

52778

ECA/MULPOC/Work progr./88-89  
01 February 1990

Original: ENGLISH

UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

First Meeting of the Follow-up  
Committee of the North African  
MULPOC

Tripoli (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)  
May 1990

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE WORK PROGRAMME 1988-1989

Tangier-based MULPOC

PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION  
OF THE WORK PROGRAMME 1988-1989

Tangier-based MULPOC

I. Implemented Outputs and Activities

1. The 1988-1989\* biennium marked the tremendous improvement in the economic and social climate and relationship among the African member States (member States). This favourable trend could be illustrated by the approval and willingness of the member States to go ahead in establishing the Preferential Trade Area (PTA) in North Africa. The other striking trend is the set-up of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU). The AMU had established, during the past six months, its administrative, technical and legislative machinery. The activities of the MULPOC had to cope with this favourable advantage by launching different activities which focused on strengthening the economic integration and co-operation within the sub-region. This endeavour was reflected in two directions: the first, analysis of the economic conditions of the sub-region, the second, bringing the national experts together to exchange experiences and have consultation on different economic and technical issues related to the work programme.

2. To this end the two surveys of economic and social conditions in North Africa (1986-1987 and 1988-1989), (ECA/MULPOC/Tanger/E.VIII/3 - ECA/MULPOC/Tanger/E.IX/3), had to be comprehensive and cover most of the priority areas. Moreover, since economic planning is a scientific tool for launching economic development, the MULPOC carried out a comprehensive study on co-ordination of planning machinery in the North African sub-region (ECA/MULPOC/Tangier/E.IX/10). The main aim of the study was: to enable member States to benefit from each other experience regarding the set-up of the planning machinery in each, and the role that the planning machinery could play in stimulating economic development. The study concluded with recommendation and suggestion to utilize economic planning as a tool to enhance and co-ordinate economic development at the sub-regional level by envisaging a sort of co-ordinating planning machinery capable of ensuring the harmonization of the national economic plans.

3. As vocational training is an attractive and interesting issue which member States seek every endeavour to develop it, the MULPOC prepared a study aiming at the co-ordination of vocational training at the sub-regional level (ECA/MULPOC/Tanger/E.IX/11). The national experts had discussed, through the Committee of Experts and the Council of Plenipotentiaries the status of vocational training in each member State which naturally increased their

---

\* A detailed report on the implementation of the 1988 work programme had been discussed during the Ninth Meeting of the Committee of Experts (ECA/MULPOC/Tangier/P.IX/2/Rev.1) and the Council of Plenipotentiaries of the North African MULPOC (ECA/MULPOC/Tangier/P.IX/3) which were held in January/February 1989.

knowledge on the concept and organization of vocational training in each member State. Also the meeting reviewed proposals to strengthen the role of vocational training at the sub-regional level.

4. It is worth mentioning that the MULPOC had the privilege of having a woman co-ordinator. Thanks to Egypt that it seconded a woman expert to supervise the programme on involvement of woman in economic development. The MULPOC was able to implement several activities regarding the role of woman in development through some studies related to the status of women in North Africa. Other studies dealt with suggestion of some activities which aim at strengthening woman's role in development as the woman pioneer project and woman leaders at the countryside.

5. The first study "the Economic and Social Conditions of Woman in North Africa" reveals the deteriorated percentage of educated woman and the spread of illiteracy among women in the countryside. Moreover, woman does not engage fully in the economic and social political life. Also, the study refers to the absence of social services needed, as children and mothers care services. The study proposes certain measures to overcome such bottlenecks. The study discusses in details different social and economic activities which are related to women in each the six member States of the sub-region. This study could be considered as a survey on the status of women in North Africa.

6. The second study "Woman Pioneer and its Role in Enhancing Economic Development" emphasizes that the woman pioneer could render tremendous social services to the women at the countryside. Such services could be arranged through training of some women as social leaders. The main trust of such project is to acquaint woman with her rights, duties and responsibilities in the economic and political life. The study also refers to those economic and social services in favour of woman in each member State. Some information were given on the concept and function of women pioneer and the advantages of such programme.

7. In pursuance with the Plenipotentiaries' resolutions adopted in the Eighth meeting (N°.4), the MULPOC had to prepare report on migration from the sub-region. The report contains information on the experiences of the concerned member States in handling migration issue. From the one hand, the report presents the set-up and the structure that each member State is adopted to supervise and control the migration issue, from the other hand, the report proposes certain recommendations to assist member States in controlling and supervising the migration problems.

8. At the sametime, the MULPOC presents a progress report on the infestation of the locust and grasshopper in North Africa. The report discusses the actual situation, (Resolution N°.1 adopted during the Eighth Meeting); the reaction of the international community to assist the affected member

States in addition the set-up and the preparedness measures in each country in dealing with such dangerous threat. The report refers to the experience of Morocco which set-up a very advanced centre to fight and control the invasion of locust.

9. During the next year of the work programme biennium 1988-1989 two outputs were implemented: one on transport and the other on the progress in the implementation of the Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986-1990 (APPER) and the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery 1986-1990 (UN-PAAERD).

10. Considering transport as a backbone of any economic development, the MULPOC had carried out during 1989 a study aiming at harmonization of national transport plans with the sub-regional network. The study "Linking National Transport Network Plans with the Sub-regional Transport Programme" provides information on the status of transport sector in each member State and suggests recommendations to link transport national plans with the sub-region transport programmes.

11. This study is a sort of survey which aims at analysing national sectoral plans and to give an overview of the level of contribution of each mode of transport to North African economic integration. Some main bottlenecks to the development of each mode have been identified and measure for a collective solutions were proposed.

12. The period 1989-1991 will witness the preparation of the Second United Nations Decade for Transport in Africa. The survey aimed at establishing a sub-regional framework of a strategy and a group of projects substracted from the national plans which can constitute a transport programme on the basis of the Lagos Plan of Action (ECA/MULPOC/Tanger/Transport/01/1989).

13. During 1989 the MULPOC had organized a thorough discussions and consultation with the member States and with the senior national experts on the progress in the implementation of the APPER, 1986-1990 and the United Nations PAAERD, 1986-1990. The report which was prepared (ECA/MULPOC/Tanger/APPER/UN-PAAERD/01/89), reveals the fact that all North African member States have implemented and are implementing different structural and adjustment policies and measures to overcome and cope with the economic crisis. In this endeavour, the member States are giving high attention to ensure momentum to the public sector and to strengthen the role of the private sector in the economic life. The report deals with the outcomes of the restructuring process, indicating the challenges that the member States are facing in handling such endeavour.

14. The report states that the restructuring process has to be handled with great caution to avoid any rashness which may lead to any negative impacts

or social disputes. Moreover, it is worth mentioning that the approach to improve the management of the economy differs according to the political system and the complexity of the economy in each member State. For instance, while some efforts are being paid by some countries to manage the public sector in the way the private sector is managed; by run it economically and commercially, the others are trying to involve the private sector more and more by shifting some of the sector enterprises and companies to the private investors (in Tunisia, most of tourism sector is now owned by the private sector). At the same time other member States are trying with great difficulties to introduce remedy measures due to the fact that public sector becomes deeply rooted and spreaded in all the economic life. Moreover, it seems that the society is accustomed to the sort of easy life that the sector is providing in some economic fields mainly through subsidy programmes. In spite of all those serious difficulties, all member States are trying hard to remedy such very complicated situation.

15. The report carries on in mentioning that the North African member countries are adopting different policies and measures to remove all obstacles impede the effective participation of the private sector in the economic life. It must be stated that this task is faced with the lack of means, especially financial, which are essential to enable the sector to perform its role quite satisfactorily. It seems that incentives and encouragements to attract domestic saving are not well founded. While some countries had succeeded in drawing down the frame in which the private sector could contribute efficiently in the investment process, securing confidence in the economic policies, and insuring economic and political stability, some other member States still in need of more time to fulfil such objective.

16. The report refers to the lack of reliable information on the performance of the national economy, which constitutes one of the main obstacles facing the restructuring process. The instability of the government's machinery, the negligence of the importance of reviewing and appraisal of the state owned companies and enterprises on continued and systematic bases, had created serious economic and commercial situation which some of these companies and enterprises are facing at present. Nevertheless it must be stated that enormous efforts were and are being paid to alleviate such dangerous impact on the national economy. Some of those, for instance, efforts have succeeded in minimizing the number of none profitable economic and commercial enterprises.

17. During the Ninth Meeting of the Council of Plenipotentiaries of North Africa there were active discussion on ways and means to rationalize the meetings and activities of the MULPOC. The main trust was to avoid any waste in utilizing the limited resources available to the MULPOC and to use it effectively, avoiding at same time spreading the efforts on wide front. A paper on rationalization of the MULPOC's meetings was prepared. The member States had requested that the number of agenda items to be reduced so is the number of documents to be presented for discussion in the meetings.

18. The paper suggests that the items in the agendas of the MULPOC's meetings may be limited only to those items contained in the approved work programme. Other documents could be sent to the member States or distributed during the meeting, not for discussion, but as background documents only. The paper describes different United Nations and Economic Commission for Africa's Declarations and Plans in view of the function of the MULPOC and its responsibilities, which affect in a way or another the type of activities that the MULPOC are implementing.

19. The paper concludes that the work programme for a particular biennium is indeed, a reflection of the different resolutions and recommendations of the member States. From the other hand, any agenda item is again a real reflection of the work programme. Furthermore, the paper states that any limitation in the member States requests will be automatically reflected in the volume of the documents, and the translation services needed.

20. Some of the member States reacted on the issue either during the discussions which were held during the MULPOC Director's mission (November/December 1989) or through a written memorandum (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya). Algeria and Tunisia are of the opinion to minimize the items of the agenda.

21. Libyan Arab Jamahiriya suggests that the work programme should reflect the needs of the member States which could enhance economic development. Also Libya and Morocco suggest that the national experts could contribute in the implementation of the work programme by conducting some of the reports as the economic survey. Most of the member States stressed the need that the meetings documents should be ready and distributed in advance to the member States in both Arabic and French languages.

22. Trade was another activity where the MULPOC had to deal with. A study was prepared on "Analysis main problems to the development and expansion of intra-subregional trade in North Africa". The study tries to indicate the actual status of trade co-operation among North African member States and means to strengthen and promote integration in such vital field.

## II. Meetings of Tangier-based MULPOC:

### A. In 1988

23. The two meetings of the Committee of Experts and the Council of Plenipotentiaries of North Africa had been organized on 14-16 March and 17-19 March 1988 respectively. Five resolutions were adopted: Resolution N°.1 concerning desertification and the campaign against the migrant locust. This resolution recommends co-operation between the countries of the North African sub-region and common stand to establish a plan of campaign against these dangerous,

and a strategy to this effect to be adapted. Resolution N°.2 in view measures for the establishment of a Preferential Trade Area in North Africa. The resolution requests undertaking study on the present needs and potentialities of the sub-region in the field of trade expansion. Resolution N°.3 on the proposal to create a transport commission at the North African MULPOC. The resolution requests the examination of the possibility of creating a sub-regional commission to be responsible for transportation. Resolution N°.4 on immigration from countries member of the North African MULPOC. The resolution recommends that member States should hold regional consultation in order to exchange information and experience in the field of migration. Resolution N°.5 on development of industry in North Africa which requests Director-General of UNIDO to provide all necessary assistance to effect the series of activities and programmes concerning the development of the industrial sector.

24. It is worth mentioning that the Committee of Experts of the North African MULPOC was preceded by the meetings of the Sub-Committees of North Africa (PADIS, Maritime Transport, Woman).

B. In 1989

25. The meeting of the Committee of Experts of North Africa sub-region took place in Tangier from 30 January to 01 February 1989. At the sametime, the meeting of the Council of Plenipotentiaries was held from 2 to 3 February 1989 (ECA/MULPOC/Tanger/P.IX/3). These two meetings were preceded by the following subregional committees:

- Second meeting of the Working Group of the North African subregion of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts for Science and Technology for Development (25-26 January 1989); (ECA/MULPOC/Tanger/E.IX/17)
- Second meeting of the Sub-committee on Maritime Transport in North Africa, (28-29 January 1989); (ECA/MULPOC/Tanger/E.IX/8)
- Fifth meeting of the Sub-regional Committee for the Integration of Women in Economic and Social Development in North Africa (28-29 January 1989); (ECA/MULPOC/Tanger/E.IX/12)
- Third meeting of the Sub-regional Technical Committee for the establishment of the North African Documentation and Information System (NADIS, (29 January 1989); (ECA/MULPOC/Tanger/E.IX/16)
- Working Group on Industry (31 January - 01 February 1989); (ECA/MULPOC/Tanger/E.IX/21).

26. The Council of Plenipotentiaries had adopted during its ninth session (2-3 February 1989), the following resolutions:

Resolution N°.1: Campaign against desert locust

27. This resolution urges the countries of the sub-region to do their best for laying down a common strategy to control the danger of desert locust. The resolution suggests the organization of sub-regional meeting of specialized experts in this field; also this resolution emphasizes again the necessity to ensure a sort of co-operation between the countries of North Africa and those of the Sudan and Sahel, in order to achieve the efficiency in locust campaign. Unfortunately, due to lack of financial resources it was difficult to organize the requested meeting. It is worth mentioning that the locust invasion did not constitute during 1989 a measure threat to the North African member States.

Resolution N°.2 concerning the Establishment of a Preferential Trade Area (PTA) in North Africa

28. This resolution refers to the commitment of North African member States to establish the PTA, also, member States readiness to support efforts paid to mobilize resources and to intervene to speed up UNDP procedures to provide resources for the financing of the project document in view of the establishment of the PTA. Unfortunately due to uncertainty which occurred after the set-up of the Arab Maghreb Union (AMU) and the lack of financial resources the progress in the establishment of the PTA was neglectable. The ECA had decided to contact once more the member States to request the green light to send a high level team to clarify with the member States different issues regarding the establishment of the PTA and its relation with other groups at regional and sub-regional level.

Resolution N°.3 in respect of the Establishment of a Transport Sub-Committee

29. This resolution requests that the Director of the MULPOC to organize a meeting to discuss and adopt the mandate of the Committee of Transport and its work programme. This meeting should be convened before the meeting of the Ministers of Transport, which will take place later in 1989. The meeting took place in Tangier in November 1989 as requested. The meeting discussed and approved the mandate and its work programme (ECA/TRANSCOM/EXP/VII/20/Rev.1).

Resolution N°.4 concerning the Integration of Women in Economic and Social Development

30. This resolution requests the ECA to do its best to mobilize resources to the women programme. ECA should establish contacts with UNDP and



international and regional organizations for the mobilization of needed resources for the women programme. Also the resolution requests member States to contribute in financing the women programme. Unfortunately neither the UNDP nor the member States fulfilled their responsibilities as it was requested by this resolution.

Resolution N°.5 to Establish Sub-regional, Sub-Sectoral Committees in the field of Industry

31. The resolution recommends the establishment of the following Sub-Committees:

(a) Three permanent Sub-Committees in chemical, metallurgical and engineering industries. These Sub-Committees should work as focal point to co-ordinate the multinational projects related to the concerned sub-sector;

(b) Three Sub-regional, Sub-sectoral Committees in the field of chemical, metallurgical and engineering industries. The membership of these Sub-Committees should be constituted from representatives from the permanent sub-regional committees. The ECA, with the co-operation of UNIDO, should prepare necessary documents for the invitation to the meeting of the three sub-regional, sub-sectoral committees during 1989. The resolution also recommends the consideration of the possibility of the establishing sub-regional sectoral committees in other industries, especially, in the field of food processing industry.

The North African member States were urged through correspondence and during the visit of the director late 1989 to do their best to establish the different sub-committees and sub-regional sub-sector committees. Such request is crucial to any future activities rendered by ECA and the UNIDO.

Resolution N°.6 in view of the Transfer of Resources from IDDA to North African Sub-region

32. The resolution requests again the UNIDO to make available to North African sub-region some resources from the funds available to IDDA. unfortunately there was no positive response from UNIDO.

Resolution N°.7 concerning Fishery Resources

33. The resolution requests ECA to prepare a study on the potentials and needs of the sub-region in the field of fishery resources. Such study should be prepared in co-operation with UNCTAD, FAO and the national experts.

34. In line with the Regional Food plan of action for Africa; the Lagos Plan of Action, and the Eleventh Arab Summit, the Council of Plenipotentiaries of the MULPOC requested a global study to be undertaken on "the needs and potentialities of the subregion in the field of fishing and aquaculture". After a detailed appraisal of the sector in each country and on the basis of estimated potentialities this study is aimed at establishing general axes of cooperation and propositions of action translated in project proposals.

35. The importance of the fishing sector in North Africa is function of the level and abundance of each country's Exclusive Economic Zone. The level of annual potential fishing is situated around one third of the global resources of each country respectively 40.000 tons for Libya, 180.000 tons for Algeria, 280.000 tons for Tunisia, 1,1 to 1,6 million tons for Morocco and 30.000 tons for Sudan. (Sea potential only).

36. The resources and their present level of utilization are leading to the expectation that Mauritania and especially Morocco will progressively succeed in exploiting by their own means on their E.E.Z; this will reinforce their position as Major Exporters at the Regional and Sub-regional level. Meanwhile Algeria and Egypt will become the largest importers with respectively 54.000 tons and 100.000 tons in 1989.

37. The study is establishing an obvious complementarity between the countries of the subregion for sea products Imports and Exports (mainly Fish). Concrete propositions of action at bilateral or multilateral level justifying a common effort are identified at all stages of the sectoral chain: (particularly those concerning trade policy in the Internal Distribution of each country and exports to and outside the sub-region).

#### Resolution N°.8 concerning Emigration for North Africa

38. The resolution requests ECA to reelaborate the study submitted to the Ninth Meeting of the Council of Plenipotentiaries on emigration. The main purpose is to include in the next study all related issues in the field of emigration. Also the resolution requests ECA to reactive the work in this field in co-operation with international and regional organizations, especially conducting a seminar on emigration. A consultant was recruited in 1989 to prepare the study. The study was completed in 1989 and the seminar is expected to be reorganized during the second half of 1990.

39. The Study is reviewing the socio-economic structure of the Maghrebian community in France between 1962 and 1989. It is found that because of its homogeneity it belongs to the colonial migratory model - but, meanwhile and under

the influence of the family dynamic and the integration of the second and third generations to the French society it has become a settlement as opposed to the colonial migratory model.

40. This phenomena has had altogether a positive and negative impact on the subregional economy. For a long period the countries of origin's policy has been limited to the implementation of accompanying measures like if it was a turning migration. In rural areas from where the bulk of this community is coming, this movement has led to a reversal of the structure of the active population and hampered the development of some sectors. As an example the consequent shortage of rural labor has led to price increases that ruined the competitiveness of some productions.

41. Nevertheless, for the present time the priority problem to be tackled remains the management of the community abroad. This priority is mainly due to the strategic importance of hard currency transfers of migrant workers and businessmen abroad which can be used as an efficient tool for the Debt service and a sustained structural adjustment. The remote control via the Friendship-Associations is may be necessary for the protection of national and cultural values and identity but it is not sufficient to the maintaining of economic links with the countries of origin.

42. For second and third generations, highly profitable investments in Europe will soon look more interesting than transfers to the country of origin. In order to remedy to this situation it is urgent that the countries reinforce their policy not only from the cultural but also from the Economic point of view. This can be done by implementing a policy package favourable to maintaining or increasing the hard currency transfers. This package should guarantee an attractive interest rate on savings and administrative facilities for investors and entrepreneurs.

43. Concerning the defense of the migrants rights in host countries, it is found that the Maghrebian countries should adopt a common position and implement a stronger policy. Although if it remains difficult to isolate this particular segment from the global international economic relations negotiations this would reinforce their limited bargaining power. Under the influence of individual strategies and the integration to the host country this aspect is more and more dealt with in a franco French context.