



UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

54927

Distr.: GENERAL

E/ECA/CM.11/37

11 April 1985

Original : ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
Sixth meeting of the Technical
Preparatory Committee of the
Whole

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

15-22 April 1985

Item II 1(b) of the provisional agenda*

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
Twentieth session of the Conference
Eleventh meeting of the Conference
of Ministers

Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

25-29 April 1985

Item II 1(b) of the provisional agenda *

EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGIONAL
FOOD PLAN FOR AFRICA (1978-1984)

AND

A PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL ASPECTS OF
THE LAGOS PLAN OF ACTION

Executive Summary

*
E/ECA/TPcw.b/1)Rev.3
E/ECA/CM.11/1/ Rev.3

EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE REGIONAL
FOOD PLAN FOR AFRICA (1978-1984)

AND
A PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF THE FOOD AND AGRICULTURAL ASPECTS
OF THE LAGOS PLAN OF ACTION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The purpose of this report is evaluation of the performance of the food and agriculture sector of countries in Africa with reference to the Afplan and the Lagos Plan of Action's Agriculture Chapter (AGC/LPA) in the period 1978-1984. The AGC/LPA drew considerably from Afplan but explicitly spelt out objectives and targets to be achieved in the medium term (1980-1985) and in the long-term.

AGC/LPA recommended objectives and targets

The medium-term objective of LPA for food was " to bring about an immediate improvement in the food situation and to lay the foundations for the achievement of self-sufficiency in cereals and livestock and fish products". The Plan set a target of 4 per cent annual growth for the agricultural sector. It also aimed at reversing the rising dependency of nations in Africa to external sources for food. The declining food self-sufficiency ratio (SSR) was to be halted and the trend reversed to a rising one. Prevention of food loss was stressed. The LPA recommended a 50 per cent reduction in post-harvest losses to be achieved in the 1980-1985 period. It was recommended that every African country adopt coherent national food security policies and translate them into concrete actions. The establishment and maintenance of strategic food reserves amounting to 10 per cent of annual food production in member States was recommended.

In the livestock area, actions were recommended in disease control, range management, animal feed and infrastructure development. The Plan set a target of increasing fish production by 1 million tons between 1980 and 1985. Afforestation programmes were to aim at increasing by 10 per cent annually areas under forests in the 1980-1985 period. The LPA also made recommendations on development of research, training and other services, formulation of income and price policies providing adequate incentives to small farmers, intensification of technical and economic co-operation at the subregional and regional levels on food and agricultural development subjects, and the establishment at national level of development monitoring and reporting systems.

The achievement of the objectives and targets recommended by the AGC/LPA necessitated an outlay of \$US 22 billion in 1979 prices on the development of the food and agriculture sector in the period 1980-1985. Half of these financial resources were to be obtained from domestic sources and the other half from abroad.

Progress and achievements

The food and agricultural production situation has worsened in Africa in the period under review. Per capita net production of food declined by nearly 2 per cent. Output of non-food items mainly cash crops declined by 2.9 per cent in the 1980-1984 period. It can be inferred from this that the self-sufficiency ratio dropped and Africa became more dependent on external sources for food.

There is no empirical evidence to show progress, or lack of it, on reduction of food loss. The LPA resolution to reduce food loss by 50 per cent by 1985 has, however, evoked both national as well as supporting international action. Pilot projects supported by international bilateral and multilateral agencies are being implemented in many countries in the region.

The majority of governments have formulated objectives and policies for the establishment of strategic food reserves (SFR). The objectives of maintenance of SFR to stabilize supply to domestic and export markets, providing for emergencies and stabilization of prices are given priority. Available data show low or nil SFR stocks. This is explained by the low domestic food production in recent years and the serious shortage of foreign exchange to finance imports.

Governments have expressed their awareness for the necessity of improving agricultural services and institutions principally to the small farmers. Strategy and policy documents on food and agriculture development by governments emphasize this. Measures have been taken by some governments for example Mali and Gambia for improving the efficiency of institutions rendering vital services to small farmers.

The LPA recommended investment of \$22 billion in the food and agriculture sectors of member States in the period 1980-1985 has not been achieved. Half of the implied \$4.4 billion annual investment in the sector was to be financed from domestic resources with the other 50 per cent being inflows of external resources. A recent survey carried out by FAO has results which show that governments in Africa in 1982 invested on a per capita basis \$20 in the sector.

The share of agriculture in government budgets in Africa averaged 7 per cent in the period 1978-1982. Domestic financial resources devoted to agriculture have therefore been lower than recommended in the LPA. However, bilateral and multi-lateral resources flowing to agriculture have risen from \$1.1 billion in 1976 to \$ 3.4 billion in 1982. Levels of disbursements are, on the other hand, lower than these figures on commitments.

Intra-Africa trade development has not recorded improvement. Similarly not much has been achieved in the establishment of implementation monitoring. The awareness of agriculture's crucial role in the development of Africa economies has, however, led to 12 governments in the region compiling and adopting comprehensive agricultural development strategies. The majority of countries are in the early stages of formulating agricultural development strategies.

Possible causes of poor performance

Causes of the poor performance of the agricultural sector are both domestic and external in character. First past development strategies of countries in the region gave the agricultural sector a low priority ranking which has resulted in inappropriate and inadequate development of infrastructure, institutions and services for the sector. The small-holding farmer who is the pillar of agricultural development in Africa is not well catered for by these services. Second, the low priority accorded to agriculture has also led to inadequate public sector financial resources being invested in the sector. Leadership's commitment to the sector is still not vindicated by governmental actions. Thirdly, the rapid rate of population growth has aggravated the decline in per capita investment and output in the sector. Lastly agricultural development strategies and policies in the region have not always taken into account the likelihood and consequences of drought. Severe droughts have adversely affected production in many parts of the region.

On the international front economies in Africa have faced large adverse balances in their balance of payments current accounts. The countries exports comprise of agricultural commodities whose annual price increase are every year many times lower than the price increase of import items comprising of industrial goods : including agricultural capital goods and inputs. Serious balance of payments problems have arisen that have already affected agricultural development.

Prospects for improved food and agriculture situation

Since the adoption of AFPLAN/LPA many conferences on food and agriculture have been convened at the regional level. The conferences have dealt with various aspects of the subject and adopted resolutions which affirm the objectives and targets of the LPA. These are elaborated further in the ECA normative analysis for the development of Africa for the period 1983 to 2008. It is mandatory for governments in Africa to make a determined effort to attain the agreed objectives and targets as they are achievable. Africa has the natural resources, manpower, and capital resources (augmented with external financial resources) to achieve the objectives and targets. This , however, can be accomplished if the governments adopt the following course of action : formulation and implementation of the correct strategies and policies for the development of the sector, direct appropriate amounts of human and capital resources to the sector, and improve planning and monitoring of development of the sector.