

Programme of Action for Science and Technology  
Development in Africa in the 1980s

Introduction

1. In the main document E/CN.14/757, the background and evolution of the negotiation procedure and the final outcome of the United Nations Conference on Science and Technology Development (UNCSTD) were thoroughly reviewed.
2. The inevitable conclusion was arrived at that as far as African countries are concerned the Conference realized only part of its objectives and the Vienna Programme of Action leaves much to be desired.
3. Even though for Africa, the outcome of UNCSTD was not as effective and fruitful as anticipated, it was felt that African countries should take appropriate steps to ensure their active participation in the post-UNCSTD dialogue.
4. While doing this, African governments should direct their efforts to spelling out a strategy for development which is internally located and which should guide their thinking planning and action on bringing about socio-economic changes necessary for improving the quality of life of the majority of the people. This objective requires them to invest science and technology resources in the raising of African standards of living and relieving of misery in the rural areas and urban slums where the majority of the people live and work.
5. Attention therefore should be paid to the role of science and technology in integrated rural development. This would require among others, the generation of financial resources and of political will and courage on the part of policy and decision makers of the continent to induce a profound change with far-reaching effects on the use of science and technology as the basis of socio-economic development as a matter of the utmost importance and urgency at this fateful juncture of history.
6. African governments should therefore adopt measures to ensure the development of an adequate science and technology base and the appropriate application of science and technology in spear-heading development in agriculture; transport and communications; industry, including agro-allied industries; health and sanitation; energy, education and manpower development; housing, urban development, and the improvement of the environment.
7. It was essential within this context, for governments to also take measure for exploiting markets for their locally manufactured capital and consumer goods and services in Third World and other developing countries and to provide machinery for bilateral and/or multilateral co-operation among African or Third World countries, in a conscious effort to promote collective self-reliance.

8. Endorses the Programme of Action document E/CN.14/771 hereto annexed subject to the following modification:

(a) African countries ~~should organize science and technology fairs~~ at annual or biennial intervals. These fairs will provide a forum for:

- (i) The exhibition of indigenous technologies;
- (ii) The exchange of knowledge and experience among African scientists and technologists;
- (iii) The promotion of technology transfer among African countries;
- (iv) The promotion of technical co-operation among African countries.

(b) African countries should formulate national policies on science and technology plans to be incorporated in the over-all national development plan as science and technology is a fundamental input to the development of all other sectors identified in the Strategy and Programme of Action for the Third Development Decade.

(c) African countries should take measures to promote research and development in science and technology particularly by providing the necessary financial resources.

(d) African Governments should take measures that will encourage the return to their country of origin of skilled-labour cadres.