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GENERAL ORIENTATIONS OF FRAME PLAN,
1967-1970

(Document submitted by the Government of the Upper Volta)

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GENERAL ORIENTATIONS OF THE FRAME PLAN, 1967-1970

The Government of the Republic of the Upper Volta, in its anxiety to raise the living standard of the great mass of the Upper Volta people in the best possible circumstances, by the rigorous prosecution of a development economy, has decided to make use of planning techniques in orienting the national effort.

Consequently, the Government is anxious publicly to define the main guidelines of the work to be undertaken.

I. Initial data

The object of the Plan is to promote development in the quickest possible time and at the least cost in human terms, by sponsoring all the sectors of economic and social activity.

The methods to be used are varied:

It is of the utmost importance that the equipment available to the nation should be increased, but there is also need for men to learn to use the natural resources and the equipment supplied, to greater advantage.

The extent of the resources available for investment is equal to the sum of goods and services produced by the nation, increased by contributions from outside and diminished by consumption.

The increase in equipment therefore implies an increase in resources from which such equipment might be obtained, that is to say, from the Gross Domestic Product and transfers from abroad, as well as a reduction in domestic consumption.

In 1964, the GDP was fr CFA 50 million, 66 per cent for the rural sector, and 34 per cent for the modern sector, 21 per cent of which was accounted for by trade.

1. Motors

(a) The rural sector is unquestionably the essential economic motive force. The rural population comprises 94 per cent of the active population, and its share in the consumption of imported products is 37.5 per cent. It is the rural population which provides the basis for the large majority of exports (cattle, cotton, groundnuts, shea butter, sesame ...). It also makes possible the most interesting form of industrialization, namely, the type which secures substantial added value as compared with the turnover (edible oil refineries, soap factories, meat, textiles, shoes ...).

The rural population is therefore the most important motor in the economy of the Upper Volta, and holds out substantial possibilities for progress, since the yield from most of the crops can be increased considerably.

Since the margin of growth in production is large, the material resources necessary are not considerable, when compared with the results that might be expected. The difficulty lies rather in the training of men and the progressive changes in mental outlook. If it is agreed that there are approximately 500,000 rural farms in the Upper Volta, and that a top-level supervisor is needed for 80-100 farms, the increase in production would call for the training and establishment of a network of 6,000-7,000 top-level supervisors, in other words one per village, whose activities would be supplemented by voluntary animators. This is a long-term undertaking which cannot be expected to yield important results under several years (10-15 years).

It should also be noted that land is available, and there is no bottleneck as far as land is concerned either in the low-lying areas or in the plateau.

(b) The second motor in the economy of the Upper Volta is secured by transfers from abroad. These transfers are made for a number of reasons: military pensions, in respect of migrants, local expenses of foreign administrations, expenses by way of technical assistance and investment aid.

Any reduction in monetary transfers would lead to a decrease in imports and therefore in receipts from taxes, and this at once creates difficulties for budget implementation.

It is therefore important to do everything possible to increase these transfers and see to it that they are used in a manner beneficial to the national development and not for purposes of pure consumption.

To give a shove to the economy, the two motors must be influenced at the same time: transfers from abroad, an increase in which is generally quickly reflected in the economic life, and production in the rural areas, the effects of which are generally medium and long-term.

2. Obstacles

After studying the development motors, we are left with an examination of the obstacles in the way.

(a) Consumption may be regarded as a break, in so far as it often competes with equipment in the use of available resources. Hence the need to do everything possible to promote local savings for various internal and productive use, and avoid prestige consumption which is not economically motivated.

(b) The fact that the Upper Volta is a hinterland country is also an obstacle to its development. This circumstance increases transport costs on imported goods as well as on exported goods, and raises the cost of other contingent factors. It is therefore necessary for the country to promote a policy of growth in association with the economies of the neighbouring States.

(c) There are certain structures particularly social, administrative and financial ones which hinder development, and these must be got rid of gradually.

II. General orientations

Apart from this diagnosis, the more detailed quantitative data made available through national accounts and sectoral or special studies, some idea now exists not only of the possibilities but also of the difficulties of the economy of the Upper Volta. It is therefore with full knowledge of the facts that the Government has laid down the following broad lines of orientation which are in fact directives for the guidance of the teams responsible for preparing the Plan, and all the officers and architects of progress in the national economy.

1. Top priority must be given to activities whose aim is to increase the productive capacity of the economy of the Upper Volta. Growth in production capacity is in fact a necessary condition for any substantial increase in future consumption, and therefore in raising the living standard of the Upper Volta people.

2. As part of the drive to increase the productive capacity, the maximum effort will be devoted to developing production in the rural sector which is the mainspring of the economy.

To achieve maximum efficiency in investments, no systematic attempt will be made to secure equality of development all around. On the contrary, efforts will be concentrated on the regions which hold out the greatest possibilities for development. Thus towards the end of the programme a certain amount of autofinancing may be sought, to enable development in the less-favoured zones to proceed.

By reason of its importance, that part of the Plan which is devoted to rural development will provide the basis for the national Plan. All other sections will be subordinated to the imperatives of this Plan, and their main objective will be to contribute to its success.

The rural Plan will have two characteristic features:

- (a) Because of the complex nature of the problems to be solved and the need to co-ordinate action by various services to a common end, the various operations will take the form of an integrated plan. This will mean a very clear definition of the action required by each branch of the service, as well as a very strict supervision of its implementation. Around the main activity which will be represented by the provision of top-level supervisory farming staff will be organized the other activities, upstream and downstream, from supplies of equipment and products to farmers through the marketing of his produce, all these activities being designed to give logistic support to the efforts at staffing.

- (b) Because of the need to adapt the activities to the various regions and to see that co-ordination is in the hands of a single person responsible for the execution of the work, rural development will take the form of regional plans in the framework of each of the RDC's^{1/} which now exist or may be set up in future.

As part of the rural Plan, action will be undertaken by way of experimentation with improving areas that are potentially rich but under-populated, by making careful transfers of populations on the over-populated areas.

3. So far as industrial development is concerned, the emphasis will be placed first on industries for processing local raw materials or those producing equipment goods designed for use in the rural sector, or which meet the needs of mass consumption. National industries which created added value and employment will be especially encouraged, and prospecting for wealth beneath the sub-soil will be continued and intensified.

4. The imperative need to devote the main effort to increasing production, necessarily implies limiting the social objectives. Two basic principles will guide the choice of operations:

- (a) The essential criteria will be the extent to which action supplements economic activity, and the effect on budget expenditure. These factors will determine to a great extent the direction and degree of the effort to be made in the training of men necessary for carrying out the development programme.
- (b) The second principle will be to maintain action at the present level and also the preference for action influencing the largest population entities. It follows from this that improvement in education and health will be secured not by an increase in the resources allocated to these sectors, but particularly through research in methods for improving the effectiveness of the human material and the financial resources available for that purpose.

5. An attempt will be made to establish a permanent road infrastructure which will facilitate the disposal of rural products and the supplies of consumer goods and production factors to the rural sector.

6. In order to strengthen national independence, public finance must succeed by its own resources in releasing a whole set of ways and means making for productive investment. It will therefore be necessary to make a considerable effort to cut down on recurrent State expenditure especially in the civil service, through a plan spread over several years and designed to put finances in order.

7. An effort at integrating the economic activities of the Upper Volta with those in the neighbouring States will be pursued with a view to strengthening the aspects of complementarity that already exist among them. The Upper Volta must use to advantage its position as a "busy crossroads".

^{1/} RDO's = Regional Development Organizations.

III. Conditions governing implementation

If the Frame Plan is to be achieved without any major difficulties during the period 1967-1970, the Government will have to pay some attention to the following points:

1. An effort must be made to achieve co-ordination and efficiency at all levels. The co-ordination of the various operations, which is one of the conditions of the Frame Plan will be achieved through the judicious planning of all the activities provided for in the Plan programme, backed up by meetings organized for this purpose between the various executive personnel.

The first aim must be to carry out activities in keeping with the realities of life in the Upper Volta, that is to say, activities which touch the lives of the producers and consumers who form the bulk of the population, while endeavouring not to create too many additional problems, nor start discussions which often end in deadlock, because of the excessive number of modifications in the structures and functional activities of the existing administrative services. The Government will never fail to co-operate in ensuring the success of such co-ordination.

2. From the very outset, strict supervision will have to be exercised in the execution of projects included in the Plan, to determine why certain instructions have not been complied with, and ensure that the activities are adjusted to the realities of local life, and that efficiency in the administrative services and the various economic agencies is gradually obtained.
3. Great encouragement will be given to the spirit of creativeness and private initiative. The private sector with its characteristic drive will be associated with the work of development.
4. The implementation of the Plan requires an extensive effort at bringing information to the people, in order to get them all to support the objectives of the Plan.

Actually, the setting up of new equipment is not enough to secure development. It is also necessary to ensure that the workers learn to use the equipment, adopt new methods of work and are convinced that their living conditions can be improved. In traditional rural society, prestige was attached to the man who could best wield the ax. This is a tradition to be restored and strengthened, and prestige should once again be attached to the efficient producer, to the man who creates wealth. The State, through its highest civil servants, should participate in campaigns designed to promote modern farming, and the best producers should be singled out as good examples to be emulated. In this way, a genuine development mystique will be gradually evolved and it is only thus that the masses will be galvanized into action.

The Ministry of Development and Tourism is responsible for drafting the Frame Plan, and for this purpose it will contact all the administrative services in the Upper Volta. It will also by means of working groups, ad hoc commissions or by direct approach, contact any individual or legal entity concerned, whether public or private.
