

Document 7

United Nation Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development (UN— PAAERD) 1986-1990

This United Nations initiative was designed to thoroughly evaluate the persistent downturn in socio-economic conditions throughout Africa while rallying the global community to strengthen African endeavors aimed at stimulating growth and improving the quality of life for all residents. Furthermore, it aimed to support African countries in securing greater external resource inflows to accelerate the execution of Africa's Priority Programme for Recovery and Development from 1986 to 1990, thereby establishing a renewed collaboration between Africa and the international community to ensure essential assistance.

Questions for consideration: What general or specific justifications does the United Nations provide for its new development schemes in Africa? Can you identify reasons why African leaders often struggle to implement their own development initiatives? How do the colonial boundaries inherited by African nations contribute to the ongoing challenges in achieving collective self-reliance and sustainable development? If African leaders continue to rely on external resources despite the continent's vast human and natural resources, what message does this send to the world, to Africans themselves, and to future generations? What does it signify for a nation or community to attain collective self-reliance? What essential changes are necessary to unravel the persistent dependency on external resources for Africa's development?

The General Assembly, 1986

Recalling its resolution 39/29 of 3 December 1984 and the Declaration on the Critical Economic Situation in Africa annexed thereto, as well as its resolution 40/40 of 2 December 1985, in which it decided to convene a special session to focus, in a comprehensive and integrated manner, on the rehabilitation and medium-term and long-term development problems and challenges facing African countries;

Welcoming the efforts of African countries towards their economic recovery and development, as evidenced in Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990 adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its twenty-first ordinary session, held at Addis Ababa from 18 to 20 July 1985, in which the Governments of Africa reaffirmed their primary responsibility for economic and social development of their countries, identified areas for priority action and undertook to mobilize and utilize domestic resources for the achievement of these priorities;

Convinced of the need for concerted action by the international community in support of the efforts of African Governments to achieve economic recovery and development;

Emphasizing that the African development crisis is one that concerns the international community as a whole and that greater realization of the rich physical and human potential of the continent is an integral part of a common strategy to promote the economic and social advancement of all people;

Noting with appreciation the strong expression of support and commitment made by the international community during the thirteenth special session of the General Assembly;

- Adopts the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990 set forth in the annex to the present resolution;
- Emphasizes the need to intensify economic and technical co-operation with African countries during and beyond the period of the Programme of Action;

- Urges all Governments to take effective action for the rapid and full implementation of the Programme of Action;
- Requests the organs, organizations, and bodies of the United Nations system to participate fully in and support the implementation of the Programme of Action;
- Calls upon all concerned intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, in view of their significant contribution to economic and social development in Africa;
- Decides to conduct a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action at its forty-third session, in accordance with paragraph 24(a) of the Programme of Action;
- Requests the Secretary General to monitor the process of implementation of the Programme of Action and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its forty-second and forty-third sessions, as outlined in paragraph 24© of the Programme of Action.

United Nation Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990

Analysis of Africa's Critical Economic Situation

Africa's economic and social crisis has been a cause of grave concern to Africa and the international community alike. The crisis has not only jeopardized development process of the African economies but has also threatened the very survival of millions of Africans. The persistent economic crisis in Africa exacerbated by drought and desertification, and the more recent tragic famine and hunger have strengthened the resolve of the African countries, individually and collectively, to take immediate and concerted actions to achieve sustained economic and social development of their countries in the medium-term and long-term.

The international community fully recognizes the pervasive and structural economic problems of the African continent. Some of these lie in the colonial past; some of these flow from the post-independence era; others are a combination of economic, political, and endemic factors. The vulnerability and the fragile nature of the African socio-economic structures have not become fully apparent as a consequence of the dramatic effects of drought. The African Governments have initiated actions aiming at long-term structural transformation of their economies which is vital for breaking the vicious cycle of poverty and underdevelopment and for paving the way for self-reliant economic development. Notwithstanding past efforts, it is imperative that the international community intensify its co-operation and substantially increase its support for African efforts.

The persistent economic crisis in Africa has been aggravated by a combination of exogenous and endogenous factors. The endogenous aggravating factors include deficiencies in institutional and physical infrastructures, economic strategies and policies that have fallen short, in some cases, of achieving their objectives, disparities in urban and rural development and income distribution, insufficient managerial/administrative capacities, inadequate human resource development, and lack of financial resources, the demographic factors and political instability manifested, inter alia, in a large and growing population of refugees. In addition to these factors, many African countries have to contend with severely adverse consequences of the policy of economic destabilization perpetrated by the racist minority regime in South Africa and its illegal occupation of Namibia. The serious aggravating exogenous factors include the recent international economic recession, the decline in commodity prices, adverse terms of trade, the decline in financial flows, increased protectionism and high interest rates. The heavy burden of debt and debt-servicing obligations also constrains Africa's prospects for economic growth.

Urgent, far-reaching and imaginative economic policies are required to avert Africa's Critical Economic Situation further deterioration in the economic conditions in Africa and to launch the continent

on the path of dynamic self-reliant and self-sustained economic development in a favourable external environment. One immediate task of such efforts should be to increase substantially productivity of all sectors, particularly in the in the central sectors of food and agriculture. Achieving such a task would be extremely difficult without the amelioration of the external and internal factors that have aggravated the structural crisis and without simultaneously enhanced supportive measures by the international community.

Africa has taken the main responsibility for its own development. It has organized itself to undertake the necessary measures to overcome the current economic crisis on the basis of Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990, adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government at its twenty-first ordinary session, held at Addis from 18 to 20 July 1985. The Programme aims at identifying areas for priority action for the rehabilitation and recovery of the African economies mobilizing and fully utilizing domestic resources for the achievement of those priorities. However, given the dimensions of internal and external problems now facing the continent, it is obvious that in order to accomplish this complex task Africa must receive the full support of the international community.

The African development crisis is not an exclusive African problem but one that concerns mankind as a whole. Interdependence is today a living reality. A stagnant or perpetually economically backward Africa is not in the interest of the world community. Without durable and sustained economic development in the world's poor regions, of which Africa is a notable example, there is a real danger to international peace and security and an impediment to world economic growth and development. The international community recognizes the importance of genuine peace and security, as well as the strengthening of international co-operation, to African economic development.

It is consequently essentially urgent to develop and implement an international strategy to complement the exceptional efforts that the African countries have themselves initiated to put their economies on course. In developing such a strategy, it is necessary to take full cognizance of the special problems and needs, not only those common to Africa as a whole, but also those of subregions and individual African countries in order to ensure balances and equitable development. The international community must respond positively to the African call for a new era of co-operation based on a spirit of genuine and equal partnership, which is an essential element for harmonious and mutually beneficial economic co-operation in an interdependent world. Africa is convinced that, given the necessary support from the international community it will be capable, in the not-too-distant future, of establishing national, subregional and regional structures which would ensure self-reliant sustainable economic development.

United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990

The United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986-1990, based on mutual commitment and co-operation, consists of two central elements:

- The determination and commitment of the African countries to launch both national and regional programmes of economic development as reflected in Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990, adopted by the African Heads of State and Government in July 1985;
- The response of the international community and its commitment to support and complement the African development effort;

Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990

The African countries have fully committed themselves to the implementation of a sharply focused, practical and operational set of activities, priorities and policies, as elaborated in Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990. The successful implementation of the Priority

Programme will lay the foundation for durable structural changes, improve levels of productivity, and ensure the rapid recovery of the African economies while at the same time enhancing long-term development prospects.

The implementation of the Priority Programme should contribute to the realization of the Lagos Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for the Economic Development of Africa, the Industrial Development Decade for Africa, proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 35/66 B of 5 December 1980, the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa, proclaimed by the Assembly in its resolution 32/160 of 19 December 1977, and the Harare Declaration on the food crisis in Africa, adopted on 25 July 1984 by the Thirteenth FAO Regional Conference for Africa.

The Priority Programme stipulates the following priorities at the national, sub regional and regional levels:

1. At the national level

a. Agricultural development

The Priority Programme lays considerable emphasis on the food and agricultural sector. The Priority Programme seeks to revitalize the more dynamic and internally generated forces for growth and development. Primary focus will be on women farmers who contribute significantly to agricultural production.

Immediate measures to combat food emergencies

The immediate objective will be to cope with future emergencies and catastrophes through the following measures:

To create and sustain national emergency preparedness:

- To institute effective early-warning systems;
- To establish flexible and efficient regional networks of crop protection agencies;
- To establish national food security arrangements

Medium-term measures

The main objective will be to give impetus to agricultural development in order to achieve increasing levels of productivity and production through:

- Raising substantially the level of investment in agriculture;
- Increased food production;
- Restoring, protecting and developing arable land and rendering it more productive;
- Establishment of remunerative produce pricing policies, establishment and strengthening of incentive schemes, eliminating pricing policies that have tended to discourage production and providing effective agriculture credit to programmes;
- Development of livestock and livestock products through the utilization of agricultural by-products, improved management, and attention to animal diseases;
- Development of mechanization and the use of modern farm and processing machinery; increased use of fertilizers, improved seeds, and pesticides;

- Improving and expanding the storage capacity, distribution, and the marketing system;
- Development of agricultural research and extension through the creation of a network of agronomical research stations and extension for the design and diffusion of appropriate agricultural technologies;
- Placing at the disposal of small farmers necessary inputs for increased yields; better utilization and improvement in management of water resources and the establishment of low-cost irrigation schemes;
- Establishment of reforestation, drought, and desertification control programmes, including firewood schemes; and improvement of agricultural implement maintenance capacity;
- Establishment of assistance programmes for small farmers, especially women food producers and rural youth;
- Improvement of the distribution of agricultural products.

The above measures should be applied in a suitable combination to achieve the expected results, taking into account the particular situation in each country. Other subregional and regional measures are also envisaged in the Priority Programme to complement national measures. The total investment required for the implementation of this programme is estimated at \$US 57.4 billion which is 44.8 per cent of the total cost of implementing the Priority Programme.

b. Other sectors in support of agriculture

The success of Africa's effort in achieving the stated objectives for the development and growth of the agricultural sector will depend on the parallel development of the following agriculture support sectors:

Rehabilitation and development of agro-related industries

Given the high dependency of Africa on imports of almost all industrial goods in general and agriculture related goods and the urgent need to increase Africa's capacity to increase food production, the following specific measures are to be taken, among others:

- Development of industries for production of agricultural tools and equipment, small-scale irrigation equipment and agricultural inputs;
- Processing of raw materials and intermediate inputs;
- Rehabilitation and upgrading of existing plants;
- Development of capacity for utilization of renewable sources of energy, especially bio-mass and solar energy;
- Establishment of engineering capacity to produce spare parts and components;
- Provision of training in the above areas and the development of local capacity for project design and preparation

Development of transport and communications

In this field the objectives are to improve access to production areas, facilitate the development of intra-African trade in agriculture, industrial raw materials and other goods and services in a complementary manner.

Action in this area will consist of:

- Maintenance and development of feeder, access and service roads, small bridges and desert roads;

- identification of obstacles and rehabilitation and maintenance of existing modes of transport and communication;
- Utilization of labor-intensive techniques in the construction and maintenance of transport infrastructure;
- Production of spare parts for the overhaul repair and maintenance of public vehicles, machinery and equipment
- Participation in the development of multinational and intermodal transport networks.

Africa, in co-operation with the international community, will intensify its efforts in financing and implementing the Transport and Communications Decade in Africa.

Trade and finance

In the field of trade, the objective is to improve the distribution channels for domestic trade, by improving market arrangements and reversing the present consumption pattern in favour of domestically produced goods through:

- Adoption of price incentives for agricultural products;
- Improvement of internal distribution channels;
- Identification and elimination of obstacles hindering trade expansion. In the field of financial co-operation, the following measures are envisaged;
- Increased utilization of existing clearing arrangements;
- Adoption of coordinated measures to establish financial markets at the national subregional and regional levels;
- Intensification of efforts for the establishment of an African Monetary Fund.

The total cost for the implementation of the measures envisaged under the other sectors in support of agriculture is estimated at \$60.1 billion.

c. Drought and desertification

Although drought and desertification require a long-term approach, there is need for immediate action by the African countries at national, sub regional and regional levels to implement a comprehensive programme for drought and desertification and to stem and control the effects of drought and desertification on both the ecological environment and the development process. African Governments are, therefore, committed to undertaking as soon as possible the following measures:

- Massive afforestation and reforestation;
- Better management of water resources, including river basins and irrigation;
- Protection of common eco-systems;
- Development of alternative sources of energy to replace wood fuel;
- Stabilization of sand dunes;
- Measures to stop soil erosion;
- Measures against salination;
- Improvement of drainage in irrigated areas;
- Integrating measures for the protection of the environment in national development programmes and according to them high priority;
- Full implementation of the Plan of Action to Combat Desertification approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 32/172 of 19 December 1977. The total cost of measures envisaged for the implementation of the programme to combat drought and desertification is estimated at \$3.41 billion.

d. Human resources development, planning, and utilization

African Governments fully recognize that central to the successful implementation of the proposed actions is the efficient development, planning and utilization of the human resources and the full and effective participation of the people in the development process. In this regard, African Governments are adopting the following comprehensive policies for human resource planning, development, and utilization with a view to integrating them in their overall national development policies and plans:

- Radically changing the educational systems at all levels to ensure that the skills, knowledge and attitudes that are relevant to Africa's developmental needs are generated;
- Intensifying efforts to promote mass literacy and adult learning programmes;
- Efficiently utilizing manpower resources, including measures to reverse the brain drain and ensure the guarantee of human rights;
- Reducing the present high level of dependence of most African countries on foreign experts to reduce foreign exchange leakage;
- Ensuring good working conditions;
- Encouraging the role and participation of women and youth, particularly those living in the rural areas, in the development process.

The total cost of measures envisaged in the human resources sector is estimated at \$7 billion.

e. Policy reforms

In order to achieve the objectives of the Priority Programme, African Governments are undertaking a number of major policy measures while focusing attention on the need for policy reorientation. African countries are determined to undertake, individually and collectively, all measures and policy reforms that are necessary for the recovery of their economies and the revitalization of genuine development, particularly in the following areas at the national level:

Improving management of the economy

African Governments recognize that genuine efforts must be made to improve the management of the African economies and to rationalize public investment policies, particularly since the public sector will have to continue to play an important role in the development of the region. Such efforts would require, inter alia, improvement of public management systems, institutions and practices; improvement of the performance of public enterprises; reforming the public services to make them more development oriented services; greater mobilization of domestic savings; improvement of financial management, including debt and development aid, fiscal administration and control of public expenditure with a view to promoting the efficient use of resources and cutting wastage and resource misallocation; reduction of foreign exchange leakages. The positive role of the private sector is also to be encouraged through well-defined and consistent policies.

Other policy measures

In accordance with their respective policies and priorities, African Governments have demonstrated through, among others, appropriate adjustment measures that have been undertaken when needed. These measures have involved, inter alia, exchange rate adjustment, debt-relief

arrangements, wage and salary reduction and public employment freeze. Though the tasks involved have often been difficult and painful, African countries have recognized the need to bear the burden and have made the necessary sacrifices to the extent possible. In the coming years, short-term adjustment measures should give way to the medium-term and long-term structural transformation. Restructuring measures will be continued with prudence through appropriate monetary and fiscal reforms.

Population Policy

Special importance will need to be accorded by each African country to a population policy that, on the basis of the Kilimanjaro Programme of Action for African Population and Self-Reliant Development, adopted by the Second African Population Conference held at Arusha, United Republic of Tanzania, from 9 to 13 January 1984, will, inter alia, address issues of high fertility and mortality, rapid urbanization, rural urban and rural migration, the problems of children and youth and the protection of the environment in a manner that would ensure compatibility between demographic trends, appropriate land utilization and settlement patterns and the desired pace of economic growth and development. African countries should also push for the attainment, within the shortest possible time, of an agro-food production growth rate at least equal to the population growth rate.

Participation of the people in development

Special attention will be accorded to the role played by human resources. Policies will need to be pursued to ensure the effective development and utilization of human resources in all fields and sectors through:

- Ensuring the effective participation of the people in all dimensions of development
- Developing indigenous entrepreneurial capabilities, both private and public
- Establishing sound bases for political, economic, and social justice.

In the food and agricultural sector, the focus of attention must be the peasant farmer with special reference to female farmers who dominate food production in most countries.

8 th plenary meeting, 1 June 1986