SECOND MEETING OF THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE OF EXPERTS
Conakry, Guinea, 1-7 March 1999

REPORT OF THE MEETING
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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Second meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts (ICE) of the Subregional Development Centre (SRDC) for West Africa, was held in Conakry, Republic of Guinea from 1 to 7 March 1999. The purpose of the meeting was to review the work programme of the SRDC for 1998 and make proposals for the implementation of the programme for 1999.

A. Attendance and organization of work

2. The meeting was attended by the following member States:

   Benin
   Cap Vert
   Gambia
   Ghana
   Guinea Bissau
   Guinea
   Mali
   Nigeria
   Liberia
   Senegal
   Togo

3. Although Côte d'Ivoire and Niger had announced their participation in the meeting they were unable to come.

4. The following intergovernmental organizations also participated in the meeting : (ADRAO), the Permanent Inter-State Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS), the African Solidarity Fund (FSA), the Organisation of the Development of River Senegal (OMVS), (UEMOA)

5. UNDP was also represented at the meeting.

6. The list of participants is attached as annex to this report.

B. Election of the Bureau

7. The meeting was guided by a Bureau composed of:

   - Chairman : Guinea
   - Vice-Chairman: Ghana
   - Rapporteur: Benin
C. Agenda of the meeting

8. The following agenda was adopted:

1. Opening Session
2. Organisation of the meeting
   a) Election of the Bureau
   b) Adoption of Agenda
3. Report by the Director of SRDC/WA on progress made in the implementation of the 1998 work programme (SRDC-WA/5.4.2a(l)a.6/99)
4. Report on Economic and Social Conditions in the West Africa SRDC subregion. (SRDC-WA/5.4.2b(l)a.1/99)
5. Networking, advocacy, Policy Analysis, Capacity, Building and Regional Integration.
        (SRDC-WA/5.4.2a(l)a.1/99)
   5.2. Report on the techno-economic study of a pilot laboratory project for production and utilisation of gum xanthane in panification of tropical flours. (SRDC-WA/5.4.2a(l)a.2/99)
   5.3. Report on Progress made in promoting sustainable data bases networking West Africa (SRDC-WA/5.4.2a(l)a.3/99)
   5.4. Report on the experiences of River and Lake Basin Development Organisation in West Africa (SRDC-WA/5.4.2a(l)a.4/99)
   5.5. Report on the prevalence, causes and consequences of HIV/AIDS in West Africa (SRDC-WA/5.4.2a(l)a.5/99)
   5.6. Report on facilitating the implementation of existing cooperation arrangements;

Report to Subregional Development Centres (SRDCs) on self-financing mechanisms of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Intergovernmental Organizations (IGOs).

6. Technical Support and Cooperation

6.1 The Directory of West African Intergovernmental Organisations (SRDC-WA/5.4.2b(2)b.1/99)

6.2 Feasibility study of a sub-regional coastal shipping line in West and Central Africa (SRDC-WA/5.4.2b(2)b.2/99)

6.3 Business plan for the establishment of the subregional coastal shipping services (SRDC-WA/5.4.2b(2)b.3/99)

6.4 A compendium of results of West African Research Centres in the field of improved seeds and modalities of these results by national institutions (1998) (SRDC-WA/5.4.2b(2)b.4/99)

Development Bulletin of West Africa

7. Programme of work for the biennium 2000/2001

8. Information on next meetings of the Commission

9. Date and venue for next meeting.

10. Any Other business.

11. Review and adoption of the report of the meeting.

12. Closing Session
Opening of the meeting (Agenda item 1).

9. During the opening of the meeting two Statements were made by the Officer-in-charge of the Subregional -Development Centre (SRDC-WA) for West Africa and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation.

10. On behalf of Mr. K. Y. Amoako, Under Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ECA, Mr. Henri Gabriel Soumah Officer-in-charge of the SRDC for West Africa and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation welcomed participants to the second meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts of the SRDC for West Africa being held in Conakry, Republic of Guinea. He paid tribute and conveyed deepest gratitude to His Excellency, Mr. Lansana Conté, the President of the Republic of Guinea, and his government for the special attention that they have always given to the Economic Commission for Africa and its Centre based in Niamey as well as to the United Nations family in Guinea.

11. He reminded the participants that since 1995 the Economic Commission for Africa had been going through very significant changes in its structure and programmes. It has been redefining strategies to cope with Africa's transition into the 21st century, built around a clear vision of the region's future in a world of technology and information revolution that is turning the world into a global village. The technology and information revolution has been fueling the debate on globalization that must take very seriously.

12. Globalization, he pointed out, underscored the point that world economies, and world markets, were clearly interconnected and entwined to an extent which few had given serious thought to. It was transforming world business in powerful ways, making money to become enormously and almost unbelievably mobile. As a result of heavy investment by markets and the financial services sector in the latest technology, it is now possible to move money around the world with the touch of a computer key, without regard to national borders. In businesses that see themselves as most successful and most global, many more members of top management are foreign born.

13. Mr. Soumah pointed out that there were three "pillars" in establishing a foundation for global leadership, namely organizational consistency, having the right people in the right place when one chose to compete and customer-focused organizational flexibility, having the ability to service. These three pillars were a bid to create alternative futures by reformulating economic theories to guide industrial societies on healthier paths toward more equitable, ecologically sustainable economic and human development. Globalization, he said, meant that unless one was competitive there would be the risk of being swallowed up or completely marginalized by economic forces which no longer respect national boundaries. Corporate and political leadership was undertaking a restructuring of global politics and economics that may prove as historically significant as any event since the industrial revolution.
14. There were fears, he said, that globalization would lead to corporate dictatorship based on the overpowering strengths of the communications technology revolution. Many industrialized countries are now embarking on a multi-year study of globalization, focusing on the data storage and retrieval industry because the strength of globalization depended on the control of the flow of information and investment in the technology that ensures this flow.

15. These threats, he pointed out, had led to initiatives for a worldwide coordination of resistance against the global market to safeguard local interests against unscrupulous global investment. It was the argument that the unscrupulous global investors more often than not endangered local economic interests. The idea is to provide a platform which will serve as a global instrument for communication and co-ordination for all those fighting against the destruction of humanity and the planet by the global market, building up local alternatives and peoples' power.

16. Under the circumstances, it was legitimate for to question what this meant to this subregion of Africa and how was it contributing to addressing the challenges of global partnership without sacrificing national and subregional interests? He suggested that the work of the second meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts includes issues relating to the economic and social conditions of the subregion, the nexus of population environment and food security, water resources management, gender mainstreaming and last but not least, database networking. It was important to bear in mind that the reports being examined were on programme actions that were supposed to promote subregional activities for development as a springboard for achieving the same goals at the regional level.

17. It is encouraging, he said, to note that there was significant effort by the governments and the private sector in the subregion were awakening to the information technology momentum and were initiating capacity building activities to that effect. The same could be said of the major intergovernmental organization, namely the Permanent Interstate Committee for Combating Drought in the Sahel (CILSS), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Economic and Monetary Union of West Africa (UEMOA). Although the international community, particularly the United Nations Resident Coordination system, had an important role to play in support of this effort, local research and development institutions should play the lead role.

18. ECA and the SRDC for West Africa on their part had strengthened its capacity for outreach and networking by installing Internet capacity in the subregional Centre to enhance the Centre's ability for networking with the countries of the subregion. In this connection he expressed gratitude to the UNDP and other sister agencies of the United Nations for the collaboration they have been giving the ECA and the SRDC in the implementation of their programmes in member States.
19. It was expected that the deliberations of this meeting would put the actors of the subregion, as a team, one step ahead in organizing themselves better to face the challenges of belonging to a «global village». Participants should leave the meeting more determined and committed to invest in information technologies that will assist in developing effective policies for dealing with pressing economic and social development issues from a well informed standpoint. How well and how seriously our partners take us will depend on whether we can compete in the global market place.

20. In her opening speech the Secretary General of the Ministry of Planning and cooperation, representing the minister, first of all welcomed participants to this second meeting of the intergovernmental committee of experts (ICE) ECA sub-regional Development Centre for West Africa. She stressed that the establishment of the SRDC/WA falls well within the new strategy and orientation of the ECA. The Centre should so especially promote subregional integration cooperation, and become the booster of ideas, the facilitator of networking and the coordinator of development activities in the sub-region.

21. The secretary General then invited participants to examine with special attention the documents presented at the meetings and which concern on the daily life of populations; these documents include a survey on economic and social conditions in the sub-region, gender issues, production of xanthan gum, river basin development AIDS and lastly the feasibility study on a coastal shipping company for West and Central Africa. She then declared the meeting open

Report by the Director of SRDC/WA on progress made in the implementation of the 1998 work programme (SRDC/WA/5.4.2a(1)a 6/99 (Agenda 3)

II PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETING.

22. The Committee observed that the achievement of the work programme of the subregional Development Centre of West Africa (SRDC-WA) was mostly influenced by the overall situation of its implementation. Very often the implementation of the programme is met successfully but in some cases the programme was not executed during the period. Under review the problems encountered collectively or individually have always formed the part of the activities of the Centre. Hence the goal of the Centre and the UN Commission for Africa is to «serve Africa better».

23. The meeting noted that strategic orientation of the Centre is founded on the pillars of the excellence, useful and effective partnership. That is why the Centre was strengthened by headquarters through the assistance of more experienced professionals with more modern means of the economic data collection and processing. Through the implementation of the work programme, the Subregional Development Centre strived to achieve the mutations in member States. The work programme was therefore designed as an open programme enabled the Centre
to select projects to help government take appropriate measures. The work programme also included the recommendations of the first intergovernmental committee of experts.

24. The Committee noted that the 1998 programme was fully implemented. However, this implementation rate takes into account the fact that some programmed were non quantitative, such as the programme for assistance to member States. For instance, providing consultative services to one member country to conclude that the programme concerned is implemented. The committee was also briefed on the new ECA strategy that serves as guideline to project implementation, is excellence, efficiency and partnership. In details, the work programme implemented includes the 1998 programme proper and the recommendations made by the committee last year. This programme also includes surveys, management of meetings, and holding of meetings, and the drafting of technical reports on gender issues, on xanthan gum production, on the establishment of a subregional database, river and lake basins development, AIDS, the Directory of IGOs, the compendium of the result of agricultural research centres in the area of improved seeds.

25. It was also recalled that significant percentage of ECA technical staff should be redeployed in the SRDCs so as to reinforce operational activities in the subregions. The committee addressed to have working documents for meetings sent to member States well before meeting date in the future. Moreover, member States were requested to send articles with the view to preparing publication of the Development Bulletin which reviews economic development issues in the subregion.

Report on Economic and Social Conditions in the West Africa SRDC Subregion
- Doc. SRDC-WA/5.4.2.b (1)a.1/99 (Agenda item 4)

26. The Committee considered the survey of economic and social conditions in West Africa (Doc. SRDC-WA/5.4.2.b (1)a.1/99) (Agenda item 4), which was for information and sensitization document for all the development partners of the subregion. It highlighted the strengths, weaknesses and expectations of West-African economies as a whole. With respect to the international and national contexts which were the background for efforts to promote the economies of the subregion, it was be noted that the present 1998 review of this document and prospects for 1999 take place at a time when there were a serie of uncertainties relating to:

(i) the impact of the financial crisis in South-East Asia on the world economy and, particularly, on that of West Africa;
(ii) the effect of the coming into force of the Euro on the economy of the subregion and, particularly, on that of its F CFA component; and
(iii) the prospects for the present serious slump in world prices of the main exports of the subregion: - 19.43 per cent of average variation rate between November 1997 and November 1998; the ceiling and the maximum being - 0.95\% (manganese) and 70.42\% (cotton yarn);
The report also highlighted the fact that internally, member States had been pursuing rigorous economic policy devoted to implementation of structural adjustment programmes. Then the presentation of the report laid special emphasis on the strengths and weaknesses identified in the economies of the subregion. Strong aspects of the West African economy, were essentially:

(i) a relatively high real GDP growth rate of 4.9% on average, in 1998, thus, exceeding population growth rate by +2.26;
(ii) an economic performance based essentially on high levels of final consumption and gross capital formation; the contributions to the real GDDDP growth rate of these two components in 1998 being +3.11% and +1.88% and;
(iii) an encouraging level of access to primary education, in spite of the fact that there is more room for efforts in this domain.

The weaknesses involve:

(i) poor control of the external sector, the external balance rather pulling economic growth downward;
(ii) poor control of the demographic trend whose rate, in 1998, reached an average of +2.68;
(iii) the poor social development as expressed by the levels:
- HPI: 48%, on average;
- WPI: 0.262, on average;
- illiteracy rate: 59.3%, on average;
- life expectancy: 37.4 years, minimum; and 66.7 years maximum;
- inaccessibility to health services (42.3%, on average), sanitary services (42.3%, on average), sanitary services (66.2%, on average) and to potable water (45.7%, on average);
- great number of the poor (41.8%, on average) and the very poor (20% of whom did not earn US $400, on average, in 1997).

During the debates on this agenda the committee expressed the wish to see the following aspects taken into account in this report. They pertain to issues relating to:

(i) Physical infrastructures;
(ii) Currency, including inflation rate;
(iii) Budgetary balance;
(iv) Co-operation and economic integration, including the establishment of a common external tariff.

The Committee requested that some of the proposed recommendations be improved through:
including prevention in solution related to health;
(ii) a better distribution of responsibilities in the management of water
resources, between public authority private sector and civil society;
(iii) in in-depth analysis of the various causes of the refugees problem in the sub-
region (including political causes) with view to designing better corrective
action and solution related to effective management of population policies
beyond birth control.

31. The meeting also suggested that a concerted policy be implemented in the subregion in
order to have more weight on the evolution of world forces for basic commodities exported
from by the sub-region. The question of strengthening the competitiveness of the economies
of the subregion was discussed including that of investment and the meeting requested that the
next survey should also focus on it, particularly competitiveness indices for the subregion.
Recommendations were made as below with a view improving the document.

Recommendation 1. on economic performance

32. The meeting of Committee expressed the wish to see the following aspects taken into
account in the next report:

(i) strengthening subregional cooperation; and
(ii) increasing competitiveness and performance of their external sector;

Recommendation 2. on education

33. West African Governments should increase their efforts in matters of education,
with a view to raising the levels of performance of their educational systems to international
standards. They should individually and collectively strive to establish an observatory to
report on the state of performance of all the aspects of education.

Recommendation 3. on health

34. West African Governments should increase their efforts aimed at adequately
meeting the WHO standards, on time in terms of:

(i) qualified medical personnel, notably, medical doctors, pharmacists, midwives
and nurses;
(ii) drugs available at affordable prices;
(iii) hospitals, health Centres, pharmacies and drugstores; and
(iv) provision of health services, notably, primary health care, infant and maternity
monitoring.
Recommendation 4. on water

35. West African Governments should implement, within as soon as possible, the objectives agreed upon, at the international community level, relating to efficient management of water resources, notably, the objective of ensuring that access of populations to potable water is total and sufficient by the year 1990. To this end, the action should aim at promoting:

(i) better awareness of the problem;
(ii) commitment of governments to supply the entire population with potable water, with priority given to the poor and impoverished as well as the areas where water is scarce;
(iii) allocation to this sector of a higher percentage of the overall resources allocated to economic and social development;
(iv) rectify the personnel shortage; and
strengthen institutional capacities; and
involve the private sector better in this area.

Recommendation 5. on sanitisation of the various wastes

36. To conform to international standards in matters of collection, and purification of household and industrial wastes and those emanating from transport and tourism, the governments of the subregion should try to strengthen their operational capacities significantly, including:

(i) adoption and implementation of national and subregional plans for efficient management of the environment impact of the economic and social development activities; and
(ii) establishment of a data bank periodically reporting the state of all the components (air, water, land, etc.)

Recommendation 6. on social development

37. West African Governments should pursue efforts to:

(i) ensure high growth for their respective economies; and
(ii) ensure remarkable improvement of their social policies; with the view to honouring progressively all the commitments made in the framework of the conclusions of the World summit on social development on world social development of Copenhagen.

Recommendation 7. on employment

38. West African Governments should strive, individually, collectively and with the support of the international community to:

(i) develop a high economic growth policy in their respective countries;
(ii) promote full employment and productive employment, notably, long-term ones, including self-employment by encouraging, particularly, creation of small and micro-enterprises (also in the non-structured sector, and by strengthening the

(iii) develop micro-credits;

(iv) involve the youth, women, the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in the

(v) protect fundamental human rights, notably, those of the youth, women, aged persons and the disadvantaged groups; particularly, the right to work, non-discrimination in matters of employment and right to satisfy essential social needs, and in matters of salary, in such a way as to improve the social integration of this section of the population;

(vi) better target expenditures in order to enhance their effectiveness;

(vii) make the best possible use of and develop the potential of the cooperatives and other associative groupings with a view to attaining the social development objectives, notably, poverty eradication; and (establish a database for regular monitoring of the performance of the social programmes and, thereby, ensure proper utilization of the resources allocated to such programmes.

Recommendation 8. on population

39. West African Governments should try to develop effective policies in population matters through:

(i) birth control utilizing family planning methods adapted to local traditions; and

(ii) measures aimed at increasing life expectancy at birth

Recommendation 9. on refugees

40. West African Governments should pursue their efforts aimed at protecting, as much as possible, the rights of refugee populations, notably, the rights of refugee and facilitating their social integration both in the host countries and on their return to the native country. They should take appropriate measures with the view to addressing the causes of these conflicts.
41. The Committee examined document SRDC-WA/5.4.2a(1)a.1/99 a report on the Progress Made in Promoting Gender Perspectives in Sustainable Development in the West African subregion 1998. This document considered the achievements and failures in the implementation of the Beijing Platforms for Action and the Commitments of the ECA's 40th anniversary under the theme "Women and Development the Future Investment". The idea was to advocate the use of gender mainstreaming indicators to enhance the measurement of its contribution to sustainable development in the subregion.

42. The status of gender mainstreaming in different countries was reviewed based on various indicators. Despite all the governments' efforts and political will towards restructuring, women youth and other vulnerable groups constituting about 70 to 80 percents of the population were still at a disadvantage. They bore a disproportionate burden of the cost of transition due to the position they hold as workers, producers and consumers within the framework of the traditional sector. The inadequate gender mainstreaming in sustainable development programme highlighted the gap between men and women in such areas as education, employment political participation and access to land and credit facilities.

43. There was also insufficient data on distribution of school enrolment by sex in the subregion. However, on the basis of available data the percentage enrolment at this level for female was however below 30% in 13 countries. There was also high illiteracy rate of women compared to that of men. Out of fifteen countries in the subregion only four countries had women's literacy rate above 40 percent. All the 15 countries had higher percentage of men than women working in industry. Women high participation was found in agriculture and services where economic activities were at the bottom of labour market. These gaps were seen in all the social and economic indicators available in the subregion. There was also inadequate consideration in policy design of inadequate gender mainstreaming in contributing to the perpetuation of poverty and the causes of women's poverty could easily be attributed to lack of production assets and low income. Despite these gaps in gender mainstreaming, there were some of innovative activities that are being undertaken within the subregion which were discussed for the interest of replication where necessary.

44. The Committee noted that gender mainstreaming called that for the development of all human resources and giving them the chance to participate and contribute in development. Both men, women and youth had their basic needs that must be satisfied to avoid poverty. Some strategies that should be developed and implemented in the interest of gender mainstreaming in sustainable development was considered.
45. The discussion that followed stressed the need of using up-to-date data and requested that proper means of obtaining appropriate and up-to-date data be promoted within the SRDC and the member States as a whole. The need for developing the political participation skills on women in the subregion as it is happening in Europe was put forward. It was observed that women who had chance to obtain loan or share in economic ventures perform very well in paying back the loan and in production. The countries that contributed to the comments showed that their countries have done much in the gender mainstreaming than that was presented in the report particularly in the area of gender mainstreaming in education, health, employment, FMG and supporting the poorest poor.

46. It was accepted that data collection is a big problem in the subregion and efforts should be made to improve the situation. The problem of attracting funds for project implementation was raised particularly in the country where such funds were available to agriculture, education etc. The committee noted that the data used were old but showed that it was all collected from the countries visited. The Committee suggested that in future when such report is produced it should be circulated to the countries to give their comment before the finalisation.

47. In improving the women political and decision making skill in the subregion, the committee noted that there will be a training workshop for selected women from the subregion in July 1999 and requested that each country should try to approve the participation of their countries. The need for men and women working together was stressed. The gender mainstreaming has to move beyond sensitisation of men in gender issues and have men to be seriously included in manning gender desks. Since women have shown their capabilities in managing micro projects, there is need to move them to macro enterprises which will help them contribute better in sustainable development.

48. The Committee recommended that priority action should be undertaken in the following areas:

(a) Reduction of the burden of women’s responsibilities at the family level, through interalia, the introduction of appropriate technologies and adequate involvement of in assisting women’s where necessary;

(b) Creation of avenues for ensuring full participation of men in gender-sensitisation programmes;

(c) Reduction of gender imbalances by ensuring equal access to education for boys and girls, and retention of female, adolescents in school;

(d) Improvement of existing facilities and building of new ones to accommodate specific educational needs of the youth;

(e) Revision and development of appropriate gender-sensitive curriculum and materials
for students and teachers to respond to youth survival needs which tally with labour market requirements;

(f) Enforcement of laws that are responsive to the needs of youths, including their constitutional rights and responsibilities;

(g) Provision of opportunities for youth and women participation and involvement in the policy and decision making;

(h) Provision of legal education aimed at creating awareness on the rights of women and the vulnerable opportunities for exercising these rights;

(i) Making available to youths sexual and reproductive health information and services to reduce incidence of STDs and HIV/AIDS, as well as unwanted pregnancies; and

(j) Creation of opportunities for economic empowerment such as access to credit, support for income-generating activities agricultural inputs entrepreneurship.

49. It was also recommended that rather than the present practice of implementing women and youths’ projects by the urban elites, NGOs and other civil society organisation should be involved in the design and implementation of the gender programmes. In health service, in order to control all diseases governments can also invest more money especially on the poor who are more exposed to diseases. Similarly, investment should be made in association with impure water and bad quality environments, governments could also invest more in environmental sanitation and family planning programme should involve both men and women, more so as the reproductive decisions are mostly taken by the husbands.

50. Finally, reliable policies on gender issues was very essential to effectively monitor the performance and impact of programmes aimed at improving the development and quality of life. Data in this regard should be disaggregated, collected on continuous basis on the performance and output indicators for the programmes. The member states should make available the data to SRDC and also cooperate with the it in filling and submitting the required questionnaires towards data collection.

Report on the techno-economic study of a pilot laboratory prospect for the production and utilisation of gum xanthan in panification of tropical flours
- Doc. SRDC-WA/5.4.2a (l)a.3/99 (Agenda item 5.2)

51. The Committee reviewed the document ECA/CDSR+AO/5.4.2a (i) a.2/99 which is a report on the implementation of a project for reinforcing food security in Africa though science and technology applications. The purpose of the project is to establish whether production of Gum Xanthane is possible in Africa; the present report to the Committee aims at sensitising member states on opportunities offered by xanthane gum for developing food industries so that planners may take it into account when formulating agriculture and food policies.
52. The Committee noted that this was an applied research project which would be implemented through several stages: looking for foreign partnership, identification of equipment to be purchased, identification of suppliers, additional training, preparation of contractor's document, certification of equipment of origin, review of technical literature on the subject, acquisition of a pure stem of Xanthamonas Campestris on the international market, acquisition of a sample of xanthane gum, and finally the implementation of the proper project.

53. With respect to partnership, the Committee noted that the project benefited was financed by Japan and from Belgian technical assistance. One African Biothechnologist has been sent to Belgium to get acquainted to xanthane gum production techniques and practices; a strategy was defined in order to reduce production costs. The Committee noted that there are several types of gums in the world, the most known of which were vegetal gums (such as Arabic gum, caroube gum, nar gum etc.). In addition to vegetable gums there were gums of biological origin such as xanthane gum. This type is divided into several branches of which only the food brand was considered here; each of the gums mentioned here, of both vegetal of biological origin are of special interest to the food industry.

54. The manufacturing process of xanthane gum was reviewed, and it was pointed out that there were potentially a great number of xanthane gums for many specific applications. It was noted that the properties of the xanthane gum are those of enhancer, stabilizer, thickener, structurer and texture-inducer, which are essential properties sought in food industries.

55. In the project being implemented, the issue was to prepare a quality of xanthane gum specific to panification of glutenless tropical flours. It was noted that mastery of the manufacturing process of the xanthane gum in Africa would be a major technology breakthrough with the view of using a greater number of varieties of maize, sorghum and millet for traditional food preparations such as t6, ké-n'-k6 and akassa. Using a specific quality xanthane gum, high yield varieties of cereals that are inappropriate for traditional food preparations would become convenient. It was noted that the project will end this year, and if successful, a briefing leaflet on the manufacturing technology of the xanthane gum would be published and circulated among Member States. The final report on the project implementation shall determine if a second phase should be envisaged.

56. During the debate, the Committee noted that the report was much technical with little economics, and in this respect, national agriculture and food research institutes and Centers should be involved in technical advice and views. The Committee also stressed the necessity to do in-depth feasibility studies prior to setting up production units at industrial scale. Such studies should determine the economic profitability of the project, its environmental impact, the incurring of the product, the production cost as well as the influence of the product on organoleptic aspects. The Committee also stressed that the project being a local cereals development project, PROCELOS/CILSS should be associated. In conclusion, the Committee recommended that:
(a) that the present report, the results and the final report of project implementation be sent to national agriculture and food research Centers for comments;

(b) that a meeting of an ad hoc expert group be convened to validate the documents as well as the results and to define related guidelines;

(c) a survey on the constraints to the development of composite flours in Africa should be carried out to this end, it is proposed that each country examines the issue at country level, and that of the SRDC/WA studies two or three concrete cases and reports thereon to the next Committee of the meeting.

Report on progress made in promoting sustainable databases networking in West Africa (Document SRDC-WA/5.4.2.a (1) a.3/99): Agenda item 5.3.

57. The Committee examined the report on progress made in developing databases for sustainable development management in West Africa, (document No. SRDC-WA/5.4.2.a (1) a.3/99): Agenda item 5.3. The document revisited the recommendations of the First ICE dealing with the databases and networking, particularly with the help of the new communications technology. Specifically the Committee had recommended that the Committee should strengthen its information networking by:

(a) increasingly involving its focal points in outreach activities of the Centre;

(b) mobilizing extrabudgetary resources to supplement regular budget resources for that purpose; and

(c) treating investment in the new information and communications technology to include the promotion of local capacity as a policy issue.

58. It was noted that over the last two years a number of missions had been undertaken to most of the member States and interactions made with professionals both in the public and civil society sectors. This provided a fairly reasonable assessment of the thirst for information sharing through the use of the new information technology not only at the national level but also for interaction across national boundaries. The mission also confirmed the existence of common problems in this field. These included:

(i) inadequate flow of information among member States and between them and the SRDC which hampered the development of effective programmes for sustainable development at the national level and for the promotion of subregional integration;

(ii) uncoordinated approaches for enhancing the effectiveness of technical support and advisory services based on reliable information; and
(iii) inadequate harmonization and coordination with the nation focal points and even with the United Nations Resident Coordination system.

59. The meeting also noted that the transition into the 21st century was built on a clear vision of Africa's future in a world of technology and information revolution. Encouragingly, there was a significant effort being made in the countries of the subregion in awakening to this momentum at both the public and private sector levels. Local expertise and institutions were responding to this momentum towards globalization. Many of this initiatives within the public sector were supported by the UNDP within the Capacity 21 programme of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development of 1992 as sustainable development network programmes (SNDPs). The intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and even non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were also investing in building this capacity. These initiatives provided for a progressive setting up of national information exchange mechanisms as a basis for a national Intranet and its extension to the subregional level.

60. The meeting underscored the fact that to backup any actions on database, information exchange and networking, priority lay in a harmonized and standardized data generation system at the macroeconomic, social environmental and subregional integration levels. In this respect a number sustainable development indicator categorizations were reviewed.

61. Affirming the need to information networking, emphasis was put by the Committee on the improvement of the data generation approaches as suggested in the document under review. The concern was expressed the unclear manner in which some of the indicators, particularly those pertaining to macroeconomic indicators such as fiscal policies, private sector investment, monetary policies and the overall macroeconomic indicators defined in the document. There was the need to make a broad scope itemization and categorization of indicators to facilitate the needed general consensus on them. Suggestions were also made as to the possible inclusions in such itemization and categorizations. It was also important to include qualitative measurement, data on the informal sector and other parameters that were an integral aspect of the local socio-economic environment but are not easily captured in the international database frameworks. This would make the information to be easily understood at the national and multi-national levels.

62. The Committee underscore the need for inter-institutional collaborative action, particularly among the CILSS, ECOWAS, the SRDC and UEMOA in the harmonization of data generation, analysis and dissemination. In this respect Benin and Ghana informed the meeting of changes in the structure of there local networks. The necessary protocols should be arrived at to make this a matter of routine. It also endorsed the need for support by the ECA and the SRDC to national statistical activities and the improvement of national accounting procedures, research in support of data generation and the annual publication of a compendium of information sources by the SRDC for review at the next meeting.
63. The Committee examined document SRDC/WA/5.4.2a(1)a.5/99 on the experiences of River and Lake Basins Development Organizations in West Africa, namely, the Niger Basin Development Authority (NBA), the Gambia River Development Organization (OMVG), and the Senegal River Development Organization (OMVS) which were the only three subregional specialized Organizations in West Africa. The objective of the report was to brief the Committee of Experts on recent developments within these organizations and to sensitize the Committee on the cases of success and the difficulties confronting these organizations. The document related the history of each organization before addressing the progress status of that programmes up to 1998.

64. In spite of positive results recorded during the primary phase of diagnosis, the preparation of action programmes and raising funds required for specific programmes almost all these organizations continue to face difficulties. Among the difficulties faced, the commonest related to technical and financial aspects, to institutional arrangements and to management.

65. The Committee took good note of this report requested the Secretariat to prepare a none analytical report next time to highlight the social and economic importance of the sound management of these shared water resource. Their inadequate management had resulted in slowing down industrial performance in some countries as a result of fluctuation in energy supply. Some delegations made comments on the socio-economic aspects and on the use of land and water resources in the areas of these river and lake basins. Lastly, the Committee recommended the setting-up of a structured organization for a better management of resources in the Volta River Basin area.

Report on the prevalence, causes and consequences of HIV/AIDS in West Africa - Doc. CDSR/AO/5.4.2a(1)a.5/99 (Agenda item 5.5)

66. The meeting reviewed the background document on the prevalence, causes and consequences of HIV/AIDS in the West African Subregion (CDSR/AO/5.4.2 (a) (1)a..5/99), with a view to enabling member States to constructively participate in action programmes to mobilize all segments of society to combat the spread of the pandemic in their countries. The meeting noted that the fragmentary data on the occurrence of the disease in the subregion indicated that although prevalence rates were lower than subregions they were high, especially in urban areas of three countries, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso and Ghana.

67. On the causes of the pandemic, the meeting took note of such factors as sexual behaviour involving multiple sexual partners and unprotected sexual contacts with high risks...
persons as well as blood transfusions. Poverty and migration, in particular, seasonal population mobility as occurs between the Sahelian and coastal countries was also identified as one of the major causes.

68. It was observed that the disease had resulted and would result in deaths of persons in their most economically productive years. This would have serious consequences on income generation and family care giving for children such as orphans, and the elderly. There would also be a decline in household resources as a sequel of increases in medical expenditures and loss of productive capacity of affected persons as well as overstretched health sectors by coping with HIV/AIDS related illnesses in addition to other sicknesses. With respect to demographic consequences, it was noted that the pandemic would result in slowing down the pace and magnitude of population increase, resulting not only from the decrease in life expectancy but not decrease in population sizes, even in countries with high prevalence rates.

69. The Committee recommended that member States should establish or strengthen programmes to seek changes in high-risk sexual behaviour, mobilize all segments of society to control the AIDS pandemic; and investigate socio-economic factors underlying the spread of HIV infection.

70. They urged political decision-makers and community leaders to play a more active role in programmes and campaigns of education and sensitization. The Committee also requested the Secretariat to systematically document (a) the experiences of African countries especially exemplary programmes and projects on how the spread of the disease is being tackled, and (b) the utilization of local drugs and their curative effects.

Report on facilitating the implementation of existing cooperation arrangements; Report to Subregional Development Centres (SRDCs) on self-financing mechanisms of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and Intergovernmental Organisations (Agenda item 5.6)

71. Although this agenda item was not adopted initially, the Committee judged it important enough to make suggestions on the possible contents of such a report. This importance arose from the fact of the success of some of the approaches adopted by UEMOA we tried in ECOWAS but appeared not to have succeeded.

Presentation of the Project Proposal on a Study of the Performance of Agricultural Development Projects in West Africa (Agenda item 5.7)

72. The Committee considered the Project Proposal on a study of the performance of agricultural development projects in WEST Africa. It had before it document SRDC/WA/5.4.2a of the same title. It noted that while there were a few cases of success, the vast majority of agricultural development projects in West Africa have not been very successful. Investments in these projects have usually been for integrated rural development, agricultural research and
extension, irrigation, rural education and health. The Committee noted that the objectives of the study include: a determination of the success and failure elements influencing project performance, an analysis of the factors responsible for project success or failure, and the provision of guidelines for ensuring better project design and execution in the future. The findings of the study will be reviewed at the next meeting of the Committee after which it would be published and distributed to interested parties throughout the region.

73. The Committee also noted that the study would be carried out at two levels: a general survey administered in all countries of the subregion and a more in-depth study of selected countries. In both cases, the starting point would be a possible systematic and comparative analysis of existing information in each country followed by a consideration of the overall state of information and knowledge on the design, operation and performance of agricultural development projects. Six countries including: Senegal, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Ghana, Gambia and Nigeria had been tentatively selected for the in-depth phase of the study. The criteria for selecting these countries was: the availability of information needed for the comparative analysis, the existence of a wide range of agricultural development projects, and the institutional considerations that influenced project design and execution.

74. The Committee considered the proposal and made a number of suggestions to ensure that it added value to existing knowledge on the subject under consideration and contributes to better project performance in the future. In this respect the Committee cautioned that the study should build on studies that had already been carried out in member States and not try to duplicate past studies on the same subject. The Committee pointed out that the study was focusing on performance rather than on impact which was more complex and difficult to measure. It however, called, for care to be taking in selecting the range of projects to be focused on so as to ensure a representative sample of projects. It was suggested that the study should also subregional agricultural projects that cut across national boundaries. It also called for more diversity in the choice of countries for the in-depth phase of the study.

75. The Committee welcomed the fact that the study would be a collaborative effort between the food security and Sustainable Development Division at ECA Headquarters in Addis Ababa and the SRDC-WA. It then endorsed the study and directed that it be carried out. Taking into account the suggestions and recommendations if had made to improve the proposal. The members of the Committee agreed to facilitate the conduct of the surveys in their different countries by serving as contact persons and assisting the study team to follow-up on its efforts in their countries.

The Directory of West African Intergovernmental organisations (SRDC-WA/5.4.2b(2)b.1/99 (Agenda item 6.1)

76. The Committee noted that the Directory of IGOs in West Africa is a reference and
information document. It was recalled that the 1998 edition was already outdated become some information required updating. The IGOs are requested to promptly answer to enquired so as to facilitate the definitive of this information tool.

Report on the Implementation of a Coastal Shipping Project in West and Central Africa (SRDC/WA/5.4.2b/(2)b.3/99 and SRDC/WA/5.4.2b(2)b/3.99)
(Agenda 6.2 and 6.3)

77. The Committee examined the documents on Implementation of a Sub-regional coastal shipping project (SRDC/WA/5.4.2b/(2)b.3/99 and SRDC/WA/5.4.2b(2)b/3.99); the Committee noted the complementarity of the two documents. Indeed, the document "Business Plan" of which the feasibility study was but one component suggested a detailed timetable for the implementation of the project for the establishment of a sub-regional coastal shipping company in West Africa and Central Africa.

78. The Committee noted the integrating role of the project which addressed:

(i) the need to create a sub-regional coastal shipping line in West and Central Africa as the more competitive and more adapted mode for promoting trade in this sub-region;

(ii) the existence of a great trend of trading and of movement of people within this sub-regional space, which make a strong base for commercial feasibility of a sub-regional coastal shipping in West and Central Africa in spite of competition from road and air transport and long haul maritime navigation;

(iii) the political will as expressed by business players in the sub-region, to establish such an operation by reason of its strong potential for physical integration of the sub-region;

(iv) such a will was translated into deed by the setting-up, by business players in the sub-region of a project follow-up committee for the project that is chaired by the ministerial conference of West and Central Africa on maritime transport (CMEAOC);

(v) beyond the existence of a potential market in this area, the feasibility study arrived at most contrasting conclusion as regards the performance of the project:

- the project was financially viable in respect of the average and peak hypotheses of scenario 1, where the financial performances such as expressed by actualized cash flows give US$14,726 million and US$17,102 million respectively, i.e. rates of yield on invested capital of 105.3% and 122.38%.
- contrarily, the project would not be profitable for the low hypothesis under scenario 1, capital recuperation being only 88.36% i.e., US $12,349 million of actualized value;

- likewise, investment would not be profitable for low peak and average hypotheses (17.55%), (60.90%), (39.24%) respectively.

79. The document then addressed some aspects of the economic benefits that the operations of the sub-regional company would generate. They pertained to tax incentives and job creation. The Committee then noted that these two documents were presented at the meeting as mere briefing and sensitization in accordance with the wish expressed in October past by the CMAOC tenth session at Brazzaville. The meeting took good note of this report.

A Compendium of results of West African Research Centres in the field of improved seeds and modalities of these results by national institutions (1998) (SRDC-WA/5.4.2b(2)b.4/99) (Agenda item 6.4)

80. The Committee noted that the document is a 1998 version of a document produced five years ago. The research Centres were eager to provide information on new results of their research to ensure a definitive updating of the document

2000-2001 Work Programme (Agenda item 7)

81. For briefing purpose only, the Committee took note of SRDC/WA 2000-2001 Work Programme. The procedure used to elaborate the programme was recalled and all member States were requested to make comments. The latter will have the opportunity to take this up at the TEPCOW meeting in April at Addis Ababa.

82. The Committee emphasised that programme agreements between the SRDC and IGOs (ECOWAS, UEMOA, CILSS, MRU...) would be desirable at the beginning of each biennium. Consultation and technical cooperation services can be requested from the Centre at any time by simple letter.

Information on the next meetings of the Committee  
(Agenda item 8)

83. The Committee noted that the Copenhagen world Social Summit follow-up meeting will be held in Ouagadougou from the 9th to the 11th of March 1999. The issue will be examination of the progress made in member States with respect to implementation of the Copenhagen recommendations. The Committee called on delegate to make sure that the countries be represented at the conference at the highest and the most appropriate level.
84. The Committee also noted that the joint meeting of Ministers of Finance of Planning and of social and Economic Development will be held at Addis-Ababa from the 6th to the 10th may 1999. The Committee invited delegation to make sure that their countries are represented at this meeting whatever the schedules of the authorities concerned.

85. Besides the committee expressed the wish that working documents of meetings be sent of member States on time so as to facilitate an effective participation to the proceedings of the meeting.

Venue and date of the next Meeting
(Agenda item 9)

86. The Committee asked the Secretariat to begin consultation with member state with the view of fixing the venue and date of the next ICE meeting and informing member countries on time.

Any other matters
/agenda item 10/

87. No other matters were raised under this agenda item

Review and adoption of the report of the meeting
/agenda item 11/

88. The final report of the second Intergovernmental Committee of Experts of the SRDC-WA (SRDC-WA/5.4.2a(1)b.1/99) was examined and adopted with amendments.

Closing session
/agenda item 12/

89. In the course of the closing session, the representative of Cape Verde read out the vote of thanks addressed to the Government of Guinea for its readiness and sense of hospitality.

90. Then, Professor Henri Gabriel SOUMAH, the Acting Director of the Subregional Development Centre for West Africa, on behalf of the Executive Secretary of ECA, expressed his sincere gratitude to participants for the quality an high level of the discussions throughout the meeting. He then pointed out the three motives for satisfaction which, according to him, characterized the meeting : first of all, a high quorum of more than 75 % of the 15 members countries of SRDC/WA were present, secondly the high-calibre of participants greatly contributed to enriching the debates and thirdly the choice of the venue of the meeting, that is the “Palais du Peuple de Conakry” which is a venue pregnant with history. He thanked the Guinean authorities for the facilities placed at the disposal of participants and wished them safe journey back to their respective homes.
91. Mr Keita Mohamed Lamine, National Director of Statistics at the Ministry of Planning, Conakry, Guinea and Chairman of the meeting also expressed his sincere thanks to participants for their assiduity and quality of their contributions which ensured the success of the meeting. He then thanked the interpreters and all the supporting staff for their contribution to the success of the meeting.

92. In his closing remarks, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Planning and Cooperation, deputizing for the Minister, first of all pointed out that the participants of the meeting were composed of high-calibre officers from member States and Intergovernmental Organisations, hence the practical and high level discussions held. She pointed out that some of the topics discussed dealing with the decline in export earnings, pose new challenges to be faced up to in order to increase financial flows into member States.

93. She also stressed the need for West Africa to manage, at best, the co-existence among the States and to increase, especially, exchange of information; in this respect, she commended the subregional and regional intranet connection project and expressed the hope that participants, on their return to their countries would impress upon their Governments to implement the recommendations made at the meeting. She re-assured Mr Soumah of the support of the Government of Guinea to SRDC/WA and expressed her sincere thanks to the Executive Secretary of ECA for the choice of Guinea for the meeting.

94. She declared the second meeting of the intergovernmental Committee of Experts of the Subregional Development Centre for West Africa closed.
UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
Sub-regional Development Centre for West Africa

Second meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee
of Experts of the Subregional Development
Centre for West Africa,
1 - 7 March 1999
Conakry, Republic of Guinea.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Report on Economic and Social Conditions in the West Africa SRDC Subregion
- Doc. SRDC-WA/5.4.2.b (1)a.1/99 (Agenda item 4)

1. The Committee expressed the wish to see the following aspects taken into account in this report. They pertain to issues relating to:
   (i) Physical infrastructures;
   (ii) Currency, including inflation rate;
   (iii) Budgetary balance; and
   (iv) Co-operation and economic integration, including the establishment of a common external tariff.

2. The Committee requested that some of the proposed recommendations be improved through:
   (i) including prevention in solution related to health;
   (ii) a better distribution of responsibilities in the management of water resources, between public authority private sector and civil society;
   (iii) an in-depth analysis of the various causes of the refugees problem in the sub-region (including political causes) with view to designing better corrective action and solution related to effective management of population policies beyond birth control.
   (iv) environment and sustainable development; and
   (v) beyond birth control the survey should also include issues related to the effective management of population policies.

3. The meeting also suggested that a concerted policy be implemented in the subregion in order to have more weight on the evolution of world forces for basic commodities exported from by the sub-region. Recommendations were made as below with a view improving the document.
4. The Committee recommended that priority action should be undertaken in the following areas:

(a) Reduction of the burden of women's responsibilities at the family level, through inter alia, 
the introduction of appropriate technologies and adequate involvement of in assisting 
women's where necessary;
(b) Creation of avenues for ensuring full participation of men in gender-sensitisation 
programmes;
(c) Reduction of gender imbalances by ensuring equal access to education for boys and girls, 
and retention of female, adolescents in school;
(d) Improvement of existing facilities and building of new ones to accommodate specific 
educational needs of the youth;
(e) Revision and development of appropriate gender-sensitive curriculum and materials for 
students and teachers to respond to youth survival needs which tally with labour market 
requirements;
(f) Enforcement of laws that are responsive to the needs of youths, including their 
constitutional rights and responsibilities;
(g) Provision of opportunities for youth and women participation and involvement in the policy 
and decision making;
(h) Provision of legal education aimed at creating awareness on the rights of women and the 
vulnerable opportunities for exercising these rights;
(i) Making available to youths sexual and reproductive health information and services to 
reduce incidence of STDs and HIV/AIDS, as well as unwanted pregnancies; and
(j) Creation of opportunities for economic empowerment such as access to credit, support for 
income-generating activities, agricultural inputs, entrepreneurship
(k) Making available to youths sexual and reproductive health information and services to 
reduce incidence of STDs and HIV/AIDS, as well as unwanted pregnancies; and
(l) Creation of opportunities for economic empowerment such as access to credit, support for 
income-generating activities, agricultural inputs, entrepreneurship, training and skills 
development.

(m) It was also recommended that rather than the present practice women and youths' projects 
by the urban elites, NGOs and other civil society organisation should be in the design and 
implementation of the gender programmes. In health service, in order to control all 
diseases governments can also invest more money especially on the poor who are more 
exposed to diseases. Similarly, investment should be made in association with impure 
water and bad quality environments, governments can also invest more in environmental 
sanitation and family planning programme should involve both men and women, more so 
as the reproductive decisions are mostly taken by the husbands.

(n) Finally, reliable policies on gender issues was very essential to effectively monitor the 
performance and impact of programmes aimed at improving the development and quality 
of life. Data in this regard should be disaggregated, collected on continuous basis on the 
Performance and output indicators for the programmes. The member states should make 
available the data to SRDC and also co-operate with the SRDC in filling and submitting 
the required questionnaires towards data collection.
UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA
Sub-regional Development Centre for West Africa

Second meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee
of Experts of the Subregional Development
Centre for West Africa,
1 – 7 March 1999
Conakry, Republic of Guinea.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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   (iv) environment and sustainable development; and
   (v) beyond birth control the survey should also include issues related to the effective management of population policies.

3. The Committee suggested that a concerted policy be implemented in the subregion in order to have more weight on the evolution of world forces for basic commodities exported from the sub-region. Recommendations were made as below with a view improving the document.
4. The Committee recommended that priority action should be undertaken in the following areas:

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(c) Reduction of gender imbalances by ensuring equal access to education for boys and girls, and retention of female, adolescents in school;

(d) Improvement of existing facilities and building of new ones to accommodate specific educational needs of the youth;

(e) Revision and development of appropriate gender-sensitive curriculum and materials for students and teachers to respond to youth survival needs which tally with labour market requirements;

(f) Enforcement of laws that are responsive to the needs of youths, including their constitutional rights and responsibilities;

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(h) Provision of legal education aimed at creating awareness on the rights of women and the vulnerable opportunities for exercising these rights;

(i) Making available to youths sexual and reproductive health information and services to reduce incidence of STDs and HIV/AIDS, as well as unwanted pregnancies; and

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(m) It was also recommended that rather than the present practice women and youths’ projects by the urban elites, NGOs and other civil society organisation should be in the design and implementation of the gender programmes. In health service, in order to control all diseases governments can also invest more money especially on the poor who are more exposed to diseases. Similarly, investment should be made in association with impure water and bad quality environments, governments can also invest more in environmental sanitation and family planning programme should involve both men and women, more so as the reproductive decisions are mostly taken by the husbands.

(n) Finally, reliable policies on gender issues was very essential to effectively monitor the performance and impact of programmes aimed at improving the development and quality of life. Data in this regard should be disaggregated, collected on continuous basis on the Performance and output indicators for the programmes. The member states should make available the data to SRDC and also co-operate with the SRDC in filling and submitting the required questionnaires towards data collection.
5. The meeting recommended that:
   (a) the present report, the results and the final report of project implementation be sent to
       national agriculture and food research Centres for comments;
   (b) a meeting of an hoc expert group be convened to validate the documents as well as the
       results and to define related guidelines;
   (c) a survey on the constraints hindering the development of composite flours in Africa
       should be carried out to this end, it is proposed that each country examines the issue
       at country level, and that of the SRDC/WA studies two or three concrete cases and
       reports thereon to the next Committee of the meeting.

Report on progress made in promoting sustainable databases networking in West Africa
(Document SRDC-WA/5.4.2a (1) a.3/99): Agenda item 5.3.

6. (a) The meeting recommended that as concerns indicators, there was the need to make a
   broad scope itemisation and categorisation of indicators to facilitate the needed general
   consensus on them. Suggestions were also made as to the possible inclusions in such
   itemisation and categorisations. It was also important to include qualitative measurement,
   data on the informal sector and other parameters that were an integral aspect of the local
   socio-economic environment but are not easily captured in the international database
   frameworks. This would make the information to be easily understood at the national and
   multi-national levels;
   (b) The Committee underscore the need for inter-institutional collaborative action, particularly
       among the CILSS, ECOWAS, the SRDC and UEMOA in the harmonization of data
       generation, analysis and dissemination. In this respect Benin and Ghana informed the
       meeting of changes in the structure of their local networks; and
   (c) the necessary protocols should be arrived at to make this a matter of routine. It also
       endorsed the need for support by the ECA and the SRDC to national statistical activities
       and the improvement of national accounting procedures, research in support of data
       generation and the annual publication of a compendium of sources of information.

Report on the experiences of River and Lake Basin Development Organisations in West
Africa - Doc. SRDC-WA/5.4.2a(1) a.4/99 (Agenda item 5.4)

7. The meeting recommended the establishment of a structured organisation for the
   management of the Volta river basin.

Report on the prevalence, causes and consequences of HIV/AIDS in West Africa
- Doc. CDSR/AO/5.4.2a(1)a.5/99 (Agenda item 5.5)

7. (a) The meeting recommended that member States should establish or strengthen
    programmes to seek changes in high-risk sexual behaviour, mobilise all segments of society
    to control the AIDS pandemic; and investigate socio-economic factors underlying the
    spread of HIV infection;
    (b) They urged political decision-makers and community leaders to play a more active role
in programmes and campaigns of education and sensitisation; and
(c) also requested the Secretariat to systematically document (a) the experiences of African
countries especially exemplary programmes and projects on how the spread of the
disease is being tackled, and (b) the utilisation of local drugs and their curative effects.

Report on facilitating the implementation of existing co-operation arrangements; Report
to Subregional Development Centres (SRDCs) on self-financing mechanisms of Regional
Economic Communities (RECs) and Intergovernmental Organisations (Agenda item 5.6)

8. Although this agenda item was not adopted initially, the Committee judged it important
enough to make suggestions on the possible contents of such a report. This importance arose from
the fact of the success of some of the approaches adopted by UEMOA we tried in ECOWAS but
appeared not to have succeeded.
VOTE OF THANKS

The participants of the Second meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts of the Subregional Development Centre for West Africa held in Conakry, Republic of Guinea, from 1st to 5th March 1999:

Express their profound gratitude to the People and Government of the Republic of Guinea for the hospitality, availability and the excellent working conditions enjoyed during their stay in the Republic of Guinea.

AND

Convey to his Excellency, General LANSANA CONTE, President of the Republic of Guinea, Head of State, their heartfelt gratitude.
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