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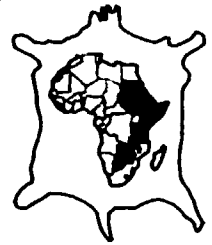
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REGIONAL AFRICA

REGIONAL AFRICA LEATHER AND FOOTWEAR INDUSTRY SCHEME

US/RAF/92/200/11-10

MISSION REPORT (\*)

to Uganda

21 - 29 February 1994

Based on the work of

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Agro-Based Industries Branch

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Uganda situation was different from that of other countries because of what Uganda has gone through. Think of any one current third world affliction and most probably Uganda will have suffered from it. Socially and economically this is appalling for Ugandans. Because of its history, the global economic constraints have impinged more upon Uganda than most African countries. In the last thirty years or so the economy has shrank considerably.

The increased number of game - parks gazetted in the early 80s adversely affected poorer cattle keeping groups in Uganda.

During this period, many people shifted from the formal to the informal sector of the national economy. Most manufacturers in the leather industry are therefore in the informal sector. Many of the machines and tools they use are obsolete.

Most shoe manufactures in the informal sector are found in the suburbs of Kampala especially in an area called Katwe. This area accommodates many people in the informal sector.

All people visited were running small workshops and were operating from rented premises. They were using textile old sewing machines for stitching shoe uppers. Although many of them did not really employ women; some women owned their own small footwear workshops. Below is a description of selected places the National Expert, Mr. Mwebe and I visited:

### **General Remarks**

It should be noted that I rushed to Uganda so that I could get an overview of the situation of women in the leather industry before the "*Malawi women in the Leather Industry Workshop*".

Many people I met lacked everything from raw materials to machineries. They nevertheless had the zeal and the dedication. However, almost all of them had never had any technical training at all.

They bought their raw materials from Kenya.

If the women in the leather industry are to be assisted, they will need to join the leather association. This means that they should be well informed about the benefit of forming and joining such an association.

Whereas the women in the leather industry can benefit from training offered out of the country, they should be trained in Uganda as a group, especially since they are many.

It will be useful to have a directory of women in the leather industry in Uganda as soon as possible. The directory will be

helpful in terms of selecting candidates for training.

It would help if the backstopping Officer, UNIDO Leather unit. Ms. Aurelia Calabro visited Uganda. This would enable us to brainstorm on strategies for enhancing the situation of women in the leather industry.

Finally, I would like to thank the National Expert, Mr Emmanuel Mwebe for all his support. I also thank the personnel of the UNIDO office in Kampala for facilitating my visits to various places.

**KAMPALA -Katwe  
Kayabure Footwear:**

The above workshop started in 1980. It is owned by a woman; Winifred Nabukenya. The workshop employs three men and two women. Nabukenya herself makes shoes.

On average the workshop makes 30 pairs of shoes per day.

- Nabukenya has got only one old textile sewing machine.
- Given the right facilities, Nabukenya can make better shoes.

**Nalumansi and Sons' workshop:**

The owner; Nalumansi, is a woman. She makes leather articles. However, she mixes leather with palm leaves. She could substitute palm leaves with fish skin. The fish skin is obtainable from *Uganda Leather and Tanning Industries* in Jinja.

Nalumansi workers with her children.

**WALK OVER FOOTWEAR**

The above factory is owned by a man, Mr Kayongwe.

At the time of our visit there was hardly any activity. Normally the factory makes shoes soles using P.V.C. It employs women.

**Uganda Shoe Company**

This factory was not working at the time of the visit. We were told that the company was trying to replace old machines with new ones.

The company employs 18 men and two women namely B. Nabisera and A. Nasonko. Both women stitch shoe uppers.

The company makes military boots.

**Salim Alhamed Tannery**

The above tannery, apart from tanning hides and skins to semi -

finished leather (wet - blue) exports raw hides and skins.

At the time of the visit, the tannery was not working. The tannery does not employ women.

#### **People's Footwear : Jinja**

The above workshop is owned by a woman, a university graduate. Her name is Joy Rwangula.

The workshop started in 1983. All the ten employees are men.

On average the workshop produces 50 pairs of shoes per day. Most of the shoes produced are bought by one of the government ministries.

This is a rather promising footwear workshop. Its potential is limited by lack of appropriate machines and trained workers.

#### **Bata Shoe Company**

Mr Campbell, the General Manager, was rather unfriendly. He said that he would not work with the National Expert, Mr. Mwebe, since he worked for ULATI. According to Mr Campbell, ULATI was responsible for Bata's problems. We were not even allowed to visit the factory.

This appeared like an unreasonable accusations since Mr Mwebe was not the General Manager of ULATI!

#### **INSTITUTIONS VISITED:**

##### **Uganda manufacturers Association (UMA)**

UMA is the manufacturer's mouthpiece. It offers training, solicits scholarships for members and links with other interested members elsewhere in the world.

The Association is an information, technology and marketing centre. It organises for manufacturers to attend trade fairs and other relevant activities.

Very few women are members of UMA.

##### **Association of Women in Industry**

The Chairperson of the above association is called Margaret Ndekera.

The association is supposed to offer services similar to those offered by UMA. However, its got very limited resources, as a result, most members have become disillusioned.

#### **GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES**

##### **Ministry of Women in Development Youth and Culture**

I had a discussion with the Commissioner in the ministry,  
Ms. Edna Baryaruha.

She said that her ministry had started organising an open market once a week. The purpose of organising the market was to assist women in the informal sector. She indicated that many women in the footwear sub-sector were using the facilities provided by the open market. She promised to work with the UNIDO leather project to enhance the status of women in the leather industry.

#### **Ministry of Industry**

I had a discussion with Ms. Mambule. She outlined the problems faced by women entrepreneurs and employers in the manufacturing industrial sector.

She too promised to work closely with the project to enhance the status of women in the leather sector.

#### **Conclusion**

Most people in the footwear industry had very small places which they rented, sometimes in the backyard of shops. Despite the limited physical space, they were able to produce a few pairs of shoes per day. Perhaps if they all got together and rented a big room, it would help them. Even giving them assistance would be easier.