The Mandate

The Library was established in 1992 under Article 142 of the COMESA Treaty with the following Mandate:

“Member States agree to recognise the status of the Library situated at the Secretariat as the official depository Library of the Common Market for storage of all documents; regulations, public notices, databases and other documents with regard to national development plans, official gazettes, Central Bank annuals, periodic reports and other documents as may be determined and notified by the Library from time to time, with respect to member states.”

The Centre has a comprehensive collection of printed books, reports, studies, investment packages, Bank annuals, statistical indicators, CD-Roms and others, all enhancing the documentation of the history of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa. It is designed to facilitate all citizens of the member states access to information and information resources so collected and documented.

Functions

- It is designed to facilitate all citizens of the Member States access to printed and electronic information resources
- It is mandated to document all that has been, there is and that shall be about COMESA and its constituencies.
- It is a depository of all recorded knowledge on COMESA.
- It dynamises the information resources provision by selecting and acquiring the most recent and most pertinent printed and electronic resources to support the programs pursued by COMESA through the Secretariat and as mandated by the Treaty.
- It is the information and information resources dissemination facilitator through the provision of reference services; interlibrary services; document circulation services and current awareness services backed by internet searches.
- It provides information resources and information services requirements to all its Secretariat staff members. Operating within this dynamic environment the Centre extends its
services to the ever-increasing needs of the academic world and researchers both within and outside the region.

- It performs these various functions by using a state of the art Library management system which helps to organise and retrieve information faster and also facilitate full-text read only service for COMESA documents.

**Our Mission:**

- To provide pertinent information and information resources to serve the research requirements and needs of the Secretariat and its member states.
- To disseminate COMESA information and information resources to selected institutions of higher learning, Export Boards, Investment Centres and selected co-operating partners within and outside the Region.
- To serve as the Centre of excellence in information delivery on COMESA's development agenda through regional integration.

**Our Vision:**

- To develop, maintain and operate a regional, state-of-the-art Information Resources Centre/Library offering print, electronic and audio-visual information resources.

**Objectives:**
- Systematically select, acquire, document and maintain a comprehensive information resource collection irrespective of format on COMESA integration agenda including relevant publications on the sustainable development process regionally and internationally.
- Provide complete bibliographical access to all resources so classified and catalogued.
- Provide timely dissemination of relevant information and information resources to the clientele within and outside the member states by establishing mutual partnership arrangements.
- Develop into a knowledge database on COMESA.

"Sometimes a person has to go back, really back - to have a sense, an understanding of all that's gone before to make them - before they can go forward."

The Collection

The Centre has:

- Published and unpublished documents on COMESA including pamphlets and articles
- Books and monographs with subject coverage of the main sectors on COMESA agenda.
- Studies, surveys, project documents commissioned by COMESA
- Annual Reports of COMESA Institutions and Central Banks.
- Proceedings of policy organs meetings: Intergovernmental, Council and Summit
- Reports of missions undertaken by Staff of the Secretariat: workshops, seminars, meetings, conferences, attachments
- Press clippings on COMESA
- Legal documents: protocols, treaties, agreements; memorandum of understanding
- Audio-visual materials on COMESA events/discussions.
- Serials/journals
- Speeches delivered at the policy organs meetings
- WTO Reference Centre
The goal is to remain on top and offer up-to-date information and information resources on all programs, investment climates, trade policies, banking and all.

**Clientele**

The Center serves the needs of the Secretariat Staff, the business community, the Academic fraternity from Schools, Colleges and Universities in and outside the region. It provides information to organizations that seek investment opportunities in member states. It supports the efforts of COMESA embassies abroad by supplying them with information resources to help them foster the image of COMESA in their various stations.

**Hours of operation**

The Centre opens to the public:
Monday - Thursday
Morning
9.00 hrs - 12.30 hrs
Afternoon
14.00 hrs to 17.00 hrs,
Friday
09.00 hrs - 13.00 hrs.
Closed weekends and all public holidays.

**Contact Information**

**Telephone:** 260 211 229725/32 Ext.355 or 356
**Electronic mail:** library@comesa.int