



COMESA-LLPI NEWSLETTER

JANUARY - MARCH 2013 ISSUE

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The COMESA/Leather and Leather Products Institute (COMESA/LLPI)-Co-sponsored All Africa Leather Fair 2013 Successfully Concluded

The Ethiopian Leather Industries Association (ELIA), in cooperation with COMESA/LLPI and other sponsors, organized the 6th All-African Leather Fair (AALF) in Addis Ababa, from February 20-22, 2013. The Trade Fair brought together tanners, footwear and leather goods manufacturers, equipment and technology suppliers, chemical and inputs suppliers, manpower training institutions, trade promotion organizations, etc. from different parts of the globe. African companies and organizations constituted the largest attendance.



LLPI Director with Prime Minister Hailemariam During the Fair

The Fair was a specialized one, designed to promote the African leather industry and to enable it create an interface with its partners within the continent and around the world. It offered the opportunity for business persons in the industry to meet and to talk face to face and to get immediate feedback on their prospective businesses. It provided a comprehensive forum for increased business in leather, leather products and the allied industries, notably chemicals, machinery, components and accessories. The main activities conducted

during the three days Fair were Trend Show by APLF (Hong Kong), Buyers and Sellers Meeting, IFCOMA (India) and ELIA Meeting, Fashion Parade, USAID-Agricultural Growth Program Forum, Consozio Toscana Shoe Components (Italy)-ELIA Forum, Trade Fair, etc.

The AALF 2013 attracted 154 exhibitors from Ethiopia, 8 from Europe, 19 from Asia and more than 30 from African countries other than Ethiopia that displayed their products and services.



Partial View of COMESA-LLPI Sponsored Participants

COMESA/LLPI supported the participation of 31 SMEs to ensure more depth of SMEs in Intra and Inter-trade in the Region. Most encouraging was the interest by traders outside and within the African continent on exhibited products by some of the LLPI sponsored SMEs. African enterprises utilized the opportunity to promote the wealth that Africa has in the sector by showcasing their exportable items to the world market. Exhibitors expressed their high level of satisfaction. §

**Next Issue
June 2013**



**Dr. Mwinyikione Mwinyihija, Director of
COMESA/LLPI**

Here it is - the first quarter newsletter of 2013, your source for information about developments in the leather sector in COMESA Region. The newsletter is filled with many interesting information that I hope you will enjoy reading it.

I am also proud to indicate that COMESA/LLPI is continuing to display its international stature and living up to its goal of cooperation and collaboration with institutions of regional and global dimensions in the leather sector. During the ending quarter, the Institute initiated linkages with Korean Institute of Footwear and Leather Technology, CONTANCE, Tanners' Council of Japan, Taiwanese International Leather Association, Central Leather Research Institute (India) and Edge university (Turkey). The participation and paper presentation of the Institute's Director at the International Tanners Council meeting in Hong Kong in March 2013 was also another event carried out during the quarter.

In this first issue of 2013, you'll read about COMESA/LLPI accomplished activities, news from COMESA-member countries, and other international news as well as upcoming events in the leather sector.

It is my hope that this newsletter helps connect all of us in the leather related works we are doing and thus, I invite you to read this newsletter and continue to provide us with your valuable comments.

With regards and best wishes to all,

THE NEED TO INCENTIVIZE LIVESTOCK OWNERS TO BRING HIDES AND SKINS QUALITY ISSUES TO THEIR ATTENTION

Cattle, goats and sheep population, in the COMESA Region, is estimated at 354 million which represents approximately 68.7% of the total livestock population in Africa ¹. With an off-take rate of 20 percent approximately 70 million pieces of hides and skins are estimated to be produced annually. These have a potential market value of US\$987 million assuming of first or second grade quality. However, approximately 70% of these hides and skins are of reject or downgraded due to pre-slaughter, slaughter and post-slaughter defects, incurring an estimated loss of approximately US\$345 million² per annum. A study conducted in Ethiopia shows that pre-slaughter defects account for 65 percent of all the downgrade or reject categories while slaughter and post-slaughter defects accounted for 20 and 15 percent respectively ³.

The pre-slaughter defects commonly seen on hides and skins result from ectoparasite, infestation, scratch from barbed wire fencing, transporting animals, stock pens, thorns and horns, prolonged contact with dung, ringworm or brand marks. Potentially, all of these defects are controllable by applying good husbandry practices during the rearing period, and costs associated with these avoidable damages to hides and skins could be minimized. LLPI intends to continue playing a pivotal role in strengthening quality assurance practices in the Region. For Example, developing manuals, trainings, capacity building and technology transfer.

However, with all efforts having been done price structures for hides and skins trade need to be seriously considered. For example, livestock owners are not paid for the hide or skin during the sales of their animals. Thus, the hides and skins quality improvement activities (treatment for skin diseases, improved housing and transport conditions, dehorning, etc) that require financial outlay do not interest these livestock owners.

It is, therefore, important to establish some form of direct reward to the livestock owners, if a sustainable hides and skins quality improvement during the rearing period of animals is sought. Introducing a system of payment scheme in live animal marketing, where hide/skin price could be differentiated from the animal sale price could be an option to be explored.

¹2010 FAO compendium, also note that Egypt, Libya and Sudan, which are recorded as Middle East in the Compendium have been included as African countries

²The loss computation is based on the fact that even reject or low grades hides/skins they are not discarded completely, but fetch very low prices on the market.

³ Livestock Development Master Plan, 2007. Study Phase I Report – Data Collection and Analysis Volume K – Hides & Skins, November, 2007

COMESA/LLPI at the Hong – Kong Trade Fair (Continued from page 8)

From the Trade Fair it came out that few countries such as China, Brazil, and India have tremendously increased their global share, and Africa needs to optimize its value addition and should give particular attention to Automobile industries (upholstery). COMESA/LLPI Director Dr. M. Mwinyihija, representing the Institute at the Trade Fair, met and discussed with the delegates of Vietnam, Thailand, Republic of Korea, Japan, EU (Cotence) and Turkey on future collaborative activities and all showed favorable attitudes towards working with COMESA/LLPI.

COMESA-Leather and Leather Products Institute (COMESA/LLPI) Regional Leather Sector 6th Core Team Meeting Conducted

The 6th Core Team Meeting of the COMESA Leather Subsector was held at the Ambassador Hotel, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia on 23rd February 2013. The main objective of the Meeting was to review past activities and the work plan for 2013. It was resolved that COMESA/LLPI should focus on activities as mandated by the COMESA Treaty, Summit and Council decision, LLPI's Charter, and Medium Term Strategic Action Plan (MTSAP) : 2010 -2015, that are geared towards achieving tangible results, that would spur growth of SMEs and intra trade.

PACT II, and the envisaged Successor Programme, identification and consideration of new candidates for the Core Team.

The Meeting was opened by Dr. Mwinyihija, the COMESA/LLPI Director, who stressed the importance of the Core Team Meeting as it represents the interests of stakeholders in the entire COMESA Region. In this regard it should act as a barometer on the performance of the COMESA/LLPI.



Participants During the Core Team Meeting

The Meeting was attended by Dr. Mwinyikione Mwinyihija, COMESA/LLPI Director (outgoing Core Team member, Mr. Nicholas Mudungwe representing COMESA Secretariat, Mr. Musisi Bam from Uganda, Mr. David E. Daka and Francis Chikonde from Zambia, Mr. Zewdu Kebede, Programs Coordinator COMESA/LLPI, and Dr. Tadesse H. Mamo, Chairman of the Core Team. Dr. Mekonnen Hailemariam and Mr. Awlachew Sintie, Leather Value Chain and Information Systems Experts, respectively, participated as observers.

The Agenda Items discussed during the Meeting included adoption of the Minutes of 5th Core Team Meeting, Matters Arising from Minutes, Review of Activities since the last Meeting, Closure of

The Core Team must draw 75% of its membership from the private sector. This would ensure that its agenda would focus on issues of substance that was directly related to the issues impacting on the performance of the leather sector in the Region.

The Core Team will now be composed of 14 members whose majority are drawn from the private sector, with 9 Partner Institutions identified and given observer position in the Core Team Meetings. Most of these Institutions are potential development partners, as COMESA/LLPI has geared itself in a resource mobilization drive, image and consensus building in its agenda to support a plethora of projects that it intends to implement in line with its five year Medium Term Strategy. §

COMESA/LLPI Focal Points and SMEs Workshop

The All Africa Leather Fair, has become an important annual event of the leather sector enterprises and stakeholders in the COMESA Region. Annually both regional and international enterprises converge on Addis Ababa to show case the latest leather, footwear, and leather goods technology. COMESA/LLPI has capitalized over the years on this event to facilitate the participation of SMEs, through a cost sharing arrangement. In addition, the COMESA/LLPI has used this platform to hold a review meeting with its countries focal points. A total of 31 participants from 8 COMESA member countries, namely Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Rwanda, Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe participated in the Workshop.



Dr. Mwinyikione Mwinyihija, during the opening of the Workshop

This year the Meeting was special as the new Director, Dr M. Mwinyihija also invited SMEs who were drawn from the COMESA Region to attend the Meeting. This brought a good amount of freshness, as the SMEs were able to exchange views with focal points in a manner which is set to impact positively on the performance of COMESA/LLPI and consequently on the leather industry in the Region. An external perspective was also solicited by inviting an expert on leather exhibition, who is currently working with the Hong Kong Fair Organizers (APLF). The Director pointed out that the COMESA Region have taken a giant step in supporting the development of SMEs clusters in the leather sector, as most countries in Asia has been able to grow the industry through the implementation of the same strategy.

Dr. Mwinyikione Mwinyihija, the new Director

of COMESA/LLPI further in his opening remarks made it clear that COMESA/LLPI's was ready to deliver on its mandate and was ready to fulfill the expectations of its stakeholders. He stressed that there was a need to unlock the potential that the Region holds in the leather value chain. Among other issues he raised during his remarks, he alluded to the fact that SMEs were important in ensuring a rapid and robust growth of the leather sector in the region if they were supported. He promised the participants that the COMESA/LLPI was ready to take up the challenge and would join hands with all relevant stakeholders in this endeavour.

Topics discussed during the Workshop encompassed overview and key accomplishments to date of COMESA/LLPI, LLPI's Leather Trade Information Network Development in the COMESA Region, LLPI's role in the COMESA Region Leather Value Chain Systems Development, LLPI's Focus in Future Leather Industry Regional Development/Medium Term Strategic Action Plan and Regional Integration Support Programme/Cluster Management Excellence, with lead discussants being Dr. Tadesse H. Mamo, Mr. Awlachew Sintie, Dr. Mekonnen Hailemariam, Mr. Zewdu Kebede and Mr. Nicholas Mudungwe in that order.



Partial View of the Focal Points and SMEs Workshop

Workshop participants made thorough discussion and deliberations during the Workshop. SMEs representatives said that the Workshop allowed them to expose problems that they are facing and the support they need to effectively participate in national, intra-regional and international trade operations. §

Ethiopia's Leather Products Export in Growth

According to the Ethiopian Leather Industry Development Institute (ELIDI), leather and leather products export has generated USD 80 million in the past eight months of 2012/2013. This revenue surpassed the amount earned the previous year (2011/2012) by USD 2.5 million.

The largest share of the earning has been from the export of processed leather which is USD 66.02 million, USD 11.49 million from footwear, USD 2.07 million from gloves and the remaining from other leather products.

The Ethiopian Leather Industry Development Institute is working on improving market system and technology transfer in the sector.

Source: ENA §

Italy to Boost Rwanda Leather Industry

The Minister of Trade and Industry, François Kanimba on Thursday signed an Agreement with the Italian Trade Commission (ICE) represented by the Director of its Johannesburg Office, Sergio La Verghetta and the Rwandese Association for the Promotion of Leather and Leather Products (RAPROLEP)

The contract is aimed at accelerating the operationalization of a Training and Production Laboratory for the footwear and leather products in the community processing center in Gatsibo District, Eastern Province.

According to Hon. Kanimba, the signatories intend to establish a technical and financial cooperation in the set-up, organization and installation of the laboratory.

“The Italian partners expect to send 24 machines with production capacity between 60-200 pieces per day by latest May, 2013,” he noted.

Hon. Kanimba said the agreement will serve to transfer and apply advanced Italian technologies and know-how to the local industry in terms of development of new product designs, training on new product development and other technical

services and technologies in the local footwear and tannery industry.

The Italian delegation was composed of Dr. Sergio La Verghetta Director of the Agency for the promotion of Foreign Trade and the Internationalization of Italian companies (ICE) - The Italian Trade Commission at Johannesburg; Dr. Carlo Milone Secretary General of the International Polytechnic Industrial and Economic Development (PISIE) Italy, and Patricio Cioni President of PLURIPEL Group, an investor in the tannery sector.

After a three-day visit and meetings with different Government institutions, besides the Italian Government support to the leather community processing center in Gatsibo district, the private investors PLURIPEL Group are also committed to invest in the leather industry in Rwanda.

Their investment in leather industry will be done in three phases.

Phase one will cover building a tannery for production of wet blue for export and 10% of finished leather to supply local market while the second will see the upgrade of production from Wet-blue to finished leather.

Phase three will ensure the establishment of a shoe factory with other Italian investors in leather products. If all goes well, said Hon. Kanimba, the parties agreed to complete the three phases by 2017. §

Source: <http://www.chimpreports.com/index.php/business/8263-italy-to-boost-rwanda-leather-industry.html>

Kenya's Leather Industry set for Revival with Value Addition

An article written by Nicholas Wiatathu states that Kenya's leather industry is expected to register increased productivity. This is as government embarks on implementing sound reforms, coupled with increased resource allocation.

As per the aforementioned article, the Government has lined up a raft of reforms geared towards stimulating growth. They are geared towards expanding market share and increasing earnings to farmers.

Livestock Minister Dr Mohamed Kuti, says the Government is determined to stimulate the industry with the view to creating more jobs, as well as increasing earnings for local producers.

“The livestock sub-sector is potentially endowed but under-utilised thus contributing to the economic imbalances currently ravaging majority of farmers,” said Kuti.

“However, Government together with the private sector is determined to arouse impressive growth through undertaking of the outlined projects in Vision 2030.” Kuti said the Government is considering increasing resources and enhancing access to financing and technology adoption. Outgoing Kenya Leather Development Council Chief Executive Officer, Dr Mwinyikione Mwinyihija, said the operating capacity of the tanning sub-sector has been dismally low for the last decade, owing to various factors.

Mwinyihija said most leather products are exported in semi-processed form thus attracting cheap prices leading to substantial loss in terms of revenue as well as market share.

Economic Contribution

Currently, the industry is contributing Sh6 billion to the economy yearly, from the 13.6 million pieces against 66.3 million pieces of hides and skins.

Tanneries have increased to 13, operating at 95-100 per cent capacity. The number is expected to increase to 19 after the completion of the six mini-processing tanneries being constructed at various regions of the country. They include Wajir, Garissa, Makueni, Kajiado, Mogotio and Kanduyi at a cost of Sh175 million. The funding has been provided under the Economic Stimulus Programme created a few years ago.

“Efforts should be focused in activating country systems in leather industry to enhance production and thus assist in tackling most of the economic imbalances especially in the Arid and Semi-Arid areas,” said the Minister. Mwinyihija said a number of initiatives are being pursued to ensure the products are properly enriched before they are exported

regionally and internationally.

Before early 90s, Kenya’s tanning industry thrived due to the export compensation. By then, the industry had 19 tanneries with a capital investment worth Sh3.8 billion, employed 4,000 people and operated at an average capacity utilisation of 80 per cent.

However, a significant decline in the leather industry was observed with the abolishment, in 1990, of the 22 per cent export compensation.

“This resulted to the drop in the average capacity utilisation, from 80 per cent to 30 per cent with the number of tanneries reducing to 9 but in 2004/05 increased to 11,” said Mwinyihija. §

Source: http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/?articleID=2000075053&story_title=Leather-industry-set-for-revival-with-value-addition

Seizing Sporting Opportunities to Promote the Leather Industry: The Brazilian Experience

The Brazilian Leather sector that continued to register highest value in exports of leather and leather products in recent times is now using the FIFA Confederations Cup Brazil 2013 to further strengthen the interaction of the national industry with foreign buyers. The Centre for the Brazilian Tanning Industry (CICB) planed to bring 10 guests from seven different companies that are known to be major importers of the Brazilian leather to attend the FIFA Confederations Cup Brazil 2013. The initiative, other than allowing the guests to watch and cheer at the games, will further their relations with their clients and promote more business opportunities for the tannery industry and the economy of the country. COMESA region, known for its immense potential in leather sector, will have something to learn from this Brazilian strategy.

Source: www.brazilianleather.com.br

Promotional Trade Strategies said to have Enhanced the Brazilian Leather Exports to Record Level

Information revealed from Department of Foreign Trade-Brazil indicates that in April to 2013 Brazil has recorded the highest value already exported in hides and skins in the history of Brazilian exports, amounting US\$ 191.5 million for a single month. The increase was said to be 13.3% compared to the same month last year.

According to the executive president of the CICB, Jose Fernando Bello, the positive numbers of the tannery industry result from a series of actions based on the business community commitment and also in the activities related to the associativism and promotional trade strategies aligned by the entity.

With the support of the Brazilian Leather project - an initiative of the Centre for the Brazilian Tanning Industry (CICB) and the Brazilian Trade and Investment Promotion Agency (Apex-Brasil) - a series of actions were said to be designed and implemented in target markets for the Brazilian leather, generating so, business prospecting and new opportunities for the industry. The recent participation in sectoral fairs such as the APLF (Hong Kong) and Le Cuir (France), in addition to the Brazilian Leather project's visual identity renewal and the unprecedented participation of Brazil in the "Interzum" trade show (Germany) illustrate this positioning of the Brazilian leather industry.

Source: international.cicb@brazilianleather.com.br

COMESA/LLPI at the International Council of Tanners (ICT) Annual Meeting

The International Council of Tanners (ICT) annual meeting was held at the International Convention Centre in Hong Kong on March 24, 2013. COMESA/LLPI was represented in this meeting by its Director Dr Mwinyikione Mwinyihija.

During the Council meeting, which was attended by 24 delegates and guests from 13 countries, presentations were made on two important topics: further development of the methodology for calculating the carbon footprint for leather, and the current state of evolution of the African leather industry. The Council also agreed to hold the second World Leather Congress in Italy in the autumn of 2014. It is to be remembered that the first World Leather Congress was held in Rio de Janeiro in November 2011.

COMESA/LLPI's Director Dr M. Mwinyihija presented a paper entitled COMESA Region Leather Sector: A Short Overview, Challenges and market Opportunities in which he gave highlights of COMESA/LLPI objectives and activities, selected statistics about the Region's leather sector and major constraints along the value chain. COMESA/LLPI has been invited to join the International Council of Tanners (ICT) as of 2014. This may serve LLPI and Africa as global players in the global arena.

COMESA/LLPI at the Hong – Kong Trade Fair

COMESA/LLPI attended the International Trade Fair that took place at the Hong – Kong Convention and Exhibition Center from, March 23-25, 2013. The Trade Fair was organized by Materials, Manufacturing and Technology (MM&T) and Fashion Access.

The MM&T attracted a total of 1,193 exhibitors from 53 countries from all over the world, including: South America, Central America (Mexico), USA, EU (Cotence), Italy (UNIC), Spain, Germany, Turkey, Great Britain, Scotland, Thailand, Vietnam, Australia, China, India, Brazil, etc.

Continued to Page 3

Upcoming Events in the Leather Sector for the Period January to December 2013

The Table here below highlights some upcoming international trade shows, fairs, exhibitions and expositions of leather goods, clothing & accessories, leather machinery & technology and leather processing. The details like Leather Industry expo profiles, participants, and confirmations regarding timeliness or applicability of any of the information should be obtained by contacting organizers before making arrangements.

No	Period	Event	Place, City, and Website	Country
Africa				
1	June 28-July 8, 2013	37th Dar es Salaam International Trade Fair (DITF)	Dar es Salaam International Trade Fair http://www.tantrade.or.tz/events.php	Tanzania
2	June 30 - 02 July 2013	Southern African International Trade Exhibition	Gallagher Convention Centre, Midrand http://www.biztradeshows.com/saitex/	South Africa
3	Oct., 2013	FASHION BUSINESS ANGOLA	Feira Internacional de Angola Luanda http://www.eventseye.com/fairs/zst1_trade-shows_africa-middle-east_leather-fur.html	Angola
Europe				
1	April 02-05, 2013 July 23-26, 2013	Exhibition of Shoes, Leather and Furs	Kiev, http://artexpoua.com/en/vystavki/leather-and-shoes-2013-1/	Ukraine
2	April 03-05, 2013	Lineapelle International Exhibition of Leathers	Bologna Exhibition Centre Bologna , www.lineapelle-fair.it	Italy
3	April 17-20, 2013	AYMOD Istanbul International Footwear Fashion Fair	CNR Expo Istanbul www.cnraymod.com	Turkey
4	April, 2013	Hellenic Shoe Fair	ExpoAthens Exhibition Centre Athens : www.hellenicshoefair.gr	Greece
5	April, 2013	FUTURMODA International Exhibition of Leather, Components and Accessories for Shoes and Leather goods	Institución Ferial Alicantina Alicante http://www.eventseye.com/fairs/cst1_trade-shows_spain_leather-fur.html	Spain
6	July 11-13, 2013	Outdoor Trade Fair	Neue Messe Friedrichshafen http://www.outdoor-show.com/	Germany
7	Aug. 10-11, 213	Messe	Schkeuditz / Leipzig www.mmc-shoetime.de	Germany

8	Sep. 03-05, 2013	BTS Exhibition of Shoes, Leather and Leather Goods	Poznan International Fair, Poznan http://www.expodatabase.com/tradeshows/bts-exhibition-of-shoes-leather-and-leather-goods-41220.html	Poland
9	Sept. 8-10, 2013	Outdoor Trade Show	Stoneleigh Park Exhibition Centre Warwickshire www.outdoortradeshow.com	United Kingdom
10	Sept. 15-18, 2013	MICAM Sho Event	Fiera milano Trade Fair Complex (Rho) Milan www.mipel.it ; www.micamonline.com	Italy
11	Sept. 21-23, 2013	ILM International Leathergoods Exhibition	Messe Offenbach Offenbach www.messe-offenbach.de	Germany
12	Sept. 17 - 19, 2013	Point of Shoes (international fair for fashion materials)	Zeppelinstraße 11 66954 Pirmasens /	Germany
13	Oct. 08-10, 2013	Modacalzado & Iberpiel Footwear & Leather Fair	Madrid www.ifema.es	Spain
Asia				
1	April 10-13, 2013	China (Dongguan) International Footwear Machinery & Material Industry Fair	Guangdong Modern International Exhibition Center (GDE) ,Dongguan, http://www.biztradeshows.com/trade-events/dongguan-footwear-machinery-fair.html	China
2	May 29-31, 2013	International Footwear & Leather Products Exhibition-GUANGZHOU	China Import & Export Fair Pazhou Complex Guangzhou, http://www.biztradeshows.com/shoe-leather-guangzhou/	China
3	July 11-13, 2013	The 15th International SHOES & LEATHER EXHIBITION	SECC - Saigon Exhibition & Convention Center, Ho Chi Minh City http://www.shoeleather-vietnam.com/	Vietnam
4	August 29-31, 2013	All China Shoe-Tech China (Wenzhou) International Leather, Shoe Material & Shoe Machinery Fair 2013	Wenzhou International Convention and Exhibition Center, Wenzhou http://www.chinaexhibition.com/trade_events/2726-ALL_CHINA_SHOE-TECH_2013	China
5	Sept. 04-06, 2013	China International Footwear Fair + All China Leather Exhibition	Shanghai New International Expo Centre(SNIEC) Shanghai, www.ciffchina.com http://www.biztradeshows.com/trade-events/china-footwear-fair.html	China
North America				

1	June 10-12, 2013 Oct. 14-16, 2013	Transit The Los Angeles Shoe Show	California Market Center, Penthouse, 13th Floor, Los Angeles http://www.californiamarketcenter.com/markets/transit.php	United States
2	July 23-25, 2013	ENK WSA,	Sands Expo & Convention Center, Las Vegas www.wsashow.com	United States
3	June 5-7, 2013	New York Shoe Expo	Hilton New York Hotel & Member Showrooms New York, ffany.org	United States
4	Aug. 17-19, 2013	The Atlanta Shoe Market	Atlanta, atlantashoemarket.com	United States
Latin America				
1	July 31 - August 03, 2012	IFLS International Footwear & Leather Show	Corferias Exhibition Centre, Bogotá www.ifls.com.co	Colombia

Evaluating Internet Information Resources (Continued from page 13)

organisational scheme appropriate, for example chronological for an historical source, or geographical for a regional resource?

◇ Interactivity

- » Where interactive features such as forms, cgi scripts etc are provided, do these work? Do they add value to the site?

◇ Connectivity

- » Can the resource be accessed with standard equipment and software, or are there special software, password, or network requirements? Can the resource be accessed reliably, or is it frequently overloaded or offline? Is a local mirror site available, or do international traffic charges have to be incurred?

◇ Cost

- » Currently Internet information resources are perceived as being “free”. However costs do exist, and are likely to become more important. Costs can be divided into (a) costs of connecting to the resource and (b) costs associated with the use of the intellectual property contained in the resource.

- » In terms of (a), users paying traffic charges are already having to consider the costs of

connection, and may want include this in criteria for selection, for instance to favour text based rather than image intensive sites, if the image content is the same.

- » Increasingly we will see sites where (b) is a consideration, and a charge is made for the intellectual content of the site. Of course, libraries have been dealing with charged online services such as Dialog for many years, but the Internet has created an expectation and an opportunity to make charged services available to end users. Libraries have a role in negotiating subscriptions and site licenses for organisational access to charged services. If online transactions are used to pay for information, the security of these transactions at a site may become important. Charged services may be available with limited functionality, or for trial periods, for free; librarians will need to decide whether to provide the enhanced or the limited version.

§

Evaluating Internet Information Resources

You may have heard that ‘knowledge is power,’ or that information, the raw material of knowledge, is power. But the truth is that only some information is power: reliable information. The Internet is a virtual library, consisting of an unlimited amount of information.

The Internet is a relatively new medium, with the first site being posted in 1991. Therefore, people often either approach the Internet with skepticism, or without questioning the material at all. Should we question the credibility of material found on the Web? Should we evaluate electronic information more so than printed material? What factors contribute to a credible source?

1. Why evaluating the free Internet is so important

- » Anyone can publish anything on the Internet
- » Rarely is there any quality assurance eg. editors, fact-checkers, peer review, librarians
- » Anyone can create a website
- » Location and content of sites changes frequently
- » Many pages are outdated
- » Customers need reliable information
- » Search engines often throw you into the “middle” of a site - loss of context (no selection guidelines for search engines)

2. Questions to ask when evaluating Internet resources

**Who wrote or published the page? A person?
An organization?**

Authority

- » Is the author/publisher of the information clearly identifiable? If not, why do you think it is missing? e.g. a purposeful or accidental omission
- » Is the author/publisher affiliated with an educational institution? A government department? A commercial company? A non-

profit organization?

- » Check the domain of the document, what institution publishes this document?
- » Is there any way to determine the credibility/expertise of the author/ organization? What qualifications do the authors have?
- » Is there someone to whom you can direct your questions/comments?
- » Where are you? In the middle of a larger site? Explore the site by chopping off sections of the URL beginning on the right hand side. Each backslash (“/”) denotes a new directory. Chop off one directory at a time.

Why was the page/site created?

Objectivity

- » What type of site is it - scholarly, business, personal?
- » Is the author trying to sell you something?
- » Is the author trying to sway you to a particular point of view?
- » Is the author trying to inform?
- » Can you identify a particular point of view?
- » Who is the site aimed at? What audience? e.g. scholars, children, general public, etc.
- » What is the stated purpose/objective of the site? Are there unstated objectives?

What information is given?

Coverage

- » What is covered on the site?
- » How accurate, valid, comprehensive, specific does the information appear to be?
- » Is the page mainly content-oriented or mainly links to other sites?
- » Is the information useful? Is it unique? Is there added value?

e.g. graphics/sound/video, links to further references.

- » If you are on a page within a larger site, can you find related information by looking at the site as a whole?
- » Is there any relationship to the wider world of knowledge? Are there citations or references?

Is the information in the resource accurate?

Accuracy

- » Is there any relationship to the wider world of knowledge? Are there citations or references?
- » Is the information factual, or opinion? Does the site contain original information, or simply links?
- » Who wrote the page and can you contact him or her?
- » Is this person qualified to write this document?

How current is the information?

Currency

- » When was the site created?
- » When was the site last updated?
- » Are there any/many dead links on the site?

Is the resource convenient and effective to use?

Workability

This is the area where criteria for Internet resources differ most from print sources. An issue in providing access to electronic documents is whether a library should just provide links to the originating site, or “acquire” the publication for local access. Poor workability may indicate that the library should store the data locally, if intellectual property considerations allow this.

Aspects of workability include:

- ◇ **User friendliness**

- » Are any special commands clear? Is help information available? Have user interface issues been addressed, such as menu design, readability of screens, etc.

◇ **Required computing environment**

- » Can the resource be accessed with standard equipment and software, or are there special software, password, or network requirements?
- » Has the resource been designed to work well with one software and user interface (for example the latest Firefox release on a broadband connection) but be difficult to use with others (for example Lynx at 2400bps)? It is useful to test resources with a variety of browsers and connections. Telnet resources may pose problems to users who have not installed a telnet client. Images and other multimedia may create problems if users have not installed the correct viewer.
- » While the extent to which older browsers are still used is a source of argument, there are still Lynx only users, frames challenged users, visually impaired users out there, and sites should attempt to cater for them. This criteria is less important where users are in a defined computing environment, such as a library's inhouse terminals.

◇ **Searching**

- » How effectively can information be retrieved from the resource? Is the resource organised in a logical manner to facilitate the location of resources? Is the organisational scheme appropriate, for example chronological for an historical source, or geographical for a regional resource? Is a useful search engine provided? What operators and ranking features are available? Is the search engine interface intuitive? Does the search engine index the whole resource?

◇ **Browsability and organisation**

- » Is the resource organised in a logical manner to facilitate the location of resources? Is the

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ABOUT COMESA-LLPI

The formation of the Leather and Leather Products Institute (LLPI) was approved by the former Preferential Trade Area (PTA) for Eastern and Southern African States in 1988 to fulfill its industrial objective to “support and develop the leather industries of the COMESA regions”. It was then established by the signing of the Charter by member States on 23rd November 1990.

LLPI Vision:

LLPI endeavors to be a competent and leading leather and leather products centre of excellence that will enhance regional and global competitiveness of the leather industry.

LLPI Mission:

To promote the development of the regional leather industry through research, science and technological development, investment, productive capacity building, inter-regional cooperation.

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