

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
SCHOOL OF INFORMATION STUDIES FOR AFRICA

AN INFORMATION SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR INDUSTRIAL  
DEVELOPMENT IN UGANDA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE  
TO THE SMALL-SCALE SECTOR: A PROPOSAL

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE  
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BY  
JAMES MATOVU  
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AN INFORMATION SUPPORT SYSTEM FOR INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT  
IN UGANDA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE SMALL SCALE SECTOR,  
A PROPOSAL

BY

JAMES MATOVU

Approval by the Board of Examiners:

Getachew Birru

Chairman, School Graduate Committee

A. Neelamegham

Advisor

G. Bhattacharyya

Advisor

I. K. Ravichandra Rao

Examiner

Taye Tadesse

Examiner

G. G. Chowdhury

Examiner

Getachew Birru

A. Neelamegham

G. Bhattacharyya

Ravichandra Rao. I.K.

Taye Tadesse

G. G. Chowdhury

**DECLARATION**

This thesis is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.



Signed  
James Matovu  
24<sup>th</sup> May 1994

The thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as University advisors



Signed  
Prof. A. Neelameghan  
24<sup>th</sup> May 1994



Signed  
Dr. G. Bhattacharrya  
24<sup>th</sup> May 1994

## **DEDICATION**

**This thesis is dedicated to my wife Victoria, daughter Loussie and son Philip, who endured my stay away from home for a period of two years.**

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I should state it here that the views contained in this document were a contribution of all those groups of people mentioned above. However, I must excuse them of all the shortcomings and limitations that may be reflected in this document as these are mine and mine alone.

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## ABSTRACT

The role of information in the scientific, technical and socio-economic development of nations is becoming widely accepted. In what has come to be referred to as the "information age", a larger percentage of people in the developed world are now employed in the information sector and the same trend is perceptible in the industrialising economies as well. In Uganda, the future of the country lies in the rejuvenation of the industrial sector, which presently, accounts for less than 5 per cent of the GDP. More than 80 percent of the manufacturing sector in Uganda is comprised of small scale enterprises. The problems faced by the SSIs are numerous and diverse. However, a critical analysis of these problems reveal that they all have a bearing to the information situation in the country, which presently remains grossly ill-developed.

Twice the government of Uganda, assisted by international agencies has tried to address the issue of industrial information in the country. These two attempts, however, proved futile, partially due to poor perception of information as a resource by planners, decision makers, manufacturers, etc.

With the advent of information technology, the information component has gained new dimensions. Information technology (IT) is today an indispensable tool in the capture, storage, processing, analysis and dissemination of data and information in industries as well as in other organisations. IT application has transformed information systems and centres from mere custodians of information to a

management tool of industries. Its impact is being felt in all sectors of the national economy, the manufacturing sector in particular. Information, industrialisation and economic development are a mutually synergising trinity.

This thesis discusses the relevancy of information systems and centres in industrialisation from Uganda's point of view. It proposes the need to develop a national scientific, technical and industrial information centre (NSTIIC). It is proposed that among other things, NSTIIC should aim at bringing together in a network of database system, all institutions, organisations, etc., whose activities and functions are contributory to the growth of the industrial sector in Uganda. It also advocates for a serious campaign to sensitise planners, decision makers, manufactures and all those involved in guiding the national economy, big or small, so as to help them develop an information culture in their day-to-day activities.

## ABBREVIATIONS

APT	Appropriate Technology
CAS	Current Awareness Service
CCF	Common Communication Format
CMA	Canadian Manufacturers Association
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IAC	Information Analysis and Consolidation
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ISO	International Standards Organisation
ITIU	Industrial Technological Information Unit
MTAC	Management Training and Advisory Centre
MOIT	Ministry of Trade and Industry
MUL	Makerere University Library
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NCST	National Council of Science and Technology
NRM	National Resistance Movement
NSTIIC	National Science, Technical and Industrial Information Centre
PTA	Preferential Trade Area
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SMI	Small and Medium Industries
SSI	Small-Scale Industry
TIC	Trade Information Centre
TIS	Trade Information Service
UBS	Uganda Bureau of Standards
UDC	Uganda Development Corporation

UEPC	Uganda Export Promotion Council
UMA	Uganda Manufacturers Association
UMACIS	Uganda Manufacturers Association Consultancy and Information Service
UMAIC	Uganda Manufacturers Association Information Centre
UNCC	Uganda National Chamber of Commerce
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIDO	United Nations Industry Development Organisation
UPK	Uganda Polytechnic Kyambogo
USIDO	Uganda Small Industry Organisation
USSIA	Uganda Small Scale Industries Association
UTIS	Uganda Technical Information Service