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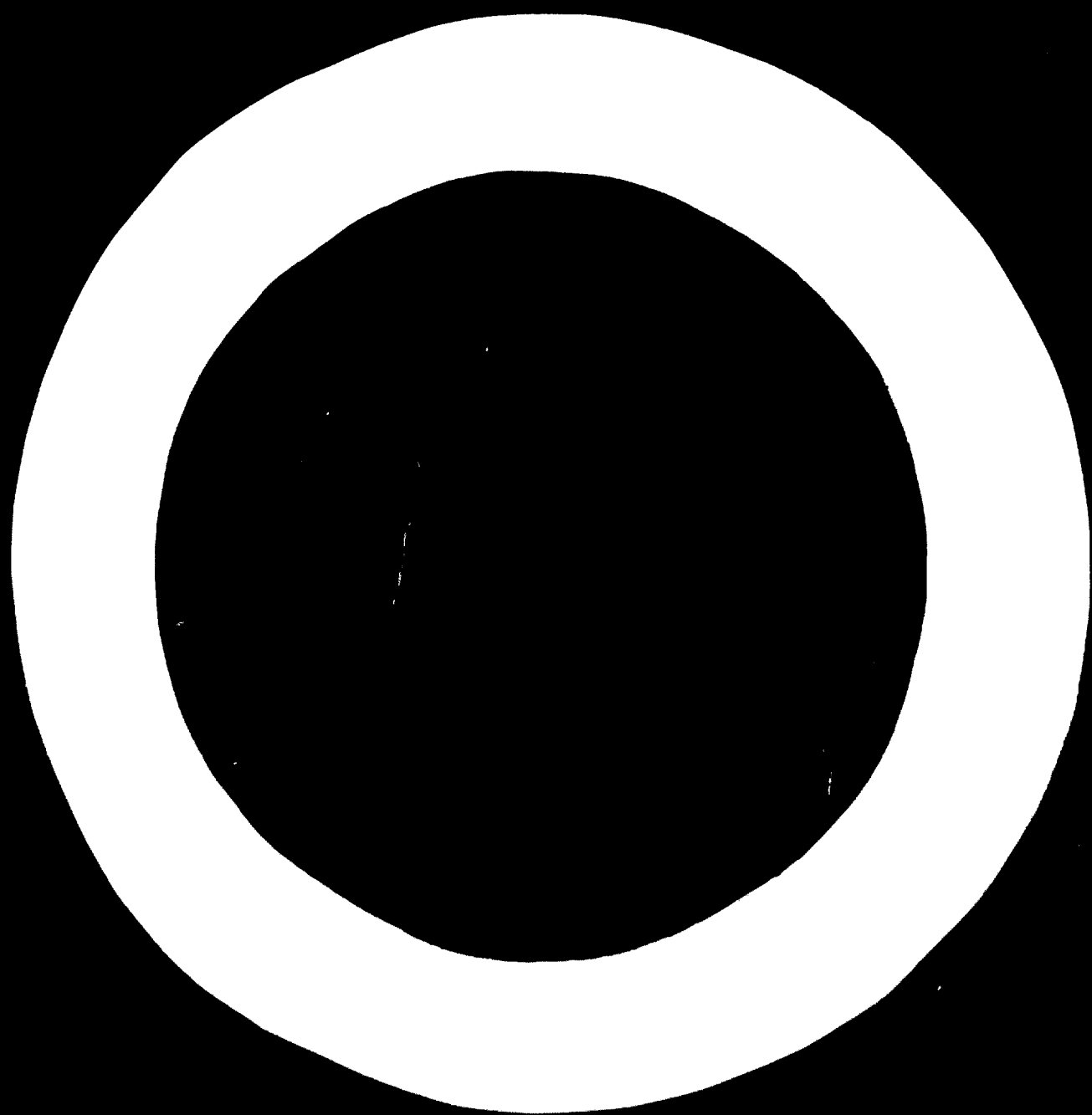
INDUSTRIAL INFORMATION SERVICE IN TANZANIA^{1/}

by

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^{1/} The views and opinions expressed in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the secretariat of UNIDO.

We regret that some of the pages in the microfiche copy of this report may not be up to the proper legibility standards, even though the best possible copy was used for preparing the master fiche.



Sources or institutions for industrial information in my country, Tanzania, are numerous but inadequate. They do not cover the whole spectrum of industrial information and more often than not the information they are able to supply in respect of a particular aspect of industry is inadequate and sometimes inaccurate. Besides, the procurement and dissemination of the information by the various institutions is uncoordinated. In a nutshell, the industrial information service in Tanzania suffers from several problems including (a) lack of organization on the part of the institutions (b) lack of cooperation by the industrial firms, (c) inadequacy and inaccuracy of the data. I shall attempt to discuss the problems along with the various institutions which procure and disseminate industrial information in the country.

There is in Tanzania a Ministry of Commerce and Industries which spearheads the promotion of industrial development. For this purpose the Ministry has a division called Industries Division which maintains direct contact with established as well as prospective investors. The Division studies their problems and advise them appropriately. To be able to advise, the Division has to obtain a wide range of information from various sources including the industrial firms. Procuring information from the industrial firms is often cumbersome, time consuming and sometimes disappointing. This situation arises simply because the firms are either not technically equipped to supply the information or they refuse to cooperate. Refusal to cooperate is prompted not only by fear of taxes and competition; it is also prompted by the disorganised or uncoordinated approach by the various institutions seeking information. Thus a firm, for instance, may be approached by the Ministry for a certain information and, at the same time or after a short interval, the Central Statistical Bureau under the Ministry of Development and Planning may seek the same information from the same firm. Consequently, the firm gets irritated and tends to be unwilling to cooperate. It would appear that while a coordinated approach is necessary to solve the problem, legislation to force the firms to supply the Government industrial information is also necessary.

Organisation and coordination of the institutions for industrial information or centralization of the information service would also help to reduce many other problems including definition of specific data and information. The Statistical Bureau, for instance, may happen to have a definition for small-scale industry different from the one used by the Ministry. Coordination or centralization would make it easier for the industrialists etc., to obtain the information required.

In the experience of Tanzania, inadequacy and inaccuracy of industrial information is a reflection of the underdevelopment of the industry. Thus a certain piece of information may not be available because (a) the firm does not keep it; (b) the firm is not technically equipped to translate the information it has into the form it is required; (c) if the information is translated it may be inaccurate and therefore misleading or useless; (d) the firm, because of lack of sufficient technical personnel, may not have the time to compile the information.

In its task to disseminate information, the Ministry publishes a booklet from time to time, consolidating in general terms the available industrial information for industrial development and lists the sources available for supplying further or more detailed information. The Ministry also has been publishing quarterly a journal known as "Trade and Industry" which projects the Tanzanian industrial scene not only overseas but also to the other sectors of the economy. The publication of the journal has stopped temporarily because of lack of finance and qualified information personnel.

Under the administration of the Ministry there is an Industrial Studies and Development Centre which was established a few years ago with the assistance of UNIDO. The Centre is equipped with experts in specific fields of industry and they concern themselves with identification of projects, market and feasibility studies as well as production techniques. They give their advice free of charge to public as well as private firms. There is also an Export Promotion Bureau in the Ministry which renders market advice to industrial firms freely.

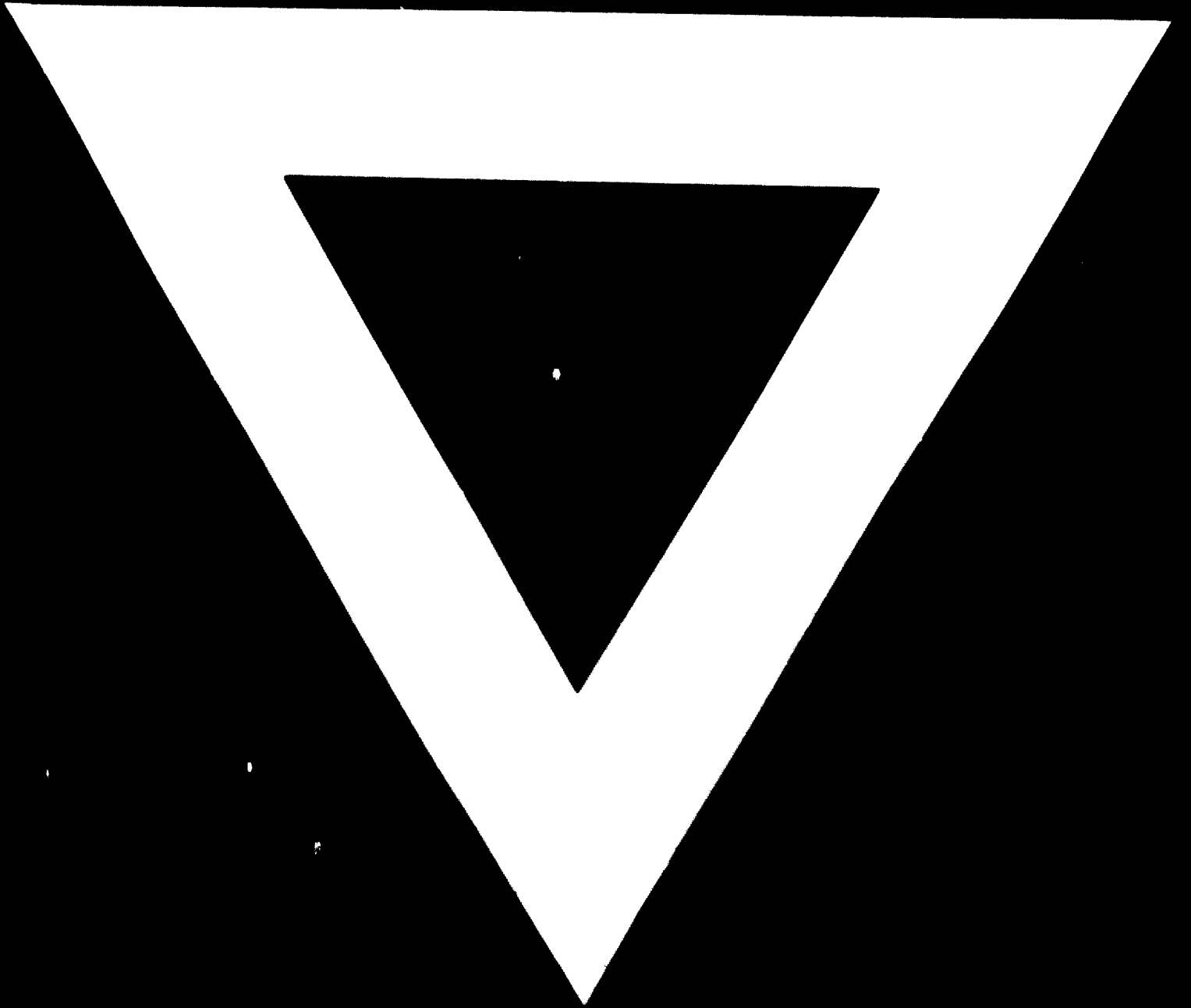
Other sources of industrial information include the National Development Corporation which is the industrial investing arm of the Government; Bank of Tanzania; the National Bank of Commerce; the Tanzania Industrial Investment Bank; the Rural Development Bank; the Institute of Productivity; the Economic

Research Bureau of the University of Dar-es-Salaam and the Central Statistical Bureau.

At the East African level we have the Customs and Excise Department which provides trade data monthly, quarterly and annually. Their annual report is published in the form of East African Trade Report.

I should like to discuss the nature of the information procured and disseminated by each of the institutions listed above but time is not on my side.





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