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RESEARCH

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SYSTEM-WIDE INITIATIVE ON AFRICA,
1996 - 2001**

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THE REQUIREMENT OF THE AWARD OF A MASTERS DEGREE IN
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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other University.

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Signed:  Date: 19-11-2009

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University Supervisor.

Prof. OLEWE NYUNYA

Signed:  Date: 19-11-09

DEDICATION

My efforts to this research are dedicated first to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who has sustained me through the turbulence of life while working on this project.

I also dedicate this research to six most important people in my life: My dear husband Fred Kimori Mwakesi for his encouragement, patience and love, my three children who were the centre of strength for me to work hard, Frank Mwakesi, Nessy Maghema (passed on 1st April 2004 at the age of 22 through the Konza, Mash bus accident) and Harrison Tuja. You all made sure I was safe from the library to home at night and I felt loved and spoilt, and lastly my mum and dad, Agnes Maghema and Harrison Tuja (passed on in April 2003 at the age of 74 through road accident). Without your presence, sacrifice, love, encouragement, patience and prayers I would not have gone this far. Whenever I felt, all is over and, like giving up (and these were many times), you stood by me and I felt renewed strength.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Africa is a continent at a critical turning point in its history. It is a continent beset by economic, political and social crises, yet it is also a continent with abundant untapped natural resource base. Economic decline, falling per capita incomes and worsening social conditions have led many to characterize the 1980's and 1990's as the "lost decades" for Africa. Africa's socio-economic profile is grim. Fifty four per cent (54%) of the population (220 million) is estimated to live in absolute poverty, and Africa is the only region in the world in which poverty is projected to increase over the following decades. Twenty two out of the twenty five countries appearing in the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) category of "low human development" countries and 33 out of the 47 Least Developed Countries (LDCs) are African. The proliferation of armed conflicts and their staggering human toll (in terms of massive loss of human lives, refugees and displacements) have also strengthened the perception of Africa as a continent in turmoil and lacking in political stability. (*UN S-G, 1995: 1*)

However it is neither fair nor objective to label developments in the continent solely on the basis of these generalizations. Significant divergences in economic performance among countries and across sub-regions are evident throughout the continent. In the past decade, growth rate in three countries have exceeded 8 per cent per annum, eight countries had annual growth rate between 6 and 8 per cent and a dozen countries were able to achieve average annual rate of growth of output between 3 and 6 per cent. Thirty five African countries have been implementing structural adjustment programs for more than a decade and have succeeded in putting in place economic reform measures to correct fundamental economic imbalances and support private sector development. At a time when conditions are steadily improving for many people around the world, the socio-economic plight of Africa remains a matter of great concern. The situation has reached a critical stage. (*Ghali, 1995*)

1.1 Background of the Problem

A diagnosis of the African social, political and economic situation has been attempted on many occasions by many eminent Africans. As a conscious and deliberate attempt to address Africa's development dilemma, the UNDP initiated the UN System-wide Special Initiative on Africa in 1996.

The United Nations System – Wide Special Initiative was designed to rationalize UN assistance to Africa, including that of the Bretton Woods institutions, through more effective coordination and facilitating genuine partnerships. In addressing the root causes of the problems facing the continent, the UNSIA sought to reinforce visionary leadership, empower people, revalidate African development priorities set out in the 1995 Cairo Agenda for Action, and ultimately to build sustainable partnerships. The UNSIA was launched to help Africa help itself and to ensure that the United Nations system's commitment to support Africa's development efforts was sustained in a comprehensive and coherent manner. The initiative was meant to strengthen the capacity of African men and women to take charge of the development process and promote minimum conditions for civil tranquility, good governance and socio-economic progress in order to give development a chance. It also sought to give more hope to future generations through the provision of better education, health care and employment opportunities.

Compared to the past UN development programmes for Africa, the Initiative was innovative because first it aimed at giving practical expression to the policy commitments made in the past, such as the UN New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) and the UN System-Wide Plan of Action for African Recovery and Development. Second, financial mobilization would take place with the full cooperation of the World Bank. Third, specific leadership roles were to be taken by agencies across the UN system for each of the fourteen major components of the Initiative. Fourth, the heads of UN agencies would hold themselves mutually accountable for achieving results. The Special Initiative on Africa was a ten year programme of concrete actions to

accelerate development in priority areas already identified by African countries (*Africa Recovery, 1998*).

1.2 The Problem Statement

The attempted assessment of the African socio-political and economic situation on many occasions by eminent Africans in all cases has been unanimous: the African region is most seriously affected by the burden of underdevelopment. In spite of its vast human and natural resources, in spite of the efforts of its leaders and the dedication of its people, the region is unable to boast of any significant achievement of wellbeing. The use of its resources is not only below its potential but also in the hands of outsiders. Mass poverty, unemployment, social unrest, disease, hunger and ignorance continue to plague the region. As a result, Africa continues to resound with cries of distress. (Adedeji, 1983; 1979). The study examined the stages leading to the conceptualization of the United Nations System-Wide Initiative on Africa. The study also examined the tools and framework used to implement the Initiative and finally analyzed its impact on Africa's development from 1996 to 2001. This analysis should be able to give a lead to the future prospects of other initiatives and whether indeed it had any positive lessons to be learned.

The study finally analyzed how much help the Special Initiative gave to African countries that were affected by conflict and how much it has enhanced the climate for investment and established the necessary conditions for sustainable economic and social development. From the foregoing discussion, a number of pertinent questions emerge which constituted the focus of this study. These were as follows:

1. What factors led to the formation of the United Nations System-Wide Initiative on Africa?
2. What tools and framework were used to implement the Initiative and were they appropriate?
3. What impact has the initiative made on the African Countries in relation to its goals, indicators?
4. What were the lessons learned from the initiative, and whether they could be useful for future development initiative in Africa?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The main objective was to assess the impact of the implementation of the United Nations System-Wide Initiative on Africa and its possible implications on future Africa's development initiatives.

The specific objectives were to:

1. analyze factors that led to the formation of UNSIA
2. examine the involvement of African countries in this process and the involvement of major actors
3. discuss outcomes of UNSIA
4. examine lessons learnt from the initiative and whether they could be useful for future development prospects of Africa.

1.4 Justification of the Study

The structure of the African economy defines the essential features of Africa's central problem of underdevelopment. The major problems of mass poverty, food shortage, low productivity, weak productive base and backward technology that plague Africa are basic bottlenecks that arise from the structures of production, consumption technology, employment and socio-political organization. An appropriate framework for such a structural analysis should be grounded, first of all, on the examination of the enabling and disabling factors (such as domestic and external, historical and contemporary) which have shaped and continue to sustain Africa's underdevelopment.

According to Adedeji (1983), time has come for African governments and peoples to begin to evolve their own uniquely African pattern of development and life styles which is built on their rich cultural heritage, their social structure and economic institution and their considerable natural resources. A pattern of development and life styles which while

borrowing from other societies and other countries does not alienate us, the Africans, from our cultural heritage.

The main justification for this study is therefore to unearth the problems that may have been inherent in the implementation framework of the UNSIA process and attempt to give the way forward for future Africa development discourses.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

This section reviews the literature on development theories. The aim is to have an understanding of development, dependent and underdevelopment theories. The theories explain the literature behind the formulation of the United Nations System Wide Initiative on Africa.

1.5.1 Development theories

An understanding of the various development theories is critical as it can be used to interrogate the conceptual and implementation framework of the various development initiatives. Similarly such an understanding can be used to inform the conceptualization of future development initiative.

1.5.2 Background of Dependency Concept

The concept of dependency in Africa was developed in the late 1950s under the guidance of the Director of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America, Raul Prebisch. Prebisch and his colleagues were troubled by the fact that economic growth in the advanced industrialized countries did not necessarily lead to growth in the poorer countries. Indeed, their studies suggested that economic activity in the richer countries often led to serious economic problems in the poorer countries. Such a possibility was not predicted by neoclassical theory, which had assumed that economic growth was beneficial to all (Pareto optimal) even if the benefits were not always equally shared.

Prebisch's initial explanation for the phenomenon was very straightforward: poor countries exported primary commodities to the rich countries that then manufactured products out of those commodities and sold them back to the poorer countries. The "Value Added" by manufacturing a usable product always cost more than the primary products used to create those products. Therefore, poorer countries would never be earning enough from their export earnings to pay for their imports.

Prebisch's solution was similarly straightforward: poorer countries should embark on programs of import substitution so that they need not purchase the manufactured products from the richer countries. The poorer countries would still sell their primary products on the world market, but their foreign exchange reserves would not be used to purchase their manufactured goods from abroad. Three issues made this policy difficult to successfully implement. The first is that the internal markets of the poorer countries were not large enough to support the economies of scale used by the richer countries to keep their prices low. The second issue concerned the political will of the poorer countries as to whether a transformation from being primary products producers was possible or desirable. The final issue revolved around the extent to which the poorer countries actually had control of their primary products, particularly in the area of selling those products abroad. These obstacles to the import substitution policy led others to think a little more creatively and historically at the relationship between rich and poor countries.

At this point dependency concept was viewed as a possible way of explaining the persistent poverty of the poorer countries. The traditional neoclassical approach said virtually nothing on this question except to assert that the poorer countries were late in coming to solid economic practices and that as soon as they learned the techniques of modern economics, then the poverty would begin to subside. However, Marxists theorists viewed the persistent poverty as a consequence of capitalist exploitation. And a new body of thought, called the *world systems approach*, argued that the poverty was a direct consequence of the evolution of the international political economy into a fairly rigid division of labor which favored the rich and penalized the poor.

1.5.3 What is Dependency theory?

There are many definitions of the dependency theories that have been expounded by various scholars. According to Osvaldo Sunkel, it is defined as an explanation of the economic development of a state in terms of the external influences--political, economic, and cultural--on national development policies (*Osvaldo, 1969, p.23*).

Another view by Theotonio Dos Santos views dependency as a historical condition which shapes a certain structure of the world economy such that it favors some countries to the detriment of others and limits the development possibilities of the subordinate economies...a situation in which the economy of a certain group of countries is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy, to which their own is subjected. (*Theotonio, 1971, p.226*)

John Beech and Simon Chadwick on the other hand view this theory as a situation where developing countries are kept in a position of dependency and underdevelopment due to existing economic and institutional power structures sustained by leading western nations. (*John & Simon 2005, glossary*)

Despite the differences in perception, there are three common features to these definitions which most dependency theorists share. First, dependency characterizes the international system as comprised of two sets of states, variously described as dominant/dependent, center/periphery or metropolitan/satellite. The dominant states are the advanced industrial nations in the Organization of Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The dependent states are those states of Africa, Latin America, and Asia which have low *per capita* GNPs and which rely heavily on the export of a single commodity for foreign exchange earnings. The definitions have in common the assumption that external forces are of singular importance to the economic activities within the dependent states. These external forces include multinational corporations, international commodity markets, foreign assistance, communications, and any other means by which the advanced industrialized countries can represent their economic interests abroad. Third, the

definitions of dependency all indicate that the relations between dominant and dependent states are dynamic because the interactions between the two sets of states tend to not only reinforce but also intensify the unequal patterns. Moreover, dependency is a very deep-seated historical process, rooted in the internationalization of capitalism. Dependency is an ongoing process:

Africa is today, and has been since the 19th century, part of an international system dominated by the now-developed nations. Africa underdevelopment is the outcome of a particular series of relationships to the international system. In a nutshell, dependency theory attempts to explain the present underdeveloped state of many nations in the world by examining the patterns of interactions among nations and by arguing that inequality among nations is an intrinsic part of those interactions.

1.5.4 Central Propositions of Dependency Theory

In overall there are a number of propositions, all of which are contestable, which form the core of dependency theory. The propositions are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Underdevelopment is a condition fundamentally different from *undevelopment*. The latter term simply refers to a condition in which resources are not being used. For example, the European colonists viewed the North American continent as an undeveloped area: the land was not actively cultivated on a scale consistent with its potential. Underdevelopment refers to a situation in which resources are being actively used, but used in a way which benefits dominant states and not the poorer states in which the resources are found.

The distinction between underdevelopment and undevelopment places the poorer countries of the world in a profoundly different historical context. These countries are not "behind" or "catching up" to the richer countries of the world. They are not poor because they lagged behind the scientific transformations or the enlightenment values of the European states. They are poor because they were coercively integrated into the European economic system only as producers of raw materials or to serve as repositories

of cheap labor, and were denied the opportunity to market their resources in any way that competed with dominant states.

Dependency theory suggests that alternative uses of resources are preferable to the resource usage patterns imposed by dominant states. There is no clear definition of what these preferred patterns might be, but some criteria are invoked. For example, one of the dominant state practices most often criticized by dependency theorists is export agriculture. The criticism is that many poor economies experience rather high rates of malnutrition even though they produce great amounts of food for export. Many dependency theorists would argue that those agricultural lands should be used for domestic food production in order to reduce the rates of malnutrition.

The preceding proposition can be further amplified: dependency theorists rely upon a belief that there exists a clear "national" economic interest which can and should be articulated for each country. In this respect, dependency theory actually shares a similar theoretical concern with realism. What distinguishes the dependency perspective is that its proponents believe that this national interest can only be satisfied by addressing the needs of the poor within a society, rather than through the satisfaction of corporate or governmental needs. Trying to determine what is "best" for the poor is a difficult analytical problem over the long run. Dependency theorists have not yet articulated an operational definition of the national economic interest.

The diversion of resources over time is maintained not only by the power of dominant states, but also through the power of elites in the dependent states. Dependency theorists argue that these elites maintain a dependent relationship because their own private interests coincide with the interests of the dominant states. These elites are typically trained in the dominant states and share similar values and culture with the elites in dominant states. Thus, in a very real sense, a dependency relationship is a "voluntary" relationship. One need not argue that the elites in a dependent state are consciously betraying the interests of their poor; the elites sincerely believe that the key to economic

development lies in following the prescriptions of liberal economic doctrine.
(*Bodenheimer*)

1.5.5 Theories of Underdevelopment

Underdevelopment is seen as the result of unequal relationships between rich developed capitalist countries and poor developing ones. In the past colonialism embodied the inequality between the colonial powers and their colonies. As the colonies became independent the inequalities did not disappear. Powerful developed countries such as the US, Europe and Japan dominate dependent powerless LDC's via the capitalist system that continues to perpetuate power and resources inequalities.

Dominant DC's have such a technological and industrial advantage that they can ensure the global economic system works in their own self-interest. Organizations such as the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO have agendas that benefit the firms, and consumers of primarily the DC's. Freeing up world trade, one of the main aims of the WTO, benefits the wealthy nations that are most involved in world trade. Creating a level playing field for all countries assumes that all countries have the necessary equipment to be able to play. For the world's poor this is often not the case.

In this model the responsibility for lack of development within LDC's rests with the DC's. Advocates of the dependency theory argue that only substantial reform of the world capitalist system and redistribution of assets will 'free' LDC's from poverty cycles and enable development to occur. Measures that the DC's could take would include the elimination of world debt and the introduction of global taxes such as the Tobin Tax. This tax on foreign exchange transactions, named after its proponent, the American Economist, James Tobin, would generate large revenues that could be used to pay off debt or fund development projects.

The underdevelopment theory has its lot of criticisms. It is argued that power is not easily redistributed as countries that possess it are unlikely to surrender it. It may be that it is not

the governments of the DC's that hold the power but large multinational enterprises that are reluctant to see the world's resources being reallocated in favor of the LDC's. The redistribution of assets globally will result in slower rates of growth in the DC's and this might be politically unpopular.

1.5.6 Theories of Development

Development means using the productive resources of society to improve the living conditions of the poorest people. In its weaker sense development means more of everything for everyone in the context of a lot more for a few. Development differs from economic growth in that it pays attention to the conditions of production for example, the environments affected by economic activity, and to the social consequences e.g. income distribution and human welfare. Stemming from enlightenment notions of the use of modern scientific mind for improving existence, development entails human emancipation in two senses; Liberation from the vagaries of nature through advanced technology and self emancipation, that's is, control over social relations, conscious control over the conditions under which human nature is formed. In both senses development entails economic, social and cultural progress, including in the latter sense, finer ethical ideals and higher moral values. (*Peet Page 1, 2, 3*)

To classify these countries as "traditional societies" implies either that the underdeveloped countries have no history or that it is unimportant (*Griffin, 1969*). But it is increasingly clear that the history of the post-colonial countries has been crucially important in shaping their present underdevelopment. The most influential proponent of the thesis that European expansion and colonialism created the underdevelopment of these countries has been Andre Gubder Frank. Frank's thesis is that underdevelopment is not basically a consequence of traditionalism. Rather, he argues that underdevelopment in Latin America-and by extension. parts of Africa and Asia- has been systematically created by colonist exploitation. Frank has documented "the development of underdevelopment" in Chile, Brazil, Mexico and Cuba.

The issue of governance has occupied centre stage in post cold war African problems. While the nature and the effect of government actions on African societies were recurring themes in post colonial Africa, they were not accorded the centrality they deserved. The Cold War provided a permissive environment in which the post independence African State, with its inherently weak foundation, could experiment with various forms of government. The legacy of colonialism itself was initially a major obstacle, characterized by ethnic and regional conflicts and competition for political control of the state. The absence of mechanisms to encourage mediation compounded the turbulence of defining this period (*Ayemi, 2004*)

This study examined the impacts of the whole process of the initiative from inception to its status presently. In so doing, it identified development factors that contributed towards the whole participatory process which involved the United Nations, other major actors and Africa itself. Generally Africa is known to depend on the North. Therefore in this analysis it is hoped that development and dependency theories will be able to help develop a framework in which the way forward for Africa can be established.

Considering the fact that real power has changed in a less dramatic way, the question to address is how real then the Initiative can apply its goals. The major actors as already seen are among others the Bretton Woods institutions from whom the third world depends. The United Nations depends on its member states to run its affairs, United States fronting like the largest stake holder of the organization. The new agenda centers on the most salient feature of the new international system: the contrast between formal political equality and actual economic inequality. The combination of the socio-economic differences to be found in the modern world with the notion of formal equality is unique to the modern international system. The system has become inclusive, but the reality of the newcomer's membership in the international society lacks meaning in the absence of the political, social and economic resources required for full participation in the political structure. The demands for the 'South' are largely demands that the political structure makes a reality of their membership of it, even if the most characteristic form these demands take is for a new international economic order. From the perspective of

the South. decolonization is an uncompleted process, which must be extended so that political power is genuinely redistributed. First and foremost, this redistribution requires a change in the economic conditions prevailing in the South. This therefore implies that 'North-South' relations are at least in part antagonistic (*Adebayo, 1979*).

While there is no single coherent body of thought that can accurately be described as 'dependency theory' instead various theories stress the key notion that some countries (or economies) are conditioned in their development by their dependence on other countries (economies), and that this dependence is structural and deeper than the dominance relationship between societies that differ in size, but not in level of socio-economic development. The general notion of dependency subsumes several different theories including dependency, center-periphery analysis and world-system analysis. This conceptual framework hence aims at analyzing an initiative involving various actors towards development of key and common areas as raised by the various African countries.

1.6 Research Methodology

In any research work, the success and failure of the data collected to reflect can be authoritative depending on the design and methodology used to collect the data. There are many different approaches to research design and methodology. The choice of any particular design and methodology depends on the appropriateness to the case of study. This section outlines the research methodology adapted. It discusses the research design, population and sample selection, data collection procedures and the analysis procedure that was adapted.

1.6.1 Research Design

The research is designed to capture information that would assist in addressing the main objective of this research: That is to assess the impact of the implementation of the United Nations System-Wide Initiative on Africa and its possible implications on future

Africa's development initiative. The study adopted a descriptive design. According to Gay (1976) descriptive research involves collecting data in order to test hypothesis or answer questions concerning the current status of the subject under study. It is against this background that the perceptions of stakeholders with regard to the issues, challenges and responses that impact of the United Nations system-wide initiative on Africa. The research design was favored because it allowed the researcher to use instruments like questionnaires to collect data.

1.6.2 The Population and Sampling plan.

The population of interest in the study encompassed all United Nations Organisation employees in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia. A stratified random sampling design was used. Stratification was used as the population of study was heterogeneous consisting of various cadres. Random samples were taken from within each group (stratum) in the proportions that each group bears to the population as a whole. Stratified sampling ensured that true representation of the population was well represented in the sample and that each respondent had an equal chance of being chosen (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). The sample size was evaluated as twenty percent of the population size. This was considered a good representation of the population in the sample. The samples for each stratum were evaluated as proportions of the population. As explained in Mugenda & Mugenda (1999), an optimum sample is one that fulfills requirements of efficiency, reliability and flexibility.

1.6.3 Data Collection

This study used the questionnaire method to collect primary data. As mentioned above, the targeted respondents are in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia. Data and information for this study was derived from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary data encompassed the use of United Nations library materials and other international organizations. This included publications, books, newspaper clippings articles, conferences reports, the internet and any relevant materials on the subject.

Primary sources of data were derived from visits to various United Nations agencies mainly the United Nations Development Programmes, Habitat, UNESCO, OAU, ECA and the Ministry of Planning and National Development to carry out interviews. Efforts were also made to visit or carry a phone interview with UNDP Kampala and ECA Ethiopia for the purpose of undertaking a comparative analysis of the implementation of UNSIA in the three countries in the region. This was done through contacts with their Embassies in Nairobi.

Due to the huge geographical areas of research, some questionnaires were administered through mail, email while others administered through telephone interview. The questionnaire to be used adopted both open and close-ended questions and used structured as well as unstructured questions. The questionnaire was divided into six main parts and questions relevant to these properties were formulated. Part A comprises of questions to assess the respondent's background information, which includes Country, gender and how long they have worked for the UN. Part B comprises of questions that would assess the level of understanding of The United Nations System-Wide Initiative in Africa by the respondent.

Parts C, D and E comprise questions that would assess the level of involvement of the respondents and their country in the United Nations System-Wide Initiative. Part F comprises questions seeking an evaluation of the Initiative and recommendations of the respondents with regard to future development initiatives in Africa.

1.6.4 Data Analysis and Presentation

Primary data gathered from employees of the UN was summarized, analyzed and presented by way of percentages and means. The analysis of data was done to answer the research questions. Data collected was analyzed to identify the key factors that necessitated the United Nations System-Wide Initiative in Africa; examine the involvement of African countries and major actors in the process and; to discuss outcome of UNSIA and its implications on future initiatives. Analyzed data was presented in form of frequency tables, percentages and bar charts.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

It may not be possible to get complete and accurate information because:-

1. Some of the people to be interviewed may not have been working with the UN at the time when UNSIA was initiated and implemented.
2. Telephone interviews are not quite reliable as the interviewee may not have time to give all the information required
3. Implementation Successes and Failure may not have been comprehensively documented.

CHAPTER TWO

BACKGROUND OF UNSIA

2.0 Introduction

This chapter reviews the existing literature on past Africa initiatives. It also reviews a wide range of actions and programmes that were taken in relation to the recommendations contained in the report submitted by the Secretary-General to the Security Council in April 1998. The aim is to examine whether the authors of United Nations System-Wide Initiative on Africa used experiences of past development initiatives in developing the UNSIA implementation framework.

2.1 Past Africa Development Initiative and Discourse since 1980

As Africa's submission to the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly summed it, the fundamental problem of Africa is that of "a vicious interaction between excruciating poverty and abysmally low levels of productivity in an environment characterized by serious deficiencies in basic and social infrastructure, most especially the physical capital, research capabilities, technological know-how and human resources development that are indispensable to an integrated and dynamic economy" (*ECA/OAU, 1980, p.4*)

Since the adoption of the Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) and the Final Act of Lagos by African Heads of States and Governments in 1980, Africa's efforts to bring about fundamental socio-economic structural changes have been constantly frustrated. In addition to domestic policy shortcomings in the implementation of the necessary policy reforms, African countries have been confronted with a host of external adverse factors. Prominent among these are the continuous worsening of the international economic environment particularly with the respect to the collapse in the prices of primary

commodities, mounting external indebtedness and decreasing net flows of public and private resources. This situation was further compounded by deteriorating weather conditions resulting in severe and persistent drought and increasing desertification.

"It is not surprising therefore that Africa's economic performance was particularly dismal since the beginning of the 1980 with an average annual growth rate of GDP of only 0.4 per cent for the region as a whole during the period 1980 - 1987. *Per-capita* income which was already low at the end of the 1970 had steadily declined by 2.6 per cent per annum between 1980 and 1987." (*Adedeji A. AAF-SAP pp.i*)

Such sharp decline in the standard of living of the African population had severely and adversely affected the most vulnerable groups, namely, women, youths, the disabled and the aged. In addition to the increasing poverty, Africa's economic crisis was also characterized by firstly the disintegration of the productive and infrastructural facilities. Agricultural output and particularly food production was substantially reduced. Also most of Africa's industries have been increasingly operating much below their installed capacities. Secondly, the physical infrastructure built during the immediate post independence era, has, to a large extent, deteriorated due to poor maintenance and lack of innovation. Thirdly, social services and welfare, especially education, public health and sanitation, housing and potable water, have rapidly deteriorated.

Against such a background many countries endeavored to undertake relevant economic policy reforms. One such programme was Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery 1986 - 1990 (APPER) adopted by the Organization of African Unity in 1985, and the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development 1986 - 1990 (UN-PAAERD). In addition, since 1980, an increasing number of African countries, over 30 as of 1988, had adopted stabilization and structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) usually with the support of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. However, over time, increasing concerns started to be expressed not only with respect to the relevance of these programmes to Africa's long-term development objectives, but also with respect to their social, economic and financial

impact. During the mid-term review of the UN-PAAERD, the social impact raised more doubts and questions at policy level within and outside Africa and also at international forums, such as the 43rd session of the United Nations General Assembly. It was concluded that although these programmes aimed at restoring growth, generally through the achievement of fiscal and external balances and the free play of market forces, these objectives could not be achieved without addressing the fundamental structural bottlenecks of African economies. Consequently, at the beginning of 1988, the ECA, with the financial support of United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), embarked on a search for an African alternative framework to structural adjustment programmes (AAF-SAPs) that would address simultaneously both adjustment and structural transformation problems of the African economies. This exercise received great encouragement from the General Assembly of the United Nations, during the mid-term review of the UN-PAAERD.

The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) called upon African countries to increase their efforts in the search for a viable conceptual and practical framework for economic structural adjustment programmes in keeping with the long term development objectives and strategies at the national, sub regional and regional levels. This search resulted in a joint meeting of African Ministers of Economic Planning and Development and Ministers of Finance held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, on 10 April 1989 which adopted the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio Economic Recovery and Transformation (AAF-SAP). This alternative framework put great emphasis on the full mobilization and efficient utilization of domestic resources and the need to establish an enabling environment for sustainable development and to adopt a pragmatic approach between the public and private sectors. At the center of the alternative framework is the human dimension, the recognition that it is only through the motivation and the empowerment of people as well as the ensuring of the equitable distribution of income that development can take place on a sustainable basis. An adjustment programme that marginalizes people is doomed to failure.

AAF-SAP was to be used to design specific country programmes depending on individual countries and their characteristics. As a human - centered framework. AAF-SAP implied full democratization of all aspects of economic and social activities and in all stages from decision - making to implementation. It called for intensified inter-country cooperation in the designing, implementation and monitoring of national programmes for adjustment with transformation.

Finally AAF-SAP was to constitute a basis for constructive dialogue between African countries and their development partners in the implementation and financing of country programmes. It was hoped that on the basis of the resources provided by the international community, it would lead to sustainable development through the process of adjustment transformation thus ensuring that the 1990s would witness the socio-economic revival of Africa.

The surge towards political liberalization which is spreading across the continent and the emergence of an increasingly strengthened civil society are enhancing the chances for further entrenchment of democracy, pluralism and more accountable and transparent political systems. African governments have also taken a number of measures to respond to the challenges and obstacles to development. These include establishing mechanisms for conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of conflicts; the effective development and utilization of human resources; harnessing the continent's vast natural resources; mobilizing human and financial resources for development; strengthening regional and sub-regional cooperation and integration; and taking advantage of the trend towards economic globalization. (*Adedeji AAF-ASP*)

The challenge of economic globalization is particularly formidable. So far, Africa has not taken full advantage of the opportunities offered by the growth in international trade; global linkages; interdependent enterprise; information technology linkage; and investment and financial flows to developing countries. This state of marginalization, which is complicated by the inadequate resolution of a crippling debt problem, needs to be countered through resolute action.

Reflecting on the overall situation of progress despite severe challenges, Africa's top political leadership has increasingly focused primarily on national and regional responsibilities and how the international community can best support development as defined by Africa. The most significant of these initiatives was the adoption on 28 March 1995, during an extraordinary session of the OAU Council of Ministers in Cairo, of Re-launching Africa's Economic and Social Development: The Cairo Agenda for Action, which was subsequently adopted in the June 1995 Summit of the African Heads of State and Government in Addis Ababa. The Cairo Agenda reaffirmed that Africa's development is first and foremost the responsibility of the governments and people of Africa themselves. It also affirmed that priority must now be given to the implementation of the strategies and programmes for the development of African countries which have been adopted at the national, regional and continental levels.

The Cairo Agenda identified a set of priority issues which governments were committed to address and for which international support was requested in order to promote growth and economic recovery. These issues included governance, peace, stability and development; food security; human resource development and capacity building; resource mobilization and regional economic cooperation and integration.

In implementing these priorities, African Heads of State and Government called upon their international partners to enhance the development prospectus of the continent through understanding and appreciating Africa's development efforts, mitigating the adverse consequences of the Uruguay Round¹; and taking measures to reduce the continent's debt burden. These themes were also echoed at the July 1995 meeting of the ECOSOC High Level Segment on Africa. This agenda must inform any credible action to be undertaken by African countries and their supporters to stimulate economic and social development in Africa (*Adedeji, 1983*)

¹ The Uruguay round was a trade negotiation lasting from September 1986 to April 1994 which transformed the general agreement on tariffs and trade into the World Trade Organisation

Despite the widespread concern expressed by the international community about the deteriorating economic and social conditions in Africa and the commitment of African governments to removing the obstacles to growth, current projections indicate that the prospects for recovery was still not in sight and that unless urgent actions are taken, living standards could continue to fall in the region.

The agreements reached at numerous international gatherings such as the United Nations Conference on Population and Development, (UNCPD) the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, (UNCED) and the United Nations Conference on Women, and at the Social Summit in Copenhagen earlier routinely singled out the problems of Africa for special attention. The July 1995 discussion on Africa at the High-Level Segment meeting of ECOSOC was a powerful reminder of the depth of concern over and commitment to Africa. This solidarity with Africa was a continuing strength which needs to be channeled into further positive action.

It is against this background and recognizing that Africa represents the foremost challenge of global development and that "Africa is a test case for international cooperation for development and for the United Nations" that the UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, decided to launch this Special Initiative. Over the years, the UN has launched various initiatives in favor of Africa. UN-PAAERD and its successor the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa (UN-NADAF) are but the two most recent. Efforts have also been made over the years to co-ordinate activities of the UN system in Africa through the System-Wide Plan of Action for African Development. The "Special Initiative" was not intended to duplicate either the UN-NADAF or the System-Wide Plan of Action for African Recovery and Development. Its aim was to identify and develop practical proposals to maximize the support provided by the UN system to African development and to raise the priority given to Africa in the international agenda.

According to the UN System Wide Special Initiative on Africa (2001), in establishing the scope of this Initiative, a decision was made to focus on a few issues of the highest priority and to make every effort to mobilize and coordinate the efforts of African

governments and Africa's development partners to achieving their stated goals. Each of the proposals reflect the priorities enunciated by Africa's leaders and reinforced through the ECOSOC discussions on implementing the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). In fact, there is almost complete congruence between the priorities of African Heads of State and those identified in the Special Initiative.

The Special Initiative had a twofold challenge: one, to identify the best supportive actions congruent with Africa's priorities, which could be taken to help stimulate an added push for development in Africa, and two, to mobilize the political support needed to ensure that timely action was taken to remove some of the obstacles to Africa's development. At the heart of the special initiative on Africa are people – in 1996, more than 728 million. By 2010, more than 1 billion and by the year 2025, the African population will be about one and a half billion.

Population issues and gender concerns are central to all aspects of development. Accordingly, they affect and interact with all sectors of the special initiative on Africa. All components and activities of the initiative give them special attention. Population in Africa is growing by 2.7 % a year outpacing economic growth in all but a few countries. The Urban population is growing by 4.3% a year, faster than any other region of the world. Women's health and reproductive health in particular is generally very poor. The average woman in Africa bears more than six children. For every 100, 000 births, more than 600 mothers die. Adolescent pregnancy is high. HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases continue to take a very heavy toll. Harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM) undermine individual dignity and contribute to reproductive ill health. It was envisaged that improving health would be a major step in laying a solid basis for the development of Africa and its people. Within the health sector component of the special initiative, reproductive including family planning and gender concerns would be given prominence.

The action of implementing special initiative on Africa was to be an important step towards the goals of the Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development. It was to promote the integrated and coordinated implementation of the recommendations of the various international conferences from Rio to Beijing to the Habitat II and the World Food Summit.

2.2 Programmes and Actions

Apart from the initiatives submission of the Secretary-General's report to the Security Council in April 1998, led to a wide range of actions/programmes were undertaken in relation to the following areas:

2.2.1 Strengthening good governance

A number of activities have been undertaken by the United Nations system, in the area of governance to support African countries in this area. UNDP organized, jointly with ECA, with contribution from FAO Regional Office in Accra, the Africa Governance Forum II in Ghana (June 1998), on "accountability and transparency." The Forum served as a platform to promote the concept of an OAU instrument on the conduct of public affairs, which the UNDP will also help to design.

One of the issues that were emphasized is accountability and transparency in public administration. In collaboration with the Global Coalition for Africa, the World Bank has sent multi-disciplinary missions to help each country identify the causes and effects of corruption and to propose means to address the causes. The World Bank's recommendations includes: measures to strengthen parliaments' capacity to exercise their oversight roles; legal, judicial, financial and public sector reforms; and strengthening the media and such watchdog agencies as the offices of accountants-general. Six countries (Benin, Ethiopia, Malawi, Mali, Tanzania and Uganda) have requested assistance from the World Bank to establish national anti-corruption

programmes, and, in many cases, the Economic Development Institute's integrity programmes are supporting these efforts (Towards Sustained Development in Sub-Saharan Africa - World Bank, 2001).

DESA focused on two specific areas of activity, i.e. governance and ethics. In the former, it provided assistance to several African countries including Burundi, Liberia, Mozambique and South Africa, in the development of national capacity for the promotion of good governance. The assistance covered three main issues: human rights, justice and participation of civil society. In the latter, a major Pan-African Conference of Ministers of Civil Services was organized in Morocco in December 1998 in which Ministers of Civil Services from several African countries attended. Key deliberations in this conference concerned the promotion of professionalism and ethical standards in the civil services of African countries. The conference culminated in the adoption of the Tangier Declaration on African Civil Service

Enhancing administrative capacity is also a critical part of promoting good governance. The World Bank has assisted in building capacity for decentralization and local governance in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). The Bank is of the view that the pervasive weakness of local governments and the lack of capacity of municipal institutions in SSA are major impediments to social and economic development. The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) has approved projects, *inter alia*, in Senegal, Ghana and Guinea, which build on this approach. It stressed that support to rural decentralization has become an important tool to strengthen capacities of the local populations and to promote the participation in the decision-making process. IFAD is considering the possibility to expand its support to decentralization to other countries in SSA.

By and large, the majority of African countries signed and ratified the major international human rights instruments. As of 21 May, 1999, 42 of 53 African countries had ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, while 40 had ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Forty-two countries had ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial

Discrimination while 48 had ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women. Twenty-seven countries had signed the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, while 30 had ratified the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. Fifty-two of 53 countries have ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child making it the most widely ratified treaty (*Amoako, 2000*).

UNHCHR with UNDP have been active in establishing regional and country level support to Governments in the elaboration of Human Rights Action Plans. As a member of the United Nations Interagency Group on Gender and Development, UNHCHR is planning to launch a legal and human rights literacy programme geared towards women during the second half of 1999.

Various United Nations organizations provided assistance in the drafting of national legislation as well as technical advisory services in their respective areas of competence. UNHCR provided assistance in the drafting of national refugee legislation in countries such as Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, The Gambia, Niger, Uganda and South Africa. Efforts are under way for similar legislation to be adopted in other African countries such as Gabon, Guinea Bissau, Rwanda and Kenya, with a view to covering the whole continent. ILO granted technical advice on human rights issues and labour law revision as well as subregional training programmes for labour law judges on equity issues based upon an ILO manual for labour judges on the same subject. Its advocacy activities, among others, facilitated the support of African member States in the adoption of the 1998 ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work. UNESCO provides high-level experts to assist in the drafting of media legislation. It also carries out two major projects: (a) strengthening democracy and governance through development of the media in Mozambique; and (b) communication and good governance in 10 West and Central African countries (Benin, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Sao Tome and Principe and Togo).

Bilateral donors continue to support several governance related projects in Africa. The Government of Australia is providing support in a number of areas, including, capacity

building or the reform of public institutions in South Africa and Mozambique. A special visit programme to Australia was also arranged for a group of High Court judges from Zimbabwe. The Government of Australia has also given a number of small grants for the development of civil organizations. France supports governance programmes, particularly in the area of human rights, and has allocated FF5 million for projects to support activities, including holding elections in a number of countries. The Government of Norway has established a Trust Fund for Good Governance in Africa and the Norwegian Resource Bank for Democracy and Human Rights (NORDEM), which provides experts in the field of democracy and human rights, is also available for use by the United Nations and others to support activities in Africa (African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 1990).

2.2.2 Social development

According to the Economic and Social Survey (1995-6), the United Nations and its agencies are involved in a number of activities geared towards creating an enabling environment for enhancing the effectiveness of the informal sector both in rural and urban sectors. As lead organization for the priority area, Poverty Reduction through the Promotion of the Informal Sector and Employment Generating Opportunities of the United Nations Special Initiative for Africa (UNSI), the ILO is promoting a series of interventions ranging from appropriate macro-economic policies, reforming government regulations, policies and institutions, providing appropriate incentives, developing market networks between the formal and informal sectors and provision of physical and administrative infrastructures. Serious attempts are being made to maintain a gender focus in this component. The ILO is also involved in strengthening the national capacities of constituents in the formulation of vocational training policies for both the formal and informal sectors.

At a regional level, the ILO Biennial African Employment Planners Meeting has become a regular forum to review the overall employment situation in Africa and to recommend policies and strategies for employment promotion and poverty reduction. One major programme that is currently being implemented since July 1998 is the Jobs for Africa

(JFA) programme. Set up as a part of the UNSIA and as follow-up to the World Social Summit, this regional programme provides an alternative policy framework for employment-intensive growth and formulates diversified and comprehensive programmes of action for job creation. The immediate objective of the programme is to develop and strengthen the capacity of national and regional institutions and networks in ten participating countries (phase one) to design and advocate alternative policies for poverty reduction through generating productive employment.

There has been a steady progress in the area of primary education enrollment and advancing basic education for all African children. However, despite the progress, the low enrollment in primary education and the low literacy rate in the 16 selected countries is a matter of great concern. The proportion of out-of-school-age population remains low in many countries. It is observed that the efficiency is much higher when international institutions work together with the countries concerned.

HIV/AIDS epidemic, while being a major health concern, affects all sectors of the economy and society - and thus is of major relevance to all organizations of the United Nations. The UN system is uniquely placed to make a difference through its political as well as development work. UNAIDS, together with its Co-sponsors, UNICEF, UNDP, UNFPA, UNDCP, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank, has intensified its action in Africa. This is being done in partnership with African governments, regional bodies, bilateral development agencies, multilateral organizations, the corporate sector (with commitments from large pharmaceutical corporations, the entertainment industry and a Global Business Council on AIDS) and with NGOs. The Partnership will sought to develop joint multisectoral action plans prepared with major national and international stakeholders, in participating countries and mobilize resources to fund them. Work started through country based groups on HIV/AIDS. Another significant area where the UN system efforts are directed is in malaria prevention and control. The UN system's Roll Back Malaria campaign led by WHO aims to cut the number of deaths from malaria from 50 per cent by 2010 and 75 per cent by 2015. The UN system continues to work together on reduction of maternal mortality, which is closely related to HIV/AIDS and malaria in Africa, as well as to female genital mutilation (FGM).

Some bilateral donors have taken steps to collaborate in the health sector with the UN system organizations. The Government of Japan plans to establish centres for parasitic disease control in Asia and Africa in close collaboration with WHO. The centres will provide training courses and operational research for parasitic disease control and contribute to regional cooperation, especially South-South Cooperation among African and Asian countries through their activities. Japan and the United States plans to contribute towards ending the scourge of polio from the continent through expanding cooperative eradication efforts at the grass-roots level by the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers and the US Peace Corps Volunteers.

2.2.3 Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women

In 1998, Economic and Social Survey (1998) prepared "*Status of Women in Africa, 1998: 53 country profiles,*" which is a compilation of sex-disaggregated data on the status of women in the 53 ECA member States published in brochure format. The data contained selected indicators in some areas of concern contained in the Beijing Platform for Action - among them, women in decision-making, education, and health, economic contribution of women and the rights of women and the girl-child. The brochures were intended to serve as information, sensitization and advocacy tools by providing a clear picture of the extent to which Governments and other sectors of African society have succeeded in implementing international instruments aimed at achieving gender equality. The Division for the Advance of Women of DESA organized a sub-regional workshop in Cotonou, Benin in the latter part of 1999, on reporting under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. This workshop was followed by in-country training components. The Division is also involved in efforts to encourage African States to ratify or accede to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and to encourage those States which are party to the Convention to submit their reports required under article 18 of the Convention.

UNIDO contributes to the elimination of discrimination against women especially through awareness building programmes and training programmes, especially in agro-industries. One of the most successful examples is an integrated training programmes for

women entrepreneurship development in food processing in Tanzania. Another example is a project aimed at assisting women manufactures of textiles and garments to make the transition from the informal to the formal business sector in Kenya. The Action for the Rights of Children (ARC) is an UNHCR Initiative which was implemented in 1999. ARC, which includes a specific age-gender perspective, aims at increasing the capacity of UNHCR, government and NGO field staff to protect and care for children and adolescents in refugee situations. ARC also aims at ensuring that girls and boys benefit equally from all protection and assistance efforts (Economic Commission for Africa, 1984).

UNCTAD has conducted a series of studies on enhancing the participation of women entrepreneurs in LDCs' economies, in order to assess the impact of policies on promoting entrepreneurship among women and to identify those measures adopted at international conferences which have not been implemented, but which need to be in place for women to become and remain entrepreneurs in the formal sector. The African LDCs selected for the project are Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Madagascar, Tanzania and Zambia. Through its "Strategy for Women and Gender Equality in Development Cooperation" programme, the Government of Norway seeks to strengthen the position of women, particularly with regard to the areas of poverty eradication and education. Working through UNICEF, Norway has contributed \$15 million to basic education for girls in 19 African countries.

2.2.4 Improving trade flows

The United Nations system organizations and the donor community have taken some steps to assist the African countries in enhancing their diversification efforts. UNCTAD/ITC/WTO have launched the Joint Integrated Technical Assistance Programme (JITAP) for which a Trust Fund has been established. Out of an estimated requirement of \$10.3 million, \$7.1 million have already been pledged, of which Norway has contributed NOK 6 million. The implementation of JITAP started in May 1998 on the basis of specific country projects of eight African countries organized into 15 clusters of closely related activities so as to achieve synergies and economies of scale. It also helps

African countries identify and take advantage of opportunities provided by the multilateral trading system as well as access through the WTO to implement the provisions thereof. In cooperation with five other agencies, UNCTAD is actively involved in the Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance, including for Human and Institutional Capacity-Building, to Support Least Developed Countries in their Trade and Trade-Related Activities which was endorsed in October 1997. Twenty-two LDCs are presently at various stages of preparation of trade-related round table meetings, out of which 17 are from Africa. Together with the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), UNCTAD has undertaken a project on "Investment guides and capacity-building for least developed countries" (Economic Development in Africa, 2002).

At a meeting of the Secretary-General with representatives of DAC/OECD countries held in September 1998 to urge the implementation of his recommendations on debt, ODA, market access and foreign direct investment (FDI), participants reaffirmed that though efforts have been made to increase the market access for African exports in the framework of WTO and in the Lomé Convention, there is a need for greater access to the markets of industrialized countries. The Panel of High-level Personalities on African Development convened by the Secretary-General on 15 October, 1998, also stressed the need to address high tariffs and tariff escalation that continue to exist in certain sectors of interest to African countries, such as agricultural products, textile and clothing, and leather products. In response to the Secretary-General's recommendation that improved south-south cooperation be used to reinforce export-led growth in Africa, the Republic of Korea co-organized with DESA/OSCAL, the Asia-Africa Forum in Export Promotion in Seoul in December 1998. The Forum, which was attended by 22 African countries and 9 Asian countries and United Nations system organizations involved in trade and investment activities, provided the opportunity to review both the Asian experience and the challenges facing Africa in export promotion and diversification. The Seoul Framework for Cooperation was adopted by the Forum. The Government of India also announced in 1998 the establishment of a \$30 million Revolving Fund for Africa for

"promoting trade, investment and technology sharing" as well as for revitalizing bilateral trade with and investment in Africa (Amoako, 2001).

Traditional donor countries are also responding positively to the trade and investment opportunities available in African countries. The Government of Norway has established the Norwegian Risk Fund for Developing Countries (NORFUND) to promote the participation in the establishment of sustainable and profitable businesses in developing countries. In 1998, the first year of operation, 47 per cent of the NOK400 million allocated to the Fund was used to support investment in African countries. The United States *African Growth and Opportunity Act*, which seeks to expand duty free access to the US market for goods now excluded under the GSP and eliminates quotas on imports of textiles and apparel for countries which are pursuing economic and political reforms. The Act also calls for the creation of a US-Africa Economic Forum to discuss economic matters of mutual concern and a United States-Sub-Saharan Africa Free Trade Agreement by 2020. The rapidly changing global environment offers African countries an opportunity and a challenge to expand exports as an essential element in raising resources to finance development (Amoako, 2001).

2.2.5 *Improving financial resource flows*

In spite of the general decline in ODA to Africa, some donor countries have increased development assistance to Africa. For example, the United Kingdom increased its ODA budget in 1999 by almost one-third, while the United States increased its assistance to Africa by 4.5 per cent in 1999 and proposed a further increase of 10 per cent for 2000. As per the Swedish Government Bill for fiscal year 1999, the ODA will increase from 0.7 per cent of GDP in 1998 to 0.73 per cent in 2001. Norway stepped up its ODA budget in 1998 to 0.91 per cent of GNP. The goal of Norway is to re-establish its ODA level to the previous level of 1.0 per cent level and to increase its bilateral assistance to Africa from 46.2 per cent in 1998 to 50 per cent of its aid budget. Denmark has exceeded the target of ODA to developing countries and is contributing 1% to GNP. Over 40% goes to Africa. In an effort to redesign technical assistance to close the technical capacity gap between industrial and developing countries by accelerating the transfer of knowledge, skills and

expertise, emphasis on national execution of projects (NATCAP), pioneered by UNDP, are examples of existing national capacity building instruments designed to address this problem. UNDP, in cooperation with the Federation of African Consultants (FECA), is involved in designing a sound framework to tackle this issue. The United Nations advocacy role is critical to the long-term solution of these issues.

The Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs (EC-ESA) in a report entitled "Finding Solutions to the debt Problems of Developing Countries" made a number of proposals for an enhanced initiative on HIPC debt relief. These proposals include: (a) extending the list of poor indebted countries eligible for debt relief; (b) shortening the length of the debt relief process from 6 to 3 years; (c) while sustainable levels of debt should be repaid, relaxation of the definition of what is sustainable so as to ensure that the levels set are realistic; (d) cancellation of all ODA debts of poor heavily indebted countries, while reducing other official bilateral debts by a minimum of 80 per cent, with full cancellation for post conflict countries, countries affected by serious natural disasters and countries with very low social and human indicators; (e) meeting the cost of relief from partial sales of IMF gold, a fresh allocation of SDRs, and additional bilateral contributions to multilateral Trust Funds for debt relief; and (f) beyond debt relief, provision to poor countries with new concessional resource transfers to achieve sustainable growth. In response to the growing concern over the limitations of the HIPC Initiative to effectively deal with the debt burden of highly indebted poorest countries, the majority of which are in Africa, the World Bank and IMF undertook a comprehensive review of the Initiative in February 1999 with a view to possible improvements thereto. Since its review, the World Bank established a HIPC Review Consultation web-page, and consultative meetings were held in Mozambique, Togo, Germany, Norway, the UK, the USA and Honduras, which brought together dozens of organizations and more than 500 participants.

In its 1998 Trade and Development Report, UNCTAD proposed the establishment of a body composed of high-level personalities with experts in finance and development, appointed jointly by creditors and debtors, in order to undertake an independent assessment of African countries debt sustainability. UNDP/Africa also prepared a policy

paper which provides input into the formulation of a UNDP institutional position on debt abatement with respect to the HIPC Initiative, and explores the capacity building implications of such a position. This approach was to outline a framework for a debt-for-sustainable human development (debt-for-SHD) window which would enable eligible countries to secure additional debt relief as an incentive for countries to accelerate poverty alleviation and SHD programmes and make some headway into achieving the major goals of the international community in these important activities.

A number of proposals, including proposals from major donor countries have been made to this effect: for example: the Mauritius Mandate by the British Government in September 1997; the Cologne Debt initiative by the German Government of January 1999; and proposed actions for deeper and faster debt reduction by the President of the USA at a Conference on US-Africa Partnership for the 21st Century in March 1999. Other proposals have been made by Canada, France, Italy and Japan. A number of positive developments has also occurred recently at the bilateral level in relation to debt relief for African countries. In 1998, the Government of Norway launched the Norwegian Debt Relief Strategy, which aims at reducing the debt burden of the poorest and heavily indebted countries and enabling them to embark on the next millennium with a debt situation which will not be an impediment to sustained economic and social development. In addition to increasing its contribution to the IMF operations in favour of poorest countries by granting an additional loan of US\$300 million for the period July 1999 - December 2000, the Government of Belgium committed itself to canceling the last 40 year debt for countries that are not eligible under HIPC. These countries were selected for debt relief subject to the criteria such as good governance, respect of human rights and the rule of law. Already twelve African countries (including Benin, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Tanzania, Zambia, Comoros, Côte d'Ivoire) have benefitted from cancellation of their debt under bilateral arrangements.

In the context of the recommendations relating to attracting investment for stimulating growth and the importance of investing in infrastructure development, under a UNDP/NLTPS initiated project, a Forum to review competitiveness of African economies was organized in Dakar, Senegal in March 1999 in cooperation with the

Government of Senegal. The following United Nations organizations were involved in the Forum: UNDP, UNCTAD, WTO, UNIDO, ADB, OAU, ECA and UNESCO. Its objective was to agree on steps to be taken to create a positive environment for investment and enhance competitiveness. The review helped in taking stock of the openness to trade, rationalized tax structures, adequate infrastructure, transparency and accountability as well as protection of property rights. This forum and other activities on investment and growth underway in the context of UNSIA trade cluster can provide a good basis for the Secretary-General's joint action with the OAU Secretary-General to promote large scale long term investment including multi-country infrastructure projects and exploitation of shared natural resources. UNIDO was also involved in promoting investment in Africa, convening Investment Promotion Conferences for Uganda, Guinea and for the Southern Africa region in 1998 and 1999.

2.2.6 Support for regional cooperation and integration

United Nations organizations continue to support activities aimed at strengthening regional cooperation and integration. SADC, in cooperation with UNIDO organized in 1998 in Windhoek, Namibia a workshop with a view to defining/formulating Industrial Policy and Strategies for SADC. The SADC workshop was attended by approximately 40 high level officials from the public and the private sectors. Significant support has been provided by UNIDO for the leather sector in Eastern Africa through a regional project involving 9 countries, namely Ethiopia, Kenya, Malawi, Namibia, Sudan, Uganda, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe. The programme's strategy is centred around the establishment of the Eastern and Southern Africa Leather Industries Association (ESALIA), which promotes skill development and technology upgrading across the entire range of operations in the leather cycle as well as providing direct support to business in the field of quality enhancement and pollution control, and facilitating partnerships with foreign firms.

Projects implemented so far under this programme totaled \$27 million. UNESCO is working towards promoting regional and subregional cooperation in the area of telematics and the information society through a Regional Informatics Network for

Africa (RINAF) which links focal points in 42 Member States concerned with promoting the use of information and communication technologies in development. Activities include coordination meetings and electronic discussions on planning of cooperative activities and sharing of experience, support for subregional training courses, pilot projects on the application of telematics for development in the sectors of public concern, and promotion of African content of the World Wide Web for educational, scientific, social and cultural development. South-South cooperation has enormous potential for tapping the vast resources and experiences available in the developing world as well as forging sub-regional and regional cooperation.

UNIDO has utilized the framework of TICAD-II as a vehicle for promoting South-South and triangular cooperation. Significant progress in the area of regional cooperation and integration requires a more genuine supportive attitude on the part of donors and international trading partners, particularly with regard to the development of common standards and equipment among neighbouring countries. African countries, with the support of their development partners, should examine ways in which support for regional and sub-regional integration can be used to promote economic discipline and sound macro-economic policies, and facilitate the establishment of solid institutional confidence-building links between neighbouring countries.

2.3 Conclusion

From the literature review, it is clear that the System-wide Special Initiative was a critical United Nations contribution to Africa's efforts to accelerate development. It was an initiative for which everyone had to exert every effort to mobilize the energy and resources of the United Nations system behind the cause of African development, the greatest development challenge faced by the world. For the initiative to work, the normal business of development had to be conducted in a new way, and required the new types of collaboration and coordination around which the overall reform programme was built. Only in this way would the Initiative make its contribution to poverty eradication, peace-

building and stability in Africa. In seeking to address the longstanding challenges of peace and development in Africa, the Initiative did indeed join a number of other initiatives - including the Tokyo International Conference on African Development process, and the development vision for the 21st century of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development - designed to support Africa's own priorities and efforts.

CHAPTER THREE

TOWARDS UNDERSTANDING UNSIA

3.0 Introduction

According to the Human Development Report (1995), African governments have taken a number of measures to respond to the challenges and obstacles to development. These include establishing mechanisms for conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of conflicts; the effective development and utilization of human resources; harnessing the continent's vast natural resources; mobilizing human and financial resources for development; strengthening regional and sub-regional cooperation and integration; and taking advantage of the trend towards economic globalization through appropriate policies and modernization of agriculture and industry. The challenge of economic globalization is particularly formidable. So far, Africa has failed to take full advantage of the opportunities offered by growth in international trade; interdependent enterprise; information technology; and investment and financial flows to developing countries. This state of marginalization, which is complicated by the inadequate resolution of a crippling debt problem, needs to be countered through resolute action. But the basic way out of marginalization remains to invigorate economic performance, uppermost through industrial and agricultural development, and investments in human skills and capacities.

In his 9 February 1995 letter to heads of agencies and organizations of the UN system, the Secretary-General recalled the Fall 1994 ACC meeting regarding the need to develop further practical initiatives to maximize the support provided by the UN system to African development and to raise the priority given to Africa in the international agenda. Also on that date a Steering Committee co-chaired by the Administrator of UNDP and the Executive Secretary of the UN Economic Commission for Africa with membership from FAO, UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank, ILO, WHO, and the United Nations (DPCSD) was established, to which UNEP and UNFPA were added.

Each of the actions in this paper reflect the priorities enunciated by Africa's leaders and reinforced through the ECOSOC discussions on implementing the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF). In fact, there was almost complete congruence between the priorities of African Heads of State and those identified in the Special Initiative. Consultations took place with African leaders during the formulation of this Special Initiative. These proceeded more intensively after the October 1995 meeting of the ACC at which the Special Initiative was approved in principle. These consultations would continue both at the regional and national levels as the Special Initiative moved to the stage of implementation to ensure that ownership of the Special Initiative was firmly with African countries in partnership with the international community.

The Special Initiative had a twofold challenge: one, to carry out the best supportive actions congruent with Africa's priorities, which could be taken to help stimulate an added push for development in Africa, and two, to mobilize the political support needed to ensure that timely action was taken to remove some of the obstacles to Africa's development. This was also an opportunity to clearly establish the supportive role of donors in Africa by reinforcing that Africans, women and men, must be at the centre of their own development. The Initiative included a number of innovations for improved modalities of implementation focused on an African-centred development process.

In 1996, the Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali, along with James Wolfensohn, President of the World Bank, and heads of UN agencies in Geneva, Nairobi, New York, Paris and Rome, launched the UN System-wide Special Initiative on Africa, a multi-billion dollar programme of concrete actions to accelerate African development. The unprecedented Special Initiative aimed over a 10-year period to greatly expand basic education and health care, promote peace and better governance, and improve water and food security. It also involved a year-long mobilization of political commitment and support for Africa.

The Special Initiative was the UN system's most significant mobilization of support for the development of a continent's people and its largest coordinated action. Implementation of the Initiative's 14 components would cost up to \$25 billion. The World Bank agreed to lead in the mobilization of over 85 per cent of this amount, the bulk of which would go towards improving basic education and health. Reallocations of existing resources would be required, as would better ways of managing aid. To this end, the Initiative contained new measures to improve donor coordination and increase aid effectiveness.

3.1 Key Themes of the Special Initiative

According to the ACC network on Rural Development and Food Security (1999), the Special Initiative's Steering Committee approached the complete membership of the ACC at the commencement of the exercise to gather ideas for the work of the Special Initiative. Similarly, after the 12-13 October 1995 meeting of the ACC, each member of the ACC was asked for final comments leading to this document. The bulk of the work in putting together the Special Initiative was undertaken by five Working Groups which were established under the guidance of the Co-Chairmen and the Steering Committee. In establishing the Working Groups, the special emphases of the exercise were clearly demarcated. The membership of each working group included several agencies. The five working groups were: Water (under the chairmanship of UNEP); Food Security (under the chairmanship of FAO); Governance (under the chairmanship of UNDP); Social and Human Development (under the chairmanship of UNESCO) and Resource Mobilization (under the chairmanship of the World Bank).

Priorities for the Special Initiative have been determined on the basis of the following criteria: congruence with priorities identified by Africa's leaders; strengthening the capacity of African men and women to take charge of their own development; economic and social importance in relation to people centered sustainable development; political appeal and dramatization potential; feasibility and affordability, with emphasis on

maximum possible payoff; UN comparative advantage and experience; and early visible impact. Comparative advantage was gauged by agency experience (substance and outreach in Africa) in given subject areas. The priorities for this Initiative are presented under four major cross-cutting themes chosen to emphasize key issues which are essential for accelerating African development and which are easily understood by the wider audiences necessary for effective political mobilization. These four cross-cutting themes are intended to capture the idea of a momentum to give the Special Initiative its distinctive thrust. Progress in these priority areas should be sufficiently important to enhance the prospects for many other development interests shared by Africa and its external partners, and consequently, add impetus to African development. The cross-cutting themes are explained in the following paragraphs.

3.1.1 Give Development a Chance

The first theme consisted of actions which were required to create a conducive climate for development. It recognized that in countries torn by warfare, it was meaningless to talk of economic development without first addressing conflict resolution, national reconciliation and peace-building. To support the peace process in Africa, the Special Initiative would focus on three priorities: Strengthening the OAU's capacity to engage in conflict prevention, management and resolution; strengthening selected organs of civil society engaged in peace-building and the promotion of human rights and democracy; and promoting the use of the mass media, particularly radio broadcasting, to support peace-building, both through the reinforcement of a culture of tolerance and through the education and empowerment of people to enable them to express their views and participate in the political process.

While tangible backing from the international community remained vital for Africa's development efforts, budgets for external development assistance were under growing pressure in donor countries. In recognition of this situation, the Special Initiative sought to encourage the release of more resources for development through a combination of action and advocacy that would involve African countries, donor countries and institutions, and the UN system itself. The Special Initiative on Africa would assist in the

mobilization of the continent's internal resources by helping to improve revenue collection as well as stimulating domestic savings and investment. The financial intermediation system would also be strengthened for better resource allocation. The Initiative would help to harness information technology for development to improve internal links between African countries, its sub regions and the rest of the world.

The Initiative also strived to galvanize external support for Africa's economic transition in the critical areas of debt relief, trade access and South-South cooperation. With the Secretary-General expected to utilize his moral authority to accelerate concrete actions in these areas of activity, the Special Initiative would encourage multilateral and bilateral creditors to reduce Africa's external debt burden and make it more sustainable; encourage African countries to manage their debt more effectively; and encourage the UN system, with the Secretary-General's leadership, to have a more integrated and active strategy on African debt; help lessen Africa's aid dependency by expanding trade access, diversifying export opportunities, boosting the inflows of foreign direct investment, and increasing the continent's capacity to compete in the international economy; and enhance South-South cooperation and partnerships in trade, finance, production and services, particularly through stronger private sector linkages (*Human Development Report, 1995*).

3.1.2 *New Hope for the Upcoming Generation*

UNESCO (2003) on a major thrust of the Special Initiative, and its largest resource commitment, was to greatly increase the provision of basic education and health care in order to ensure that African children had vastly improved opportunities for productive and rewarding lives. Accomplishment of these goals would also help empower women, an effort which would have a clear impact on development through more manageable population growth rates and enhanced human welfare.

The Special Initiative, therefore, would conduct a 10-year campaign to ensure basic education for all African children. There was to be a special emphasis on educating girls and women as part of the effort to make Africa's education system equitable, accessible,

and relevant and of high quality. The World Bank would lead the financial mobilization for this component which, at between \$12.5 billion and \$15.5 billion, would be the Initiative's largest. But progress in this component would require a significant reallocation of resources as well as a long-term commitment by African and donor governments to the principle of education for all in a continent where up to half of all adults are illiterate and lack the basic skills needed for more rapid development.

As part of a decade-long strategy to reform the health sector, the Special Initiative would put particular emphasis on boosting the capacity of Africa's health systems to reduce, on a sustainable basis, the most common causes of morbidity and mortality. This meant increasing the coverage, quality and access to primary health care services and specially targeting the most common preventable and/or treatable diseases. These included malaria, HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis and major childhood illnesses.

The Special Initiative also addressed poverty reduction by promoting employment and sustainable livelihoods. The major thrust in this area involved efforts to upgrade the informal sector, which then employed about 60 per cent of Africa's labour force, the majority being women. The Initiative would support increased access to technology, skills development, entrepreneurial training and micro-credit. It would also promote a participatory approach to developing sustainable livelihoods in environmentally marginal areas, especially rural communities in arid and semi-arid agro-ecological zones, building on local knowledge and community-based action.

3.1.3 Strengthening the Capacity for Governance

It was widely recognized in Africa that better governance would enable Africans to fulfill their political, economic and social aspirations, and the continent's leaders are taking steps in this direction. With additional support needed to accelerate this process, the Special Initiative aimed to help expand capacities for transparent, responsible and effective governance by strengthening Africa's civil service to better manage

development. It would also help build independent judicial systems, support the functioning of parliaments and electoral processes, make public administration more accountable, and increase the flow of public information on development policies and programmes.

A second component was strengthening civil society. The dramatic growth of pluralistic forces in Africa had been one of the most promising developments of recent years. The Initiative would help reinforce the role of civil society and its capacity to participate in development. It would also help selected civil society organizations engage in peace-building, conflict resolution and national reconciliation, with a special focus on women's organizations. Three sub-regional centres were envisaged to promote conflict prevention and resolution, linking public and private organizations within Africa to the UN and to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) addressing issues of human rights and social justice (*Santiso, 2001*).

3.1.4 Urgency on Survival Issues

According to the Human Development Report (1995), the interrelated issues of food production, population growth and protection of Africa's fragile environment from further damage present a formidable challenge. Food and water security were also key elements to be tackled. Africa was a net food importer since the early 1960s. Hunger and poor nutrition are widespread, especially among women and children, and food insecurity is most severe in the rural areas where 90 per cent of Africa's poor live. The Special Initiative would address food security and drought management by promoting control of land degradation and desertification; soil quality improvement through plant nutrition management and fertilizer use; food security, with a special emphasis on women. This would involve advocating for the reform of laws that contribute to the subordination of women, and enactment of new laws and changes in practices regarding land ownership and access to credit and extension services. The second component of this theme was ensuring sustainable use of and equitable access to freshwater in Africa, as well as household water security for drinking and sanitation for at least 80 per cent of the

population. The Initiative would back these two efforts with freshwater assessments to provide accurate information on the quantity and quality of water as a prerequisite for its future development. Finally, improved water management practices would be fostered to assure adequate water for food production. This included encouraging irrigation development and adoption of appropriate technologies.

These four cross-cutting themes combined to create a synergy even among this limited number of priorities so as to give the Initiative a distinctive thrust. Altogether, if the Initiative is successful it should be sufficiently important to enhance the prospects for many other development interests shared by Africa and its external partners and consequently, add impetus to African development. It is re-emphasized that the Initiative is not a call for action by UN agencies; rather, it is a call to support Africa-determined priorities and efforts, and to galvanize international support for their successful implementation.

3.2 Content of the Initiative

The priorities for the Initiative are of two types: those which require substantial resource mobilization and implementation actions, and those which call largely for the strengthening of synergy, coordination and rationalization of efforts. In the latter category are efforts concerned with Africa's external sector, policies concerned with domestic savings and investment, and three innovations concerned with improving aid effectiveness. All of the priorities listed below form integral parts of the Special Initiative, although some, so noted, require budget and implementation arrangements to be worked out. These priorities are listed below under the subject headings of the five working groups involved in the Special Initiative: water (assuring sustainable and equitable freshwater; household water security; freshwater assessment and water for food security), food security (land degradation and desertification control, soil quality improvement and food security with special emphasis on the role of women), governance, peace-building, conflict resolution and national reconciliation (through

strengthening OAU's capacity for peace building, strengthening civil society for peace-building, and communications for peace-building), capacity building for governance (strengthening civil society for development, harnessing information technology for development; and partnership with Africa through south-south cooperation), social and human condition (basic education for all African children; health sector reform, poverty reduction through the promotion of the informal sector and employment generating opportunities and sustainable livelihoods in environmentally marginal areas), resource mobilization (substantial debt relief, partnership innovations for effective development cooperation through, goal-oriented regional forums, use of goal-oriented country programmes) and broadening participation in consultative groups and roundtables (trade access and opportunities and internal resource mobilization).

Finally, it is important that this Initiative should link up in imaginative ways with other important aspects of Africa's development. Agencies, both before and after the 12-13 October 1995 ACC meeting, submitted a number of such ideas which, while not fitting into the five topic areas established for the Special Initiative are all worthy of implementation by them in as close a coordination as is possible with the Special Initiative (*ACC network on Rural Development and Food Security, 1999*).

3.3 Mobilizing Support for the Special Initiative

The 14 components of the Special Initiative on Africa were of two types: those which required substantial resource mobilization and implementation actions, and those which called primarily for a strengthening and rationalization of existing efforts. While the cumulative financial resources required for implementation of the Special Initiative were substantial; estimated at close to \$25 billion over a 10-year period, the lion's share of this amount would come from a reordering of priorities in African national budgets and reallocations of existing levels of multilateral and bilateral official development assistance (ODA).

The Special Initiative contained three innovations which would facilitate development cooperation, increase aid effectiveness, and provide a framework for the resource

mobilization necessary to implement the Initiative. First, goal-oriented regional forums of multilateral and bilateral donors were planned to help mobilize funds for Africa's larger development priorities, such as education and health. These forums would complement individual country programmes, and could involve interested private sector and NGO representatives as well as donors.

A second innovation involved committing African governments and donors to preparation of goal-oriented investment programmes which directly addressed the major strategic objectives in each country. Donor support that was channeled within these confines would have a much more significant impact, and donors would be more likely to carry out joint activities. A third initiative would seek to broaden Consultative Group and Roundtable meetings to include non-traditional participants.

Although individual UN agencies would play a major role in the financial mobilization efforts for each of the Special Initiative's components, the involvement and support of bilateral and multilateral donors was key. The mobilization exercise was to contribute to the rationalization and redirection of existing UN and external resources, as well as helping to channel new resources to Africa's priority areas. The exact mix of new and existing resources would be determined on the basis of regional consultations and national programmes (*UN Initiative on Africa, 2001*).

3.4 Africa at a turning point

Africa had reached a critical turning point in its history. After having suffered through a long period of economic stagnation and decline, the 1980 and 1990 had been termed the "*lost decades*" for development. Africa's prospects were mixed. It was the only region in the world where poverty was then projected to increase over the new millennium, and its annual population growth rate was the worlds highest. Civil conflict continued to exact a massive human toll in a number of countries (Human Development Report, 1995).

However, according to the same report (Human Development Report, 1995) there were also many positive indicators. Far-reaching economic reforms adopted across the continent have begun to yield positive results in some countries. Nearly half of all African countries have been implementing structural adjustment programmes for more than a decade, seeking to correct economic imbalances and encouraging faster growth of the private sector. Over the past few years, growth rates in three countries had exceeded 8 per cent per annum; in eight others, they averaged between 6 and 8 per cent, and a dozen more attained levels of from 3 to 6 per cent. A climate conducive to increased domestic and foreign investment was being created. Capital markets were being formed and African entrepreneurship was expanding. There was also agreement that progress in human development, measurable by concrete social indicators, must be the end result of reform efforts.

Just as significant, Africa's leaders had taken action to address the devastating impact of conflict on development, working to strengthen institutional mechanisms for the peaceful resolution of some of the region's most intractable wars. The end of long-running conflicts in Angola, Mozambique, and potentially Liberia, the demise of apartheid in South Africa, and the accession to power of democratically elected governments in many countries had provided new hope to the continent's peoples. This, and the emergence of a strengthened civil society, augured well for a stable and prosperous future. But major challenges remain. Africa's crippling debt burden which reached \$313 bn in 1994, equivalent to 234 per cent of its export income and 83 per cent of GDP continued to be a major impediment to growth and a disincentive to domestic and foreign investment. Africa also faced new challenges, brought about by economic globalization and the expansion in world trade, which had to be addressed if the continent was not to become even further marginalized from the global economy (*Santiso, 2001*).

3.4.1 *A Development Consensus*

In light of Africa's need recognized by the international community to take charge of its own development and set its own agenda, African leaders affirmed, through the

Organization of African Unity's 1995 Cairo Agenda for Action that it was time to move towards the concrete implementation of those development strategies agreed upon in various international forums. The Cairo Agenda identified a set of issues; governance, peace and stability; food security; human resource development; resource mobilization; regional economic cooperation and integration; and structural transformation of Africa's economies as key priorities for immediate action.

The Special Initiative was built on this consensus, identifying actions which support Africa's priorities and which will provide a real stimulus to the continent's growth. This monumental effort to enhance Africa's development possibilities would require strong international support in order to achieve its goals. A one-year mobilization of political support for the Special Initiative would be undertaken, in which its key emphases would be publicized and the case for support to Africa made. The campaign would also demonstrate the UN's lead role in devising new ways to foster African development (*Amoako, 2000*).

According to Annan (2000), Africa had reached a critical turning point in its history. After an era of decolonization and a period characterized by civil wars and military rule and economic stagnations, a third wave was beginning in Africa. One of peace, democracy, human rights and sustainable development. This was in deed an opportune time for us and our partners to coordinate and harmonize our programmes and mobilize support for the development of Africa and increase aid effectiveness. The initiation provided a unique opportunity to do so. The initiative is essential if we are to help Africa strengthen its ownership and leadership of the development process. It is essential to accelerate the continents socio-economic progress and give new hope to the upcoming generation of Africans by improving basic education, health care, food security and employment opportunities, all which are crucial to poverty eradication and civil tranquility (*Annan, 2000*)

Despite widespread concern expressed by the international community about the deteriorating economic and social conditions in Africa and the commitment of African

Governments to removing the obstacles to growth, projections then indicated that the prospects for recovery was still not in sight and that unless urgent actions were taken, living standards could continue to fall in the region.

Numerous international gatherings singled out the problems for Africa for special attention. The July 1995 discussion on Africa at the high – Level Segment meeting in ECOSOC was a powerful reminder of the depth of concern over and commitment to Africa. It was against this background and recognizing that Africa represents the foremost challenge of global development and that “Africa was a test case for international cooperation for development and for the United Nations”. Over the years, the UN had launched various initiatives in favor of Africa. UN-PAAERD and its successor UN-NADAF are but the most recent. Efforts have also been made over the years to coordinate activities of the UN system in Africa through the system- wide plan of action for African Development.

3.5 Financial Implications of the Initiative

According to the Africa Recovery Press kit (1996), the cumulative financial resource implications of the various components presented in this paper are significant. In general, new or redirected resources would entirely be devoted to African national programmes. The exercise was to contribute to the rationalization and redirection of existing UN resources as well as help to channel non-UN resources into critical priority areas of Africa’s development. Cost estimates had been calculated for the large components and most of the smaller ones. In total, there was an implication that both African national budgets and donor budgets needed to be realigned if these programmes, particularly the larger ones in education and health, were to move forward. In terms of ODA, if the Special Initiative was fully implemented there would be a need to locate an average of around \$2.4 billion/year out of reallocated or new resources. This would be the equivalent of 20 per cent of ODA to Africa. New financing and/or financial mechanisms had to be found from other more economically advanced parts of the developing world

and especially from OECD countries. The priorities in this Initiative was to be seen in light of their potential to garner a reallocation from existing levels of multilateral and bilateral ODA directed to Africa and of African national budgets.

Table 3.5 Financial Implications of the Priorities Requiring Funding

Priority	Annual Cost	Implementation Period	Total Cost
Equitable Access to Fresh Water	\$ 1 million	2 years	\$ 2 million
Household Water Security	250 million	10 years	2.5 billion
Freshwater Assessments	4 million	5 years	20 million
Water for Food Security	5 million	5 years	25 million
Land Degradation	6.7 million	3 years	20 million
Soil Quality	0.45 million	1 year (design)	0.45 million
Food Security with special emphasis on women	n/a	n/a	n/a
Governance	100 million	5 years	500 million
Peace-OAU	20 million	5 years	100 million
Communications for Peace-building	1.56 million	5 years	7.8 million
Informatics	2.3 million	5 years	11.5 million
Civil Society	1.6 million	5 years	8 million
South-South Cooperation	2 million	5 years	10 million
Education	1.25-1.5 billion	10 years	12.5-15 billion
Health	650 million	10 years	6.5 billion
Poverty Reduction & Employment	n/a	n/a	n/a
Sustainable Livelihoods in Environmentally Marginal Areas	1.6 million	5 years	8 million
<i>Total</i>	<i>\$ 2.296 - \$ 2.546 bn</i>		<i>\$ 22.212 - \$24.712 bn</i>

(Africa Recovery Press kit: Report 1996)

A source of encouragement was the willingness of the World Bank to lead the financial mobilization of the education and health initiatives, and the readiness of other agencies to participate as partners on these initiatives. Similarly, other UN entities (such as UNDP and ECA) were committed to lead in the re-sourcing of other priorities. If these indications equally materialized, they would set an example of financial leadership vital to the success of the Initiative. The bulk of these resources would be mobilized and expended at the country level. In addition to those priorities requiring financing there were others which required negligible or no additional funding to be carried out. These

largely called for policy interventions in the external sector. A third component involved innovations in cooperation modalities particularly regional and country forums, but may well have had implications for institution building and strengthening at the country level and for additional kinds of analyses of development problems. On the other hand, donors were to save funds if more of their activities were directed to common goals in more synergistic ways.

3.6 Rationale and Goals of the UNSIA

The United Nations system-wide Special Initiative on Africa was designed to rationalize United Nations assistance to Africa, including that of the Bretton Woods institutions, through more effective coordinated synergistic actions, capacity building and by facilitation of genuine partnerships. With the successful adoption of political and economic reforms in an increasing number of countries, the mood of optimism was spreading. Despite encouraging results, poverty was still pervasive, the spread of HIV/AIDS, displacement from civil conflicts, disruption of livelihoods, prolongation of human suffering and scarce resources for development, all contribute to the intractability of poverty (*Africa Recovery UNSIA Press Feature. 1996*).

The UNSIA was therefore launched first, to help Africa help itself and second, to ensure that the United Nations system's commitment to support Africa's development efforts were sustained in a comprehensive and coherent manner. A number of problems were associated with the launch. First early skepticism arose from claims of insufficient consultation throughout Africa and among major donor partners, hence African ownership was doubted. Second, the \$25 billion announcement at the time of the launch sent mixed messages as to how the Special Initiative would generate additional resources, particularly in light of declining ODA and scarce investment flows. Third, in the absence of a clear intergovernmental legislative framework, misperceptions that the UNSIA was conceived to undermine UN-NADAF (UN- New Agenda for the Development of African Recovery), further disparaged the credibility of the new initiative.

With the aforesaid, it is obvious that the main goal of this initiative was development oriented and hence the theories that can best examine its progress are those based on development, underdevelopment and dependency theories.

3.7 Conclusion

In light of Africa's need which was recognized by the international community it was to take charge of its own development and set its own agenda, African leaders affirmed, through the Organization of African Unity's 1995 Cairo Agenda for Action, that it was time to move towards the concrete implementation of those development strategies agreed upon in various international forums.

The Cairo Agenda identified a set of issues such as governance, peace and stability; food security; human resource development; resource mobilization; regional economic cooperation and integration; and structural transformation of Africa's economies, as key priorities for immediate action.

The Special Initiative was to build on the consensus spelt out above, identifying actions which would support Africa's priorities and which would provide a real stimulus to the continent's growth.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA FINDINGS & ANALYSIS

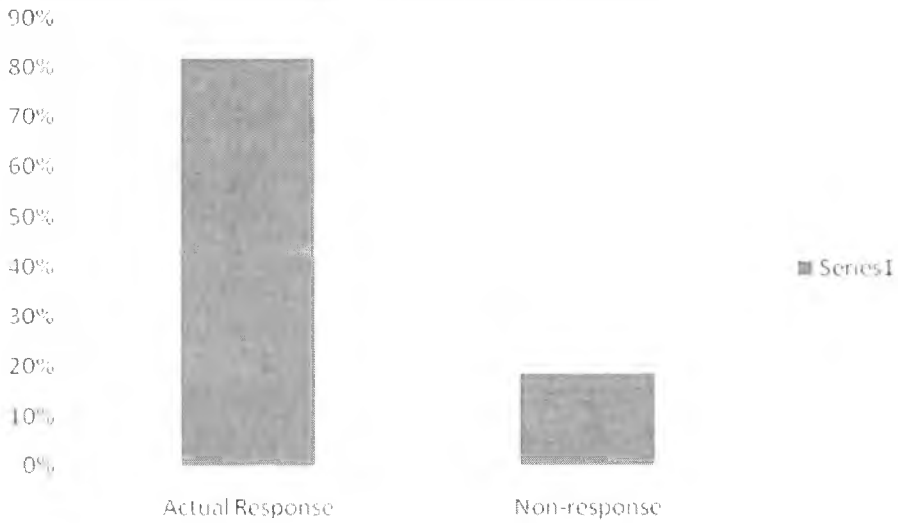
4.0 Introduction

In this chapter, data from the employees of the various United Nations bodies was analyzed and interpreted. The questionnaires were coded and edited after they were filled in by the respondents. The chapter presents the analysis of the data and its interpretation as it was collected from the sampled population.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Staffs

4.1.1 Response Rate

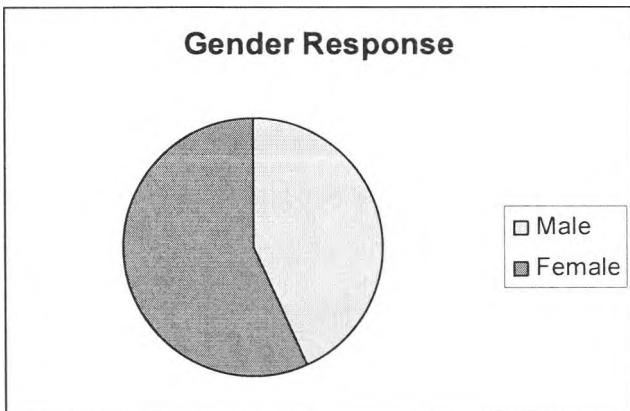
A sample of 8 respondents from Ethiopia, 18 from Uganda and 34 from Kenya was obtained. A total of 49 questionnaires were returned wholly completed despite an expected 60 which were administered. This represented 81.7% of the required sample size. The researcher considered the number adequate for the purpose of analysis. The response to the questionnaire was considered to be good enough for analysis and the non-response was not likely to adversely affect the outcome of the analysis. Figure 4.1 shows the response rate.



4.1.2 Response according to gender

Table 4.1.2 shows 56.6% of the respondents were females while only 43.4% represented the male respondents. The gender gap is small hence gender may not be considered a significant break variable in this analysis.

Table 4.1.2: Response according to gender



4.1.3 Response according to Length of service

Table 4.1.3: Proportion of Respondents by Years of Service in the United Nations

Years of Service	Total No.	Percentage
Less than 1 Year	4	9 %
1 – 4 Years	16	33.5 %
5 – 9 Years	17	35%
Above 10 Years	11	22.5 %
Total	49	100 %

As shown by the clusters of the respondents in terms of years of service, 57.5% of the respondents had worked for over 5 years out of which 22.5% had worked for over 10 years. This makes the analysis more significant since they were aware of previous UN initiatives like UN-NADAF.

4.1.4 Understanding of UNSIA

Ordinarily, it was expected that an employee of a United Nations agency would be familiar with development initiatives within the UN system. The respondents were asked whether they were familiar with UNSIA and their understanding of the initiative. 80% of the respondents were familiar with the United Nations System Wide Initiative while 20% were not. When asked for their understanding of the Initiative, the following percentage scores were obtained as recorded in Table 4.1.4

Table 4.1.4: Understanding the UNSIA

<i>Item</i>	<i>%</i>
Initiative to enhance Africa's development in all sectors and all forms	80
A set of coordinated actions set to maximize support for African development	53
Initiative aimed at regaining development support for the African continent	61
Initiative to reinforce developing countries in terms of education, health, water, food security, governance and information technology.	35
Initiative that was initiated as a follow up of the UN-NADAF to give more emphasis on African problems	10
Initiative to uplift the plight of Africans and help African countries to achieve economic & sustainable development.	87
For the development of Africa since it was lagging behind	67
To improve opportunities for those deprived of education in Africa.	19
Initiative formed to add momentum to African development.	46
Initiative to accelerate development in priority areas already identified in Africa.	36
Initiative to enable Africa take charge of its development process	23

From the understanding of the respondents, it is clear that United Nations System Wide Initiative in Africa was meant to spearhead development in Africa in different sectors and also an Implementation vehicle for the UN-NADAF initiative.

4.1.5 Involvement in UNSIA

All African countries were eligible to participate in the UNSIA, but not all were involved at all stages. The respondents were asked about their personal and country involvement in the initiative. 72% of the respondents indicated that they were involved while 8% were not. The remaining 20% of the respondents did not know whether their countries were involved or not.

Involvement was divided into four main level; Idea generation, Initiative formulation, Initiative implementation and Monitoring and Evaluation.

4.2 Factors Leading to UNSIA

The respondents were asked to indicate the factors they thought led to the formation of UNSIA and also to indicate which factor they considered the most important. Table 4.5 shows factors which were highlighted by the respondents:

Table 4.2: Factors Leading to UNSIA

Item	%
Need to address issues such as poverty, education, gender issues and health.	82
Need to develop African economy, to strengthen the capacity of African people to take charge of development projects, better education, health care and employment	53
Development of Africa and poverty eradication	98
Improvement in socio-economic situation and poverty reduction in Africa	66
Improvement in the socio-economies in Africa & adoption of enlightened government practices	54
Poverty eradication in Africa, health, education and good governance	96
Simulation of Growth and reducing poverty in Africa	62
Basic health, education, governance, food security, water, sanitation & gender issues	35
Education, health, governance, population and gender, information technology, food security, south to south cooperation and trade access	45
Improved synergies. maximize use of development funds in Africa, coordinating UN efforts	12

Out of all the factors that were listed as having led to the formation of UNSIA, poverty eradication, health, education and development of African economy were highlighted by most respondents as the key factors that led to the formation of UNSIA.

4.3 Implementation of UNSIA

There are times during implementation of a project when goals change for one reason or the other. When asked whether the relevance of the project goals change during the implementation period, 17 respondents indicated it did not, 2 indicated it did while the remaining 6 did not indicate or did not know.

Table 4.3: Implementation of USIA

Item	%
The one year mobilization for the political and financial support required for successful implementation was a good idea for generation of funds	45
Prioritizing the aims and objectives	97
Formulation of working groups to undertake each of the objectives	43
The emphasis on changing the image of Africa and on African problems	2
It gave a practical expression of policy commitments made in the past initiatives.	70
Policies by governments to involve Non Governmental Organizations & civil societies to ensure food security at the house hold level.	85
Eligibility of all African countries to participate	64
The commitment and working together of different United Nations agencies to achieve the objectives and to support Africa	23
Division of resource mobilization and coordination of implementation to various UN agencies	34

Those who indicated that the relevance of the projects goals changed were asked to give reasons for their indication they both responded that tough donor conditions led to the change in the project goals since there were not enough resources to implement the earlier laid goals. The respondents were then asked which new aspects, approaches, tasks, ideas they thought had emerged during the project realization in comparison with the previous development frameworks. The responses were recorded in table 4.5.

4.4 Efficiency of Communication

For any project to succeed there is need for good communication interface amongst the key players in the project. In the case of UNSIA there was need for efficient communication between the targeted partners and countries. This was divided into two parts; communication interface between the partners and countries; Internal communication within the implementing countries. The measure was in terms of Very efficient, moderately efficient and not efficient.

Tables 4.4a and 4.4b shows summaries of the responses in terms of efficiency in communication

Table 4.4a Communication efficiency

Communication Rating	Total
Very efficient	23
Moderately efficient	15
Not efficient	0
Did not indicate	11
Total	49

From table 4.4a, the communication interface towards targeted partners and countries was efficient given that 23 respondents indicated it as very efficient and 15 indicated it as moderately efficient.

Table 4.4b: Internal communication within implementing countries

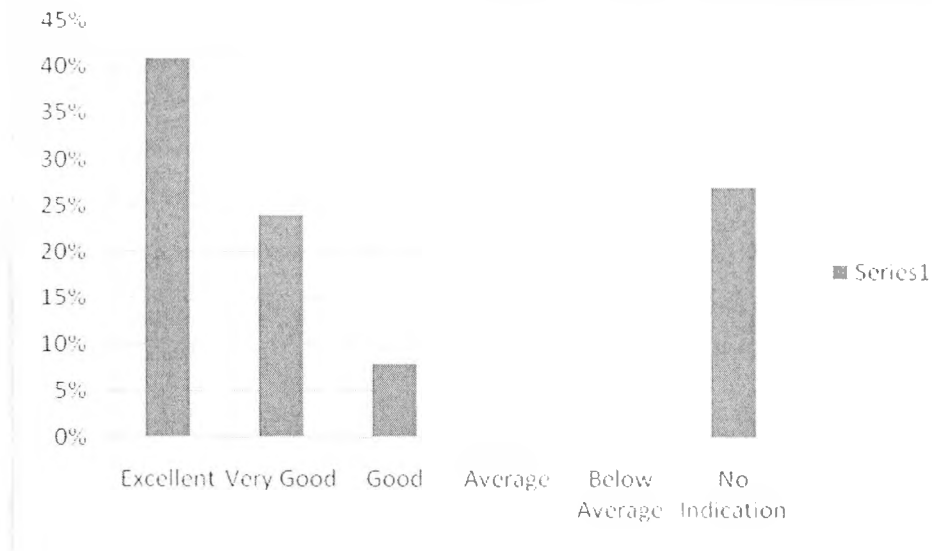
Communication Rating	Total
Very efficient	20
Moderately efficient	18
Not efficient	2
Did not indicate	9
Total	49

From table 4.4b, the internal communication e.g. (meetings with partners, mailing lists etc) within implementing countries was efficient given that 20 respondents indicated it as very efficient and 18 indicated it as moderately efficient. Only 2 respondents indicated it as not efficient.

4.5 Evaluation of UNSIA

Evaluation of a project is necessary since it assists project staff and community partners to make effective decisions and continuously strengthen and improve the initiative. The respondents were asked to rate the work done by the project coordination and central management. This was in terms of excellent, very good, good, average, below average. Figure 4.5 displays a summary of the ratings.

Figure 4.5: Work done by the project coordination and central management.



Form the table above, the work done by the project coordination and central management was satisfactory since 41% of the respondents rated it as excellent, 24% as very good and 8% as good.

During evaluation it is important to compare the amount of resources to the tasks realized. The respondents were asked whether in their view the amount resources available were proportional to the tasks realized. 20% of the respondents indicated yes, 52% indicated no and 28% did not indicate.

Respondents were then asked if UNSIA contributed to any social, economic and cultural development in their countries and to give examples. The following are examples of UNSIA contributions as per the respondents from the three countries. In Ethiopia, the road sector investment programmes in education and health human resource development, institutional capacity building and in improving the social and economic well being of the population was identified. Others included poverty alleviation through the promotion of the informal sector and employment generating opportunities, sector wide programs in education , food, health and security, jobs for Africa programme, reduction of high maternal morbidity & mortality. prevention & control of HIV/AIDS, the launch of good governance and conflict management for durable peace and sustainable development.

In Uganda, it provided assistance on the formulation of irrigation policy and strategy in Uganda and demonstration and advice on local manufacturing of irrigation equipment was also provided, tcp projects were implemented for the control of trans boundary diseases, prevention and control activities on a continuous basis in regard to contagious bovine pleuro-pneumonia (cbpp), control of foot and mouth disease, eradication of poverty, access to better health facilities, aids awareness programmes, assistance by the international institute for communication and development to harness potential of information and communication technologies

The Kenyan scenario was characterized by the formation of National Aids control council to spearhead the national response on HIV, the emphasis of girl child education and free primary education, the formation of national poverty eradication plan by creating a poverty eradication commission, reforms in the health sector and fight against aids and malaria in Kenya

4.6 Performance of UNSIA agenda

Respondents were asked to rate the performance of the various aspects of the UNSIA agenda. The rating was 1- 5 with 5 as the best. They were then asked to state the factors they think led to the poor performance. Table 5-7, 5-8 and 5-9 shows the mean rating of performance.

Table 4.6: Mean Rating

Aspects	Ethiopia	Kenya	Uganda
Education	3	5	3
Governance	4	4	3
Health	3	5	5
Population and Gender	2	4	3
Children	2	4	4
Information Technology	2	2	2

From table 4.6, Population and gender, Children and Information Technology performed poorly. The factors listed as having led to the poor performance of some aspects of the UNSIA agenda in Ethiopia included recurrent drought and inappropriate policy management, poverty level in Ethiopia so most funds were diverted to other issues, UNSIA transformed to a different project before all the tasks were completed and poor governance and lack of commitment from some government agencies in implementation

Information Technology performed poorly in Kenya due lack of political commitment, lack of enough resources due to tough conditions by donor agencies and poor climate for development.

Information Technology performed poorly in Uganda. The factors listed as having led to the poor performance of some aspects of the UNSIA agenda in Uganda included lack of cooperation from some sectors in government, inadequate resources, lack of enough resources due to tough aid conditions and poverty levels in some parts of Uganda.

4.7 Strengths and Limitations of the Project:

Respondents were asked to state some strengths and weaknesses of the project. The following strengths were dominantly mentioned: well coordinated follow up meetings, there was success in the food and agricultural sector, good consultations between the government, civil society, United Nations system and the donor community and also the communication strategy implemented helped improve Africa's image in order to mobilize support.

However, the following limitations were obvious: no modalities were developed to make use of Africa's own internal resources for development, very little emphasis was given to good governance and lack of awareness by the communities and there were evidently tough aid conditions by the donors.

The respondents were then asked to list some of the UNSIA strategies they would recommend to be applied in future African development initiatives. The following strategies were recommended: reliable information readily accessible about donors cooperation & external financial situation, good coordination and follow-ups of each project during implementation, collaboration among donor agencies, monitoring and reporting with a view to enhance coherence, the need to empower communities to participate in educational governance, create and initiate community awareness on projects being done, consultations with different Non Governmental Organizations ensured societies were fully involved, the need for greater coverage of countries, resource mobilization strategies and the promotion of civil society links to government.

4.8 Conclusion

The response rate was considered good for analysis by the researcher. The response was free from gender bias since the number of respondents were almost equally balanced.

Most of the respondents have worked with the United Nations for more than five years. This implies that the information gathered is reliable since they have an in-depth knowledge of operations of the UN.

The factors which came out strongly leading to the formation of UNSIA included the need to address poverty, education, health and gender related issues.

On the implementation of UNSIA, prioritizing the aims and objectives, policy commitment by governments, civil societies and non-governmental organizations and eligibility of all African countries to participate were the main concerns of respondents. The performance of UNSIA agenda in areas of education, governance, health, population, gender and children affairs had the best ratings in Kenya and were poorly rated in Ethiopia. Generally information technology was the worst rated by respondents from all the countries implying that this agenda has not been sufficiently addressed.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides a summary of the major findings of the research project drawing conclusions and making recommendations on the various mechanisms that can be put in place to ensure maximum impact of UNSIA. It also recommends further research on the subject.

5.0 Summary

The main objective of the study was to assess the impact of the implementation of the United Nations System-Wide Initiative on Africa and its possible implications on future Africa's development initiative. Specifically, the study sort to meet four objectives: analyze factors that led to the formation of UNSIA. examine the involvement of African countries in the process, discuss outcomes of the UNSIA and examine lessons learnt from the initiative. The study theoretically looked into three concepts: dependency theory and underdevelopment theory.

The literature focused on the history of development initiative discourse since 1980. It discussed the programmes and actions that have been implemented by the African governments in strengthening good governance, social development, trade inflows, financial resources and regional co-operation and integration. The literature then discussed the UNSIA initiative and its agenda for Africa.

The population of study was restricted within three African countries of Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia from which a sample of sixty respondents was picked for the study. The sample was proportionately selected and questionnaires were distributed to United Nations Employees in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia. The questionnaires had both structured and unstructured questions and statements. Fully completed and returned

questionnaires were used in the analysis. The data was analyzed by use of descriptive statistics. The conclusions based on the research findings and their managerial implications are discussed here under.

Poverty in Africa slowed down the implementation process of The United Nations System Wide Initiative in Africa. Some countries did not receive enough aid because of the tough aid conditions by the donor agencies. African countries lacked the necessary prerequisites for development like poor infrastructure and internal conflicts. There was no reliable information system especially within participating countries.

5.1 Conclusions

The overall perception of the respondents was that there were positive impacts of the United Nations System Wide Initiative in Africa. However there were certain issues that needed to be considered in the implementation of the initiative and also in the implementation of future initiatives, notably governance, health, population, gender, children affairs and information technology.

5.2 Recommendations

There is a need to develop countries' specific needs. African countries have different needs, so there is need to asses the specific needs of each country and have them developed according to their needs. There is also need to have development differential within implementing countries so as to have projects initiated around the communities or provinces that need them most.

There is need to improve on the political will by the African governments. For a project to succeed there is need for political will and commitment by the implementing

governments. A project that is fully initiated and implemented by donors themselves may not succeed if the implementing country is not willing to assist at any level.

There is need to involve Non Governmental Organizations in any initiative so as to make the projects reach the grass root levels.

Emphasis on good governance should be prioritized. All initiatives and projects should emphasise on good governance and democracy. Without this there would be cases like mismanagement of funds and lack of transparency.

There is need for collaboration among the donor agencies in order to avoid duplication of projects within the same country or region.

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Appendices

Appendix 1

ABBREVIATIONS

APPER	Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery
AAF-SAPs	African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes
ECA	Economic Commission of Africa
ECOSOC	Economic Commission and Social Council
LDC	Least Developed Countries
LPA	Lagos Plan of Action
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programmes
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-NADAF	United Nations New Agenda for Development
UN-ACC	United Nations Administrative Committee on Coordination
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session
UN-PAAERD	United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development
UNCPD	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNSID	United Nations System-Wide Special Initiative on Africa
WB	World Bank

Appendix 2

INTRODUCTION LETTER AND QUESTIONNAIRE

Hi, my name is Irene Wakio Mwakesi. I am a Student at the University of Nairobi undertaking a Masters Degree in International studies at the Institute of Diplomacy and International studies. To graduate all students undertaking this course are required to carry out an empirical study on their area of interest. I will therefore be grateful if you could fill this short questionnaire for me. Your information will be treated in the strict confidence.

UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM-WIDE INITIATIVE ON AFRICA EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE

PART A: RECIPIENT INFORMATION

- 1. Kindly indicate your country
- 2. Gender of respondent [Tick only one]

Female Male

- 3. How long have you worked for the United Nations?

Less than 1 year 1 – 4 years
 5 – 9 years over 10 years

PART B: UNDERSTANDING OF UNSIA

- 1. Are you familiar with United Nations system Wide initiative on Africa

Yes No

- b. If yes. What is your understanding of United Nations system Wide initiative on Africa

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PART C: INVOLVEMENT IN UNSIA

- 1. Were you or your country involved in the United Nations system Wide initiative?

Yes No

- b. If yes at what level were you involved?
- (a) Idea generation
 - (b) Initiative formulation
 - (c) Initiative Implementation
 - (d) Monitoring and Evaluation

PART D: FACTORS LEADING TO UNSIA

1. In your own view, what factors do you think led to the formation of UNSIA

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2. Out of the factors you have listed, which one do you consider the key factor

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PART E: IMPLEMENTATION OF UNSIA

1. Did the relevance of the project goals change during the implementation period?

Yes No

2. If yes in 1. Above, what do you think influenced the change of project aims?

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3. Which new aspects, approaches, tasks, ideas do you think emerged during the project realization in comparison with the previous development frameworks e.g UN-PAAERD?

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4. How efficient was in your opinion the “communication interface” of the project towards targeted partners and countries.
 Very efficient
 Moderately efficient
 Not efficient

5. What do you think about the efficiency of the internal communication e.g (meetings with partners, mailing lists etc) within implementing countries?
 Very efficient
 Moderately efficient
 Not efficient

PART F: EVALUATION OF UNSIA

1. How would you evaluate the work done by the project coordination and central management?
 Excellent
 Very good
 Good
 Average
 Below Average

2. What do you think about the resources available and the tasks realized? Were they proportional?
 Yes No

3. Did UNSIA contribute to any social, economic and cultural development in your country?

 Yes No

4. If yes, give an example?

5. On a scale of 1 – 5, 5 as the best. Rate the performance of the following aspects of UNSIA agenda.
 Education
 Governance
 Health
 Population and Gender
 Children
 Information Technology

6. Where the performance below average. What factors do you think led to the poor performance?

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7. What are some of the strengths and weaknesses of the project you would like to mention.

strengths

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Weaknesses

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8. What are some of the UNSIA strategies you would recommend to be applied in future African development initiatives?

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