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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

Meeting of the African Regional Inter-Agency Committee on
Rural Development and Fourth Inter-Agency Meeting for
Africa on the Follow-up of WCARD

Addis Ababa, 20-23 November 1984

SUMMARY OF ECA'S ACTIVITIES IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

The Economic Commission for Africa has been continuing its efforts, especially since the famous Moshi Conference^{1/}, to facilitate the acceptance and adoption of an integrated approach to rural development in Africa in pursuance of:

- (i) the various ECA legislative mandates on rural development;
- (ii) General Assembly Resolution 32/197 on re-structuring,
- (iii) the objectives of the Lagos Plan of Action;
- (iv) ECA resolution 423(XVI) on the Social Implications of the Lagos Plan of Action; and
- (v) the WCARRD's Plan of Action.

Given below herein is a summary of the major activities that are being undertaken by the various Divisions of ECA in the field of rural development (past, current and tentatively planned).

I. SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS DIVISION

Past activities

1. The Division organized, in cooperation with UNRISD, FAO, UNESCO and Tashkent Agricultural Institute, USSR, a regional seminar and study tour on "Popular Participation in Rural Development of Africa" in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, USSR, during the period 3 to 22 October 1983 for twenty-five experts in the field of rural development from twenty-two African member states.
2. The objectives of the regional seminar and study tour were, among others, to provide a forum for African officials active in the field of rural development and leaders of rural organizations to compare and analyse national experiences, approaches, policies and problems of popular participation in rural development and to provide them with an opportunity to examine, at first hand, the techniques and organizational approaches of integrated rural development in the USSR.

^{1/} The Moshi Conference was convened by the UN Economic Commission for Africa at the Co-operative College, Moshi, Tanzania from 13 to 24 October 1969. The Conference was attended by forty-one participants from twenty-six African countries and forty-two observers from the UN system and other organizations. The Conference identified: the major factors influencing rural development in Africa; the problems being encountered by the African countries in their rural development programmes; the main objectives and policies that should guide African countries in planning and programming for rural development; and the role that international technical assistance agencies should play in order to accelerate the process of rural development in Africa. The Conference also adopted a set of recommendations in the aforementioned areas, and strongly advocated that African countries should adopt the integrated approach to rural development.

3. A "report on social trends and major social development problems in Africa" was completed and its findings incorporated in ECA's Silver Jubilee publication "ECA and Africa's Development, 1983-2003: A Preliminary Perspective Study", 1983.
4. The Division prepared a report on the use of mass media for rural development on the basis of field studies, which were undertaken in twelve African states. The objective of the study was to determine the effectiveness of the mass media used in various African countries and the extent of their coverage, the extent to which local languages are used; the involvement of the rural population in the development process; the availability of competent staff for rural-oriented programme production; and to make recommendations regarding staff training and recruitments for planning, management and direction, production, dissemination and evaluation of broadcasting programmes oriented towards rural development.
5. The Division, organized the "Regional Meeting on the International Youth Year: Participation, Development and Peace" in Addis Ababa from 20 to 24 June 1983. It adopted inter alia, a "Regional Plan of Action on Youth", whose objective is to "promote effective measures for the meaningful participation of youth in all areas of national development.
6. The Division also organized, the "African Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Seventh United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and Treatment of Offenders". The meeting, inter alia, reconfirmed the deep interest of the region in the establishment of the African Regional Institute on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders.
7. The Division organized, in collaboration with the African Centre for Applied Research and Training in Social Development, a workshop on the "Mass Media and African Society", in Tripoli, Libya from 1 to 5 November 1983. The purpose of the workshop, besides others, was to review the role of mass media in rural development and in institutional and technological changes in Africa.
8. The Division also carried out the first review of the implementation of the United Nations' Conference on Desertification's Plan of Action to Combat Desertification in Africa. It evaluated the relevant activities over the past seven years (1977-1983) in ten countries around the Kalahari Desert Area. A similar exercise in twenty-one countries was carried out in the Sudano-Sahelian Region by the United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Organization (UNSO) and in six countries by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
9. The Division participated in the UNDTCD's Inter-regional seminar on Integrated Rural Development, held in the People's Republic of China during 16-30 August 1983. A resource person presented a paper entitled "Rural Development in Africa: A Retrospect" at the seminar.
10. The Division continued to render technical advisory services to the African Centre for Applied Research and Training in Social Development (ACARTSOD), Tripoli, Libya. Such support included substantive assistance in the organization of "the training course on social planning and administration of social development projects".

11. The Division also carried out the following studies:

- (a) the Situation of African Youth in the 1980s;
- (b) Draft Regional Plan of Action on Youth;
- (c) Patterns of family and child welfare policies, organizations and administration in Africa;
- (d) Study of the identification, testing, promotion and acceptance of improved social and material technologies and innovative systems applicable to activities undertaken in rural areas;
- (e) The Integrated Approach to Rural Development in Africa: Strategy and means of implementation. It was presented in the seminar noted in (1) above.

12. Rural Progress, ECA's Newsletter on rural development activities in Africa, continued to be published.

On-going activities (1984-1985)

The activities of the Division for the 1984-1985 biennium include the following:

(i) Case studies on production co-operatives and rural development in Africa, to be followed by an Expert Consultation to be held in October 1985. Several organizations within and outside the UN system have been invited to contribute papers and to attend the Consultation;

(ii) Case studies on technology and rural development to be followed by an Expert Consultation on the same theme early in 1986;

(iii) Annual meetings of the African Regional Inter-Agency Committee on Rural Development;

(iv) Advisory services to member states, on request, on the various aspects of integrated rural development, social policies, planning and institutions, national youth policies, administration and organization, human settlements and environment;

(v) Organization of a Scientific Round Table on Climatic Situation and Drought in Africa in February 1984. The Round Table elaborated a "Regional Plan of Action to Combat the Impacts of Drought" in Africa detailing measures that need to be taken in the short-, medium- and long-terms at the national, regional and international levels to alleviate the impacts of drought. The Plan is intended to be implemented between 1984 and 1990 and beyond. The Regional Plan of Action was endorsed by ECA Conference of Ministers;

(vi) Studies on environmental health and sanitation relating to water resource development, to be followed by a seminar, which is scheduled to be held in 1985;

(vii) studies on the prevention of encroachment on arable land which will be considered by an Expert Group Meeting in 1985;

(viii) studies on (a) physical planning, (b) spatial organization of development activities, (c) building materials production development and (d) studies for "African Participation in the Year of the Homeless; 1987. An Expert Group Meeting on (b) above will be organized in 1985,

(ix) organization of the meeting of the Inter-Governmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment, to be held in 1985;

(x) ECA's bulletin, Rural Progress continues to be published.

Tentatively planned activities (1986-1987)

(i) Organization of a Regional Consultation on technology and rural development in Africa in 1986;

(ii) Case studies on the implementation aspects of integrated rural development in Africa, to be considered by a Regional Expert Consultation on the same theme in 1987;

(iii) Continuation of the publication of ECA's bulletin, Rural Progress;

(iv) Continuation of the advisory services, on request, to member states on the various aspects of integrated rural development, social policies, planning and institutions national youth policies, administration and organization, human settlements and environment;

(v) Organization of the periodic meeting of the African Regional Inter-Agency Committee on Rural Development;

(vi) Survey of social trends and major social development and study on the social aspects of the Lagos Plan of Action and their submission to the fifth Conference of African Ministers of Social Affairs in 1986;

(vii) Study on the social aspects of the Lagos Plan of Action for consideration by the fifth meeting of the Conference of African Ministers of Social Affairs, 1987;

(viii) establishment of a clearing house for the collection and dissemination of information, studies and experiences on youth in Africa and for monitoring the implementation and follow-up of the African Regional Plan of Action on Youth;

(ix) study on the implementation on the regional plan of action on youth for review by an Inter-Governmental Expert Group meeting in 1987;

(x) Technical Publications: (a) Social Aspects and implications of International Migration in Africa (1986) and (b) Survey of National Family Policies and Programmes in the context of Socio-economic Development in Africa (1986); (c) Modalities of popular participation in rural development in some selected countries (1987); (d) Institutional mechanisms for the formulation and implementation of human settlements policies in Africa (1986); (e) Human Settlements Planning for different environments in the African Region (1987); (f) Programmes and Projects for improving and developing training facilities and programmes and related institutions for training of human settlements personnel in Africa; (g) study on Programmes for promoting institutionalized public participation systems in human settlements; (i) study on Approaches to the formulation of comprehensive construction planning and implementation policies in Africa;

(xi) Report on the identification of measures for the incorporation of human settlement development programmes in the over-all process of socio-economic development to the Joint Inter-Governmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment (1987)

(xii) Report to the Joint Inter-Governmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment on integrated approaches to evaluate building construction needs as a requisite for the elaboration of sound construction policies and programmes for developing building materials industries in Africa (1987);

(xiii) Report on the progress being made in developing environmental capabilities to combat desertification in the African region to the ECA Conference of Ministers (1986);

(xiv) Report on the progress being made in the implementation of the Regional Plan of Action to combat the impacts of drought in Africa within the context of ECA resolution 499(XIX) on the subject to the Joint Inter-Governmental Regional Committee on Human Settlements and Environment (1986);

(xv) Report on the environmental problems related to the development and management of underground water for agricultural use in the countries of the Kalahari Desert Region to the Lusaka-based MULPOC Council of Ministers to enable them to make decisions for related action in environmental management (1986);

(xvi) Report on the coordination of environmental activities in the African Region with other organs of the United Nations System, governmental and non-governmental organizations, within the context of ECA resolution 408(XVI) to the Committee noted in (xiv) above (1986);

(xvii) Report on progress in the implementation of recommendations to be made and resolutions to solve environmental health and disease problems relating to water resource development adopted at ECA Conference of Ministers of 1986 to the Committee noted in (xiv) above (1987).

II. JOINT ECA/FAO AGRICULTURE DIVISION

Past activities

1. The Division organized a Regional Expert Consultation on Socio-Economic Indicators for monitoring and evaluation of Agrarian Reform and Rural Development.

2. A seminar was organized in 1983 by the Division on the desk and field work on project for the establishment of a sub-regional Hybrid Maize Research Centre for the Eastern and Southern Africa sub-region. It was held at Lusaka.

3. It completed the preparatory work for the seminar and study tour in USSR for African specialists involved in implementation of rural development projects, to be held in 1984.

On-going activities (1984-1985)

1. Advisory services to member-states and inter-governmental organizations, on request, on policies, plans and investment programmes and measures for the improvement of agricultural statistical data capability for monitoring agricultural development based on the recommended socio-economic indicators; in harmonization and coordination of livestock and forestry development policies and programmes at sub-regional and regional levels, on measures for improving the capacity of marketing institutions, services and facilities;
2. completion of a study on the Integration of Women in Development Process: Pilot Project on the Reduction of Food Losses in Sierra Leone and Togo in 1984;
3. monitoring of the implementation of the food and agricultural aspects of the Lagos Plan of Action during 1980-1985 and preparation of report thereon to the Eleventh meeting of ECA Conference of Ministers. Also to be reported on to the Conference of Ministers are proposals and recommendations for food and agriculture development during 1986-1990;
4. preparation of reports on the assessment and appreciation of the role of women in institutions for the production and marketing of food;
5. studies on constraints inhibiting effective agricultural services and institutions for small farmers (1984-1985);
6. survey of the constraints on improved storage facilities in two sub-regions of Africa (1984-1985);
7. technical publications: reports on (i) the role of small scale indigenous entrepreneurs in the marketing of food and agricultural products (1984); (ii) measures for the improvement of cooperatives and small farmers organizations/association in the marketing of food and livestock products (1985); and (iii) prices and incentives for increased food and agricultural production (1984).

Tentatively planned activities (1986-1987)

1. Reports on the implementation of the Lagos Plan of Action at sub-regional level to the policy organs of the ECA, FAO and OAU (1986 and 1987);
2. workshops or seminars for government officials to improve their capacity in analysis, formulation and implementation of policies, plans and programmes of agricultural development (1986-1987);
3. marketing seminar for government officials involved in the operation and management of state-trading institutions (1987);
4. studies and reports on (i) reduction of food waste and losses by farmers' marketing institutions and consumers (1986-1987); (ii) magnitude and causes of pre-harvest food losses in Africa (1986); (iii) measures to reduce food losses over the period 1974-1985; (iv) marketing policies and programmes for food products; (v) role of women in the marketing of food and agricultural products, (vi) possible actions to improve the performance of rural and urban storage; (vii) promotion of food security;

and (vii) strengthening of national food security efforts as a basis for establishing a subregional food security programme (1987),

5. technical publications on (i) existing forestry legislation, policies and institutions for improved forest conservation, management and accelerated development (1987); (ii) evaluation of programmes and techniques and land use particularly with respect to forestry and wild life, soil conservation and management (1986 and 1987), (iii) basic data requirements for policy making, planning and evaluation of food and agricultural development programmes at national, subregional and regional levels (1986-1987), and (iv) improving the efficiency of existing agrarian structures with emphasis on supporting services (1987),

6. advisory services, on request, to member states and others on (i) policies, plans and investment programmes on policies, plans and investment programmes including prefeasibility and feasibility studies (1986-1987), (ii) strategies for improving agricultural statistical data; (iii) improvement of agricultural institutions and services; and (iv) effective marketing institutions, services and facilities.

III. TRANSPORT, COMMUNICATIONS AND TOURISM DIVISION

Past activities

1. The Division completed in 1983 the second part of the phase II of the Low Cost Sound Broadcasting system project. It has now been handed-over to the Voice of Kenya.
2. At the request of the Southern African Labour Commission (SALC), the Division prepared a report recommending that migrant labour be utilised in construction and maintenance of rural access roads. Implementation of this suggestion has created effective labour demand in Kenya and Ethiopia. SALC countries have, therefore, been advised, based on the experience of these two countries, that construction of rural feeder roads will also help in (i) promoting food self-sufficiency and (ii) opening up remote rural areas with potential for food and cash crops production.

On-going activities (1984-1985)

1. Advisory services to member states and others, on request, in the field of roads and road transport;
2. studies on (i) simplification of documentary and other procedures between trading partners including the establishment of subregional transport facilities group (ii) and specific transport problems of land-locked islands and of least developed African countries;
3. study on the African Highway Master Plan in late 1984 or early 1985, which, when completed, would form the basic prerequisite for the rural development efforts of the African region;
4. organization of a telecommunications seminar on rural network planning in Addis Ababa from 17 to 21 September 1984, with attendance from 15 English-speaking African countries. The objective of the seminar was to discuss planning methods and information on modernization of rural networks in developing countries.

Tentatively planned activities (1986-1987)

1. Study on the missing links of Trans African Highways and their feeder roads (1987),
2. continuation of advisory services to member states and others on request, in the field of roads and road transport,
3. technical publications on manpower and training surveys in roads, railways, inland water transport, air and maritime transport for policy-makers and Government Experts.

IV. NATURAL RESOURCES DIVISION

Past activities

1. The Division's "Development and Demonstration of Technologies suitable for Rural Areas in Africa" programme in six countries (viz. Kenya, Mauritius, Botswana, Senegal, Morocco and Egypt) made considerable progress. The process was initiated to identify technologies in these countries for:

- (a) processing, storage and transport of maize, rice, sorghum, fruits and vegetables;
- (b) renewable energies (solar energy, biogas, windpower, and waste utilization) and;
- (c) textiles, clay and ceramics industries with special reference to the role of women.

Institutions and personnel engaged in the above mentioned activities in these six countries were identified.

A study tour for six African experts to observe the infrastructure and operational techniques in these three areas in India was organized from 16 March to 8 April 1983. The report of the study tour has been issued.

The Division developed a new project, entitled, "Assistance to African countries in the Development Replication of Technologies, relevant to the problem and needs of the rural population". It was accepted by India and has provision for consultancy services to member-states.

On-going activities (1984-1985)

1. Advisory services to member-states on request, in the field of water resources development and management covering;
 - (a) assessment of surface and ground water resources and;
 - (b) identification and preparation of village/rural water supply and irrigation projects.

2. Publication jointly with DTCD on ground water resources development in Africa covering occurrence of such resource, quality and pollution factors associated with its use, development and range of technologies available for exploration and development and cost benefits in its uses.

Tentatively planned activities (1986-1987)

1. Report on the long-term strategy for water resources development in drought affected areas (1987);
2. system wide and international cooperation and substantive servicing of one session of the proposed Intergovernmental Committee on water for the African Region called for by the Lagos Plan of Action (1986);
3. advisory services to member states, on request, on (i) planning, policy-making and legislation with respect to water resources development (1986-1987); and (ii) the assessment of surface water and ground water availability and on developing institutional capabilities for the appropriate exploitation and development of water resources (1986-1987);
4. technical publication: Economic aspects of rural water supply in Africa (1987).

V. JOINT ECA/UNIDO INDUSTRY DIVISION

Past activities

1. A Technical Compendium on the Milling, Baking and Utilization of Composite flour was completed.
2. Training of seventy-five officials and small farmers from Burundi, Rwanda and Zaire in artisanal and small-scale sugar production in rural areas was organized.
3. Project profiles covering thirty items in six product areas were prepared for all African member states. They covered food, wood, textile, leather and metal engineering. These profiles were prepared to facilitate establishment of small-scale industry in the rural areas.

On-going activities (1984-1985)

1. Advisory services for development of agro-based industries and forest based industries and for policies, support institutions and services, making use of TCDC framework, on request, to member-states;
2. publication of a Directory on Project Profiles including identified products to be manufactured in the region for the creation of a network of various types of small scale and rural industries (1985).

Tentatively planned activities (1986-1987)

1. Reports to member-states through sub-regional meetings of the MULPOC's on integrated development of resource-based production of agro-based industrial products and related manpower needs.
2. Advisory services to member-states, on request:
 - (i) to facilitate information and feasibility studies for development of agro-based industries;
 - (ii) in planning and implementation of national and multi-national agro-based industry projects;
 - (iii) in investment promotion;
 - (iv) for manpower training; and
 - (v) to prepare portfolio of project profiles on specific small scale industrial projects, taking into consideration the resource base on demand criteria.
3. Technical publication: updating of a Directory of project profiles for small scale industries including identified products to be manufactured in the region for the creation of a network of small scale and rural industries.
4. Organization of workshop in one member-state or for a subregion, incorporating Chambers of Commerce and industry on the promotion and development of small-scale industries and industries for integrated rural development.

VI. AFRICAN TRAINING AND RESEARCH CENTRE FOR WOMEN

Past activities

1. The Centre carried out studies on policies and strategies in rural development in Sierra Leone and the Federal Republic of Islamic Comoroos respectively. It also did a study on the need assessments of the women in the Comores;
2. a study on the role of women in agricultural development of Africa, which was published in the ECA's Survey of Socio-Economic Conditions in Africa, 1983, was completed;
3. the Centre participated in and presented a paper entitled a "study of the Role of Women in Rural Development in Africa" to the FAO/Ethiopia Seminar on the Role of Women in Rural Development in Ethiopia;
4. the Centre prepared studies on (i) the "Role of Women in the Alleviation of Food Crisis in Africa" for submission in the Third Regional Conference on the "Integration of Women in Development", Lusaka, 1984; (the same study will be submitted to the World Conference on the UN Decade for Women, Nairobi, 1985)
(ii) the "Role of Women in Production, Storage and Marketing of Agricultural Products in seven Central African countries; (iii) the "Role of Women in the Rural Economy of Upper Volta"; and (iv) the "Participation of Women in the rural economy" of four African countries.
5. It participated in the FAO/ECA Seminar on Firewood and Energy Development for African Women, Lusaka, April 1983.

On-going activities (1984-1985)

1. Advisory services to member-states, on request, on the participation of Women in Development.
2. Report to member-states on (i) the role of women in the Industrial Development Decade for Africa; (ii) comparative situation of women in agriculture (Central African Republic, Gambia, Senegal, 1984); and (iii) the effects of existing laws and customary norms on the status of women, specially as regards family and inheritance laws (Ghana, Cameroon, 1984; Angola, Burundi, Rwanda, Tunisia, 1985).
3. Four Expert meetings on family and inheritance law and the integration of women in development.
4. Training workshop for rural women on the use of technologies that have been tested and found appropriate for home and farm.
5. Report to the Preparatory Committee and the World Conference on the United Nations Decade for Women (1985) on the implementation of the World Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development.

Tentatively planned activities (1986-1987)

1. Sub-regional workshop on improving women's agricultural productivity (1987).
2. Implementation of pilot projects for the prevention of food losses in Sierra Leone and Togo (in cooperation with FAO).
3. Training of Rural Women in "Tie-Dye" and cooperatives in Togo.
4. Sub-regional seminar on measures to improve women's management skills.
5. Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in Development (1987).

VII. PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, MANAGEMENT AND MANPOWER DIVISIONOn-going activities (1984-1985)

1. The sub-regional inter-Governmental workshops on the Organization and Management of institutions for rural development (one for Anglophone countries in 1984 and the other for Francophone countries in 1985) followed by reports to member-states;
2. Two sub-regional Inter-Governmental Conferences on local government for national development (one for Francophone countries in 1984 and the other for Anglophone countries in 1985) followed by report to member-states; and
3. Advisory services to member-states, on request, in the effective organization and management of institutions for rural development.

Tentatively planned activities (1986-1987)

1. Two national workshops on the techniques, methods and strategies for improving non-formal education delivery capabilities in rural areas.
2. Report on the status of and progress made in non-formal education programmes in African development.
3. Technical publication: "Status and Effectiveness of Existing non-formal Education systems".

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