Summary Report


2. H. E. President Olusegun Obasanjo, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria formally declared the conference open with an address read on his behalf by Dr. Kema Chikwe the Nigerian Aviation Minister. The President of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Benin, Prof. Ouinosu Conceptua Chaired proceedings.

3. The conference was convened principally to increase awareness about the NEPAD and to build a popular support base within the organized civil society in general and women’s groups in particular. The conference among other things, identified

- The possible entry point(s) for African women in the operationalisation of the programmes and activities of the NEPAD;

- Identified a number of frameworks and possible modalities for effective interface by women’s groups with NEPAD.

4. The conference served as an added opportunity for the women’s groups to evaluate the current mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating the priority areas of security, stability, development and cooperation, and the roles of women in this process; while laying the basis for a structured understanding of the place of the African women in the development and implementation of continental initiatives.

5. In his welcome address, the Executive Director of the *Africa Leadership Forum*, Ayodele Aderinwale described the participation at the conference as an indication of African women’s readiness to grapple with the reality of the problems confronting the continent. He pointed out that at the highest political level African leaders are also respond thick and fast to Africa’s developmental challenges through a range of initiatives such as the Solemn Declaration on the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and cooperation in Africa, (CSSDCA) the African Union, and the NEPAD. Commenting on NEPAD he enjoined participants to think through the critical difference and value added of NEPAD. While saluting NEPAD as an Africa led, Africa managed and Africa owned
initiative, he wondered if this will be enough to enable it make the required critical difference in the lives and living of the ordinary African. He also wondered if NEPAD will provide a practical platform for African women to make due contributions to the developmental needs of the continent? Aderinwale wondered why developmental frameworks yielding productive results in other regions have failed to make a similar impact in Africa. Concluding his address he noted that these and other questions must be part of the focus of this meeting. He thereafter thanked and commended the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), the Africa Leadership Foundation and the Embassy of France for providing the necessary financial support for the meeting.

6. In the formal opening address read on his behalf by the Minister of Aviation, Dr. Kema Chikwe, the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency, President Olusegun Obasanjo lamented the slow pace of development in the continent saying: “It appears that Africa missed the boat of development long ago, we have rushed to the airport only to discover that we cannot afford the plane ticket and finally stand at the airport watching and wailing as the plane of development takes off”.

7. President Obasanjo further admonished Africans to avoid bemoaning the current loss he suggested that we could approach development through a fast moving vehicle. He further pointed out that African political leaders have managed to fashion out a framework; a high-speed vehicle has been provided, the development partners have indicated willingness to provide the fuel in principle, a driver is available, but where are the passengers?” he asked in reference to the participation and support of Africans.

8. One groundbreaking departure of NEPAD from the practices of the past, noted Obasanjo, is that all African heads of State have agreed to the common value of good governance and accountability and would call to question any of them who is found wanting in the discharge of his/her responsibilities as a leader through what he called Peer Group Review Mechanism. According to Obasanjo, the Peer Group Review Mechanism seeks to hold African political leaders at the highest political level accountable for their actions and inaction for their commitments. These are fundamental departures from the practices of the past”. According to him it indicates clearly the seriousness with which African leaders view the initiative and demonstrates the willingness of African leaders to engage the rest of the world and it also shows the readiness of Africa to move in tandem with the rest of the world.

9. Alluding to the fact that the challenges ahead are tough indeed, Obasanjo said current African leaders agreed with the International Development Goal to reduce poverty by 50 percent by 2015, adding that it would require a lot of planning and ingenuity on the part of the leadership to achieve this goal. “While 9% per annum growth rate is required for eradicating poverty in Africa”, he observed that current projections do not envisage more than 5% per annum.” Presently, most of the countries of the continent, he lamented lack the fundamentals for sustained future growth at rates required to realize the poverty reduction target.

10. He therefore called on the women to take the lead direction of this process, because according to him it is paramount to the successful implementation of NEPAD, its objectives, programmes and projects. President Obasanjo expressed the hope that sustainable economic growth based on human security, peace and stability in Africa; poverty eradication; enhanced role women and gender equality in school enrolment by
2005 among others, would be achieved on a continent wide scale through a range of carefully designed and agreed sectoral priorities.

11. He added: “At the political level, we have set targets, made commitments and are serious about these goals and commitment. We set these goals targets and commitment as the basis of our covenant with our people, as the basis of our engagement with our development partners and as the basis for assessing our desire to achieve a thorough going transformation of our continent in several respects. We are of course aware that the journey will be long and arduous and will require the collective commitment of all of us: the young, the old, the public as well as the private sector. It is clear that only our unrelenting and unwavering commitment and discipline will take us through. The opportunities for effective interface with the civil society are many and numerous. However, apathy, cynicism, hopelessness, make-believe, deceit, political grandstanding, political brinkmanship and gimmickry will certainly not help”.

12. President Obasanjo also pointed out ruefully “that development is not a walk on the beach”. He contended that “social, political and economic transformation of any society is usually a product of hard work, tough decisions and the willingness to go the extra mile on all sides of the divide. Excuses, finger pointing, escapist attitudes, lack of sacrifice, business as usual mindset and mentality and we/they syndrome will not contribute to the realisation of the lofty goals objectives and dreams”. He challenged the womenfolk to rise up to the challenges ahead, saying: “Our women cannot be left out; we cannot talk about globalisation, about the need for regional cohesion in a globalising world and still hold our women in contempt”.

13. In the assessment of President Obasanjo, women have always borne the brunt of Africa’s misadventure: “they are the ones that are most vulnerable in times of conflicts and wars; they are the ones that are widowed; they are the ones who face insecurity in all ramification; they are the ones that are left alone to bring up the country from its ruins. They are the ones that are left out in the decision making process; they are the ones that stimulate the conscience of the society; they are the ones that mediate between warring factions; they are the ones that bear the hostility and finally the ones that nurse the wounded and traumatized”. He enjoined women to candidly exchange views on the operational challenges that are associated with implementing the NEPAD process, adding that it is his hope that NEPAD could become an effective tool for channelling resources in support of policies and programmes for poverty reduction.

14. This, he reiterated depends critically on true African ownership and control of the process and a shared vision of where the continent is going. “As future instrument of the Africa Union, NEPAD stands ready to assist in ensuring that we all move together towards the desired destination: a better life for all Africans. NEPAD is a journey that needs my inputs and your inputs and the inputs of all Africans, both young and old, it is time to wake up and move the continent forward,” he asserted. (See Annex I for full text)

15. Thereafter, participants proceeded to grapple with the main task of understanding the NEPAD document, its programmes, activities, priorities and the possibilities it holds for a radical transformation of the African peoples.

16. Presenting An Over View of NEPAD, Merhi Madarshahi, Senior Economic Affairs Officer from the Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for Africa and the
Least Developed Countries (OSCAL) Secretariat, New York argued that the reality of conflicts in seventeen African countries and their debilitating impact on the continent, in terms of human and material resources, is clearly suggestive of the fact that Africa and Africans must take that deliberate rational steps to set their own priorities and thereafter seek the necessary support of development partners. Madarshahi sees NEPAD as the mark of Africa’s readiness to accept responsibilities for its development and the determination to decide its destiny.

17. According to her, it is critical that Africa goes into a new productive partnership with the developed world – a partnership offered by the NEPAD. She added that NEPAD is one continental agenda that places pre-eminence and prominence on participatory action involving the African populace, the civil society and the women. Madarshahi further identified sectoral priorities (provision of roads, water, electricity etc), and the need for a partnership with the developed world which will provide the motivation for acquiring the support of the international community targeted at achieving the short-and long-term objectives of the NEPAD which include the desired diversification of African products and exports, mining, tourism, availability of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) for education, etc. While advocating Africa’s need for a redefined relationship with the international community, she added that this must be complemented by the enthronement of the administrative ethos of transparency and accountability, to checkmate the malaise of corruption in the society, in addition to the institution of a legal framework for the enforcement of law and order. This enabling environment, in her opinion will put the NEPAD in a vantage position to push for better access for African countries in the World Trade Organisation (WTO) negotiations, which previous efforts have not accomplished.

18. In a related presentation Xoliswa Sibeko, from the office of the President of South Africa remarked that NEPAD is a direct outcome of the African Renaissance. It is an African statement to the entire world that in spite of the seemingly intractable problems and the pervading atmosphere of squalor, Africans have the mental capability to think, reflect, with a view to checkmating the blight in their destinies. NEPAD, she intoned, is the continental framework that forms the basis of a new partnership with the developed world based on Africa’s developmental agenda and programme of action, with the target objective of poverty eradication, the pursuit of sustainable development, addressing Africa’s continuing marginalisation in the global arena, and the empowerment and preparation of women for future developmental challenges in the continent.

19. Sibeko stressed that for NEPAD’s laudable dream to become a reality, certain crucial factors must be put in place. These include peace, security, and popular participation in constitutional, democratic governance, economic and corporate governance, regional and sub-regional integration. Xoliswa argued that past continental attempts at releasing Africa from the yoke of underdevelopment did not yield much results because the same diagnosis and solutions were proffered to the same problems – a situation that is a far cry from the NEPAD’s decisive and thorough approach.

20. She assured that under NEPAD, African leaders have been made to commit themselves to ensure an adequate utilisation of Africa’s limited resources to put the continent on the desired developmental plane, through the provision of essential infrastructure. Sibeko called attention to the fact the leadership has placed undue premium on incoming flows to the detriment of the no less vital outgoing ones; advising that it is most pertinent for
Africa to increase the value of her raw materials; develop, and package them effectively with a view to utilising their full value.

21. Speaking under the topic “An Insider’s View of NEPAD”, Ms Kudjoe, the Chief Director, African Multilateral Department of Foreign Affairs, South Africa took a cursory survey of the various stages of the continent’s evolution from the architectural and intellectual grandeur of ancient times, through the Berlin Conference of 1885 which fragmented the continent into nation states that were tied to the developmental aprons of the colonialists, to the post independence era, whose dreams were marred by a myriad of socio-political and economic upheavals.

22. Kudjoe’s paper declared that NEPAD is a manifestation of Africa’s preparedness to wake up to the development needs of the continent, with the overall objective of maintaining a firm ground to create a proper and deserved place of dignity for the continent in the global arena. NEPAD, according to her, demonstrates the desire of Africans to attain global equality with other humans, through developing the continent.

23. This desire, according to her, culminated in the establishment of structures, which make NEPAD outstanding. According to the paper, in furtherance of the overwhelming commitment of the African leadership, all Heads of State have been put in position of responsibility in the NEPAD programme where they are made answerable, both to their respective citizenry and their counterparts in the African Union, during continental summits.

24. Kudjoe’s insider’s comments revealed that the NEPAD commands a high priority in the agenda of the international community; arguing that for the successful actualisation of this continental dream, there is indeed, a requirement for partnership with the various strata within the African continent and the multilateral organisations – the World Bank, IMF, and effective cooperation with the international community. However, the paper submitted that NEPAD’s success in the areas of poverty eradication, provision of infrastructure, global integration, creation of peace, security, stability, popular democratic participation, women empowerment is basically dependent on two major issues: the unflinching commitment of the African leadership and Africans to pursue the stated objectives of NEPAD; and the realisation on the part of the developed countries some of which benefited unfairly from Africa’s economic throes; and the entire international community that their developmental successes can not be complete without accepting the reality that Africa’s development is pertinent. “In our global village, there cannot be islands of development – security and prosperity in a sea of abject poverty and increasing conflict”, Kudjoe posited.

25. Mary Agboli of the Nigerian Economic Summit Group, in a paper titled, “NEPAD: Identifying Stakeholders, Partnership and Priorities”, emphasized that market-oriented economic policies under participatory democracy is critical to the realisation of NEPAD’s major objective of poverty reduction in Africa. She reiterated the inseparable connection between economic prosperity and good governance; positing that prosperity and beneficial economic policies help to bridge the gap between the government and the people. She argued that as a fall out of the age-long gender discrimination against women, the women have been victims of “economic disenfranchisement”, and urged that women must be accorded enough opportunities of economic empowerment through government policy and measures in the NEPAD agenda. Focussing on agriculture and manufacturing which witness a massive concentration of women activities, Agboli called
for the establishment of micro-credit instruments that will be targeted at enhancing small and medium-scale business among the womenfolk.

26. Commenting on the challenges of peace and security, Agboli called attention to the fact that the African women are the worst victims of the pervading insecurity, which comes with the conflicts, and wars that are ravaging the continent. It was her view that a continental strategy, which will make it a priority to checkmate the adverse impact of conflicts on the women, is established to reverse this trend. For her, the establishment of “safety nets” to ensure the protection of women during crisis situations would be a proper starting point in this regard.

27. Tokunbo Ige, African Team Coordinator from the Office of the High Commission on Human Rights (OHCHR), Geneva, commenting on the topic NEPAD And African Women: Mechanism For Engagement Input And Ownership, saluted the socio-political and economic re-awakening among African leaders who have embarked on a number of fresh initiatives in recent time that are targeted at proffering decisive solutions to the problems of the continent. She, however, noted that clarity is needed on the issue of the African ownership of NEPAD. In her view, the success of the NEPAD agenda will remain a function of the effectiveness of its machinery in ensuring that it is people-oriented, people-centred and people-focused in its approach to the crucial issue of Africa’s development.

28. Tokunbo Ige also raised the recurrent issue of marginalisation of women in crucial continental issues. She argued that women should be involved at the various stages of the formulation and implementation of strategic initiatives like NEPAD. She deplored the passing reference to women in the NEPAD document, which according to her is a manifestation of the patriarchal nature of the society that is structured towards stifling the women. She therefore urged that the consultation and involvement of women at all stages of the NEPAD programmes and activities become a desideratum.

29. Ige specifically called on NEPAD Implementation Committee to establish structures that will adequately protect the interest of women. She argued that in order to actualise an increase in women’s involvement in NEPAD, there must be legal instruments to enforce the rights of women to equality in the society, which include the introduction of reforms in areas where women have been put into a cultural disadvantage such as inheritance, ownership, etc. The paper further demanded adequate representation among the women at the level of policy formulation and decision-making in consonance with the fact that the NEPAD agenda can only be executed at the level of government. She stressed that in virtually all areas of developmental priority adequate attention must be paid to the existent gender imbalance.

30. Florence Butegwa, the Regional Director of UNIFEM for Anglophone West Africa, took the debate further in her presentation of the issue of “Popularising NEPAD among Women in Africa” she argued that all segments of the African population must be involved in its formulation and implementation of NEPAD if it is to become part of our developmental reality. Butegwa reasoned that whatever is done in this regard must be based on how the following questions are answered; To what extent does NEPAD acknowledge and address women’s concern and the factors necessary for full participation? Does NEPAD provide sufficient reasons for the women to own it?
31. According to Butegwa effective dissemination of the proposed programmes and activities under NEPAD will be crucial if the overall goal of social change – a shift in our perception of ourselves, capabilities, and even our expectations from our governments and donor agencies and countries is to be realised.

32. Ayodele Aderinwale and Olumide Ajayi from the Africa Leadership Forum Secretariat, in a presentation titled, CSSDCA, NEPAD and the African Union: Towards a Frontier of Convergence pointed out that the three initiatives represent a fundamental reawakening between and among African leaders at the highest political level possible. The presentation focussed on the complementarity and points of convergence between the three initiatives.

33. The presentation further highlighted the interface between the CSSDCA, the African Union (AU) and the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD). It was pointed out that most of the objectives, and the principles upon which the AU and NEPAD rest can be implemented within the framework and four Calabashes of the CSSDCA. Secondly, the CSSDCA is the only initiative that has a well-defined reporting and evaluation mechanism, which will eventually assist the Assembly of AU in fulfilling its function on compliance, as stated in Article 9, subsection (e) of the Constitutive Act of the Union. Logically, the CSSDCA becomes the anchor point of both the AU and NEPAD and that the three of them should now stand as the “Tripod of Security, Stability and Development in Africa”.

34. For this tripod to stand and endure, a new operational arrangement that will wedge the three initiatives together is urgently required. Under this arrangement, it is expected that the NEPAD will be used to supply the organs of AU with new policy programmes and projects while the CSSDCA through its standing conferences and meetings will monitor, conduct performance analysis, evaluate and report back to the main organs of the AU. In this way, the continent will be more efficient and effective in programmes delivery and evaluation.

Gender Analysis:

Marginalization of women and the compelling need to bridge the gap between men and women within the continent was a recurring issue throughout the conference. Participants expressed surprise and disappointment that NEPAD with all its promises and lofty goals could be gender blind. The conference pointed out that the African women have contributed immensely to development of the continent and deserved more than the mere “tokenry”. They should be recognised, saluted and acknowledged as worthy partakers in the entire process of the planning and implementation of NEPAD. Specifically, they declared that for NEPAD to acquire a place of pride in the heart of the African populace, it must give due recognition to the centrality of the women, youth and the organised civil society. They advised that NEPAD, as a visionary document should not be regarded as immutable and must be made open to corrective innovations and additions.

Participants expressed dismay at the lack of gender mainstreaming in the NEPAD document. It was seen as a reaffirmation of the neglect of the interest of women in a patriarchal setting. Women’s movement in Africa, it was pointed out must remain conscious that they must proffer the solutions to their disadvantaged situation. As the neglected segment of the society that make up about 50% of the population in any country, they insist women should be taken into consideration, as citizens with equal rights and privileges in the development of our sub-region.
and continent. The participants recommended that the disparity among sexes should be indicated and strategies for dealing with them duly stated. The conference reasoned that though the NEPAD document is gender-blind, the challenge for the women’s group must be the need to reverse the situation.

Participants pointed out that there is a question mark on the genuineness, originality and sincerity of the document, when viewed against the backdrop of the fact that the proponents of the NEPAD agenda do not find it expedient to consult with women. They contended that, the fact that the women who constitute a vital segment of the African continent, and are known to be making immense contribution to the strengthening of the African economy were not taken into perspective in NEPAD agenda is glaringly suggestive of the fact that NEPAD deserve more than a cursory analysis.

That NEPAD Implementation and Steering committees should also endeavour to undertake as urgently a possible a needs assessment of all vulnerable groups such as women, youths and the poor children and the disabled and incorporate same in project identification, selection and execution.

The conference further suggested that the term ‘Africans’ in the document should be replaced with ‘African men, women and youth’ to specify the relevance of the various segments in the society. They posited that emphasis should be placed on the social and development aspects, with reference to available statistics. Better and recent statistics should be provided to show the importance of women’s input into the society, and their vulnerable situation, noting that 41.2% are women and 75% of the women are poor and illiterates and who live below US$1 a day.

The group argued that although women and men share the burden of poverty in Africa, women are also subject to socially imposed constraints that further limit their opportunities or to equal access to public services and consumption of public goods”. They therefore recommended that more attention should be given to the socio-economic conditions of women. Consequently, participants pointed out that gender disparity deserves greater recognition by the NEPAD. They also expressed dissatisfaction that NEPAD goals only reflected the importance of gender balance in the areas of school enrolment and mortality, which are the traditional areas.

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The conference also deplored in very strong terms the continuing marginalisation of the rural women in critical gender-based issues. They deplored the recurrent relegation of the rural woman, in major continental initiatives. It was the consensus at the conference that all women, irrespective of social background, should be availed the opportunity to know the principles and objectives of NEPAD. The participants submitted that it was both germane and critical to put in place a sustained programme targeted at training women for future responsibilities; both as a means of reducing the inequality in gender and the reduction of the rate of illiteracy among women. Specifically, the group called for the establishment of a special conference to review existing policy initiatives aimed at improving the access of the girl-child to qualitative education with a view to enhancing the life chances of the girl-child.
The conference took some time to reflect inwardly on the current state of the women’s strive for
equality with men. The conference decided that there was a pertinent need for an inventory of all
Gender-focused Non-Governmental Organisations, Women Affairs Ministries or Women
Bureau, etc.; which are indeed pivotal to the realisation of the dreams and aspirations of
women. Towards this end the conference called for a critical and sober reflection on the current
state of the women’s struggle. Such a reflective gathering must as a matter of necessity be guided
by a search for answers to the following questions:

Participants noted that mystification of gender is a feature of African politics. Such terms as
illiteracy, etc are used to further marginalise women. They, however, argued that there are a lot of
African women who though are not educated, have functional capabilities in economic matters.
As a result of this mystification, national budgets do not give women the adequate attention. With
a view to redressing this anomaly, therefore participants suggested that:

- Disparity of gender has to be recognized in national budgets
- NEPAD should put in place a mechanism for women’s effective participation
  in national budgeting.

As a corollary of the above, it was also suggested that African leaders should encourage popular
participation in national planning, especially in national budgeting.

**Sectoral Analysis:**

1. **Economic Aspects**

Participants recommended the acceleration of Intra-African Trade and increased access to the
markets of industrialized countries. Participants observed that since the emergence of the World
Trade Organisation (WTO), Africa seem to have conceded all the initiatives in the area of global
trade to the rest of the world. A critical challenge in the years ahead remain the need to inform
and generally educate the mass of the African people on the dynamics of globalisation with a
view to empowering them to assist African policy makers to better respond to the multifarious
and often times intricate challenges of globalisation. In this respect it would be strategic to
establish clearly the link between poverty alleviation and globalisation. Participants suggested
that this aspect should be given due prominence under the programmes and activities of NEPAD.

Participants further called for the mobilization of increased Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and
Oversea Development Assistance (ODA) as well as programmes designed to accelerate the
development of agriculture (access to creation and equal distribution of wealth and resources) and
the enhancement of the South-South Cooperation.

While commending the NEPAD initiative participants pointed to a number of fundamental gaps
and omissions in the NEPAD Document. In more specific terms, the conference pointed out that
the document was lacking in precision and clarity on the African quest for a debt relief.

While recognizing that African countries and sub-regions are at different and differing levels of
development, the meeting pointed out that African leaders failed in their previous initiatives
because they did not move as a collective bloc. They therefore maintained that it is mandatory for
Africa to adopt a collective approach to tackle the challenges of underdevelopment.
It was also observed that the desired growth rate of 7% is largely obscurantist and should be expanded in gender related manner.

The utilisation of GDP for measuring economic performance does not reflect the important contribution of the formal sector, to which the majority of African women belong. As part of a fresh beginning aimed at harnessing the contributions of the different segments of African population, it will be instructive and practically rewarding for NEPAD to refrain from using the GDP alone to measure economic development. The Human Development Index, (HDI) it was argued, should be used in addition to the GDP. This was premised on the argument that majority of African women belong to the informal sector, of which contribution to economic growth is not adequately reflected in the GDP. Participants stated that the NEPAD document should reflect the fact that both men and women have the capacity of contributing to Africa’s socio-economic development. They therefore recommended that all capacity building mechanisms should be gender focused, that is gender perspective has to come to bear in all priority areas.

The conference pointed out that the informal sector could not be phased out in Africa, though some of informal sector initiatives should be analysed and formalised where appropriate.

Participants also suggested that a study of factors impeding women’s effective participation in all the priority areas should be instituted, and that it is based on this that strategies and targets for each area can be developed.

1.a. Agriculture

Participants noted that women are not featured in NEPAD document on agriculture, though they represent 70% in the agro-processing sector. It was also observed that the cultural practice of patriarchal land ownership is antithetical to women development and should be reviewed. Women, it was argued should be involved in the process of policy formulation in order to avail them the opportunity of systematically addressing this sensitive issue.

Additionally, they canvassed increased access of women to modern farming modalities and post harvest processing and storage should be expanded. In similar vein, it was suggested that women – friendly technology should be made available and affordable

Increased access of women to credit facilities under NEPAD was seen by the participants as a desideratum under NEPAD.

They reasoned that Women should be part of the body that would come up with the plan for the infrastructural schemes. They stressed the need to encourage cross-border transportation, regional cooperation, telecommunication, while the women should be given the opportunity of capacity building to enable them feature adequately in these areas.

It was agreed that there is need to combat the malaise of corruption effectively, putting in place the effective strategy for combating this bane of the African continent. Furthermore, they emphasised that the document must articulate how the youths and the women can contribute to making a drastic mitigation of corruption - a social evil that has ensured the absence of the ethos accountability and transparency in governance.

1.b. FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT
Participants suggested that African governments should develop clear strategies to divert FDI to areas where women are involved – Agro food processing, cottage industries, etc.

Women’s groups, it was further recognised should be included at all levels of trade negotiations, and in the management of FDI.

African governments were equally enjoined to set up and encourage existing African women co-operative societies to enable African women to group together towards ownership of enterprises.

Participants also recommended that clear target for reducing the gender gap in ODA and that such assistance should be diverted to sectors of critical importance to women, agro-allied industries

In addition, it was suggested that the poverty reduction programmes in Africa must be informed by a conscious and deliberate effort aimed at reducing the gender gap. Additionally, the proportion of ODA to be used in addressing this should be specified. The conference also reasoned that a more sustainable usage of ODA in Africa might be to direct such assistance to income generating projects.

2. PEACE AND SECURITY

Reviewing the Peace and Security component of the NEPAD Document, it was agreed that it might be instructive to include the following clause:

“Instability affects women and children more than existing statistics reveal.”

In addition, the conference felt strongly that paragraph 74 of the document should be amended to include the sentence below:

“Building, recognising and strengthening participation of communities, including women in the prevention, management and resolution of conflict, peace building, peacemaking and peace keeping and peace enforcement”.

The conference also dwelt on the inseparable link between peace and the desired African economic integration. They submitted that without peace- social and legal peace, the envisaged vision of development could never be a reality.

Reviewing the conflict situation in Africa and the emergence of various continental bodies that are meant to address this situation, participants, pointed out that it is necessary to have a continent-wide high level meeting on peace and security whose major preoccupation will be to chart the course for setting an effective and efficient policy for the maintenance and restoration of peace and security in Africa. The conference further stressed the imperative to give adequate attention to the reconciliation of the existing two continental initiatives – the CSSDCA and NEPAD under the aegis of the African Union and how these measures on peace and security can be made to work in accordance with expectations.

3. DEMOCRACY AND GOVERNANCE INITIATIVE:

On the democracy and governance component of the document participants made the following recommendations:
• Paragraph 79: must make reference to women’s human rights, pointing out that although most African countries signed CEDAW, majority are yet to fully implement same.

• In Paragraph 83: Participants suggested that a provision for women’s involvement in all the identified areas should be added.

The conference also agreed that African leaders must set up a framework for gender specific structural reforms. All structural obstacles to the development of African women, as well as job discrimination must be removed.

The participants examined the acclaimed African ownership of NEPAD considered a major strength of the NEPAD. They pointed out that the document was already a subject for discussion in the UN in October 2001, even when it had not been known to the generality of the African people. Such a situation it was observed leaves much to be desired.

The conference highlighted the need for a mechanism of evaluation that would be structured towards eliciting a response of accountable, effective leadership from our political leaders. The conference contended that for the NEPAD project to be truly fulfilled, it must make adequate provision for the establishment of capacity building projects for the women, without which its smooth realisation would run into hitches.

Participants also saw the need for the document to contain more comprehensive and thorough going strategies with clear indicators for measuring progress towards the mitigation of corruption and all forms of administrative and financial malfeasance which has continued to undermine development efforts in Africa.

Participants urged the Chairman of the NEPAD Implementation Committee to consult urgently with his colleagues with a view to creating an interface mechanism for effective participation and representation of civil society organization especially those of women, in the task teams and other strategic committees of NEPAD;

Participants recommended that NEPAD should provide for the removal of laws and statutes that have the propensity of maintaining the gender status quo or widening the gender divide.

The participants declared that the pervading atmosphere of democracy must be accompanied by political education that should enable the electorates to know the processes of democratization - asking pertinent questions, making their concerns known to the policy makers and contributing to the entire process of policy formulation and implementation. It was therefore recommended that the enhancement of peace, democracy, human rights and sound economic management, a valid aspiration for any nation state, must be accorded a place of preference in NEPAD.

4. INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY:

Recognising that ICT will define nature of human interaction in the years ahead, it was suggested that women must be encouraged to recognize the importance of Information & Communication Technologies ICTs; gender-gaps in access to ICT must be bridged; gender approach on awareness
creation on ICT be developed; access to ICT at local and formal educational levels should be fostered.

In Paragraph 8 of the NEPAD document the conference suggested that that African countries must reflect the need to bridge gender gaps within African countries.

- Telecommunication policies must define telecommunication as a tool for information for rural development.
- Access to telephone should be available and affordable for rural women.

5. SOCIAL ASPECTS:

5.1 Environment: The conference enjoined that adequate attention should be paid to the protection of the environment. Participants agreed that the issue of environmental protection should not be restricted to natural disasters and conflicts alone. They advised that the government should put structures on ground to enhance capacity building to increase the level of preparedness during conflicts and natural disasters with a view to overcoming.

5.2.1. Human Resource Development

Recognizing the importance of human resource to bridging the gender gap, participants recognised the imperative of imbuing women with functional education and recommended that:

- Life long and continuous literacy programme for women to enable them improve their lot be put in place at the national level.
- Policy supporting functional/technical education for women and children be formulated.
- Adequate funding has to be devoted to women’s education.
- Participants recommended that African governments should reform their education policies and comply with 30% diversion of budgets to education as directed by UNESCO.

6. SECTORAL PRIORITIES:

Reviewing the sectoral priorities in the NEPAD document participants made the flowing recommendations:

The adverse effect of globalisation on the African continent also featured prominently in the conference. Examining the economic content of globalisation, the participants called for the protection of goods that are strictly original to the African continent. The participants further called for the institution of collective policies again the World Trade Organisation, particularly, in areas that are expressly detrimental to Africa’s interest.

ENERGY

The Conference also recommended that African leaders should facilitate under NEPAD, the popular utilization of cheaper and alternative and affordable energy such as solar energy, at
national level to reduce the burden of women with a view to diverting the time women used in sourcing firewood, kerosene and other forms of energy to creative ventures.

TRANSPORT

Participants pointed out that NEPAD does not recognize the relevance of intra-national movement of people. The movement of people at the intra-national level has particular relevance for African women. Apart from regional transport network, participants maintained that public transport should be improved to reduce the stress women encounter in their daily activities. NEPAD should provide for reform of the intra-national public transport system in Africa. That emphasis should be on the development of intra-national road networks, which have significant impact on African women.

African countries should put in place mechanisms to provide accessible and affordable insurance coverage for loss of goods resulting from accidents.

HEALTH

The participants pointed out with regret that it has become the tradition to focus attention on HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis and other terminal diseases to the exclusion of other health-related issues such as lack of sanitation, water, food, shelter, environment reproductive rights etc, and recommended that health and basic health-related issues should be dealt with collectively.

The participants recommended that there is need to review how communicable diseases such as HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis affect different people – the men, women, boys, girls and children. The statistics should reflect these areas and should form the basic thrust of major government policies in order for the political leaders to proffer effective solution to them.

Participants called attention to the need to handle issues relating to sex and the process of control and access to reproductive health with caution.

The conference also felt that it is pertinent to take a critical look at the existing detrimental cultural practices that are inimical to the health of women.

TOWARDS A COUNTRY STRATEGY DOCUMENT FOR POPULARIZING NEPAD.

The conference agreed that effective dissemination of the NEPAD document among Africans was critical to its effective ownership by Africans and therefore will serve as the basis for building a sustainable development strategy. It therefore recommended that the following steps might prove useful and instructive in devising national strategies;

1. Women must be made to understand that involvement in NEPAD is an investment for social transformation not only for their generation but also for the future.

2. As a first basic step it was reasoned that simplification of document to be disseminated to stakeholders must be undertaken. Target groups have to be taken into consideration to determine the level of assimilation of the document. It was therefore recommended that aspects of the document in local languages and sometimes reduced to jingles.
3. Identification of women’s organization, religious leaders, playwrights, musicians, youth groups, traditional communicators, as primary target groups.

4. The conference agreed that the NEPAD has to be popularized by several African leaders from Nigeria, South Africa, Algeria, Egypt, Senegal etc., and called for the effective contribution of the African women to a global cross fertilization of ideas with a permanent focus in the development of the region.

5. The participants agreed that conscious efforts should be made to adequately tackle the identified gaps in the document, with a view to making it truly responsive to the developmental yearnings of the African continent. The conference suggested that in order to move the document beyond the realm of a mere continental vision, the **document must become an African household document**. The participants, however, advised that in order to translate it into a truly productive continental programme, with emphasis on addressing the infrastructural problems of the African people, the NEPAD Document must assume a shift in focus from being a market-oriented document to a people-centred, people-focused document.

The above steps, it was suggested should be complemented by a concerted, systematic and progressive efforts based on:

1. Sensitization of the different machinery within countries, such as the civil society, the gender machinery, the youths organisation, which are vital to spreading the envisaged ideals to as many people as possible; hear their views through sustained consultation and incorporate them into the document.

2. Organisation of advocacy visits to the community leaders to enable them know the needs and aspirations of women and youths about the document.

3. Creation of sectoral committees of experts from all sectors to make their inputs in the process of putting the document together.

4. African civil servants should meet to define strategies for involvement, particularly of women’s organizations.

5. Participants recommended that consultative meetings at regional and sub-regional levels should be convened. They also reiterated the need for NEPAD to integrate earlier protocols, especially the CSSDCA and the AU. They therefore suggested that members of the steering committee should develop strategies for harmonizing the initiatives.

6. The conference decided that now is the time for the women to exhibit more consciousness in the politics of their respective countries. They enjoined the women to be more critical politically; ask follow-up questions when manifestos are tossed at the society without the accompanying sincerity for their implementation.

7. The participants advised that an all-women movement be initiated to challenge the politicians to imbue in them the imperative of strict adherence to the ethos of governance.

8. It was agreed that it might be necessary to think through the establishment of:
➢ A Women Steering Committee at the national level;

➢ A regional Steering Committee at regional level during this meeting;

➢ With the following category of membership;

Mixed group of Community Based Organizations and government representatives.
International Development Agencies such as UNDP, UNIFEM UNICEF etc.
Organized Private Sector / Indigenous private sector operators.

It was also agreed that this should be undertaken within a short-term frame of one year.

In addition to the above it was also suggested that information on members of steering committee should be widely disseminated in order to allow input of the civil society into the NEPAD Document through them. In particular it was felt that information about who they are? When do they meet? Other pertinent issues in need of clarification is the relationship between OAU/AU and NEPAD. How NEPAD fits into the operational framework of the African Union?
Chapter Two

AFRICA: THE IMPERATIVE OF CHANGE

FORMAL OPENING ADDRESS

By
President Olusegun Obasanjo

Let me start by kindly requesting that we all observe a one-minute silence in memory of our brothers and sisters who unfortunately and sadly lost their lives on the 27th of January 2002 in Lagos. May their souls rest in perfect peace. May their departed spirits fill us with the strength to see through the nature of our developmental challenges in Nigeria and indeed all of Africa. Some weeks before, it was the volcanic eruptions in the Democratic Republic of Congo. For several Africans not living within the vicinity of Goma, it was merely images available through the mass media. So far away, so real and yet so unreal. Do we know the next spot, the next disaster, the next set of Africans to lose their lives? Why has death disaster become so commonplace and cheap in Africa? Why are the odds so highly stacked against us as a people, as a continent and as a race? How prepared are we to change our life chances? Is there hope for Africa? Can we convert the limited and ever contracting opportunities?

While we ponder on these thoughts and questions, let me, on behalf of the People and Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, add my words of welcome to those already expressed by the previous speakers. Please, accept my fraternal greetings and sincere welcome to Ota and Nigeria and to this important **Regional Conference on African Women and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)**. I hope that you will find time at the end of your deliberations to visit places of interest. For those of you visiting Nigeria for the first time, I hope you will take the opportunity of your visit to know Nigeria and meet her people and partake of our hospitality. I also hope that you return to your country with a better and more positive impression of Nigeria and Nigerians than you came with.

Let me also commend the initiative of the organizers, the Africa Leadership Forum and the United Nations Economic Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). I say so because activities such as these are crucial in converting NEPAD into a truly people based, people focussed, people owned, and people driven process. It is also indicative of the sort of partnership that would be required as the NEPAD’s technical team refines and clarifies the sectoral priorities and modalities for realising set goals and targets.

I must thank all of you for taking the time out of your various commitments to deliberate on NEPAD and the possible roles for our women in moving this African agenda forward in a sustainable manner. I see in your presence in Nigeria at this time of a national tragedy, a reaffirmation of the African spirit of solidarity with us in our trying moments. May your deliberations over the next three days be fruitful. May your thoughts, reflections and insights be devoid of platitudinous civilities. May it be infused with the required degree of realism, hope and sober reflections.
Quite legitimately, some have wondered why NEPAD? What difference? What about all the wonderful and hope raising initiatives, frameworks, modalities packages of the past? Will this be any different? What is the guarantee that, like all good intentions of the past, it will not remain a mere good intentions? Yes, it is true that there have been several frameworks, initiatives, packages, studies, projections etc to assist in responding to several challenges confronting Africa in the past. In most cases, some of these initiatives were ideas, viewpoints and distilled thoughts of non-Africans and others who, though have expressed genuine concern about Africa and its problems, lack the requisite interpretative understanding of our reality. In other instances, the operational environment was tainted mostly by compulsory ideological altercations. At a point and as I have had occasion to say in the past, Africa became an over-studied continent so much so that it became a victim of perennial theoretical postulations - a testing ground for all manners of theories most are, of course, well meaning and could possibly have assisted in redressing some of the problems. Some of the past initiatives also suffered from conceptual and operational contradictions and confusion. It bothers on stating the obvious that these solutions, suggestions, frameworks and constructs have not effectively addressed Africa’s problems in any fundamental sense.

In some cases, these solutions were mere palliatives. In other instances, they sought to tackle the symptoms and not the disease. The main problems of Africa have not fundamentally changed. Majority of our people are still poor and still lack access and the wherewithal to engage in popular participation in both economic, political and social structures and processes. A few statistics will underscore the gravity of our situation and the need for NEPAD.

- Poverty is higher in Africa than in any other region of the world. Two out of five Africans subsist below a poverty line of less than $20 per month; the majority of these are women.

- Africa has the most unequal distribution of income of any region in the world. Income distribution is negatively skewed against women.

- Half of Africa’s children of school age are out of school; this is even lower in rural areas and among girls. This means that most African women will grow up into the world of illiteracy, which will also adversely affect the mental and social development of their children.

- Elsewhere in the world HIV/AIDS is on the decline. In Africa, HIV/AIDS has reached pandemic proportions, threatening to wipe out Africa’s fragile social and economic gains. Two-thirds of the world’s 34 million AIDS sufferers are in sub-Saharan Africa. Yet as countries like Senegal and Uganda show, with the necessary political will and resources, the AIDS pandemic can be rolled back.

- 26 African conflicts have taken place since 1963, affecting 61 percent of the population. Today, 21 percent of Africa’s peoples are in war and conflict. Poverty, political instability and war go together.

- In the period 1990-1996, the OECD countries accounted for over 70% of global exports of goods and services; the figure for Sub-Saharan Africa was less than 2%. In 1997, 68% of the world stock of foreign direct investment was in the hands of the developed world, while Africa had 1.9%
• Forty years after independence in Africa, we are still struggling with the easily controllable diseases such as malaria and diarrhoea infections. We still have not been able to rein in-group meningococcal meningitis in the Sahelian states in spite of availability of cheap vaccines that can be applied before harmattan.

• The structure of African economy is that of dependency. Africa produces commodities it does not need and depends on others for the production of its own need. For centuries, Africa, especially the Sub-Saharan Africa, has been a source of cheap labour and raw materials. Inevitably, there is a transfer of wealth from Africa rather than its expansion within the continent.

• In the 80’s alone, it is estimated that conflict and violence claimed over 3 million lives with 160 million Africans living in countries in the throes of civil war.

• Out of 35 genocides and politicides recorded around the world, 11 occurred in Africa compared with 24 elsewhere in the world. At the beginning of the 1990s, Africans accounted for 43 percent of the global population of refugees, most of them fleeing from political violence and many of them dying from famine, exposure and diseases. The majority were women and children.

Cognizant of the severity of the situation and the need to respond quickly, deeply and rightly; in addition to the fact that Africa was already on the verge of being delinked from the rest of the world, it became imperative that we must set our own agenda, based on our vision and understanding of our place in the world today. In setting the agenda, we also remained conscious that we must exercise the leadership by keeping the driver’s seat and plotting and navigating our ways through the maze. How do we intend to tackle these problems differently from the previous attempts under NEPAD? What do we intend to do differently? Can we do it successfully?

NEPAD’s main thrust and difference from previous initiatives include the following:

• It is Africa initiated, Africa propelled and Africa led.

• It is a comprehensive and holistic attempt to resolve Africa’s multifarious challenges in a concerted manner.

• It is an attempt by Africa to design its own agenda based on its own perception of her reality and the answers to these challenges.

• NEPAD insists on the centrality of peace, security and stability of African nations as the preconditions for sustainable human development.

• NEPAD seeks to facilitate popular participation of her people in the development process.

• NEPAD recognises the importance of engaging her development partners on her own terms based on a number of commitments to redefine the operational environment within the continent.

Under NEPAD, African leaders have jointly committed themselves to the following:

• Strengthening of Conflict Prevention Mechanisms
• Promotion & Protection of Democracy & Human rights
• Restoration & Maintenance of Marco-Economic Stability
• Transparent Framework for Financial Market, Private & Public Sector Auditing
• Revitalisation & Extension of Education, Technical Training & health services
• Promotion of the Role of Women in Social Economic Development
• Enhancement of State’s Capacity to set, enforce and maintain Law and order
• Promotion of Infrastructure and Product & export Diversification

NEPAD has one other interesting and groundbreaking departure from the practices of the past. It seeks to hold African political leaders at the highest possible level committed to it undertakings through the mechanism of peer group review. These are fundamental departures from the practices of the past. It indicates clearly the seriousness with which African leaders view the initiative. It also demonstrates the willingness of African leaders to engage the rest of the world on an even keel. It shows the readiness of Africa to move in tandem with the rest of the world.

In the long run African leaders hope to achieve sustainable economic growth based on human security, peace and stability in Africa; eradicate poverty; enhance the role of our women in all areas and achieve gender equality in school enrolment by 2005, while reducing infant and maternal mortality. This will be achieved through a range of carefully designed and agreed sectoral priorities.

NEPAD is also a demonstration of the willingness and commitment of the current political leadership in Africa to confront head long the much needed, often mouthed but seldom actualised need for socio-economic transformation, its requirement. The current political leadership is aware that responsive and responsible leadership will be critical. So will partnership at all levels and in all shapes be essential. Partnership with development partners as well as the civil society and the generality of our people on whose behalf we act.

At the political level, we have set targets, made commitments and are serious about these goals and commitment. We set these goals, targets and commitment as the basis of our covenant with our people, as the basis of our engagement with our development partners and as the basis for assessing our desire to achieve a thorough going transformation of our continent in several respects. We are of course aware that the journey will be long and arduous and will require the collective commitment of all of us; the young, the old, the public as well as the private sector. It is clear that only our unrelenting and un-wavering commitment and discipline will see us through. The opportunities for effective interface with the civil society are many and numerous. However, apathy, cynicism, hopelessness, make-belief, deceit, political grandstanding, political brinkmanship and gimmickry will certainly not help.

At the highest political leadership on our continent today, we are gradually coming to terms with the need to evolve a set of common values. We are gradually realising that the only people that
can turn Africa around and change the fortunes as well as the life chances of her people remain Africans and her leaders. The leadership is seeking to take the bulls by the horn. It is time for the civil society organisations to also begin to look inward to believe in the honest commitment of its leadership, to encourage the leadership and to hold the leadership to its promises. Popular participation based on accountability, openness and transparency is not a one-way street. The leadership may set the tone; the people must pick up the beat and raise the tempo and set the rhythm that will facilitate the effective restructuring of Africa. Words, niceties, political talks and fantastic strategy papers are never enough. A serious understanding of the exhortation ‘never to look back once your hand in on the plough’ is critical. The world is not shaped by mere good intentions, as that alone will not do. A degree of adroitness, hardheaded pursuit, and willingness to walk our talk through the maze is required. The partnership will not only be with our development partners, it will also be with our people, in particular, the organised civil society which will be a critical part of the equation.

At the risk of repeating myself, let me reiterate the fact that development is not a walk on the beach. It never has been. Social political and economic transformation of any society is usually a product of hard work, tough decisions and the willingness to go the extra mile on all sides of the divide. Excuses, finger pointing, escapist attitudes, lack of sacrifice, business as usual mindset and mentality and we/they syndrome will not contribute to the realisation of the lofty goals, objectives and dreams of NEPAD. We cannot afford to fail this time. Let me illustrate my thoughts in the following terms. It appears that Africa missed the boat of development long ago; we have rushed to the airport only to discover that we cannot afford the plane ticket and finally stand at the airport watching and wailing as the plane of development takes off. We have a chance to catch the flight; we can moan about the traffic jam, we can wish away the other obstacles or we can get up and decide to do something about our condition. The political leaders have managed to fashion out a framework; a high-speed vehicle has been provided, the development partners have indicated willingness to provide the fuel in principle, a driver is available, but where are the passengers?

The main purpose of this conference according to the organisers is to listen, dialogue and to promote a shared understanding of the content of NEPAD as they affect our women, our children, our society and our land.

It is true that the current African leaders agreed with the International development goal to reduce poverty by 50 percent by 2015, it will require a lot of planning and ingenuity on the part of the leadership to achieve this goal. While a 9% per annum growth rate is required for eradicating poverty in Africa, current projections do not envisage more than 5% per annum. Presently, most of the countries of the continent lack the fundamentals for sustained future growth at rates required to realize the poverty reduction target.

The need for women to take the lead direction of this process is paramount to the successful implementation of NEPAD, its objectives, programmes and projects. In this new millennium, the defining feature of our increasingly interdependent world is accelerated by globalisation, and the liberalization of production, trade, investment and finance. Our women cannot be left out; we cannot talk about globalisation, about the need for regional cohesion in a globalising world and still hold our women in contempt. Women for very explicable reasons have borne the brunt of Africa’s misadventure. They are the ones that are most vulnerable during conflicts and wars; they are the ones that bear the hostility, nurse the wounded and the traumatized; they are the ones that are widowed; they are the ones who face insecurity in all ramification, they are the ones that are left alone to bring up the country from its ruins. They are the ones that are left out in the decision making process; they are the ones that stimulate the conscience of the society; they are the ones that mediate between warring factions,
It is, therefore, my hope that you will be candid in exchanging views on the operational challenges that are associated with implementing the NEPAD process from the perspective of the African woman. My hope is that NEPAD becomes an effective tool for channelling resources in support of policies and programmes for poverty reduction. However, this depends critically on true African ownership and control of the process, and a shared vision of where we are going. As a future instrument of the Africa Union, NEPAD stands ready to assist in ensuring that we all move together towards the desired destination - a better life for all Africans. NEPAD is a journey that needs my inputs and your inputs and the inputs of all Africans, both young and old, it is time to wake up and move the continent forward.

Since the UN’s Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, the world now displays a better understanding of the need to free women, and to make them equal participants in development. This is not just a matter of rights but of good economic sense. Africa must break institutional and cultural barriers that inhibit active participation of women in the development process.

The NEPAD framework must be the means to accelerate and deepen the effective integration and cooperation between and among different African economies. NEPAD commits all African states to economic cooperation and integration, much like other unions in the world. Regional integration is the key to Africa’s success in the 21st century. The challenge is for the subregional initiatives to march together and in step with the objectives and the goals of the Africa economic community and the Africa union.

Africa must mobilize sufficient resources to cut poverty by 2015 in line with the millennium development goals. African economies would have to grow by 8 percent compared to the average of 3.2 percent growth rate last year. To grow at 8 percent a year, investments need to be about 40 percent of GDP. Even with major increases in domestic savings, there are still huge financing gaps. The issue is not aid or trade, or debt relief or foreign direct investment, but rather a holistic framework for financing the continent’s development. Aid to Africa is declining at exactly the time when Africa’s abilities and plans are sounder than ever. Africa’s men and women must rise up to these challenges and demonstrate greater commitments towards the continent’s progress.

Much has been said about leapfrogging development through Information and communication technologies (ICTs). ICTs present some of the most exciting possibilities for Africa in the new millennium. For once, we have affordable (and increasingly cheaper!) forms of technology, capable of benefiting Africa, cut the cost of doing business, and narrow the gap of huge distances. A few years ago, only a handful of African countries were connected to the Internet. Today, things are changing; women in particular have a role to play in promoting and popularising ICTs among African children and youth.

Women must position themselves and insist on good governance. Ensuring and sustaining good governance must be an African priority responsibility. Women must be involved in civil society action groups that canvass for good governance; they must create networks for collegiality and ensure a constant reappraisal of strategies to ensure effectiveness.

Women must become the focus of social spending which has become a major casualty of recent budget cuts in many African countries. To expect that Africa can progress when investment in its human capital is declining is a classic case of being penny wise and pound-foolish. Social investment challenges of health, education, housing, water supplies and sanitation are enormous and demand the creativity and partnership of all caring parties.
The role of women as peace mediators is not in doubt, while NEPAD strives to prevent conflict and provide solutions to current conflicts in Africa. Peace can no longer be just about peace making and peacekeeping, it is also about peace building. The world has learned expensively that it is cheaper and far more humane to prevent conflict than to fight a war. To quote the UN Secretary General, “in the past twenty years we have understood the need for military intervention where governments grossly violate human rights and the international order. In the next twenty years we must learn how to prevent conflicts, as well as intervene in them.”

I have described an Africa where there is hope and opportunities for transformation. As women, we need to begin to think of our roles and needs in this process of transformation.

In closing, let me quote the African saying that a child who does not cry dies on its mother’s back. So here is my final plea: as women, don’t just claim the 21st century for Africa. Go out and make it Africa’s century.

Chapter Three

AN OVERVIEW OF NEPAD

By
Mehri Madarshahi

Why NEPAD?

- Too many initiatives and too little action
- Dual forces demand change: from within and external development/globalisation
- Need for a new vision by Africa
- Redefine scope and terms of partnership with other actors of global community
- Africa unequivocally ready to accept responsibility for its own development
- Commitment to determine its own destiny

Main features

- NEPAD is Africa-designed, Africa-led and Africa managed
- It sets an agenda for the continent’s renewal based on participatory processes involving the people and civil society, including women
- It envisages a peace and security mechanism to resolve conflicts and civil strife
- NEPAD aims at reducing marginalization by building strong centers based on African ownership and competitive economies
- NEPAD seeks to promote and protect democracy, human rights and the rule of law
- Enforces the legal framework and maintains law and order
- Restores macroeconomic stability
- Revitalizes education and health services
- Promotes diversification and development of infrastructures
- Promotes the role of women by seeking to reinforce their capacities
**Long-term objectives**

- To provide security and stability in Africa
- To achieve sustainable growth
- To eradicate poverty (extreme poverty to be reduced by half by 2015; universal education to be attained by 2015)
- To promote the role of women in all areas (achieve gender equality in school enrolment by 2005; reduce child and maternal mortality)

1. **Sectoral priorities**

   - **INFRASTRUCTURE** (improving access; enhancing regional cooperation and trade; boosting investment)
   - Expansion and availability of ICT;
   - Energy (affordable commercial energy; reverse environmental degradation; develop hydropower potential and gas pipelines);
   - Transport (ports, roads, land and air transport)
   - Water and sanitation (safe, adequate and clean water; provide sustainable ecosystems...)

2. **HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

   - **POVERTY REDUCTION**
   - **BRIDGING THE EDUCATION GAP**
   - **REVERSING BRAIN DRAIN**
   - **HEALTH**
   - **AGRICULTURE**

3. **ENVIRONMENT**

   - Combating desertification
   - Wetland conservation
   - **Coastal management**
   - Global warming
   - Cross-border conservation
   - Environmental governance
   - Financing, including debt relief (further negotiations with development partners/creditors; sharing experiences; ODA reform; private capital flows)

**Projects requiring partners**

- Market access initiative (diversification of production)
- Mining
- Manufacturing
- Tourism
- Export promotion
- Development of ICTs and transportation
- Negotiating a new global access

**Division of labor**
A. **Industrialized partners**

- To support materially mechanisms for conflict prevention and peace-keeping initiatives
- To accelerate poverty reduction actions
- To improve debt relief strategies
- To help implement the international strategies on education and health issues
- To secure access to drugs for infectious diseases
- To negotiate more equitable terms of trade for African countries
- To encourage investment by private sector
- To raise consumer protection standards for exports
- To persuade multilateral financing institutions to invest in infrastructure projects
- To support governance reform
- To strengthen Africa’s capacity in planning and development
- To combat corruption

B. **African countries:**

- Provide regional and sub-regional support to conflict resolution;
- Implement CSSDCA;
- Harmonize policies and regulations with that of global partners;
- Reduce investment risks;
- Enhance investment policies;
- Develop new industries or upgrade existing ones in agro-business, energy and mineral resources
- Develop shared vision with the private sector
- Adopt international standards to enable African industry to participate in global trade
- Establish an accreditation infrastructure according to international standards
- Encourage growth of small industries through technical support
- Create marketing mechanisms and strategies
- Enhance capacity building through improvement in universal education and health services;
- Priorities consumer safety issues;
- Increase regional co-ordination and expand diversity of products;
- Enhance the capacity of the private sector through training and skills development;
- Promote and improve regional trade agreements, trade liberalization and harmonization of tariffs and product standards.

**Multilateral Organisations**

- WTO (open, predictable and diversified market access for exports from Africa; a special forum for developing countries; investment to boost products; provision of technical assistance)

- UNITED NATIONS (through UN-NADAF, Millennium Declaration Action Plan, Global Compact with Africa (ECA), TICAD, Johannesburg Declarations and NAPs (UNESCO),

- WHO (to establish mutually agreed performance targets for both recipients and donors; provide technical assistance; concrete commitments on education and health strategies)
• World Bank and IMF (strategic partnership with Africa and Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers/PRSPs) to accelerate debt reduction and combine them with more effective poverty reduction programmes—including a reversal of the decline in ODA
• Africa-Europe Summit Cairo Plan of Action

**Actions by international community**

• The industrialized nations appear to be willing to address needs related to poverty alleviation, infectious diseases and development subject to Africa’s willingness to help itself

• They agreed to support African efforts to solve African problems in connection with: democracy and political governance, prevention of conflict, health, ICT, corporate governance, stimulating private investment, food security and trade

• America Growth and Opportunity Act and the EU African, Caribbean and Pacific Nations Trade Initiatives

• Requested a plan of action to be submitted to G-8 at its 2002 Canada Summit

• Security Council: on 29 January 2002, it reviewed conflict situations in Africa and assessed the responses of the international community. It also reviewed the role of sub-regional organizations and strategies with regard to poverty alleviation.

**Actions by multilateral organizations:**

• UNESCO: has identified major bottlenecks in Africa’s education systems and established a new approach which shall be guided by the “need to promote sustainable human and economic development”

• UNESCO considers “education as a human right for all, especially girls. .”

• UNESCO is prepared to develop e-learning, tele-education, and trans-national learning

• UNESCO is committed to contribute to mobilizing funding campaigns for public recognition, acceptance and support of NEPAD

• Action by World Bank and IMF: . . .

**Actions by...**

• WHO: No specific Plan of Action, but it will integrate national plans of action for each country into NEPAD;

• ACC/CEB is reviewing all Africa related initiatives to propose a comprehensive Plan of Action for implementation of NEPAD by the UN family;

**What can women do?**
NEPAD is the roadmap to the future. As envisaged in NEPAD, African women should ensure their effective participation in:

a) achieving the International Development Goals (reducing poverty, universal enrollment into primary school, eliminating gender disparities in education, reducing infant and child mortality ratios, improving productive health);

b) Building infrastructures;

Developing human resources and skills development through concrete and timebound programmes and targets;

Playing an instrumental role in conflict resolution and reconstruction;

Ensuring good governance and respect for human rights, democracy and the rule of law by developing assessment tools, participating in the process and monitoring compliance; designing and promoting practical projects for mainstreaming NEPAD;

To identify priority action for participatory decision-making and to insist on equal gender representation in all stages of the NEPAD implementation process.
Chapter Four

NEPAD: IDENTIFYING STAKEHOLDERS AND PARTNERSHIPS

By
Xoliswa Sibeko

What is NEPAD?
Ø It is a plan that has been conceived and developed by African leaders;
Ø It is a comprehensive integrated development plan that addresses key social, economic and political priorities in a coherent balanced manner;
Ø It is a commitment that the African leaders are making to the African people and to the international community to take leadership in enhancing political and economic governance and placing African countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development and thus accelerating the integration of the continent into the global economy;
Ø It is a vision and a programme of action for the redevelopment of the African continent;

Background
Ø Merger of the Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme (MAP) and the Omega Plan was finalised on 3 July 2001;
Ø Out of the merger, the New African Initiative was born;
Ø The New African Initiative was approved by the OAU Summit of Heads of State and Government on 11 July 2001;
Ø Endorsed by the leaders of G8 countries on 20 July 2001;
Ø Heads of State Implementation Committee finalised the name of Policy Framework on 23 October 2001:

**What is NEPAD?**

Ø It is a framework for a new partnership with the rest of the world, especially the industrialized countries;

Ø It is call to the rest of the world to partner Africa in her own development on the basis of her own agenda and program of action.

Ø Broadly the goals of NEPAD are:

- Accelerate the eradication of poverty
- Promote accelerated growth and sustainable development;
- Halt the marginalisation of Africa in the globalisation process;
- To accelerate the empowerment of women.

**NEPAD Programme of Action**

**A. CONDITIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Ø Peace, Security, Democracy and Political Initiative

Ø Economic and Corporate Governance Initiative

Ø Sub-regional and Regional Approach to Development

**B. SECTORAL PRIORITIES**

i) **Bridging the Infrastructure Gap**

- All infrastructure sectors
- Bridging the Digital divide: Investing in Information and Communication Technologies
- Energy
- Transport
- Water and Sanitation

ii) **Human Resource Development**

- Poverty Reduction
- Bridging the Education Gap
- Reversing the Brain Drain
- Health

Ø Agriculture
Ø Environment
Ø Culture
Ø Science and Technology
C. MOBILISING RESOURCES

1. Capital Flows Initiative:
   - Increasing domestic resources mobilisation
   - Debt relief
   - ODA reforms
   - Private capital flows

2. The Market Access Initiative
   - Diversification of Production
   - Promoting African Exports
   - Removal of Non-tariff Barriers.
Chapter Five

AN INSIDER’S VIEW OF NEPAD

By
Ms S Kudjoe

When considering an insiders view of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD), what can be more apt than to reflect on what one of post-colonial Africa’s founding fathers, Kwane Nkrumah said nearly 50 years ago:

“Thus may we take pride in the name of Africa, not out of romanticism, but as an inspiration for the future. It is right and proper that we should know about our past. For just as the future moves from the present so the present has emerged from the past. Nor need we be ashamed of the past. There was much in it of glory. What our ancestors achieved in the context of their contemporary society gives us confidence that we can create, out of the past, a glorious future, not in terms of war and military pomp, but in terms of social progress and peace, for we repudiate war and violence. Our battles shall be against the old ideas that keep men trammelled in their own greed, against the crass stupidities that breed hatred, fear and inhumanity. The heroes of our future will be those who can lead our people out of the stifling fog of disintegration through serfdom, into the valley of light where purpose, endeavour and determination will create a brotherhood.”

Therefore as we gather today Africa stands poised to advance at a pace that will firmly restore to it the status it deserves as an international role player. So, let us not focus on the past let us today focus on the future, on what will be.

As President Mbeki said last week at the launch of the work-in-progress Review Workshop of NEPAD, Johannesburg, 24 January 2002, that NEPAD is not the first African plan aimed at the renewal of this continent; throughout the last century and even prior to this period, various Africans played their parts in organising nations and continents in support of African development.

Political leaders, economists, doctors, philosophers and poets have contributed in analysing the African reality, putting forward programmes of action and dreaming of a great African future.
The resultant initiatives have met, at times, with varying degrees of success and often with failure in a climate that was hostile to African unity and African prosperity - a reality characterised by Africans reduced to cheap labour and an Africa seen only as a source of raw materials for the developed world.

Yet it was under these circumstances that for instance, Edward Blyden, one of our foremost Pan-Africanists, promoted the idea of Africans taking possession of their lives, owning their future.

In an address to the Liberian College in 1881, Blyden said the following:

“The African must advance by methods of his own. We must possess a power distinct from that of the European.”

“...We must show that we are able to go alone, to carve out our own way.”

This dream of 1881, three years before Africa was carved up at the Berlin Conference, was not one that could be realised in the century that ensued, which was characterised by the entrenchment of colonialism, racism and neo-colonialism, with African economies becoming dependent on the metropolitan countries and the destruction of the productive capacity of African peoples to work in their own interests and for their own gain.

The wars with the resultant deaths, destruction and suffering on a massive human scale are what we, as Africans, have to deal with on a daily basis. These scars are the result of, among others, racial and ethnic intolerance, slavery, colonialism, the cold war, dictatorship, lack of democracy and respect for human rights, lack of transparency, lack of proper checks and balances, lack of good governance, inadequate utilisation of natural resources and Apartheid. In addition, there are people who are making money out of war and have a financial interest to ensure that conflict continues. The AIDS Pandemic represents a newer threat that also has to be dealt with.

We, as Africans, are ready to admit our own role in the slow rate of development of our continent, just as it is imperative for the rest of the world, in particular, those countries that have profited unfairly from our position to do so.

Historically, and especially in the post colonial period, African leaders spoke of Africa’s contributions to the very evolution of human life and also of ancient times when Africa was the leading centre of learning, technology and culture. They were referring to the increasing discovery of evidence which points to Africa’s primacy in the historical evolution of humankind; to the magnificent royal courts of Mali and Timbuktu in the 15th and 16th centuries; to the works of art in South Africa that are thousands of years old; to the artistic works of the Nubians and the Egyptians; to the sculptured stones of Aksum in Ethiopia; the pyramids of Egypt; the City of Carthage in Tunisia and the ancient universities of Egypt, Morocco and Mali. Those leaders called for an African reawakening to restore this legacy. The vision was there, the time was not right, I contend the time has now come.

In a New World order that has changed dramatically in the last few years, not only do we have to deal with the legacies of the past we are also confronted with the phenomenon of globalisation, liberalisation, deregulation and the information highway. The biggest challenge that humanity faces today, is to ensure that Globalisation benefit all - big and small, the rich and the poor. In our global village, there cannot be islands of development-security and prosperity in a sea of abject poverty and increasing conflicts. Increasingly our experience forces us to ask the question: Are double standards applied to conflict situations in Africa as opposed to elsewhere.
Afro-pessimism pervaded to the extent that there are those who would say that we have forfeited our right, as Africans to dream, to hope, to speak and to plan for a better life. There are those who will even argue now that the hopes for an African renaissance are ill-founded and that Africa cannot guarantee her own future. As a gathering of insiders we would categorically state that this is not the case.

Clearly, the latter half of the twentieth century has seen a new attitude among Africans who now choose to see themselves as activists for change, who are reclaiming their place as equals among other humans, who walk a common continent and world proud of who they are and confident of their abilities for self-development.

One of the building blocks for this rebirth of Africa, this African Renaissance vision heralded by continental leaders is the NEPAD. This is a plan inspired by Africa’s architectural, artistic and cultural heritage, and Africa’s ancient civilisation. It is informed by the challenges facing us especially Africa’s underdevelopment, with a view to identifying priorities that must receive immediate attention.

The NEPAD is a declaration of a firm commitment by African leaders to take ownership and responsibility for the sustainable development of the Continent. The starting point is a critical examination of Africa’s post-independence experience and acceptance that things have to be done differently to achieve meaningful socio-economic progress, without which it would not be easy to achieve our historic task of improving the lives of our people.

NEPAD contains a vision, perspective and the outlines of a plan for the redevelopment of Africa. It is based on a partnership approach that will include all those that wish to become full partners in the development of the continent. It clarifies objectives and approaches to development projects.

NEPAD has developed the outlines of a concrete programme of action that is multi-faceted with targeted priority areas to include:

- Creating peace, security and stability, and democratic governance without which it would be impossible to engage in meaningful economic activity;
- Investing in Africa’s people through a comprehensive human resource strategy;
- Harnessing and developing Africa’s strategic and comparative advantages in the resource-based sectors to lead the development of an industrial strategy;
- Increasing investments in the Information and communication technology sector without which we would not be able to bridge the digital divide;
- Development of infrastructure including transport and energy; and
- Developing financing mechanism.

- The objectives we want to achieve through its implementation include the acceleration of efforts to eradicate poverty on the Continent and to significantly increase new investments by mobilising both domestic and especially foreign savings.
• The plan envisages both Africa-wide and regional initiatives. Conflict prevention and eradication of infectious diseases are examples of programmes that will be continental in scope. Economic development initiatives like the development of agriculture and agro-industries, economic infrastructure, promotion of competitiveness and economic integration will be managed at regional or sub-regional level.

Furthermore, this plan must look at the measures that Africa must take in detailed fashion:

• to ensure that a climate for economic growth is established throughout the continent;
• that security exists for the people of these countries
• that measures for good governance are put in place through which our governments are made to be accountable to their peoples;
• that best practices are agreed upon and put in place for economic and political governance.

NEPAD would be incomplete without a focus on areas of human development. In this regard, we must concentrate on:

• Our ability to deal with communicable diseases among other things,
• Empowering our people through education, and
• Putting in place essential infrastructure for human development.

There is an urgent need for infrastructure investment including in ICTs so as to reduce the cost of doing business in Africa, among other things. In this way, we aim to reverse the increased marginalisation of the continent during this period of globalisation. Our economic development is also dependent on increasing our competitiveness in the world economy.

However, NEPAD can only succeed with the commitment of Africa and the realisation of the rest of the international community that without Africa succeeding they themselves are not succeeding. NEPAD is premised on recognition that Africa has an abundance of natural resources and people who have the capacity to be agents for change and so holds the key to her own development.

The New Partnership is unique in African history in that African leaders have pledged to cooperate and be accountable to one another and to their people in terms of the development strategy, plans and delivery of programmes. For the first time, also, an implementation strategy exists led by the leaders and not simply delegated to officials, so that genuine progress can be made.

Through the organising of NEPAD into an implementation committee, a steering committee and a secretariat, there is in place a clear leadership and management structure with the necessary professional expertise that is capable of dealing with political issues and technical issues competently and efficiently.

Moreover, NEPAD has established a governing structure which puts Heads of State in charge, where leaders must account to their counterparts at summits and interact with their development partners in industrialised countries. There is also the overall accountability to the OAU/AU for
the NEPAD initiative and the guidance that comes from the OAU on how to actualise this plan.

It is vital to note the approval of NEPAD by the OAU Heads of State and Government summit in Lusaka last year, followed by endorsement by African scholars. As President Mbeki stated last week in Johannesburg the interest of ordinary Africans in this initiative has also been awakened and this inculcates in everyone a consciousness that the NEPAD initiative exists ultimately to better the lives of the African people and thus must be accountable to them.

The interaction with the developed countries even prior to the formation of the Implementation Committee has resulted in NEPAD being high on the agenda at international gatherings. For the successful implementation of the plan, we need partnerships at various levels with Governments, Business and Civil society as well as with multilateral organisations - the World Bank, IMF and other institutions; and co-operation with the G8, EU, Nordic countries, China, Japan, Brazil, India, the Arab countries as well as the countries of the South.

The positive feedback received from the above international fora and from individual countries bear testimony to the intense work carried out by African heads of state who have succeeded in generating hope and confidence in the future of our continent, and in attaining acceptance of NEPAD as a policy framework informing the way they view African development.

In addition to a plan of Action, Africa needs institutions that can lead the way with the Renaissance of Africa. Africa needs institutions to carry out this agenda at the national, regional continental and international level.

A significant development and one around which the new Africa will evolve, in essence, is the African Union. In fact the African Union came into effect on the 26th of May 2001. In general, the focus of the African Union’s objectives is different and more comprehensive than those of the OAU. The OAU has served its mission and will be replaced by a structure geared towards addressing the current needs of the Continent in the new millennium.

The Pan African Parliament also has a critical role in evolving common values of democracy, human rights, governance, on-sexism and tolerance in the continent.

The intrinsic challenge facing us this day in Africa is how to ensure that Nkrumah’s unfulfilled confidence “that we can create out of the past, a glorious future, not in terms of wars and military pomp, but in terms of social progress and peace” becomes a reality.

At the dawn of this new millennium, we as Africans are committed to making this Millennium ours. There is a renewed spirit of confidence and self-assertiveness on our continent. Once again our leaders have taken up the mantle for the African rebirth and this mantle is NEPAD.

Thank You.
Let me begin by thanking the organisers of this regional conference for their remarkable attempt to clearly define the role of women in the New Partnership for African Development. Obviously, for this new initiative to succeed, we must recognize the decisive role women have played in the economic and social development of our continent, and the need to address their needs and concerns in all initiatives to move the continent forward. In this regard, I am particularly pleased to address the issue of identifying the relevant stakeholders and partners that would distinguish this initiative from those of the past.

I will begin by reiterating the central objective of NEPAD, which is “to provide the impetus to Africa’s development by bridging the gaps in priority sectors to enable the continent catch up with developed parts of the world.” Specifically, NEPAD aims to eradicate poverty in Africa and place Africa on the path to sustainable growth and development. This means more than achieving a pre-determined growth rate; I think this means improving the standard of living for every African man, woman and child.

As complicated as this may sound, experience from other nations has shown that market-oriented economic policies in a stable democratic system are essential for the achievement of sustainable economic growth and development. So, simply giving people the freedom to make good economic choices in a free, secure environment promotes economic growth. This fact should be the framework upon which we can institute new initiatives to move Africa forward either collectively or individually.
The leadership of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development has rightly identified the cornerstones upon which sustainable economic growth and development can be achieved. And they are: peace and security, democracy and political governance, economic and corporate governance. In addition, the development of sectoral priorities is also critical to reshaping Africa.

**Peace and Security**

No doubt, peace and security are needed to protect not only lives, but also the protection of investments—foreign and domestic. More specifically, African women often suffer most adversely from insecurity that comes with wars and conflicts. A World Bank study of the effects of wars and conflicts in the last decade concluded that women and children end up poor and more destitute. Loss of the main breadwinner of the family coupled with the destruction of the means of making an income, result in a further impoverishment of the African woman, often leaving her a refugee without a home and a source of livelihood.

The various forms of psychological and physical abuse suffered by women and children – sexual molestation and various forms of child abuse (slavery and child soldiers) draw attention to the severe impact of wars and conflicts on these groups of people. The case of displaced persons is particularly of interest here. Recent events in Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone have contributed greatly to the increase in the number of women and children living in poverty.

One critical factor that can help protect women against the effects of war and conflict is the creation of safety nets. This mechanism protects and shields African women and children during difficult situations. A continent-wide initiative that directly addresses the need of women who have been negatively affected by national and regional conflicts would go a long way to reducing poverty in Africa. Such an initiative will require the bringing together of national organizations that are already working in this area.

However, the role of women in resolving conflicts should not be disregarded, as this could be explored as a possible means of resolving ethnic, political and religious conflicts. Historically, women have proven to be excellent mediators between warring sides, most often, applying patience, foresight and intuition in very tense situations. Perhaps, communities should consider allowing women to play this significant role in conflict resolution, especially at the tribal level, before the problem escalates out of control. However, whether or not women will be allowed to play a prominent role in resolving conflicts in Africa, it remains that there should be greater consideration of the impact of war and conflict on women and children in NEPAD, with strategies being adopted to minimise disruptions in their lives, because these disruptions ultimately affect the family, which means every single African.

The major stakeholders that could be identified here are professional/business women, rural (poor) women, urban women and self-employed women. All these groups of women, though with different needs, have equal rights to the peace and security of the African continent. This peace and security would determine the business climate for investment, and this affects the working (business/professional and self-employed) women. For the rural women, it is crucial to provide more education, healthcare, and employment, while it would guarantee the urban woman better opportunities for survival. The partners for the achievement of peace and security in Africa are both the government and the private sector, with external support from the international community.

**Democracy and Political Governance**
As we have seen, a poor political system where the leaders have no respect for the laws, with a very high level of corruption, will only aid in the further pauperisation of its citizens. Therefore, NEPAD should emphasise the pertinence of the quality of governance vis a vis the respect for human rights and the rule of law –factors that are critical to the development of Africa. In many African countries, human rights are hardly recognised particularly in situations where a democratic system is not in place, which are characterized by more oppression and intimidation by the government in power.

This further serves to alienate the people from their leaders and deprives them of their economic rights, since the government’s policies would only serve to aggravate the situation of poverty among the poor. However, it must be noted since democratic governments are made up of people, who are elected into office, they should be held accountable for their actions; they should pursue policies that will work for the good of the entire country, and not just themselves.

Corruption, which has become deeply embedded in Africa, must be tackled with potent strategies, and not just rhetorically, because it is possible that for any level of growth to be collectively attained, the real returns to poor people, over time, will be lost to corruption. To buttress this point, recent research has shown that people in countries that have poor governance, and a very corrupt society are worse off than they were twenty years ago. Of course, women have suffered more from this economic handicap due to gender discrimination. There is a big lesson here to draw from in any decisive attempts to determine Africa’s future.

Good governance is as important as sound economic policies just as the people and governments are also of equal importance. This implies partnerships between both the leaders and the people in general, and between all classes of society - the rich and the poor, men and women in all sectors of the economy. I hope that this plan will design a set of common values that will be subscribed to by all countries that adopt the NEPAD. These values will then be reflected in the politics of each country, and in the quality of governance that all Africans expect.

**Economic and Corporate Governance**

In addition to the recognition of the thin line between politics and economics, it is also accepted that they are both positively related. In other words, for a country to be prosperous, it must have a good government which should pursue sound economic policies. Economic governance is important because it is actually the bridge between people and leaders, the means through which people receive the returns on development. However, many governments have refused to acknowledge this fact, and have chosen economic polices that do not maximise the benefits of development for the people. In this regard, it is pertinent note that the people have equal right to a better future as their leaders, and the governments must adopt policies that puts the people as priority. Women have equal right to a better future as the men, so the government policy should be able to create mechanisms through which women are able to take advantage of economic opportunities as their male counterparts.

These economic policies at the broad macroeconomic level include those that will improve social welfare, enable private sector activity focus on export-oriented production, enhance industrial expansion (including agriculture and manufacturing). This should be incorporated into the NEPAD, with a specific emphasis on the parts that will be played by small entrepreneurs, particularly women engaged in micro-credit schemes. I have highlighted agriculture and manufacturing because these are two prominent employers of female labour. In the rural areas, small-scale farming is the livelihood of over 60% of African women. Micro policy instrument
such as developing linkages micro credit institutions and Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) female entrepreneurship schemes will support these broad policies listed above.

The proper implementation of these policies would rely on cooperation between the facilitating institutions – all tiers of governments, ministries and state agencies, female awareness groups, the education sector and non governmental organisations NGOs.

For the private sector in Africa, apart from the role that government will play in facilitating corporate activities in terms of administrative and legal instruments, infrastructure and monetary and fiscal policies, the sector must be adequately prepared to take up the challenge of propelling Africa’s growth by building on its skill and technology. Against a backdrop of a male dominated labour force, the greatest areas of technical skills and technology, it is clear that the private sector has not fully awarded African women with adequate opportunities to excel in corporate activity. Even the professional and businesswomen still suffer the same discrimination as those in the low-income brackets in the rural areas.

Certainly, NEPAD must involve a framework for partnerships between both the private and public sector in this essential area. Although there have been laudable attempts by the private sector to fund small businesses, dominated by women, many of them are still denied access to credit on the basis of their sex. For Africa’s economy to truly sustain any private sector-led growth, women must be primed to play their prerequisite roles.

This means adopting the right strategies, managing the interplay of available resources: human and material, to create more output, and therefore, more jobs that can be taken up by women. So corporate governance is important not only at the macro level, but also at the micro level, where with better profit margins, companies perform better in the economy and create opportunities for employment for both urban and rural women. This also underscores the subscription to a common code of ethics drawn from the respect of human rights, so that women will enjoy the same privileges as men and play a more proactive role in sustaining the economic development of their continent. This also brings the quality of corporate polices into focus, and NEPAD should emphasise both economic and corporate governance as the means to achieving the end, which of course is the sustainable economic development of the continent.

**Sectoral Priorities**

In drawing up this plan for our future, there should be a prioritisation of sectoral needs; the most critical things that are needed. In certain areas, such as technology, we have realised that we are lagging behind the rest of the world, for instance, in terms of basic infrastructure. Investors shy away from Africa because of the dilapidated and highly inadequate infrastructure. Although, as part of the developing world, we certainly cannot claim to compete with the West, there are some basic things that, as human beings, we require to survive and flourish. In setting social and economic targets, NEPAD must carefully prioritise Africa’s needs, with respect to specific sectors.

In identifying these sectoral priorities, the provision of basic amenities (food, water, housing, healthcare) would be of strategic importance for African women. Secondly, education and employment should be given particular attention. The productive sectors – agriculture and manufacturing, building up our human capital – through science, technology and skills acquisition, and centrally creating a framework for good governance. I think that these are the most critical areas for us at the moment, and as such the leadership of NEPAD should rank them very high on its list of “things to do”. We must understand that the inclusion of African Women
in a development strategy is a continuous process, and it is imperative. It must be understood that this is necessary for the consolidation of Africa’s development and I hope that NEPAD will embody this new role for women in its plan of action.

I believe that African women and all Africans will have a better future.

Thank you.

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**Chapter Seven**

**NEPAD AND AFRICAN WOMEN: MECHANISM FOR ENGAGEMENT INPUT AND OWNERSHIP**

By
Ms Tokunbo Ige¹

**INTRODUCTION:**

At the dawn of this millennium, African leaders have come up with new initiatives, which in their implementation are supposed to aid the transition of the Continent towards socio-political and economic development. Beginning with the decision to transform the Continent into a Union of States and followed by the evolution of what today is being referred to as NEPAD, Africa’s statement to the larger world is ‘finally we are resolved to taking our own destiny in our hands’.

NEPAD has been widely applauded as an Africa-lead and owned initiative. While the former may be true, the concept of African ownership requires a bit more effort on the part of its initiators. If NEPAD has one major challenge to overcome, it is that of ensuring that it becomes a real people-centred strategy for development. The laudable resolve and pledge being made in NEPAD requires major support by the African Peoples, if the initiative is to meet with the success it deserves. The APPEAL made in the NEPAD document needs to be translated into our local languages for all persons on the streets of Africa to sing as their new song. NEPAD has to move away from being a market-oriented document into a people focussed initiative.

Traditionally, African women have been the conduit for the promotion and development of various strategies and initiatives. Their role in the different struggles in Africa and its development to date cannot be over-emphasised. It is therefore remarkable that the ALF took the initiative to organise this Conference on the Role of women in the implementation of NEPAD, which as far as I know, is the first gathering focussing on the role of women in this important exercise.
Despite the gender-neutral nature of NEPAD, its implementation will have significant effects on women’s role in development as well as their involvement in political and economic governance and conflict resolution. It is therefore a matter of great concern that no formal role has been reserved for women in the emerging implementation framework for NEPAD.

The reference to women, albeit, eight times in very general terms in the latest version of the document is clearly linked to NEPAD’s limited plans for women. Women should not only be recipients of NEPAD’s generosity, but active participants in its development and decision-making. The gender factor should be a crosscutting theme for this and any other initiative. The structure and language of NEPAD is a reflection of the patriarchal nature of African society that encourages little or no female participation in its evolution. If real progress is to be made by Africa, women must and should be consulted and have a more active role in shaping initiatives such as NEPAD.

Women are prime movers and key players in the African civil society, labouring under discrimination, unequal treatment as well as unequal access to opportunities. The role of the African woman and her involvement in development, peace-building, conflicts (including their prevention and resolution) have been and will continue to be crucial to Africa’s development.

**Mechanical for Engagement, Input and Ownership**

It is important in discussing possible mechanisms for engagement, input and ownership in the NEPAD process that we are determined to get involved. We must tell ourselves that despite the fact that women have not necessarily been consulted nor invited so far, we must get engaged in the process, because it is extremely important that we do so.

First, I believe we should go through a stocktaking exercise. What are the existing mechanisms e.g those put in place in post-Beijing at the national and regional levels that could play an important role in this, albeit, late process of engagement? How effective have they been? How can they be utilised in the ongoing process? If in answering these questions we find that the various initiatives, such as the Women’s Ministries and Commissions at the national level, the Women’s unit at the OAU and even the ECA have not been really effective, we can then begin to consider other options. At the same time, from a civil society perspective, we need to assess the existing NGO frameworks and identify which ones could be useful. The methodology adopted so far by the African Women’s Forum and ALF in general could be instructive. I think if we look at the objectives of NEPAD and its areas of emphasis namely,

i. Peace, Security and Political Governance,
ii. Economic and Corporate Governance,
iii. Infrastructure Development and
iv. Agriculture; we will be able to identify the right resource persons to carry out the stocktaking exercise.

A second question that is important for us to consider is: what are the mechanisms envisaged in the NEPAD document, and how can women access and, eventually use them? As a follow on to this, it is important to think of developing strategies that will take into consideration the need for effective engagement with the different structures emerging as a result of the myriad of initiatives referred to above, for example, CSSDCA and the African Union. I mentioned, earlier, the need to harmonise these initiatives to avoid duplication of efforts, and I think that this should be borne in mind in developing our strategies.
The success of an initiative such as NEPAD will be dependent on whether it can gather information relating to its impact quickly and efficiently enough, and also by an even quicker and more efficient pace react to them effectively. Feedback mechanisms in such initiatives are needed so that the nature and growth of NEPAD can be monitored effectively. In the realisation of this important fact, the drafters of NEPAD have attempted to set in place some mechanisms for ensuring compliance to the NEPAD principles and for measuring progress and impact. One big advantage that Africa may have over most continents is that there still remains a strong sense of the community and family.

In many African countries, the family unit is headed by a woman, especially as a result of the many conflicts that have engulfed the Continent which led to the loss of a large proportion of the men. This, in effect, means that women are more and more the decision-makers at this level, thereby indirectly shaping the present African society.

At the same time, in the wider society, there is a movement towards centralization of government, which means that decision-making power is slowly being shifted to the capitals and big towns. This could be considered a positive trend for coordination and planning, but the reverse is that for simple and important measures to be taken at the local level, there’s the growing need to secure approval from a more principal seat of Government. If NEPAD is to be successful, it has to shift away from this top-down approach. It has to adopt a very decentralized system of operation. The most effective feedback mechanism is, and should always involve, local and delegated bodies.

The question then arises, what mechanisms are going to enhance effective female participation in NEPAD? The lessons learnt so far in setting up the implementation strategy for the CSSDCA must be brought to bear in dealing with NEPAD. Unfortunately, the role of women in most African initiatives is set in vague and general terms. One can see a similar trend in NEPAD where there is no formal role or mechanism set for women’s development, and no concrete measures set for women’s involvement. Paragraph 49 merely states that African leaders will take responsibility for ‘promoting the role of women in social and economic development by reinforcing their capacity in the domains of education and training; by the development of revenue-generating activities through facilitating access to credit; and by assuring their participation in the political and economic life of African countries.’

For an enhanced participation of women, there must be a strategy put in place to ensure systematic consultation of women at all levels. The fundamental right of women to equal rights, access and participation must be promoted by NEPAD. Reform in regards to ownership, inheritance, equal treatment and opportunity must be effected. Legislative instruments that would promote equal rights; treatment and opportunity should be strongly encouraged by NEPAD.

Since the implementation of this initiative is going to be done at the country level, it is imperative that the places of decision-making and implementation do have substantial female representation. If this isn’t done, we are going to end up with supposedly gender-neutral initiatives, which may not be of any developmental use to women. Uganda is an encouraging example of how proportional representation has led to an increase in female participation in politics. The results have been that they have arguably the most progressive female friendly legislation in the sub-region. Another recent development in African states is the setting up of specific ministries for women. If these ministries are involved in the implementation process, one can assume that women issues could be greatly enhanced.
Furthermore, women’s participation in debates and discussions on NEPAD should be encouraged. This would translate NEPAD into a language that women can better understand, and gather information on the way initiatives should proceed in regard to women.

NEPAD lays emphasis on three areas that are crucial to an integrated regional development namely agriculture, the promotion of the private sector and infrastructure, and regional integration. If need be, affirmative action must be structured into these three areas to speed up their general development.

In agriculture, NEPAD must be a catalyst for reform of present land ownership and inheritance rights, as most of these traditional customs are discriminatory and allow women no access to land and payment for their contribution. Women should be given access to more gender sensitive Micro-Credit Schemes, which would give them bargaining confidence and financial independence. It is particularly important that these Micro-Credit Schemes are formulated with a female bias. This has been successfully used in countries like Eritrea and Rwanda. Money does come with power, and with power comes the ability to influence the general trend of development.

The second is the promotion of the private sector. It is a well-known fact that African women are heavily involved with the hidden or informal sector of the Continent’s economy. Unfortunately this sector is generally quite difficult to monitor and modern accounting methods are not widespread. As a result, it is difficult to measure the financial contribution or impact women make towards development. Most women, particularly housewives, do hold what are for all intents and purpose jobs within the family’s main source of income. Their efforts are usually seen as the traditional roles for women in relation to their position within the family. Therefore most of the work carried out by them is not appreciated and are mostly unpaid.

If African women are to have a more visible role in development, as well as a general improvement in their lives, there has to be a formalization of these hidden and informal economies. The effect of such a move would be that women could have recognizable assets, which could be used as collateral thus making them eligible for loans and other forms of financial assistance. When such formalization is instituted there would be a stronger case for targeted help to these formally hidden industries. Women are usually the predominant participants of such industries and they are most likely to benefit from these measures. As one of our strategies, we should encourage the preparation of an accurate compilation of information relating to the business practices and real financial clout of African women.

The role of women networks in our drive towards more infrastructure and regional integration cannot be overemphasized. Women can contribute a perspective other than that of men. Organizational and interpersonal skills are required for successful integration. Women are particularly good at this and they have or could use their skills in enhancing regional integration in particular.

In the area of conflict resolution and peace building, the existing African Committee for Women and Peace can play an important role in determining the mechanism for engagement with the NEPAD structures. The Committee should be encouraged to facilitate the participation of an active women’s lobby at the meeting of the leadership mentioned in Paragraph 76. The meeting that is scheduled to hold in March is expected to design the new policy on peace and security.

THE WAY FORWARD
To illustrate the practical process that I am trying to outline here, I will use the Peace, Security and Political Governance Initiative as an example of how I think we can proceed from here.

This meeting should take a close look at the NEPAD document and make a list of issues that do not seem to be covered by the relevant initiative. Once compiled a follow-up group should be empowered to bring these issues to the attention of the President of South Africa in his capacity as Chair of the group monitoring the implementation of this sector. The same process can be adopted for the other sectors.

At the same time, ALF and other NGOs should establish working groups similar to the approach adopted for the CSSDCA process after the Lomé meeting, to lobby the Chair and members of the other monitoring groups. What is vital to the sustainability of any strategy of this nature are leadership, effective coalition building and timely information. NGOs have to build working relations with key institutions that have direct input into the NEPAD process. The UN agencies working in Africa could be useful in this regard since their activities are coordinated by the ECA.

Finally, I hope that the report of this meeting will be distributed widely among African women. There is an urgent need to bring information about NEPAD out to the people on whose behalf the initiative is being made.

26 January 2002
Chapter Eight

POPULARIZING NEPAD AMONG WOMEN IN AFRICA

By
Florence Buteegwa

UNIFEM is the United Nations Development Fund for Women, established in 1976.

The Fund’s mandate is to:

- Support innovative and experimental activities benefiting women in line with national and regional priorities
- Serve as a catalyst, with the goal of ensuring the appropriate involvement of women in mainstream development activities, as often as possible at the pre-investment stage
- Play an innovative and catalytic role in relation to the United Nations overall system of development cooperation.

The overall goal of UNIFEM as stated in its Corporate Business Plan is to increase options and opportunities for the economic and political empowerment of women in developing countries, especially those living in poverty, so that they can contribute more effectively to, and benefit from the development of their communities and countries.

UNIFEM, in Africa and around the world, is actively and innovatively working with women and their institutions to empower themselves.

Given UNIFEM’s mandate and track record, I feel particularly privileged to have been asked to speak on popularizing NEPAD among women in Africa. The conference itself is important and opportune, not just because women constitute half (if not more) of the population in Africa, but
also because Africa’s leaders realize that the ideals and objectives of the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) are not achievable unless all men and women, boys and girls participate to the best of their capabilities, in its actualization.

Though NEPAD purports to define a framework for the relationship between Africa and the international community, the theme of this conference indicates an appreciation that the internal dynamics in Africa, including gender relations and their impact on development must also be addressed. There is an absolutely inspirational statement in NEPAD that reads thus: “Across the continent, Africans declare that we will no longer allow ourselves to be conditioned by circumstance. We will determine our own destiny and call on the rest of the world to complement our efforts”. I would like to challenge the people of Africa and our leaders to realize that until this statement becomes a reality for the majority of the population, NEPAD will be another failed effort.

It is from this perspective that I would like to approach the topic assigned to me. To what extent can the women of Africa determine their destiny? To what extent can they expand their capabilities to the highest possible level, so as to contribute to the development of Africa? To what extent can they, now and in the foreseeable future, benefit from the development process, on a basis of equality with their male counterparts?

Mr. Chairman, in these questions lies a significant gist of the strategies for popularizing NEPAD among women in Africa. I wish to clarify my perception of popularizing NEPAD. It means inviting women to be part of the ideals and objectives behind NEPAD. It means soliciting their commitment to implement the actions contemplated as necessary to give effect to these ideals. It is an invitation for genuine partnership between women, men and youth to develop Africa. It is an invitation to each woman and girl, in the cities, towns and villages to say that she will no longer allow herself to be conditioned by circumstances, but will determine her own destiny and the destiny of Africa.

If this is the context in which the leadership of Africa and all of us understand the concept of popularizing NEPAD, then we can begin to talk about strategies for delivering the invitation to women and harvesting the results. I would like to highlight four (4) elements necessary for such strategies.

1. Motivation for the women

The first element revolves around the question of motivation for women’s commitment to NEPAD. To what extent does NEPAD acknowledge and address women’s concerns and what factors are necessary for full participation? In other words, does NEPAD provide sufficient reasons for women to own it and be motivated by it? The simple answer might be in the affirmative because women are part of Africa. Africa is replete with many lessons that not everyone benefits from policies. NEPAD’s aims to reduce poverty, individually and collectively, and to promote the role of women in all activities.

It develops a variety of ideas and actions necessary for progress to be made in peace and security, democracy and political governance, and in economic and corporate governance. It also provides for the establishment of various structures to spearhead implementation. Although women are mentioned here and there, NEPAD does not appear to deal with gender perspectives of development. It does not address how narrowing the gender gap in all sectors, (not just the promotion of the education of the girl child), is key to progress. It does not bring out the elements of the partnership between men and women in the NEPAD project. A gender task force
is to be established to ensure that the specific issues faced by poor women are addressed in the poverty reduction strategies. A lot more is required if individual women are to get the best, and if Africa is to get the best out of women on the continent.

As stated in NEPAD, “development is a process of empowerment and self-reliance. Africans must not be wards of benevolent guardians; rather, they must be architects of their own sustained upliftment”. The motivation for women, and men for that matter, to buy into and commit to NEPAD will depend on the extent to which it provides a framework for each person’s empowerment and self-reliance. That is what women crave to know and hear and experience. This calls for gender analysis of the entire NEPAD as a framework for development. It calls for explicit commitments, including resource commitments, to using NEPAD as a tool for mainstreaming gender in ALL sectors and strategies, and for narrowing gender-based gaps in each sector. Women-only strategies, though necessary in specific situations, are to be seen as addition to mainstreamed genuine involvement.

2. Environment for participation and benefiting

The second factor for popularizing NEPAD is the creation and sustenance of an environment conducive to women’s participation, and for them to benefit from that participation on a basis of equality with men. The gender analysis that I have referred to above would, if properly done, expose the factors that impinge on women’s potential in all areas and at the personal level. A lot has been written about these factors. Equal access to quality education by girls and boys, and the participation by women in governance and decision-making at different levels is a good starting point.

Also required is a policy, legal and justice system that will effectively guarantee and protect the right of women to access, manage and control economic resources, and protect them from gender-based violence in the family and community; a political will by the state and communities to give up the negative aspects of culture, and its misuse by many, in favour of development. Access to information is a central feature of a conducive environment - information about personal health, protection against, and prevention of HIV infection; information about more efficient ways of agriculture, of agro-processing, and of commerce and trade; information about accessing finance, technology and markets. Information that should indeed enhance their understanding that, as women, they have fundamental rights, including the right to equality, and that these rights are an integral part of the development that NEPAD seeks to promote.

Creating an environment conducive to optimum participation of women in the NEPAD project requires more than rhetoric. It requires both political will and the commitment of resources to reverse the prevalent gender inequalities in Africa. A gender analysis of national budgets will show that, despite the fact that the constitutions of most African countries guarantee equality and that most countries have ratified international human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), national budgets are not seen as tools for narrowing the gender gaps and as instruments for promoting equality. If anything, the trend of budget allocation widens the gap and this must change if Africa is to develop. All these are part of an enabling environment. UNIFEM has launched a programme to work with governments and civil society organizations to promote the concept and practice of gender budget analysis as a tool for mainstreaming gender and promoting gender equality.

Related to national budgets is the method of defining and measuring economic or productive activity, and the relative values assigned to what is defined as “non-productive”. As one scholar once said, if it is not valued it does not count. In current economic terms, work done in the home,
including caring for children, cooking, washing, fetching water, collecting fuel wood, and growing food for subsistence, and caring for the sick and the aged, is not “work”! It has no value and does not form part of what we measure when computing the gross domestic product. Unfortunately in most African societies, this work is predominantly done by women. By not valuing it, the system ignores its input. As the pressure mounts for economies to be more competitive, scarce resources are allocated to so-called “productive” sectors – the manufacturers, the traders, the formal service providers e.g. insurers and those in the hospitality industry.

I do not need to overemphasize that this does not only widen the gap between those who have and those who do not, it further marginalizes women. It is one of the causes of the phenomenon referred to as feminisation of poverty. Poverty becomes associated more with women. It is certainly not an environment conducive to women’s effective participation in the NEPAD project. The challenge is for Africa to develop alternative economic and statistical models that reflect our society and level of development. It is, I hope, the underlying value in NEPAD. How can Africa develop when the majority of its population is branded “unproductive” and starved of resources, while the immense expertise and potential remain locked in?

As Africa finally takes the HIV/AIDS pandemic seriously, it is an additional factor to also take it into consideration in our definition of an enabling environment. The statistics are beginning to emerge. Women, especially the youth, are more vulnerable to infection. Additionally, when family members come down with full-blown AIDS, it is the women and girls, who must shoulder the burden of caring for the sick. I have seen women who have had to abandon small businesses, or even an office job, to take care of a sick spouse or parent. The impact on agricultural production and food security is also beginning to be known. When it is the woman who is sick, the propensity is to send her away from her matrimonial home. The scenario has economic and social implications. It has implications for NEPAD, and women’s capacity to play their role. Government and the entire society must come up with gender responsive strategies, backed by resources, to reduce vulnerabilities to HIV/AIDS and for caring for the sick and those orphaned.

There are many other aspects of the creation of an enabling environment for women’s optimum participation, including increased education opportunities for girls and women of all ages, improving the health status of women, particularly those in rural and poor urban settlements, and satisfying women’s immediate needs for survival. These steps will transform individual perspectives from a struggle for survival to sustainable development.

3. Avenues for participation

Further, entry points for women’s participation, as equal partners, must be opened by governments, financial institutions, markets, as well as by individual men and women. What does a woman committed to NEPAD do? Just as NEPAD’s programme of action for sustainable development indicates, action and progress are required in promoting peace, security and political governance, including human rights. Action is required to bridge the infrastructure gap, including the digital divide, and for strengthening and modernizing the agricultural sector. There is a need to diversify production and to access markets within and outside the region. In each of these areas, avenues must be found for women’s participation and contribution, as well as for them to benefit (as actors) from NEPAD. It would be a shame and totally unacceptable for opportunities for women to be seen in the context of income-generating activities and micro-credits. While these projects may enable some women to meet their immediate needs, gender analysis of many will find them as labour intensive, time-consuming and with very low returns. Many compound the triple roles of women, forcing them to work even longer hours and forgo basic necessities in order to meet loan repayment requirements.
While avenues for effective economic and social agency will differ from country to country, and by sectors, there are some commonalities that can be highlighted. First is participation at the policy level. NEPAD is a policy document. What was the level of participation by women relative to women? To what extent are economic and trade policies formulated or influenced by women, relative to men? The participation of gender experts and women generally in the formulation of policy at the macro and micro level is extremely important. It brings to policy women’s own expertise, experiences and concerns, and makes it more likely that the resultant policy framework will be gender responsive. Governments and civil society in Africa must promote and support women’s participation in regional and sub-regional institutions, in parliament, policy-making positions in the public service, as well as in decentralized structures of governance. A network of African women economists has been established, with UNIFEM’s support, implying the existence of expertise among women to engage and contribute to policy processes. Women’s organizations that work with women at community level have an enormous amount of information and expertise to further enrich policy.

Secondly, women have always had a bad deal when it comes to technology development, transfer and distribution. The modern economy is technology driven. Information and Communication Technology is particularly relevant here. Access to information, and to do-it-yourself tools for efficient production, that are available, as well as to market information and to networks, are some of the advantages of ICT in all sectors. Unfortunately connectivity is largely urban-based and for those who can afford it. For the majority of women and men ICT remain inaccessible. An additional problem is that the commonest language of the web is foreign, and some of the more accessible technologies, like the radio are not developed sufficiently to make up for the difference. The challenge is for our governments to see ICT as an increasingly important tool for development and fast track appropriate gender-sensitive and population-wide policies and programmes. Resources must be found for Africa to create its own knowledge, and information in languages and formats that are more accessible to its people. Again women must be part of the ICT policy dialogue, design, and marketing.

Thirdly, many governments are taking serious steps to attract direct foreign investment. They are offering tax holidays and other incentives to foreign corporations and encouraging joint ventures with their own nationals. Trade delegations to developed countries for these purposes are a common feature. Unfortunately for many African countries, these delegations rarely include women, or work with national gender experts to develop strategies for targeted searches for trade and business opportunities that will either benefit women or can assist government in narrowing the gender gaps in income levels, access to finance and other resources, to markets and to technology.

4. Appropriate methods of communicating NEPAD to women

Popularising NEPAD is about communication, which is a two-way process. The person with a message needs to make it known and the intended recipient must receive and understand it. The media used must reach women in languages and places accessible to them. However, NEPAD is not just about passing on information for its own sake. NEPAD is about social change – change in the way we perceive ourselves and our capabilities, change in what we expect from government and from donor countries, change in what we produce; change in the way we relate to each other. And that kind of change calls for dialogue and sustained engagement. The challenge is to have the political will to commit the necessary resources for effective communication with the women of Africa.
In conclusion, I wish to affirm that my organization remains committed to the empowerment of women in Africa. In NEPAD, we see new possibilities for moving towards this goal provided there is political will. UNIFEM is willing to join hands with governments, civil society organizations, women and, of course, the international community to turn this possibility into reality.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chapter Nine

THE CSSDCA, THE AFRICA UNION AND NEPAD: WORKING TOWARDS A CONVERGENCE

By
Ayodele Aderinwale and Olumide A. Ajayi

INTRODUCTION

The continent of Africa is not suffering from dearth of initiatives but lack of effective framework for sustainable development. The greatest challenge facing policy-makers in Africa today is to identify the prerequisites for durable peace and development. Above all, the continent has remained volatile and vulnerable to external factors and factions. The international community recognizes the importance of genuine peace and security as well as the strengthening of international cooperation in support of African development. After all, the more Africa and Africans can take care of themselves, the less demand they will make on the developed economies.

Thus, the continent and its leadership are confronted with a major challenge, namely that of initiating a sustainable and comprehensive framework for addressing, in a concerted manner, the myriad of developmental changes facing Africa.

Over the years, a need has emerged to initiate a process capable of operationalising emerging paradigms, concepts and new attitudes as a means of increasing the capacity of the continent to make appreciable progress and impact in the future. In practical terms, it is imperative that a strategic framework informs Africa’s engagement with the rest of the world. Such an agenda must evolve within the overall framework of an African collective solidarity on issues of socio-economic development, integration, security and stability, democratisation and human rights.
It is within this latitude and frame of mind that the African Leaders had moved to initiate three fundamental and strategic development policies that will rejuvenate Africa’s development process.

These initiatives are:

Ø The Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA)
Ø The African Union (AU)
Ø The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD)

The CSSDCA Process

The CSSDCA was initiated by the Africa Leadership Forum (ALF) in 1991 in consultation and collaboration with the Secretariats of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa UN (ECA) and the Organization for African Unity (OAU), which organized a series of consultative meetings culminating in the May 1991 Kampala Forum. More than 500 participants attended the Kampala Forum from Africa and other parts of the world. It brought together Presidents and peasants, professors and students, trade union leaders and employers of labour. They all adopted the Kampala Document which contains the proposal for a Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA).

Current developments within the continent and the overall change in the political environment provide a basis for optimism in that regard. The call at the highest political levels for an African Renaissance and the need for holistic frameworks and approaches provide a fertile ground for a comprehensive effort to deal with Africa’s challenges.

The CSSDCA initiative was also discussed during the Fourth Extraordinary Summit of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government meeting in Sirte, Libya. That Summit adopted the Sirte Declaration in which, among other things, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government decided that a Ministerial Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in the Continent be convened as soon as possible.


The CSSDCA is divided into four components called calabashes -Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation that will work through a set of principles and plan of Action. These principles are to be expanded through a process of negotiation that will translate them into core values and commitments as well as performance indicators, which will be monitored and evaluated on periodic basis. The negotiation on Cooperation and Development has been completed while preparation for the Security and Stability is underway.

There are four fundamental uniqueness in the CSSDCA process. These are:

Ø The privilege of being a standing Conference of OAU that will convene every two years to give a report to the Assembly of Heads of State and Government in Africa during the OAU Summit
Ø The framework that provide a guide for sustainable development through subscription to set of common values and measurable performance indicators;
Ø Mechanism for monitoring and evaluation of development performance of African states;
Ø Openness and transparency through the involvement of Civil Society Organisations both in the implementation and the periodic review process.

THE AFRICAN UNION

The African Union (AU) came out of the growing realisation that there is a need for greater efficiency and effectiveness within the present structure of OAU. It was also borne out of the fact that there is an urgent need to integrate the political activities of the OAU with the economic and development vision of the African Economic community as envisaged in the Abuja Treaty.

In general, the African Union objectives are different and more comprehensive than those of the OAU. The OAU having realized its overriding objectives of decolonisation and political unity is obviously due for replacement by a better structure geared towards addressing the current needs of the continent.

The major thrust of the union is reflected as its objectives in article 3 of the Constitutive Act. These objectives include:

1. Achieve greater unity and solidarity between the African countries and the peoples of Africa;
2. Defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of its Member States;
3. Accelerate the political and socio-economic integration of the continent;
4. Promote and defend African common positions on issues of interest to the continent and its peoples;
5. Encourage international cooperation, taking due account of the Charter of the United Nations and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;
6. Promote peace, security and stability on the continent;
7. Promote democratic principles and institutions, popular participation and good governance;
8. Promote and protect human rights in accordance with the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights and other relevant human rights instruments;
9. Establish the necessary conditions which will enable the continent to play its deserved role in the global economy and in international negotiations;
10. Promote sustainable development at the economic, social and cultural levels as well as the integration of African economies;
11. Promote cooperation in all fields of human activity to raise the living standards of the African peoples;
12. Coordinate and harmonise the policies between the existing and future Regional Economic Communities for the gradual attainment of the objectives of the Union;
13. Advance the development of the continent by promoting research in all fields, in particular, science and technology and,

14. Work with relevant international partners in the eradication of preventable diseases and the promotion of good health on the continent.

Apart from these objectives it is expected that the Union will function in accordance with certain principles, which are enunciated in article 4 of the Act as shown below:

1. Sovereign equality and interdependence among members states and the Union;

2. Respect of borders existing on achievement of interdependence;

3. Participation of African peoples in the activities of the Union;

4. Establishment of a Common defence policy for the African continent

5. Peaceful resolution of conflicts among Member States of the Union through such appropriate means as may be decided upon by the assembly;

6. Prohibition of the use of force or threat to use force among Members States of the Union;

7. Non-interference by any Member State in the internal affairs of another;

8. The right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely: war, crimes, genocide and crime against humanity;

9. Peaceful co-existence of Member States and their right to live in Peace and security;

10. The right of Member States to request for intervention from the Union in order to restore peace and security;

11. Promotion of self-reliance within the framework of the Union;

12. Promotion of gender equality

13. Respect for democratic principle, human rights, rule of law and good governance;

14. Promotion of social justice to ensure balanced economic development;

15. Respect for the sanctity of human life; condemnation and rejection of impunity and political assassination, acts of terrorism and subversive activities;

16. Condemnation and rejection of unconstitutional changes of government

The Act also specified a number of organs through which the Union will express itself in article 5. Some of the organs are part of the organs specified in the Abuja Treaty establishing the African Economic Community (AEC). Therefore, the AU is not only replacing OAU but also the AEC as
shown in article 33(2) of the Act. The Act also made provision for a transitional arrangement covering a period of 12 months during which time the AU is expected to subsume the OAU charter leading to devolution of its assets and liabilities to the Union.

NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA’S DEVELOPMENT (NEPAD)

The New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) is the third leg of the recent wave of calls for the renewal of the African continent. It is a set of selected regional priorities and development plans through which the continent of Africa is supposed to regenerate herself and provide the necessary framework and environment for the progress of her people. It is expected that African Leaders will tap into the various programmes articulated in the NEPAD so as to precipitate sustainable development and shape the destiny of their own countries and that of Africa. It is also a programme with a framework of interaction with the rest of world including the industrialised countries and the multilateral organisations. To achieve the overall objective of the AI, the African Leaders are expected to take joint responsibility for certain key projects which to me are the pillars upon which the NEPAD rests. These responsibilities include:

1. To strengthen the mechanism for Conflict prevention, management and resolution at the regional and continental levels, and to ensure that these mechanisms are used to restore and maintain peace;

2. To promote and protect democracy and human rights in their respective countries and regions, by developing clear standards of accountability, transparency and participative governance at the national and sub national levels;

3. To restore and maintain macroeconomic stability, especially by developing appropriate standards and targets for fiscal and monetary policies, and introducing appropriate institutional frameworks to achieve these standards;

4. To institute transparent legal and regulatory frameworks for financial markets and auditing of private companies and the public sector;

5. To revitalise and extend the provision of education, technical training and health services, with high priority given to tackling HIV/AIDS, malaria and other communicable diseases;

6. To promote the role of women in social and economic development by reinforcing their capacity in the domains of education and training, by the development of revenue-generating activities through facilitating access to credit; and by assuring their participation in the political and economic spheres of African countries;

7. To build the capacity of the states in Africa to set and enforce a legal framework as well as maintain law and order;

8. To promote the development of infrastructure, agriculture and the diversification into agro-industries and manufacturing to serve both domestic and export markets.

Apart from this, the NEPAD also assembles its main strategy, programme of action which include preconditions for development, sectoral priorities, resource mobilisation and implementation plan. The ultimate goal is to eradicate poverty in Africa, create a path for sustainable growth, increase the space of opportunities for women and eventually halt Africa’s marginalisation in the global arena.
CONTEXTUAL PLACEMENT OF THE CSSDCA, AU AND NEPAD

A contextual placement of the CSSDCA, the AU and NEPAD immediately throws up the complimentarity between them as well as a reinforcement of the belief that Africa is searching for a better framework and platform for a rapid transformation of the Continent.

Within the Constitutive Act of AU, it is obvious that only three organs and instruments are recognised. These are the Charter of OAU, The AEC and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs). This is a serious oversight.

The OAU in its 38 years of existence has established quite a range of organs, binding protocols, programmes and initiatives some of which are still relevant for the attainment of the objectives of the Union and should have been given specific role or general mention in the Act of the Union.

The CSSDCA falls into this category. The CSSDCA should be seen as central and strategic to the attainment of the objectives of the AU. The CSSDCA, if properly implemented, will serve as the framework for the development and advancement of Africa’s Common Values. The assertion is attested to by a number of objectives and the principles of the AU that fall within the framework and calabashes of the CSSDCA.

An analysis of the objectives and the principles of the AU showed that 12 of the objectives and all the principles stated in article 5 of the Act fall within the four calabashes of the CSSDCA. The break down of this analysis is as follows: (see attached interface document)

Ø Objective 2 and principles 1, 5, 6,7,8, and 9 fall within and are implementable under the Security Calabash

Ø Objectives 5,7,8 and principles 12, 13, 14, 15, and 16 are within the Stability calabash;

Ø Objectives 3, 10, 14 and the 11th principle can be handled by the Development calabash;

Ø Lastly, objectives 3, 4, 9, 11,12 and 14 are also captured, and implementable within the Cooperation calabash.

From the foregoing, it is safe to argue that the CSSDCA is the anchor point of the African Union. Furthermore, article 9 of the Act defines one of the functions of the Assembly, which is the highest organ of the AU, as “Monitor the implementation of policies and decisions of the Union as well as ensure compliance by all Member States”. There is no doubt that compliance to policies, protocol and decisions of the Union is what will determine it effectiveness and acceptability within the continent irrespective of the legion of signatures that brought it into existence. As at today, the CSSDCA remains the most strategic and comprehensive continental monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanism.

At the time of its adoption, it was agreed that the CSSDCA would be implemented as a Standing conference to be convened every two years, during the OAU Summit. The Meetings of Plenipotentiaries and Senior Officials will undertake review meetings in between Sessions of the Standing Conference. The Secretary General was requested to initiate internal administrative arrangements for designating, within the OAU/AEC Secretariat, a unit to coordinate CSSDCA activities. It was also agreed that detailed discussions should be undertaken on the various Calabashes in order to implement the CSSDCA process.
In the operationalisation of the CSSDCA, the first leg of the CSSDCA Calabash meetings will be at experts’ level. After the hosting of experts negotiation meetings for all the Calabashes, a Ministerial meeting will be held to review all the Calabashes. This will be followed by the bi-annual standing Conference that will coincide with the 2002 Summit to be held in South Africa.

There is no other organ of OAU that enjoys this sort of status. The whole idea is to effectively tap into the reporting and evaluation mechanism of the CSSDCA and use it to monitor the progress of African countries in terms of security, development and other policy initiatives. The CSSDCA should be seen and treated as the catalyst required for the firm establishment and promotion of the ideals of the UNION.

In the same vein, NEPAD when situated beside the CSSDCA also provides a sort of synergistic environment that will make its implementation more effective in term of result generation and measurements. The NEPAD provides the framework of what is to be done and how it should be done while the CSSDCA provides the framework of what has been done through its monitoring, evaluation and reporting mechanism as envisaged in its uniqueness as a Standing Conference. Within the context of the Africa Union, the objectives, strategies and goals of the NEPAD when viewed from the African perspective, provide the path and guide for the Specialised Technical Committees of the AU as well as the Economic, Social and Cultural council (ECOSOCC) as shown in article 5 of the Act. Furthermore, it can be seen also that preconditions for development, as embodied in the NEPAD i.e. Peace, security, democracy, political governance, economic and corporate governance and regional cooperation and integration are the entire major policy pillar upon which the CSSDCA rests. This is in addition to the fact that virtually all the joint responsibilities subscribed to by the African Leaders in the NEPAD are also detailed as part of the Plan of Action in the various calabashes of the CSSDCA (See the attached table 3). It, therefore, follows that the African Leaders have adopted three sets of initiatives which in several dimensions dovetailed into one another but are expected to perform different roles in providing Africa and Africans with a Common Value and Development System which can be evaluated in concrete terms from time to time.

TOWARDS A CONVERGENCE

Conceptually a framework has been defined for the effective and functional relationships between these three initiatives, which now stand as the tripod of Security, stability and Development in Africa. What is envisioned in this relationship is demonstrated in the model below being proposed by AFRICA LEADERSHIP FORUM:
Under this arrangement, the Africa Union remains as Africa’s main and overall Political Institution with all of its organs as envisaged in the Act establishing the Union. NEPAD will be used to guide and provide policy and programmes direction for the organs of the Union, especially, the Executive Council and the Specialised Committees of the Union. The CSSDCA will provide, through its conferences, a monitoring, evaluation and feedback report on the various policies, programmes and projects executed by the various organs of the Union. In addition, it would also interact with the various organs of the Union in taking new policy initiatives and adjustment, which may surface, from its various meetings and conferences with the major actors within the continent.

The benefit of this arrangement is the fast track opportunity in it which will make the African Union to fully express itself as a truly continental organisation set up to accelerate and coordinate the development of Africa in a stable environment that gives room for popular participation and sustenance of good governance. It can, therefore, be concluded that, from the new model, the African Union is the Vehicle, NEPAD is the Driver while the CSSDCA is the Vehicle Inspector.
ANNEXUE A

REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON AFRICAN WOMEN AND THE NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT (NEPAD)

3 – 5 February 2002

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REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON AFRICAN WOMEN AND THE NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA’S DEVELOPMENT (NEPAD)

Concept Paper

-If you educate a man you educate an individual, but if you educate a woman you educate a family (nation)-
African Proverb.

BACKGROUND

The New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) is a pledge by African leaders, based on a common vision and a firm and shared conviction that they have a pressing duty to eradicate poverty and to place their countries, both individually and collectively, on a path of sustainable growth and development, and at the same time to participate actively in the world economy.

NEPAD consists of a set of select regional priorities that address in a rather comprehensive manner the developmental needs of Africa as well as the facilitation of Africa’s effective participation in the processes of globalisation and in the growth of the world economy as factors of global stability and progress. It is expected that African leaders will tap into the various programmes articulated in the NEPAD and take joint responsibilities for certain key projects, which are the pillars upon which NEPAD rests.

The initiative has the following objectives:

Ø Creation of a conducive environment for economic growth and development in both individual African countries and the continent through the enhancement of political and economic governance;

Ø Poverty reduction and broad based improvement in incomes and quality of life;

Ø Acceleration of economic integration and reduction of costs/risks of doing business in the continent;

Ø Increasing economic output and productivity through accelerated development of agriculture and diversification of structure of African economies;

Ø Mobilisation of additional capital and technical resources

Unlike previous initiatives, NEPAD is African initiated, African led and African managed. African leaders have not only identified core issue areas, they have equally committed themselves to major areas of governance and undertaken responsibilities for core socio-economic problems of the continent, with indispensable, efficient and solidarity-based relations or partnership for the pursuit of their common interest to wipe out poverty and foster development.

This renewed commitment has also served as a boost to the member states of the G-8 who, for the first time, have taken keen interest in African affairs by endorsing NEPAD during their G8 Summit in Genoa, July 2001, with an assurance to make the initiative a reality. An 8-man high powered team of G-8 officials was appointed to work with the African countries in preparing,
within the next twelve months, a set of programmes and projects that can be used as basis for future interventions and Official Development Assistance (ODA).

Drawing on a generation of experience, it is imperative that different segments of the African public, as major stakeholders, must not only be familiar with the aims and objectives of NEPAD but also be sufficiently mobilised by providing the necessary support for the implementation and actualisation of the ideals of NEPAD. Every segment of the civil society should be adequately informed and engaged in order to provide the required sustainability for NEPAD to become a people-driven, people-oriented initiative. This is particularly so because civil society organisations usually have direct ties with the grass roots and are therefore in a good position to direct development and socio-economic activities. One important group of actors in this regard, are the African women who have over time proved that as a group, they are major change agent.

The Role of Women in Africa’s Governance

In the recent past, the issue of governance in Africa had been predominantly patriarchal. In high-level decision-making, policy formulations and governance issues, gender sensitive approaches have rarely been in evidence, and the role of women in these areas are seriously underrepresented. Today, however, the strength of women to make unique contributions to issues of governance seems to have been recognised and the contributions women make towards supporting their households and communities in both times of peace and conflict are gradually taken more seriously by the African and International Community. It is, however, astounding that women are under-represented, at high-level decision making processes.

Recognising the unequal gender representation, and determined to assist in changing this practice, the Annual Africa Leadership Forum Meeting of the African leaders in 1997 created the Africa Women’s Forum as a spatial arrangement for consultation between and among sub-regional and regional African women’s movements for networking, information and solidarity as well as serving as a focal point for regional and sub-regional action.

The Africa Women Forum (AWF), therefore, strives to promote the collective interest and leadership of women in Africa through research training and advocacy, and the strengthening of the abilities and capabilities of African women’s network. It also seeks greater collaboration and partnership between Africa women’s networks and governments, intergovernmental agencies and other civil society organisations, for the improvement of the status of women in Africa.

The first AWF convened in Cape-Town, South Africa, with the theme: “Communication and Leadership for Empowerment”. The 2nd AWF convened in Abidjan, Cote d’Ivoire, in 1999, under the theme “Improving the Status of Women in Africa: Challenges for the Future”. The meeting focused mainly on the ‘Index on the Status of Women in Africa’, an initiative of the Africa Leadership Forum to measure women’s participation in the economic and political spheres in Africa, especially with regards to leadership positions. The 3rd AWF took place in Tunis, Tunisia, in the beginning of this year, and had the theme: “Women and Conflict Management in Africa”.

It is in the same vein that NEPAD and its proposed activities must sort and include African women’s input in order to make it useful and also have credibility. Africa Leadership Forum has therefore decided to use its AWF format to address the compelling question of how African Women can be involved in the development and implementation of the main strategic initiative for the continent’s future development within the framework of NEPAD.

African Women and NEPAD
To put the New Partnership initiative on the right footing, there is an obvious need to involve African women to convene, deliberate and synergise on the issue of NEPAD. Some of the important issues that need to be addressed are the following:

**ISSUES FOR DELIBERATION**

- What is the overall strategic interest of African women in the NEPAD?
- How can we ensure that African women effectively participate in NEPAD activities and make significant contributions towards programmes development, project selection and implementation?
- How can we ensure effective and strategic representation of African women on various Regional Committees and Special Task Teams working on NEPAD such that issues affecting women are considerably reflected in the various outputs of these committees?
- What kind of strategic framework should African women adopt in responding to opportunities and challenges embedded in the NEPAD initiative?
- What plans of action should we put in place to create a broad based awareness among African women on the importance, relevance and opportunities within the NEPAD?
- How can a network of African women that is capable of facilitating strategic planning and implementation be established and what will be the framework for effective interface between and among African women?
- How can the various government and subregional Economic Communities be ensured that women play a significant role in development and implementation of NEPAD programmes (e.g. Health, Youth, Governance, Economics, Conflict Prevention)
- Which priority projects can be identified and what development framework is required to facilitate their implementation?
- What mechanism can African governments use to monitor and evaluate the situation and progress in the continent regarding security, stability, development and cooperation and which role can women play in this process?
- How can African women play a pro-active instead of re-active role in policy development and implementation on a continental level? In other words: How can African women gain access to and conduct their leadership responsibilities with a view to serving Africa’s development.

It is believed that these issues and more will have to be given priority in the agenda of the Women’s forum and demand a critical review and answers from representatives of African Women.
BACKGROUND NOTE ON THE AFRICA LEADERSHIP FORUM (ALF)

Despite over a quarter of a century of political independence Africa’s aspirations and hopes remain today largely unfulfilled. This has not been, however, a period of unmitigated failure in the history of the continent; there have been successes in education, public health, import substitution industries and in the continuing process of decolonisation. The problems of development, peace and security, the health of the world economy, and improving the environment are interrelated global issues; which do not admit piecemeal solutions.

And yet all countries find that in the absence of true global cooperation, they have to tackle particular aspects of them. At the national level in Africa, the inadequacy of information, data and resources makes the problems daunting. Regionally they are overwhelming.

African leaders have frequently come to their positions with limited experience. Though most of them have struggled confronting their awesome problems of development and nation-building, essentially not only unprepared but unaided, their efforts have been at best only a qualified success.

Africa cannot afford to continue with ill-prepared and unassisted leaders. Those on whom the burden of leadership world fall in future must fully comprehend their responsibilities, duties and obligations. They must, that is, have exposure and a carefully planned preparation if they are to meet the challenges that will face them.

The leaders of tomorrow have to be pursuing their professional careers today. They have little time to devote to gain a comprehensive knowledge either of their own countries and their region, or of the cultures of their diverse peoples; nor even to learn and understand the actions taken by their present leaders where they do not impinge on their own areas of expertise.

Most young potential leaders have focused primarily on single issues, lacking the time to look at wider, critical regional and world challenges. Time for comprehensive study and reflection, for sharing experiences with persons inside, let alone outside their countries, region and field of concentration is very limited. Opportunities for such detached discussion and contemplation are even rarer.

There are no private institutions in Africa devoted to preparing potential leaders with a global outlook leaders who will be able to cooperate within and across national, regional and institutional boundaries. Furthermore, it is difficult, if not impossible, in many African countries to gain access to relevant and timely information on most national, regional and global issues.

Experience in and out of Government brings this issue to the fore. It is a problem that poses a challenge to address and remedy. One solution is to launch the Africa Leadership Forum through conducting a series of meetings, which may be national, sub regional, regional and international in dimension and may vary in duration. The purpose will be to enhance the knowledge and awareness of current and young, potential African leaders, placing special emphasis on diagnosing apparent failures of the past; on understanding multiple dimensions and complex interrelations of local, national, regional, and global problems; and on seeking possible approaches to solutions.
OBJECTIVES:

The purpose of the Forum is to encourage diagnosis, understanding, and an informed search for solutions to local, regional and global problems, taking full account of their interrelationships and mutual consequences.

To that end, the Forum will develop, organize and support programmes for the training of young and promising Africans with leadership potentials so as to expose them to the demands, duties and obligations of leadership positions and to prepare them systematically for assuming higher responsibilities and meeting the challenges of an interdependent world.

The Forum will also endeavour to generate greater understanding and enhance the knowledge and awareness of development and social problems within a global context among young, potential leaders from all sectors of society, cutting across national, regional, continental, professional and institutional borders. This may foster close and enduring relationships among participants and relationships that promote life-long association and cooperation.

Further, the Forum will support and encourage the diagnosis and informed search for appropriate and effective solutions to local. This will be within the framework of global interdependence, including consideration of phased action programmes that can be initiated by various countries, sub-regions and institutions.

In addition, there will be specific weekend seminars organized as Farm House Dialogues to be held quarterly.