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REPORT ON ECA'S INTEGRATED RURAL DEVELOPMENT  
ACTIVITIES AND INTER-AGENCY CO-OPERATION IN THE  
FIELD OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The paper gives a succinct report on the integrated rural development (IRD) activities of the Secretariat since 1980 - the year of adoption of the Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa, 1980-2000, inter-agency co-operation in this field and their impact on the quality of rural life.

Africa is pre-dominantly rural. Hence, the development of rural life, institutions and economy, with equity and people's participation, of member States is synonymous with the region's development. The Secretariat was, therefore, given several mandates in favour of IRD, of which the Resolution 197 (IX): Integrated Approach to Rural Development of 13 February 1969 is the most important.

In compliance with these mandates since 1980 nine expert consultations/workshops/training seminars/study tours on various aspects of IRD were organized to create a more informed interest and capacity to implement it in member States. In addition, the Secretariat carried out several studies and reports on issues relating to IRD. Moreover, the publication of its journal, RURAL PROGRESS was continued for the benefit of cross-section of readers interested in IRD within and outside the region. The secretariat also provided advisory services to seventeen member States. Moreover, a beginning has been made to develop capacity of the secretariat to monitor and evaluate IRD programmes/projects of the member States.

IRD, by definition, is inter-disciplinary and multi-sectoral. Inter-agency co-operation is thus essential. The co-operation is maintained by the Administrative Co-ordination Committee's Task Force on Rural Development, of which the secretariat is a member, at the global level and by the Secretariat's African Regional Inter-agency Committee on Rural Development of which OAU is a member, at the regional level. The members of the Committee have collaborated with the secretariat in carrying out several joint activities.

The preceding paragraphs may prima facie lead to the logical assumption that the efforts of the secretariat have significantly contributed to the development of the rural sector of the region.

In theory, it is reasonable. And yet, the evidence so far indicates comparative deterioration of the rural sector and growing disparity between urban and rural sectors and within the rural sector largely due to stagnation of IRD's main economic base, i.e., agriculture specially since the 1970s. The main reasons for stagnation are: (i) inadequate investment; (ii) low productivity of agriculture; (iii) practice to produce export crops in preference to cereals; (iv) urban bias in development; (v) lack of dialogue between the rural population and decision-making authorities and consequent inappropriate priorities, (vi) inequitable access to productive resources; besides, of course, inter alia, prolonged drought and other adverse external factors.

In addition, the political emancipation of the member States of the Region gave rise to expectation of socio-economic development with equity across the board. However, enthusiasm for collective national building started getting eroded as the role of rural people - specially the poor - was increasingly marginalized.. The Secretariat or for that matter the UN system can do precise little for juridical reason to reverse the trend. It can only supplement but cannot substitute national efforts.

#### Recommendations

The key to rural development lies with the member States. They may wish to correct the situation by: (i) reiterating the resolution 197(ix) of 1969 and translating it into action; (ii) setting up National Rural Development Commissions, (iii) transferring more resources to rural areas; (iv) establishing mechanism for continuing dialogue with rural people; (v) respecting the priorities arising out of dialogue, as far as technically feasible and financially viable and (vii) following a pragmatic path consistent with history, tradition and institutional capacity of the member States.

SECTION I: Rationale of Integrated Rural Development (IRD)  
and Legislative Mandates

1. The purpose of the report is to succinctly cover the integrated rural development (IRD) activities of the secretariat since 1960, when the Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa (LPA)<sup>1/</sup> was adopted. It has five sections. Section I gives the rationale for IRD in the region, the pioneering efforts of the secretariat in this field and the legislative mandates it has been given from time to time. Section II deals with the various aspects of its IRD activities of the ECA Secretariat. Section III states inter-agency co-operation in the field of IRD. Section IV very briefly states comparative deterioration in the quality of rural life despite logical expectation to the contrary. The concluding Section V makes certain recommendations for the consideration of the member States.
2. IRD in this report is defined as a concept for production-based, poverty-alleviation policy and action oriented towards sustained improvement of the rural sector of the region. Its objective is co-ordinated implementation of various sectoral activities, either sequentially or simultaneously to: (i) narrow the gap between urban and rural incomes and amenities of life and (ii) reduce the disparity between various income groups within the rural sector. The expectation is that those, at the bottom of the socio-economic ladder, with sharply limited opportunities to realise their potential and only a minimal share in the decision-making process, would make substantial gains on both counts. The emerging rural society would have an institutional framework appropriate for increased economic growth, with greater allocative justice, leading to a better quality of life.
3. Africa continues to be predominantly rural and may remain so at the year 2000 and possibly beyond. Hence, IRD of the member States of the region is synonymous with their national development. The development of rural life, institutions and economy is the main basis by which Africa can expect to pull itself out of the current socio-economic crisis with dignity, equity and people's participation.
4. In appreciation of this reality the secretariat pioneered the advocacy of the concept of IRD, with equity and people's participation, as early as 1969 with the adoption of resolution 197 (IX).
5. The famous African Regional Conference on the Integrated Approach to Rural Development (1969)<sup>2/</sup> for the first time pleaded in favour of (i) integration of sectoral activities for optimal impact and (ii) improvement in the quality of rural life through a series of quantitative and qualitative changes. It thus anticipated the Nairobi speech of McNamara (1973), who made a strong case for rural development four years later.<sup>3/</sup> ILO's World Employment Conference, with its basic need approach (1974) and FAO sponsored World Conference of Agrarian Reform and Rural Development (WCARRD), 1979, which obtained a global consensus in favour of IRD were culmination of Africa's pioneering efforts.

1/ OAU, Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa, 1980-2000, International Institute for Labour Studies, Geneva, 1981.

2/ The Conference was organized by ECA and held at the Co-operative College, Moshi, Tanzania from 13 to 24 October 1969. It was attended by 41 participants from 26 African member States, in addition to 24 observers from the UN system and other organizations.

3/ R.S. McNamara, Address to the Board of Governors, IBRD, Washington, D.C., 1974.

6. The secretariat has been continuing its efforts over the years to facilitate a more informed understanding of the policy implications of the concept and its implementation at various levels; i.e., regional, subregional and national in pursuance of:

- (a) the various ECA legislative mandates on rural development, such as:
  - (i) Resolutions 117 (VI) of 2 March 1964 on Rural Life and Community Action;
  - (ii) Resolution 197 (IX) of 13 February 1969 on Integrated approach to rural development in Africa;
  - (iii) Resolution 321 (XIII) of 1 March 1977 on Integrated Rural Development and
  - (iv) Resolution 352 (XIV) of 27 March 1979 on Agrarian reform and rural development.
- (b) General Assembly Resolution on Re-structuring;
- (c) the objectives of LPA;
- (d) ECA Resolution of 10 April 1981 on the Social Implications of the Lagos Plan of Action and
- (e) the WCARRD's Plan of Action.

#### SECTION II: ECA's IRD Activities

7. Given below is a summary <sup>4/</sup> of the major activities in the field of integrated rural development since the adoption of LPA in 1980:

##### Specialized activities for integrated rural development

- (i) Regional Expert Consultation on the Impact of Technology on Rural Development in Africa held at Addis Ababa from 4 to 8 August 1986. It was organized to (a) review the current level of rural technology, (b) discuss the existing national technological policy and its appropriateness, (c) consider current institutions and infrastructural support and (d) evaluate the impact of existing rural technology and national technological policies on food production, productivity, employment, income and its distribution and quality of life and (e) make policy recommendations.
- (ii) An Expert Consultation on the Role of Rural Cooperatives in the Productive Sectors in Africa, was held at Addis Ababa from 7 to 11 October 1985.

<sup>4/</sup> Some details of the major activities are available in the following Annual Reports of the secretariat: (i) Annual Report, 1981-82 (E/1982/21; E/ECA/CM.8/32/Rev.1) (ii) Annual Report, 1982-83 (E/1983/44; E/ECA/CM.9/30), (iii) Annual Report, 1983-84 (E/1984/21; E/ECA/CM.10/38) and Annual Report 1984-85 (E/1985/36; E/ECA/CM.11/81).

Its objectives were to (a) review genesis, structure, objectives of the national production cooperatives and their size and share within the cooperative sector and the overall economy; (b) consider the policies - past and present - of the Governments towards production cooperatives; (c) evaluate the impact of production cooperatives in rural areas on extension services, expansion of technology, the integrated cooperative system, productivity, income and food security through increased food production and its equitable distribution, and (d) propose measures to promote production cooperatives in rural areas and policies and institutions needed for the creation of a more conducive climate for the growth and success of cooperatives.

- (iii) Seminar and Study Tour for African Specialists involved in the implementation of Rural Development Project at Tashkent, USSR, from 14 to 30 September 1984. It provided a forum for twenty African Specialists, besides others, to exchange and analyse national experiences, approaches, policies and problems in implementing rural development projects and to acquaint them with farm organization, planning and agricultural practices in the USSR.
- (iv) Expert Consultation on a System of Socio-Economic Indicators for African Planners was held at Addis Ababa from 23 to 27 January 1984. The objectives of the Consultation was to discuss socio-economic indicators for, inter alia, (i) agricultural development, (ii) planning, employment, manpower and education and (iii) women's status and participation in development.
- (v) Regional Seminar and Study Tour on "Popular Participation in Rural Development of Africa" was held at Tashkent, USSR from 3 to 22 October 1983 for experts in the field of rural development from twenty-two member States besides others. Its objectives were, among others, to provide a forum to compare and analyse national experiences, approaches, policies and problems of popular participation in rural development and to give them an opportunity to examine, at first hand, the techniques and organizational approaches of IRD in USSR. 5/

8. The secretariat also organized the following workshops and Expert Consultations:

- (i) A telecommunications seminar on rural network planning was organized in Addis Ababa in September 1984. Its objective was to discuss planning

5/ The report of the Seminar, "Report of the Regional Seminar and Study Tour on Popular Participation in Rural Development in Africa", Tashkent, USSR, 3-22 October 1983, (ECA/SDEHSD/IRD/83/Rpt) was published by ECA in English, French and Arabic and circulated to, amongst others, AMSA IV.

methods and information on modernization of rural networks in developing countries. The seminar was attended by participants from fifteen member States;

- (ii) A study tour for six African experts was organized in India from 16 March to 8 April 1983 to enable them to observe the infrastructure and operational techniques in (a) processing, storage, and transport of maize, rice, wheat, sorghum, fruits and vegetables; (b) renewable energies (solar energy, biogas, wind-power and waste utilization) and (c) textiles, clay and ceramic industries with special reference to the role of women.
- (iii) A series of training seminars was conducted on the use of mass media in rural development in Botswana, Cameroon, Congo, Gambia, Kenya, Niger, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal and Tanzania based on the findings of field studies in these countries in 1982.
- (iv) Two six weeks' courses on women and development planning with special emphasis on rural transformation for development planners and other experts were organized in collaboration with the Eastern and Southern African Management Institute, Tanzania in 1982.

9. It co-sponsored with the African Centre for Applied Research and Training in Social Development, a workshop on the "Mass media and African Society" at Tripoli from 1 to 5 November 1983. The purposes of the workshop were to (i) review the role of mass media in African development and its role in the implementation of LPA; (ii) consider methods of promoting social, institutional and technological changes in the effective use of the mass media in rural development; and (iii) explore cooperative arrangements and relationships between countries, institutions and international agencies in the field of mass media.

10. The secretariat also participated in the "Inter-Regional Seminar on Integrated Rural Development", which was held in China from 16 to 30 August, 1983. It was organized to discuss planning and management of IRD. The seminar analysed and compared institutions, policies and experiences of selected countries in promoting rural development within an integrated approach and studies national measures for streamlining and strengthening IRD programmes, with particular emphasis on innovative policies for modernization. It developed guidelines on IRD in order to facilitate development of the rural sector of the developing countries. The seminar was attended by experts from 25 countries; including eight from Africa.

11. Studies, reports and technical publications: During the period, the secretariat carried out several studies/reports on various topics, which are relevant to IRD such as:

- (i) Construction and maintenance of rural access roads;

- (ii) Inter-African trade in food products and agricultural raw materials;
- (iii) Role of production cooperatives in the rural sector;
- (iv) Impact of technology on food production, income and its distribution;
- (v) Institutional problems of small farmers;
- (vi) Constraints effecting agricultural services for small farmers;
- (vii) Non-formal education of women;
- (viii) Integration of women in development process;
- (ix) Strategies of implementation of rural development programmes/projects; and
- (x) Models of rural development.

Most of these studies/reports are country - specific and others are either sub-regional or regional in coverage.

12. Rural progress: The secretariat continued to publish its quarterly Rural Progress to facilitate the dissemination of information and the exchange of experience on integrated rural development in Africa with a view to creating a more informed interest in the concept and facilitate its acceptance in Africa. The quarterly enjoys wide readership within and outside the region.

13. Rural Progress, as a matter of policy, is deliberately published in non-technical language as far as possible. It covers issues and/or subject of topical interest. The central themes of its last four issues were (i) "International Youth Year", (ii) "Women: Partners in African Development", (iii) "Peace and Development" and (iv) "Drought and Desertification: The Regional Plan of Action to Combat the Impact of Drought and Desertification in Africa".

14. People's participation in rural development: In reiteration of the spirit of the legislative mandates, noted in Section I, the fourth meeting of the Conference of African Ministers of Social Affairs, which was held at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 25-26 March 1985, endorsed, inter alia, the case for people's participation in rural development in Africa and agreed in favour of "vigorous advocacy of structural reform where necessary, and institution-building, the recognition of the basic premise that man is the author and beneficiary of development".<sup>6/</sup>

15. The secretariat's sub-programme, Integrated Rural Development, for the biennium 1986-87, also explicitly recognizes that rural development needs to be based on equity and people's participation.<sup>7/</sup> It will in fact gather relevant data and information to bring out a technical publication, "Modalities of Popular Participation in Rural Development in Selected African Countries, <sup>8/</sup> in end 1987 to assist member States make their rural development programme consistent with the felt needs of the rural people.

<sup>6/</sup> ECA/OAU, Report of the Fourth Conference of African Ministers of Social Affairs (E/ECA/CM.11/46: ECA/OAU&AMSA IV Rpt), Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 25-26 March 1985, p.16.

<sup>7/</sup> UN, Proposed Programme Budget for the Biennium 1986-1987, Vol. I, Supplement No. 6 (A/40/6), New York, 1985, Section 13, p. 50.

<sup>8/</sup> Ibid., p.50



16. Advisory services to member States: The secretariat rendered advisory services to seventeen member States (viz, Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Ethiopia, Guinea, Kenya, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Sao Tome & Principe, Somalia, Tanzania, Tchad, Togo, Tunisia, Zaire and Zambia) at their request, on various aspects of integrated rural development such as (i) organization and management of institution for rural development; (ii) integration of women in development; (iii) water resources development and management covering (a) assessment of surface and ground water resources and (b) identification and preparation of rural water supply and irrigation projects; (iv) measures for improving the capacity of rural marketing institutions, services and facilities; (v) policies, plans and investment programmes and measures for the improvement of agricultural statistical data capability for monitoring agricultural development based on socio-economic indicators; (vi) effect of existing laws and customary norms on the status of women, specially as regards family and inheritance laws and (vii) small scale enterprises.

### SECTION-III: Inter-agency cooperation in IRD

17. Inter-agency cooperation in IRD is maintained through the Administrative Co-ordination Committee's Task Force on Rural Development (ACC TF/RD) at the global level and the Secretariat's African Regional Inter-Agency Committee on Rural Development in Africa at the regional level.

18. ACC TF/RD has two panels: one on monitoring and evaluation of rural development and the other on people's participation. It also published a Newsletter. It meets once a year to (i) review the progress made by the UN system in assisting member States to implement their IRD Programme, (ii) consider the reports of the two panels and (iii) draw up a programme of work to be carried out by its members. ACC TF/RD thus provides a mechanism for (i) harmonization of IRD programmes of the United Nations and its specialized agencies and (ii) co-ordination and cooperation in implementation of the programmes at the global level.

19. The secretariat participated in the annual meetings of ACC TF/RD and contributed in its activities; such as (i) WCARRD High Level Missions to four member States (viz., Ethiopia, Somalia, Tanzania and Uganda), (ii) FAO's Inter-agency meetings for WCARRD follow-up in Africa until 1983 and (iii) the Rural Development Newsletter.

20. At the regional level, the secretariat has its African Regional Inter-Agency Committee on Rural Development in Africa. The Committee used to meet once a year. However, FAO started holding Inter-agency meetings for Africa on the Follow-up of WCARRD since 1979. Hence, in the interest of greater cost-effectiveness, FAO and ECA agreed, during the eleventh annual meeting of the ACC TF/RD, 1983, to convene jointly the meetings of FAO's Inter-agency meetings for Africa on the Follow-up of WCARRD and ECA's African Regional Inter-Agency Committee on Rural Development.

21. The first ever joint meeting was that held in the ECA secretariat from 20 to 23 November 1984. The secretariat proposed such meetings should be held on a regular basis to:

- (a) facilitate the exchange of information and experiences among the participating agencies on their past, on-going and future activities and programmes

- in the field of rural development in Africa;
- (b) review progress on the follow-up of WCARRD;
- (c) identify activities and programmes, which are suitable for implementation within the framework of inter-agency cooperation in Africa;
- (d) provide an opportunity for agencies to co-ordinate and harmonize their activities both at the implementation and planning stages;
- (e) co-ordinate their activities with a view to facilitating the adoption of an integrated approach to rural development of member States and
- (f) undertake joint activities in the field of rural development in Africa.<sup>9/</sup>

22. These proposals reflect the secretariat's desire to make on-going inter-agency cooperation more cost effective.

23. Similarly, the secretariat had the benefit of collaboration and co-operation from several specialized agencies of the UN system in implementing its integrated rural development programme, a select list of which is given below:

- (i) Regional Expert Consultation on the Impact of Rural Technology on Rural Development in Africa Addis Ababa, 4 to 8 August 1986;
- (ii) Regional Expert Consultation on the Role of Rural Cooperatives in the Productive Sectors in Africa, Addis Ababa, 7-11 October 1985;
- (iii) Study Tour and Seminar for African Specialists involved in implementation of rural development projects, Tashkent, USSR, 14-30 September 1984 and
- (iv) Regional Seminar and Study Tour on Popular Participation in Rural Development in Africa, Tashkent, USSR, 3-22 October 1983.

In all the above mentioned meetings, several agencies submitted technical papers, actively participated in them and thus substantively enriched their proceedings and reports.

#### SECTION IV: Comparative Deterioration in Rural Sector

24. The preceding three Sections may prima facie lead to the logical assumption that the efforts of the Secretariat and of the UN system have significantly contributed to the development of the rural sector of the Region. In theory it is reasonable. To illustrate the point with select few activities of the secretariat: (i) The Regional Conference on the Integrated Approach to Rural Development, Moshi, Tanzania, 13 to 24 October, 1969, inter alia, advocated for (a) rural development, with equity and people's participation and (b) an integrated approach to it. This advocacy was reiterated by besides others, the legislative mandate 197 (IX) of 13 February 1969 and the Regional Seminar and Study Tour on

<sup>9/</sup> ECA, Strengthening of Inter-Agency Cooperation in the field of rural development in Africa (ECA/SDEHSD/IRD/WP.2), 1984, p.4.

Popular Participation in Rural Development in Africa, Tashkent, USSR, 3-22 October, 1983 and the fourth meeting of the African Ministers of Social Affairs, Addis Ababa, 25-26 March 1985; (ii) the Report on the Utilization of migrant workers for the construction and maintenance of rural access roads to the seven Southern African member States noted earlier and its follow-up in Kenya and Ethiopia created effective demand for labour. Hence, these countries were advised to use migrant workers to help in (a) promoting food self-sufficiency and (b) opening up remote rural areas with potential food and cash crops; (iii) the study on situation and prospects of domestic trade in Africa, indicates, inter alia, the flow of trade between rural-urban sectors and possible impact on development of the rural sector as a result of increased domestic trade activities with a view to reversing the current adverse balance of trade against the rural sector.

25. Similarly, the five project profiles covering food, wood, textiles, leather and metal engineering prepared by the secretariat were intended to facilitate establishment of small-scale industry in the rural sector.

26. These and many other activities of the secretariat, as stated in Section II and III, a priori would suggest the assumption made at the beginning of this Section is reasonable. However, it will be shown below that the realities point to the contrary, i.e. comparative deterioration in the quality of rural life in Africa.<sup>10/</sup> The economic base of IRD is generally agriculture in most member States. In fact, the performance of the agricultural sector either makes or breaks the backbone of rural life. The prime logical concern of the rural population, most of whom are peasants, at the present stage of economic growth, is first to produce enough food for the family, and if possible, a marketable surplus.

27. And yet stagnation<sup>11/</sup> in agriculture since specially the 1970's is a reality, which reaches a crisis point in the 1980's. The crisis has been too recent, too widespread, too devastating and well documented to need any elaboration or further detailed empirical evidence. The stark reality was the starvation death of a million people, mostly in rural areas and from the disadvantaged and vulnerable segments of the rural population. This is an incontrovertible indicator of comparative rural deterioration. This reality carried the risk of being shrugged off as the "normal situation"<sup>12/</sup> in large parts of Africa by 1988.

28. Another indicator is steady decline in per capita income since 1980 at an annual average rate of 4.1 per cent. In fact, average per capita income in many countries, in real terms, less than what it was 15 years ago.<sup>13/</sup> Hidden within

<sup>10/</sup> ECA/OAU, Africa's Submission to the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Africa's Economic and Social Crisis, Vol. I., (ECM/2XV): E/ECA/ECM.1/1 of 13 March 1986), Addis Ababa, 1986, p.7.

<sup>11/</sup> A. Adedeji, the Paralysis of Multiple Debilitating Crises, ECA, Addis Ababa, 1985, p.18. Also see FAO, Famine in Africa, Rome, 1982, p.1.

<sup>12/</sup> W. Albert, Food Security in Africa, in Development and Cooperation, DSE, Berlin, No. 6/1985, 1985, p.4.

<sup>13/</sup> ECA/OAU, Social Trends and Major Social Development Problems in Africa (ECA/OAU/AMSA-IV/6), January, 1985, p.1.

these low per capita income figures is a highly skewed pattern of income distribution. About 70 per cent of the total African population is now destitute (seriously below the poverty line) or on the verge of poverty. About one-half of the labour force is unemployed or under-employed. 14/ In fact a survey of the social development in Africa shows, *inter alia*, "..... the gap between the rich and the poor has been widening....." 15/ This is to be expected "since rural development in Africa has not been oriented towards alleviating poverty" 16/ by reversing the process in which wealth accumulates and men decay or bridging the gap.

29. One of the consequences of this deteriorating rural economic base is, of course, drastic cut in allocations for education, health and other socio-economic infrastructure in rural areas. Such cuts, coupled with malnutrition, due to poverty, mean in effect, a poorer quality of life for most rural people: a life to be suffered rather than enjoyed. In a situation like this a vicious circle takes over. The rural people, poor, malnourished, un- or - ill educated as they are, play safe. They become averse to taking risk and stick to their traditional mode of production, while the rate of population growth outpaces economic growth, adding to unlimited and unemployable labour supply.

30. The other serious consequence is the desertion of rural areas by young people who are generally the potential innovators, adaptors or adopters of new ideas and technology and less conservative in taking risks. They go to the urban sector in vain search of jobs leaving the rural sector to the aged, children and women - often to fend for themselves. This drift to urban sector is euphemistically called "rapid rate of urbanization" which hides another reality: rapid spread of slums and rise in number of squatters, without gainful employment.

31. The disadvantaged segment of rural population, which is left behind in rural areas can hardly be expected to make agriculture the engine of growth. Similarly, they cannot realistically be expected to be vocal interest group or lobby to make the ruling authorities accountable to them and establish a dialogue with them in deciding on the priorities, price policies, fiscal measures and resource allocation - specially internal. They become passive and loyal "law abiding citizens" rather than initiators of ideas and action, based on their felt needs. Hence, the prediction that in the next two years, i.e. by 1988 the present socio-economic crisis of Africa will be shrugged off as "normal phenomenon" may as well prove to have been pragmatic, in retrospect, unless corrective actions are taken immediately.

#### SECTION V: Explanatory variables for Rural Deterioration and Recommendations

32. This section briefly covers the major explanatory variables of the rural deterioration in Africa and at the end makes some recommendations of policy nature. Most basic of the basic objectives of integrated rural development is the alleviation of hunger. And yet hunger continues to hunt and stall the rural sector.

14/ Ibid., pp. 1-2

15/ ECA, Economic and Social Conditions in Africa, 1981-1982 (E/ECA/CN.9/5), Addis Ababa, 1983, p. 148.

16/ United Nations, Report of the Inter-regional Seminar on Integrated Rural Development, Shanghai, China, 16-30 August 1983, (TCU/SEM.84/1), New York, 1984, p.6.

33. Despite all the emphasis placed on increased food production within the region by the LPA and feasibility studies showing one member State alone has the potentiality of becoming the granary of the region, the share of the public sector allocation for agriculture averaged seven per cent in the 1978-82 period, 17/ as against typically 10-15 per cent in nations on the developing world which have successful agricultural development strategies resolved their food problems to a large extent. 18/

34. Similarly, despite the recommendation of the LPA to gradually allocate up to one per cent of the GDP to develop appropriate technology, the resource allocation by member States as of 1985 varied from 0.2 to 0.3 per cent of GDP. 19/ Hence, the decreasing food self-sufficiency ratio (which may be as low as 71 per cent by the year 2008) 20/ is a logical corollary of inadequate investment to improve farm productivity.

35. Besides inadequate investment in agriculture and technology, member States of the region, like in other parts of the Third World, suffered from urban bias in development. Some public sector-financed infrastructure and physical facilities (such as feeder roads, irrigation schemes, communications, water supply and storage facilities) are there in the rural sector.. Similarly, the eradication of small pox, river blindness, decrease in infant mortality, literacy campaigns and expansion of primary schools have also to be taken note of. However, the point is: sum total of the outlays either for making these gains or building the facilities and maintaining them, comparatively speaking, is significantly smaller than those invested in the urban sector, where the major decision-making institutions are based.

36. In addition to the factors mentioned above, the other contributory factors for comparative rural deterioration, inter alia, were: (i) institutional rigidity, (ii) inappropriate priority in intra-sectoral allocation within agriculture and (iii) gradual marginalization of the over-whelming majority of the rural population from the decision-making process at all levels.

37. It must be emphasized the current socio-economic crisis of the Region is due to both external and internal factors. The external factors have been covered extensively in several recent publications and fora. The emphasis in this report is on the internal factors. If development is to be internalized, then the search light must primarily be turned inwards to learn from past experience of the region and reconsider the objectives and process or IRD in Africa.

38. Or else, as a study so candidly points out, "..... the rural population, which would have to survive on intolerable toil, will face an almost disastrous situation.... Poverty would reach unimaginable dimensions since rural incomes would

17/ ECA, 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) E/ECA/CM.11/37), February 1985, p.15.

18/ Ibid., 0.15.

19/ ECA, Current Economic and Social Crisis Facing Africa and some Concrete Project Proposals on the Role of Science & Technology (S & T/IGCESTD/1/7 of 25 September 1985), Addis Ababa, 1985, p.3

20/ A. Adedeji, op. cit., p.18.

become almost negligible.... But along side with the misery, there would continue to be those very few who, unashamedly, would demonstrate an even higher degree of conspicuous consumption ..... Against such a background of misery and social injustice, the political situation would inevitably be difficult..... The very consequence of extreme poverty..... would result in political instability... Management systems... would increasingly be undermined by the problem of corruption, nepotism and inefficiency ... With increased food shortages, many governments would be put at the mercy of food donors ...21/ compromising national dignity.

39. Recommendations: If such eventuality, which is needless, is to be avoided in future then the member States may wish to:

- (i) reiterate the spirit of the Moshi Conference and of the Resolution 197 (IX) of 1969 and translate it into action in redesigning national IRD programme;
- (ii) adopt national policies and measures, including legislative, where necessary, set up National Rural Development Commission, with adequate authority, staff and logistic support to ensure all national efforts are (a) harmonized in planning stage, (c) co-ordinated while implementing them and (c) the long-run impact of all national efforts will be socio-economic integration of the various segments of the population;
- (iii) reverse their urban bias in development in favour of the IRD, which inter alia, requires transfer of more resources to the rural sector;
- (iv) go steady rather than rush with crash programme and almost inevitably suffer crush later. Rural Africa, having joined late in the "development league", has the advantage to learn from the experience of other developing continents - Asia and Latin America. She can spare herself the sad experience by harvesting bitter harvest of staple food crops in abundance and suffer from the man-made hunger, famine or threat of it;
- (v) let their people decide the pace and course of their life. Development is a partnership bringing together the affluent, the educated elites and the broad masses. It cannot be "development from above", nor can it be "development from below". That is why popular participation is considered as a fundamental principle for all actions to be taken at the national, regional and international levels for changing the life styles of the people or for implementing their living conditions. 22/ The secretariat has been advocating the principle of popular participation through its programme of work since 1969.
- (vi) re-consider the current propensity to graft development in capsule from in a short period in Africa, whose modernization process is about two decades or more. Grafting usually does not "take in" in social engineering in which the process is so important as the result. The key

21/ ECA, ECA and Africa's Development, 1983-2008: A Preliminary Perspective Study, Addis Ababa, 1983, pp. 50-51.

22/ ECA/OAU, op.cit., vol. I, p.3. This document proposes, inter alia, "the broad participation of all our peoples in the veritable fight against poverty, famine and hunger and disease and ignorance".

to the development of rural Africa is in the hands of the multitude of Africans themselves.

- (vii) decide on the priorities of IRD based on dialogue with people. Such dialogue may mean established priority of the rural population in the short-run to produce more food in preference to cash crops, provide such priority is backed up by necessary yield raising inputs, institutional support and relatively attractive price policy. This will help (a) establish greater homogeneity of interest between the rural population and decision-making authorities in the capitals, (b) make Africa less dependent on external food aid and (c) disprove the "lament" that Africa produces what it does not consume and it consumes what it does not produce; even in a situation of declining food self-sufficiency ration.
- (viii) respect the priorities arising out of dialogue so long as
  - (a) it may not risk any irreversible damage to the eco-system;
  - (b) does not conflict with the legitimate priorities of the rural people in other areas and
  - (c) consistent with national aspirations, which must reflect consensus.
- (ix) vigorously pursue structural reform, where necessary, since dialogue can only be between the equals or near-equals. This is necessary to raise productivity, beyond a certain point, when the class base and the resource base have to be reconciled. <sup>23/</sup> It is by such reforms that the growth process can be accelerated by, inter alia, activating the dormant productivity of a considerable section of the rural population, which has so far been marginalised. In order to make IRD a realistic possibility, the process of transformation has to start on issues of immediate concern to people. If rural people's first preference is for indigenous cereal production it has to be respected.

40. Africa, unlike some over-populated parts of the Third World, still has a favourable land-man ratio. It is potentially rich in factor endowments. <sup>4</sup> The normative scenario of the Perspective Study shows the realisation of the vision for "the beautiful and mature African region that the leaders had in mind when they adopted the Monrovia Strategy, the Lagos Plan of Action, and the Final Act of Lagos .....<sup>25/</sup> is feasible, given the enlightened and informed political will.

41. The will is clearly there, as is self-evident from the following recent declaration of the Heads of State and Government of the member States:

"We re-affirm that the development of our Continent is the primary responsibility of our Governments and peoples. We are, therefore, determined to take concrete actions and measures individually and collectively for the achievements of the economic development of our continent in unity and solidarity of African people's and member States". <sup>26/</sup> The region also recognizes that man is the author and beneficiary of development. <sup>27/</sup>

<sup>23/</sup> ECA, Report of the Regional Seminar and Study Tour on Popular Participation in Rural Development in Africa, Tashkent, USSR, 3-22 Oct., 1983, (ECA/SDEHSD/IRD/83/Rpt), 1983, p.20.

<sup>24/</sup> A. Adedeji, *op.cit.*, 15

<sup>25/</sup> ECA, ECA and Africa's Development, 1983-2008, A Preliminary Perspective Study, Addis Ababa, April 1983, p. 93.

<sup>26/</sup> OAU, Declaration on the Economic Situation in Africa adopted by the 21st ordinary session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, Addis Ababa, (M/R7360/E), 1985, p.3

<sup>27/</sup> ECA, ECA and Africa's Dev. 1983-2008: A Preliminary Perspective Study, A.A., 83, p.94.

42. Hence, it is now time for enlightened decision and action by the member States. The secretariat, both singly and jointly with OAU and other organizations of the UN system concerned with integrated rural development in Africa, continues to remain at their disposal to facilitate and accelerate development of rural Africa, with people's participation, equity and dignity. Some of the major decisions, instruments and obstacles in re-orienting national policies towards an IRD programme are given in the attached Annex.



DECISIONS, INSTRUMENTS & OBSTACLES IN RE-ORIENTING NATIONAL POLICIES TOWARDS  
A POVERTY-ORIENTED PRODUCTION BASED IRD PROGRAMME

DECISION	INSTRUMENTS	OBSTACLES
<p>Re-allocation of resources</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> <li>4.</li> </ol>	<p>Agrarian reform Fiscal Policy Investment Policy Price Policy</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Vested interests; local, national and international</li> </ol>
<p>Active involvement of the various groups of the rural poor</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> </ol>	<p>Devolution of authority Strengthening of bargaining power through:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) People's organization (planning from below)</li> <li>b) Production organizations</li> <li>c) Employment on and off farm</li> <li>d) Availability of appropriate institutions for production; marketing and credit etc.</li> <li>e) Availability of appropriate technology</li> <li>f) Provision of public services</li> <li>g) Articulation of needs</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tendency to centralize</li> <li>2. Existing socio-economic structure</li> <li>3. Resistance to change</li> <li>4. Lack of absorption capacity of the various groups of the rural poor.</li> </ol>
<p>Acceptance of long-term commitment to IRD programme</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> </ol>	<p>Long-term planning Socio-economic approach to project proposal</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lack of institutions</li> <li>1. Political and institutional expectations of short-term results</li> </ol>

Source: FAO, Report of the FAO/SIDA/DSE Inter-Regional Symposium on Integrated Rural Development, Rome, 1978, p.106.

ECA/OAU/AMSA.V/14a  
Annex