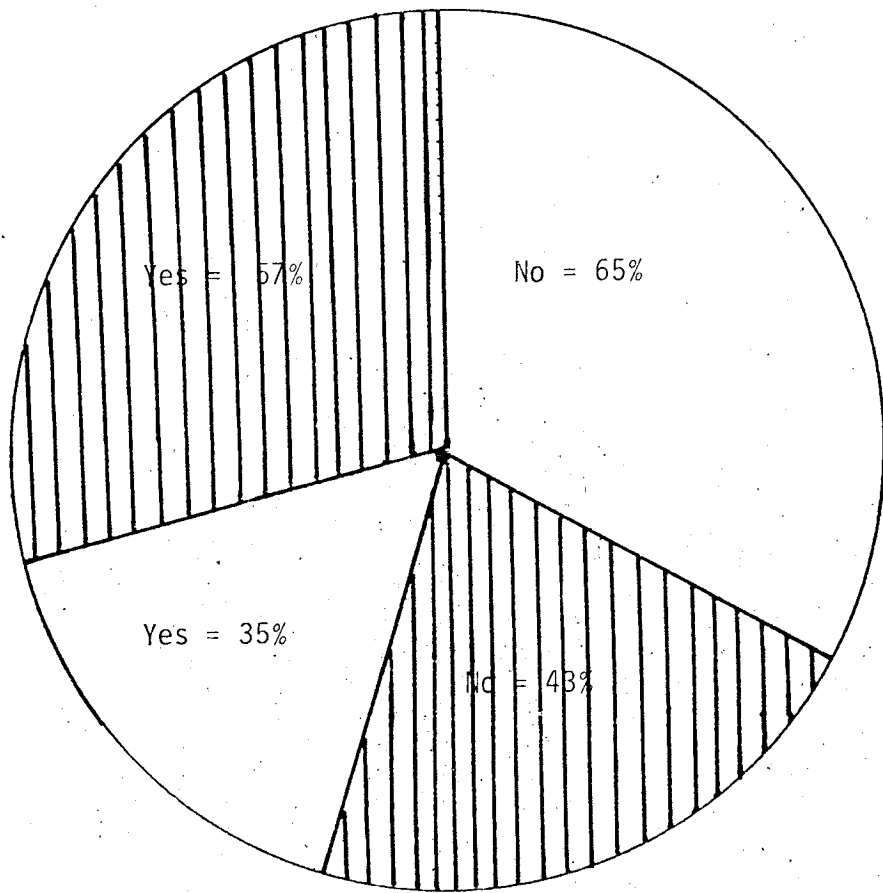
3.6.2 Types of Information Used

The types of business information have been established. The average information need for business is impressive at 72%, yet this need is inadequately met (Section 3.4.2). Keeping up-to-date suggests there is a great need for periodical literature. The areas of information needed signify the development aspirations in the country, particularly in the areas of product information and STI. More important, there is need for marketing and market research information. This calls for more industrial studies to be undertaken by research organisations, Indeco, National Commission for Development Planning, Development Bank of Zambia and SIDO.

Foreign aid information, political and economic information is not disseminated. Business houses would like to see foreign loans being used for development programmes in which they could participate. Economic and political information has a bearing on the destiny of business life; its availability therefore is imperative. Generally there is a serious shortage of business literature (Section 3.4.3).

3.6.3 Sources and Methods of Seeking Information

Documentary sources of information are used despite their scarcity. Banks and newspapers are the major sources of information. LIDS are not considered important sources of information while colleagues or personal contacts are valued and used extensively. Chambers of commerce and industry are a poor source as they do not generate information in published form; professional associations are similarly of little practical help.



Difficulties in obtaining information



Difficulties in using sources

FIGURE 5: Relationship between difficulties in obtaining information (Section 3.4.4) and sources found difficult to use (Questions 4 and 6)

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Government ministries and their departments are considered important sources particularly for legal and regulatory information, but they are difficult to use (Section 3.4.4).

3.6.4 Use Made of Information

The use made of information, it has been established, is to enable management make positive decisions and to aid in planning at various levels in business. This conclusion was expected (Section 3.4.5).

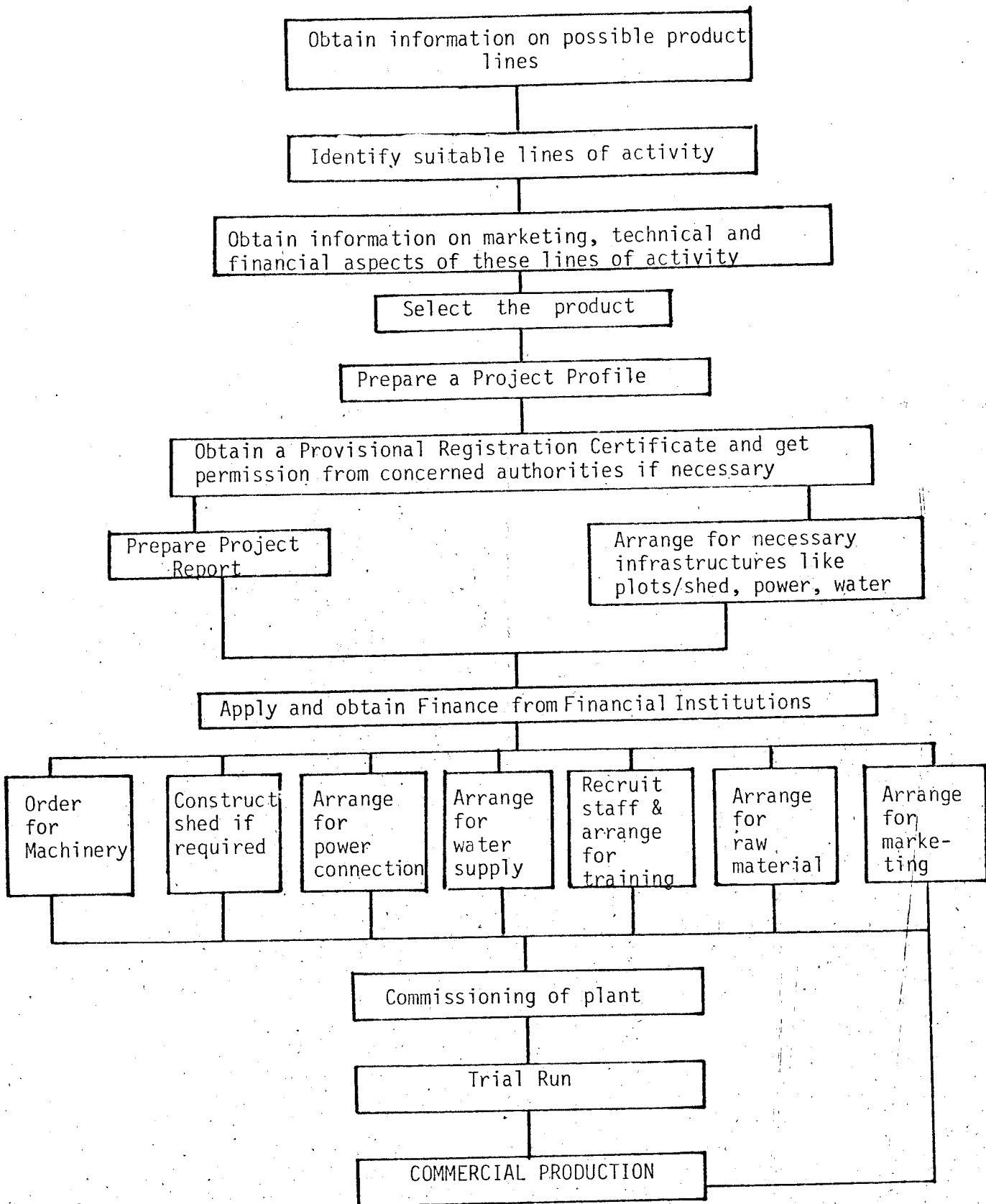
3.6.5 Acquisition Problems

Statistical information is difficult to acquire; most of it is unusable by the time it is available. Extraction of competitors' information is a problem due to lack of skilled personnel. Lack of literature is again identified as contributing to acquisition difficulties. Market research reports and industrial surveys are not only difficult to obtain but to locate. Government departmental libraries are disorganised and unreliable and therefore it is difficult to acquire material from them. Conference reports are rarely published. Public libraries do not provide special information services to industry (Section 3.5). Lastly manufacturers' catalogues and leaflets are scarce or non-existent, and company reports are rarely distributed for public access.

3.7 Information for Small Business Enterprises

Throughout this chapter little reference has been made of the information needs of those small scale business enterprises mentioned in Chapter 2. As mentioned earlier, it lies outside the scope of this study to explore the information needs of this newly evolving sector of the economy. It may be useful, however, to reproduce here an unpublished flow chart on how to set up a small-scale industry by N L Nanjappa ³⁶, Director of the Small Industries Development Organisation (SIDO), and UNIDO Senior Adviser to the MCI (Figure 6).

FIGURE 6: Flow Chart for Setting up a Small Scale Unit



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Writing in an unpublished paper, How to Motivate Entrepreneurship in Zambia, Nanjappa³⁷ states that the information needs of the small industry at the present time is concerned with the initial stages of setting-up an industry. This information includes the following: feasibility studies - i.e. project identification including technology and know-how; market conditions, economic viability, financial requirements and management. This information is essential in order to support the application for a licence at the MCI and approval by SIDO, Village Industry Services (VIS) and the Banks.

Other factors that an aspiring small entrepreneur has to consider, continues Nanjappa³⁸, are location of the industry, incentives and concessions, weather and atmospheric conditions, investment costs, constitution, raw materials, availability of essential services, legal consents, plant and machinery, pre-operative expenditure and working capital requirements including loan facilities. All these aspects require information inputs from bodies which include the MCI, VIS, SIDO, Bank of Zambia, DBZ and Commercial banks. The small entrepreneur needs to be aware of these sources and the assistance that he can benefit from them.

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CHAPTER 4

SURVEY OF AVAILABLE SOURCES OF INFORMATION

CHAPTER 4

SURVEY OF AVAILABLE SOURCES OF BUSINESS INFORMATION

4.1 Structure of Business Information

In the previous chapter, an analysis of business information needs and the difficulties of using sources of information was made. It revealed that provision of information is inadequate, particularly from the viewpoint of the business executive. The present chapter is concerned with where to find information for commerce and industry. To obtain this information a second questionnaire, mentioned in Section 3.4.1, was designed to survey existing industrial and commercial library/information services in Zambia. The questionnaire is reproduced at Appendix II. The aims of this questionnaire were to find out:

- a) the existing services available from various organisations in government, LID services, trade and professional organisations.
- b) the kind of services provided.
- c) the major subject fields covered by the services.
- d) the users of the services.

The questionnaire was distributed to 60 organisations, covering government institutions, chambers of commerce and industry, trade associations, professional organisations, financial institutions, para-statal companies and public libraries. The university, colleges, and training institutions were not surveyed by this questionnaire.

Unfortunately the questionnaire had a disappointingly low response, with only 17% return. The reasons for this poor rate are difficult to ascertain. The only factor which could be attributed to this low response is that the majority of institutions which are

either sources or potential sources of information do not operate fully fledged LID services. Hence they do not have professionally qualified staff who may have appreciated the value of this enquiry. Chambers of commerce, professional and trade associations especially, function through part-time or voluntary staff. But this cannot be said of the Zambia Industrial and Commercial Association (ZINCOM), which has full-time staff under an Executive Director. A close scrutiny of the few questionnaires returned indicate that they all came from well organised and established libraries and information systems. To remedy this deficiency, efforts have been made to include as much information as possible from other sources, mainly government reports, statutory laws, newspapers and the writer's personal knowledge of the institutions concerned.

The information obtained from the questionnaires and other sources has been used to describe and identify sources potentially useful to industry and commerce. Where possible the exact services available are included. This survey claims no comprehensiveness because of the poor response.

Zambia's information sources for business are many. It is the selection and identification of the most appropriate source that can pose a problem. Information use therefore necessitates knowledge of the main characteristics of all types and familiarity with many individual sources. As seen in the previous chapter, these sources are either documentary or non-documentary, and may be of an internal or external nature. It is also *sine qua non* to be familiar with their scope, limitations, and ease or difficulty of consulting them.

As a prelude to a discussion of the actual sources of information available in Zambia, a brief description of the categories to which they belong will be made. These fall into two groups:

4.1.1 Documentary Sources

These sources are self-explanatory (see Chapter 3), consisting of published or unpublished literature. The classification devised by Grogan¹ (1973) will be followed here:

a) Primary sources

These disseminate new information that has not been reviewed, abstracted or indexed. In some cases they contain the only published records of original research and development and applications of science and engineering to technology and industry. They may also include new data or a new understanding of previously unknown facts or ideas. They appear often in periodicals, research reports, conference proceedings, standards, patents, dissertations, government bulletins and manufacturers' technical bulletins containing specific information about particular products or other developments.

b) Secondary sources

These are publications containing material derived from or referring to the primary sources. They will guide the user to the original documents. Falling into this group are abstracting and indexing journals; annuals, review serials and monographs. Concise information such as facts, formulas, procedures, theories are found in encyclopaedias, handbooks and dictionaries.

c) Tertiary sources

This category acts as aids to research workers, in using both primary and secondary sources. They include directories of persons, organisations, products and guides to literature.

4.1.2 Non-documentary Sources

Business information is not restricted to documentary sources. Non-documentary sources can provide immediate answers by direct contact with an expert or specialist without recourse to documents, or written summaries of information. It has already been seen that this has a key role in the business world (Section 3.4.4 and Table 4).

a) Formal channels

These include the following: research establishments in government, industry and private organisations; learned and professional societies; universities, colleges or institutes of technology; specialised information centres; trade associations; private and para-statal industrial concerns.

b) Informal channels

These consist of colleagues, professional acquaintances; meetings, conferences and workshops. Oral sources may often act as pointers to documentary sources and follow-up of contacts may lead to the printed page, but this is not always the case.

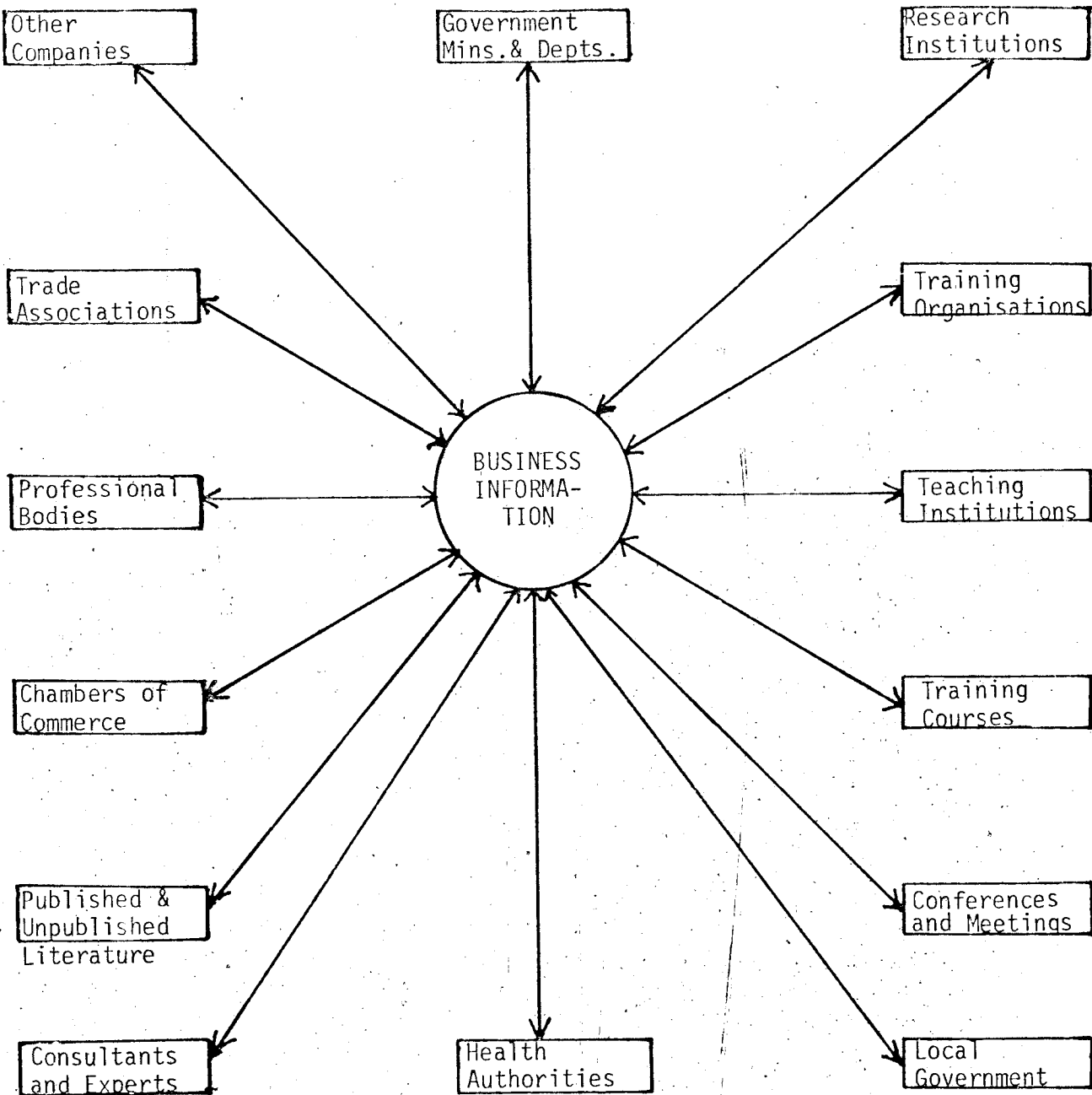
Dare (1979) in a discussion paper Information for decision-making² summarised these sources in a diagram reproduced here in Figure 7.

4.2 Government Ministries and Departments as Sources of Business Information

Against the outline of the structure of business information sources (Figure 7), the following sections discuss the relevant sources found in Zambia; their organisation, functions and types of information they generate and provide; and, where possible, how it is disseminated.

In Zambia, government ministries and departments are the main authoritative source of legal information, development planning and policy information, that affect or relate to industry and commerce. Conformity with rules and regulations, and with government policy cannot be overstressed. The government regularly issues regulations and policy statements that may affect industry and commerce, such as trading practices, areas of business enterprises in which individuals are allowed to venture, health requirements at places of work, factory regulations, duty and other taxes, wages and employment

FIGURE 7: Structure of Business Information Sources



Source: G Dare - Information for decision-making. Journal of Information Science (1979).

conditions and procedures. This information is obtainable either through its various departments or through government publications such as white papers, annual reports, the Government Gazette, statutory instruments, Acts of Parliament, statistical reports and research reports.

The following sub-sections describe the functions of the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI) and its main departments.

The MCI is the main source of legal, company, trade and import/export information. As such it is the point of first reference for information relating to the company as a legal or financial entity, e.g. the registered address, names of directors, capital employed and nature of business. The MCI has six departments, of which the most relevant to this study are:

- a) Department of Internal Trade
- b) Department of Foreign Trade
- c) Department of Industry
- d) Patents, Trade Marks and Designs Office.

4.2.1 Department of Internal Trade

This department has responsibility for import control, import licensing and trade licensing. It allocates foreign exchange to importers.

Trade licences are issued in accordance with the Trade Licensing Act of 1968³ for manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers, agents, commercial travellers, stall-holders, pedlars and hawkers. The Act, (amended in 1969 and 1971) was a result of the economic reforms of 1968 discussed in Section 1.2.1; with the motive to drag Zambians into the commercial life of their country. The Act stipulates the provisions relating to the control of trading, licensing authorities and issues. Local Authorities (now District Councils) are empowered to issue trade and manufacturing licences within their areas of jurisdiction. A local authority can issue licences on behalf of the government but it has no power to

withdraw or cancel them. Cancellation can only be made by Presidential Order published in the 'Government Gazette'. The Act also requires a Licensing Authority to furnish reasons for rejecting an application for a licence. Each authority maintains a register of licences, which can be inspected by anyone at a fee⁴. The registers are kept up-to-date and accurate through the mandatory requirement that all licence holders renew their licences annually. The following information can be obtained from the registers: name and postal address of the licensee, number and date of issue, description of premises, type of goods permitted by the licence. The ease of consulting the registers and the extent to which they are known were not investigated by this survey.

Certain licences can only be issued by the department, especially those relating to manufacturing. For instance, in 1980 the Department issued 100 manufacturing licences to Ndola City Council, approved 47 new manufacturing licences and renewed a further 328 for other organisations⁵.

4.2.2 Foreign Trade Department

The main role of this department is to promote trade with other countries. It is responsible for issuing export licences. The department provides secretarial services to the Zambia Export Promotion Council. The Council's functions include trade fair participation (local and international), sales promotion missions of Zambian-made goods, market research, training and seminars, (also Section 4.7 on training information).

As part of its policy of increasing awareness of the importance of exports, both within the government and amongst the business community, the Council publishes the Zambia Export Directory, Zamexport Newsletter, and Zamtrader. These publications are described in Section 4.5.

A Trade Information and Documentation Centre was established within the Department in 1980, with help from the EEC/ITC⁶, to

provide up-to-date information on products, markets, trade regulations, statistics and other inquiries pertaining to trade for manufacturers. In 1981 the Council posted a Trade Documentation Officer for secondment to the Trade Information Office in Geneva⁷, presumably to gain in-service practical experience and training on how to run the Trade Information and Documentation Centre. Since the questionnaire was not returned by the Centre, it has not been possible to identify its exact organisation, its documents, usage and users and other operations. It is assumed that the Centre is still in its formative stages, and it is worth noting that this is the first known business information service in the country.

4.2.3 Industry Department

The primary function of this department is to promote the establishment of manufacturing industries in the country. It administers and implements the Industrial Development Act and related regulations. The Act has been discussed in sub-section 1.2.7. The department processes manufacturing licences for new and existing industries, and liaises with Indeco (Industrial Development Corporation) on the implementation of projects and the utilization of loans procured for Indeco to channel into projects.

The creation of SIDO (Small Industries Development Organisation) within the department added another organ to the provision of business information. The full range of SIDO's functions are discussed in Chapter 2 (sub-section 2.4), but certain of these are specially relevant in this section. When fully operational, SIDO's information service will give advice on choice of machinery and technical processes to small industrialists. It will also conduct economic and research surveys; and answer queries on economic and commercial information for small-scale businessmen.

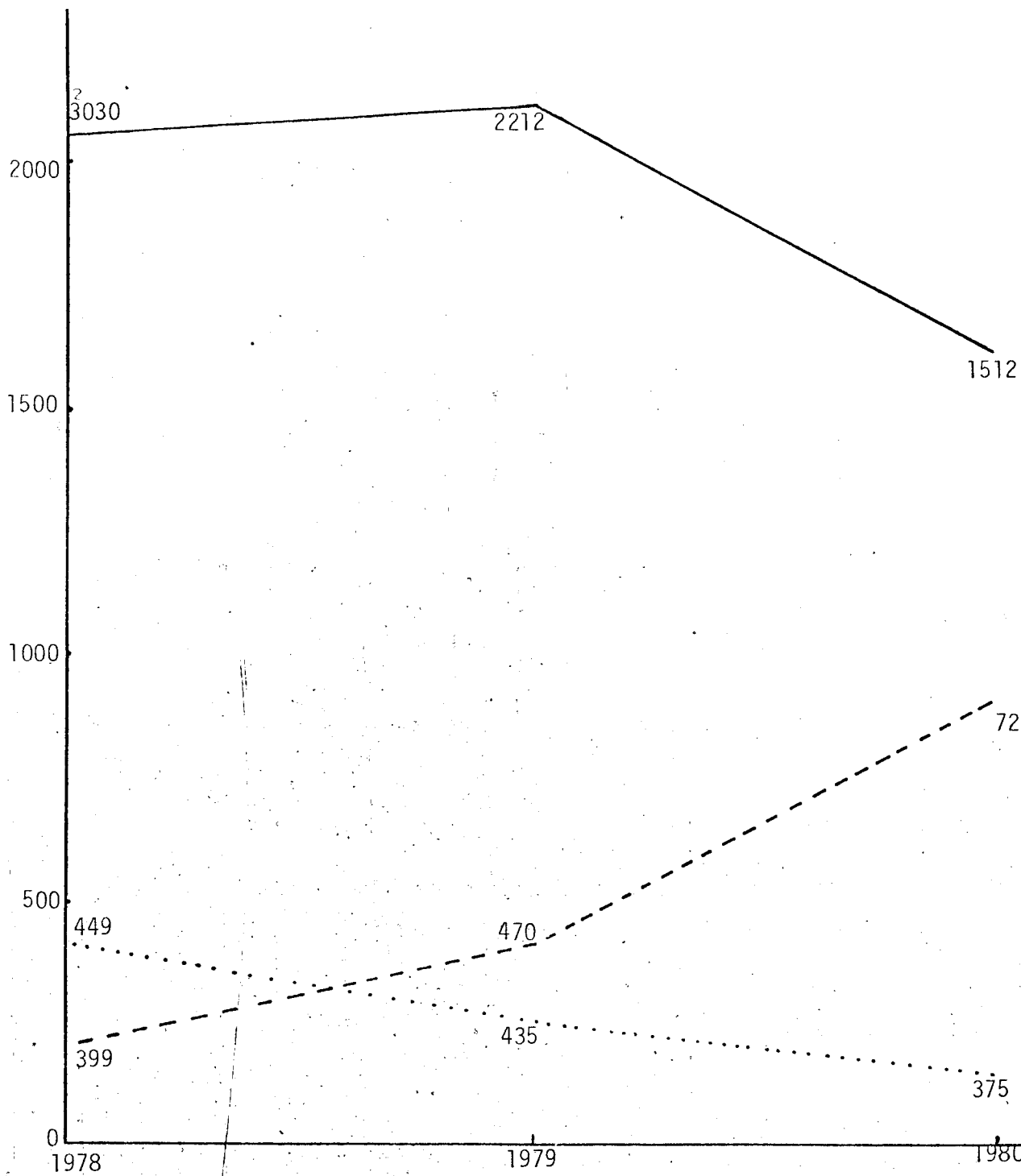
4.2.4 Department of Patents, Designs, Trade Marks and Companies

This department administers the Companies Act (1921 amended 1965), the Patents and Trade Marks Acts (1958 amended 1965), the Registered Designs Act (1958 amended 1965) and the Registration of Business Names Act (1932 amended 1965). These Acts, as the dates indicate, are largely based on British precedence since they were first enacted during colonial rule. They together form a vital set of sources of legal information of use to any type of business organisation, large or small.

The Companies Act provides for the formation, management, administration and winding-up of limited liability companies. It also provides for the registration of foreign companies doing business in Zambia. This process requires furnishing the Registrar of Companies with the Memorandum and Articles of Association when registering a firm. The information required includes the registered office address, names of directors and capital employed. Upon registration of both the memorandum and articles of association, a certificate of incorporation is issued by the Registrar of Companies. A register of companies is kept and is open for inspection by any member of the public at a prescribed fee⁸.

A separate Act stipulates the manner in which business names are registered before a company starts operating. A business names register is maintained by the Registrar of Business Names, who also issues certificates of registration. This Act serves to exclude misleading or offensive names from registration⁹. It follows therefore that before a new firm is registered under the Companies Act, its proposed name must be cleared by the Registrar of Business Names to determine if the name has already been used or is offensive. Again, it was outside the means of this study to investigate the accuracy and availability of both registers. It is sufficient only to identify their existence.

The graph on Figure 8 shows the growth and decline of registered new companies, registration of business names and new manufacturing licences issued during the period 1978-80. During that period there



Key:
 ————— New Business Names Registered
 New Manufacturer's Licences Issued
 - - - - - New Companies Registered

FIGURE 8: Registration of Companies, Business Names and Issue of new manufacturing licences.

Source: MCI Annual Reports 1979/80

has been a decline in new business names and manufacturing licences (issued under the Industrial Development Act and not the Trade Licensing Act), and an increase in new companies registered. It excludes figures for small-scale industries which are registered separately by SIDO (under the Small Industries Development Act). In 1980 SIDO registered 67 new industries¹⁰ in areas mentioned in Section 2.4.

4.2.4.1 The Patents Office

Patents as sources of information have many uses. They help to identify companies and personnel working in specific areas. They may also be used to identify new products, processes, materials and components, to avoid duplication on research and development, and to assist with market strategy.

Zambia's patent law is based on the British Patents Act of 1949¹¹. It makes provision to protect inventions and discoveries of creators of intellectual and scientific work. Patents are registered for a period of 16 years from the date of filing of the complete specification; but an extension for five years or, in exceptional cases, ten years is possible. Application for a patent is made to the Registrar of Patents by the inventor, his assignee or the legal representatives of a deceased inventor. It has to be filed before the invention has been publicly used, worked or made known in Zambia. The Patent Office is a member of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (see also Section 4.6a).

A register of patents is maintained and open to members of the public for inspection. The register gives particulars of patents in force, of assignments and of licences under patents. Certified copies of patents are sealed with the seal of the Patent Office. An entry in the register is considered *prima facie* evidence in legal action under the Act.

Table 5A gives a summary of new patents registered between 1978 and 1980; this shows a slight increase.

4.2.4.2 Trade Marks Office

This section is concerned with registration of symbols used to indicate ownership and to distinguish between products. The provisions for such registration are found in the Trade Marks Act which is based on the British Trade Marks Act of 1938¹². The Act stipulates that the first user of a trade mark is entitled to its registration and exclusive use. Registration is valid for seven years from the date of application and may be renewed for 14-year periods.

The Registrar of Trade Marks also maintains a register containing all registrations with the names, addresses and descriptions of their proprietors, and notifications of assignments. Details of names, addresses and descriptions of all registered users, disclaimers, conditions, limitations are also given. The register, also available for inspection, is divided into 4 parts - A, B, C and D. Registration in part "A" of the register gives the exclusive right of use of the mark; part "B" gives similar rights, but in an action for infringement of part "B" registration, no relief will be granted if the infringer proves that no deception or confusion is likely to arise. Part "C" contains Certification Marks and part "D" is for Defensive Marks¹³. Table 5B gives details of new lodgements, renewals, registrations and cancellations of trade marks between 1978 and 1980.

4.2.4.3 Registered Designs

Industrial designs are required to be registered with the same department. The Registered Designs Act, again similar to the British Act of 1949, defines "design" as features of a shape, configuration, pattern or ornament applied to an article, by any industrial process judged solely by the eye¹⁴.

As with the two cases given above, a register of industrial designs is kept and is open for inspection by any member of the public. The period of registration is five years and is renewable

twice for similar periods. Specimens and a statement of the features of the design for which novelty is claimed must be lodged with the application for registration.

From the above descriptions it can be seen that the Patents, Trade Marks and Designs Office maintains a set of registers relating to live patents, trade marks and registered designs in force in Zambia. Table 5 summarizes the activities of the department between 1978-80, but does not give the exact number of patents and trade marks in force.

While access to the registers is fairly easy and can be done through legal firms, it appears the process may be slow for inquiries outside Lusaka, as the department has no regional offices. Available literature does not indicate the comprehensiveness and currency of the registers, nor if the legal requirements are frequently evaded.

A note should be added that the department runs the Patent Documentation and Information Centre, and publishes the Patents, Trade Marks and Designs Journal. These are discussed separately in Section 4.6.

4.2.5 Zambia Standards Institute

Standards are essential in that they contain valuable information on design and manufacture, materials, components, products, properties, dimensions, purity and terminology. The definition given by Grogan¹⁴ is that they are "*rules as to the quality, size or shape of industrial products*". This definition can be extended to include processes, methods and terminologies.

The Zambia Standards Institute is the body responsible for issuing standards. Upon registration, standards are published in the "Zambian Standards", the Institute's official publication. Full details of each standard issued are given as per the description above. The Institute is a member of the International Standards Organisation.

TABLE 5A: PATENTS

	1978	1979	1980
New applications	107	96	112
Patents sealed	106	78	75
Patents renewed	903	839	724
Patents lapsed	152	134	90

*Slight increase in new applications

TABLE 5B: TRADE MARKS

	1978	1979	1980
New applications lodged	353	361	452
Trade Marks registered	393	241	282
Trade Marks renewed	772	1312	1054
Trade Marks removed	300	759	739

*Increase of new applications and decline in registrations

TABLE 5: Statistics of Patents and Trade Marks registered between 1978-1980

Source: MCI Annual Reports 1979 and 1980

The Institute maintains a combined and specialised technical library and information service for both industry and commerce. The technical library concentrates on food and agriculture, chemicals, cosmetics and drugs, engineering and buildings. Its stock consists of house journals, techno-commercial journals, abstracting journals, local and foreign standards. Among the services provided are a current awareness bulletin for members, who also enjoy a reduced purchasing rate for standards, and the procurement of foreign standards. The users of the library and information service are industrialists, government officials, farmers and educationists.

The Institute plans to expand library facilities and to increase its services.

4.3 Other Government Sources of Information

Services of use to businessmen are offered by several ministries, such as the Ministries of Labour, Finance, Agriculture and Water Development, Lands and Natural Resources, Works and Supply, Power Transport and Communications, and the National Commission for Development Planning. For the purposes of this study an attempt is made to discuss the activities only of those which have direct dealings with commerce and industry.

4.3.1 National Commission for Development Planning (NCDP)

The Commission is the most important source of development planning information. It comes under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister and its major responsibility is to formulate the economic and development strategy of the nation. It is concerned with national development plans, and publishes progress reports of the current five-year national development plan, the TNDP (Third National Development Plan; see Section 1 of Chapter 1) and projects the next stage of development. The Commission is divided into seven departments and some of the most pertinent are ¹⁵:

- a) Department of Manpower Planning and Research - responsible for national manpower development and policy, and manpower planning; conducts economic, social and industrial research; and reviews the performance of the para-statal sector.
- b) Department of Economic and Technical Cooperation - concerned with multilateral cooperation which deals with the UN System - UNDP, FAO, ILO, UNESCO, UNIDO and with international bodies such as the IMF, IFC, EEC and IBRD. A unit is also concerned with economic and technical cooperation with other countries on a bi-lateral basis. All information concerning technical aid and loans is disseminated and generated by this department.
- c) The Departments for Sectorial Planning and Investment Policy, Programming and Project Preparation are concerned with economic production planning in, among many other areas, mineral and energy resources, agriculture, transport, communications, industrial (manufacturing) and internal trade. Other tasks include formulation of macro-planning investment (financial) policy and programming; macro-projections and analysis, foreign trade, incomes, wages, prices, productivity and enterprise corporate planning. A separate department for regional planning is concerned with regional analysis and policies, and planning of regional development programmes. It also coordinates and implements regional investment programmes as well as conducting regional surveys and research.

4.3.2 Department of Census and Statistics (CSO)

This department also falls under the NCDP. The CSO's (Central Statistical Office) major tasks are to collect, compile, disseminate and interpret statistical information. In addition to many other sub-divisions within the department, the CSO operates a statistical information service and library. In Chapter 3, Section 3.5.2 an observation was made that the business community is dissatisfied with the unavailability of statistical information. This problem is perhaps partially explained in the CSO's 1980

Annual Report which reported that the department experiences delays in data processing due to lack of data processing capability at its office¹⁶. Its publications are also issued irregularly. For instance the Monthly Digest of Statistics has almost been turned into a quarterly if not a bi-annual serial and the "Statistical Yearbook of Zambia" has not been published since 1971. The CSO attributes this delay to the low priority that the Government Printer attaches to statistical work¹⁷. These two reasons do not tell us whether other means have been tried in order to maintain continuity of publications (see Sections 3.4.2, 3.5.1 and 5.1.1).

4.3.3 Ministries of Finance and Labour

The Ministry of Finance is responsible for all government revenue, expenditure and economic affairs. Revenue is collected mainly through the departments of Customs and Excise, and Taxes. Every year the ministry publishes the "Annual Estimates of Income and Expenditure" for the government and the "Budget". The budget is perhaps the most important document from the ministry for industry and commerce. It outlines various topics under such headings as general economic outlook, government financial operations, budgetary and economic policy, industrial and investment policy, prices and incomes policy, multi and bilateral cooperation, and monetary policy¹⁸. Fiscal measures often lead to increases in excise and customs duty and taxes which in turn may result in increases in prices of some commodities such as beer, petrol, sugar and mealie meal. It is often reproduced in full in the national papers.

The Ministry of Labour's responsibilities are to advise the Government on all matters concerning labour; maintain safe and healthy working conditions in factories and construction sites; promote and maintain good industrial relations; collect and collate labour statistics and enforce labour legislation¹⁹. It administers the Employment of Women, Young Persons and Children Act, the Minimum Wages, Wages Councils and Conditions of Employment Act, the Employment Act, the Factories Act and the Industrial Relations Act.

The Labour department cooperates with management training institutions, for example MEF, by delivering lectures to management trainees on labour matters and factory safety regulations. Through its provincial labour officers, information is also disseminated via press releases, visits to industries, circulars, and seminars in addition to statutory instruments and other official government publications.

4.4 Professional, Trade and Commercial Organisations

This section is concerned with Chambers of Commerce and Industry, (CCI), Professional Institutions, Trade Associations and Research Organisations, which have particular relevance to business information.

4.4.1 Chambers of Commerce and Industry

These private organisations serve the interests of the business community. They assist in economic development by working with the Government to improve business enterprises in the country. In addition to providing information to individual businessmen, who must be members, they act as representative organisations in dealing with local district councils and government departments.

In Zambia, these organisations exist only along the line of rail and the Copperbelt, following the lopsided economic and industrial development noted in Chapters 1 and 2. Similar organisations are not found in other parts of the country except Chipata in the Eastern Province. Examples of notable CCIs are found in Kitwe and Lusaka.

The Kitwe and District Chamber of Commerce and Industry maintains a small collection of literature which is at present being collated and indexed. Kitwe CCI hopes to establish a centralised office where information will be made available to members. The stock consists of local, foreign bank and government economic reports, reports of other local CCIs, foreign trade journals and

manufacturer's catalogues. It is staffed by part-time staff, and is open to any member of the chamber. Small businessmen are the main users of the service.

Established in 1933, the Lusaka CCI coordinates the activities of various industrial and commercial sections. It is the largest organisation of its type in Zambia. It provides information on commercial and industrial matters both locally and externally, through minutes of its meetings and inquiries.

At national level, all CCIs are linked to the Zambia Industrial and Commercial Association (ZINCOM). ZINCOM's major function is to promote the development of trade, commerce and industry. It provides information to the business community which includes information geared to promote and diversify exportable products. Members are kept informed through publications and circulars. One of its objectives pledges to *"maintain and augment a library consisting of books and publications containing information concerning all branches of trade, commerce and industries"*.²⁰ Despite this pledge, there is no evidence that it has been fulfilled.

ZINCOM represents its members on the Prices and Incomes Commission, the Managerial Services Board (MSB), the Zambian Export and Promotion Council and the Zambia Standards Institute.

CCIs disseminate and generate information but access to this information is strictly confined to members, as the experience of this author illustrates in Chapter 5 (Section 5.1) (see also Section 3.5.2).

4.4.2 Trade Associations

Trade Associations are relatively numerous in Zambia²¹, (about 20). An indication of their variety is given by quoting a selection of their titles: the Clothing and Allied Industries Association of Zambia, the Manufacturers' Association of Zambia, the Hotel and Catering Association of Zambia, the Master Printers and Newspaper Proprietors Association of Zambia, the Travel Agents Association of Zambia, the Building and Contractors Association of Zambia, the

Zambia National Council of Commerce and Industry and the Small Scale Industries Association. These Associations assist their members and their industries in dealing with common problems. Membership is restricted to organisations within the trade and is independent of government control.

As voluntary organisations, they are financed through subscriptions from members; hence their services are not available to non-members. Their functions include data gathering and they undertake studies on behalf of their members. They also serve as the industry's spokesman on national problems. For example, the Manufacturers' Association of Zambia held a meeting in January 1983 with the Chairman of the Economic and Finance Sub-Committee of the Central Committee²², where problems affecting the manufacturing industry were discussed, centering mainly on the critical shortage of raw materials and the lack of foreign exchange with which to import raw materials.

4.4.3 Professional or Technical Associations

Like Chambers of Commerce and Industry, professional or technical associations are voluntary non-profit making organisations. Their membership, is confined to professional people with the purpose of an interchange of ideas by means of publications, meetings and research. Examples are the Economics Club, based in Lusaka; the Engineering Institution of Zambia, the Zambia Institute of Accountants, the Medical Association of Zambia, the Zambia Institute of Personnel Management, the Pharmaceutical Society, the Institute of Architects and the Zambia Institute of Management. A newcomer to this category is the Management and Accountancy Association (MAA) formed and based at UNZA School of Business and Industrial Studies.

Publications from these associations are significant sources of business information. For example, the "Journal of the Engineering Institution of Zambia", the "Medical Journal of Zambia" and the "Executive", published by MAA, publish articles which may be useful

to a business executive. These journals enjoy contributions from practising professionals and learned persons such as lecturers from universities and colleges. They also publish research results.

The Junior Engineers Technicians and Scientists (JETS), is an allied organisation. It publishes papers and a journal and also organises annual fairs.

4.4.4 Research Institutions

Two notable institutions conduct research useful to industry and commerce: the National Council for Scientific Research (NCSR) and the University of Zambia (UNZA) (Chapter 2, Section 2.5). To these can be added Indeco; the National Commission for Developing Planning; the Development Bank of Zambia (DBZ); and the newly established Small Industries Development Organisation (SIDO). These organisations have among their objectives to undertake market research and industrial studies. Indeco, for example, completed feasibility studies in the following areas in 1981: tractor assembly plant, pharmaceutical products, irrigation equipment, electric motor water pumps, transformer factory, iron and steel plant, matting plant and calcium carbide factory²³.

DBZ is in the process of establishing a library; while SIDO is still in the formative stages. The NCSR has a Documentation and Science Information Centre in addition to a library. This is described under Section 4.6.

Through its various schools, UNZA conducts research in the following areas useful to industry: low cost automation, solar energy, noise level in industry, production engineering, manufacturing technology and development of designs for equipment and tooling suitable for small industry²⁴. As seen in Section 3.5.1 research reports from these institutions are difficult to locate.

4.5 Trade Literature

This sub-section attempts to identify trade literature published in Zambia. As observed in Chapter 3, trade literature is a popular source used by the business community, and so it is important to consider its availability.

4.5.1 Directories

Few trade directories are published in Zambia. The most notable is the "Zambia Directory" which is published by Directory Publishers in Ndola. The directory gives information on government, carries reviews on economic, commercial and industrial topics and, most usefully, gives what purports to be comprehensive information on manufacturing and assembling industries in Zambia. This section is arranged in classified order, with headings arranged alphabetically. It is published annually and costs K20.00 (£8.00).

Another significant directory for export information is "Zambia Export Directory". First published in 1982 by the Trade Information Services of the Zambia Export Promotion Council (ZEPC), it gives information on 103 Zambian exporting companies or potential exporters of 350 products. It is divided into the following sections: addresses of Zambian Missions abroad, diplomatic missions resident in Zambia, government ministries, ZEPC activities, CCIs, transporting, clearing and forwarding agents, list of products, and suppliers, addresses of exporters including postal address, telex, cable code, year established, number of employees, name of director or general manager and statistics. It is hoped it will be published annually (price unknown).

The Posts and Telecommunications Corporation (PTC) issues annual editions of the "Telex Directory", and bi-annual editions of the "Telephone Directory". The "Telex Directory" has alphabetical lists of subscribers and answer-back codes.

The "Telephone Directory" is probably the most well known and widely used. It is issued in April and October each year and published

by Printpak by agreement with the PTC. It is divided into three sections, and covers the whole country. The first section is arranged alphabetically by town giving general information on postal and telephone numbers of subscribers. The second section (in blue) provides information on government ministries and departments throughout the country. The third section (in yellow) is the classified section by trade (A-Z) or products. It costs 25n or is gratis by exchanging with the old copy.

On the regional scene "Braby's Commercial Directory of East and Central Africa" published from South Africa, covers the whole of Southern Africa: including Namibia, South Africa, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Reunion, Seychelles, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. This directory gives product information, telephone, telex and postal addresses. Each country has alphabetical and classified sections of business organisations, their products or services. The classified section (in yellow) lists all manufacturers of each product. Information on Chambers of Commerce and Industry can be found.

4.5.2 Periodicals, House Journals and Newspapers

Notable journals are "Enterprise" published quarterly by ZIMCO, and is devoted mainly to articles on management topics; "Zambia Journal of Science and Technology" and "Zambia Science Abstracts", which are both produced by the NCSR's Documentation and Science Information Centre. Other periodicals of relevance are "Patent Journal and Trade Marks Journal" a monthly, "Zambian Standards" for technical information; the "Government Gazette" and "Statutory Instruments" for government regulations and company information. The Government Gazette is a weekly publication from the Government Printer and gives notices of, *inter alia*, newly formed companies, dissolutions, liquidations, collective agreements and rulings of the Industrial Relations Court on trade disputes and approved conditions of service negotiated by individual trade unions.

"Zamexport News", a bi-monthly and "Zamtrader News", a monthly; are both published by the Zambia Export Promotion Council. They carry

information on trade agreements, trade missions, trade meetings, and conferences, overseas markets, products for exports, training opportunities and trade fairs. Other titles have been referred to in Section 4.4.3 under the classification of technical or professional journals.

Most para-statal produce house journals not only for internal circulation but also for public consumption. They are instruments of public relations and carry little pertinent information to business. But prestigious journals such as "Indeco Review" and "Rudeco Review" carry articles which are of a management nature.

Zambia's two national daily newspapers the "Times of Zambia" and the "Zambia Daily Mail", and the weekly "Sunday Times of Zambia" and "Sunday Post", have business sections which are obligatory reading for every executive. They carry a digest of news that might affect a company such as new appointments in the government, financial news (e.g. change in bank rates) and economic forecasts. Newly formed companies are reported in newspapers in addition to general business news.

The "Financial Review of Zambia", a business monthly, is another newspaper which is purely devoted to reporting business news and economic analyses. Its articles make a significant contribution to business information in Zambia. Produced by Contact Advertising Limited, the paper includes supplements under which various entrepreneurs are featured and carries features on trade and business connections between Zambia and foreign countries. It plans to open a branch on the Copperbelt.

There are no indexing or abstracting services covering serials, except Zambia Science Abstracts.

4.6 Libraries Information and Documentation Services

Zambia has fairly developed LID services along the line of rail, comprising public libraries, industrial libraries and libraries of the university and technical colleges. In Chapter 3 it was observed

that the business community in Zambia makes very little use of the facilities provided by LIDS. Remarks included "*information not readily available*" and "*usually have limited number of books*".

This section identifies the services found in those LIDS which responded to the questionnaire.

Public libraries in Zambia do not provide business or technical sections, unlike similar institutions in the UK. They are still very backward in their approach to information provision. Ndola City Library might be the first to break through this situation, as it indicated plans to establish an information service.

Amongst more specialist information services the following have already been discussed: Trade Documentation and Information Centre in the MCI (Section 4.2.2); Zambia Standards Institute Technical Library (Section 4.2.5); and the proposed SIDO Information Centre (Section 4.2.3). In this section, special consideration will be given to two significant institutions:

a) Patent Documentation and Information Centre

This is a major sector of the Department of Patents, Trade Marks and Designs Office (Section 4.2.4). Its principal role is to acquire and disseminate technological information contained in patent documents. The stock covers trade marks, limited liability companies, partnerships and other forms of businesses, industrial designs, patents and their technological contents. Also found are trade mark and patent journals of the United Kingdom, Ireland, Malawi, Zimbabwe, and South Africa; and UK law reports on patents, designs and trade marks cases.

The Centre is used by lawyers acting on behalf of their foreign counterparts, and those representing both foreign and local companies, local businessmen, individuals and public institutions. Through the monthly "Patents, Trade Marks and Designs Journal", it publishes lodgements, registrations, terminations and licensing of industrial property rights.

Located in Lusaka and financed by the government, the centre is connected to a regional data base in Harare (Zimbabwe) in addition to being a member of WIPO (World Intellectual Property Office). It adopts WIPO standards for recording, arranging, and dissemination of information. Consideration is being given to mechanisation and to the provision of more information services according to WIPO standards and recommendations. Access is granted by arrangement.

b) Documentation and Scientific Information Centre

The NCSR runs this centre to serve the needs of researchers in science and technology. It includes a library. The Centre's services include literature searching, document provision, and it produces accession-lists and current awareness bulletins to alert research workers. It publishes the "Zambia Science Abstracts", technical reports and selected surveys of scientific literature and contents reviews.

Its stock consists of house journals, techno-commercial journals, patents and other STI literature including reprints.

The Centre is financed through annual grants from the government approved by the National Assembly. It is situated in Lusaka with small branches at Kitwe and Mt Makulu. The Centre is expanding rapidly and will soon move into a new building which will have equipment to permit provision of a modern information centre.

As a special library its accessibility is restricted to research and technological personnel working in, amongst other areas, food science, nuclear science, industrial minerals, ceramics and building materials, livestock and animal pests research and research into alternative sources of energy.

A further source of import/export information and technical information is provided by libraries of foreign embassies and trade attaches. In Zambia the most notable is the recently opened American Embassy Commercial Library²⁵. This Library specialises in information on American industry, commerce and foreign trade. It provides

information on new products and services in the USA, trade shows, seminars, addresses of manufacturers and suppliers in addition to information on trade and professional associations. It carries a stock of current American trade directories.

The Bank of Zambia maintains a well-established library dealing with monetary and economic policies of the country²⁶. It supports the bank's research department. The Development Bank of Zambia is establishing a library (see Section 4.4.4). The information services provided by commercial banks are largely an unknown quantity.

4.7 Training Institutions

The importance of training information for commerce and industry cannot be overstressed. Success in industry and commerce can only be achieved with skilled and well trained qualified personnel. As technology changes, management and technical skills need to be updated.

Training information in Zambia is obtainable from institutions run by the Ministry of Education, through the Department of Technical Education and Vocational Training (DTEVT); the University of Zambia; and in-service training institutions. The DTEVT runs the Zambia Institute of Technology, the Northern Technical College, the Evelyn Hone College of Arts and Further Education as well as Trades Training Institutes at Choma, Kabwe, Kasama, Livingstone, Luanshya, Lusaka and Mansa. Other Trades Training Institutes are planned for Eastern, North-Western and Western provinces. These institutes run courses at certificate and diploma level in accountancy, business studies, secretarial studies and technical courses in, among other subjects, engineering and electronics.

Other institutions specialise in sandwich courses for personnel already in employment: Management Services Board (MSB), Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation (MEF), Mining Industry Manpower Services Unit (MIMSU), President's Citizenship College (PCC), and the National

Institute of Public Administration (NIPA). NIPA is used exclusively to train government and local government administrators and accountants; while MIMSU is used by the mining industry.

MEF, MSB and PCC run similar courses designed for industry and commerce, such as management development, small business management, personnel management, industrial relations, marketing and production management. MEF and PCC have good libraries attached to them.

A further institution of interest to industry and commerce is the Zambia Export Promotion Council. It is a source of training information for the business sector in international trade with particular emphasis on trade promotion, export packaging, product costing and pricing for export. It can be located in its publications described in Section 4.5.2.

The University of Zambia in addition to its range of degree and postgraduate courses established a School of Business and Industrial Studies in 1978²⁷. The school was a recognition of the great need for trained manpower in management and accountancy. It provides managers with an opportunity to continue, to broaden and to enrich their education through management workshops and executive development programmes.

4.8 External Sources of Information

This chapter has concentrated on local sources of information. It does not imply that external sources i.e. foreign sources of information - are not used. In fact external sources are heavily used, but lie outside the realm of this thesis. A brief survey of the major external sources will complement the local sources examined in this chapter.

It is not possible to state exactly which sources are used because there was no such provision in either questionnaire. Some libraries, information and documentation centres reported that they stock external sources in the form of periodicals and directories.

They are used to identify information on latest developments in technology and manufacturing; product information; export and training information.

One source worthy of note are the UNIDO Guides to Information Sources. (UNIDO is considered further in Chapter 5, Section 5.3.1). These are well-researched guides to information sources on a wide range of subjects. Primarily designed for use in the developing countries, they cover published sources and organisations that give aid. The format has sections on professional, trade and other organisations, directories, basic handbooks and manuals. MEF's Dag Hammarskjold Memorial Library has comprehensive sets of these guides.

4.9 Summary

This brief survey has made a general overview of sources of information for business available to users in industry and commerce. What seems to stand out clearly is that there exists, in Zambia, a number of institutions providing a variety of information. Within the Ministry of Commerce and Industry there are three separate institutions providing specialised business information: the Trade Documentation and Information Centre, the Patents Documentation and Information Centre and the new SIDO Information Centre.

Furthermore there are other institutions such as the Zambia Standards Institute Library, the Scientific Documentation and Information Centre; banks and financial institutions and training institutions which are pertinent to industry and commerce. Public libraries have no business sections as such, but stock materials such as directories which are useful information sources.

The National Commission for Development Planning and the Ministries of Finance and Labour all perform functions that generate information on development plans and policy, labour regulations and fiscal policies. This information affects industry and commerce and shapes the economic and industrial destiny of the country.

Unfortunately there exists no active and organised systems of disseminating information or making it available to industrial and commercial users.

This chapter concludes with a table summarising types of information and the sources which can be used (Table 6). The next chapter examines whether the need for information seen in Chapter 3 in relation to the sources in this chapter justify the establishment of a separate business information centre.

TYPE OF INFORMATION	RECOMMENDED SOURCES TO USE
LEGAL INFORMATION	ACTS on Companies, Industrial legislation etc; Statutory Instruments, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Law firms, Public Libraries, District Councils. Health and Safety Regulations, Ministry of Labour.
TRAINING INFORMATION	University of Zambia, Management Services Board, President's Citizenship College, Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation, Colleges of Technology, Department of Technical Education and Vocational Training, Zambia Institutes of Management and Personnel, Brochures, Libraries, Colleagues, Journals, Prospectuses
NEWS OF DEVELOPMENTS	Journals and Magazines, Patents, Newspapers, Standards, Workshops, Meetings, Conferences National Council for Scientific Research, University of Zambia, Trade and Industrial and Commercial Shows and Fairs, Research Institutes, Libraries, Documentation and Information Centres, Colleagues, Abstracts.
SCIENTIFIC/TECHNICAL INFORMATION (Includes Industrial Surveys)	Scientific and Technical Journals, Standards, Patents, NCSR, UNZA, Conferences, Meetings, Professional and Technical Associations; Research Institutes, Zambia Standards Institute, Patents, Trade Marks Office; Libraries, Documentation and Information Centres, Colleagues
INVESTMENT INFORMATION	Relevant Acts, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, Indeco, Zimco, Bank of Zambia, Small Industry Development Organisation, Village Industry Service, Chambers of Commerce and Industry, ZIMCOM, Trade Fairs, Development Bank of Zambia, Commercial Banks, National Development Plans; District Councils; Industrial Surveys, MSB.
MARKETING AND MARKET INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION	SIDO, Market Research Reports, MSB, Consulting Firms, DBZ, Indeco, Colleagues, Company Internal Reports, Statistics - Central Statistical Office and Bank of Zambia, Zambia Export Promotion Council

TYPE OF INFORMATION	RECOMMENDED SOURCES TO USE
COMPETITORS INFORMATION	Industrial and Commercial Associations, Department of Industry, Newspapers, House Journals, Magazines, Patents and Trade Marks Literature, Registrar of Companies Office, Chambers of Commerce and Industry; Industrial Directories, Annual Reports from Companies. Patents Journal
STATISTICAL INFORMATION	Publications from the Central Statistical Office, ZIMCOM, BOZ (for financial statistics), Public Libraries, Company Annual Reports, Department of Agriculture for Agricultural Statistics, Banks, Electoral Registers, LIDS
PRODUCT INFORMATION	Newspapers, Technical Journals, Patent Literature, SIDO, INDECO, Industrial and Commercial Associations, Zambia Directory (Industry), and Regional Directories e.g. Braby's; Trade and Commercial Fairs, Manufacturers Catalogues, Annual Reports, Trade Directories, LIDS
COMPANY FINANCIAL INFORMATION	Company and Annual Reports; Newspapers, Department of Industry, ZIMCO for para-statal's Banks. Libraries, Documentation and Information Centres
IMPORT/EXPORT INFORMATION	Zambia Import/Export Promotion Council, Chambers of Commerce and Industry, Foreign Embassies - Commercial and Trade Attaches, Zamexport News, Zambia Export Directory, Trade Documentation Centre, Trade and Commercial Fairs, Commercial Banks and BOZ, NIEC

TABLE 6: Types of information and their sources; based on information derived from both questionnaires.

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CHAPTER 5

THE NEED FOR A BUSINESS INFORMATION

CENTRE IN ZAMBIA

CHAPTER 5

THE NEED FOR A BUSINESS INFORMATION CENTRE IN ZAMBIA

The previous chapters have described the economic situation and the industrial and commercial structure of Zambia; and surveyed the needs and sources of information for business. The present chapter and the following builds on this by considering the need for a business information centre. The current situation on information policy, the respondents' reaction to the suggestion for the establishment of a business information service, and the options and implications thereof, will be examined and discussed. A brief exploration of business information services in other countries will be made and this chapter finishes with a consideration of the role of international organisations, including UNIDO, in industrial information.

5.1 Present Position of Business Information

The present situation as regards to business information in Zambia is that although there are several institutions which provide information to commerce and industry, there is no one institution clearly designated as such. It would be wrong to assume that business information services do not exist. The institutions surveyed in Chapter 4 and those mentioned in Chapter 3 have rich information sources which are under-utilized, probably because of lack of knowledge of their existence by potential users or because of a lack of communication on the part of the providers of information. This situation raises the need for the establishment of an institution or institutions to disseminate information to those who require it but do not know where to find it. The activities of most institutions are uncoordinated, even those under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MCI).

Question No 9, of the questionnaire, already analysed in Chapter 3, invited respondents to express their own views on the establishment of a business information service. The service as envisaged would specialise in technical, industrial and commercial information. This question was attempted by all the respondents. 85% of the respondents were in favour while only 11% were not in favour and 4% were doubtful. Some of their comments were:

This would be a useful business information service if it were established. Besides giving specialist information on various topics as suggested ... and obtained from developed countries, it would be advantageous if such information was tied up with and helped to inform developing business communities.

Setting up a business information service in the areas indicated would certainly ease the difficulties experienced in obtaining certain information due to inability to pay for either publications or reference books for certain materials of information.

The setting up of a business information service would highly contribute to the efficiency of company performance. This would come about because of the instantaneous service the centre would provide.

The idea ... of a business information system in Zambia is very important and should be seen through. This is because there is no such service at present.

A business information service is a welcome idea, because it will help industries and businesses to obtain technical, scientific and commercial information regarding the operation of their organisations. At the moment many organisations lack this very fundamental information and as a result these organisations or businesses suffer losses and eventually collapse.

These statements, coming from the business community itself, emphasize the need for a business information centre. The reasons given are valid since they are qualified further by the problems being faced at present. Other respondents who welcomed the idea believed that the service would greatly assist in technological change, hence advancing industry and commerce, adding, "*the service is essential to our economy*". Some respondents even suggested a

"Weekly Business Journal", an implication of the lack of literature on the subject. The strength and directness of these comments would seem to show that no further argument is necessary at this stage.

Some respondents were sceptical about its success and efficiency. They had some cautionary words, as the following indicates:

This is a good idea as long as it does not depend on government departments like the Central Statistical Office as a source of data. Data from this source normally has a time lag.

Setting up a business information system will certainly go a long way in helping executives get the much needed information. A good information system should in fact be a prerequisite for any business organisation. However the most important thing is not having the information but rather it is using the information. If you have the information and you cannot use it at the right time then the whole purpose of information will be defeated.

Once again the problem of obtaining statistical information is sounded. But perhaps the more interesting comment is the second which touches on timely presentation of information. This manager is obviously conscious that information is useless if it is not provided at the right time.

One more note of caution was made by the respondent who observed that the service would no doubt be a very useful innovation in terms of providing vital information for business needs but added:

this information service needs the services of expert people to run, who can search, research, and update the various data constantly and regularly. Unless this standard is maintained only then will the information service function properly and organisations will benefit from the service.

This comment, which rightly emphasizes the quality of staff, is extremely pertinent and is discussed in Chapter 6, Section 6.3.2. This is one of the cardinal issues which planners of information and library services have often overlooked.

A minority were not in favour of the idea, but their comments are worth recording. Some thought that the existing services were adequate, while others doubted that the centre would be viable at all. For example:

Unfortunately this would be difficult in Zambia, because of the small business community and uniqueness of each enterprise.

I doubt if it would be viable. The Chambers of Commerce and Industry, ZINCOM and Trade Associations provide the best general business information ...

This already exists on a scattered basis; all that is required is to improve the current institutions handling the various types of information.

The existing sources of information suffice, but the problem in some instances is timely presentation of data. Perhaps weekly, monthly publication to cater for the specific needs of the business community would be ideal.

The views as expressed here have not been dismissed, but have been considered in the overall evaluation of Zambia's business information provision. As regards Chambers of Commerce and Industry, it is interesting that one respondent at least thought that they provide adequate business information. The question is, how cooperative are they in providing information to non-members? As an illustration, the present writer had immense difficulties in obtaining information from Chambers of Commerce about their activities in the information provision field. Out of more than eight Chambers contacted, including ZINCOM, only one Chamber returned a completed questionnaire (see also Section 4.4.1).

Timely presentation of data is again mentioned as one of the major problems facing the business community in Zambia. It is

unfortunately not known if the institutions concerned, such as the Central Statistical Office, are aware of the problem caused by inefficient methods of transmitting information. It lay outside the scope of this thesis to investigate this problem, but it would have been interesting to discover what the institutions concerned would have to say (see Section 4.3.1).

There is no doubt from this analysis that there is a strong need for a business information centre in Zambia. The statements made, including those not in favour, give sufficient ammunition to justify the creation of such a centre. The argument therefore is that since there is no national institution providing the service, since existing institutions are inadequate and uncoordinated and since the users themselves appreciate the value that is derived from business information, what can Zambia do to redress the situation? Should Zambia create and establish a business information service or should it just upgrade the services provided by existing institutions? The situation as it stands is such that the absence of a business information service seriously denies the creators of wealth - industry and commerce - access to information which would make it more competitive and efficient both at home and abroad. With the exception of the giant mining company, ZCCM, many firms, including the para-statal monopolies, do not have information services of their own.

The following factors arising from this study make the provision of business information in Zambia imperative:

- a) Lack of an institution which is exclusively devoted to serving industry and commerce with its information requirements.
- b) Incapacity of available institutions, e.g. government departments and chambers of commerce, to provide information when it is required.
- c) Lack of an institution to coordinate the information intake

available in the country and to complement it with intake from (d) below

- d) Lack of an institution that would facilitate the transfer of information from the industrialised and other developing countries to potential users in Zambia.
- e) Absence of a national policy on information for business to facilitate the flow of information within the various institutions handling and disseminating information in the country.

These factors effectively answer the need for a business information service in Zambia. As seen in Chapter 2, an increase in industrial development is likely to trigger an increase in research and development activities, creating in turn the need for technical and commercial information. This calls for an organised information and library system to gather and process information for business use to support the nation's development objectives. As one respondent stresses: *"the idea must be sold to organisations such as employers' associations, chambers of commerce and industry, government, workers unions etc"*. No further argument seems necessary.

5.1.1 Advantages of Business Information Services

J O Y Akisente¹, in a study of business information needs in Nigeria, writes that a management information and documentation unit serves to facilitate more efficient use of previously generated information; thus ensuring that efforts are not duplicated as the centre would collect relevant materials on behalf of several institutions in the same field. She continues that since the information would normally be processed for immediate use a *"manager does not get bogged down with a list of references but is given actual information"*. This is a good summary of the advantages of a business information service, highlighting, as it does, the main advantages to be derived from such a service, namely accessi-

bility, timeliness, relevance and availability. These points have been mentioned repeatedly by respondents.

In Chapter 3 it was observed that managers have many demands on their time and therefore need information fast. This is restated again in Section 5.1 both by the respondent who foresees the *"instantaneous service the centre would provide"*; and by the stress on timely presentation of information. These are the factors that make business information attractive to potential users, and perhaps the appropriate expression is made by another respondent who says a *"good information service is a prerequisite for any business organisation"*.

J Michel² of the French Bureau National de'information Scientifique et Technique said in a paper delivered to the Committee for Information and Documentation on Science and Technology Ad hoc Working Group on Information for Industry that a good information centre should make accessible to commerce and industry without discrimination the following main features of information:

a) Technical Information

- state-of-the-art reviews of technology
- current research reports
- technical research reports
- existing industrial products
- domestic and foreign standards and regulations

b) Technical/Legal Information

- domestic and foreign patents and trade marks
- assignable inventions and know-how
- investors' certificates

c) Techno-commercial Information

- technological and economic forecasts
- statistics on production, exports and imports
- information on consumption patterns

This kind of information can most easily be obtained where only one institution is responsible for its acquisition, provided that that institution were known to potential users. In Zambia, information in the categories used by Michel is scattered through several unconnected bodies. Information in category (a) is provided by the National Council for Scientific Research, the Zambia Standards Institute and various technical journals deposited without pattern in libraries. Information in category (b) is likely to be obtainable from the Patents Documentation Information Centre, the University of Zambia Library, the Technical Library Services in Kalulushi and perhaps from a host of other unknown sources. The State and commercial banks as well as Government ministries and departments, such as the Central Statistical Office, would be the most likely sources of techno-commercial information in category (c). These are too many sources for an executive to remember, and the absence of published guides to business information sources is a further barrier to effective use of information.

A single business information centre has the added advantage of maximizing the skills of information workers. Problems such as those of lack of skill to extract information and availability of literature could be minimized. A central organisation could take over some of the functions currently undertaken in an 'amateur' fashion within certain firms. The danger of in-house library and information services is that managements often down-grade these services, with the result that ill-qualified staff are employed without being properly versed in the techniques of information handling and retrieval. Hence the shoddy services provided.

Existing in-house resources would benefit from drawing on the resources of a separate business information service through some form of cooperation. A further discussion on staff is given in Chapter 6.

The advantages of a business information service are synonymous with the reasons given by the respondents themselves. As a summary of its effects on the business community, a business information service would:

- a) Benefit not only established big firms, but small and medium enterprises, as most have no resources to develop their own information systems.
- b) Make available relevant foreign information on technology, industry and commerce.
- c) Ease information seeking problems.
- d) Motivate managers to use information as it becomes available.
- e) Minimize duplication of services by collecting information on behalf of several organisations.
- f) Be able to tap information from sources of which the ultimate user is ignorant, particularly foreign sources.
- g) The information needs of managers would be easier to satisfy through a centre devoted to their needs.

5.2 Business Information Services in Other Countries

In this section an attempt is made to describe the ways in which other countries provide information services for business. Four countries have been chosen: Britain and Denmark from the industrialised north; India and Mexico both third world countries with developing economies. The approaches taken to provide information to the business community differ in each country. Britain was chosen because of the initiatives taken by local authority libraries to provide commercial and technical services; and the stand taken by the profession to urge the establishment of a

National Business Library. The activities of British public libraries in this field illustrate what other public libraries can do to provide information for business use. Zambia's public library system was modelled on the British system. Although sharing little in common with Zambia, Denmark has established impressive information services which are worth emulating by a developing country, particularly in the area of extension services to industry. India has advanced information services for industry which support import substitution industries particularly in the small scale industry sector; while Mexico's information service to industry is a recent development and shows signs of success.

5.2.1 Britain

There is no single authority responsible for business information provision in Britain, but the situation may change with the proposed creation of a National Business Library by the British Library. In the meantime, the nation-wide business library and information network remains without a formal structure. The diverse and uncoordinated state of business information was underlined in a recent speech by Sir Harry Hookway³, Chief Executive of the British Library. He divided business information services in Britain into three categories. With the exception of public library services, similar services prevail in Zambia at present.

a) Centrally funded national services

These consist of services provided by the British Library, the Statistics and Market Intelligence Library, the Department of Industry (including the EEC Information Unit) and the Small Firms Information Centres. Other services such as the Technical Reports Centre help industrial and business information to be more widely disseminated. Technical Help for Exporters, government backed but self-supporting, is the profit-making division of the British Standards Institution, and provides exclusively export

intelligence. The British Standards Institution is currently modifying and modernising its services. Technical Help for Exporters complements the British Overseas Trade Board which helps the British exporter with export intelligence, overseas tariffs, import regulations and market advisory services.

b) Local authority services

In large cities, for example London, (the City Business Library), Birmingham, Manchester, Nottingham and Sheffield, business information is provided by the public library systems. These are discussed later as bearing indirectly on the regional approach to information provision.

c) Restricted access and commercial services

Amongst many examples are the British Institute of Management, trade and research associations such as RAPRA (Rubber and Paper Research Association) and chambers of commerce. These are restricted in that access is confined to members. Information under this heading is also provided by commercial services (information brokers) such as Capital Planning Information, Financial Times Business Information Services, Warwick Statistical Service, Times Information and Market Intelligence Unit, Research Index, MacCarthy Information Ltd and Extel. They all publish business information material.

Local authority services first developed in the areas of old industrialisation⁴; the commercial section of the Nottingham Public Libraries (now the Business Library) was in existence in 1918⁵. Cooperative schemes have developed with the expansion of public libraries and information services in the past fifty years. They contribute significantly to the provision of business information. These local schemes concentrate on advice, information provision and current awareness services. They also try to reach smaller firms and partnerships. There are at present 27 schemes linked to the Standing Conference of Cooperative Library

and Information Services, e.g. NANTIS (Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Technical and Information Service), B-LINK (Birmingham Library and Information Network), LISIC (Library Information Service to Industry and Commerce), SINTO (Sheffield Interchange Organisation). NANTIS links almost 100 sources of information in the Nottingham region including libraries, colleges, research organisations and firms. It issues 'NANTIS News', a periodical offering current awareness services; though this is now in abeyance^{6,7,8}.

Despite this impressive network of information services available to the businessman in Britain, they are patchy and uncoordinated. Hence the calls for a national library and information service for business information^{9,10}. 1981 saw steps being taken by the British Library towards the establishment of a national business library. Acting on the recommendation of an Ad Hoc Working Group on Business Information¹¹, the British Library has set up a national referral service for business information in the Science Reference Library. This is building a collection to cover market research reports and industry surveys, is providing a comprehensive current bibliographical listing of market research reports and is building a comprehensive collection of company card services and more specialised trade and professional directories. This scheme is still in its infancy and its success is doubted by many. Yet its progress will be watched with interest in Zambia, as British librarianship influences library developments in many other countries.

5.2.2 Denmark

Denmark has two organisations feeding information to commerce and industry. The first is DTO (Dansk Teknisk Oplysningskjeneske) or the Danish Council for Scientific and Industrial Research. DTO's main activities are in the areas of active information and liaison services, question and answer services, conferences, courses and consultation services. A summary of DTO's activities are on Figure 9^{12,13}.

FIGURE 9: Summary of DTO's Activities

1.

FIELD LIAISON SERVICE

- a) Visiting firms uninvited
- b) Stimulating demand for knowledge by inter-viewing.
- c) Promoting sources of specialized knowledge available

FEED-BACK

The profile of fields of interests and receptivity. Appropriateness of sources and services available.

2.

ACTIVE INFORMATION SERVICE

- a) Searching information and evaluation according to "profile" of individual firms
- b) Dissemination selectively uninvited

FEED-BACK

Requests for information, documentation and service

Source: Klintøe in Information Management.

Transfer of Information for Industry

4.

QUESTION AND ANSWER SERVICE

- a) Transmitting requests for knowledge, documentation, advisory-service etc. to appropriate source of information - establishing personal contact.
- b) Confidential intelligence service upon request (charged for)
- c) International referral service.

3.

CONFERENCES AND COURSES

- a) Stimulating within a branch of industry or a geographical area the efficient utilization of knowledge
- b) Stimulating the cross-flow of information on an important topic
- c) Promoting specialized information services
- d) Training in how to organize information flow to and within the enterprise

FEED-BACK

Requests for setting up specialized information services and individual internal information services

The conference service organises 'information days' for managers and technical staff where they have the opportunity to discuss problems and make proposals for establishing auxiliary institutions for industry¹⁴.

The second organisation is the National Technological Library of Denmark (Danmarks Tekniske Bibliotek - DTB). This offers SDI current awareness services to industry. These two institutions work successfully in competition with each other. Both specialise in industrial and technical services. They also cooperate with foreign and international information services.

In this example the services provided by both bodies are obviously of interest to Zambia and worth emulating. But the prospect of two bodies competing with each other is out of place for Zambia; as this amounts to unnecessary duplication of services and Zambia cannot afford that luxury.

5.2.3 India

From the developing world, India was among the first to realise the importance of information to aid development. As early as 1942, India established the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) *"to collect and disseminate information on industrial matters in general"*¹⁵. Some 29 industrial research laboratories or institutes are now linked to CSIR and maintain contact with industry through communicating research results and assisting in the industrial application of research. CSIR has an industrial liaison and extension service and publishes journals.

To complement CSIR, the Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre (INSDOC) was set up in 1952, with UNESCO assistance¹⁶. INSDOC provides a complete range of documentation services mainly in the field of science and technology.

Two other centres were established to serve particularly clients in commerce and industry, namely the Trade Development Authority (TDA) and the Small Enterprises National Documentation

Centre (SENDOC). TDA is responsible for export trade information and operates a merchandise, research and analysis information division. It has a collection of trade directories, statistical publications, bank reports and trade catalogues. TDA also provides a technical enquiry service, market intelligence and statistical services.

With the growth of small scale industries in India, SENDOC was established in 1971 as a department of the Small Industry Extension Training Institute, an institute which specialises in the training of managers and proprietors of small industries. SENDOC collects and organises information on all aspects of small industry development, such as feasibility studies, industrial profiles and technological information. For dissemination of information, SENDOC publishes bulletins and provides technical enquiry services¹⁷.

5.2.4 Mexico

Mexico's information service for industry is reported by Jose Quevedo Procel¹⁸, the Executive Director of Technical Information Service (INFOTEC). INFOTEC is a department of the Mexican Council for Science and Technology. INFOTEC was established in 1972 when the Mexican government realised that industrial growth requires the use of knowledge and that information about tools, raw materials, equipment, work methods, engineering standards, patents and manufacturing processes is an essential ingredient in economic progress. INFOTEC's basic function is to supply information to industry. It also assists industry in the design of internal information services and promotes and organises courses for users of information. Cooperation with international organisations such as International Federation for Documentation (FID), Organisation of American States and UNIDO is maintained in projects of information provision to industry. It produces a technical news bulletin and provides liaison and enquiry services.

This brief survey shows how other countries have tackled the provision of information to industry and commerce. What is noticeable is that, in each case, except in Britain, information services to industry began as part of the Councils of Scientific or Industrial Research organisations; hence their services have a strong bias towards provision of industrial and technological information. Zambia could gain from these experiences. For instance, adoption of the British practice (on regional approach to information) may prove effective. Zambia has public libraries in all the major cities and towns and at provincial level, modelled on British public libraries. In cooperation with Chambers of Commerce and Industry local firms and technical colleges, cooperative schemes could be formed on the British lines; perhaps through the Standing Conference of Head Librarians of Zambia (SCOHLZA). Modifications could be made to suit Zambian conditions.

Another area in which Zambia could profit is in the provision of extension services such as those found in Denmark, India and Mexico, namely seminars and training programmes for users and handlers of information, visits to industry, liaison services and enquiry services. These services are vital in a country like Zambia where entrepreneurship is just evolving among the indigenous population. Maximum utilization of a business information service is likely to be achieved if the services are well marketed through such extension services. Further discussion of these topics is made in Chapter 6, suggesting what Zambia's approach should be.

5.3 The Role of UNIDO and Other International Organisations

This section looks at the assistance given by UNIDO and other major international organisations to developing countries in the field of developing information systems. It is hoped to highlight the types of assistance that Zambia can expect from such international bodies.

Zambia's participation in international programmes such as those advocated by UNESCO (UNISIST/GPI, NATIS Programmes) and International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) is unimpressive. As a member state of UNESCO, Zambia has adopted the resolutions for the establishment of GPI, but there appears to be no action for its implementation. Zambia has no programme for National Information Systems (NATIS), although recent developments indicate that steps are being taken for its introduction¹⁹. As for IFLA, the Zambia Library Association is not a member, though the University of Zambia Library is an affiliated member. Hence IFLA's Universal Availability of Publications (UAP) and Universal Bibliographical Control (UBC) programmes are not partaken. UAP and UBC have the ultimate aim of achieving Universal Access to Information (UAI). On FID Zambia is represented by the NCSR's Documentation and Science Information Centre. This inactivity in international activities is probably the result of the apparent absence of a single authority and policy on information and library services, and secondly perhaps because of ignorance of their existence and an awareness of the services they provide on the part of policy and decision makers. It is therefore not surprising that Zambia finds herself unrepresented at international conferences and meetings dealing with library and information services. For Zambia to be involved in internationally initiated programmes, her decision-makers need to be enlightened of the ensuing advantages; otherwise she will lag further behind other nations.

Examples of countries which benefited from association with international organisations appear in the previous section. India's INSDOC was established with UNESCO assistance, while Mexico maintains close cooperation with UNIDO. In Africa the most recent example is illustrated by the UNESCO/GPI project in Rwanda²⁰. In this, UNESCO provided the services of a GPI staff member to design a project to establish an information and documentation centre. The centre will provide means for the collection, processing, storage and dissemination of information relevant to

the activities of planners and decision-makers.

The following sub-sections give brief descriptions of services provided by UNIDO and others. It should be pointed out that most of the organisations, particularly those in the UN system, only react to requests made by member states either for aid or for technical assistance to start or improve information systems.

5.3.1 UNIDO - United Nations Industrial Development Organisation

In the previous chapter, UNIDO was considered as a source of information for industry. Here an attempt is made to define UNIDO's role in information transfer and assistance to developing countries.

UNIDO was established by the UN General Assembly in 1965 in order to give assistance to developing countries in their efforts to accelerate industrialisation. This assistance is given in several ways, such as the SIDO project being developed in Zambia (mentioned in Chapter 2, Section 2.4). In this project, UNIDO seconded an Adviser to set up SIDO at the request of the government. Another form of assistance rendered is in the area of industrial information. In this area UNIDO's contribution consists of advice and assistance for establishing and managing national and regional facilities for industrial information²¹. A project to establish an industrial information unit in Zambia by UNIDO is reported in Polinière's UNESCO sponsored study²². The latest information is that this project has not taken off the ground; for reasons assumed to stem either from lack of funds or from low priority rating given to the project by the Zambian authorities²³. A preparatory mission by a UNIDO staff member envisaged at the time never took place²⁴.

UNIDO's technical assistance also concerns upgrading industrial information systems, including on-the-job training programmes for local personnel and awarding fellowships for training abroad.

If Zambia established an information service for commerce and industry, it could benefit from UNIDO's inquiry service, which provides answers without charge, and the Appropriate Choice of Equipment services (ACE). ACE services have a referral service on industrial equipment and technologies, provides sources of supply of hardware and know-how, prepares industrial profiles and manufacturing guides to acquaint planners and investors with the necessary factors and considerations involved. Its information service disseminates equipment and technologies from developing countries, recycling technologies and comparable technologies and equipment^{25,26}.

To utilize these services effectively an agency is required and since Zambia has no such agency it is doubtful whether the various uncoordinated services discussed in Chapter 4 would fill the gap. It is not known why Zambia has failed to establish an industrial information service despite having considered such a service as early as 1974, yet organisations like UNIDO are more than ready to render assistance from the identification of user needs and sources of information through all the stages to the operation of the centre. Such help normally includes advice on how to organise the supply of information, and on how to transfer information to clients.

5.3.2 Other Organisations

a) UNESCO - Intergovernmental Programme of Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technological Information (UNISIST)

An example of UNESCO's activities in promoting the development of information services in developing countries has been given in the opening paragraph of this section. Under this sub-section a brief analysis of the UNISIST/GPI programmes is attempted.

UNISIST (World Science Information System) was created as a result of a feasibility study by UNESCO and the International Council for Scientific Unions, in order to facilitate the transfer of scientific and technological information for the economic and

social development of nations. The objectives of this programme are to advance and coordinate information-sharing and cooperative agreements among governments and international organisations; guide developments in scientific and technological information (STI); facilitate access to information by scientists, engineers and technologists; help developing countries meet their needs for STI; and establish a flexible world network of information systems and services based on voluntary cooperation²⁷. UNISIST was merged with UNESCO's GPI (General Information Programme) in 1967.

Whereas UNISIST may be seen as a programme for industrialised countries, GPI is geared towards the requirements of developing countries. GPI was formed to promote information policies and plans at the national, regional and international levels; disseminate information handling systems; contribute to the development of information infrastructures and specialised information systems; and promote the training and education of specialists and users of information²⁸. As GPI's effectiveness depends on the collaboration of national associations, it follows that Zambia's likelihood of receiving aid from these two programmes is dependent on her cooperation. This cooperation is also dependent on the degree of awareness of the existence of these services, among Zambia's planners and policy makers. Zambia submitted to a United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development (1979) that her research workers in Science and Technology (S & T) were isolated and with inadequate literature; and therefore made a request for aid agencies to assist Zambia in developing facilities to link her with international and regional information systems in S & T²⁹. The UNISIST/GPI programme was not approached for the assistance sought.

b) UNCTAD and UNDP

One of the perceived aims of United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) is to help developing countries to strengthen their technological capabilities. In Zambia UNCTAD's assistance (in collaboration with International Trade Centre (ITC)

and General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)) has been in the following areas:

- establishing and strengthening trade promotion
- building specialised trade promotion services in the government and business sectors
- expanding sales of exports through more effective marketing and developing new products for export
- training government trade officials, businessmen and instructors in all aspects of trade promotion and international marketing³⁰.

The ITC, on the other hand, has been assisting the Zambia Export Promotion Council since 1976 in export diversification in order to promote and establish new sources of foreign exchange earnings. The latest Zambia Export Directory is largely a result of the data assembled by UNCTAD/GATT-ITC in their survey of exporters³¹.

As a major source of funds for technical cooperation, UNDP's principal role is to finance projects by other UN agencies. UNDP also provides lists of consultants, training facilities and research services which developing countries make available to each other. UNDP's technical assistance to Zambia has been in the form of expert and advisory services including secondment of staff in government³². There is no evidence of assistance in the development of information services except the financing of a survey on the Zambia-Mozambique microwave link³³.

The systems described above indicate the organisations actively involved in the information systems for economic and industrial development. The list is not exhaustive and many more could be added, including the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA); World Intellectual Patent Organisation (WIPO), mentioned in Section 4.6(a); United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP); International Labour Organisation (ILO); International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA); International System for the Exchange of Information

on Science and Technology for Policy-making, Management and Development (SPINES). The assistance that can be obtained from cooperation with these organs is of immense value to developing countries. Awareness of their existence and the assistance and services they offer is imperative.

5.4 Conclusions

To summarise, the first section of this chapter argues that Zambia should establish a business information service for her industrial and commercial organisations. It is axiomatic that the service should be planned in the context of her own problems, but the second section illustrates the approaches to business information systems taken in four differing countries. Zambia has her own peculiar development problems, but she can learn from the failures and achievements of other countries. The third section concentrates on the role of UNIDO and of other international systems in order to illustrate what could be gained by participating in their programmes of information transfer. Perhaps this is the most important area which Zambia should take note of. The need to partake in international programmes devoted to developing information services is illustrated by the concern about the isolation and inadequate provision of literature experienced by research workers in Zambia, cited in sub-section 5.3.2(a).

Unless Zambia participates and cooperates with these organisations, she will not be able to take advantage of the services and assistance they provide. This can best be realised if a single national focal point is identified and created. It is clear from all the available evidence that there is a basis for the creation of a national business information service, by coordinating all the information centres under the MCI.

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CHAPTER 6

TOWARDS A BUSINESS INFORMATION SERVICE -

A PROPOSAL

CHAPTER 6

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A PROPOSAL

The discussion in the opening sections of Chapter 5 attempted to give reasons for accepting the concept of a national referral centre for business information or the creation of a nation-wide network of information services for business information. The suggestions if implemented would have to take place within a well-defined framework of policies and objectives. This would require some adjustments in policies and objectives of public libraries and chambers of commerce, as these would be the most likely participants in such a scheme. It is not the intention of this study to formulate definitive policies and objectives, but to identify and suggest areas on which these could be based.

6.1 Policy

Charles Lungu (1981)¹ pointed out in his MLS thesis, 'A National Library Service'... that the major problem that faces the development of LIDS in Zambia lies in the conspicuous absence of a National Information Policy, to provide the base or criterion for planning library and information services to meet the requirements of national development programmes. An information policy should cover information needs of the nation (or organisations), information inputs required to meet the needs and the systems that handle the information. The policy therefore must be defined in relation to the set objectives. It should also state clearly what the information function is and define the role of the information service and its staff and the expected services.

The second factor in an information policy is that it should provide an authoritative source of reference for management in government and industry; thus helping to ensure that information needs and information exploitation are taken into account in forward planning and policy decisions².

The absence of an information policy therefore seriously impedes LIDS development, and yet the need for an information policy may be comparable to other policy needs which cater for investment, industrial development or trade and marketing. It has been one of the major concerns of the Zambia Library Association which has been lobbying (without success for over 12 years) not only for an information policy but also for the enactment of a library and information services bill. Recent activities indicate that there are signs that a policy on information may be realised at long last. The Government has appointed a committee under the auspices of the National Council for Scientific Research and is reported to have called on all heads of libraries, documentation centres, archives, and museums to discuss the subject³.

In developing a business information service policy for Zambia the following aspects may be taken into account:

- a) Identification of areas of information need. This could be made on the basis of the survey of information need discussed in Chapter 3, which could also be seen as a pilot survey, refining techniques for a full-scale national survey. From such a survey an inventory of users of business information could be compiled. The survey should also collect data on existing industrial and commercial enterprises, their size, output, equipment and technologies used, raw materials used and markets and policies. The survey, which could be conducted by the MCI, could also be partially based on the "Survey of Zambian Industry" published by Indeco in 1972.
- b) Identification of information resources necessary to meet the needs. It has been shown earlier that one of the preconditions is the need to know what the information inputs will be. No business information service will materialize unless the inputs are identified and coordinated. This would entail an evaluation of those sources of information, both local and external, discussed in Chapter 4.

Since the ultimate aim of an information centre for business, is to develop an informed management, it is of utmost importance

that the two factors noted above are met. Major business decisions require inputs from scientific and technical intelligence, commercial and industrial intelligence, economic and environmental intelligence and political and legal intelligence. These can be supplied only if the service has knowledge of sources and ready access to sources and also knowledge of users of information so that accurate information may be supplied accordingly⁴.

6.1.1 Objectives

The definition of the objectives of a business information service needs to be linked to Zambia's industrialisation policy, which lays emphasis on the diversification of the economy and industries (Chapters 1 and 2). They should seek to strengthen and support the Industrial Development Act, the Small Industries Development Act and other relevant Acts which aim to achieve import substitution industries, utilization and production of raw materials, export oriented industries and rural development (Section 2.4). The objectives should also make provision for the maintenance of a continuous system of surveillance of industrial and commercial trends, market intelligence and government regulations and actions.

Under the framework of such objectives, a successful information service can be developed.

6.2 User Awareness

This subject deserves close attention as it stands at the centre of any information service. No matter how good the objectives and policies of an information service, library or documentation centre, it can be rendered obsolete if users and potential users are unaware not only of the importance of information but also of the systems that handle information.

Writing in the Zambia Library Association Newsletter, Andrew Rooke, Assistant Librarian UNZA Library, charged that another

obstacle to library development in Zambia is that decision-makers and planners are not aware of the fundamental importance of information services to the development of the nation⁵. He based his arguments on five factors, of which two are particularly relevant to this thesis: (a) the lack or scarce reference to libraries in the "Third National Development Plan 1979-83" and the "Educational Reform: prospects and recommendations" (1977); (b) the disorganized state of government departmental libraries including Zambia Library Services. His view is shared by Dr Maurice Lundu, who in a PhD thesis (1982), "Justification for Establishing and Maintaining a Nation-wide Library Service..." writes of the need to change the attitude of potential users of information before libraries and information centres can be appreciated as effective systems of communication of information⁶. Although these two librarians refer to the attitude of government officials, the same can be said of managers in industry and commerce. Table 3 in Chapter 3 reveals that indeed LIDS are considered the least important sources of information (65% of the respondents); thus confirming Lundu and Rooke's sentiments.

It has been shown through the questionnaire distributed as part of the present thesis (Section 3.4) that some degree of awareness of the power of information is present among the respondents in industry and commerce. Therefore it can be argued that non-use of libraries does not constitute lack of awareness of information but ignorance of how to use libraries. It may also be due to the type of information available in libraries which may not be relevant to their information needs.

Since, as already stated, the success of information services designed for business information dissemination depends upon the extent to which executives make use of the information service, it is important that potential users are made aware of the services at their disposal. It is essential also for them to have an understanding of the information function⁷, as the systems are intended to improve their knowledge and to keep them continuously informed.

In this way, training institutions can be seen to have a crucial role. In Chapter 4 several institutions are mentioned as providing sources of information through their courses: viz UNZA School of Business and Industrial Studies, Management Services Board, Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation, President's Citizenship College and Institutes and Colleges of Technology under the Department of Technical Education and Vocational Training. It was also pointed out that whereas UNZA and Institutes of Technology run courses of an academic, technical and professional nature, MEF, MSB and PCC conduct courses of short duration to lubricate personnel already in employment in the managerial and supervisory areas.

None of these institutions is known to offer business information; not even UNZA Department of Library Studies. The reason is understandable. Information as an academic discipline is new, and business information has yet to be considered as a subject of itself.

Nevertheless, recent developments indicate that two institutions in Zambia have begun to offer some element of business information in their courses. These are Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation and the Management Services Board. In 1982, MEF introduced a new course on "small business and entrepreneurship development"⁸. This course has been developed in response to the new direction of small industry development discussed in Section 2.4. It includes "information search procedures", in addition to a module on "management information systems". MSB conducts a three-week course in management information systems (MIS) for senior and middle managers⁹. The MSB course includes: (a) identification of key information required to manage each main business function; (b) sources of data and methods of collection; and (c) effective presentation of information. The two should not be confused. MIS is concerned with information about internal operations of a firm and its environment; describing what has happened in the past, what is happening now and what is likely to happen in the future¹⁰. This definition has subtle but important differences to that for business information (Section 3.2).

Assuming that business information as a discipline is accepted by training institutions, what should be their contribution to awaken the interests of managers and policy-makers? UNZA's School of Business and Industrial Studies, in cooperation with the Department of Library Studies, is best placed to conduct short courses on business information for managers during vacations, when the school runs refresher courses for managers. The course could concentrate on sources of information in the major fields of company information, statistics and their sources, marketing intelligence, product information and techniques of information handling. In some aspects of business information such as trade and export information close cooperation with the Trade Documentation and Information Centre would be beneficial, with joint programmes organised where possible. The target would be managers, librarians and information officers handling commercial and industrial information. The preference for the School of Business and Industrial Studies to the Department of Library Studies is deliberate. The reasoning is that a course organised by the School is likely to appeal to management. Secondly it is the contention of this author that if a course on business information were identified with institutions that train personnel for industry and commerce it might receive acceptance from users and potential users as a vital management tool in the same way as MIS is. Patronage from the desired audience would be tapped effectively.

One organisation which should have an interest in such projects is the Zambia Library Association (ZLA), because one of its objectives pledges to "*establish and promote training courses ... in the practice of library, information and documentation services*".¹¹ But lack of financial resources makes it difficult to achieve that pledge. ZLA publishes a newsletter and a journal; yet as its circulation does not go beyond professional circles, it is an inappropriate medium for soliciting opinion either of the government or the business community.

This does not mean that the Association is consigned to a negative stance. Two prominent librarians, T K Lwanga, Chief Librarian of UNZA, and A Max Banda, Librarian of the United National Independence Party and Chairman of SCOHLZA, have urged the Association to identify itself with the problems of the nation at large^{12,13}. Areas suggested were the 'operation food production programme' and the 'industrial diversification programme'. Here ZLA could contribute by conducting surveys on identification of user needs. ZLA could foster awareness and increase usage by conducting, perhaps for financial reasons in partnership with training institutions, the following studies:

- a) research into the information seeking habits of various professional groups in business enterprises to see how libraries could meet their information needs.
- b) survey public library services and recommend the kind of information they should provide to the business community. It should also investigate the parallel problem of how the business community can make best use of public library services.
- c) investigate and design courses in business information suitable for Zambia, taking into consideration the various types of businesses and the level of managers.

The findings from such studies could be acted upon by both training institutions and LIDS to improve user awareness, availability of information and its utilization.

6.3 A Business Information Library and Network

On the basis of the findings of the questionnaires in Chapters 3 and 4, the discussions in Chapter 5 and the previous sections of this chapter, some of the alternative strategies that could be considered when planning a nation-wide network of business information will now be considered. This will be supported, where appropriate, by diagrams.

In Chapter 5 (Section 5.3.1) mention was made of a proposal in 1974 to set up an "Industrial Information Unit" by UNIDO within the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. This project never materialized and available information indicates that there exists no concrete plans to establish the unit. In correspondence to the writer, the MCI confirmed that *"the referred to Industrial Information Unit has not been established; if and when it becomes established this information will be available for your use"*¹⁴. (Emphasis mine and see also Section 5.3.1 for reasons). In light of this, a network will be proposed to complement the business information centre discussed in Chapter 5 (Section 5.1-5.1.1). A network of centres would be best placed to serve the entire population as opposed to one centre, which is likely to be centralised in Lusaka. The principle of accessibility is an important factor here. Zambia is a large country, and its business executives should be able to have access to information irrespective of where they are. The three main advantages to a network are:

- a) it avoids the creation of a single monopoly information service.
- b) it provides alternative centres of access, thus removing the pressure on a centralised service.
- c) it facilitates participation by different types of LIDS, and although it might cause some duplication of services, centres are economic as they are financed independently of the main centre; and because of the degree of their specialisation they are likely to be more efficient in information provision.

6.3.1 Options for the Centre

The first problem is the choice of who should be responsible for a national business information service. This arises from the fact that information is the concern and interest of everyone but no one is willing to bear its responsibility. J P Polinière¹⁵ revealed in his UNESCO sponsored study that Zambian officials were

reluctant to suggest a positive approach to a focal point for a national information system, thus obviously avoiding operational responsibility. The officials were also resentful of establishing an authoritative body in preference to a coordinating one, on the grounds that the body should have sufficient autonomy to avoid being identified with and representing the interests of any given ministry¹⁶. Such fears are seriously retrogressive to development.

In the case of business information, as revealed in Chapter 4, there is no single way for a company executive to plunge into Zambia's information resources, which are many and uncoordinated. Hence a coordinating body is necessary to harmonize the running of any network (Section 5.1.1). The UNIDO suggestion¹⁷ is that an information service for industry should be attached to an existing institution such as the Ministry of Economic Planning and Development or a national centre for industrial research (as in Section 5.2.3), or even a chamber of commerce and industry; but care must be taken to ensure an unrestricted nation-wide service.

Essentially in Zambia, there are three main options which could be adopted to coordinate a national business information network:

1. Ministry of Commerce and Industry
2. Zambia Industrial and Commercial Association (ZINCOM)
3. A combined venture between the Government, through the National Commission of Development Planning, and Chambers of Commerce and Industry through ZINCOM.

Option 1: Ministry of Commerce and Industry

The MCI is organisationally best suited to be the coordinating agent for a nation-wide information centre for commerce and industry. It has several advantages. First, it already has to its credit information services either in its own departments, or as quangos; viz the Trade Information and Documentation Centre, the Patents Documentation and Information Centre and the Zambia Standards

Institute Technical Library (Sections 4.2.2, 4.2.5 and 4.6.a). Second, there are indications that SIDO, also under the Ministry, will establish an information centre and a proposal for an "Investment Information Centre" is apparently receiving active attention (Sections 3.1.1 and 4.2.3). Third, it still has plans to create an "Industrial Information Unit", (Section 5.3.1). Finally, it has sufficient authority to represent commerce and industry in the National Assembly; and moreover it controls industries and external and internal trade. A full range of the MCI functions and activities have been outlined in Section 4.2.

The only disadvantage which might militate against its effectiveness as a coordinator is the attitude of businessmen towards government (Sections 3.4.2 and 5.1). But these charges of bureaucracy and secretiveness towards information provision are general and perhaps psychological, and could be overcome.

The MCI, therefore, could be considered to be the nucleus of a business information service, through the services it already runs and those it plans to create.

Option 2: Zambia Industrial and Commercial Association

Given more support and incentives, ZINCOM could be an acceptable body for developing an efficient national intelligence information service for commerce and industry. The support would have to come from the government, the business community and trade associations.

It has the advantage that it would have the confidence of the business community; and therefore has the capability of running the centre on a commercial basis. ZINCOM has a further advantage of contacts with counterparts outside the country.

The disadvantages with this body is that its activities are biased towards servicing members only; and for reasons stated in Section 4.4.1, it would only benefit the line of rail and the rural

Eastern province which has a chamber, leaving out the non-industrialised Northern, North-Western, Western and Luapula provinces. It is dependent for its finances upon membership subscriptions, a situation which has an effect on its attitude towards information provision to non-members.

In order to be effective, ZINCOM would have to bend its backward attitude to accommodate non-members as far as information provision is concerned. This is unlikely.

Option 3: Combined Venture between Government through the National Commission for Development Planning and ZINCOM

Given the problems of bureaucracy in government, and the discriminatory attitude that Chambers have towards non-members, an independent quasi non-government organisation is an ideal compromise. Such a quango would be financed by government and ZINCOM.

The main advantage is that it would bring together planners of development projects and those who implement the programmes with industry and commerce. Such a union would facilitate the easy flow of information from government to industry and perhaps feedback to government. The Commission already coordinates national planning and supervises the implementation of annual plans and the five-year national development plans (see Section 4.3.1). It has authority over the departments of census and statistics, economic and technical cooperation, sectorial planning, investment policy, project preparation and regional planning. From this it can be seen that the Commission generates information that would be of great interest to the business community.

A factor against this venture is that neither ZINCOM nor the Commission has the base from which it would start. Further, its financing might be put in jeopardy if either body withdrew or was unable to make contributions.

The choice option could be based on the following criteria:

- a) enthusiastic commitment to provide information.
- b) convenience of access from a wide range of business information users.
- c) infrastructure of existing services available in the institution.
- d) level of potential usage, without restrictions.

The MCI appears to meet the criteria.

6.3.2. Establishing an Advisory Board

Assuming Zambia establishes a business information centre and an information network in which participants would come from government institutions, libraries and information services, industry and commerce through their chambers, research organisations, banks and other institutions, it may be asked how will the centre and network be managed? Whichever of the options above is adopted, it is imperative that such a centre should operate through an independent advisory board. The reasons are embodied in the functions outlined below:

Functions of the Board

It is at this preliminary stage an open question as to whether the establishment of an advisory board requires an Act of Parliament or a simple statutory instrument. For the purpose of this study it is sufficient only to suggest the following functions:

- a) Coordinate all existing LID services, in particular public libraries (including ZLS at provincial level) as access points for business information.
- b) Develop a nation-wide network for business information to benefit the entire business community.
- c) Encourage awareness of the value of information through courses, seminars and similar activities in collaboration

with universities, training boards and the Zambia Library Association.

- d) Encourage industry to contribute proprietary information and government departments and ministries to contribute regulatory and policy information.
- e) Develop an information system to facilitate personal contact between sources of supply and customers.
- f) Conduct, initiate and encourage research into ways of attracting use and improving communication between information providers and users.
- g) Promote training facilities for information handlers with a view to developing a new breed of "business intelligence officer".
- h) Forge relationships with regional and international information systems to facilitate information exchange with other countries for use in Zambia (e.g. UNIDO and UNISIST Section 5.3).
- i) Develop liaison services with industry to promote effective application of technology in industry:

The core of the above functions lies in improving and facilitating accessibility and availability of information. But, perhaps, even more important is the development of an information conscious management and the training of information handlers.

Composition of the Board

The board members should be drawn from bodies representing the generators, the users and the disseminators of information. It is important that the three types are brought together so that they are more likely to understand each other's problems. Thus the proposed composition is:

- a) Ministry of Commerce and Industry

- b) National Council for Scientific Research
- c) National Commission for Development and Planning
- d) Zambia Industrial and Commercial Association
- e) Development Bank of Zambia
- f) Training Institutions - (UNZA, MEF, MSB, PCC)
- g) Zambia Library Association
- h) Zambia Library Services
- j) A body representing professional associations
- k) Zambia Industrial and Mining Corporation and Indeco
- l) The Manufacturers' Association of Zambia

The Manager or Director of the centre would be an ex-officio member and Secretary of the Advisory Board.

6.3.3 Implications

The following are held to be the main determinants of the success of the information system: accessibility, staff, stock, services and functions, and finance. Each is considered below.

1. Accessibility

The principle of accessibility has already been mentioned as a cardinal factor in planning an information service. The three main types of achieving accessibility may be summarised as:

- a) The Linear system.
- b) The Radial system.
- c) The Satellite system.

The inspiration for this model came from the British Library's discussion paper, 'Access to patent documents and information' (1979).

- a) The Linear System: In this, a single national centre would be provided without any provincial facilities so that the enquirer has direct access to the national centre. Although it might work well for document supply, it is not to be recommended for a country like

Zambia with poor telex and telephone communication facilities, and no telefax.

b) The Radial System: Here the enquirer is provided with a national centre together with points of access to the system linked informally for information and document transfer. Thus it would have various points of access through regional centres (e.g. ZLS regional libraries). The two main advantages are that the gradation of enquiries would reduce duplication and that equal access throughout the country would be possible.

c) The Satellite System: This is a regional system. Requests are directed to regional headquarters in each province which are more or less independent of each other. The result would be that areas of no economic development are omitted. The system would be costly and difficult to operate. It is doubtful if Zambia's decentralised local government system has the necessary infrastructure to run such a system, nor can the MCI or the ZINCOM afford it.

The system most suited to Zambia's needs is the 'Radial System'. With this system it would be possible to ensure wide geographical distribution of information, and thus provide for rapid supply of information and documents. The best chance of success would be if public libraries in cities and towns and the Zambia Library Services were involved as access points (also Section 6.5).

2. Staff

This is a thorny area and its handling must be made with extreme care. The success or failure of an information centre (libraries and documentation centres included), and indeed the proposed network as a whole, will depend on the calibre of its staff. Therefore the engagement of properly trained and experienced personnel is crucial. Demand for information should be parallel with the ability of the staff who supply it. Few have expressed this need for competent staff better than this respondent:

This information service needs the services of experts to run, who can search, research, update the various data regularly and constantly. (Sec. 5.1)

Indeed, as this plea makes clear, the level of service reflects the quality of personnel. Many a government in developing countries has tended to overlook this factor. In Zambia this attitude has resulted in many library services being manned by improperly qualified staff and hence comes the deficient service found in many library systems today (Section 5.1.1). This should not be allowed in the case of a business information centre.

Business information is a specialist kind of librarianship; specialist in the sense that the work demands provision of information as opposed to documents. Therefore the staff should be well-qualified and have an understanding of modern techniques of information storage and retrieval processes. Ability to communicate at all levels, skills in indexing, abstracting and enthusiasm for information work are essential¹⁸. Opportunities for retraining and continuing education would increase knowledge and strengthen the staff's ability to identify and assess ideas and information.

The effective conversion of information into action by the business community will depend on the accuracy and currency of information procured from the centre. Only a competent staff can identify and supply accurate and current information.

3. Finance

It is well known that libraries and information centres are expensive in that they are labour-intensive; and moreover that labour is largely professional and relatively well paid. Further, information gathering is on-going and to keep up-to-date with materials and information technology is costly.

Whether established as a quango or a government agency, the centre's operational income should be provided by the state (see also Section 4.3.2 for sources of government revenue).

An alternative strategy of finance is to charge for services, such as desk research, consultancy and training programmes for users of information. There is the added point that businessmen may place more confidence in a service for which they have to pay than in a free service, as was suggested by those respondents who expressed preparedness to subscribe to such an information service (Section 5.1). If the centre is to operate efficiently it should be allocated sufficient funds, and this should be seen as an investment to which business houses should make contributions rather than as a service.

6.4 Functions, Stock and Services

Having drawn-up objectives and policies (Section 6.1), identified the clientele (Section 6.2), and ascertained their needs, we are now in a position to work out the functions of the proposed information centre. The following may be considered as ideal functions although strictly there are no standards which are universally acceptable:

- a) Providing documents
- b) Providing information
- c) Keeping up-to-date¹⁹.

These three basics require the support of functional units. Ideally these could also be divided into three, but circumstances may dictate that they be combined:

- Document storage unit (library)
- Information storage unit (documentation)
- Information dissemination unit (communication)

a) Document provision

The library's prime function would be to acquire and supply documents on request. This will involve acquisition techniques and procedures and document processing viz cataloguing, classification

and indexing. The unit should be a reading room for the consultation of documents. It may also require a bibliographical service providing current information on new editions and new acquisitions of both local and foreign materials.

b) Information provision

This task is the responsibility of the information storage unit and involves providing answers to factual enquiries. Abstracting, indexing and extracting information are associated tasks. It should provide research facilities to outside research workers, but on a long term basis the unit could carry out detailed research for more complicated queries. Information provision should lay emphasis on supplying actual information and not just information on information.

c) Keeping up-to-date

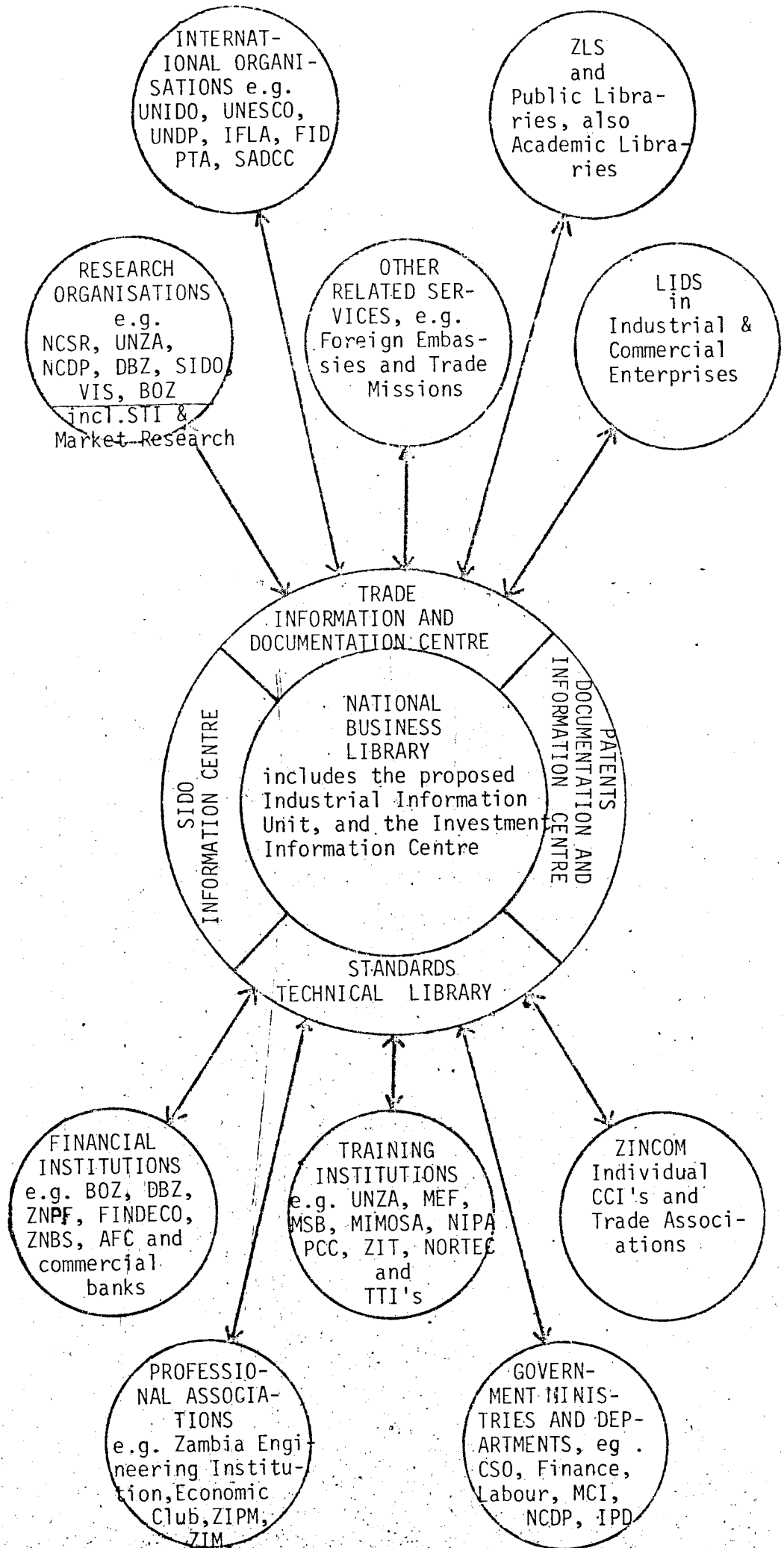
As seen in Chapter 3 (Section 3.4), managers need to keep abreast with new developments in their fields (Table 1). Thus it is not enough to operate a library and/or a documentation unit without disseminating information to those who may make use of it as soon as it is received. Included in the province of this unit is the preparation of current awareness services, such as selective dissemination of information. Informing users of the availability of information may draw their attention to other potentially useful sources.

The above functions are summarised in the diagram on Figure 11.

6.4.1 Stock and Services

The stock requirements of a business information centre have been discussed in Chapter Four (Section 4.1.1). A summary may be useful here. The centre and participating public libraries should hold comprehensive sets of:

- Directories: trade, professional, telephone and telex directories from neighbouring countries and other countries with



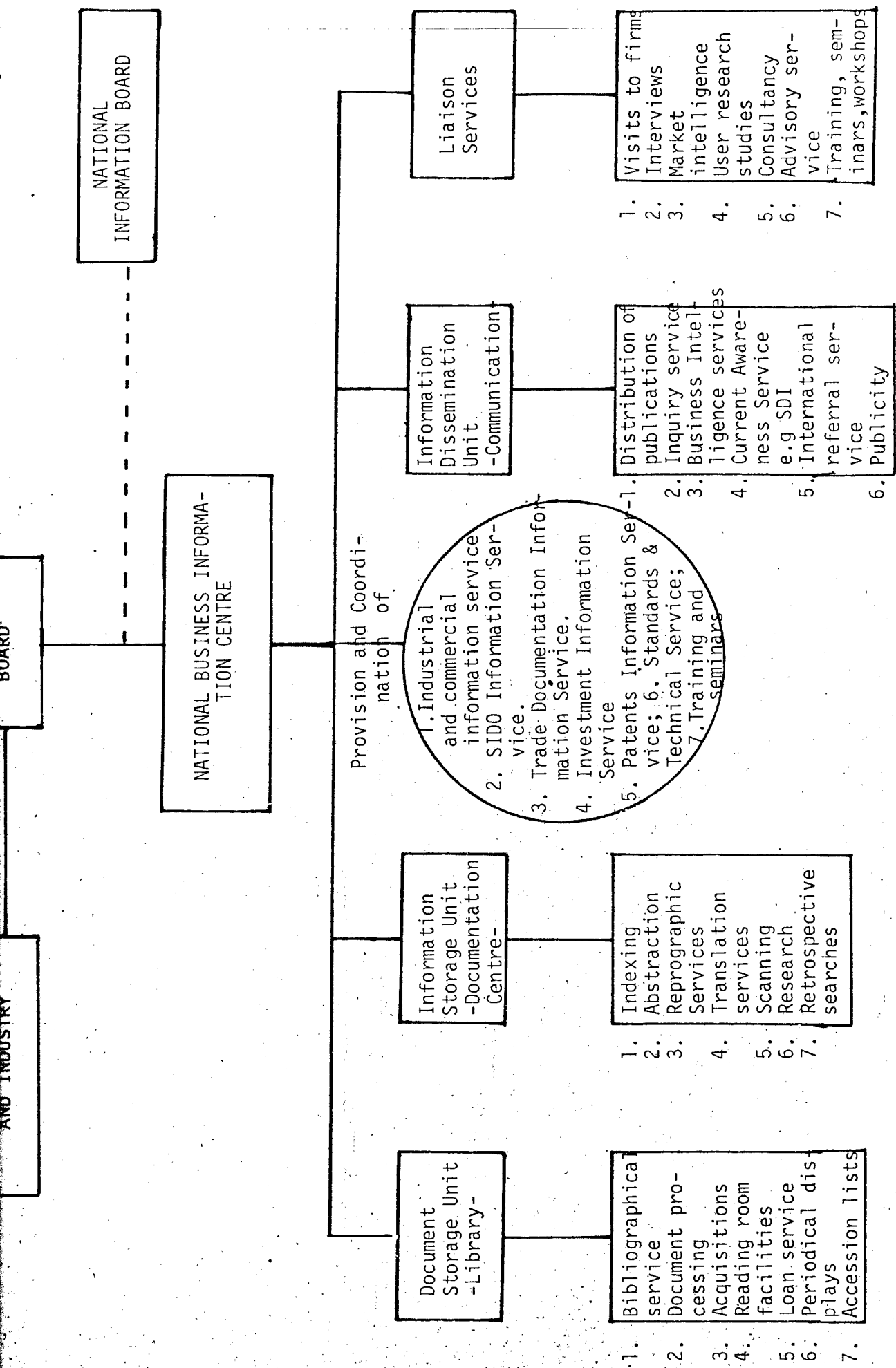


FIGURE 11: Structure and Functions of the Proposed National Business Information Centre

strong trade links with Zambia (e.g. PTA or SADCC countries, Section 1.2.5).

- Serials: newspapers, trade and house journals; business, technical, commercial, professional and abstracting journals.
- Technical literature: local and foreign patents, standards, and trade marks or designs literature; including new products and new but appropriate technology.
- Reports: industrial surveys and market research reports, company reports, economic reports from the government and banks; chambers of commerce reports and reports from professional and trade associations, conference and meetings.

Other Services

The basic information services have been outlined above. Consideration may also be given to other, more peripheral or more futuristic services. In addition to the normal reader services like reference and loans, an enquiry and referral service should be provided. Of importance is the installation of a telex and telephone service separate from the enquiry desk and manned by professional staff. Long-term projection plans might include the installation of on-line services connecting the centre with regional and international data bases.

Finally the centre could produce, at regular intervals, publications such as "Product Information Bulletin", "Technology Transfer Information Bulletin", and "Notification of Forthcoming Meetings".

6.5 Role of Public Library Services in Business Information

6.5.1 Public Libraries

The state of public library services in Zambia has been referred to in Chapter 4. The 'survey of information services' questionnaire revealed that none of the responding public libraries provide specialist information services to industry and commerce (Section 4.6).

The same can be said of those which did not respond by examining the Directory of Libraries in Zambia. The only potential exception is Ndola City Library, which hopes to introduce an information service; but no details are available as to what type of information service is envisaged. This fertile plan is unlikely to materialise for lack of properly qualified staff (Section 4.6).

Public library services have not changed since their inception. They are confined to the provision of basic lending and reference facilities. There are two fundamental reasons. First, public libraries were created as social institutions to support the needs of the literate community. Second, they were created outside the concept of communication and information which is problem-oriented²⁰. A subsidiary reason may stem from library education programmes which do not stress the importance of communication and information in the sphere of public libraries.

Reference has already been made to two prominent librarians, Max Banda and T K Lwanga, who have urged librarians to identify with the national objectives (Section 6.2). One area in which public libraries could actively participate is in the provision of business information to industrial and commercial organisations in their respective areas. Such an action might require radical changes in their policies. Most public libraries are in areas which have chambers of commerce and industry, with whom cooperation could be forged to build strong information services.

Should public libraries decide to heed the call for identification with national development programmes, information provision for business presents them with the best opportunity for such participation (see also the British example, Section 5.2.1). There is no other institution which is better placed as a universal access point for information than a public library because it is free from restrictions.

6.5.2 Zambia Library Services

Established in 1962, ZLS is a section under the Ministry of Education. It has wide-ranging functions, some of the relevant ones being: to establish and run a public library network throughout the country; to give professional guidance in the establishment and running of government, ministerial and departmental libraries; and to assist professionally insofar as practicable in the training of librarians.²¹

Unfortunately for ZLS most of its functions have not been implemented; and yet it stands as the main national network offering public library services to the rural and peri-urban areas. But, as Dr Lundu observes²² its concept of public library service is related to printed books only.

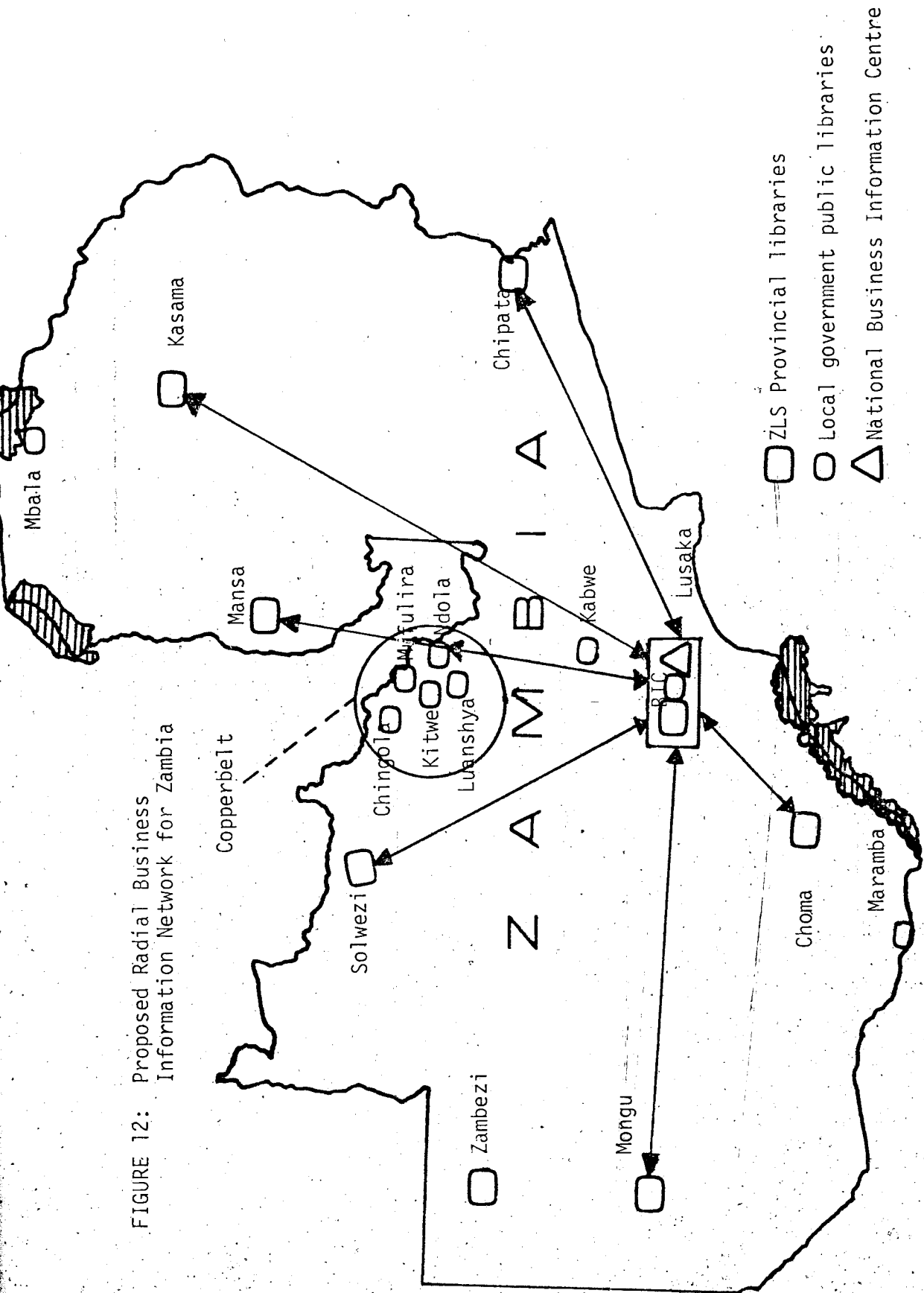
ZLS operates 7 provincial and district libraries on public library lines, an advantage which places it at the centre of any potential nation-wide information and library network. This includes the proposed business information network.

Given close cooperation and coordination with the MCI, ZLS could become the distribution centre for business information in the provinces. The infrastructure it has already laid down strengthens the idea; hence it would be unwise to ignore the opportunities that ZLS has to facilitate reaching the business community in the provinces.

Even without this proposal being realised, ZLS might want seriously to consider active participation in the dissemination of information to industry and commerce in the provinces. This would contribute much to the establishment of small-scale industries.

Another aspect in which ZLS could become involved is in the area of user-studies. These are needed to aid the rationalisation of library and information services. To this effect ZLS may consider setting-up a research and development section, to provide on-going assessment of the services provided, covering not only industry and

FIGURE 12: Proposed Radial Business Information Network for Zambia



commerce but agricultural and other sectors (also Section 6.2).

The map on Figure 12 shows the ways in which the radial system with participation from ZLS provincial and district centres could be organised. The business information centre would be based in Lusaka.

6.6 Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter, various issues that would affect and influence the proposed national business library and information network have been examined. The purpose has been to determine the likely future centre and network suitable for Zambia, to facilitate dissemination of business information nation-wide.

The factors that influence the proposal have been in the field of accessibility to information through coordination of existing library and related institutions. These include the present and planned business services within the Ministry of Commerce and Industry; public library services and Zambia Library Services; technical colleges, training institutions and universities; trade, professional associations and chambers of commerce. The theories on how best coordination can be achieved have been summarised in Figures 10 and 12, while other factors on functions, services and structure of the centre are summarised in Figure 11.

Certain recommendations have been made in this chapter on the following aspects: policy and objectives (Section 6.1); the role of training institutions and ZLA on user awareness (Section 6.2); options suitable to run and coordinate a business information centre and network (Section 6.3.1); functions and composition of the Advisory Board to run the centre (Section 6.3.2); the appropriate system that would permit efficient accessibility to information (Section 6.3.3.1(b)); staff, stock, services and financial implications (Sections 6.3.3.3 and 6.4); and finally on the role public libraries and ZLS should play in the dissemination of business

information (Section 6.5). Some of the issues raised here are dealt with in the final chapter of this thesis, which reflects on the findings of the questionnaires.

The chapter has also tried to show that information is an integral segment of the development process by emphasizing the facets necessary to build an effective information service for industrial and commercial use. In summary, it may be said that a business information centre suitable for Zambia should help industry, commerce and government in the following ways:

- a) Provide facilities for access to needed documents and information; both to be centrally available and to be disseminated through the radial system outside Lusaka (Section 6.3.3.1(b)).
- b) Initiate research and related activities in the fields of industry and commerce, especially market research and industrial feasibility studies.
- c) A national focal point for international activities concerning technology transfer, industrial and trade information through agencies such as UNCTAD and UNIDO.
- d) Coordinate and upgrade existing industrial, commercial and techno-economic services in Zambia.
- e) Advise government on policy relating to economic, commercial and industrial information needs for the business community in Zambia.

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CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

In the introduction to this study it was noted that the central theme was to design a nation-wide business information service and network for Zambia. The previous chapter discussed such possibilities and made the main suggestions, after taking into consideration the country's economic and industrial infrastructure, user needs and sources of information for business, and the availability and acquisition of information. These factors are presented and discussed in Chapters 1-5 emanating from existing literature and questionnaire results on the provision of business information and a survey of LIDS pertinent to the business entrepreneur.

The final chapter of this study brings out the salient conclusions which arise; and advances recommendations on the basis of the findings of the study.

7.1 On Information for Business

In Chapters 1 and 2 it was observed that factors such as the development and emergence of indigenous entrepreneurs and company executives with technical and managerial competence, industrial diversification, the development of agro- and small-scale industries, import substitution industries and research and development services, require the support of business and related information services. The need for information to aid business enterprises is emerging in parallel with development of new business concerns. Productivity and progress will increasingly depend on the ability of firms and their executives and technicians to keep-up-to-date, a requirement largely dependent on the availability of information (Section 3.4.3), timeliness of its presentation, relevance and acquisition. The search for new techniques or information on business trends and

changing market conditions require good information services, which many firms do not have and cannot afford. Since transfer of information followed by its application is fundamental to the diversification of industry and economy, the following recommendations are made:

Recommendation 1

The Government of Zambia should assume responsibility and take steps for the establishment and operation of an effective information transfer service for business organisations (Sections 3.1.1 and 5.1).

Recommendation 2

The service must be centrally operated to ensure effective cooperation and coordination of information activities, and to achieve maximum utilization of local and foreign information resources (Section 5.1.1). The service should be able to cater for the needs of every type of industrial and commercial enterprise in the country (summarised in Figures 10 and 11).

Recommendation 3

The Zambian government should pay increased attention to the concern about insufficient provision of information for business, especially STI, with a view to improving the situation. The sentiments presented in Sections 3.4.2, 3.4.3 and 5.1 are clear evidence of this need.

7.2 On Provision of Business Information

In Chapter 3 it was found that the present state of information for business was unsatisfactory (Section 3.4.2). This is characterised by untimeliness of publications and unavailability of information; with some measure of ignorance or unawareness of useable sources and unorthodox bureaucracy. These are the main barriers

against the free flow of information from suppliers to the ultimate user. Indeed, as Section 4.3.1 reveals, there is no organised system of disseminating information. The absence of such an organ particularly from government sources, chambers of commerce and trade associations has an adverse effect on availability and usage of information. Yet information (summarised in Tables 1, 2, 3 and established in Section 3.4.5) is demanded and valued for various reasons: identifying facts, assessing trends, diagnosing problems, locating needs, prescribing solutions, formulating policies, defining plans, devising and operating programmes and projects, and evaluating successes and failures.

Recommendation 4

For effective provision of information to the business community, all those concerned with its dissemination should liberalize their attitude towards its availability. Government departments and CCI's in particular should re-assess their policies towards information with a view to allow industry and commerce greater access to information for industrial and economic development.

Recommendation 5

Considerable information is generated by the National Commission for Development Planning. This information should be made available through more regular means than through (or in addition to) the Commission's annual report, 'the Annual Plan' (Section 4.3.1).

Recommendation 6

While acknowledging the difficulties experienced by the CSO in publishing statistical information through the Government Printer (Sections 4.3.1 and 3.5.1), the department should, nevertheless, be mindful of the significance of statistical information by the business community. Through its statistical information service and the library, the CSO should endeavour to devise other means of making

its publications and information available and lessen reliance on the Government Printer.

Recommendation 7

LIDS should explore efficient and coordinated means of communicating information to industry and commerce as the ultimate rationale of their existence.

7.3 On Use of Information and its Sources

Sections 3.6.2 and 3.6.4 contain summaries of the findings of the survey on information use and sources. Section 3.4.3 establishes that information is sought and used extensively as percentages in the section and Table I testify. Figure 4 and Table 3 further amplify the importance attached to information which signify the development aspirations of the country. In considering sources, it is evident that there is a lack of periodical literature generated from within Zambia. Similarly the bulk of STI literature is of foreign origin (Sections 3.6.3 and 3.6.5). Acquisition of foreign material poses the problem of depleting the meagre foreign exchange available; and literature is not among the priority commodities. It has also been established that CCI's and trade associations appear not to generate useable information in published form. Since these institutions often operate with part-time staff, their attitude to information provision is passive.

Recommendation 8

Since the user is the key element in any information, as it only exists to satisfy his needs, ZLA should embark on user-awareness studies with a view to determine the information-seeking behaviour of users of business information (Section 6.2).

Recommendation 9

User-awareness programmes should be organised in order to increase the usage of information based on the findings of user-studies (Section 6.2).

Recommendation 10

Greater use of UNESCO coupons should be made by LIDS to acquire foreign material, particularly periodical literature. This would relieve the strain on foreign exchange.

Recommendation 11

CCI's, trade and professional associations should endeavour to increase their activities to ensure generation of information through publications and other means (Section 4.4).

Recommendation 12

Business enterprises should make greater use of standards and patent literature as these contain valuable technical information. Foreign patents and standards are easily available through the Patent Documentation and Information Centre and the Zambia Standards Institute Library (Sections 4.2.5 and 4.6).

Recommendation 13

Personal contacts appear to be a popular source of information and should be encouraged through conferences, meetings and symposia (Section 3.4.4).

7.4 On the Role of LIDS and Training Institutions

Table 3 indicates that, as expected, LIDS are not rated high as important sources of information. Yet LIDS possess the bulk of the documentary sources such as directories, periodicals, reports and monographs. Admittedly LIDS are but one of the various sources at the disposal of the business executive. Because of the inferior services that the "amateur" librarian or information officer provides, LIDS have found themselves accorded a low profile (Section 5.1.1). The role of LIDS and training institutions is discussed in Chapter 6.

Recommendation 14

LIDS should increase their activities for providing information to industry and commerce using appropriate methods of information dissemination, such as selective dissemination of information (SDI) and other current awareness devices (Section 6.5.1).

Recommendation 15

LIDS in commercial and industrial concerns, particularly parastatal organisations, should be up-graded and engage qualified personnel in order to improve the quality of information provision to management.

Recommendation 16

ZLS should seriously reconsider its role so as to enable it to play a more positive role in information provision. It should also consider creating a section for commercial and technical information capable of reaching the business entrepreneur in the provinces (Section 6.5.2).

Recommendation 17

Through its regional libraries, ZLS should act as information and referral centres. These centres should collect information pertaining to the region's industries and commercial enterprises, compile directories of such information and maintain files of the actual information (Figure 12). ZLS should also try to come to some relationship with the Department of Industry in order to achieve recommendation 16.

Recommendation 18

Public library systems, especially those along the line of rail, should join in providing information to business communities in their areas through the establishment of business information sections (Section 6.5.1, see also Section 5.2.1).

Recommendation 19

Cooperative schemes for business and technical information should be given serious thought by CCI's, public libraries, training institutions and local firms at district and provincial levels (Section 5.2).

Recommendation 20

Training institutions such as UNZA's Department of Library Studies in cooperation with the School of Business and Industrial Studies, MEF, MSB, PCC and NIPA, should consider initiating courses aimed at those handling information in business (Sections 4.7 and 6.2). These institutions, particularly MSB, MEF, NIPA and PCC, have a market opportunity of reaching a great number of executives every year through their sandwich in-service courses.

Recommendation 21

Executives in government, para-statal and private organisations, information and documentation officers and librarians should participate in regular inter-disciplinary training courses, including research methodology, in order to increase their perception of information and its sources.

7.5 On the Role of International Organisations

In Chapter 5 Sections 5.3-5.3.2 examples of the kind of assistance that can be gained from international organisations were given. The activities of organisations such as UNIDO, UNDP, UNESCO (UNISIST/GPI) and FID were discussed. Zambia's participation in internationally initiated programmes is disappointing and so is the priority given to projects concerned with information provision (Section 5.3.1). Financial or technical aid, staff consultancy services and training opportunities are available if requested. While Zambia requests and receives aid for other projects (Section 4.3.1) and training through fellowships and attachments (Sections

2.4 and 4.2.2), comparable priority is not given in the area of information. In the light of this the following recommendations are strongly urged.

Recommendation 22

The Government should treat business information as a vital economic good worth the investment in the same way as it regards other investments. It should allocate funds accordingly. A good information service will in the long run prove to be the nerve centre of that economic and industrial development which it so much desires.

Recommendation 23

Zambia must take advantage of the financial and technical assistance normally provided by international organisations like UNESCO, UNDP, UNIDO and by the "have" countries, for developing information services for development.

Recommendation 24

District Councils that have twin relationships with towns and cities in the developed countries should make use of these contacts by sending their qualified staff to learn the methods used to reach business enterprises through information provision.

Recommendation 25

Zambia should actively involve itself in the programmes initiated by international organisations such as GPI, UAI, UAP, DEVSIS, UNISIST and NATIS. Assistance should be given to ZLA to become a full member of IFLA.

Recommendation 26

The creation or appointment of a national focal point for information is urgently required. Zambia should therefore establish a National Information System (NATIS).

7.6 On Establishing a Business Information Service

This topic has been discussed fully in Chapter 6, and the majority of the recommendations are presented there. The conclusion that there exists a need for a business information service stemmed from the sentiments expressed by respondents to the first questionnaire, analysed in Chapters 3 and 5. The absence of effective information services to industry and commerce has been confirmed and the fact that the MCI is contemplating an industrial information unit further strengthens the case. Whether it is an industrial information unit or a business information service, in the context of this thesis, which is eventually established, the following is recommended.

Recommendation 27

The policies and objectives of the service should be clearly defined and formulated as these are the cornerstone of the service. Some suggestions have been made in Section 6.1.

Recommendation 28

The Government should set up a national committee with members from industry and commerce (ZINCOM), trade and professional associations, government, and ZLA to investigate the whole question of business information in Zambia. This could be done under the auspices of the MCI or ZINCOM.

Recommendation 29

The Government in collaboration with ZINCOM should make efforts to build on and improve existing channels and systems for the transmission of business information to the end user.

Recommendation 30

ZINCOM, trade associations, professional associations and ZLA should consider joint representation on each other's committees in order to increase and diversify methods of disseminating information to industrial and commercial concerns.

Recommendation 31

The services and stock of the envisaged service should include liaison and advisory services as the main means of improving and promoting effective application of technology and modern managerial techniques in business enterprises.

Recommendation 32

Special attention should be given to the employment of properly qualified staff. Successful information transfer will be realised only if high calibre, properly trained and experienced staff are engaged in LIDS (Section 6.3.3.2). All information units (libraries and documentation units included) in government or parastatal institutions should be staffed with appropriately trained personnel.

Recommendation 33

Planners and policy makers in Zambia should be aware of the fact that an effective information service which has ready access to all the sources of relevant information whether local or otherwise is an asset to the development process.

Figures 10, 11 and 12 summarise (a) the functional units of the proposed business information service, (b) the institutions that should participate in a nation-wide business information network and (c) the role of public libraries and ZLS.

7.7 Conclusions

In the light of the observations and recommendations in the preceding sections, and summaries and observations appearing in the main text, this study has shown that information is vital to the development process. While this is recognised by policy-makers and users alike, the degree of importance attached to information is not parallel with that given to LIDS, the institutions that handle

and disseminate information. In the case of business information, knowledge of its sources appear to be on the weak side. The need for information for business has been established in Chapter 3. The attitude of users towards information is encouraging in that it provides a basis on which providers of information for business use can have an understanding of the patterns of user-needs.

The survey of information sources in Chapter 4 revealed a variety of institutions providing information useful to the business executive. No coordination exists among these institutions, a situation calling for proper and effective dissemination of information. Whereas there are a good number of institutions providing information, albeit they are under-utilized, printed sources appear to be very limited, particularly periodical literature generated from inside Zambia. The situation is worsened by a lack of literature from CCI's, trade and professional associations and bureaucratic tendencies; posing acquisition problems for the potential user. The case of statistical information is one such example which generates frustrations among the business community.

The suggestion to set up a business information service received a favourable support in Chapter 5. The advantages are discussed in the same chapter.

Suggesting new structures at a time when the country is experiencing serious economic difficulties is obviously a delicate issue. It is difficult to justify information provision on strict cost-effective terms. Yet at no time in Zambia's short history does information appear to be more necessary than at this time of declining economies. Zambia is over-reliant on the exports of one commodity, copper; thus the desire to diversify her economic activities provides an opportunity to set up information systems. Her embryonic state of development is characterised by heavy dependence on imported goods, machinery and technology without the corresponding foreign exchange earnings to match the demand. Zambia's survival lies in proper utilization of information on tech-

nology and similar areas to enable her to develop industries and commercial enterprises, diversify her industries and reduce imports, with a view to achieve self-sufficiency. This will require a good understanding by those responsible for its implementation of the politics of information for economic and industrial development, involving an awareness of the importance of information and the existence of its sources and providers. These are linked by those with the professional mission to make information available, i.e. librarians, information and documentation officers.

Information for business should be planned and provided within the overall framework of the NATIS concept. All institutions charged with disseminating information for commerce and industry such as CCI's, all types of LIDS, in-house information services in private and para-statal organisations, professional and trade associations, training and financial institutions should be coordinated to achieve the free flow of information for business use. Experience shows that in other countries investment in information pays. Europe developed her information services as a result of demands from scientific and technological research, and hence the industrial superiority enjoyed. Zambia should develop her resources by investing in information. Therefore the ultimate user, the entrepreneur, should press for the creation of a business information service, the advantages and value of which needs no further emphasis.

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APPENDIX I

Department of Library & Information
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LE11 3TU
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26 July 1982

To:

Dear Sir

Re: Business Information Needs for Industry and Commerce in Zambia -
a Survey

I am conducting a survey of business information needs for executives in industry and commerce in Zambia.

In order to help me in my studies I would be most grateful if you would spare a few moments to answer the few simple questions on the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the enclosed stamped and pre-addressed envelope as soon as possible.

It is your experience and ideas as users or potential users that count in assessing the business information needs for industry and commerce. For this reason please complete the questionnaire as accurately as possible.

My interest is in the types of information you need to do your job and how useful you find some information sources that you often use.

If you find there is not enough space for you to express your point of view in any question, please continue your comments on a separate sheet of paper and send this with the completed questionnaire.

Your answers to the questionnaire will be treated in complete strict confidence as you will notice I have omitted provision for names and companies.

I shall be very pleased to receive any comments that you have to make. Please return the questionnaire by 30 August 1982.

Yours faithfully

Nyambe Namushi

Questionnaire

BUSINESS INFORMATION NEEDS FOR INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE IN ZAMBIA

INFORMATION NEEDS

In the following questions information means 'information about business, trade, technology, science and industry etc which is to be used by those in business, trade and industry and by all other interested personnel such as banking personnel and government officials, available in a published or unpublished form'. "Need" means 'need to use information of that kind to aid you perform your job, whether or not you actually use that information'.

1. Are your information needs being met adequately? YES/NO
Please explain.

2. In the list below are some types of information that you may need in your work. Please think about each type and indicate how important that kind of information is for your job. Concentrate on your NEED for each type of information rather than how much you actually use information of that type.

Please tick one box in each case.

0 = Not important; 1 = Less important; 2 = Important;
3 = Very important.

Type of Information

Legal information	0	1	2	3
Training information	0	1	2	3
News of developments in your field	0	1	2	3
Scientific/Technical information	0	1	2	3
Investment information	0	1	2	3
Marketing and market intelligence information	0	1	2	3
Competitors' information	0	1	2	3
Statistical information	0	1	2	3

Questionnaire ... continued

Product information	0	1	2	3
Company financial information	0	1	2	3
Import/Export information	0	1	2	3

3. Are there are other types of information that you think are important for your work?

NO Go to question 4 YES Answer Q. 3.1

3.1 Please list other types of information and indicate how important these are for your work by ticking the appropriate box in each case

Type of Information	Important	Very important

4. Have you experienced difficulties in obtaining any type of information marked 'important' and 'very important' at Q.2 and 3.1 above?

NO Go to question 5 YES Answer Q. 4.1

4.1 Please state which type of information and what difficulties are for each type.

Type of Information	Difficulties

Questionnaire ... continued

5. Which of the following sources of information do you use and find useful? (Please tick one in each case).
 0 = Not useful; 1 = Less useful; 2 = Useful; 3 = Very useful

Documentary Sources

Trade directories	0	1	2	3
Trade journals	0	1	2	3
House journals	0	1	2	3
Manufacturers' catalogues and leaflets	0	1	2	3
Techno-commercial abstracting journals	0	1	2	3
Patents and other industrial property literature	0	1	2	3
Standards	0	1	2	3
Industrial survey and market research reports	0	1	2	3
Bank reports	0	1	2	3
Statistics	0	1	2	3
Company annual reports and financial reports	0	1	2	3
Chambers of Commerce and industry reports	0	1	2	3
Newspapers and magazines	0	1	2	3

Non-documentary Sources

Libraries, Documentation and Information Centres	0	1	2	3
Government ministries and departments	0	1	2	3
Foreign Trade Missions and Embassies	0	1	2	3
Chambers of Commerce and Industry organisations	0	1	2	3

Questionnaire ... continued

National commercial and industrial societies (e.g. Zambia Industrial and Commercial Association)	0	1	2	3
Professional Associations (e.g. Engineering Institution of Zambia)	0	1	2	3
Financial and Banking Institutions	0	1	2	3
Conferences and Meetings etc	0	1	2	3
Colleagues	0	1	2	3
Other (please specify)	0	1	2	3

6. Have you experienced any difficulties in obtaining information from any of the sources listed at 5 above?

NO Go to question 7 YES Answer Q. 6.1

6.1 Please state the source and the difficulties

Source of Information	Difficulties

7. How is information brought to your attention?

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Discussion with colleagues | Departmental service |
| Own personal searches | Company Library or information service |
| Other | Please explain |

Questionnaire ... continued

8. Please indicate below how you use the information once you have obtained it.

9. General Matters

Would you like to express your views regarding the idea of setting up a business information service specialising in technical, scientific and commercial information to enable the business community in industry and commerce to obtain needed information easily and as quickly as possible?

Thank you for your cooperation in completing this questionnaire. Please return the questionnaire in the stamped and self-addressed envelope provided.

APPENDIX II

Department of Library and
Information Studies
University of Technology
Loughborough
LE11 3TU
England

26 July 1982

Dear Colleague

Re: Survey of Industrial and Commercial Library/Information
Services in Zambia

I am writing a dissertation on the provision of "Business Information Services in Zambia", towards a Master of Library Studies degree to be awarded by the Loughborough University of Technology.

Attached is a questionnaire which I would be most grateful if you would kindly answer. It would give me the vital information I want regarding the present state of business information services and future plans.

Please kindly answer the simple questions and return the completed questionnaire to me in the enclosed self-addressed and stamped envelope provided, by 30 August 1982.

All information will be treated as confidential. Your cooperation will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Nyambe Namushi

Encl:

Questionnaire

SURVEY OF INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL LIBRARY/INFORMATION SERVICES
IN ZAMBIA

1. Which of the following information systems do you operate?
(Please tick)

Industrial	Library	Information service	Combined
Commercial	Library	Information service	Combined
Other*	Library	Information service	Combined

*Please describe

2. What are the major subject field(s) covered by your service?

3. What type of material is provided by your service?

Trade Directories

Trade Journals

House Journals

Manufacturers' catalogues
and leaflets

Questionnaire ... continued

Techno/commercial
abstracting journals

Patents and other
industrial property
literature

Standards

Industrial surveys and
market research reports.

Bank and Government
economic reports

Chambers of Commerce and
Industry reports

Reports from professional
societies and associations

Other**

** Please specify -----

4. Who uses your library/information services mostly? Can you describe the kind of people involved?

5. What kind of services do you provide to your users?

Current Awareness Bulletin

SDI Service (Personal)

Accession Lists

Questionnaire ... continued

Question 5 continued

Other**

**Please specify -----

6. Please list routine and non-routine (extra and special) facilities and services provided for users:

Routine

Non-routine

7. What are your future plans for the library/information services?

Thank you very much for your cooperation in completing this questionnaire. The information you have given me will be of great use. Please return the questionnaire in the stamped and self-addressed envelope provided.

Name of Organisation _____

Address _____

