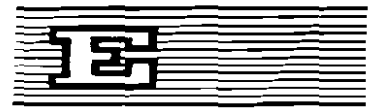
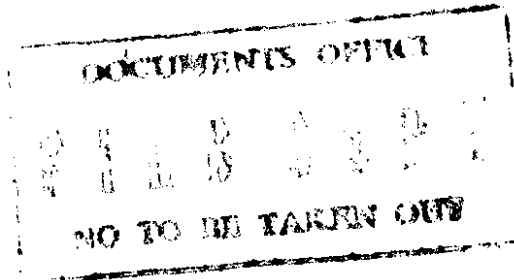




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PROPOSALS FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT

1986-1990

Executive Summary

*E/ECA/TPCW.6/1/Rev.3
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PROPOSALS FOR FOOD AND AGRICULTURE DEVELOPMENT

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Executive SummaryIntroduction

The Assessment document E/ECA/CM.11/37 provides details on performance of the food and agricultural sector. Some of the notable aspects of the sector's poor performance in the 1980-85 period are: the widening of the food-population gap, a fall in the production of cereals amounting to 19 per cent, inclusion of 21 countries in the region among nations facing critical food shortage, and today's greater reliance on external food supply and food aid. This paper addresses the causes of this unbecoming situation and makes proposals to remedy the situation in the short and long-term. The proposals made in this paper are not a revision but a reinforcement of AFPLAN/LPA.

Emergency measures

Many countries in the region now face food shortages and have to resort to emergency measures which include: mobilization of technical and financial assistance, procurement of food supplies to meet the immediate needs of the people, expansion of food storage capacities, improving food distribution systems, improving management systems dealing with emergencies, and promotion of production aiming at increasing the amount of domestically produced food supply.

In the short-term to alleviate suffering arising from food shortage external food supply through commercial transactions and food aid are necessary. The balance of payments problems that many countries in Africa face justify external assistance. Donors had by February 1985 pledged 5.1 million tons of grain to 21 Seriously Affected Countries (SAC) in Africa. This is far below the forecast requirements of the SAC's. Unfortunately, no hopeful signs are seen in the forecasts of food production in 1985 in the region as many countries expect domestic food production levels which are considerably below demand. Governments should also direct attention to the improvement of food storage, transport and distribution systems to facilitate emergency food relief administration.

Priorities for recovery and rehabilitation

Recovery and rehabilitation measures in the agricultural sector should aim at achieving short- and medium-term targets. In the medium-term governments should endeavour to achieve the rates of growth for food and agriculture implied in the normative scenario described in the ECA document: ECA and Africa's

Development 1983-2008, April 1983. Annual rates of growth ranging between 3 and 4.6 per cent are proposed for food crops such as roots, tubers and pulses and meat with a higher rate of growth recommended for cereals. For cash crops the annual rates of growth in percentage terms are: coffee 3.9, cotton 7.1, cocoa 3.1, tea 4.2, tobacco 4.1.

The package of recovery and rehabilitation measures include: increased utility of arable land, more manpower resources being directed to agriculture, improved technology being applied to agricultural production, and increased application of inputs. A comparison between Africa and other regions in the third world show that Africa has lower utility levels of land, manpower, fertilizers and irrigation. Better utility should also be made of the established infrastructure such as roads, irrigation systems, electricity and water supply systems.

Governments should accord priority to the establishment and maintenance of the Early Warning System (EWS) covering cereals, meat, milk, roots and tubers, pulses and fertilizers. This entails developing systems for collection and processing of data on crop production, rainfall, deliveries to markets and wholesale price trends. This information is vital for monitoring food security in nations and internationally.

Longer term strategies to increase food and agriculture production

It is recommended that governments undertake reviews of long-term food and agriculture development strategies and policies and among other changes accord the sector the highest sectoral development priority. The strategies should also recognize the small farm as the principal operational unit. It is essential that manpower to be associated with the development and servicing of the sector should be well trained. This should include the farmers themselves, rural artisans and entrepreneurs.

Technological research in the sector has a crucial role in its development. Specific areas which need research attention include high yielding crop varieties, drought and disease resistant crops, early maturing and disease resistant livestock, farming systems research which should also aim at increasing cropping frequency, and extension of agricultural land frontiers through use of semi-arid lands.

Physical and social infrastructure to service agriculture should be developed to levels where it can provide effectively the needs of the sector. These include roads, irrigation systems, storage facilities, agro-industries, electricity, water supply, marketing and credit institutions which have a direct impact on production activities of the sector; and social services such as health, education and housing.

One of the development objectives for the sector should be improvement of environmental quality. Soil erosion, deforestation, overstocking, shifting cultivation and water wastage have to be avoided. Effluent standards have to be established and enforced.

Agricultural regional inter-dependence is manifest in such areas as international trade, food security and food aid, capital and technical assistance, research and transfer of technology; and inter-regional and intra-African cooperation should therefore be encouraged in these fields.

Investment of appropriate levels of financial and manpower resources into the sector is a necessary condition for its development along the lines recommended in the AFPLAN/LPA. Internal resources can be mobilized to finance the required levels of investment in the sector if appropriate measures are taken by governments. These measures include: extension of financial infrastructure to the rural areas bringing banking services to the farmers whose saving potential has not been developed, providing more incentives for savings, increased taxation on consumption of luxury items and on unearned incomes and wealth. Inflow of external financial resources both private and public have in recent years increased in nominal and not in real terms.

Proposals for More Effective Monitoring of Implementation of LPA in 1986-1990
Period

The establishment and maintenance of monitoring and evaluation systems for LPA objectives and targets was stressed in the Plan. Monitoring has to be initiated at the national level. Standardization of monitoring systems, however, presents difficulties because of differences among states in their organization and styles of management. There are, however, common features which include: selection and development of socio-economic indicators appropriate to the monitoring of specific subjects of national plans, the establishment of benchmarks for these indicators, systematic and regular collection of related quantitative data sets. At the regional level it will be necessary to maintain monitoring on a number of subjects including the following: sub-regional food trade, inter-country cooperation in the form of production, trade, price and financial agreements. Inter-agency cooperation principally between FAO, OAU and ECA is necessary in coordinating monitoring for the AGC/LPA. Ministers are urged to recommend the establishment of a feasible monitoring system and to request OAU, FAO and ECA to collaborate in its establishment.