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Addis Ababa, ETHIOPIA P. O. Box 3243 Telephone 517 700 Fax 517844  
website: [www.africa-union.org](http://www.africa-union.org)

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**DRAFT SOCIAL POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR AFRICA**

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

- DSA :** Dimension Sociale de l'Ajustement (Social Dimensions of Adjustment)
- HIMO :** Haute Intensité de Main Œuvre (High Intensity Labour)
- OMS :** Organisation Mondiale de la Santé (World Health Organization – WHO)
- ONU:** Organisation des Nations Unies (United Nations Organization–UNO)
- ONUDI :** Organisation des Nations Unies pour le Développement Industriel (United Nations Industrial Development Organization–UNIDO)
- PAS :** Programme d'Ajustement Structurel (Structural Adjustment Programme - SAP)
- PIB:** Produit Intérieur Brut (Gross Domestic Product – GDP)
- PME :** Petite et Moyenne Entreprise (Small and Medium Enterprises – SME)
- PNB :** Produit National Brut (Gross National Product – GDP)
- PNUD :** Programme des Nations Unies pour le Développement (United Nations Development Programme – UNDP)
- RCA :** République Centrafricaine ( Central African Republic)
- RDC :** République Démocratique du Congo ( Democratic Republic of Congo – DRC)
- UNESCO :** Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'Education, la Science et la Culture

SPF	Social Policy Framework
ADB	African Development Bank
AU	African Union
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CBR	Crude Birth Rate
CDR	Crude Death Rate
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
DAC	Direct Assistance Committee
ECA	(United Nations) Economic Commission for Africa

FAO	Food and Agricultural Organisation
FBO	Faith Based Organisation
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HABITAT	United Nations Conference on Human Settlements
HIPC	Highly Indebted Poor Country
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
IDPs	Internally Displaced Person(s)
ILC	International Labour Conference
ILO	International Labour Organisation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LSC	Labour and Social Affairs Commission of the AU
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MIDA	Migration for Development in Africa
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
ORT/ORS	Oral Rehydration Therapy/Salts
PHC	Preventive Health Care
PRSPs	Poverty Reduction Strategic Paper(s)
RBM	Roll Back Malaria
RECs	Regional Economic Communities
SAPs	Structural Adjustment Programme(s)
STDs	Sexually Transmitted Disease(s)

TB	Tuberculosis
TFR	Total Fertility Rate
UAPS	Union for African Population Studies
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNFPA	United Nations Fund for Population Activities
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WCEFA	World Conference on Education for All
WHO/AFRO	World Health Organisation/African Regional Organisation
WSSD (Copenhagen)	World Summit for Social Development (held in Copenhagen in 1995)
WSSD (Johannesburg)	World Summit on Sustainable Development (held in Johannesburg in 2002)
WTO	World Trade Organisation
YES2002	Youth Employment Summit held in Alexandria in 2002

## **DRAFT SOCIAL POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR AFRICA**

### **GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

1. The question of human and social development in Africa featured among the concerns of the defunct Organization of African Unity (OAU) as set out in 1994. As a matter of fact, to ensure Africa's coordinated participation in the World Summit on Social Development which took place in Copenhagen in 1995, an African Common Position was developed to combat the various scourges hampering social development in the Continent. The World Summit on Sustainable Development organized in Johannesburg, South Africa in 2000 provided a useful forum for exchange of views on the results obtained since Copenhagen 1995. It was observed on that occasion, as in the past, that Africa remains the only region of the world where the lack of social development raises the most concern (ignorance, poverty and disease). The Continent is home to the greatest number of poor people in relative terms, and this number has been on the increase since 1990; whereas in other parts of the world, a lot of progress was recorded in terms of attaining the 2015 Millennium Development Goals sometimes at quite impressive rate<sup>1</sup>. The major causes of this problem is social exclusion, while the secondary causes include: inadequate human resource development, inadequate and unstable economic growth, exclusion from the labour market, lack of access to the basic social services, lack of satisfaction of basic human needs, exclusion from human rights, precarious welfare infrastructure, high fertility, morbidity and mortality rates, etc.<sup>2</sup>.

2. As a reflection of its Vision on this issue, the African Union devoted fourteen (14) of the objectives as contained in Article 3 of its Constitutive Act (2000) to the question of human and social development. Additionally, the Vision of the African Union (2004) as a lead agent of change, places at the core of its 2004 – 2007 Strategic Framework, advocacy for and harmonization of social policies. This Vision is anchored on a plan based on close cooperation with the Regional Economic Communities, networking, feasibility, value added/impact, among other things.

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<sup>1</sup> This is a case with East Asia where the number of poor people was reduced by nearly 50% in less than 10 years

<sup>2</sup> These scourges have been detailed as: low literacy rates, health problems hunger, unemployment and under employment, marginalization of women, communicable diseases especially HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis, drug, migration, poor governance, civil strife and armed conflicts.

3. In more specific terms, the AU Strategic Framework sets aside its Action Area 5 for social development with the objective to address the structural causes of poverty and social under-development. This Action Area predicates all its programmes and activities on an orientation driven by a rights-based human development paradigm. The strategies include: contribution to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and promotion of the values of solidarity in the Continent.

4. The global objective of the present Social Policy Framework is to foster sustainable human and social development in Africa. To attain this goal, the Framework incorporates all the values set out in the African Union Vision and complements the above mentioned Action Area by pursuing a global integrated strategy which welds together the two strategies contained in the 2004-2007 Strategic Framework of the African Union Commission, and comes up with fourteen (14) new programmes, including the four defined in the Strategic Framework. In actual fact, the Social Policy Framework is an amalgamation of Action Areas 2, 5 and 6 of the Strategic Framework of the AU Commission. The Social Policy Framework Strategy also complements recent initiatives such as the Highly Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative by way of countries' Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), and clearly integrates the solutions to the causes listed earlier into the strategies for poverty reduction in Africa. The present Social Policy Framework will show that, while the PRSPs and other initiatives encapsulate measures aimed at reducing poverty, such measures risk having only limited impact on poverty by the year 2015, as long as some solutions particularly social integration and job creation are not accorded special attention.

5. This consideration prompted the Heads of State and Government of the OAU meeting in the 37<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of their Assembly, to decide that a Ministerial Session should be convened on the theme of Employment and Poverty Reduction in Africa. That Meeting was held concurrently with the 25<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the OAU Labour and Social Affairs Commission in Ouagadougou in April 2002. The Continent's commitment to achieve poverty reduction was evidenced in the following recommendations submitted for the attention of States: i) share experience in building appropriate infrastructure, reduce illiteracy, scale up workers' skills and capacities, and conduct labour market studies for job creation; ii) mainstream social and job security in national priorities and develop self-employment strategies in concert with the social partners; iii) sign and/or ratify the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, as well as ILO Convention 182 on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour; iv) make primary education compulsory; v) allocate the

necessary resources for national level implementation of the Plan of Action of the African Decade of Persons with Disabilities (1999-2009); vi) accord priority to the Migration for Development in Africa (MIDA) Programme. These recommendations are justified more especially as during the past five years (2000-2004), the International Labour Conference has generally placed Employment and Human Resource Development high on its agenda. In this specific connection, it is recalled that in his Statement at the 91<sup>st</sup> Session of the Conference in 2003, the ILO Director General set out guidelines for overcoming poverty through employment.

6. The above measures and initiatives were taken up by NEPAD developed by our Heads of State and Government and adopted as African Union's economic policy framework document. NEPAD marks a new turning point for Africa as demonstrated in the Vision and Missions of the AU (2004). However, during its implementation phase and its appropriation by the stakeholders, it became apparent especially in the aftermath of the 25<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the OAU Labour and Social Affairs Commission/Ministerial Meeting, that NEPAD did not make explicit reference to employment promotion and other specific social development issues, be it in its objectives or in its actions proposals. This point was also made by the first Ordinary Session of the Labour and Social Affairs Commission of the African Union held in Grand Baie, Mauritius, from 10 to 15 April 2003, and further by the 38<sup>th</sup> Ordinary Session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the OAU in Durban, South Africa, in July 2002. Advocacy for mainstreaming employment matters into economic and social development policies reached its highest water mark at the AU Extra-ordinary Summit on Employment and Poverty Reduction in Africa held in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, from 3 to 9 September 2004. A Declaration and an Action Plan were adopted by AU Heads of State and Government at the end of that Summit.

7. In formulating the conceptual basis of Social Policy Framework for Africa, it has been retained that the development process is multi-dimensional: social, economic, political and cultural. In other words, every economic, political or cultural activity necessarily has social dimensions or implications. Social development related phenomena or issues do not constitute independent variables or parameters, rather, they are a function of other social, political or cultural variables. Consequently, every economic, political or cultural activity or initiative be it education, health, agriculture, agrarian development, science or technology ... related, inevitably impacts on humans and on the society.

8. Thus, social development does not take place in isolation or outside the ambit of other development policies. Every decision taken or executed at any level, be it national, sub-regional, regional or international will have

implications for humans and the society, the main reason being that socio-economic policies are inter-linked and the interactive relationship has repercussions on other political decisions. For instance, quality education and good health programme have positive impact on the well-being of the population. Both are closely linked in the sense that education helps to improve health, while good health contributes to better education, access to the labour market and increase in the income of the people in general, and of the poor in particular. It is needful to underscore the fact that social development issues or phenomena are closely inter-related, even though they have their distinctive characteristics; and hence the need for the holistic and integrated approach adopted in the compilation of the present Social Policy Framework.

9. In terms of methodology, the Social Policy Framework synthesises the salient issues and the core concerns contained in the five (5) sub-regional reports prepared for the Central, East, North, West and Southern Africa sub-regions. For a better appreciation of the social and human development challenges facing the Continent, the Paper provides a brief description of the socio-economic development situation by way of the economic, demographic, social, political and cultural dynamics, human resources and employment; health, hygiene and nutrition; women in development; gender issues; habitat and environment; poverty levels and living standard, etc. Given the fact that the globalization phenomenon deeply affects all aspects of development, its repercussions will be studied in light of its impact on economic, human and social development issues, and recent initiatives such as the PRSPs and others. This discussion will bring to light the emerging challenges and issues to be taken on board in the elaboration of a realistic and pragmatic African Social Model which will take into account the core new element/factors.

10. Strategy elements that are significant, practical and aligned with the African context have been identified for incorporation as far as possible into the Social Policy Framework which, if approved and implemented, should improve human and social development in Africa. But, first and foremost, **what optimal combination of pillars should the Social Policy Framework adopt to guarantee such development in Africa?**

## **CHAPTER 1: SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT POLICIES IN AFRICA**

11. The objective of this Chapter is to formulate an analytical and conceptual framework for the linkage between economic and social policies with a view to understanding how to manage economic and social data for sustainable social development. To this end, this Chapter has been laid

out in three Sections. The first Section contains a review of the pertinent concepts and goes on to examine the conceptual framework of social exclusion and investment relations, and then the relation between job creation, poverty reduction and standard of living improvement. The second analyzes the relevant experiences in Africa vis-a-vis the Continent's social development agenda. The third section concludes with lessons inherent in the above analyses.

## **1.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

12. Social policies performance is measured by the level of human and social development. The latter is generally determined by the income, education and life expectancy of the population, reason for which employment, education and health, among others, constitute the pillars of the Social Policy Framework. To supplement human and social development evaluation in some contexts, the Framework has taken on board social integration related indicators such as those pertinent to the people's degree of freedom to undertake economic, social, political and cultural activities.

### **1.1.1 A New Analytical Tool: the Concept of Social Exclusion**

13. Since the past 30 years, the concept of social exclusion has been frequently used in social literature particularly to describe situations of poverty and inequality. Generally, it implies the failure of some individuals and social groups to access the resources offered by the society and the economy (Rodgers, 1994). Social exclusion is an indicator of social policy and represents the gaps in the integration or inclusion process.

14. Several theoretical studies of the social exclusion concept have been conducted on the basis of the notion of "critical threshold", results or causes. It seems to us that the critical threshold or results based approach lacks relevance since it is never possible to clearly delineate the exact point at which the requisite levels are crossed. In contrast, studies focusing on results would appear to be more realistic, but secondary in nature. Although this involves impact study, it seems unnecessary to seek to understand the hidden meaning of result without going back to its source. Unfortunately, most studies on social exclusion are analyses of results or involved interpretations of their diverse manifestations. Such analyses are presented in the form of a huge table of the misfortunes suffered by a section of humanity. This approach is not consistent with the will to implement social policies. As a matter of fact, the effectiveness of social policy implementation presupposes an understanding of the

phenomena and causes which may not only differ from one society to another, but may also be subject to different interpretations in a given society. On this score, Hilary Silver(1994) identified three models of society which allow for deeper insight into the social exclusion phenomenon. Before we go on to define these models, it is needful for us to make two observations. The first is that whereas these models can be regarded as pivotal or predominant, others could be similarly identified. The second observation is that, in general, a society is not predicated on one, but on a combination of these models. This is clearly the case in present day Africa.

**a) Social Exclusion and Solidarity**

15. In a society built on the solidarity paradigm, exclusion arises from the fracture or relaxation of the solidarity ties. This societal model also implies cooperation between the various segments of the social fabric and embodies two fundamental elements, namely: mechanical solidarity couched on individual or group resemblance, characteristic of primitive and under- developed societies with very little division of social labour; and organic solidarity anchored on complementarity of individuals or groups, the hallmarks of industrial or developed societies in which there is significant division of social labour. Consequently, a rupture or slackening of mechanical or organic solidarity in an industrially developed society leads to social exclusion. This state of affairs must be combated to avoid erosion of social cohesion or creating a situation of non-cooperation.

**b) Social Exclusion and Specialization**

16. In a society with liberal ideology, division of labour or technical specialization leads to social differentiation; that is, diversification of individuals and groups, brought together by the efficiency of the production and competitive commercial system. In this context, the social players – independent by definition - operate in a market-oriented or competitive environment, and the resource allocation mechanisms offer all and sundry the capacity to negotiate and the power to impose preferences to serve the overriding common interest. Social milieu homogeneity is forged by the interest and will of the independent players to participate in competitive social exchanges necessitated by the differentiation of roles. In such a society, exclusion is not perceived as a fundamental or critical phenomenon since it emanates from a model which extols individual behaviour and inter-personal relations.

**c) Social Exclusion and Monopoly**

17. In a society where barriers are the rule, be it legal or cultural, such barriers create monopolies which keep some of the social players outside the field action in which they would have liked to participate. For this reason, barriers operate in favour of some individuals or groups, placing them in a position of domination in terms of access to some economic and social resources. That being the case, social exclusion constitutes an integral part of the social system which can be combated only by changing the structure.

**1.1.2. Social Policy Concept**

18. By social policy we mean a mechanism that allows for collective state-led measures, implemented by the state and its partners – the private sector, civil society and international development partners. Social policy is geared to ushering in the best possible socio-economic conditions, addressing the structural irregularities in wealth and means of production distribution, ensuring greater equality for all, and correcting market shortcomings, thereby protecting the most vulnerable groups.

**1.1.3. Employment/Work**

19. Here, we are referring to wage and non-wage employment/work. The data on the labour market situation in Africa are not only fragmented but are at times inconsistent depending on the source. Furthermore, such data emanate from the uncertainties of employment/labour and jobless measures. The point that can be made in this regard is that, according to ILO definition, an unemployed person is that individual who, being of working age, has no remunerative employment/job and actively seeks available remunerative employment<sup>3</sup>. However, as recognized by ILO, this definition is fraught with ambiguities as far as the underlying notions are concerned, namely; working age, employment/work, search for employment/work, availability. These considerations impact heavily on the existing global statistics on the number of unemployed, or on unemployment and under-employment.

**1.1.4. Investment/ Human Capital**

20. In all societies, investment involves a process of human, social, financial and material capital accumulation, and constitutes the engine of growth in the society. By contrast, the human capital is a key factor of production for economic growth; reason for which education and

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<sup>3</sup> ILO (1993), p.91

vocational training occupy a pivotal place in poverty reduction strategies. In any human resource development strategy, the competitive advantage of the economy resides not in the commodities nor in the low labour wages, but rather in expertise, spirit of enterprise and innovative research.

#### **1.1.5.Poverty**

21. As recognized by several publications, poverty is a shifting concept with multiple faces, and goes beyond the inadequacy of monetary and non-monetary assets. On this score, UNDP, World Bank and other institutions' reports have reviewed the conceptual approaches and the methodological difficulties inherent in defining and measuring poverty. Beyond the methodological concerns, poverty is often defined as the inability of an individual to meet his/her basic needs especially for food, clothing, housing, health and education (UNDP 1998). The most currently used approach to determine the poverty threshold is "basic needs" which, as reflected in the various surveys of household living standards in Africa, has resulted in a clear definition of a minimum adjusted annual per capita expenditure threshold. One other social development indicator is the poverty level (monetary or human). For the countries with low human development level such as African countries (in which institutional market based security is minimal), there is the need to take into account the position occupied by poor people in the production system.

#### **1.1.6 Social Integration, Investment, Employment and Poverty: a closely – knit relationship**

22. Several conceptual and theoretical studies have explained that economic growth is basically determined by investment in physical and human capital deriving from solid social integration, and that jobs are qualitatively and quantitatively a consequence of rapid economic growth and high living standard. The first of these studies dates back to the Keynesian vision of the crisis of the 30's according to which the labour market equilibrium is predicated on the goods and services market situation (actual demand). The solution to unemployment therefore involves reactivation of demand either by way of public finance (expansionist budget policy), increased private investment (low interest monetary policy) and public investment also aimed at creating a conducive climate for private initiative. Thus, the primordial influence of investments on employment income and living standard, is according to this model, represented by the following logic:

**Social integration/investment ► Production**  
**► Employment/income ► Unemployment ► Poverty/Living**  
**Standard**

23. As a matter of fact, social integration, the foundation of all human and social development, operates in a way that ensures that investment creates enterprises and new activities thereby boosting production and economic growth. The new business enterprises and activities thus created will pave the way for recruiting and/or utilizing (as self-employed) new workers of all categories, thereby alleviating joblessness, distributing income and combating poverty. The multiplier effect of the income and employment generated by the new activities will shoot up even more with an integrated regional economy. That being the case, public investment in basic economic infrastructure construction (collective infrastructure, communication and telecommunication infrastructure) will contribute immensely to sustaining private investment, with similar effect on employment and poverty reduction. In the circumstances, public and private investment constitutes the engine of increased production and employment. The pivotal role of social integration and investment is also at the core of all growth models irrespective of the theoretical tenets (neo-Keynesian or neo-classical). According to these models, the rate of savings, to some extent, determines the investment rate whose impact on employment is dependent on the degree of capital utilization. Where investment is effected with the acquisition of the tools and machines which economize on labour, its impact on employment will be limited. The impact will however be significant where the technology deriving from the acquired machines calls for the use of abundant labour.

24. In a word, at the conceptual level, capital accumulation boosts employment; and several empirical studies reviewed by Fields (1989)<sup>4</sup> support this conclusion. The interface between the three sets of factors (social integration/investment, employment/income, poverty/living standard) is not automatic, and positive growth does not necessarily result in employment creation and poverty reduction. This interface is predicated on technological choices, sector-based distribution of investments as well as distribution of employment income.

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<sup>4</sup> FIELDS, G.S. (1989 "The action exercised by public authorities on urban employment in small countries"  
SALOME, B (1989) Combating unemployment in urban setting : OECD Publication

### **1.1.7 Technological Choices, Investment Distribution and Productive Employment for the Poor**

25. In the first place, the investment/employment linkage is dependent on technological choices. This choice is in turn a function of the price of the factors and their productivity; and consequently, the unit cost of the product manufactured using the capitalist mode may be less for some productions under certain conditions, even with cheap labour (Hagen, 1982). For instance, as a result of technical constraints and acquired habits and mentalities, high capital intensive methods are used in countries where labour is relatively cheaper.

26. Secondly, the creation of productive employment for the poor is differentiated according to sector and branch. The problem faced in devising employment promotion policy therefore lies in identifying the lucrative sectors which offer the greatest productive job creation opportunities that contribute to poverty reduction. Intuitively, it may be said that the agricultural sector and national SME sector have an abundance of such potentials.

27. Production costs concerns, and indeed economy competitiveness concerns, are justifiably at the center of the economic and institutional reforms initiated in Africa since the early 90s, the aim being to liberalize the economic and social life, particularly external trade. Finally, increased *per capita* income and improved income distribution work hand in hand to ensure improved living condition of the population and hence generate social development.

## **1.2 SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT TYPES AND TRENDS**

### **1.2.1 State-driven development**

#### **a) Southern Africa**

#### ***Social Exclusion under the Apartheid Model***

28. This period was characterized by totalitarian regimes built on the socialist ideology in most countries in the sub-region. South Africa, the economic engine of the sub-region, operates a market-driven economic system. However, the apartheid policy was an obstacle to social development for all the people of the sub-region. As a matter of fact, the entire populations of the so-called Frontline States and the direct victims of apartheid in South Africa and Namibia mobilized against this scourge. Consequently, very little effort was invested in these countries to improve social development performance.

**b) Central Africa*****Pre-1970: Emergence and Consolidation of National Institutions***

29. Up to 1960, the sub-region's economy was organized around plantations and mines, the size and management of which varied according to the colonizer. The production system was designed to produce the raw materials needed by private colonialists in the metropole who were also responsible for evacuating such products. The mainly indigenous labour utilized, was requisitioned by force and work was done at times in contravention of the Philadelphia Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (1944).

***1970-1985: Economic expansion under controlled central planning and planned liberalism***

30. As from the 70s, under the auspices of the Eastern (socialist) and the Western (capitalist) blocs, Governments implemented economic plans and programmes under flexible or controlled planning systems, focusing largely on the productive public sector. A few elements will facilitate understanding of some aspects of social development during that period. There was in particular a significant development in education judging by the spending<sup>5</sup> on this sector. Despite the high social demand for education resulting from population explosion, supply remained inadequate.

**c) East Africa*****Inequitable and Discriminatory Social Development***

31. The pre-independence social development model in East Africa was highly characterized by inequitable and discriminatory policy. For example, access to health care and other basic social services (including education, water supply, sanitation etc.) was reserved mainly to the urban to the detriment of the rural population.

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<sup>5</sup> For instance, according to the human development report for Cameroon UNDP (1993), total expenditure on education increased from FCFA 7,804 million in 1970 – 1971 to 23,687 million in 1974 – 1975, attaining 112,686 million in 1984-1985.

### ***A Centralized State in Control of Social Development***

32. At independence, several governments invested heavily to reduce the inequalities and discrimination created by the colonial system. The impact of this policy helped to improve such indicators as life expectancy, mortality rate, nutritional status, literacy and education at the close of the 70s. However, while life expectancy across the sub-region rose from 38 years in 1960 to 47 in 1978, the *per capita* GDP increased from US\$222 to US\$280 (World Bank data cited in Manji 2000). Concurrently with this situation, the state controlled decisions through centralized planning, using its bureaucratic apparatus. By so doing, governments believed they could bring development to the people, as the combined national effort of all the social classes. In Kenya for instance, social policy was formulated in a highly centralized manner, while poverty was depoliticized on the grounds that it was a technical issue.

### ***Ideology and Social Services Supply***

33. Ideology played a pivotal role in social services provision and social development in East Africa, as evidenced by the Ethiopian and Tanzanian experiences. In Tanzania, socialist principles were derived from the Arusha Declaration which introduced the notion of collective property and production in pilot villages. Using the Arusha philosophy, Tanzania implemented the pilot village policy, thereby strengthening African socialism. During that period, the state was the controller of the means of production and distribution of economic dividends.

34. In Ethiopia, socialism as an ideology was the norm in the mid-70s up to the early 90s. During that period, the cardinal objective of government was to rationalize the means of production through medium and large-scale industries, collectivization and farm mergers. In the educational sector, government nationalized all the private schools. Early in 1975, government announced a new education policy known as education for the conscience of socialism; education for production; and education for science and research.

#### ***d) West Africa***

#### ***The Ineffectiveness of a Social Policy built on “Leader/Follower” Philosophy : Burkina Faso (1960-1983)***

35. During that period, the Plan was the accepted tool for social and economic development. In these Plans, the government of Upper Volta (Burkina Faso) tentatively opted to *“limit to the maximum the level of investment in the social sector with priority accorded to middle level*

*manpower training (secondary education). The problem of employment and its alignment with the demands of education as expressed by the structures likely to turn out technical cadre, were not specifically taken on board*". (Sanogo, 1977, pp.267-268). The results of this option which led to social policy marginalization are well known. Up to 1983-1990, Upper Volta was characterized by mediocre performance in the social sector. The gap was so huge that despite the efforts invested since 1983, Burkina Faso is still regarded as belonging to the lowest level of the ladder of countries with "low human development".

***Social Policy Performance at the Center of Social Development Concerns : Ghana (1957-1967), Burkina Faso (1983-1987) .***

36. When a voluntarist social policy was established under the socialist leadership of Dr. Nkrumah in Ghana and the National Revolutionary Committee in Burkina Faso, the result was quite significant both for poverty reduction in the rural areas and access to education, health and housing. The social policy was not conceived as "a poor relation", that is, one of the safety nets to mitigate political failures or the unacceptable impact of macro-economic policies. Social policy was a pivotal tool which, like economic policy, ensured equitable and socially sustainable development. The major lesson to be drawn in this period is that, beyond macro-economic conditions, the role of the state in the provision of basic goods and services was seen as vital. Apparently also, the participation of the populace, as in the case of Burkina Faso, was an important success factor. Indeed, social policy particularly in the realm of basic social services was faced with financing problem, and people's participation in the form of human investment ( or non commercial work) facilitated investments in the social sector at minimum cost.

***Social Policy Fragility in a Raw material based economy: experience of Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and Nigeria***

37. In Côte d'Ivoire, the vulnerability of the situation was reflected in the country's decline from the rank of medium income countries to that of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) due to the deterioration of the terms of trade which saw a 10% downturn between 1980 and 1989. The government of Côte d'Ivoire adopted Structural Adjustment Programmes to redress these economic imbalances, the first SAP being in 1981, the second in 1983 and third SAP in 1986. In Senegal, the peanut based economy which enabled the state to maintain a high living standard showed signs of breathlessness as from 1967. The political and economic reforms instituted at the end of the 70s, did not stem the economic decline and the social tensions. This state of affairs considerably constrained the post-independence government. The Senegalese central authorities

adopted a stabilization plan (1978-1979) and, subsequently, an economic and financial recovery plan covering the period 1980-1984 with a view to addressing the imbalances in the economy and accessing external resources. Nigeria offers another example in this regard with its oil revenue.

### ***The Problem of Social Policy Financing***

38. Countries' experiences, be it of liberal or socialist vocation, show that in all cases, social policy is faced with a structural problem, that is, the problem of financing. How can sustainable social development be made irreversible as in the case of Burkina Faso, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Senegal and Nigeria, and indeed in other regions whose natural resources have been the source of financing for the social sectors? Despite the political differences characterizing these countries, they have at times registered significant performance (Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana), performance beyond their economic potential as well as qualitative performance as in Burkina Faso between 1983 and 1984. However, these experiences have been reversible given the macro-economic and financial imbalances incompatible with the social performance. On the whole, social policies were constrained by lack of funding. Unless this funding problem is adequately addressed, African states, most of which have embraced universal standards in matters of human and citizen's rights, would be faced with *"a major contradiction arising from inconsistency between the rights of the citizen in the context of political liberalization, and the mounting difficulties in ensuring basic rights for the populace. This constraint poses a threat to social cohesion in the region. Therefore, the key issue of the economic conditions needed to exercise political and social rights assumes great significance"*. (Momar-Coumba Diop, p.10).

#### **e) North Africa**

### ***Social Policy Fragility in a Raw materials-based Economy***

39. The independence movements were synonymous with the socialist model which enticed and infused the new regimes with much enthusiasm. Like the centrally planned economies which placed the collective welfare of the people at the center of their priorities, the governments adopted the path of social development. That objective was so ambitious that the challenge faced could not be overcome. The policy of recruiting every certificated citizen into the public service soon showed its limitations. The difficulty was also evidenced in the huge investment programmes for health-care, education and social security. That approach was indeed viable during the oil boom between 1973 and the early 80s. During that period, social development made tremendous progress in the oil producing

and exporting countries. However, this trend started to decline with the downturn in oil price beginning from the mid 80s, coupled with spiraling indebtedness. This state of affairs signaled the fragility of the economies of the region dependent mainly on petroleum and a few other raw materials. In the case of Egypt and Mauritania, for example, debt servicing amounted to 150% and 200% GNP, respectively. The inefficiency of the industrial sector and the fall in oil revenue propelled the economy of the sub-region into stagnation with the deterioration in living standards together with high unemployment and poverty rates. The cumulative impact of the situation aggravated the current social crisis in the sub-region.

### **1.2.2 Market Driven Development Models**

#### **a) Southern Africa**

#### ***Post-Apartheid Social Development Trends and Indicators characterized by Poverty and HIV/AIDS***

40. The picture of the traditional social development indicators in Southern Africa in the past decade has been generally bleak. However, some of the countries had slight increase in *per capita* income. Other countries of the sub-region registered rapid *per capita* income growth with the exception of Malawi and Mozambique. In the case of Zambia, the trend is that of continued economic decline; and in the case of Zimbabwe, the past years have been characterized by a steep downturn in domestic production.

41. Judging by the recent tax policy measures imposed on direct transfers and on household spending and income, the Gini coefficient remains extremely high in most cases, an indication of the highly unequal *per capita* income distribution. The share of the poorest quintile stands at 3%, whereas the richest quintile represents 2/3 and in some cases even 3/4 of the national income in the five richest countries of the region. During that period, unemployment and underemployment continued to spiral, to the extent that the region saw the highest employment and under employment level in the world. This is explained by the fact that there had been contradiction in the formal labour market with the transfer of workers to the new informal economy sectors in which employment was apparently of survivalist nature. The consequence is that malnutrition rose to a significantly high level in Mozambique and Zimbabwe. Food security crisis in its most acute form posed a threat to several countries including Lesotho, Malawi, Zambia and particularly Zimbabwe; where 2/3 of over 6 million people were affected by famine.

42. The situation was not better in the area of health care. As a matter of fact, the incidence of Tuberculosis and Malaria assumed disturbing proportions, a situation partly explained by the recrudescence of HIV/AIDS and the drug resistance of such diseases as Tuberculosis. This region has the highest reported HIV/AIDS prevalence in the world and this disease has produced millions of orphans. HIV/AIDS will continue to claim several million lives in the years to come unless antiretroviral drugs are given as a matter of urgency. Attendant to this situation is the drastic fall in life expectancy in the sub-region, and the Human Development Index (HDI) for all the countries of the sub-region indicates this trend.

43. The Southern African picture of social development indices remains bleak, as proven by the related indicators such as poverty, unemployment, declining life expectancy, etc. In the specific case of South Africa, there has been an increase in social gains, and several poor people have benefited therefrom. At the same time however, the work income of the poor has plummeted, and the rise in social gains has not been tangibly reflected on any conventional social development index, with the exception of education from which some have benefited. In the case of Southern Africa in general, illiteracy rates have continued to improve and gender discrimination in education is not a decisive factor, as could be the case in other social developing regions of the world. As a matter of fact, women have better status than men in some countries.

***b) Central Africa***

***1986-1996: Economic Crisis and Structural Adjustment***

44. 1986 marked the end of the economic and social development approach based on Five-Year Plans and the advent of structural adjustment plans for tackling economic crises. The new regulations for management of national economies inherent in the structural adjustment programmes changed the existing income distribution mechanism and created new forms of exclusion. The macro-economic environment characterized by deep economic crisis powerfully impacted on modes of access to the labour market, income and basic goods and services, plus the fact that in the rural areas land ownership is a determinant of social status. The existing mode of state and customary land management is not likely to alleviate the crisis. This socio-economic situation will now be further examined for better understanding of the social exclusion processes described in the following pages.

### ***Degradation of the Labour Market and Decline in Real Income***

45. Wage employment declined between 1986 and 1996, while the jobless population increased during the same period<sup>6</sup>. Several factors explain the worsening situation on the labour market: i) slow down and indeed the stoppage of the huge public investment projects in the construction and infrastructure sector; ii) the freezing of public sector recruitments; iii) non-payment of domestic debt thereby forcing several entrepreneurs to lay off their staff ; iv) suspension or reduction of the subventions to public enterprises, compelling most of them to slow down their activities and to temporarily retrench their staff.

### ***The Limited Progress of Social Development***

46. During the structural adjustment period, limited progress was achieved in human development. With respect to health care, the situation in Central Africa was similar to that in most low income sub-Saharan countries<sup>7</sup>. Moreover, HIV/AIDS is afflicting the whole region including the rural areas. According to available estimates, around 4% of the urban population is sexually active and seropositive; but the prevalence rate varies according to risk groups and country. It is of cardinal importance that policy makers prevent the downturn in education. Admittedly, the labour market is giving negative signals as to the value of education; but its advantages are not limited to remuneration; rather it constitutes a social asset which goes beyond the labour market framework.

### ***Hope For 2000 - 2015***

47. As regards blueprints, countries have formulated or are formulating PRSPs. Their effective implementation for one year will pave the way for the countries to attain the achievement point under the HIPC Initiative (the case Cameroon, Congo, Chad and Rwanda). For this initiative to become a success, it is necessary to:

- i) restore the economic fabric destroyed by persistent conflicts (Congo, DRC, Rwanda, Burundi, CAR, Chad);
- ii) backstop the economic activities which generate higher and more equitable growth (Cameroon);
- iii) significantly improve the people's integration into national production and
- iv) develop the industrial and commercial sector (Congo, Gabon, Equatorial

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<sup>6</sup> In Cameroon the figure stands at 19.2%; and in Congo 18.3%. During that period, the unemployment rate was 18.2% in Cameroon in 1996, and 30.6% in Congo in 1994.

<sup>7</sup> Infant mortality stood at 65% out of 1,000 live births; and mortality for children aged less than 5 was 126 out of 1,000 live births.

Guinea). However and through positive nature, the results remain inadequate and a long way from what would enable the countries of the sub-region to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

**c) East Africa**

***The Negative Impact of Structural Adjustment on Social Development***

48. When reforms were set in motion in the respective countries through structural adjustment policies, the social sector was relatively marginalized and excluded from the gains of the past period. In The Sudan for instance, the programme initiated between 1978 and 1985 showed that the country's situation had become catastrophic. During this period, poverty rose to an unprecedented high, the number of poor households spiraled from 1.6 million in 1978 to 2.6 million in 1986. The negative effects of SAP in Uganda were reflected in its debilitating impact on housing. Many people could no longer access accommodation, the major reason being currency and fiscal adjustments which triggered unemployment and underemployment, as well as the massive inflow of migrants from the rural areas to the urban centers. This massive movement was caused by reduced social services and agricultural inputs, leading to depletion of social gains and the income of the local farmers (Nuwagaba, 2000). In Kenya, the government introduced a number of economic reforms. In compliance with the conditionalities of international donors, the public service staff strength in Kenya was slashed and public sector employment slipped from 700,900 to 673,900 between 1996 and 2000 (ILO, 2002). In Ethiopia, employment stagnated during the structural adjustment period. The period between 1994 and 1999 saw marginal improvement of around 350,000. During this period, family based employment alone stood at nearly 200,000 (ILO, 2000).

49. The social cost of the reforms was evidenced in its effect on employment throughout the region. Other effects were manifested through job losses, declining wage, rising prices of basic needs and the reduction in investment in the health and education sectors as well as the introduction of user fees. In light of this, the ECA in 1989 came up with the Africa Alternative Framework for Structural Adjustment Programmes for Socio-economic Recovery and Transformation. During the period following the structural adjustment, further effects militating for and/or against social development were observed: exclusion from higher education and health care by the elite classes in Kenya and Tanzania; external influence on policy formulation; reduced expenditure in the social development sector; poorly formulated social policy with sectoralized and

top-down initiatives; the poor people forced to resort to their own coping strategies; the informal economy becoming dominant and absorbing the labour force; the civil society and the community engaged in social development; minimal private sector involvement in social development; lack of social protection and independent social security system; best practices for social development noted in Ethiopia and Uganda in the area of basic education.

**d) West Africa**

***Sometimes significant sectoral results with strong donor support and external dependence***

50. Social Policy implementation modality relies on market forces whereby the state should restrict itself to creating “conducive conditions” for services provision by the private operators and cutting down on its social sector spending and activities. This approach is reflected in the disengagement of the state from some social sectors (education, housing, health, etc.), increased private sector services offer and participation of the population in cost sharing, as is already the case in the health sector. Under pressure from donors and with their conditionalities (for instance, in the case of the HIPC), the sectoral results in education and health care in particular have been at times quite significant, as in the area of HIV/AIDS control, basic education with the Basic Education Development Plans in Burkina Faso. However, the social situation generally worsened as evidenced especially by the unabated increase in the number of people living below the poverty threshold between 1994 and 2002. A similar effect was observed in budgetary readjustments to allocate adequate resources to the basic social services. In this regard, support programmes were implemented in the social sector including the labour market, aimed at alleviating the social impacts of structural adjustments. Macro-economic approach was adopted on this score, and the budgetary allocation to the social sectors stepped up. In Mali, the proportion of the state budget allocated to the health sector increased significantly between 1992 and 1999, shooting up from 5.28% in 1992 to 7.19% in 1999.

**e) North Africa**

***Economic Performance and their marginal impact on social development***

51. Governments are aware of the crucial need to institute economic reforms for transition to a liberal (or market) economy. Egypt, for instance, took the lead in the early 70s, opening the doors of its economy to encourage private initiative irrespective of its origin, thereby scaling

down government domination of and intervention in, the economy. Similarly, in the early 80s, Algeria liberalized both its economic and political systems. That liberalization was all the more necessary because the rigid non-competitive economic structure inherited from long years of central economic planning and political protectionism, with the attendant lack of the tools and mechanisms for change, resulted in the failure of the institutional reforms to reverse the economic decline. Consequently, structural adjustment came to be perceived as a condition *sine qua non* for the success of economic reforms. On the other hand, Morocco was the first country in the sub-region to make a move in 1983, followed by Mauritania in 1985, to implement structural adjustment, brought forward in 1990. Additionally, some of the countries in the sub-region embraced structural adjustment in the early 90s, notably Egypt in 1991 and Algeria in 1994. In terms of results, the structural adjustment programmes earned good marks in the macro- economic sphere, but with very marginal impact on social development (Raoual 2001).

52. North African countries have witnessed tremendous improvements with regard to social indicators. However, the situation is definitely not promising compared to other developing countries in terms of quantitative and/or qualitative development. Financially, human development spending increased significantly, reflecting an increasing government concern for human development. However, the question that arises here is to what extent did the implemented policies and programmes help in achieving development, and how far the set policies are pro-poor in terms of the effectiveness, efficiency and equitability of the services offered. These questions should be seen as a challenge by policy makers and policy experts in the sub-region.

### **1.3 LESSONS**

#### **1.3.1 AFRICAN SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT MODEL**

53. African countries' development experiences show that, irrespective of the period (pre-adjustment or adjustment period) access to services and social goods has been a matter for the privileged. Human capital development – the foundation of social development and poverty reduction followed two approaches. The first approach (dominant) is elitist in nature and was largely developed during the period of state supremacy. It assumes that the financing conditions for human capital acquisition are identical for all individuals. Differences in income arise from the unequal ability to take advantage of the same human capital investment on the labour market. For instance, there is a diversity of individual capacities and motivations such that the most endowed and the most intelligent people obtain greater profit from the same investment and tend to invest

more in themselves. This leads to segmentation of the educational market according to individual capacities. This approach has a meritocratic conception whereby each person invests according to his/her intellectual capacity, taste, etc.. The approach also presupposes unequal supply of social goods and services across the social space as a way of developing the human capital. Unfortunately, the reality shows that a highly unequal distribution of social services results in exclusion for some population sectors.

54. The second approach is egalitarian, though less popular. It is increasingly being presented as part of the market option (recovery of the costs of social services borne by households and other clients). According to this approach, individuals are supposedly endowed with the same conditions for the human capital production and gains. The individuals have the same human aptitudes, obtain the same returns from investments and express the same demand. However, they differ in terms of financing conditions. The diversity of family and other status, the grants given to them and the loan conditions are such that the most privileged bear marginal financing cost, lower than that of the underprivileged. The elimination of financial inequalities leads to equality of investment. Here, one finds the first architectural development of the human capital theory which attributes the responsibility for income inequalities to educational equality, leading in the conclusion that educational democratization produces equality in the distribution of work income. This approach presupposes access to the labour market on the sole basis of meritocracy.

55. The human capital investment model in Africa combines two approaches which embrace inequality of opportunities and inequality of abilities. As a matter of fact, once the human capital is acquired, effective access to the labour market becomes the basis of sustainable social development and poverty reduction. This access calls the availability of production factors such as work, land, financial capital, material capital, basic infrastructure, etc. It also entails access to health care, education, drinking water, nutrition, housing, etc.

56. On this score, the situation of women is a source of concern because they are virtually absent from the real estate registers, having been excluded from access to land as a factor of production. If this trend persists in Africa, the Continent will likely find itself in a situation similar to that which is obtainable in some areas of Asia and Latin America where lack of land is the common fate of all the rural poor. Conflicts often erupt between the various land users, particularly between nomadic shepherds and sedentary farmers in some countries. Arable, pastoral and protected land is coveted by everyone. Owing to rapid population growth and

increasing livestock number, the diminishing land availability has led to arable land being regarded as a “product” whose conditions for access vary from one country to another.

57. In regard to social development, the problem facing African countries is not the definition and formulation of official policies, but rather the absence of the will and the resources to implement the policies. The supply of social goods and services is highly unequal in the urban or rural sectors and in the different social classes (according to income level: the poor, middle income and the rich). This disparity is all the more acute because many countries do not have school or medical identity cards to facilitate rational planning of social services supply. There is therefore in most countries a situation of pre-discrimination whereby whole populations are excluded from social development. We talk of “pre-market” discrimination or pre-discrimination<sup>8</sup> when the opportunities for individual development do not depend solely on the individual capacities. This pre-discrimination implies a differentiation in the opportunities to increase production - the capacity for potential gains particularly through education - prior to entry into active life. Here, we are faced with a huge problem of unequal opportunities, itself a phenomenon closely linked to social stratification. Upon entry into active life, some individuals possess advantages in terms of knowledge and qualification acquired from the family or the school, access to which could depend on such characteristics as gender, ethnicity, social origin or nationality (for migrant workers employed in the vital sectors of the African economy). Such pre-discrimination is quite widespread in all African countries.

58. The same process is obtainable with respect to discrimination in apprenticeship or vocational training of individuals according to gender, ethnic background, nationality, etc. Discrimination “through” parental education, “through” the school and, more generally, in the society through culture, therefore orientates girls towards certain types of comportment: minimum involvement in the labour market; less professionalized education or massive movement to some occupational or professional sectors which lead to segregation in the labour market, with the possibility of discrimination in terms of work income and, indeed, employment opportunities.

59. Market discrimination (or exclusion from the labour market) is a continuation of the processes of differentiation of opportunities and treatment of economically comparable individuals during their active life. However, in this new framework, endowments, aptitudes and the human capital acquired prior to entry into the market are regarded as data.

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<sup>8</sup> Loose translation of the Anglo-Saxon term “pre-market discrimination”

60. Specific policies have been put in place for the purpose of meeting social needs. Faced with growing impoverishment, the most disadvantaged populations express two types of reaction. The first reaction is economic in nature, and is characterized by withdrawal into the informal sector which is most likely to generate employment, even though such employment may be insecure. The second reaction which is social in nature is evidenced by the creation and/or the consolidation of ethnic, family, profession etc. related solidarity ties. The cardinal objective here is to enable members of such relationships to access social rights<sup>9</sup>. Such solidarity ties are forged by associations and/or tontines<sup>7</sup>.

61. It is therefore evident that the associations and tontines help their members to access or acquire a variety of goods and services which would not have been accessible to them under normal circumstances. Consequently, this strategy represents a social integration mechanism. On this score, some flourishing economic activities exercised by some ethnic groups in Africa are not only a response to their social exclusion but also a source of access to a profession, thanks to the associations and tontines. Non-members are excluded from the credit and vocational training facilities, and find themselves constrained in their vocational activity. For them, this situation creates exclusion from the labour market, thereby hampering social development, aggravating poverty and down-grading the living standard of the population in Africa. Unfortunately, such associations exhibit limitations since they do not know how to manage any member temporarily or definitively excluded from the labour market.

62. The players involved in needs satisfaction are: the state, civil society and the productive private sector. What is needed is to democratize governance of some of the sectors be it economic, social or institutional. However, most African countries have hosted single parties and single trade union organizations etc. This state of affairs calls for new political

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<sup>9</sup> The reference is to basic human needs (education, health, nutrition, housing, etc.)

<sup>7</sup> The reality is that in West and Central African countries for instance, associations almost always have an element of tontine however little. One of the special ways of demonstrating solidarity is participation in tontine. Mutual and credit tontines are of various types: i) barter tontine; ii) work tontine; iii) savings and credit tontine; iv) project tontine (agricultural projects, imported goods, etc.). Moreover, for mutual savings and credit facilities, we can identify a number of credit union types involving contributions to meet a variety of needs: i) education facility; ii) solidarity fund for *ad hoc* financial support to afflicted members; iii) working capital or credit loaned to members with interest; iv) development fund – village district or group; v) roofing facility; vi) soap facility for purchase of soap; vii) misfortune facility; viii) kitchen utensils facilities; ix) tax facility for tax payment purposes.

decision sharing habit. It is necessary to institute the down-up rather than top-down approach. The level and quality of involvement of the above players is decisive and a risk factor for the model described herein, in terms of achieving sustainable social development and combating poverty and also in terms of the building a strong civil society capable of channeling development towards the majority with equity.

63. So many new blueprints have been put in place including the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiatives (HIPC) and the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), and these blueprints focus mainly on the participative approach. It should however be recognized that this approach is likely to face some resistance in the African context where participative management does not always exist in terms of decisions in the villages and towns (case of social cadets). In this connection, it is needful for the African social model to get adapted and democratized.

### **1.3.2. MAJOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PROBLEMS**

64. The sub-regional studies mentioned earlier have identified the problems and challenges facing the Continent. The present SPF will provide a guideline and, indeed, policy directions for the consideration of African countries.

**Insert 1:Major Problems Identified**

**Problem 1.** The incidence of HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Tuberculosis has dramatically worsened in most African countries.

**Problem 2.** Poverty, unemployment and socio-economic inequalities have aggravated throughout the sub-region, and the urban/rural disparity has widened.

**Problem 3.** Although secondary and higher education supply and demand have shot up, the good results in terms of quality do not meet the needs of the labour market.

**Problem 4.** Owing to the weakness of the statistics system, the social impact of economic and social policies is not being properly monitored as a result of unreliable basic information.

**Problem 5.** Despite the fact that the informal sector is the major source of employment in the urban and rural areas, there are no appropriate policies for this sector; and where such policies exist, they are not always implemented.

**Problem 6.** Recent economic reforms have not resolved the social problems, and in some cases have worsen such problems.

**Problem 7.** In the vast majority of African countries, there is the tendency to opt for high capital intensive investment rather than high labour intensive investment. Past experiences with High Intensity Labour programmes have not been adequately assessed.

**Problem 8.** Emerging community based organizations in most African countries receive recognition as a matter of official policy. These organizations are however weak and do not always get the appropriate support from governments.

**Problem 9.** Social policies are highly “sectorized” and are not mutually integrated.

**Problem 10.** Cultural attitudes have hampered social development in terms of attitudes towards women in the area of education, employment, politics etc.

**Problem 11.** In most African countries, the environment does not encourage innovation, research, development, creativity etc.

**Problem 12.** In most African countries, the quality of social services is mediocre.

**Problem 13.** Although there is surplus manpower in most African countries, economic growth is constrained by lack of decent work resulting from the generally restricted movement of labour in Africa

**Problem 14.** Although significant progress has been made in the area of good governance in several African countries, corruption remains a critical problem.

**Problem 15.** The increasing incidence of civil and armed conflicts constitutes a challenge for several African countries.

**Problem 16.** In view of massive and accelerating urbanization, access to decent housing in the urban areas is becoming increasingly difficult for the disadvantaged segments of the population.

**Problem 17.** Despite the relatively adequate global food supply in terms of quantity, cases of malnutrition in children and pregnant women persist.

**Problem 18.** The loss of, and youth exclusion from, the labour market produce street children and lead to drug and narcotics consumption.

**Problem 19.** The public and private institutions in Africa involved in social development have inadequate capacities.

**Source:** *Etude sur un cadre de politique social en Afrique Australe, Centrale, Est, Ouest et Nord, 2003.*

## **CHAPTER 2: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS, MAJOR CHALLENGES AND URGENT ISSUES**

65. The economic and social policies currently implemented in Africa are, for the most part characterized by the need to reconcile national and sub-regional development concerns with the recommendations of international bodies such as the United Nations system institutions and others like the Brettons Woods Institutions (the World Bank, the IMF), the AU, etc. This new approach takes into account the need to reorient development cooperation practices and objectives in order to significantly scale up their impact on ground.

66. This Chapter will show that, in the socio-economic arena, four reference blueprints are available to the poorest countries in Africa, for managing the initiatives of development partners and beneficiary countries' policies. The blueprints in question are the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs); the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) and NEPAD, a programme of the African Union (or the cooperation framework inspired by the principle of partnership rather than by aid and assistance. Whereas the latter is still on the drawing board, the first two which have already been in existence for more or less long periods, can be evaluated in terms of their impact on national socio-economic policies. This Chapter will, in conclusion, discuss the major challenges and urgent issues.

### **2.1. THE UNITED NATIONS MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

#### **2.1.1. CONTEXT AND FRAMEWORK**

67. In adopting the United Nations Millennium Development Declaration in September 2000, the 189 UN Member States were inspired by the fact that the greatest majority of humankind was faced with acute deprivation and has continued to be mired even more deeply in a situation of social retrogression without any prospect of a new beginning. Desirous of bringing about a radical change in the indifference of the international community (more especially the rich countries) vis-à-vis this persistent situation considered by the United Nations as contrary to the spirit of the Preamble to its Charter<sup>5</sup>, the General Assembly meeting on 8 September 2000 decided, by resolution 55/2, to infuse a new impetus into international cooperation. This impetus is anchored on the need to transform into meaningful action, the resolutions already adopted and/or reactivated by the various policy organs in the past three decades.

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<sup>5</sup> United Nations, ABC of the United Nations, Department of Information, New York, 1998

68. The Declaration and Action Programme contain a new mechanism for collating and harmonizing proposed solutions to development related problems with the main objective of addressing their effects from several fronts. This holistic approach relies on the lessons of the unfortunate experiences of the past when solutions to development issues were dispersed and compartmentalized, producing only limited results. The experiences show that the solutions advocated did not allow for a comprehensive view of situations which, though apparently independent, were negatively interrelated and eroded all attempts at making a clean break with the *status quo*.

69. To attain maximum effectiveness, social progress enhancement in the poorest countries needs scrupulously coordinated strategies as well as the necessary tools to translate into concrete measures and programmes the good intentions so often expressed not only by the rich countries (donors) but also by the poor countries (beneficiaries). Africa's case is quite disturbing as earlier indicated (in contrast to the Copenhagen Summit expectations). The Continent's marginalization is becoming more and more acute as a result of its weakened position in the global economy and the structural constraints to its development. This state of affairs cannot but have a tragic impact on the people's living standard, because the fact has been established that poverty is one of the factors that aggravates socio-economic destabilization, which in turn fuels the process of impoverishment.

70. The African Union *in tandem* with the United Nations is committed in its 2004-2007 Strategic Plan to contributing to the attainment of the MDGs. To this end, and in order to reverse the negative trends and reposition the Continent on the fast track of social progress, there is the need to implement clear-cut and well-crafted programmes. In this regard, the Declaration identified specific areas in which the international community should intervene, namely: eliminating poverty and hunger; instituting universal primary education; promoting gender equality and empowering women; reducing infant mortality; improving maternal health; combating HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases; ensuring sustainable environment and creating a global partnership for development. These eight objectives were accompanied by eighteen (18) targets with figures, to be attained within fifteen years, that is, between 2001 and 2015. Appropriate indicators were put in place to measure the progress in each area.

### **2.1.2 ASSESSMENT OF THE MDGs IMPLEMENTATION, FOLLOW-UP/EVALUATION CONTEXTS**

71. A cursory review shows that, while the MDGs implementation context in Africa is on the whole not conducive, this context is steadily being improved in some countries. The statistical tool inputs are still weak both in terms of data collection and data analysis. It should be observed, and this is to be deplored, that the available statistics are not sufficiently utilized in policy formulation; and where they are adequately integrated into policy making, they are not taken on board in policy implementation. However, with the implementation of the PRSPs, it has been noted with satisfaction that the MDGs follow-up/evaluation has been integrated into policy formulation processes. However, with respect to the available statistical indicators, the situation of the social sectors which deteriorated as a result of the persistent economic crisis of the past decade (1986-1996) still remains a source of concern.

72. Another issue contributory to progress is the allocation of the necessary resources to achieve objectives, based on the available and mobilizable resources. For instance, from the internal and external perspective, these resources are generally available in four categories: human, material, financial and institutional. With respect to financial and material resources, it has been observed that implementation of the HIPC Initiative has resulted in the release of substantial additional resources to finance projects with direct positive and measurable impact on poverty reduction. As for human and institutional resources, African countries have real capacity building needs at all levels, realizable through training and skills upgrading, as well as coordination, technical and managerial support, as far as institutional resources are concerned.

73. Most African countries are faced with the above shortcomings at a time when some of them are still in the process of formulating their PRSPs. This situation is even more worrying for countries emerging from or still involved in conflict. The will of the United Nations System to devise common objectives for all developing countries in general and poor countries in particular, is laudable. However, it should be noted that very low priority has been accorded to wealth creation through human resource development on the labour market. Of the eight objectives presented, employment received no attention; and yet, it is by using the resources derived from human capital development (within and outside the labour market) that these objectives can be attained in Africa.

## 2.2. THE HIGHLY INDEBTED POOR COUNTRIES INITIATIVE<sup>6</sup>

74. A majority of African countries have, since 2000, made the fight against poverty the new *credo* of their socio-economic policies and programmes. However, these policies and programmes have been articulated in varying ways depending on the level of perception and analysis of poverty, the national capacity to formulate policies and strategies, and mobilize domestic resources around the poverty reduction objective, the level of commitment to economic and social reforms and the linkages with the new aid/assistance philosophy of their development partners.

75. In the countries that have been used as samples for preparation of this Social Policy Framework, the poverty features are both similar and distinct. The national poverty reduction approaches, the conclusions and analysis seem to indicate that the poverty reduction strategic framework, like the conceptual approach, is heavily influenced by the concerns of adjustment (or of stabilization).

### 2.2.1 *Macro-economic stabilization and sustainable social development*

76. The objective is to strike a balance between supply and demand, and this can be achieved only by bringing the current account balance to long-term sustainable level through equitable public finance policies. To achieve these balances, SAPs recommended a number of measures including cuts in public expenditure and reduction in currency circulation. By advocating reduction in public expenditure, SAP policy unfortunately goes against the logic of history <sup>7</sup>.

77. Africa currently has irregular public spending growth rates<sup>8</sup>. It would be contra-indicated to advise the continent to reduce these rates given the missions it has set for itself, namely; speeding up growth and sustainable social development <sup>9</sup>. Moreover, the resultant deflationary impact of public expenditure reduction policy on the social services such as education, health, sanitation and drinking water supply had very negative consequences on the well-being of the majority of the population.

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<sup>6</sup> The HIPC is analyzed as a component of the SAP

<sup>7</sup> The International Statistics on developed countries' GDP expenditure according to a study by A.Maddison: "Dynamic Forces in Capitalist System"

<sup>8</sup> This involves public consumption contribution to actual GDP growth

<sup>9</sup> An example is that the drastic salary reduction measures recommended in 1993, far from being a performance criteria, indeed constituted an obstacle to economic revival.

78. Additionally, a monetary circulation reduction policy quite often led to drastic fall in production and the deceleration of inflationary pressures which, while facilitating current account balance operations led to fall in investments. Worse still, a sustained credit squeeze would culminate in devaluation arising from the inability to renew capital stocks.

### **2.2.2 Structural Reforms and African Economic Recovery**

79. It is becoming increasingly clear that in African countries, the productive capacity is constrained by structural and institutional barriers such as the inappropriate regulations that hamper competition, limit external trade and prevent enterprises from growing and from creating employment. The structural reforms advocated by SAPs for economic recovery are: tax reform; liberalization of external trade; industrial policy; rehabilitation of public sector business; devaluation and reforms of the banking system.

80. The tax reform advocated by the SAPs is a Malthusian measure at variance with economic recovery. There is no positive correlation between investment flows and fiscal policy relaxation. No matter the strictness of the tax system, foreign investments will flow to those areas where they can find interesting profit margins, particularly the mines, energy, metallurgy, food, chemical and textile industries, as well as rubber and timber businesses. Foreign investments will not be channeled to countries that do not have these products, even if their tax level is 0%.

81. External trade liberalization is one of the key SAP reforms which create conditions for sustainable growth. However, unrestricted opening to international trade would appear, with the benefit of history, to be akin to putting the cart before the horse. The progressive marginalization of Africa's economy is clearly a result of this unrestricted integration into the international market. In other words, justification for the policy of external trade liberalization derives essentially from the classical theory of comparative advantage which does not reflect the reality of the current international trade. This is because the international market is far from being a competitive market in the simplest meaning of the term, according to this theory. For this reason, total trade liberalization as advocated by SAPs is not an effective policy tool not only because of the generalized protectionism adopted by the industrialized countries vis-à-vis exports from African countries, but also because of the unfavourable impact of foreign competition on emerging industries.

82. Industrial policy cannot just content itself with adjusting the investment code, eliminating price distortions and simplifying procedures. What Africa needs is to harness and process its ground and underground

products in order to become not just a mere consumer of industrial products, but rather a supplier of these products to the rest of the world. This SAP conditionality makes only oblique reference to the key problem of industrial policy. Industrial mechanisms adopt a quite different logic than the logic of investment code modification.

83. The rehabilitation of public sector enterprises and privatization policy are likely to create conducive environment for economic development. For reasons of the poor performance of public enterprises and parastatals in Africa, SAPS advocate the privatization of these enterprises. Unfortunately, such a policy will clearly result in the expropriation of the state by foreign operators, given the constraints facing national private economic players in terms of technology and domestic financing. One of the reasons for devaluation is the relative price changes that it is supposed to usher in by channeling external and domestic demand to locally produced goods. As Africa is a net importer of manufactured goods and exporter of raw materials, devaluation cannot, on its own, ensure the competitiveness of exports owing to the rigidity of the supply and demand of its raw materials in relation to the prices unilaterally fixed on the world market by the very consumers of its goods. Besides, devaluation fuels inflation resulting from domestic hike in the prices of imported products, and reduces the quantity of the products imported at higher prices which, in turn, culminates in the under-utilization of industrial capacity. Consequently, the advantages that the export sector should derive from devaluation are eroded as a result of the excessive dependence of African economies on the outside world.

84. Regarding the banking system reforms advocated by SAPs, such reforms are limited since the local banks, most often branches of foreign banks, concern themselves more with financing speculative and international trade activities than with funding the production and distribution of goods and services in Africa and on the world market in conditions of advantageous competitiveness.

85. Clearly, the SAPs and their derivatives<sup>10</sup> contain the necessary therapies, given the macro-economic context and the distortions in the African economic structures as perceived in 2004. However, they are largely far out of tune with the prerequisites for growth and sustainable social development. This leads us to propose another development vision for Africa.

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<sup>10</sup> These include the second generation derivation programmes : Reinforced Structural Adjustment Facility; Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility resulting from the HIPC Initiative.

### **2.2.3 Economic Growth and Social Development**

86. SAPs advocate that poverty should be combated by facilitating access by the poor to the basic social goods and services (education, health, nutrition, housing, drinking water, etc.) While it is true from the conceptual standpoint, that there is a linkage between economic growth, income distribution and poverty, it is nonetheless needful to examine the nature of the growth and income distribution.

87. Viewed from the angle of productive investment with job creation in general at the core, and from the perspective of the poorest segment of the society in particular, growth will have a significant impact on income distribution and poverty reduction than any other strategy. Paradoxically, the existing PRSPs does not recognize employment as a poverty reduction strategy; rather, it considers employment as an offshoot of the effects of growth.

88. The major challenge facing African countries today is the formulation of coherent strategies with the clear objective to maximize the wage income of the active population in order to achieve poverty reduction as a component of growth, and to ensure access by the poor to equitable productive employment opportunities. This will boost the people's access to the basic social goods and services mentioned earlier on. In this connection, the Social Policy Framework advocates a social integration strategy which stimulates investment to boost wage employment and income, thereby achieving sustainable growth and improving the individual and collective well-being of Africans.

89. The critical areas of social integration and poverty reduction in Africa, like elsewhere in the world, primarily involves improved access to the labour market which, in turn, ensures access to health care, housing, education, drinking water and other social goods and services. It is therefore apparent that one of the key driving forces of social integration, poverty reduction and, indeed, social development is the quality of access to the labour market. The fact remains that humans are poor because they lack income; they lack income because they do not have a job; and they have not job because of the low-level investment etc., hence the importance of incorporating human resource development through employment and/or work into social and economic policies in general, and the existing poverty reduction policies in Africa, in particular.

### **2.3 THE NEW PARTNERSHIP FOR AFRICA'S DEVELOPMENT (NEPAD)**

90. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)<sup>11</sup> – programme of the African Union – was adopted by the OAU Summit in Lusaka in 2001. It represents a commitment by African leaders, a commitment rooted in a common vision and a strong shared conviction, to the fact that it is incumbent on them to, as a matter of urgency, eradicate poverty, position their countries individually and collectively on the path of sustainable growth and development through active participation in the global economy and politics.

91. This commitment is anchored on the determination of Africans to extricate themselves and their Continent from the abyss of under-development and exclusion in a globalizing world. This is because Africa's poverty and backwardness stand in sharp contrast to the prosperity of the developed world. Moreover, Africa's continued marginalization in the globalization process and the exclusion of the great majority of Africans constitute a serious threat to world stability.

92. NEPAD is underpinned by three sets of objectives: political, legal, economic and social. With respect to the economic and social objectives, NEPAD's approach and strategy differ from previous programme initiatives put in place to foster development in the Continent, even though the problems that they seek to resolve are significantly the same. NEPAD indeed reflects a long-term vision of Africa's programme of development by Africans themselves.

93. NEPAD's priorities - either on the drawing board or currently under implementation – include human resource development (bridging the educational gap, reversing brain drain, health) governance and culture. Herein lies the most significant linkage between the NEPAD programme and the Social Policy Framework (SPF). Unfortunately, the action areas set out by NEPAD are limited in comparison with that of the SPF, especially human resource development for the labour market.

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<sup>11</sup> NEPAD was initiated by President Thabo MBEKI of South Africa, President Abdelaziz BOUTEFLIKA of Algeria, President Olusegun OBASANJO of Nigeria and President Abdoulaye WADE of Senegal.

## 2.4 LESSONS

### 2.4.1. What role for the SPF?

94. The originality of the SPF resides in the fact that it complements recent initiatives such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) and its tool, the PRSPs and others. To ensure the effectiveness of the new initiatives, the SPF advocates a rethink of the role of the State and of planning<sup>12</sup> for sustainable and endogenous social development through African macro-economic and social management. This measure calls for integration of the economic and social endeavours. If the developed countries – most of which have liberal economic systems – are now in a position to put up the impression that planning<sup>13</sup> can be ignored, the underdeveloped economies like African economies cannot legitimately adopt the difficult path of development without collective policy coherence programmed in time and in space, and without harmonizing the societal project. What is needed here is to optimize the role of the state, the civil society and the private sector in the social development process, at the heart of which will be social integration, investment, employment and income with the objective of reducing poverty, and realign objectives and means, since these are the most crucial problems facing Africa. As a matter of fact, the problem is less that of definition of socio-economic options and their implementation sequences (which can be overcome provided there is the political will) than that of generating development resources and means to realize its ultimate ambition of self-sufficiency.

95. Africa should take seriously the challenge posed by its development, a challenge which calls for not only material but also human resources. Human resources, probably constitute the weakest link. Africa's human resource training system is such that humans are disconnected from the productive system; and this is probably why efforts at economic and social development achieve mixed results. For, and this should never be forgotten, it is human beings that make history; and the quality of this history depends on the quality of human beings. It follows that if we want to understand why Africa is backward, we should not go on looking for the reasons in whatever inevitability or curse. We should rather seek the reasons in the level and quality of its human resources and their capacity to control and comprehend the social, cultural and technological factors of developments. On this score, Africa is caught in an impasse out of which

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<sup>12</sup> This technique known in economic policy as gradualism seeks to attain the requisite results not in one sole sequence but rather through progressive sequences and adjustments, in view of the original constraints (cf. X. Greffe op cit P.541 and 81-82)

<sup>13</sup> It is in any case only an impression. All the countries continue to plan the future either officially or unofficially in subtle ways (cf Japanese Economic Department and the USA Council of Economic Advisers).

it will be difficult for it to pull itself, unless it decides to reach out for the high ground, lift itself out of the vicious circle of its training system which leads the child or the adult from the unknown to the unknown; that is to say, from that which he/she does not know to what he/she does not know, whereas the reverse is obtainable in all other world educational systems.

96. Development is a serious battle against the most redoubtable enemies of mankind, namely: deprivation, ignorance and poverty, all of which can be overcome only with the assistance of a real army of “developers”, scientists of all disciplines, engineers or technology experts of all kinds, men and women of culture, sociologists, historians and geographers, futurologists, custodians or movers of the moral conscience; in a word, a whole *corps* of elites capable of managing and spear-heading the people’s victory, a people who should become not only the major players but also the objective and end result of socio-economic development.

97. Africa must devise its own educational strategy and scale up the number and quality of its development expertise, because its capacity to overcome the constraints and barriers slowing down its progress to development will be judged in relation to its capacity to fully control its middle and high-level manpower training system. To this end, the Continent should reject the advice to directly or indirectly reduce the number of potential school children and students seeking admission into primary, secondary and tertiary educational institutions, for the sake of mere economic rationality.

98. The current paradoxical situation in Africa gives the impression that the Continent has a surplus, even with unemployment and underemployment of high and middle-level manpower. This paradox persists because the short-fall in well-trained and skilled manpower constitutes one of the scourges of African countries, representing one of the numerous measures or indices of its under-development. One of the ways to overcome the difficulties inherent in appropriating technology and making it the engine of endogenous industrialization in African countries is to reverse the monopolistic structure of the technology market, and systematically develop in Africa, as was a case in Asia of yesterday, technical schools and polytechnics to turn out large numbers of high-level officials and engineers capable of getting to grips with science and technology and turning them into powerful engines of endogenous development of the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors of the economy.

99. If Africa today decides to and succeeds in ushering in such cultural revolution despite all sorts of pressure on its educational system, pressures intended to entrench it in the educational structures and the logic of the colonial past, there is every hope that a new momentum will be generated in the service of a meaningful economic and social development strategy. Mobilizing Africa's human and material resources by Africa itself does not preclude international economic and financial cooperation. On the contrary, such mobilization will give cooperation a more effective framework for expression and action, in as much as the cooperation will be part and parcel of a global strategy, thereby placing it in a greater position to become more fruitful than it is at the moment, due to its paucity and dispersal in micro projects with only marginal impact on the development process.

100. This new development strategy calls for a new inter-African economic cooperation strategy. The initiatives so far undertaken by way of monetary, economic and customs unions based on geographical contiguity have not been able to create meaningful momentum to significantly boost inter and intra-sub-regional trade.

101. In view of Africa's balkanization into micro states often without viable individual economic space, the Continent's new socio-economic development strategy should, of necessity, be more voluntarist and coherent; and herein resides all the interest of the recent initiatives. The reconception of Africa's development should focus on human capital development, through the Social Policy Framework, rather than on raw materials export.

#### **2.4.2 Core Issues**

102. Despite all that, a lot of questions may still be raised. Why is it that the development plans, programmes, Charters and Declarations adopted in the past for Africa and by Africa did not succeed in attaining their set objectives? Why is it that the first social development instruments adopted individually or jointly by the OAU, the ECA or other organizations were not effectively executed?

103. Answers to these questions are absolutely necessary so that populations, government departments and other governmental bodies, the AU, the ECA and other cooperating partners may draw lessons from the mistakes, successes (if any) and failures of past experiences. One possible answer to these questions is that previous socio-economic development instruments had been more or less badly implemented; and hence the ineffectiveness and inefficacy observed by various evaluations. The reasons are as follows:

- i. Poor leadership, lack of political will and commitment by governments and stakeholders at all levels of action;
- ii. Poorly defined vision and missions and inadequate capacity to put in place policy, structures and strategies to make things happen or be achieved;
- iii. The human interest and welfare were not put at the centre of development planning;
- iv. The people were not involved or were not given a chance to participate in the conception, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development plans and programmes;
- v. Instead of a bottom-up approach whereby the segments of the population who are aware of their needs, interests and priorities, and are therefore better placed to express them, are closely consulted and involved in the process, the approach was instead top-bottom whereby it was state-led, and politicians and government bureaucrats imposed development plans and programmes on the populace;
- vi. Although each African country has a number of policies on some social issues, none has a comprehensive and coherent social policy;
- vii. Government departments dealing with economic matters such as Economic Development, Planning, Finance, Trade and Industry, as well as government agencies responsible for economic matters such as National Investment Authority or National Planning Board do not coordinate their activities with the sectoral departments;
- viii. Inadequate and, in most cases, total lack of coordination between the social sector, government Ministries/departments such as the Ministry of Labour/Employment and Social/Community Development, Education, Health, Agriculture and Rural Development, Water Resources, Environment and Sanitation; Women, Gender, Youth and Children, etc;
- ix. Inadequate or poor coordination within the United Nations Departments and among the Specialized Agencies of the United Nations dealing with social issues such as ILO, WHO, FAO, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNHCR, UNDP, HABITAT, WFP, etc...

- x. Inadequate or poor coordination/consultation within the OAU/AU Departments dealing with social sector issues: Labour, Employment, Social Development, Health, Population, Education, Environment, Agriculture, Human Resources, etc.
- xi. Inadequate involvement or participation of CSOs, NGOs, CBOs, FBOs such as employer's organizations, women and youth organizations, Chambers of Commerce, etc. in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development plans and programmes and other development processes;
- xii. Even where they are involved, the CSOs, NGOs, CBOs and FBOs do not effectively coordinate their approaches and activities on development issue;
- xiii. Inadequate budget allocation to the social sector Ministries (Labour/Employment, Social, Health, Education, Women, Youth, Children and the Disabled) in relation to other government Ministries like Defence and Interior;
- xiv. Absence of democracy, good governance, transparency, accountability, probity and rule of law, resulting in corruption and mismanagement by public office holders;
- xv. Inadequate financial support from the international development partners and donor countries, and lack of proper use of such support when given;
- xvi. Imposition by donors/international development partners of development agendas which do not always meet the needs, priority aspirations and local capacities of the peoples of beneficiary countries;
- xvii. Lack of follow-up mechanisms to monitor implementation and evaluation of decisions freely adopted by Member States under the auspices of the OAU/AU, the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies;
- xviii. Lack of long-term planning, feasibility studies and situation analyses;
- xix. Absence of tripartism and social dialogue, as well as national consultative agencies/commissions in which social and economic matters are discussed by all stakeholders; for

example: the National Economic Development and Labour Council (NEDLAC) in South Africa; the Joint Industrial and Commercial Consultative Committee (JICC) in Kenya, and the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in Mauritius;

- xx. Social exclusion/marginalization of some segments of the population, ethnic groups, communities or regions for political considerations;
- xxi. Increased military spending (eg. US\$9.8 billion spent on military hardware in 1999 – 2000) at the expense of investment in the social sectors.

### **CHAPTER 3: ELEMENTS OF A SUB-REGIONAL STRATEGY FOR SUSTAINABLE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

104. Implementation of an SPF focusing on social integration, investment, employment and income distribution for poverty reduction calls for concerted action by the United Nations and the African Union. It is generally recognized that the partial and fragmented nature of poverty has significantly hampered any action aimed at rolling back this phenomenon<sup>14</sup>. The core objective of the SPF is therefore to contribute to social development, an objective achievable through identification of the problems and building the capacities of the players at national, sub-regional and regional levels to enable them to execute the proposed strategy. This Framework is underpinned by three guiding principles: a) countries' capacity to embark on the strategy as set out above is essential to any reform. b) mezzo (or sectoral) and micro-economic policies should facilitate social integration as well as rapid and sustainable economic growth leading to increased job creation and poverty reduction. c) a conducive environment is necessary for growth and equity. The pivotal ingredients of this environment include participation by all the players and beneficiaries, observance of human rights especially those contained in the core international labour standards, proper management of public affairs, peace, security, etc.

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<sup>14</sup> G. Rodgers (ed): *The Poverty Agenda and the ILO: Issues for Research and Action*, Institut international d'études sociales, Geneve, 1995

### **3.1 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE SPF**

105. The following seven broad areas constitute the components of the proposed Framework:

- i. Objectives;
- ii. Strategy;
- iii. Appropriate pillars;
- iv. Necessary conditions;
- v. Players;
- vi. Factors needing special attention;
- vii. Dynamic interactions and core strategic action areas.

#### **3.1.1. Objectives**

##### **a) Major objective**

106. The major objective is to achieve sustainable social development focusing on social integration and access by people to the basic social needs and services.

##### **b) Specific objectives**

107. The SPF is specifically intended to:

- strike a balance between access to the labour market and access to the basic social needs and services;
- demonstrate the urgency of harmonizing the key sectors in order to combat poverty;
- get national and international players involved in the regional components/programmes set out in the SPF

#### **3.1.2 Strategy**

108. The strategy is anchored on social integration, as well as on investment promotion for employment creation and poverty reduction. It

regards social integration as a prerequisite for African countries, and sees employment no longer as a consequence of economic growth and social well-being but rather as a catalyst for the latter. Indeed, integration of the active population into the labour market enables them and the households to meet their basic needs. This strategy relies on the pillars listed hereunder:

### **3.1.3. Appropriate Pillars**

109. The SPF is founded on the following pillars:

- Social protection;
- Basic infrastructure;
- Education (including vocational training);
- Health (including endemic diseases);
- Population and Development (including Gender);
- Community participation;
- Agrarian reform; and
- Labour market.

### **3.1.4. Necessary Conditions**

110. To operationalize the SPF, a number of conditions are necessary:

- Peace and Security;
- Good Governance;
- Appropriate Economic Policy;
- Appropriate Commercial Regime;
- Capital Flows and Free Movement of Labour; and
- Sustainable Economic Growth; and
- Equitable Re-distribution of Labour Income.

### **3.1.5 Players/Beneficiaries**

111. The Framework calls for the mobilization and input of both national and international players, namely:

- Governments and parastatals;
- International and regional/sub-regional development bodies;
- Donors;
- Inter-Governmental Organizations;
- Labour organizations (social partners and others);
- Associations, NGOs and other groupings; private sector organizations; and
- Universities and Research Centers.

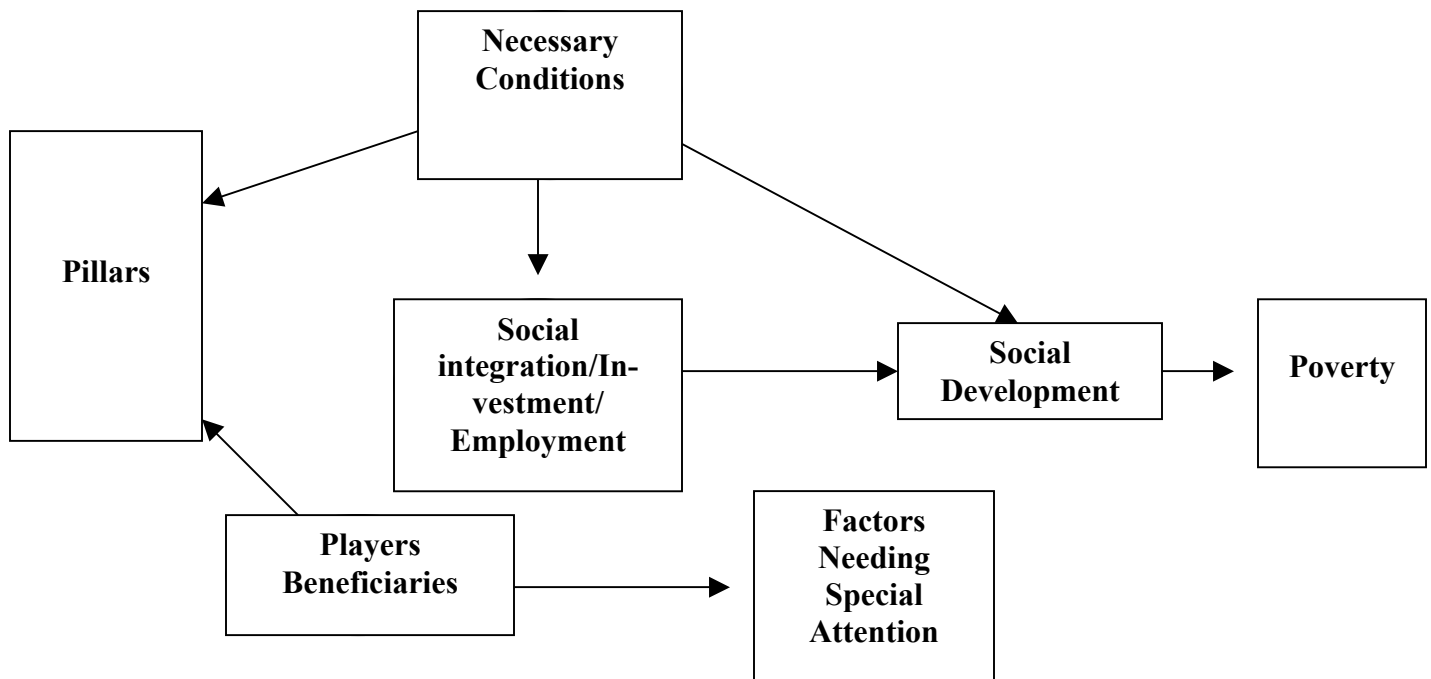
### **3.1.6 Factors Needing Special Attention**

112. To ensure positive impact and value added during SPF implementation, some elements need to be accorded special treatment. The pertinent areas are:

- Research and Development;
- Technology and appropriate systems;
- Drug Control Policy;
- The Environment;
- Culture;
- Appropriate Economic and Social Statistics System.

### **3.1.7. Dynamic Interactions and Core Strategic Action Areas**

113. The transparent and deep inter-relation between human capital and poverty reduction is being increasingly recognized. The diagram hereunder is a perfect illustration of the fight against poverty using the constitutive elements of the SPF. Indeed, the major determinant of the living standard of a country is its capacity to develop and utilize the competencies, expertise, health, educational antecedents, work ethics, etc. of its people.



114. According to the above diagram, social integration, investment and employment are at the center of the social development dynamics which, in turn, impact on the poverty level. Additionally, the pillars on which social development is anchored, under the auspices of the players generate investment and employment through social integration. However, driven by the players, the special factors also impact on social development; but this dynamics is predicated on the necessary conditions indicated above.

### **3.2 STRATEGIC SOCIAL POLICY FRAMEWORK**

115. The Strategic Social Policy Framework is derived from the conceptual framework described earlier on. It comprises three elements, namely: policy directions or the major SPF strategic action areas, the implications and impact of the policy, and institutionalization.

#### **3.2.1 Policy Directions or Major Strategic Action Areas**

116. The policy directions set out in the SPF encompass the appropriate pillars listed above. Each pillar embraces one policy area. With respect to this SPF, fifteen (15) core regional programmes (SPF components) have been identified. One regional programme should at least resolve the seventeen (17) problems identified in Chapter One. The programmes are as follows:

**A. Regional Programme 1: Social Protection****B. Regional Programme 2: Basic Infrastructure****C. Regional Programme 3: Education**

- a) Regional Sub-programme: Basic Education
- b) Regional Sub-programme: Secondary and Tertiary Technological Education;
- c) Regional Sub-programme: Vocational Education.

**D. Regional Programme 4: Health**

- a) Regional Sub-programme: Health Care Supply;
- b) Regional Sub-programme: Endemic Diseases;
- c) Regional Sub-programme: Reproductive Health;
- d) Regional Sub-programme: HIV/AIDS.

**E. Regional Programme 5: Gender****F. Regional Programme 6: Community Participation****G. Regional Programme 7: Agrarian Reform****H. Regional Programme 8: Labour Market and Poverty Monitoring****I. Regional Programme 9: Urbanization and Habitat****J. Regional Programme 10: Food and Nutrition**

- a) Regional Sub-programme: Nutrition;
- b) Regional Sub-programme: Food.

**K. Regional Programme 11: Statistics System**

- a) Regional Sub-programme: Economic Statistics;
- b) Regional Sub-programme: Population and Social Statistics.

**L. Regional Programme 12: Governance**

- a) Regional Sub-programme: Political Governance;
- b) Regional Sub-programme: Economic Governance;
- c) Regional Sub-programme: Social Governance;

**M. Regional Programme 13: Development Research****N. Regional Programme 14: Capacity Building****O. Regional Programme 15: Inter-dependent Africa.**

117. After adoption of the SPF, each of the above regional programmes will be developed by multi-disciplinary teams coordinated by the AU Social Affairs Department with support from AU traditional partners ( ECA, ADB, Specialized Agencies of the United Nations System, etc.). However, one vital condition for meaningful ownership by the countries is their full involvement in the formulation of the programmes.

### **3.2.2 Policy Implementation and Impact**

#### **A. The Players**

118. Implementation of the policy recommended by the SPF calls for proper definition of the roles and responsibilities of country players. With respect to the States, capacity building is a critical element for creating an environment conducive to development in general, and human and social development, in particular. The States have a vital role to play in enhancing sustainable growth and development, and in implementing on-going poverty reduction programmes and similar programmes contained in the SPF. However, the reality is that many governments are not in a position to play such a role. Additionally, most countries do not have the capacity to implement the programmes even when the requisite financial resources are available. As regards inter-State organizations whose missions consist in promoting a common vision of development and sharing the dividends of growth through integration; poor leadership, inadequate political will and commitment on part of governments and stakeholders in all action areas are apparent. This observation concerns governments and parastatal institutions in Africa.

119. With regard to the private sector whose mission is to undertake investments for economic growth, the domination of capital from outside Africa (multi-nationals, and others) is observed. The direct social development actions of this sector is limited in relation to its actual capacity. This observation concerns the labour market organizations in Africa (social partners and employers).

120. The civil society whose role is to backstop the state public services is in need of capacity building, just as workers' organizations, including NGOs, similar associations and private sector organizations in Africa.

121. Concerning the social partners (workers' organizations), the trade union movement, since the return to multi-partism in the 90s, experienced a new ascendancy culminating in central labour unions which exist to this day. Unfortunately, these central labour unions lack the

necessary institutional capacities to tackle the challenges of the moment: unemployment, underemployment, labour underutilization, poverty etc. In contrast, employers' organizations in Africa operate with disproportionate capacities, the norm being one pilot or dominant organization controlled by big businesses with foreign capital.

122. Development catalyzers, universities and research centers in Africa are generally not brought into the picture to make an input into development issues in African countries.

123. The multi-lateral and bilateral cooperation organizations whose mission is to backstop African countries in their development drive sometimes come up with programmes that are not always useful to the beneficiaries. Such organizations include the African Union, ILO, UNIDO, UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO, UNDP, UNFPA, FAO, UN-Habitat, UNECA, IMF, World Bank, ADB, etc.

## **B. Beneficiaries**

124. The impact of the SPF policy will be evaluated through the indirect, direct and final beneficiaries. Regarding the final beneficiaries in particular (poorly organized in Africa) there is a need to organize them in the form of NGOs and national associations, failing which it will be difficult to qualitatively evaluate them at the appropriate time.

125. The indirect beneficiaries targeted by the SPF at national, sub-regional, regional and international levels consist of the players listed earlier.

126. The direct or final beneficiaries comprise the African populace in general, particularly:

- Women;
- Youth;
- Disabled Persons;
- Marginal Populations;
- The unemployed seeking first employment;
- Long time unemployed;
- Persons in their third age;
- Retired Persons;
- HIV/AIDS Infected and Affected Persons;
- Migrant Workers;
- Refugees; and
- Street Children

127. The SPF performance indicators identifiable in the players and beneficiaries derive from country's ownership capacity and resource mobilization, a prerequisite for the SPF institutionalization.

### **3.2.3. Institutionalizing the Social Policy Framework**

128. Implementing the SPF in African countries calls for action on several fronts, including:

- a) Establishing partnership to enhance social integration, investment and job creation for poverty reduction in Africa: after adoption of the Social Policy Framework by the Labour and Social Affairs Commission and the Assembly of Heads of State and Government, it will be left to the AU to undertake measures to ensure that the SPF is adopted at national level by all the potential players (including the direct beneficiaries) concerned by the initiatives. For instance, consultancy missions will have to be undertaken by the competent AU staff as well as by consultants/experts drawn from the Specialized Agencies of the United Nations system concerned by the SPF components in order to enlist the views of African countries on the effectiveness of the SPF implementation. In so doing, their suggestions on a future country plan of action would be obtained. Given the fact that the national plan of action emanating from the SPF incorporates on-going and future actions, its major role will be to establish harmony in country social policies aimed at achieving sustainable social development. The AU should also programme a meeting with African countries to discuss the SPF implementation at sub-regional and regional levels. It is of vital importance that representatives of the United Nations System Agencies, Development Banks, donor, employers' and workers' and civil society organizations as well as research centers and universities participate in such a meeting. The conclusions thereof should constitute a consensus for social integration, investment, job creation and poverty reduction at country level. The ILO sub-regional offices are, with the support of the AU, in a position to backstop and coordinate implementation jointly with an appropriate national institution during the project phase of an initial duration of three years.
- b) Resource creation: an AU finance and loan facility or similar mechanism operating on preferential terms to be established for each SPF component (or regional programme) in order to encourage the countries that are not HIPC Initiative eligible, to

participate. In case of the countries eligible for the Initiative, resource allocation/reallocation could be made for each component taking into account the SPF logic and the existing or ongoing PRSPs. A team of country and international experts should also be established to provide countries with technical assistance for capacity building in all its dimensions.

- c) Financing the SPF: as soon as each SPF component is finalized (be it at national or regional level), a meeting with the donors will be convened to mobilize the necessary funding for implementation. The AU will have to take the necessary measures to absorb some of the SPF components through such Frameworks as its NEPAD flagship programme, the HIPC Initiative, the Special United Nations Initiative for Africa, the World Bank Capacity Building Programme, the African Capacity Building Foundation, etc.

### **3.3. CAPACITY BUILDING**

129. Capacity building for the players and beneficiaries is a prerequisite for SPF implementation, and should be undertaken at national, sub-regional and regional levels.

#### **3.3.1. Capacity Building at National Level**

130. The objective here is to foster capacity development in the concerned Ministries and in institutions representing the civil society to assist them in formulating and implementing social integration strategies anchored on investment for employment promotion and poverty reduction.

131. To this end, the African Union and the United Nations Agencies should participate in the major initiatives aimed at capacity building in the Continent. Prominent among these initiatives are: a) the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which would facilitate concerted action with the ECA; b) NEPAD's Capacity Building Programme and the countries' PRSPs.

132. The effectiveness of implementation of a social integration strategy focusing on investment and decent job creation calls for a holistic approach to the issues raised. From the macro-economic standpoint, there is the need to adopt a more coordinated approach to policy formulation and development planning as a way of ensuring that the possible implications of decisions and general policy programmes are meticulously analyzed both in terms of specific measures and the inter-relation of such measures. Special attention should be accorded to the

relation between planning and budgeting authorities. Effective coordination is vital if official decisions on social integration, decent work creation, combating poverty and improving living standards are to be properly implemented. Inter and intra-sectoral linkages should therefore be fully taken on board during formulation of any global social development strategy. Participation of the social partners and other concerned groups in the partners' consultative planning process should help scale up the relevance of intervention policies aimed at responding to employment and social development related issues. Labour market organizations have a specific role to play in socio-economic policy consultations.

133. The institutional framework underpinning implementation of the SPF strategy should revolve around the governmental and parastatal bodies dealing with economic policies, human resource development, control and regulation of the labour market, as well as investment and export promotion. The success of the strategy resides in consensus among the social partners, namely; trade unions and private sector employers' organizations directly concerned by economic development and job creation.

134. In many African countries, there is no shortage of institutional capacity for job creation as such. However, there could be the need to re-orientate and modernize the existing institutions so as to more effectively respond to emerging problems in the area of decent employment creation, especially integration of new arrivals on the labour market and improvement of their welfare. Moreover, attention has to be focused on the legislative and regulatory framework governing the economic activities likely to encourage job creation, and on the need to simplify the bureaucratic and administrative procedures.

135. The major catalyst for this initiative will be to establish a team of experts primarily to carry out studies and proffer general policy advice for countries that so desire. Such services could be financed by a special fund forming part of the AU funds under the 2004-2007 Strategic Plan. The team of experts has to bring together macro-economic specialists, employment and labour market analysts, experts in poverty reduction programmes, animators of participative development and women development, as well as other social areas.

136. Setting up national capacity building networks for social integration and welfare will address the above issues by more effectively mobilizing local resources to combat the scourge of unemployment and under-employment, and advocating job creation, and hence poverty reduction investment policies.

137. It is hereby suggested that an integrated SPF- driven macro-programme aligned to country's specific conditions be launched in every AU Member State. The major components of such a programme feature in paragraph 3.2.1 above.

### **3.3.2. Capacity Building at Sub-Regional and Regional Levels**

138. The sub-regional and/or regional capacity building network programme for social development in Africa will embrace the following major activities:

- establishment of national networks and coordination with sub-regional and regional networks;
- sub-regional surveys based on the network members' policy;
- training programmes and experience sharing among the network members;
- documentation service, particularly exchange programmes open to persons outside the network.

139. The regional services of the network, the inter-dependence of information and communication among the network members and the appropriate international institutions will have to be handled by a regional project based in the African Union Commission with the support of the ILO and the other United Nations System agencies dealing with the pillars identified by SPF. The said regional services should also include technical support for implementation of the national network activities and the sub-regional documentation services.

## **GENERAL CONCLUSION**

140. The Vision of the African Union is that of an Africa, integrated, prosperous and peaceful; an Africa driven by its own citizens, a dynamic force in the global arena. Unfortunately, Africa is the only region of the world with the lowest level of social development. It is the only region in the world where the incidence of poverty is not only the most acute but also on the increase. The decline of most human development indicators in the past ten years is as a result of the significant slow down in social development<sup>15</sup>.

141. This is the case with Africa's social and economic development. As a matter of fact, despite the economic growth recorded in most countries at the threshold of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, economic transition is at the root of the

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<sup>15</sup> Especially as a result of low level investment income. See UNDP (2003)

acute incidence of poverty and, more generally, social exclusion process. If poverty reduction presupposes rapid and sustainable economic growth, the latter should be sufficiently equitable in order not to trigger the marginalization of the disadvantaged segments of the population. Social integration, increased investment, new job creation and the protection of already available jobs are the key elements of the strategy. What is more important is to trigger a growth process that meets clear-cut criteria, and invest in human resources for meaningful grassroots social development, to satisfy basic needs such as health care, education, vocational training for all, jobs for the majority, housing, nutrition and general well-being.

142. The strategies aimed at reducing poverty and creating a conducive environment for employment should encapsulate elements of national policies at rural and urban levels. Rolling back poverty implies the development of micro, small and medium size rural enterprises through awareness on the part of the public authorities and the entire society, of the pivotal future role of rural communities and their capacity for change under the best possible conditions for future generations.

143. In the present Social Policy Framework, top priority will be given to human resource oriented investments because human resources are not only the means but also the purpose and objective of long-term development. The quality of human capital development programmes has to be scaled up, although inevitably, the volume of resources available for these programmes should be increased.

144. One realistic objective would be to beef up the financial resources allocated to human resource development and bring it up to, at least, 20% GDP in the next decade (2005-2015). The objective of these investments is to meet the basic needs for all not later than 2015. Every new development strategy in Africa should take on board the "human factor" and represent a new commitment to develop Africa's major potential resource: the men and women of the Continent, more especially the women and children, and other vulnerable groups.

145. In order for African entrepreneurs to play a pivotal role in human resource development, it is necessary to relax the constraints and the excessive controls preventing them from developing their activities. Private, small and medium-size enterprises especially in the informal sector can be a powerful engine of growth in Africa. The creativity of micro, small enterprises and local organizations operating at grassroots level should be encouraged and promoted. Foreign direct investments can also constitute a vital source of capital and growth, as other regions have learnt to their great advantage. Much more needs to be done to create an

environment conducive to private sector dynamism in Africa and to make this sector a powerful ally in long-term social development endeavours.

146. Even with a dynamic private sector, it should be recognized that some African countries are just too small to achieve economies of scale and succeed on the global market on their own, more especially as this market is increasingly being dominated by “the blocs” of Western European and North American countries. African countries should enter into greater cooperation with one another and pursue meaningful economic integration. This is the prize that they have to pay for their survival, prosperity and long-term social development.

147. There are real advantages in regional cooperation, trade, market development and resource sharing, but concrete measures are needed in these areas. Economic policies have to be harmonized. The political and bureaucratic constraints hampering capital, labour and product movement across Africa should be eliminated. All these measures call for greater political will and the spirit of decision which African countries’ governments did not demonstrate in the past. This policy should endeavour to promote real professionalism in the rural and urban communities in a competitive environment. Such professionalism will be manifested in the mastery of the environment in which it will develop, a mastery of production, processing and distribution techniques as well as the resilient capacity to defend individual or collective interest.

148. In this connection, self-employment promotion calls for specific measures in terms of the quantitative and qualitative training of trainers and the establishment of new businesses, thereby making it possible for agricultural, industrial and commercial skills upgrading to fully integrate knowledge and expertise, and energize agricultural and technological extension services. To this end, African states should consolidate the informal economy performance, because private employment currently offers real opportunities to combat unemployment. In this connection, the cooperative spirit should be instilled in the various players so that they may rapidly organize themselves to easily obtain credit and maintain basic infrastructure.

149. Lastly, the best way for women to combat poverty and exclusion is to participate more actively in economic activities and in policy bodies. To this end, combating the factors that constrain their participation presupposes in particular the alleviation of domestic and household chores, control of child birth, improved vocational attributes and, indeed, the elimination of society’s prejudices. The above recommendations should culminate in good governance, thereby enabling the civil society to become a dynamic economic and social player in Africa.

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