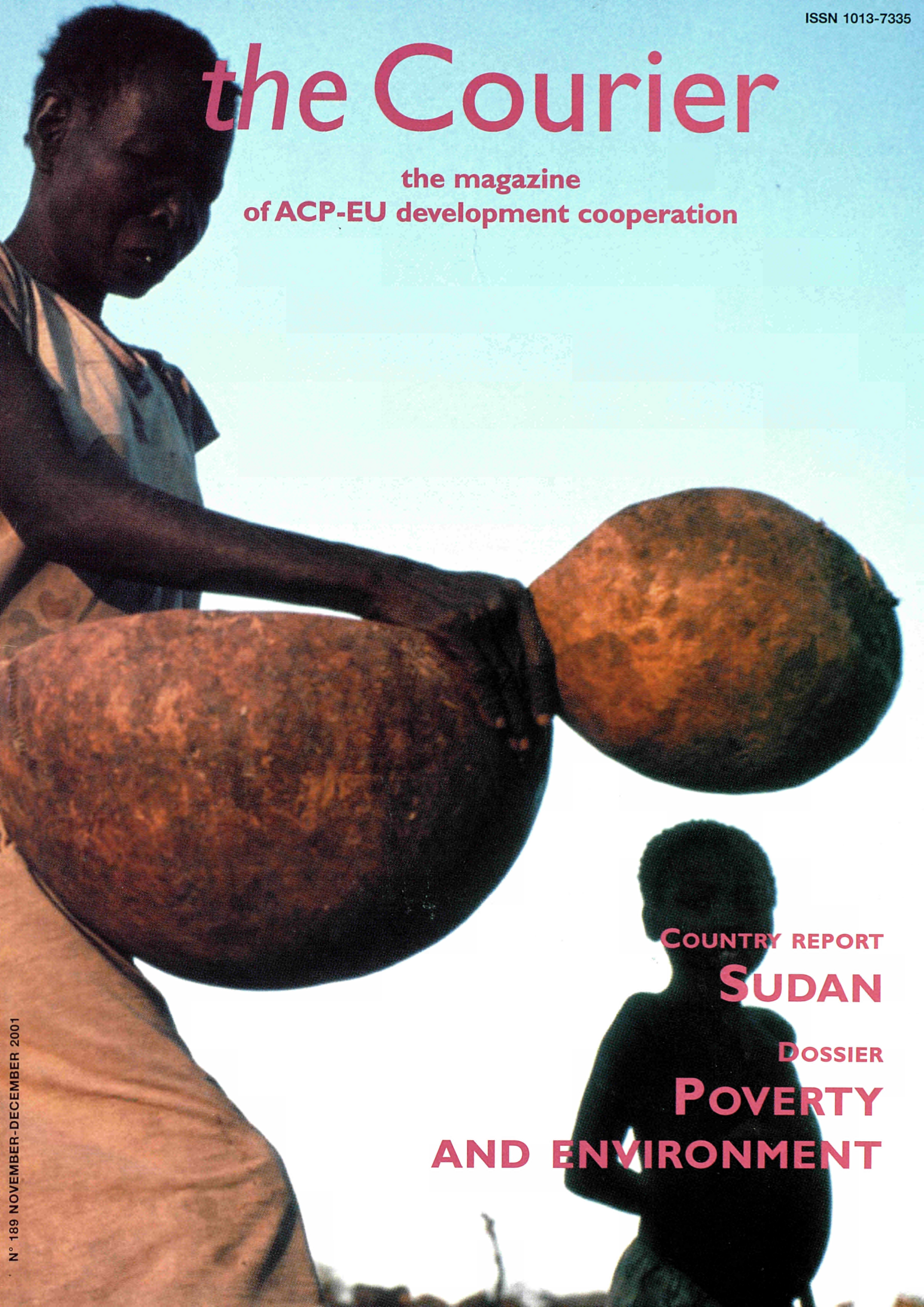


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COUNTRY REPORT
SUDAN

DOSSIER
**POVERTY
AND ENVIRONMENT**

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Contents

Meeting point

- Bishop Dennis H. de Jong, Roman Catholic Diocese of Ndola, Zambia, was one of four people to receive the 2001 Africa Prize for Leadership 2

News

- Durban re-examines the scourge of racism: 3rd world Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance 6
- WTO: a development round? 9
- Europe supports the African Renaissance 10
- Development Council tackles volumes of aid 12
- Budget analysis from a gender perspective 13

Opinion

- A new dynamic sweeping the continent... says Callisto Madavo, World Bank Vice-President for the Africa Region 15

Focus

- Supporting Nigeria's anti-poverty programmes 17
- Afghanistan: meeting humanitarian needs 20
- A new approach to fighting corruption in developing countries - the Global Network for Good Governance 22
- How mature is Senegal's political scene? 24
- CDE - more support for ACP businesses 27

Dossier: Poverty and environment

- Understanding the link between poverty and the environment 30
- The environment: a tool to combat poverty 32
- Sustainable energy for sustainable development 34
- Caribbean: a win-win situation for communities and conservation in Saint Lucia 36
- Water - the challenges ahead 38
- Southern Africa - water stressed by 2021? 40
- The Kyoto Protocol - any benefits for the poor? 42
- Global warming: the polluter is not the first to pay 44
- Agriculture and environment: an uneasy coexistence 46
- Morocco: organic farming is back in business 48
- New trade agreements aim towards sustainability 50



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Sudan: Women gather water in the Nuba Mountains

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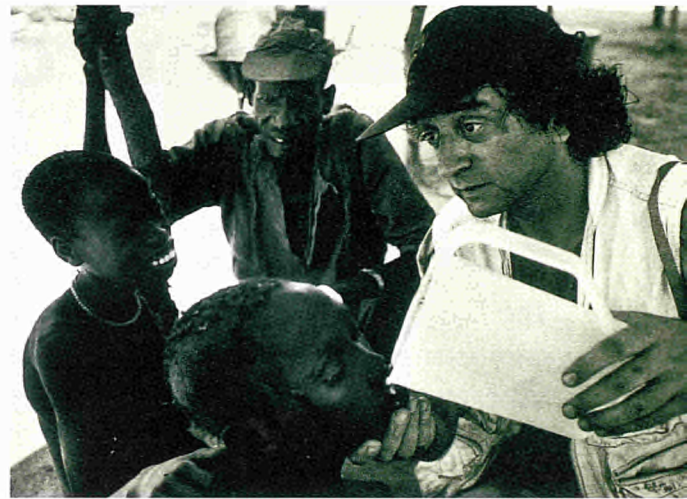
Forestry management must take account of the local populations	52
Cameroon: controlling the environmental impact of road construction	54
How does the EC integrate the environment into development cooperation?	56

Culture and Society

Freddy Bienvenue Tsimba, sculptor with a mission	57
Senegal – genius burning brightly	59

Country report: Sudan

Sudan after a decade of international isolation and 40 years of intermittent civil war	62
EC-Sudan: renewing the dialogue	66
Civilians in Southern Sudan – oppressed by all sides	68
Moving from crisis to self reliance	70
Interview: Dr Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im on human rights and Islamic fundamentalism	72
Gezira – Sudan's fertile triangle	74
Sudan's cultural heritage	75
Oil and troubled waters	77
Abduction – facing unpalatable facts	78
Planning for peace	79
Profile	80



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Photo essay

Sudan's crisis, by Tom Stoddart	81
Letters	84
King Baudouin development prize	84
Corrections	84
Maps	85

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is the main publication of the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and the European Union. The EU provides ACP countries with preferential access to EC markets and substantial development assistance (some two to three billion Euros a year). The ACP and EU cooperate at a political level and engage in a continuous political dialogue: in trade, to promote the integration of the ACP countries into the world economy and in development assistance, with the clear objective of promoting sustainable development and reducing poverty.



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“Our church must take risks”

On 14 October 2001, Bishop Dennis H. de Jong, of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Ndola, Zambia, was one of four people to receive the 2001 Africa Prize for Leadership.

Awarded by the Hunger Project, the prize honours their work to stop the spread of AIDS.

The Courier met Bishop de Jong to learn about the compromise between dogma and practice: his work is an example where faith and reason have to be reconciled in the face of the AIDS pandemic.

Working on the front line calls for pragmatism.

Robin Sappe

Dennis de Jong is an affable chap, never losing his smile and carefully weighing his words. His tone is meaningful and level, even when these words make direct reference to what certain institutions are doing and particularly what they are not doing. He is not a man to mince words. More than 10 years of working in the field— where 27 percent of the people in his diocese are infected — gives him a large degree of authority.

“In the 1980s, when the AIDS epidemic began, we had deaths and burials nearly every day. In the early stages, we said that the epidemic was not the church’s concern, but its social impact made us decide to do something positive,” he explains.

Sociology of an epidemic

In 1988, the church began to encourage people to take action, and although there were no funds to open dedicated care centres, a community-managed care sys-

tem was set up to encourage mutual help and to create a programme. In 1993, all activities in the Ndola diocese were brought together under the Integrated AIDS Programme. Bishop de Jong campaigns on all fronts promoting prevention and care equally.

For him, there is no such thing as a lost sheep: “The entire population has to be taken into account, with awareness-raising and educational programmes being organised on a regular basis for workers and those living in rural areas. We also go into the schools, to meet teachers and pupils, into factories and even into prisons.”

Bishop de Jong does not hide behind silence, nor the shame that the church can associate with sexuality.

“In the prisons, the number of inmates is continually rising,” he says. “They are packed in like sardines, sleeping one against the other. When one of them wants to turn over, he shouts “right!” and everyone turns over onto his right side. In such circumstances, when one

prisoner is HIV-positive, prevalence can only increase. In prisons, the level is very high, just as it is amongst the military. This is true too for truck drivers who stop off in out-of-the-way villages and carry the virus to rural areas where the infection rate is still currently slightly lower (16 percent) than in urban areas (27-28 percent). Awareness-raising campaigns are essential.”

Learning from the beginning

Prevention and education sessions have been organised for youngsters to heighten awareness as early as possible. The ‘Group 10’ initiative is aimed at children who join on their 10th birthday because at that age, they become less sensitive to parental influence and more receptive to that of their peers.

“They can be made aware of the dangers involved. We help them to understand sexuality, teach them to control their behaviour and avoid taking risks, how to act positively and to prepare themselves for marriage. An educational system set up by one’s peers is highly effective,” Bishop de Jong explains.

Adolescents and young married couples are not left out. Their mutual help group is SMART – ‘Sex is for Marriage, AIDS Ruins Teens’. “Recently, the group coordinator approached me because he needed money to continue his activities. He wanted to buy computers to be able to work and allow the youngsters to earn a living. Most young people are unemployed. I encouraged him because it would keep the youngsters busy, give them work and help them change their attitude.”

“For young married couples, weekends are set aside to try to get across the concept of fidelity. They are encouraged to be honest and to have a responsible attitude towards one another.”

The conundrum of Christian morals and prevention

Although Dennis de Jong is loquacious about the groups he works with, he is fairly non-specific about the practical content of the messages he delivers. Treading a fine line between rules governing Christian life and reality in the field, he tries to steer clear of the church’s current debate on the use of condoms. There is no point in using metaphors when speaking to him – he is forthright.

“We have a programme aimed at about 400 HIV-positive patients. Organisers help them adopt a mode of behaviour that will be of assistance in prolonging their life and assuming responsibility,” he says.

The 12-stage programme is similar to the Alcoholics Anonymous programme and is complemented by work-

shops because most people have lost their jobs. In Ndola, for instance, they make greeting cards using banana leaves and produce large candles.

When the conversation turns technical, regarding the practical aspects of prevention, Bishop de Jong replies that “for young people, we advise abstinence prior to marriage and fidelity for those who are already married”.

He says, when asked directly, that the use of condoms is not advised. “Young people are always told that condoms are just one factor in protection, whereas the only genuine protection is to change one’s behaviour. This seems to work because the infection rate has not increased over the last five years.”

He adds: “Non-Catholics also advise behavioural changes and advise the use of condoms only to those who can’t manage this.”

Bishop de Jong chooses his words carefully because he cannot make comments the church hierarchy would forbid. Instead, he plays on silences and terminology. He appears torn between his religious convictions and his working environment. For example, although the use of condoms is not included in the advice he gives, neither does he have a whole stock of arguments condemning their use. At most, he speaks of “formal protection”, which is a message in itself and collaborates with certain associations that he is careful not to criticise, despite their advocating condom use.

Although Bishop de Jong’s comments might sound moralistic, they are nevertheless qualified, closer to reality, and reveal a genuine tension between faith and pragmatism, possibly lighting the way to a new path for the church.

Facing meagre funding and corruption

Bishop de Jong works in the field. His project is “integrated” because he adapts it to local situations. He has also learned to get by as best he can. In 1991, when political power changed hands, all social institutions previously financed by the government were privatised – hospitals, schools and

© Robin Sappe



even agriculture received only meagre funding. Since then, poverty has increased significantly, affecting 80 percent of the population.

His response was to set up training programmes to try to lower the very high rate of unemployment and to provide young people with qualifications. "They were given training in computing, as more and more computers are used in agriculture, business and other sectors. This will enable them to join the labour market."

He disbelieves the government's claim of 600,000 AIDS orphans and says there are at least one million. In Ndola alone, there are 80,000: "These children need an education. We help them by asking the government to provide free lessons, but it does not always agree to this. So we have set up community schools to provide them with a general education."

Bishop de Jong also points to generalised corruption in public institutions and the social system as a whole. Because of corruption in the hospitals, medicines are no longer available except in private clinics. People leave empty-handed if they go to a hospital. Nor is it easy to get to a hospital. They are often far away and travel is expensive. As a result, people stop going after just a few visits. In such a context, self-managed and home-based care systems have emerged as a viable solution.

Volunteers and NGOs are the main partners

NGOs provide medicines to combat opportunistic diseases, particularly tuberculosis, malaria and diar-

rhoea. In this way, medicines can be distributed and workers can check they are being taken when water is given. This programme is going particularly well and is very favourably received.

When anti-retrovirals – the medicines that slow down the progression of HIV – are available they are used only to reduce transmission from mother to child. Even if they were handed out on a large scale, they would have to be incorporated into an umbrella project.

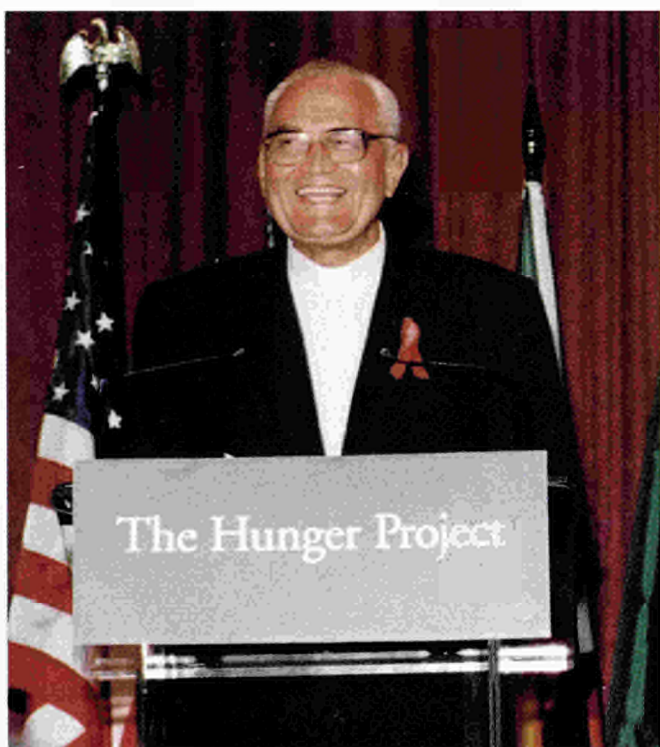
"Sufficient nutrition is essential to the success of such treatments and, at the same time, appropriate food would have to be available and someone would have to check that there was no trafficking in the medicines, enabling only the rich to have access to them," he says.

In this crisis environment volunteers and NGOs are the main partners. The project has 850 people working for it, essentially volunteers. The only aid comes from three German and Dutch NGOs – Missio, Miserior and Corpaid – in the form of funding as well as containers of medicines and food. They also respond to isolated requests. There is no support from the Zambian government. The government offers an expensive screening service, so people go to NGOs that offer this service at considerably cheaper rates.

Bishop de Jong describes cooperation-linked problems. "The Dutch embassy provides support. It financed the production of a book and video on self-help in the community. But other embassies do not follow suit. Belgium, for example, finances the Zambian government but doesn't realise just how much corruption exists. The money never reaches the projects. When the Netherlands uncovered this corruption, it opted to provide aid from closer to the ground, via the embassies."

Says Bishop de Jong: "We have also applied to the European Commission and are awaiting the \$2 billion promised by Kofi Annan for the Third World, particularly to halt the transmission of the virus from mother to child. It's very difficult, there are so many things to organise and finding the money takes a great deal of time."

In this difficult environment, Bishop de Jong is not only a member of the clergy; he is the driving force behind an extensive, tailor-made project that intervenes where the State has opted out and where the Church has as yet felt unable to take a stand. Upon receiving his award, faced with the varying degrees of religious altruism displayed by his peers, he recalled that, within the anti-AIDS campaign, "Our church must take risks."



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Africa Prize for Leadership 2001

Respect for civil society

For 14 years The Hunger Project has rewarded those who have stood out through their actions in the struggle against famine in Africa. This year, because of the AIDS pandemic and its social implications for the continent, the prize was awarded to four representatives of civil society who have a high profile in the fight against AIDS.

Since 1987, winners of the Africa Prize for Leadership have made an impressive list of heads of state, including Nelson Mandela and former Senegalese President Abdou Diouf. In 2001 The Hunger Project made a significant departure from established practice by selecting as laureates an HIV-positive woman from Tanzania, a Zambian religious leader, an Ethiopian public-health institution and a Zimbabwean NGO. They received their awards - which included a significant sum of money to be invested in their projects - on 14 October 2001 in New York. The awards recognise the contribution of civil society, which is only too rarely rewarded for its investment.

The US-based Hunger Project has not changed its focus or its actions in the field worldwide. But today it is obvious that eliminating hunger is linked to halting the HIV/AIDS epidemic. President Joan Holmes is categorical: "In Africa today AIDS is a health crisis, an economic crisis, a social crisis and a threat to political stability."

To fight this, she points to the need for commitment, the need to tackle gender inequality and to the link with poverty, and the need for international solidarity.

Honouring a courageous investment

The four award-winners were recognised for having invested personally, and with great courage, to the struggle - against a backdrop of silence and even hostility. One of the prizewinners, Amelia Jacob, deceptively soft-spoken and with curiosity in her large eyes, was recognised for having openly spoken about her experience of living with HIV in Tanzania. She created 'Service Health and Development for People Living Positively with HIV/AIDS' (SHDEPHA+), a project that aims to provide support for people who, like her, live positive lives with HIV/AIDS.

Bishop Dennis H. de Jong used his moral standing in the community to break the silence surrounding HIV/AIDS and start an awareness-raising campaign of prevention measures, including sex education, in an extremely reluctant denominational context.

The 'Hiwot AIDS Prevention Care and Support Organisation' (HAPSCO-HIWOT) emerged in response to a complete lack of action in Ethiopia, on the initiative of Tibebe Marco, a nurse and a formidable woman committed to halting the epidemic in her country.

These first three projects involve conventional activities that are acknowledged to be effective in the fight against AIDS - prevention, care, help to those living with HIV/AIDS - and that are courageous given the context in which they were conceived, which is more often than not one of denial.

The fourth award-winner is the Zimbabwean NGO Padare/Enkundleni, meaning, respectively, in Shona and Ndebele, "meeting-place near a rock or under a tree". Its mission is different from the others in that it is committed to promoting gender equality.

Its work focuses on the concepts of male and female, which traditionally too often encourage men to become involved in multiple relationships without anyone questioning this as a form of domination. Although women are biologically more vulnerable to the virus, men are still the main vectors. Jonah Gokova accepted the award for this programme that targets their behaviour.

The evening of 14 October 2001 ensured above all that civil society has been recognised for its initiatives, courage and commitment as embodied in these two men and two women. These are four people no one knows, who at the evening ceremony stayed in the background, despite being on the front line in the field. Four perfect examples of selflessness.



Amelia Jacob



Jonah Gokova



Tibebe Marco

Durban re-examines the scourge of racism

When the international community attempts to address the thorny issue of racism, despite the almost complete consensus on the need to combat this scourge, there are inevitable heated exchanges and confrontations of all kinds arising from the complex, wide-ranging and sensitive nature of the problem. Such was the case of the previous two conferences organised by the United Nations on this topic. The Durban meeting, held from 31 August to 8 September 2001, was no exception to the rule. Marked by the spectacular but no less foreseeable withdrawal of the United States and Israel and by the large number of divergent opinions expressed, the Third World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance nevertheless ended its work with the adoption of a final declaration and a programme of action.

Kenneth Karl

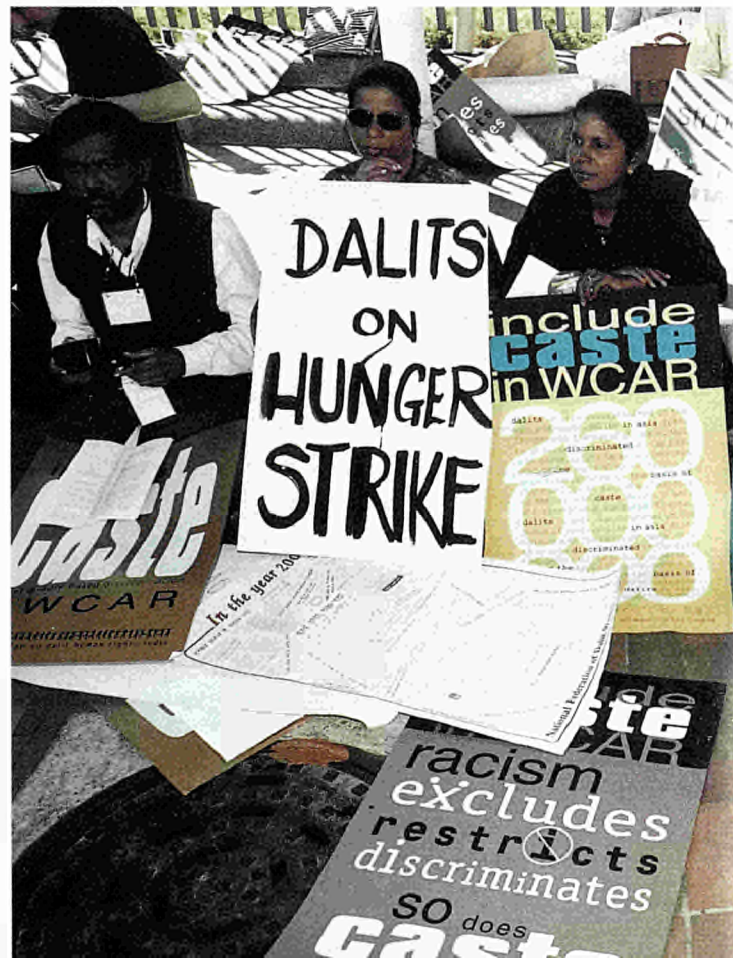
By choosing South Africa to host the Third World Conference Against Racism, the organisers were well aware of the highly symbolic value this could confer on the event. South Africa lived through, in the worst moments of its history, the painful experience of apartheid and successfully abolished it after a protracted struggle. This history aroused curiosity and admiration from all the participants who made the long trip to Durban. Approximately 16,000 people came from the four corners of the earth to witness, criticise, accuse, feel indignation, apologise but, above all, to attempt to find solutions together to enable them to fight an effective war against a centuries-old evil which even today manifests itself along the halting path of mankind's progress. Indigenous peoples, Romas, gypsies, descendants of slaves, Dalits and Adivasis from India, Tibetans and many others took this opportunity to present to the world the violations of which they are the regular victims simply on account of their origin and ethnic background. For just over one week, the Durban Exhibition Centre witnessed interminable and often painful verbal sparring matches between victims and perpetrators. All under the auspices of the UN and its High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, assisted by Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma, South African Foreign Minister and President of the conference. These two women spared no effort and used all their diplomatic skills during the discussions to reconcile points of view and to prevent the conference ending as a resounding failure, particularly in the wake of the withdrawal of the US and Israel.

A number of highly contested topics were addressed each day, some of them worthy of particular attention.

The Israeli-Palestinian issue in the spotlight

Prior to the conference, a number of highly topical issues had been put forward at the preparatory meetings, and compromises had been agreed so that they could be addressed at Durban in a more constructive light. Certain extremely sensitive topics, however, inevitably returned to the spotlight because of their political nature. Friction arising from the Israeli-Palestinian issue and the withdrawal of the US, followed by that of Israel on day four of the conference, focused media and world attention so much that it looked likely that other topics would be pushed off the conference agenda. Palestinian representatives and representatives from several Arab countries wanted Zionism to be likened to racism, or at the very least Israel to be condemned for its actions in the autonomous territories and Israel itself. The particularly tense situation prevailing at that time in the Middle East did not create a climate favourable for détente. The Americans and Israelis – who from the outset had set out their stall by sending

Like many other minorities, the Dalits protested against violations of their rights.



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a very low level delegation to Durban – not surprisingly rejected en bloc the “racism equals Zionism” equation, and in turn accused certain States of wanting to divert the course of the conference. The terms of the document presented at the start of the conference by the 300 non-governmental organisations, which condemned Israel and described it as a racist state, were deemed unacceptable and hateful by the US and Israel and further exacerbated tension. Neither calls for calm by the UN Secretary-General nor those for level-headedness by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, nor the good offices and mediation of Norway in an attempt to draft a compromise text were able to prevent the withdrawal of the two countries.

From the start of the conference’s work, the UN had displayed a balanced attitude to the issue in the form of the diplomatic remarks made by its Secretary-General. Mr Kofi Annan stated that the Jewish people had been exposed to anti-Semitism in many regions of the world and that it was therefore understandable for many Jews to be deeply offended when Israel was accused of racism. He went on to say, however, that it was impossible to ask the Palestinians to accept the injustices meted out to them. Rather than accusing one country or one region, he said, the conference should require each country, on departing from Durban, to undertake to implement its own programme to combat racism. Such balance was later to be enshrined in the summit’s final document. This recognises the inalienable right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and to the creation of an independent State and also the right to security of all States in the region, including Israel, and calls upon all States to support the peace process and to implement it without delay.

Colonisation and slavery: a moral and financial headache

Should slavery and colonisation be seen as crimes against humanity? Although a few western countries – such as France, a former colonial power – have openly addressed and resolved this issue at national level by adopting relevant legislation – not without pressure from elsewhere – the same cannot be said of many others. In the opinion of certain countries, the notion and qualification of “crime against humanity” did not exist in such radically different times. The majority of African countries that had suffered the anguish of slavery over four centuries, supported by the black diaspora and the descendants of slaves from several continents (African Americans, Caribbeans, West Indians, etc), fought hard during the summit to have these two painful episodes in their history acknowledged as crimes against humanity and to claim reparation.

“We are demanding three types of reparation”, we were told by a Senegalese historian determined to justify his struggle. “Ethical reparation (repentance and acknowledgement that the acts committed were crimes against humanity), historical reparation (duty of remembrance, recall and explanation, and promotion of awareness), and financial reparation for the victims”, because, according to this historian, the lack of economic development of the African continent also has its roots in these sombre pages of history.

“The West has to face up to all the consequences of the non-applicability of statutory limitation to crimes against humanity”, asserted Mrs Taubira-Delanon, a French parliamentarian and supporter of the legislative progress made in France in this field, during one of the many workshops. Western countries, however, had a number of questions: who is going to pay what to whom, and how will the damage be evaluated? Whereas some formulated proposals for compensation possibly in the form of funding for development in Africa, others, led by the US, were radically opposed to even the idea of having to pay compensation for acts committed several centuries previously.

The final declaration adopted by the conference acknowledged that slavery is a crime against humanity and is an ongoing source of racist manifestations. It deeply regretted the unspeakable human suffering caused by the slave trade, colonialism and genocide and, in its programme



Mary Robinson, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, spared no effort in preventing the conference from foundering



of action, the conference also accepted that past injustices had undeniably contributed to poverty, underdevelopment, marginalisation, economic disparity, instability and the insecurity of many peoples in various regions of the world. It invited the international community to put together new economic and social development programmes with, ultimately, an allocation of additional resources.

Overheard at the conference

Lydie Polfer, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister (Luxembourg)

Durban marks the beginning of a process that will enable the world to invest in the present and in the future without repeating past mistakes.

Mary Robinson, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Conference Secretary-General

The aim of this conference is also to think of those who have been the targets of discrimination that only the worst manifestations of human ingenuity can conceive.

Kofi Annan, United Nations Secretary-General

If we leave Durban without an agreement, we will be lending support to the most vile elements of our societies.

Thabo Mbeki, South African President, on the situation during the apartheid era

If you're white you're alright. If you are brown, stick around; if you are black, oh brother! Get back, get back, get back.

Anne Kristin Sydnes, Norway's Minister of International Development

It is difficult to guarantee respect for human dignity in a world where almost 3 billion people survive on less than \$2 a day – that is why we have to combat poverty in all its forms.

Axel Kahn, French geneticist

Biology and modern genetics do not confirm racist pre-conceptions, and it is the duty of scientists to refute so-called "biological" theses that are still too often used to support them.

Rigoberta Menshu, Nobel Peace Laureate

As indigenous peoples, we would like this conference to provide the opportunity for historical self-criticism and a significant advance in terms of the recognition of our rights that have been denied us through the centuries.

Charles Josselin, French Minister for Cooperation

We are ready to face up to our past, but the aim of the Durban conference is not to provide additional turnover for experts and lawyers by asking for a quantification of the damage caused by slavery and the slave trade.

A very difficult task

In the light of the significant confrontations and misunderstandings which arose during the Durban conference, the struggle against racism, xenophobia and intolerance is clearly still a very difficult one to win. How can one fight effectively against an evil rooted in people's minds, minds filled with the anomalies of history, preconceived ideas, complexes, religious misrepresentations, fear, personal frustrations, intellectual or cultural poverty, intolerance and so many other vectors, which sometimes make it natural and even unconscious, inevitably leading the human soul to its worse excesses? How, indeed, can one successfully make international public opinion, states and politicians more aware of the need to eradicate or, at the very least, diminish this evil? How can the problem be tackled without causing major political or diplomatic crises? How can convenient short cuts and amalgamations be avoided?

These difficulties were quickly perceived by the conference organisers, who had made provision for discussions involving a wide and diversified range of people and also subjects directly or indirectly linked to racism. Specific workshops were organised in addition to the speeches and debates in plenary session. Subjects such as racism and development, the sources of racism, discrimination against women or children, legal prevention and punishment instruments, combat strategies, protection of victims and of minorities, the role of the media, links between AIDS and racism, the issue of modern slavery, etc. were debated. NGOs, individual countries and international organisations all put forward proposals and presented their respective programmes for combating all forms of discrimination. The programme of action adopted at the end of the summit includes a number of measures to be taken at every level to step up the fight and envisages a follow-up to actions that have already been set up.

The European Union presented its own programme to the conference, making reference to the legislative, political and institutional tools contained in the Amsterdam and Nice Treaties which enable it to ensure and guarantee human rights and fundamental freedoms and to fight against all forms of discrimination within the Union.

In the end, despite all the criticism, Durban did not turn out to be a hollow initiative. Although certain parties departed frustrated at having been listened to but not understood, others saw a glimmer of hope. If nothing else, this meeting made it possible to carry out a global review of a delicate subject and to make a series of responses. Only the future will say whether or not these are appropriate. Nevertheless, surely the fight against racism will be won, first and foremost, at the level of the individual? Is not the sum of progress achieved at that level more relevant and more promising in terms of the evolution of our society?

WTO: the development round?

Since the bitter failure of the Seattle WTO conference in December 1999 the European Union has adopted a much more conciliatory approach towards the developing countries in a bid to create a climate of confidence among them – something sorely lacking after Seattle.

Anne-Marie Mouradian

The aim is to reassure these countries that from now on their fears and concerns will be better taken into account and that it is in their general interest to support the launch of a new Round of multilateral trade negotiations at the fourth Ministerial Conference in Doha, Qatar.

Europe is looking in particular to win over the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries which, because of their great number (56 of the 78 ACP Group countries are WTO members), hold an influential position within the WTO. Europe realises that these countries, together with their own 15, would give them a united front representing half of the organisation's 142 members. As the European Commission has stressed, the ACP countries will see a number of issues and projects that were thrown out in Seattle, such as access to medicines, included on the agenda.

The ACP countries are sceptical, perhaps even mistrustful. But this attitude, according to EU Trade Commissioner Pascal Lamy, has taken the form of a barrage of questions rather than any real hostility. Commissioner Lamy did his utmost to provide answers, increasing the number of informative meetings, such as in the context of the ministerial trade committee.

This body was set up last May to promote dialogue on trade issues between the European Union and the ministers of the 18 countries representing the various ACP regions. The most recent meeting, which took place in Nairobi, did not do enough to ease the ACP Group's concerns.

Drawing lessons from the Uruguay Round concluded in Marrakesh in 1994, the ACP group want to be more united than ever to make their voice heard this time. They recognise that Europe is more in tune with their problems than the United States or Japan. The President of Kenya, Daniel Arap Moi, stressed that Africa's choices are extremely limited.

"Either we work together to build a better and fairer economic system that will enable us to take up a fully active role in the world economy, or we are left on the sideline as mere observers," he said.

Like the vast majority of developing countries, the ACP countries have a number of fears. The precedent of the Uruguay Round left them with their fingers badly burned when it failed to keep its promises with respect to both the

opening up of the markets in the North to products from the South and antidumping rules.

They have reservations about entering into a new round of talks on issues such as competition policy, the opening up of their markets to foreign investment and transparency in government procurement. They are also calling for more democracy and transparency within the WTO itself. Their concern is to strengthen their current weak position in world trade while at the same time securing greater access to the markets of the rich countries and special and differential treatment to take account of their level of development.

ACP concerns

In a series of concessions made since the end of September, the WTO acknowledged the difficulties experienced by a number of developing countries in implementing the agreements established in Marrakech. As a result, it is according them more time and flexibility to adapt to their obligations under these agreements.

But a long-term solution can only be achieved by reinforcing these countries' own capacities. The European Commission has launched a number of initiatives, such as the financing by the EU of an ACP office in Geneva, and a promise of a supplementary €50 million on the 9th EDF, in addition to the €30 million already foreseen for technical assistance in the area of trade.

Meeting in Brussels in the beginning of November, ACP trade ministers were of the opinion that their interests were not yet sufficiently taken into account, and that the draft texts to be presented at the Doha meeting were "ambiguous and imprecise".

The ACP countries were also worried that the WTO – due to the opposition of the Latin-American countries - had not yet accorded an exemption to extend their trade preferences on the European market, as foreseen by the Cotonou Agreement.

The ACPs also want greater progress in the area of access to medication for poor countries. This is a crucial issue which has at stake the lives of millions of people in the South, pitting the EU and the developing countries against the United States and Switzerland. The EU has decided to pursue the issue in the next round, in recognition of the fundamental right to health of everyone.

WTO negotiations back on track

The 142 members of the World Trade organisation (WTO), reached agreement on a negotiating programme for a new set of trade talks, at the Doha meeting, 9-14 November.

The "Doha Development Agenda" was adopted, with a strong development component. Developing countries succeeded in putting core issues on the agenda; agreement was reached on TRIPS, and the ACP States secured guarantees for their trade preferences with the EU.

In the next issue, we will examine the significance for developing countries, and the challenges ahead.

Europe supports the African Renaissance

In Brussels on 10 October, five African Heads of State presented the New African Initiative (NAI)*, a joint programme aiming to revitalise a continent which, despite its population of 700 million, accounts for barely one percent of the world's gross domestic product and two percent of international trade.

The NAI was set up in July at the last OAU Summit in Lusaka. It is a combination of, on the one hand, the Africa Renaissance Programme for the Millennium – conceived by the South African President Thabo Mbeki, the Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo and the Algerian President Abdelaziz Bouteflika, and based on the principle that peace, good government and social and economic development go hand in hand – and, on the other hand, the Omega Plan put forward by the President of Senegal Abdoulaye Wade, which aims to boost African economies through major projects.

Anne-Marie Mouradian

An African Plan

The originality of this initiative is that it is a reflection of the desire of Africa to take its destiny into its own hands, with the vital support of the international community – but by offering African solutions to African problems. It turns its back on a long history of aid.

Five African Heads of State presented the New African Initiative (NAI) to the EU presidency, on 10 October in Brussels



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“The current situation in Africa is proof of the failure of the logic of loans and aid,” explained President Wade.

According to its founders, the New African Initiative combines a development strategy with a detailed action plan in order to bring about a new era of partnership between Africa and the developed world.

The NAI was presented by its “fathers” last summer at the G8 Summit in Genoa. “We are interested in your Africa”, was the general response of the heads of state of the richest countries, who promised to discuss it further at their next G8 meeting in July 2002 in Canada. “Why wait a year?” asked the Nigerian President indignantly. The message did not fall on deaf ears. Europe, Africa’s main partner, decided to invite those who founded the NAI to come and discuss it in Brussels.

The meeting enabled the Presidents of South Africa, Nigeria, Senegal and Algeria¹, along with Frederik Chiluba, the Zambian head of state and acting President of the OAU, to exchange views with the Belgian presidency of the EU represented by the Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and European High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Javier Solana, and Commissioners Chris Patten and Poul Nielson. The Europeans said they were impressed by the strong political will of those they spoke to. According to the Belgian Prime Minister, this plan had the advantage of not being controlled from the outside but rather of being born in the minds of Africans who want to develop their continent based on the objectives of democracy, transparency, good government and human rights.

First foundations

Africa as a whole set out its priorities to eradicate poverty and promote sustainable GDP growth of seven percent for the continent.

The European Union promised to provide concrete support for its efforts by laying the first foundations of a regular dialogue between Europe and Africa on the NAI, with biannual meetings between the EU and the executive committee of the NAI consisting of five heads of state and the President of the OAU/AU.

A permanent link will be created between the groups of experts of the NAI and the European Commission. So how can support for this new initiative be articulated with the instruments which already exist to promote cooperation between Europe and Africa, such as the Cotonou Agreement



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South African President Thabo Mbeki, welcomed by Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt, 10 October 2001, in Brussels.

and the Cairo Process? A working group will be charged with answering this question. More particularly, experts from both sides will look into the problem of infrastructure which constitutes a major part of the NAI with the building of roads across Africa.

“If we want our national agricultural and industrial production to increase, we need communication routes. For example, it is impossible to travel from Dakar to Bamako by road and the railway is also often problematic. These sorts of questions have to be answered as a matter of priority,” explains Aziz Sow, the Senegal minister responsible for the New African Initiative. Europe has great expertise in this area, transport already being the main area of involvement of the European Development Fund.

The other seven priorities of the NAI concern education, health, agricultural development, new information technologies, energy, access to markets and debt which Africa is seeking to have written off as a boost to its economy. This crucial question of debt is one of the main points on which Africa and Europe disagree.

Look through our cupboards

Although the acting President of the OAU stated during discussions that “Africa has the political will and determination but lacks the financial resources to put its ideas into practice..”, no precise amount of aid was suggested by the Africans nor decided on by the EU.

“We were not expecting a costed statement. That was not the purpose of the meeting,” explains the Senegalese Aziz Sow, who prefers to stress that “the EU is entirely in line with the objectives contained in the NAI.” As the European Commissioner for Development, Poul Nielson, pointed out,

the question is also whether aid is effective: there is often money available, it is a matter of trying to use it better. He said that under the Cotonou Agreement, €2.2 billion would be spent to promote business partnerships between the EU and the African, Caribbean and Pacific states, but that, without the involvement of the NAI, the benefits to be expected from these investments would be smaller than might have been hoped.

President Chiluba stated that he does not much like listening to Europe talk of good governance. “But,” he added, “if that is what it takes to enable us to work together, let’s talk. You can come and look through our cupboards to find what is wrong and tell us.”

Europe has not laid down specific conditions, the requirement of democracy already being an integral part of the NAI.

“To travel from Dakar to Abidjan, it is best to go along the west Atlantic coast. But if this is not possible because of difficulties in certain countries that we would have to cross, we will go round them and pass through democratic countries such as Mali and Burkina Faso. This may act as a catalyst to these peoples to move towards democracy too,” summed up Aziz Sow.

“New spirit blowing through Africa”

The New African Initiative has the support of the European Union, following the World Bank and the IMF in September, which took to it rather like a profession of faith. It is regarded as an overhaul of the African continent, desired by a new generation of statesmen who advocate regional cooperation to reverse the downward spiral of poverty and set Africa on the road to globalisation.

Implementation will be put in the hands of the new pan-African organisation created last July at the Lusaka Summit. The African Union (AU) will succeed the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) after a one-year transition period, and will be structured on the model of the European Union, gradually putting in place a Commission, a Council of Ministers, a Parliament, a Central Bank, a Monetary Fund and a Court of Justice.

The programme is an ambitious one, the road long and complex. It is, no doubt, in the knowledge of the difficulties ahead that the African heads of state have combined their respective plans so that a new spirit is now blowing through Africa. According to the Belgian presidency of the EU, it should fundamentally change the nature of relations between this continent and its natural ally, the European Union.

* Recently re-named NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa’s Development)

¹ Egyptian President Mubarak was also invited. But he was obliged to stay in Cairo because of the Afghan crisis. He was represented by a member of his government.

European Commission to discuss with Member States their levels of overseas development aid

Regarded as a breakthrough at the twice-yearly meeting of EU Development Ministers was a decision to open a dialogue with the Member States on the volume of their overseas development assistance. "For the first time this will become a subject for discussion within the EU. It was only ever discussed in the UN and OECD context," said Poul Nielson, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid.

Dorothy Morrissey

This comes in the run-up to the UN Conference on Financing for Development, to take place in Monterey, (Mexico, March 2002), and the Summit on Sustainable Development (South Africa, September 2002), where the EU expects to take an active role. "The major political event of today's meeting is the Council conclusion on how to organise the EU for the conference on financing," said Nielson.

Improving development assistance is vital, said Eddy Boutmans, Belgian State Secretary for Development Cooperation, "if the international community is to keep to its commitment to reduce poverty by half by 2015." He believes that new sources of finance will have to be found, such as a tax on carbon dioxide – proposed in the Monterey preparatory documents – or a tax on speculative financial transactions – the so-called 'Tobin tax'.

Annual Report

Ministers congratulated the Commission on its first Annual Report on the Community's external aid, but recognised that the report had shortcomings. It will be the main public document on the EC's external assistance, an inventory of Community assistance, and will increase transparency and accountability. Calling it a "0 version", Nielson acknowledged that the report still had some way to go, but it was important

Poul Nielson, Commissioner for Development and Humanitarian Aid, with James Wolfensohn, World Bank President. In his two-day visit to Brussels, Mr Wolfensohn met with development ministers and had bilateral talks with Commissioner Nielson. The World Bank hopes the EC will play a leading role in increasing volumes of aid



to get started and establish a baseline for measuring progress. Development Ministers want in future a more explicit, complete report. They want the report to include objectively-measurable criteria on poverty reduction, so that progress can more easily be judged. They requested the Commission to present a specific report on coherence between development policies and all other Community policies such as fisheries, agriculture, and trade. Commissioner Nielson said that an improved data system would be in place next year, which would enable the Commission to report on a comparative, sector-specific basis.

The report was seen in the context of the reform of Community external aid. The Ministers noted that there had been "some progress" in improving the efficiency and effectiveness of EC development cooperation. They referred to the establishment of the EuropeAid Office, decentralisation, and a reduction in the backlog of unspent aid.

Development education

The Council stressed the need for awareness-raising on development issues. "This is especially important in the light of the EU enlargement, which will associate some countries with little tradition of cooperation, whose concern will be to catch up with the living standards of the existing member states," said Boutmans. "But we mustn't lose sight of the global problems of wealth-sharing."

Fisheries and poverty reduction

The Community has concluded fisheries agreements with a number of developing countries. Its communication "Fisheries and poverty reduction" was welcomed by the Council, and they expect that it will improve coherence in EU fisheries policies, poverty reduction, trade and the environment. "We accepted the Council conclusions on the coherence of the fisheries policy", said Commissioner Nielson, "and the introduction of the element of the interests of the developing countries in fisheries agreements." The Council will propose to the Commission that clearer criteria are established which take into account long-term as well as short-term interests.

Other issues

The Council welcomed the Commission paper on "Measures taken and to be taken to address the poverty objective of EC development policy."

It also welcomed the biodiversity action plan for economic and development cooperation, as well as the programme of action for the mainstreaming of gender equality in Community development cooperation, which were presented by the Commission.

The Council adopted conclusions on the above three issues.



Access to drinking water can have an impact on girls' education, because it is they who will be required to stop attending school to keep their family supplied with water.

GENDER BUDGET ANALYSIS:

Fewer words, more action!

“We want words converted into actions!”, like a leitmotif, could be heard throughout the Conference on Gender-responsive budgeting, organised in Brussels by the Belgian government, the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Nordic Council of Ministers and the OECD, on 16 and 17 October 2001.

Mounia Lakhdar-Hamina

What was it all about?

Behind the somewhat daunting term ‘gender-responsive budgeting’, lies an important concept of gender equality and the campaign to promote women. Gender-based budgeting means comparing the impact of a budget – at any level – on women and girls as compared to men and boys. If the use and allocation of public resources and the consequences for women and men are examined, one realises that women and girls are greatly disadvantaged. It is not a case of creating budgets in favour of women or even of increasing expenditure on programmes devoted solely to women. Far from it! Gender budget analysis helps governments tailor their budget so that it also caters for the poorest women and so that public resources can be allocated more effectively. Budgeting that is more sensitive to gender issues provides women with a kind of indicator of government commitment to address their specific needs and their rights to health care, education and employment.

Women, the first victims

To what extent, in practical terms, could gender-based analysis change the lives of women or girls in a developing

country? Diane Elson, a researcher at the University of Essex, attempted to explain by giving an example.

“In education, in a developing country, it is often girls who are the ones to suffer - if a school is too far away or even too expensive, it is girls who will be taken out of school in the first instance. Access to drinking water may also have an impact on girls’ education, because it is they who will be required to stop attending school to keep their family supplied with water. I do not mean that governments are responsible for this type of differentiation. But all levels – political, financial and social – should feel involved. If gender equality is to be achieved, a country’s economic situation must be transformed.”

To sceptics who wonder whether gender-responsive budgeting is all that important when compared with the world’s problems – famine, the HIV/AIDS pandemic – Pregs Governder, a South African MP, had a ready reply.

“If you study closely the problems of poverty or AIDS, they all have a gender dimension, and a lack of gender budget analysis is the cause of many problems for women.” He took the example of HIV/AIDS, and said that one of the reasons for the epidemic is linked to the fact that women are not empowered, in our society, to reject violence within a couple or to impose safe sex. Gender-responsive budgeting could help women gain greater economic and social power both within the family and within society.

A brief history

Gender budget analysis is not new – it was pioneered in Australia in 1994 by the federal government, but it was the Fourth Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), working for

gender equality, that truly publicised the struggle for more equitable budgeting. Since that time, projects have been launched worldwide by international organisations, governments, multilateral agencies and NGOs. In South Africa, MPs and civil society introduced the use of gender-responsive budgeting in 1995. Soon after, Canada, Tanzania and the Philippines, to give just three examples, followed suit. In all, it is estimated that 40 countries are currently implementing this type of project, around 10 of them in Africa.

Each country has developed an approach to suit its own political and economic situation.

No North/South difference

Although there is indeed differentiation between women and men in terms of budgeting, the 'developed' countries are no further advanced in this field than the developing countries. Both camps have produced very good gender budget analyses. One can actually speak of 'universality' in this case, North and South together, sharing their knowledge and experience. The conference also created a knowledge 'database' for rich and poor countries and thus generated a North/South alliance on women's development.

Conference objectives and action plan

The Brussels conference had two main objectives. Firstly a review of ideas and practical experience in the field. These had to date been contributed by people from different countries and, above all, from different fields (ministers of finance, education, MPs, members of civil society, etc). From this it would be possible to build up a common understanding of the concepts and instruments used. The second objective was to mobilise political and financial commitment on the part of governments and to reiterate the undertakings made by many UN Member States to undertake a gender budget analysis by 2015.

Over the two days of debate, the conference presented a six-point action plan. Briefly, this seeks an examination of budget processes to take equitable account of the needs of men and women, encourages women to become involved in this examination, and promotes the integration of gender-based analysis in the preparation, implementation and evaluation of national budgets at all levels.

Most of the participants at the conference wanted fewer promises and greater involvement, and they asked governments to assume more responsibility for their undertakings. Now we just have to wait for words to become actions!

The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), created in 1976, seeks to promote the status of women and gender equality. It works towards greater involvement of women from developing countries at all levels and acts as a catalyst within the UN system. UNIFEM supports a variety of projects in developing countries, ranging from aid to small enterprises, which have improved women's working conditions, to public education campaigns, the campaign to stop violence against women and even the creation of gender-sensitive laws. Noeleen Heyzer has been Executive Director of UNIFEM since 1994, the first woman from the southern hemisphere to occupy the post. Since that date, UNIFEM's resources have doubled and its field of action expanded.

The Courier met her in Brussels, while she was attending the Conference on Gender-Responsive Budgeting.

What is UNIFEM's role in the campaign to promote gender budget analysis?

We offer technical expertise based on shared experience and we also develop suitable tools for that analysis. 'What can be done, and how?' We try to answer this question in collaboration with the countries we support. We do not provide assistance for the 40 countries involved in gender-responsive budgeting, but after this conference we will be assisting 14. We also provide operational aid, that is, we train members of governments and other local agents. We encourage development policies in the field of gender-based analysis and, of course, we provide financial aid to certain countries and therefore also have to mobilise financial assistance from other organisations or countries.

How do you persuade governments to take part in gender-responsive budgeting?

We explain to them, just as we have explained to the conference, and give them specific examples relating to women in everyday life. Health is a good example, because it demonstrates that new mechanisms have to be set up if women are to have greater access to health care. We talk to them about responsibility in terms of their commitments, but above all we explain that gender budget analysis includes the concept of efficiency and transparency. The issue of good governance arises from an approach such as this. Everything is interconnected.

There is much talk of 'feminisation of poverty'. Can you explain this, and its link to gender-responsive budgeting?

Women account for 70 percent of the world's poor and are therefore the primary victims of poverty. Men and women experience poverty in very different ways – women are the last to receive nourishment, to be cared for, to have access to credit or training, and so on. Gender budget analysis could be a solution, but not on its own, of course. Such analysis may be a response to gender equality and the promotion of women's rights, and in this way it can be an effective campaign against poverty. Economic power enables women to keep control over money – when women earn their own living, the entire family benefits.



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A new dynamic sweeping the continent...

Africa stands on the verge of an opportunity that should be grasped – a dynamic that all of us, and in particular the European Union and the World Bank, should support.

In a speech in September 2001, World Bank Vice President, Africa Region, **Callisto Madavo** told European Union officials that there is a determined effort by African leaders to define the content of development programmes and to forge a new type of aid relationship built on African ownership and African leadership.

The New African Initiative (NAI)* is a strategic framework, produced by Africans, that will open the door to better partnership with the EU and the World Bank. The NAI, adopted in July 2001, is a pledge by African leaders, based on a common vision and a firm and shared conviction, that they have a pressing duty to eradicate poverty and place their countries on a path of sustainable development.

“African leaders are increasingly taking the reins to define where they want to take the continent and to build a new partnership between donors and African countries,” said Callisto Madavo. “The New African Initiative provides us with a useful framework for our development activities.”

As the two largest sources of concessional resource flows to Africa, the EU and the World Bank have an important role to play in this dynamic. Mr Madavo outlined some of the critical priorities and urged the international community at large to support Africa in the coming years, particularly in the context of the NAI.

Governance – building on “islands of success”

There is a window of opportunity to help African countries make dramatic progress in governance. Within the NAI framework, African leaders have placed a heavy emphasis on fighting corruption, strengthening institutions, and improving policies.

“We ought to help them translate these commitments into action,” he said. “Already there are seeds of change. We have seen encouraging improvements over the last years.”

* *Recently re-named NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development)*



Many countries have democratised and a number of them have restored macro-economic stability. Several leaders have launched vigorous campaigns against corruption. At the same time, there remains a huge unfinished agenda. Therefore, the challenge for the coming years will be to “build on these islands of success”, to scale them up, and to replicate them across the continent.

Particular attention must be paid to the processes used to design and implement assistance programmes to ensure they contribute to empowering ordinary citizens and to strengthening accountability of the governments to their citizens.

Conflict – a major development issue

More than 20 percent of Africans live in countries in, or severely affected by, conflict. African leaders have highlighted conflict prevention and resolution as critical challenges for the continent's development. In this context, Mr Madavo outlined three challenges for the coming years.

“First, we need to pay particular attention to the most fragile countries before the explosion of a conflict. Improvements in governance (in particular to avoid discrimination) and effective poverty reduction efforts can often go a long way.

Second, we need to take better advantage of windows of opportunity when they open – as is currently the case in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) – by moving quickly, with appropriately graduated support.

Third, we need to recognise that economic assistance is only part of the solution – whether it is for conflict prevention or for post-conflict recovery. To be effective, aid has to be part of an integrated effort (political, military, economic, and humanitarian) supported by both the warring parties and the international community.”

“We at the Bank are keen on supporting such efforts, but we cannot, and indeed should not, take the lead, because a number of the issues involved are outside our mandate”, he added.

HIV/AIDS – threatening the progress of a generation

Unless Africa gets a grip on the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the progress of a generation will be wiped out. Already there are 16 million dead and more than 25 million people contaminated.

There are a growing number of countries where the epidemic has turned into a national catastrophe. He pointed to his country, Zimbabwe, where about 35 percent of the population is contaminated and there are hundreds of thousands of orphans: “Behind these numbers, there are people – and individual tragedies. How can we even talk about development if we do not first try to tackle this epidemic?”

It is essential to continue encouraging African leaders to play their role, particularly with regard to prevention. Too often, they have remained silent. Things are now moving, but in many countries it is late in the day. They need to speak up loudly and immediately against the disease.

More resources, in particular grant resources, are needed. The World Bank approved a \$500 million multi-country project last year and is committed to ensuring that no good HIV/AIDS project will remain un-funded. But even concessional loans come at a cost. The World Bank is working on developing grant instruments, but more is needed. In this regard, the creation of the Global Trust Fund is “warmly welcomed”.

Added Mr Madavo: “Perhaps most importantly, we need to help African countries develop the necessary implementation capacity so that these funds can be effectively spent.”

Regional integration and trade access

There are many reasons for Africa’s lack of competitiveness, ranging from policies to infrastructure. But often, competitiveness is undermined by the small size of the economies. The median African country has the same GDP as a European city of about 50,000 people.

African countries should be encouraged to progress in their efforts towards regional cooperation and integration. This way, larger economic spaces with more opportunities for investors and entrepreneurs, can be created.

“We need to support these countries in following the European example and in adjusting it to their specific needs and situations,” he said. “We also need to help African countries compete fairly on international markets.”

Mr Madavo pointed out that since the late 1960s, Africa’s loss of world trade has cost it about \$70 billion a year. Too often OECD countries use tariffs, and non-tariff barriers to limit access of African products. The EU’s Everything But Arms initiative is an important step forward – but much remains to be done to improve trade access.

(Under the EU’s Everything But Arms initiative, adopted February 2001, quotas and duties are eliminated on all products – except arms – from the world’s 48 poorest countries. This made the EU the world’s first major trading power to commit itself to opening its markets fully to the world’s poorest countries.)

Debt relief and reducing poverty

In the year or so following the approval of the enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative in late 1999, 23 countries have been granted a total of \$34 billion debt relief. This is a remarkable success, but the World Bank Vice President for Africa emphasised that “the HIPC initiative is not over nor is it a complete response”.

It is important to extend decisions under the HIPC framework to more countries that are eligible, in particular by accommodating the special circumstances of countries that are emerging from conflict such as the DRC.

It is equally important to recognise that resource requirements of low-income countries extend well beyond debt relief. A reduction by only 10 percent of current aid flows would offset all that has been mobilised through debt relief. Yet, since the early 1990s, aid budgets have been declining as a share of OECD GNP.

“I am very distressed by the trend in Sub-Saharan Africa, where aid receipts have fallen from \$32 per capita in 1990 to only \$19 by 1998,” he added.

It is also critical to help countries improve the way external and internal resources are used. Governments need help if they are to implement budget and financial management systems that account properly for public spending. In addition, the implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers must be supported.

Supporting Nigeria's anti-poverty programmes



The key development priority of the European Commission is the struggle against poverty. ACP countries have public programmes to address this challenge, but in many, especially Africa, they are at best very weak and at worst subject to mismanagement and corruption.

Should we fund through a country's programmes or should we set up parallel structures to ensure that our funds reach the poor?

Nicholas Costello* discusses the advantages and dangers of both approaches.

If we fund through Nigeria's programmes, we can contribute to strengthening them. They will still be there when our projects are gone. It is more sustainable and automatically brings ownership by the country. But there is the danger that our funding will be subject to all the weaknesses of the country's programmes. In particular, there may be serious risks of mismanagement and of corruption. This danger has become real over recent years when funds from EC structural adjustment programmes appear to have been misappropriated in up to 11 ACP countries.

If, on the other hand, we establish parallel structures, we can ensure that the funding is well targeted to the objectives and we can build in transparent financial and auditing procedures. But the danger is that the structures we establish will live and die with the project, with no lasting impact. Meanwhile, the government's programmes will continue in parallel with their current problems. This danger has also become real in many cases, but it does not give rise to the same kind of public scandal as visible misappropriation of funds.

Starting from scratch

Development cooperation is almost starting from scratch in Nigeria. It was suspended in 1995 because of the execution by the then-military government of Ken Saro-Wiwa and other Ogoni leaders and resumed in 1999 with the return of democracy. Before 1995, the EC funded some very effective projects such as the Mambilla tea plantation and the North-East Arid Zone Programme. But these stand-alone projects had little or no impact outside the project area.

In recent years donors have begun to realise the limits of this project-based approach. The focus is increasingly on supporting countries improve their own systems, to reduce poverty themselves.

Arithmetic produces a *reductio ad absurdum* of the project approach in the Nigerian case. The EU, through the European Development Fund (EDF), has more funding available for Nigeria than for any other ACP country. The sum of €552 million (partly new funding, partly backlog from the sanctions period), however, amounts to less than 0,5 percent of the revenues available to the government from oil.

The funding available to the government has too often had little impact on ordinary people's living conditions. Large sums are allocated to health, water supply and education in the budget, but the reality on the ground often makes Nigerians wonder where the money has gone.

Partly this is because of corruption. Huge private fortunes have been amassed with money intended to address poverty. And low-level civil servants have often been almost forced into corruption when their legitimate income is not a living wage.

It is also because of mismanagement. A proportion of the funds get through to the grassroots to fund health-centres, boreholes and schools. But often the health-centres have no or outdated medicines; the schools often lack books, chalk, even teachers. The boreholes often do not work for lack of a spare part or because they were drilled in the wrong place.

Government is making a serious effort

This sounds like a recipe for despair, but the government of President Obasanjo is making serious efforts to address these challenges. In an October 2001 speech, the President described the situation when he came to power:

"What we actually found, and continue to discover virtually every day, was more shocking than we could ever have imagined. Everything, it seemed, had nearly collapsed: the economy, our physical infrastructure, the system of our social organisation together with our values and morals... and nothing seemed to work: neither our schools and universities and hospitals, nor our roads, nor our electric power plants, nor our farms."

Two years is too short to solve problems on this scale, but a start has been made. Though good technical management is essential, this is a political, social and moral matter. The President admits that "there is still evidence of persisting

attitudes of cynicism, selfishness, greed and narrow-mindedness, especially among the leadership class... corruption is still a problem”.

Nigeria has enough money to tackle its poverty challenges. If the government can win this battle against corruption and mismanagement, the money will start to turn into functioning schools, health services and water supply, thus laying the foundation to eradicate poverty.

The challenge for the EU and other donors is how to support this. It is fundamentally a Nigerian issue that cannot be solved by outsiders. Through signing the Cotonou Agreement, the European Commission and the government have become allies in poverty eradication and good governance. It is the EU's responsibility and obligation to support these objectives.

The EU approach

How can the EU best contribute to Nigerians' efforts? The answer depends greatly on the purpose we are trying to achieve. Is the aim to ensure that EC funds have the greatest possible direct impact on poverty or are we trying to help Nigerians address poverty in the most effective way? At first glance these sound like the same thing, but they are not.

EDF funds in Nigeria are about 0,5 percent of those available to the government. If the EU can contribute to a 2 to 3 percent improvement in the effectiveness with which Nigeria uses its own funds, it would be a much greater contribution than perfect use of EC funds.

That arithmetic suggests that we should work with our Nigerian partners to help improve the quality of their programmes. But arithmetic is simple and life is complex.

Working with Nigeria's programmes is particularly complex. It would be far simpler to set up parallel structures and do some good in a limited area. It would also be less risky, as it is easier to control the outcome of a programme set up specifically to achieve a limited objective than to achieve a wider objective such as “reform state and local governance to improve delivery of poverty-oriented services”.

Working with Nigerian programmes only makes sense if we have serious grounds to believe that these programmes can start to deliver services much more effectively. If not, investing EC funds into the government's programmes would largely mean wasting them.

This battle will be won or lost in Nigerian administrations at federal, state and local level. A programme to improve delivery of public services can only succeed where there is a real commitment to reform at different levels of government. No outside donors can buy reform; they can only support the efforts of those already committed to it.

The return of democracy in 1999 offers a great possibility to improve Nigeria's management of its own resources; but it is no guarantee. There are politicians and civil servants with a reform and poverty-alleviation agenda but there are still many with a self-enrichment agenda. However, the reform and poverty-alleviation agenda is publicly dominant and strongly supported by the President and many other major players.

Betting on reform

In the real situation of Nigeria, where reforms stand a good chance but are not guaranteed, the case for the EC providing support to help reformers implement their programmes is strongest. But the risks of failure are very real.

By opting to work with Nigerian programmes, the EC is betting on the success of Nigeria's current reform efforts. Success is not guaranteed – but it is possible by working together with Nigerian reformers. This is

The EU, through the European Development Fund (EDF), has more funding available for Nigeria than for any other ACP country. The sum of €552 million however, amounts to less than 0.5 percent of the revenues available to the government from oil. When the EU re-started development cooperation in Nigeria, the oil-producing River Delta area was an immediate beneficiary. The poor in this area had a profound sense of grievance that the oil wealth was by-passing them.

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more useful than the relatively risk-free strategy of developing stand-alone projects whose success does not begin to influence Nigeria's real challenges.

This debate happens in a context where there is pressure to achieve rapid results. The government needs to demonstrate a democracy dividend as a way to build confidence and head off multiple tensions over religion, ethnicity and resource control. It is tempting to spend the money too rapidly.

First, there is the problem of arithmetic: available EC resources and probably those of the international community are not enough by themselves to have much impact on poverty. Second, programmes that do not take the time to help improve governance will not have lasting impact.

It may appear that as outsiders there is little we can do with the scale of available resources; especially as there are enough Nigerian resources to solve the problem. But this would be an oversimplification because:

- Nigeria is not homogenous. There is a struggle between the forces of reform and the old forces of corruption and mismanagement. The Cotonou Agreement obliges the EU to support honest government and poverty-oriented service delivery.

- Though in terms of resources our contribution is limited, we may contribute disproportionately if our programme is properly designed. For example, we are in a good position to bring in experience from other countries that have made important improvements in public services delivery. World Bank work on Public Expenditure Tracking Systems in Uganda and elsewhere is a good example.

The EC's judgement is that a strategy based on Nigeria's own programmes involves taking significant risks, but that these risks are worth taking to make the maximum contribution to reform.

The new approach

After sanctions were lifted, the EU and Nigerian authorities agreed on an immediate package of actions following the traditional project approach. These are mainly micro-projects in the Niger Delta. For the bulk of the funding, however, the programme will be based on the new approach.

The state and local levels have received and will continue to receive increased resources and greater autonomy. Because these levels have most of the responsibility for poverty-oriented services, it is proposed to concentrate on them.

Given the large number of states, the EC will concentrate on one in each of the six geo-political zones of the Federation. The national indicative programme will support reform with the aim of radically improving service delivery, especially in the priority area of water and sanitation. The

The EC's judgement is that a strategy based on Nigeria's own programmes involves taking significant risks, but that these risks are worth taking to make the maximum contribution to reform.

programme will initially fund support for reform (training, institutional strengthening, technical assistance). Subject to progress in improving service delivery, a second phase will provide substantial direct budget support to the six states.

Improvements in the management of state-level resources are not a purely technical matter to be tackled

only by better administrative techniques and structures. They are also a social and political issue and can be realised in a sustainable way by strengthening controls and participation from below as well as from above.

A stronger role for civil society

The fight against corruption and the misuse of resources must certainly involve frequent audits at all levels – controls from above. But it also requires the publication of details of funded activities so that civil society can ensure that real use corresponds to intended use. This also involves creating practical mechanisms and/or fora to hold government accountable to civil society when real and intended use of resources do not correspond – controls from below.

At the same time, civil society's capacity needs to be strengthened to access, diffuse and make use of such information. It should also play a more proactive advocacy and lobbying role – for example, around the planning and budgetary process – on behalf of a range of popular constituencies.

Where strategically appropriate, civil society should participate in service delivery, particularly in the water and sanitation sector. This is important where private sector actors are included in the definition of civil society as they have a major, and as yet much underdeveloped, role to play in the water and sanitation sector, as emphasised in the new national water policy.

A programme of support to civil society initially within the six states is envisaged. The precise formulation of the support package within each state will vary considerably as a result of the diverse nature and history of civil society in different parts of the country. The programme may also strengthen the monitoring and other roles of elected assemblies regarding the budget.

Such a strategy involves a considerable vote of confidence in Nigeria's ability to improve service delivery at grassroots level. The EC proposes to give this vote of confidence because the chance of success is high and the chance that we can contribute to achieving that success at state level is equally high.

**Nicholas Costello was the EC's Nigeria Desk Officer in Brussels from 1998-2001. He has now moved to the EC's Delegation in Nigeria, where he is responsible for bilateral cooperation.*

Afghanistan

Meeting humanitarian needs

ECHO, the Humanitarian Aid Office of the European Commission, has been supporting relief projects in Afghanistan for many years. The events of September 11 and their aftermath have made a grim situation even worse but despite the difficult operating conditions, ECHO is strongly committed to getting the aid through to where it is most needed.

Simon Horner and Andrea Pontiroli*

The terrorist attacks in the USA and the subsequent military action by the American-led coalition have put Afghanistan firmly in the media spotlight. Today, there must be few people who are unaware of the humanitarian plight of the Afghan population.

Before September 11, the picture was very different. While it would be inaccurate to say that Afghanistan was forgotten by the global media – events such as the destruction of Buddhist statues and the arrest of western aid workers guaranteed occasional coverage – we were offered only fleeting glimpses of the human misery visited upon the people of this troubled nation, usually linked with stories about the desperate attempts of asylum seekers to reach more promising shores. The sad reality is that after 22 years of war and three years of crippling drought, the humanitarian tragedy inside Afghanistan was no longer newsworthy.

To be fair, the recent extensive media reporting of the crisis has included references to pre-existing humanitarian problems in the region. But the sudden blanket coverage risks creating a false perception that little or nothing has been done until now to ease the suffering of the Afghans. In fact, humanitarian agencies were all too aware of the enormous needs of the population prior to September 11 and were heavily engaged in ensuring that vital relief would continue to be available. At the end of August, the Afghan refugee population in neighbouring states – mainly Pakistan and Iran – was estimated at 3.7 million. Millions more were displaced or living in highly precarious conditions inside Afghanistan.

Internally displaced Afghans seeking food and shelter



ECHO – a long-standing commitment

The European Commission, which is one of the major donors in the region, has a long-standing commitment to help the victims of the crisis, working mainly through ECHO, its Humanitarian Aid Office. Indeed, on September 11, Poul Nielson, the Commissioner responsible for Development and Humanitarian Aid, was just about to board a flight for Islamabad when the news broke of the terrorist attacks in the USA. His programme was to have included visits to ECHO-funded relief projects in Pakistan and Afghanistan, discussions with aid partners about needs and meetings with local leaders (in both Taliban and Northern Alliance-controlled areas). Commissioner Nielson is scheduled to be in Kabul in early December, for discussions with key actors, to visit humanitarian projects, and to assess how best to help in the future.

Since 1991, the Commission has allocated almost €500 million in humanitarian aid to Afghanistan. The funds have been mainly channelled through UN agencies, the Red Cross movement and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

In 2000, €19 million was provided by ECHO for projects supporting displaced people fleeing the drought and the fighting, as well as for food security operations throughout the country. In 2001, before the terrible events in the United States, €23.3 million had already been allocated for further assistance to internally displaced people (IDPs) and Afghan refugees in Pakistan, as well as for drought mitigation. ECHO was also preparing to request extra funds for Afghanistan from the EU's budget reserve in recognition of the extreme nature of the emergency.

In humanitarian terms, the events of 11 September and their aftermath have made a grim situation even worse. Existing aid activities are clearly hampered, particularly following the expulsion of expatriate staff from Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, and because of the difficulties in organising aid convoys. However, the aid agencies are endeavouring to keep as many projects as possible going with remote management by expatriate teams



Elisabeth Roussel/ ECHO



Elisabeth Rousset/ ECHO

Afghans displaced from their homes. Millions of people are threatened by starvation, exposure and disease.

based outside the country. These rely heavily on the efforts of dedicated local staff working in exceptionally difficult conditions. At the time of writing, although mine clearance activities had been halted, schemes covering food security, water and sanitation, shelter and rural development were continuing.

New decisions to meet new needs

ECHO also responded promptly to the new circumstances which have given rise to new and urgent needs. As soon as it was clear that further massive population movements were likely, the Commission took an initial emergency decision for €4 million. The funds were used to support the immediate efforts of UN and Red Cross partners in preparing for a refugee influx and in organising the pre-positioning of stocks so as to reach Afghans stranded inside their own country. Aid agencies have been establishing bases in neighbouring countries close to the Afghan border to enable them to mount cross-border relief operations.

Given the unprecedented scale of the crisis, the EU's budgetary authority (the Council and the European Parliament) agreed to release €25 million from the budget reserve for further humanitarian action.

€1.5 million of this was committed in a fast-track decision to support the medical programmes of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). Planned beneficiaries included casualties of the fighting and mine victims. The presence of many uncharted minefields in Afghanistan and large-scale movements of people are a lethal combination.

A further €15 million is being provided for a range of projects run by different operational partners, targeting basic needs including food, tents and medical support. The remaining €8.5 million will be allocated, again with a focus on basic needs, depending on how the situation develops. ECHO is stressing the programmed deployment of aid which responds to the areas of greatest need in a highly fluid situation. It has not ruled out the possibility of seeking additional funds should the circumstances require this.

Resources for Afghanistan, including substantial amounts of food aid and assistance for uprooted peoples, has also come from other Commission budget lines while the EU's 15 Member States have made bilateral commitments to support the humanitarian effort. So far this year, the total EU contribution for Afghanistan (Commission and Member State combined) exceeds €310 million.

ECHO works closely with the UNHCR, the World Food Programme (WFP), UNICEF and the ICRC who are very much in the frontline of the relief effort, as well as with NGO partners present in the region. It is also fully involved in international coordination efforts aimed at maximising the effectiveness of the humanitarian effort. The scale of the challenge is daunting. UNHCR has predicted a 'worst case' scenario (assuming a ground invasion) of some 1.5 million new refugees. WFP is working to reach more than five million people inside Afghanistan who are in urgent need of food. The ICRC, meanwhile, is targeting some 540,000 IDPs and resident populations remaining in Afghanistan.

Humanitarian crises are, by definition, fraught with uncertainty, particularly when they are the result of conflict. What is certain is that, in Afghanistan, the world is facing one of the worst human catastrophes of modern times. We may not be able to predict the course of the war but we do know that millions of people are threatened by starvation, exposure and disease – and that they badly need help. ECHO, in a practical expression of European solidarity with the world's most vulnerable populations, remains committed to getting the aid through to where it is most needed.

** ECHO Information*

Men working on an ECHO-funded "food for work" project.



Elisabeth Rousset/ ECHO

ECHO's global reach

ECHO, the Humanitarian Aid Office of the European Commission, funds relief to victims of natural disasters and man-made crises outside the European Union. In 2000, it supported projects in more than 50 countries. The aid is channelled impartially to those most in need, regardless of their race, gender, religion or political beliefs. ECHO's partners, who implement programmes in the field, include specialised UN agencies (such as UNHCR, WFP and UNICEF), members of the Red Cross family and non-governmental organisations. ECHO is one of the biggest sources of humanitarian aid in the world. In 2000, it provided €492 million in funding and the figure for 2001 is expected to exceed €500 million. The funds are spent on goods and services such as food, clothing, shelter, medical provisions, water supplies, sanitation and emergency repairs. ECHO also supports disaster prevention, preparedness and mitigation projects in regions prone to natural catastrophes.

A NEW APPROACH TO FIGHTING CORRUPTION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

The Global Network for Good Governance

GNGG



Mukete Tahle Itoe,
Secretary-General
of the Network

During the past few years the promotion of good governance and the need to eradicate corruption have attracted unprecedented worldwide attention. The reason for this international concern is simple: human rights, good governance, democracy, sustainable development and the alleviation of poverty are interwoven and centre on the welfare of mankind. Hence the talk of “human-centred” development. But corruption makes a mockery of all this. So the fight against corruption is a fight for development, and

the promotion of good governance is a key factor in international development cooperation.

By Mukete Tahle Itoe*

Good governance – certainly in developing countries – is about the ability of governments to develop efficient, effective and open management of public enterprises, in order to foster sustainable development. Good governance is officially prescribed by the United Nations, the EU, the World Bank, the UN Development Programme, the International Monetary Fund and other inter-governmental bodies. International, national and regional non-governmental organisations have also endorsed its ideals. Unfortunately, in opposition to it is the universal monster known as corruption.

The situation in developing countries is a sad one. Corruption is the major obstacle to socio-economic and political development. It goes under many names: bribery, swindling, back-handers and embezzlement. Corruption affects the lives of millions every day. It erodes the provision of efficient public services and distorts private business transactions. It results in a waste of human and financial resources. It causes a bias in public spending in favour of “white elephant” projects where bribes are easy to obtain.

This is the background against which the Global Network for Good Governance came into being.

Birth of the network

In November 1999, twenty-nine professionals from about sixteen countries attended a training course on the “Legal Prevention and Judicial Control of Corruption”. It was held at the International Development Law Institute in Rome. Experts addressed the subjects of good governance, the rule of law, corruption, democracy and accountability.

At the end of the two-week course, the participants agreed that some international forum should be created for sharing

ideas, best practices and strategies in the fight against corruption and for promoting good governance. A series of informal discussions in the corridors of the Institute was critical in framing the issues to be tackled. The author was mandated to reduce these discussions to firm proposals and to draw up a legal framework for the forum.

Setting out objectives

On 17 April 2000 the Global Network for Good Governance was registered as a non-profit organisation under Cameroon law. The secretariat is based in Cameroon, in the seaside town of Limbe. The objectives of the Network are: to support government efforts to reform and strengthen public institutions; to co-ordinate the activities of other organisations and people involved in the fight against corruption and in the promotion of good governance; to help build democratic institutions and to ensure free and fair elections; to promote sustainable human development; to enhance the rule of law, the independence of the judiciary and respect for human rights; and to encourage and empower women in the management of public affairs.

Using the global village

The overall aim is to promote and sustain best practices in public affairs and honesty in private business transactions. The initiative is based on two complementary realities. The first is that, thanks to modern technology and advanced communication, the world is now a global village – people are more and more inter-connected. The second is that democracy, respect for human rights and good governance underpin successful socio-economic and political development.

The Network recognises that corruption is universal and manifests itself in a variety of ways throughout the world. It responds to this “unity in diversity” in a particular way. It encourages practical and country-tailored ways to combat corruption and to foster good governance at grass-roots level. Best practices are shared via the Network secretariat, which co-ordinates its activities.

Training programmes are essential



GNGG



GNNG

*Earth road in Gavoua, Cameroon
Improved road infrastructures facilitate socio-economic development*

Role of the branches

The Network consists of individual members and institutions in 21 countries¹. Each country branch is autonomous, with the obligation to inform the secretariat about its activities. It has an International Advisory Board made up of eleven people of high moral and international repute². The various country branches develop and carry out the activities of the Network. These include a massive public awareness campaign on the principles of public service. The campaign stresses selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership. It includes focus group discussions, dissemination of information, advocacy programmes, legal advice and counselling for victims of human rights violations. Training programmes are run on a range of subjects, including the empowerment of women, political participation, good governance, combating corruption, the role of the media in a democracy, political tolerance and the electoral process. Out of these activities come books and other publications. They also lead to better public service and stronger institutions. Country branches also take part in a global activity once every three years in a chosen country.

Civic action from the bottom up

The international community's increasing interest in good governance is timely and appropriate. Successful socio-economic development cannot be sustained without accountable, representative and participatory political institutions. Last year's Cotonou Agreement clearly states that good governance underpins the ACP-EC Partnership and that it constitutes a fundamental element of the Agreement.

However, government and official institutions alone cannot meet the challenges of good governance and sustainable development. By themselves they cannot overcome corruption and poverty. That is why the Cotonou Agreement obliges states to consult and involve civil society organizations (CSOs) and the private sector when defining development policies and strategies. This is a key difference from the old Lomé Convention.

In this process CSOs perform their classic role of complementing, and sometimes challenging, the state. By promoting and protecting civil rights, CSOs ensure that citizens have the means to express their preferences, engage in dialogue with policy-makers, and affect decisions in the public arena. This ensures that the interests of ordinary people, including women, disadvantaged minorities, children, and the poor are properly considered by institutions that make policy and allocate resources. Once policy has been made, CSOs act as watchdogs of state performance by demanding accountability in the allocation and management of public resources.

The Network believes that it is necessary to work from the bottom up, through programmes at the community level, to develop and sustain a democratic political culture. Such programmes are designed to engage people in initiatives that they themselves have helped to identify.

Benefits of involving civil society in governance

For this to happen, public institutions must be open to CSOs' involvement at every phase of a programme, including policy formulation, implementation and monitoring. So mechanisms must exist for the exchange of information and views. This might include, for example, the appointment of representatives from CSOs to official decision-making bodies.

The benefits of this new process are enormous. Government institutions become more transparent and accountable, and more responsive at the local level.

Local government has increased capacity to act. More people vote in local and national elections. People have greater access to improved government information. Laws and regulations are reformed. Ethical practices in government are strengthened. Relations between civil society and the military improve. Legislatures become more effective, independent and representative. The quality and quantity of private business transactions increase. Finally, and crucially, levels of poverty fall.

The fight against corruption is a fight for development

Our collective challenge

The challenge of the international community is therefore to lend active support to initiatives like that of the Network. Many inter-governmental and international organisations have formally indicated their support for the Network. Some of them have given material support. The object of its endeavours is to make the world a better place to live in, especially the developing world. Its aim is the pursuit of happiness, and to feel the impact of what Dr Chris Fomunyoh (of the Washington based National Democratic Institute) calls a true "democracy dividend" in our daily lives. This is our collective challenge.

** Secretary-General of the Network, and a magistrate. (P. O. Box 607, Limbe, South West Province, Republic of Cameroon. Tel: (237) 36 40 41. Fax: (237) 36 21 59. E-mail: tmukete@yahoo.com)*

¹ As of 30 April 2001: Bosnia, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Ecuador, Ghana, Italy, Kenya, Malawi, Malta, Mozambique, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Romania, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, the Netherlands, the USA and Zimbabwe.

² Justice Carmel A. Agius, a judge of the International Criminal Tribunal on former Yugoslavia, from the Republic of Malta is the Chairman. Mr. William Loris, the Irish-American Director of the International Development Law Institute in Rome, is the Patron. Justice Bader Al Arashidi, from Oman, is the President of the International Executive Council.

How mature is Senegal's political scene?

March 2000 marked a trouble-free changeover of political power for Senegal when the new government took over after 40 years of socialist rule. *Sopi* (Wolof for change), a vast movement led by current President Abdoulaye Wade, won a peaceful victory at the polls in February 2001. This is an important turning of the political page, thanks to the responsible behaviour of participants who played by democracy's rules. The *Courier* looks at a nation well on the road to democracy that must reconcile liberal economic policy with a difficult social reality.

Terra Negra/The Courier

Senegal had two years of intense electoral campaigning with several factors contributing to the successful changeover of political power: the good behaviour of the official and private press (the latter having supported the opposition during the socialist administration), the influence of trade unions and associations, as well as the respect for the political game by all involved.

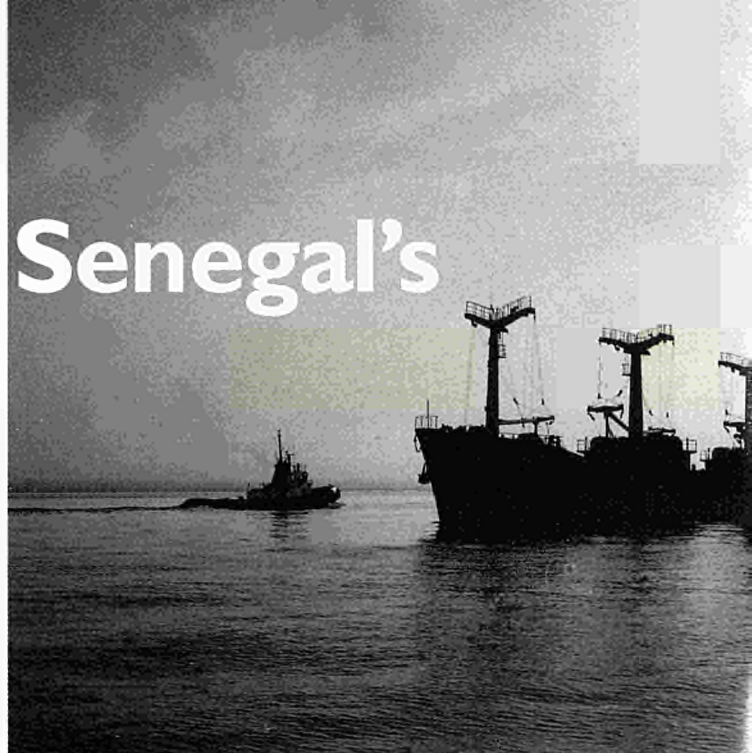
Even the generally omnipresent religious brotherhoods refrained from influencing the vote. Moreover, given the African context, the extremely correct conduct of the armed forces ought to be mentioned. General Lamine Cissé, former head of state and then Interior Minister (Independent), abided by the rules of the electoral process and the outcome of the elections.

A new political mosaic

The redefinition of the political landscape led to a polarisation between opposing forces. Government and opposition closed ranks, forming coalitions. The opposition set up the



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CPCO (Opposition Parties' Standing Cooperation Committee). The leading light, the Socialist Party, is surrounded by just a few symbolic figures who took part in the interim government before moving to the opposition benches. The major loser during the elections, the Socialist Party, has drawn lessons from its experience of the changeover.

"We are learning the lessons of democracy," explains Ousmane Tanor Dieng, Socialist Party First Secretary. "The causes show firstly the wearing effect of being in power and then the responsibility of the party. We are getting organised to build a serious opposition and to propose a democratic and social project for the good of the country."

The 30 parties underpinning the government's majority also rallied together to form CAP 21. This organisation set up a number of working committees and regularly crosses swords with the opposition. At the end of August, the opposition condemned the growing deficit and pointed to imminent State bankruptcy.

But according to former Integration Minister, Doudou Sarr, the deficit has not increased since the 2000 budgetary year, but there has been a substantial increase in State income and actual receipt of funds. Progress has also been made towards budgetary recovery. However, public spending has been held back and there has been no increase or reduction in this area.

"The actual situation is that we are recovering much better than expected and we are spending less. The situation is not one of bankruptcy, although good book-keeping doesn't mean a healthy economy," he explains. "During the same period, individual and collective poverty in Senegal has continued to increase."

Respect for the result of the elections has boosted public confidence and the government has been granted a honeymoon period in which to implement promised changes. The President has made a number of important gestures such as launching audits of a number of public administrations and institutions, moves towards privatisation, the enhancing of State services as well as a regional decentralisation project.

RADDHO – a final meeting before setting off on fieldwork.

Artisanal fishing is a priority for the new government.

He has also been working hard to re-establish Senegal's former prestige abroad by embarking upon a number of diplomatic missions to unveil his Omega Plan, an African globalisation strategy aimed at attracting foreign capital and evening out structural disparities, particularly in the area of infrastructure, education, health and agriculture.

However, given the urgent need for major structural change, voices are being raised to demand

concrete results and to denounce the slow rate of change. Says the Socialist Party: "The government are just amateurs. It's one thing to lead the opposition but quite another to govern a country. Trial and error will end up costing us dearly."

A vulnerable country

The top priority is still poverty reduction and macroeconomic stabilisation. In Senegal, 65 percent of households live below the poverty threshold and the unemployment rate is close to 30 percent. Senegal's situation is somewhat paradoxical: an average growth rate of 5 percent between 1996 and 2000, demographic growth, at 2.9 percent, below the growth rate, 2 percent inflation and a public deficit of at most 1.5 percent of GDP. Yet, despite these statistics the human development index is low – Senegal comes 145th out of 162 countries in the 2001 UNDP Human Development report. Senegal was admitted to the group of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) at the beginning of this year.

Essentially rural and with limited natural resources, the Senegalese economy is extremely vulnerable to climate vagaries and to rate fluctuations on international markets. The country is also having difficulty shaking off the effects of the CFA franc devaluation in 1994 and is still highly dependent on foreign aid. Recent price rises affecting basic products (rice, sugar, petrol), instability in the groundnut industry, the privatisation process and shortcomings in public services further exacerbate latent discontent.

Iba Ndiaye, General Secretary of the CSA (Autonomous Trades Union Confederation), explains that 61 percent of Senegalese voted against former Socialist President Abdou Diouf. The CSA went

*The 3rd Millenium door in Dakar:
a symbol for the future
of all Africans.*

along with them and supported Wade without negotiating anything in advance.

"Our central office is extremely disappointed. One year on, we still have the same list of complaints," he says. "We want workers' purchasing power to be raised, income tax to be reduced and a cut in the price of essential foodstuffs. If the people want to demonstrate their grievances, we'll be out on the street with them."

The government now has to address several issues simultaneously. Administrative management, transparency, the anti-corruption campaign, transport, education, public health, the environment, employment, regional integration and poverty eradication are all issues requiring substantial improvement and ones for which cooperation with the main donors is a prerequisite.

The EU role

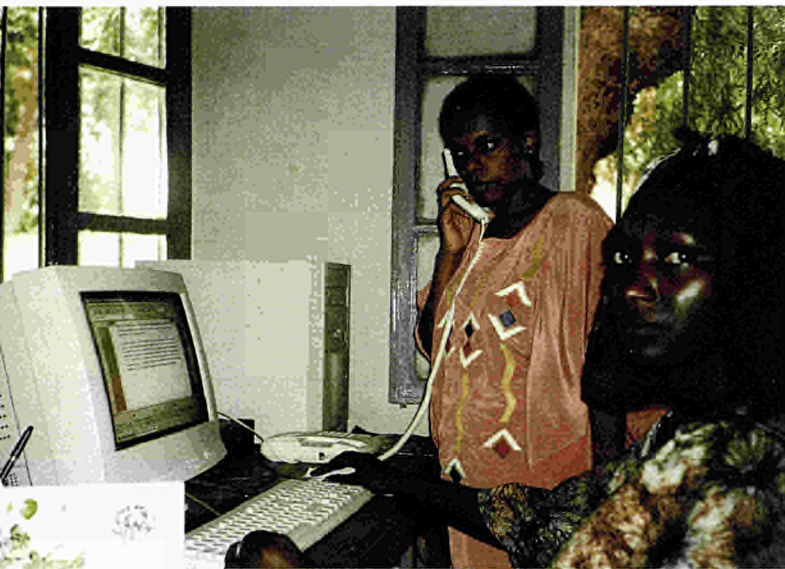
"The main thrust of European cooperation in Senegal is that there is no main thrust – Community cooperation is very fragmented, and spread over a large number of sectors and regions," says Thierry de Saint Maurice, head of the European Commission Delegation in Dakar. "It involves practically all sectors and practically all regions."

These comments are a somewhat provocative summary of the scope of the field of action of European Community cooperation in Senegal. Within the context of the 8th EDF (European Development Fund), European cooperation with Senegal mainly targets the restructuring of public services (particularly health and road-transport infrastructures), boosting agricultural growth, regional economic and political integration via WAEMU (West African Economic and Monetary Union) and ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States). The EU also supports local economic growth by creating jobs and local income, developing non-industrial fishing and farming methods and through decentralisation.

The future in local hands

The administrative decentralisation programme launched in 1972 is ready in legal terms but its implementation is still awaited. Extending as far as local elected representatives, decentralisation as an element in the democratic process is still very





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The two operators at the Thiés regional office.

much alive. The Senegalese government has just launched PSIDEL (support programme for local development initiatives), financed by the EU.

“The anti-poverty campaign at local level is still very limited and participation on the part of local actors in the development of their community still needs to be realised,” said Samba Guèye, PSIDEL Permanent Secretary, at the launch of the programme in Podor in August 2001. “This is why PSIDEL favours a joint approach including large segments of the population when implementing development actions.”

PSIDEL covers the regions of Kolda and Ziguinchor in Casamance and Saint Louis in the north of the country. In all, 59 rural communities (out of a population of approximately 900,000) will reap the benefits of the four-year programme, the aim of which is to bring local actors together to work directly for the development of their community.

Training and information support those in the field to develop projects that stand a chance of being financed. The actions implemented must improve social services and access to shared equipment. The task is an arduous one given that there is great disparity among the various rural communities. Nevertheless, common to them all is the impoverishment of wide strata of the population, insufficient basic resources, practically non-existent social services and lack of training.

Human rights in daily life

Cooperation also relies on civil society, helping it build a concrete structure and to gain skills. A good example is the support given by the EU to the NGO RADDHO (African Meeting for the defence of human rights), which relies on volunteer campaigners. Decentralised human rights watchdogs have been set up across the country to help RADDHO outposts in their work.

Mallé Mbow, RADDHO Assistant Secretary, says: “Within our general context of defending civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, the specific task of each watchdog is to identify infringements of human rights, to take witness statements from populations who suffer such infringements and to compile dossiers to be used as the basis for legal assistance.”

The EU funds two operators and their equipment, computer, a telephone line and an Internet connection. Although this aid is limited, given the wide range of needs, it allows emergencies to be signalled and provides adequate administrative support for the RADDHO outposts. At the Thiés regional office, the two operators stress the importance of being there to listen.

“We often have women come to us who are the victims of violence, and they find it very difficult to talk. The more clear-cut the facts and the more truthful the testimony, the easier it is to compile an effective dossier and to request help from the national office. At the moment, it’s easy to make contact with the local people – they come to find us,” one of the operators told the *Courier*.

Infringements of human rights usually concern the way in which police and legal procedures function, cases of domestic violence and observation of the electoral process.

“Our country’s major asset is that it is at peace, but there are vast areas where human rights are involved,” continues Mallé Mbow. “You only have to look at Casamance, or the north of the country, where the Mauritanian refugees are. There is also enormous social disparity, much reluctance and great reservation concerning the rights of women, and educational, health or environmental requirements, which are directly relevant to the right to a decent quality of life.”

Alioune Toure, the watchdog coordinator and executive secretary for the Thiés region, says there is 20 times as much work as can be handled. The greatest problem is that RADDHO, with about 100 campaigners, is the victim of its own success.

“We also organise awareness-raising and information sessions. We have to take into account laws, social realities and ignorance, and therefore have to make education of the people our priority,” he says. “We also have glaring needs, such as setting up radio transmitters or travelling around the countryside to teach people their rights. The scope of the work goes far beyond the number of volunteers we can supply.”

Deciding the future today

EU-Senegal cooperation has slowed somewhat over the last five years. The national programme incorporating the cooperation actions of the 8th EDF between 1997 and 2002 had many objectives, but the reform promised by the previous government was relatively slow in coming. Nevertheless, although the projects and programmes of the 8th EDF are at their launch stage, the future is being decided.

For the next five years, CFAS 184 billion (€282 million) is the budget allocated to Senegal under the 9th EDF. Senegal now has the opportunity to mobilise its citizens’ energies and to define, together with its partners, a specific field of action for cooperation.

The success of the changeover of political power has unquestionably consolidated the democratic tradition of a country that now has to reconcile its longed-for liberal economic policy with a difficult social reality. The search for political, economic and social stability goes far beyond petty political squabbles, but is a prerequisite in designing the future everyone hopes for.

More support for ACP businesses

The latest annual report from the Centre for the Development of Enterprise (CDE) – a joint institution created within the context of ACP-EU cooperation – describes activities carried out during 2000 and sets out the CDE's new priorities and strategies for the years ahead. The Centre has a new mandate, which is particularly important given the expected role of the private sector in both development and fighting poverty.

Kenneth Karl

The CDE's mandate was expanded by the Cotonou Agreement, which means its priorities and strategies are changing. The Centre is focusing on increased transparency, and its annual report, released on 13 September 2001, is an important step in that direction.

CDE Director Fernando Matos Rosa explains: "This annual report is different from previous ones. It is no longer merely a simple list of projects."

The report outlines the CDE's new tasks and the main guidelines that will underpin its strategy in the next few years. It also explains the CDE's organisational aspects, its instruments and products, budget rationalisation and the adaptations necessary since the changeover from CDI (Centre for the Development of Industry) to CDE.

The Director says the report should be seen in the context of a new desire for transparency, which is the institution's clearly posted objective in implementing its actions.

The annual report includes a detailed explanation of the sectoral distribution of CDE projects, their geographical breakdown between the various ACP regions and the number and nature of individual actions. It notes that the Centre, with approximately 1,000 calls upon its funds, concentrated its efforts on flagship sectors that enabled it to establish its reputation and in which it now has an undeniable comparative advantage. These sectors include agro-industry, construction materials, fishing, timber, textiles and mining.

*Mr Matos Rosa (centre), CDE Director
Mr Ghekire (left), Representative of the Belgian Foreign Ministry
Mr Simeau (right), Representative of the European Commission*



Adapting tasks and strategy to new requirements

The CDE's principal aim is to promote business development and to support the private sector in ACP countries. This was confirmed in its mandate and in its status as a joint institution under the Cotonou Agreement. Its activities have now taken on a new dimension owing to the increasingly important role of the private sector in development and in the fight against poverty.

The integration of the ACP countries into the global economy cannot be achieved without a strong and dynamic private sector and competitive businesses with genuine production and exporting capabilities. In this respect, the Centre fully intends to play its role in the great challenge of development.

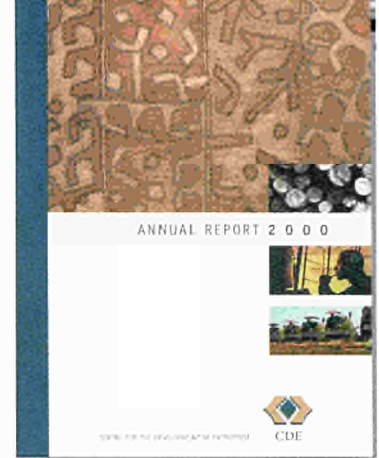
As a sign of renewed confidence, the European Commission recently entrusted the CDE with implementing the ambitious Proinvest programme to promote investment in ACP countries. The CDE also wishes to make its experience available to new key sectors of business growth such as health (pharmaceutical products), leading to a justifiable increase in the Centre's tasks.

The CDE's tasks include direct support for ACP businesses, support for intermediate organisations, support for ACP consultants and consultancy firms, cooperation with financial institutions, collaboration with other partners, implementation of Proinvest and CDE Link, the inter-business network and informal consultation body.

The combination of more than 20 years' experience in the field in direct contact with businesses and the imperatives of its new mandate have led the CDE to rethink its strategy to improve the efficiency of its actions. Several main areas of CDE activity over the next few years have been prioritised. These include:

- The Centre's pursuit of its decentralisation policy in order to improve the quality and speed of its aid with a view to better meeting expectations in the field.
- Its adoption of a proactive, sector-based, regional approach.
- The search for greater synergy and improved coordination with programmes implemented by other bilateral or multilateral players, particularly those set up by the European Commission, such as Diagnos, Ebas and Infac.
- CDE's stepping-up of support for ACP businesses in seeking international quality accreditation and respect for environmental standards to enable such businesses to gain a foothold in international markets.
- An improvement in its communication and information policy vis-à-vis the private sector is envisaged, with improved access by ACP businesses to new information and communication technologies.

*Contact: to obtain a copy of the CDE annual report, please contact Mr Daniel Pouzadoux, CDE
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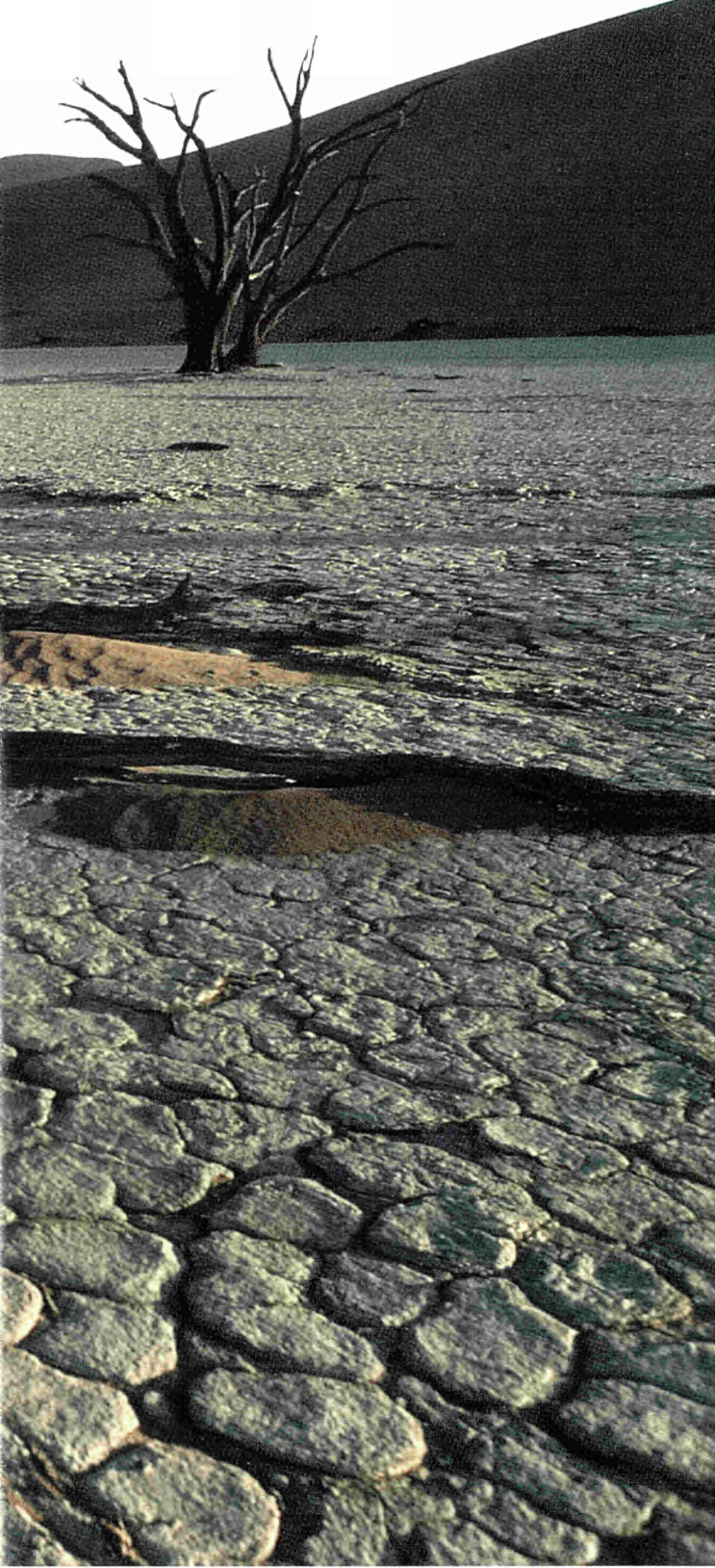




Dossier

Poverty and environment





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Everyone has the right to an environment adequate for their health and well-being. But what is the link between poverty and the environment? In many parts of the world it is the poor who suffer most from environmental degradation, from climate change, from deforestation, from drought, disease and from widespread desertification. These environmental conditions can, at worst, threaten their very survival. Environment is inevitably global, and what happens in one part of the globe has inescapable effects elsewhere, and on our common future. No society can afford environmental degradation. The concept of 'sustainable development' can be defined as ensuring that development should be aimed at alleviating poverty and allowing human progress, but without compromising environmental and natural resources for future generations. The overarching aim of development cooperation is to reduce and eventually eliminate poverty. Proper environmental management is inextricably linked with improving quality of life.



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The rural poor and their natural resources - understanding the link between poverty and the environment in a globalised economy

There is an intimate and complex relationship between rural poverty and the environment. But only in the past twenty years or so has the international community acknowledged it. Recognising the dynamic is a start, but do we really know how it works? A proper understanding is crucial to successfully tackling both poverty and environmental damage.

David Reed*

With the publication in 1987 of the Brundtland Commission's report, 'Our Common Future', governments formally recognised the importance of the poverty-environment link to the well-being of a substantial proportion of the human race¹. Five years later, at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, the international community made formal commitments to do something about it.

Formal recognition began to reshape development policies, but our understanding of the relationship between poverty and the environment was still quite simplistic. Initially it tended to reduce the interactions between the rural poor and the environment to a mutually reinforcing dynamic of deepening poverty and intensified environmental degradation. That "vicious circle" argument suggested that the rural poor drew on "natural capital" to survive: they degraded the environment in various ways that in turn fuelled poverty – and so on in a reinforcing process.

The link is too complex for simple theories

Slowly our understanding of the dynamics has become more sophisticated. A growing body of local studies has provided numerous examples of ways in which reducing poverty and improving environmental management have been achieved simultaneously. Many other studies have documented how either the alleviation of poverty or environmental management has suffered as the other side of the equation has improved. The poverty-environment dynamic is very complex and subject to numerous pressures that converge in unique ways at the local level.

Following the "vicious circle" view, other simplifications have gained currency in shaping approaches to addressing the poverty-environment nexus. While they all contain an element of truth in certain situations, each situation is far more complex than any one of them would suggest. Building strategies on simplistic analysis usually backfires against everyone involved.

The impact of economic reforms

Structural adjustment programmes and the resulting integration of the global economy have significantly affected the complex dynamics at work between rural poverty and the environment. Reforms supported by the IMF and the World Bank have altered the development strategies of countries around the world and have brought three fundamental changes to the development process.

First, the role of the state as an economic agent has been severely reduced. Second, the private sector and liberalised trade regimes now drive global economic expansion. And third, countries' institutional foundations - including legal, financial, political, and social institutions – are changing to support the new economic regime.

Increasing pressure on the rural environment

These policy and institutional changes have direct and often profound impacts on the economic opportunities of the rural poor, their access to environmental assets, and their ability to improve their living standards. The impacts in rural areas have been felt through three principal changes.

The first comes from incentives designed to expand modern, high-input agricultural systems and to take advantage of external market opportunities. These have increased pressure on areas where traditional agricultural systems prevail. These pressures have led to the displacement of peasants and rural communities, which give way to the imperatives of agribusiness and "plantations agriculture".

The second comes from new government incentives encouraging the conversion of forests and mangroves, among other ecosystems, into productive agricultural lands. These have increased pressure on communities living in and surviving on those natural resources. Conversion of forests into palm oil plantations, and of mangroves into shrimp farms are typical of this process.

The third comes from institutional reforms designed to support the new, more liberal economic regime. These have replaced tradi-

The "vicious circle" argument suggested that the rural poor degraded the environment in various ways that in turn fuelled poverty



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“Institutional reforms must allow the rural poor to increase their control over and access to natural resources in the areas in which they live”

tional institutions, systems of land and resource tenure, and forms of governance. These changes have weakened the ability of rural communities to defend their interests vis-à-vis more powerful companies and political elites.

Who benefits?

There is no doubt that structural reforms are necessary. In many countries they remain urgent. The question is which social groups will benefit from economic adjustment and liberalisation. Will the more adept and privileged continue to benefit from new economic incentives, to enjoy broadened implicit and explicit subsidies, and to have greater access to emerging institutions? The danger is that the rural poor, despite the promise of reversing a pro-urban bias, will continue to bear many of the costs.

No country has been able to raise living standards and significantly reduce poverty on the basis of agricultural production alone. Without exception, diversification of the national economy into manufacturing and service sectors has provided the foundations on which countries have created employment and raised living standards.

Urbanisation and industrialisation must play a driving role in raising living standards, but the fact remains that most of the world's poor still live in rural areas¹. Migration from rural areas will continue or accelerate in many countries in the coming years. However, raising living standards and providing sustainable livelihoods for some two billion rural people will remain an overarching imperative for governments and the international community for the foreseeable future.

Necessary conditions for combating rural poverty

I believe that progress in this area depends on fulfilling a number of basic conditions. Institutional reforms must allow the rural poor to increase their control over and access to natural resources in the areas in which they live. Governments must therefore help them improve their ability to manage these natural resources more efficiently and sustainably. Governments must also ensure steady investment – not dis-investment – in rural productivity. This can be achieved through the introduction of technological improvements, the extension of basic infrastructure, and access to credit.

Policies and incentives favouring urban areas must be reversed to provide a steady stream of financial, technical and human resources to rural areas. Political structures must be reformed to ensure that rural populations and rural issues are better represented. Finally urban populations must pay rural communities for their stewardship of environmental goods and services, on which healthy urban life and well-being depend.

A question of power and privilege

Some of these conditions can be fulfilled by reallocating investments and future opportunities, others only by the redistribution of current assets. Addressing the needs of the rural poor involves shifting the terms on which they compete with the privileged. It requires that subsidies and incentives be redirected away from the large producers to the small landholders and the landless.

It means a reordering of national development policies. “Traditional areas”, where many rural poor live, must no longer be relegated to the status of targets of welfare transfers and a source of cheap labour. On the contrary, these areas must be placed at the centre of national development.

Unless that happens the costs to society in the medium and longer term will far outweigh the gains offered by short-term returns from the market place. Those costs will be measured in social instability, environmental disruption and lost productivity.

All these changes require, to one degree or another, altering the distribution of national political power. This will inevitably be resisted by the powerful in developing countries, since their privilege is often based on their control of natural resources and environmental assets. But the strategic goal of enhanced livelihoods for the poor and sustainable management of environmental resources (what the European Commission and UNDP regard as a “win-win” scenario) ultimately depend on this redistribution². Strengthening the economic opportunities, management capacity, and advocacy skills of rural communities constitute the linchpin of changing that balance of power in the longer run.

¹ *World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, 'Our Common Future', Oxford, Oxford University Press*

² *Carney, Diana, 1999, 'ODI Poverty Brief: Approaches to Sustainable Livelihoods', London, Overseas Development Institute; 1998, 'Sustainable Rural Livelihoods: What Contribution Can We Make', London, Department for International Development.*

³ *UNDP/IEC, 1999, 'Attacking Poverty while Improving the Environment: Towards Win-Win Policy Options', New York, UNDP.*

Theoretical approaches to the poverty-environment link. All have some truth, but all over-simplify

Demographic spiral. As the population in a given rural area grows it surpasses the capacity of the natural environment to cope with it. This leads to the “vicious circle” dynamic.

Tragedy of the commons. Without clearly defined owners, common resources face pressures of over-exploitation. This often fuels the degradation of resources and contributes to the impoverishment of those who use the resources.

Kuznets curve. Environmental degradation will increase initially in a developing country until higher income levels lead to higher investment in the environment.

Market failures. The rural poor harm the environment because they receive the wrong market signals. The reasons for this include distorted markets, lack of information and lack of market access.

Zero sum argument. There is a fixed amount of resources. What someone loses, someone else gains.

Local is best. The basic tools and approaches for addressing rural poverty and improving the environment must occur at the local level. Local stakeholders must therefore design their own approaches to poverty alleviation and environmental improvement.

* *Director of WWF-International's Macroeconomic Program Office*

The environment: a tool to combat poverty

The environment is, above all, global. But environmental change affects different parts of the planet differently. Links between poverty and environmental degradation are complex, but obvious. People in developing countries are by far the most vulnerable to climatic variations, air and water pollution, deterioration of forests and biodiversity, overexploitation of fish stocks and the irresponsible use of certain chemicals.

Time is of the essence. Most of the studies conducted into the subject show that measures taken to protect the environment are too little, and too late.

François Lefèbvre looks at European Community support to its partner countries.

Aside from trade and economic relations, environmental interdependency links countries in the Northern and the Southern hemisphere through production and consumption. The emission of greenhouse gases or the transmission of disease through the food chain are just two examples. Ignoring the threats to the environment leads, in the short term, to an undermining of the efforts undertaken to combat poverty and, in the medium and long term, to an increase in destitution.

Nevertheless, the trend can be reversed. A reduction in soil fertility leads to a drop in agricultural productivity and, ultimately, the loss of vital resources. Pollution degrades the marine environment and is harmful to fishing. On the other hand, protection of nature increases tourism potential and, by the same token, the recycling of waste creates jobs in urban centres.

Cross-cutting issue

A healthy environment is a prerequisite for sustainable socio-economic development. Environmental aspects must be an integral part of any development action, as acknowledged in November 2000 in the Commission and Council-approved Statement on development policy, which strengthened the undertakings made by the European Union within the context of the Rio process and OECD discussions. The Statement takes account of the 1999 Helsinki Summit and defines the principal cooperation areas through which the European Union can help partner countries face up to the environmental challenges they confront.

Trade is undoubtedly one of the areas with greatest impact on the development of the ACP countries. So it is important to use commercial exchanges in order to enhance economic, social and environmental viability in developing countries. Using the

trade lever is, however, only possible if domestic and international environmental policies are implemented rationally and if governments can demonstrate proper management of public affairs. The potential effects of trade liberalisation can be calculated by evaluating the impact on sustainable development. This evaluation can also be a guideline for defining suitable measures.

The Cotonou Agreement makes provision for close collaboration between trade and environment, particularly in stepping up controls on the quality of goods and services and promoting more environmentally-friendly production methods to allow developing countries to gain footholds on the market for organic produce or 'fair trade'. Finally, some multilateral agreements (CITES, the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movement of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, or the protocol on biosafety) envisage the application of strict environmental standards. In this area, too, European cooperation can be used to assist the ACP countries in incorporating these standards into their domestic legislation.

Beyond boundaries

The management of river basins, exploitation of fish stocks, the campaign against desertification and atmospheric pollution, conservation of biodiversity, and regional trade in timber and non-forestry products are all transnational areas of potential conflict. To avoid this, dialogue between all the countries involved must be encouraged. By the same token, regional integration initiatives can be assisted – such as SADC, ECOWAS, ASEM, MERCOSUR, ASEAN, CARICOM – in their efforts to establish common environmental-protection strategies.

Well-worked-out structural reforms also improve environmental management. The Council and Commission are of the opinion that Community support for structural adjustment in developing countries must take account of the protection of natural and environmental resources. They also believe that economic reforms and transitional processes must be flanked by consistent environmental measures.

Several instruments can easily be used to promote sustainable development: macroeconomic development strategies can prevent economic growth harming the environment; fiscal reforms can eliminate subsidies which harm the environment, create stimulus for growth and introduce the principle of "the polluter pays"; reform of the state can incorporate environmental skills within various ministries; and environmental legislation can be strengthened both in the public sector and in the private sector.

During the last decade, governments of developing countries made great progress in introducing legislation on environ-

mental issues. But the application of these rules and the capacity to analyse and plan remain weak. Civil society seems to be more concerned about the impact of domestic policy on the environment than are the public authorities. The links between all players (government, NGOs, private sector and local authorities) should therefore be strengthened in order to enhance the involvement of citizens and elected representatives in decision-making.

Health, education and environment

Structural adjustment programmes are often directly linked to social sectors, particularly health and education. Demographic growth is one of the prime causes of pressure on the environment. Environmental factors are largely responsible for deadly diseases and for increased expenditure. The cost of the effects of atmospheric pollution on health in Jakarta was estimated at 2 percent of the country's GDP. Towns and cities in the Middle East, Asia, Latin America and Africa experience serious problems with water because of the over-exploitation of sources, with unsuitable waste disposal systems, waterway and river pollution and improper extraction of water from water tables. There are still many developing countries which produce and use persistent toxic chemicals which are highly dangerous to health. In order to improve the socio-economic development of such countries, environmental management must be integrated into programmes supporting the health sector, and they must be associated with effective measures for controlling demographic growth. Investment in education about environmental issues is needed, to change people's attitudes and to provide governments with the spur to implement necessary policies.

Transport and environment often come into conflict. Road, port, rail and air infrastructures all contribute to opening up regions or countries and promote their growth. Limiting atmospheric and noise pollution caused by traffic, and reducing its impact on ecosystems necessitates the updating of regulations on the impact of transport on the environment. Improved supervision is also needed, as well as lessening congestion in urban areas. Most of all, the intermodal

nature of rail, river, maritime and road transportation needs to be promoted.

Food security

Deforestation, soil erosion, desertification and pollution – in the long term these destroy the means of subsistence in the countryside and in the towns and cities, and exacerbate the precarious nature of existence. The inhabitants of rural areas play an essential role in the maintenance of the ecosystem. Why not involve them more closely in the drafting and implementation of programmes to prevent desertification and erosion; the use of renewable energy resources; diversification of rural activities and thus of sources of income; more efficient use of water resources; and innovation in agricultural techniques?

Public/private partnership

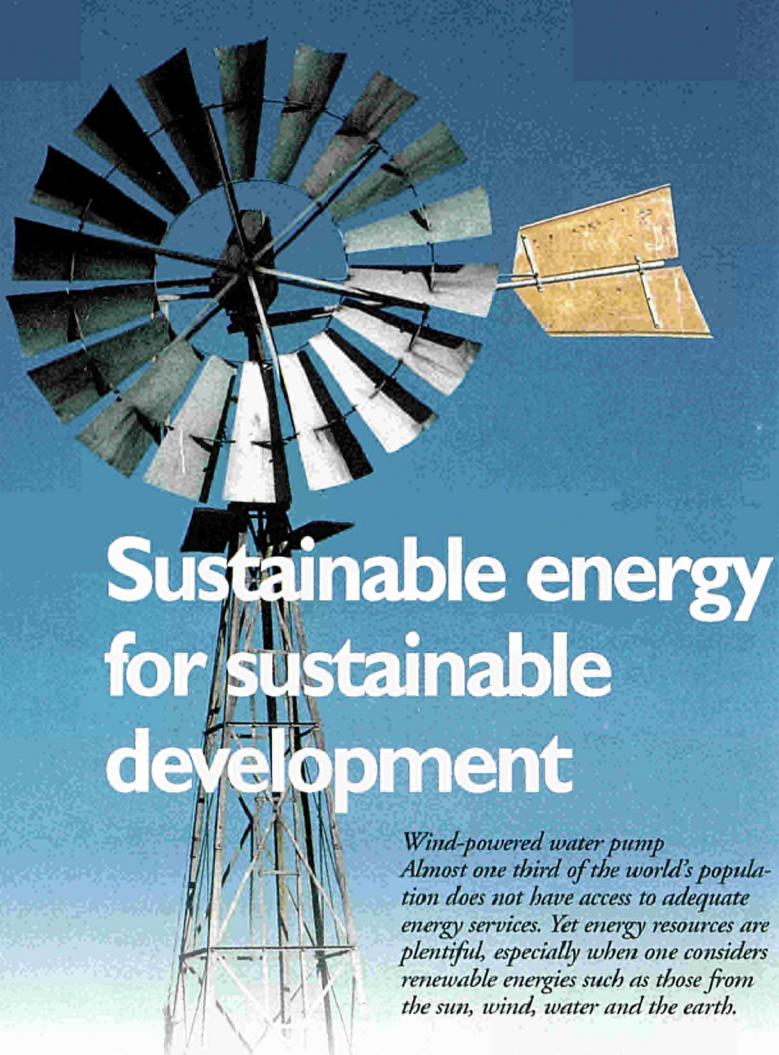
The private sector is a major player in the process of sustainable development. This is why the European Union intends to support it by encouraging environmentally-friendly production methods, the integration of environmental aspects into corporate decision-making, the efficient use of raw materials, natural resources, power and chemicals, and a reduction in pollution.

Environmental degradation can be both the cause and consequence of natural disasters and conflicts. The European Union therefore helps developing countries through disaster-prevention actions. It incorporates environmental issues into emergency aid, humanitarian aid and post-crisis rehabilitation operations.

The general objective of sustainable development can't be achieved solely through development cooperation. But there are a number of possibilities for enhancing the integration of environmental aspects into community development cooperation. The success of the proposals and initiatives presented here also depend on an essential and ongoing dialogue between Europe and its partner countries, and on the consistency of European policies. To face the challenge of "a sustainable environment", environmental integration is a prerequisite, since it can enhance the political, economic and social survival of the economies of developing countries.



*Environmental aspects must be an integral part of any development action
Developing countries are more vulnerable to the use of harmful chemicals*



Sustainable energy for sustainable development

*Wind-powered water pump
Almost one third of the world's population does not have access to adequate energy services. Yet energy resources are plentiful, especially when one considers renewable energies such as those from the sun, wind, water and the earth.*

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Energy services play a fundamental role in human development. They are essential not only for basic needs such as food and clean water, but also for improving livelihoods by permitting new productive activities. Improved energy services give new choices to the poor. The focus of many donors is increasingly to regard energy in its relation to the key social, economic and environmental sectors. The challenge is to integrate energy services into priority development areas – such as health, education, rural development – while ensuring that there is sufficient capacity in beneficiary countries to plan, implement and maintain energy programmes, in a sustainable manner, and encourage private investment.

Philip Mann, DG Development

Recent international activities have raised the profile of energy. The UN's Commission on Sustainable Development in 2001 (CSD9) focused on sustainable energy and helped to place it on the agenda of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in South Africa next year. The G8 Summit in Genoa considered recommendations made by a Task Force on Renewable Energy, resulting in recommendations in the Communiqué relevant to developing countries. A successful outcome of the UN climate change negotiations would provide new investment options for energy in developing countries through the so-called Clean Development Mechanism (CDM).

Closer to the ACP-EU family, a Working Group on the use of renewable energy sources in the ACP States, under the ACP-EU Joint Parliamentary Assembly, has made a number of recommendations to accelerate the use of renewables in ACP states. This Working Group supported the initiation of regional awareness-

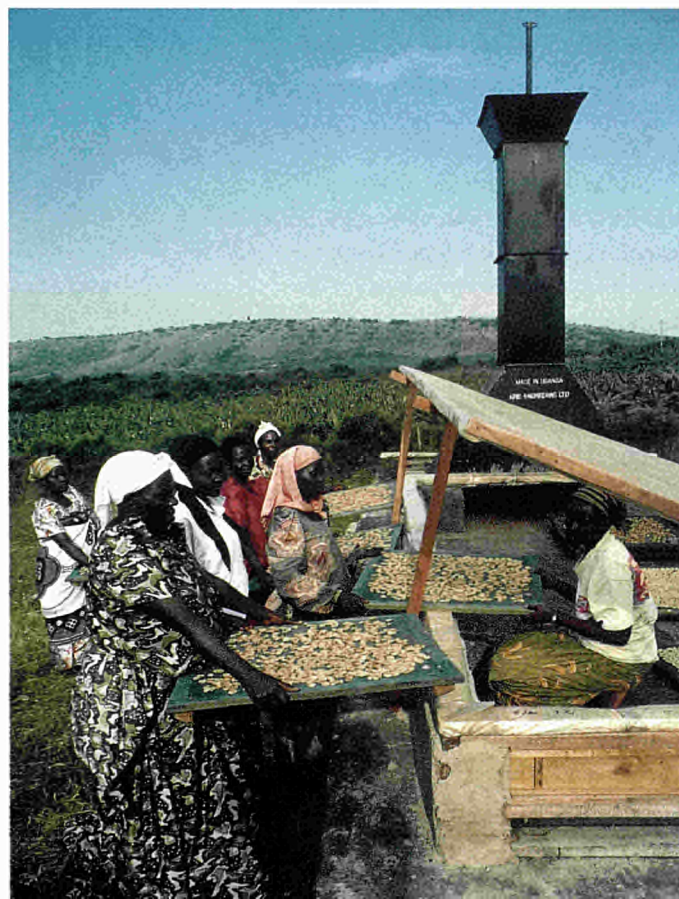
*Solar-powered food drier
Improved energy services give new choices to the poor.*

raising events for ACPs. In June this year the first of two events took place in the Dominican Republic to discuss sustainable energy in the framework of EC development cooperation with ACP island states. National Authorising Officers (NAOs), Deputy NAOs, Ministers and officials from 26 ACP island states attended, leading to a lively debate. As well as clear interest in the possibilities offered by renewable energy in the islands, most of which currently pay very high prices for imported fossil fuels, one of the main themes to emerge from this event was the need for institutional capacity building and policy support in the area of sustainable energy. Although few ACP islands will be specifying energy as a focal sector during their programming for the 9th EDF, the essential links between energy and the priority sectors that are specified (health, education, rural development, tourism etc) were highlighted. Integration of energy into these priority sectors should happen during programme design and implementation.

Energy and Poverty

It has been estimated that almost one third of the world's population – around 2 billion people – does not have access to adequate energy services; many of these rely on fuel wood and animal dung for the majority of their energy needs. With population increases the number without access to adequate energy services will increase. Yet energy resources are plentiful, especially when one considers renewable energies such as those from the sun, wind, water and the earth.

Energy is an essential aspect of human life. Food must be grown and cooked, water moved from its source, goods carried to and from the market. For the poor many of the basic energy inputs are currently human, such as those for water and wood gathering, requiring precious time and effort, particularly for women and children. Alternatives to human power can free time and radically improve basic livelihoods, helping to alleviate poverty. Improved energy services also lay the foundations for the development of new enterprises, and improved opportunities for access to health



©Ron Gilling/Wildlife Pictures

services, education and communication. One might say that improved energy services bring choice.

Energy is increasingly viewed by donors such as the European Commission as a cross-cutting issue, with the focus on energy services in support of social and economic development in the context of the international development goals (see box for energy linkages).

Energy and Development Cooperation

During the 1990s energy played a relatively small role in the European Development Fund, accounting for less than 5 percent of funds committed, due largely to competing development priorities with ACP administrations. A large proportion of the energy activities that were funded involved large, centralised systems using either hydro or fossil fuel-powered generation. There were also a number of programmes involving renewable energy.

European Development Fund projects involving renewable energy have included:

- Regional Solar Programme (PRS) in the Sahel, using photovoltaic solar energy principally for water pumping; PRS phase I is now finished; PRS II is due to start, with EDF support of over €55 million;
- Kiribati programme for electrification of the outer islands using photovoltaic solar energy. A successful first programme is currently being followed up with a second programme for electrification of more outer island communities.
- In South Africa a programme aims at providing solar photovoltaic energy for rural schools.

Large, centralised electricity generating systems are increasingly the domain of the international financing institutions and the private sector. The thinking of donors such as the EC is moving towards decentralised, user-focused activities, with energy being seen less as a commodity and more a provider of services. Renewable energy sources will have an increasingly important part to play in developing countries, particularly in rural areas, providing barriers to their adoption can be overcome. Improving energy efficiency should be a key area in all energy consuming sectors.

The private sector will be a key player, while public administrations must ensure fertile, stable conditions that will encourage private investment. Sustainable energy is not one of the six priority areas identified in the EU's development policy; instead it is viewed in its relation to key development activities. The question is not "how should energy be supplied?" but rather "how can energy contribute to health, rural development, education and other objectives?". However many ACPs lack the internal capacity to implement the necessary plans and policies. Within this context, current EC thinking is based on two main themes:

- mainstreaming energy into priority development areas, focusing on the need for sustainable energy services within key areas such as health, education, rural development sectors, as part of poverty reduction programmes;
- energy sector institutional and policy support to enable coherent sector planning and the creation of favourable conditions for private sector investment. Encouraging local ownership and partnerships between the various actors (public and private sector, utilities, NGOs and civil society) is seen as a vital part of sector development

Linkages between energy and other sectors

Social Sectors

Health – indoor air pollution from biomass use has been causally linked with serious and widespread health problems¹, a particular problem for women and children. Simple interventions, such as improved cook-stoves or a switch to modern fuels significantly help. Electricity provides cool conditions for medicine conservation and lighting in health centres.

Education – electricity for school/domestic lighting enhances education and provides the possibility of access to modern information sources (telecommunications, television, internet etc). Reduced daily drudgery from modern energy sources (eg water pumping) increases time available for education.

Gender – modern/improved energy reduces the burden of daily tasks for women, such as for water and fuel gathering and food processing. Electricity provides lighting for community centres for evening classes, and street lighting for improved safety.

Economic Issues

Trade – On the macro level, the high costs of energy imports are detrimental to national budgets, helped by reducing consumption through energy efficiency measures, and increased use of local energy resources. Energy exporting countries should ensure that resulting income benefits the whole population, including the poor.

Enterprise development – Access to adequate energy services is a necessity for most new enterprise development, whether in rural or urban areas, while lighting allows extended operating hours for existing businesses.

Domestic – improved energy supply and use can reduce the large proportion of poor household budgets currently spent on energy.

Rural Development

Electricity/motive power for enhancement of agriculture and new productive activities/business development. Pumping for improved water supply. Potential for biomass 'Energy crops'.

Transport

Energy use for transport (generally imported fuel adversely affecting trade balance) is influenced by technology choices, fuel choice, planning issues and urban development amongst many other factors. Choices made now can limit future dependency on imported fuels, as demand for transport increases.

Environment

There are multiple links between energy and the environment: between wood use and deforestation and desertification, between air pollution and the choice of fuels/technology for domestic use, industry, transport etc. Climate change is intimately related to energy supply and use.

¹ "Indoor air pollution from biomass combustion and acute respiratory infections in Kenya: an exposure-response study" M Ezzati and D Kammen, *The Lancet*, Vol 358, August 25, 2001

Energy has a key role to play in sustainable human development. Sustainable provision of energy services needs to be considered as an integral part of development activities. This is particularly true when considering decentralised energy solutions for rural areas. Renewable energy and energy efficiency will be increasingly important.

Private sector investment will be central in extending energy services to all. Public institutions must establish conditions which encourage the private sector, while ensuring that social safety nets are in place where competitive environments exist. In most ACP countries stronger public and private institutions need to be developed to allow for improved planning, policy making, regulation and delivery of energy services. This will require political commitment from ACP Governments, who along with donors, civil society and the final beneficiaries, increasingly recognise that improved energy services bring new choices to the poor.

A win-win situation for communities and conservation

Anyone who has visited the Eastern Caribbean island of Saint Lucia is aware that it has a lot more to offer than plush all-inclusive hotels and a beach experience.

The island boasts a vibrant natural beauty – the famous Pitons landmarks as well as fauna and flora found nowhere else in the world.

Debra Percival

Saint Lucia's *Kwéyòl* culture is alive on this Caribbean Island. *Kwéyòl* (Creole), the island's second language, is based on French, which reminds visitors that in the 18th Century, Saint Lucia was at the centre of the colonial struggles between France and Britain. The island changed hands 14 times before becoming a British Crown colony in 1814. Since independence in 1979, Saint Lucia has developed into a stable and prosperous country.

The island's breathtaking natural beauty has been reflected in the watercolours of artist Llewellyn Xavier and evoked in the poetry of Nobel Prize winner Derek Walcott. Today, this beauty is being preserved through an EU funded government programme. The Saint Lucia Heritage Tourism Programme is creating new jobs for remote rural communities and adding value to the island's tourism industry.

Michael Whittaker, Tourism Policy Advisor at Saint Lucia's Ministry of Tourism says the programme is rapidly becoming a model for sustainable tourism in the Eastern Caribbean region and beyond.

Developing sustainable tourism

For two years The Saint Lucia Heritage Tourism Programme – funded with a €2 million grant – has been supporting communities in developing tourist industries while preserving the environment. To date, some 60 projects have been financed under the scheme.

Project Director Felix Finisterre explains that when the government first put pen to paper on the programme in 1997, it was already recognised that large European and North American tour operators were organising accommodation for visitors and making money from various island tours. "They were packaging rural assets without concern for the participation of rural communities," he says.

Another important aspect of the programme is preservation of Saint Lucia's natural heritage from its coastal waters to the soaring Pitons. Establishing the programme's goals and drawing up a blueprint for defining sustainable tourism development was the next step.

Guidelines were developed stressing that foreign visitors should relate more to the island culture, that no waste should be left behind and that local communities should have a stake in any project. This could involve employing a tour guide or producing items such as local juices. In addition, the island's image had to be enhanced and the tourism product identified as "authentically Saint Lucian".

Fostering environmental conservation

The three-year programme was recently granted a nine-month extension. Funds were initially spent on public education to make people aware of the need to preserve natural resources and to stimulate the creation of small businesses.

St Lucia Eye Centre. Take a tour around the capital, Castries



Posters – “Taking the business of tourism to all our communities” – were distributed country-wide to spread the news of the availability of loans, grants, marketing support and technical assistance for small tourism projects.

Applications were accepted for grants and loans for capacity building, training workshops and tourism product development. Grants were also given to create facilities such as public washrooms and to upgrade sites by adding amenities such as beach restaurants.

The project also invites applications for technical assistance to analyse a project's feasibility. Finisterre points to a copy of a recent application to develop a recreational scheme at Mon Repos on the island's rugged west coast. The application includes a biodiversity study. A wildlife conservation component in the marketing plan intends to make the eco-traveller more environmentally conscious. The programme is also aiming to create a more conducive policy for environmental conservation.

Finisterre says that together with the Organisation for Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) small grants of about €4,000 are being given to improve environmental management systems, encourage good conservation management practices or build on an organisation's environmental efforts. The grant covers staff training, the hiring of consultants and the purchase of new equipment to track, audit and maintain environmental certification. For example, a scheme to tag turtles has provided employment for ten people in a community and to date has generated \$EC16,000 (Eastern Caribbean dollars).

“This is a win-win situation from which everyone benefits,” he adds.

The programme has expanded. Participants have formed an association and developed its own branded commercial tours with a very recognisable logo of the Saint Lucia whiptail lizard. The Heritage Tourism Association is now setting its own tourism product standards and is marketing an ever-expanding tour programme. Given the absence of a middleman, these tours work out ten to 15 percent cheaper than many others run by foreign owned hotels.

Beyond the typical sea and sun package

The programme has greatly expanded what the island has to offer to the visitor beyond the typical sea and sun package. The sales desks are conveniently placed to catch passengers from cruise ships. To date, about half a million tours have been sold to cruise passengers who stopover in Saint Lucia for a day. Excellent marketing material, including a map showing the location of all the tours, has been published.

A tour averages half a day to a full day and could include a hike taking in the rugged beauty of the east Atlantic coast or a walk around the capital, Castries, with its diverse history and rich cultural heritage. A waterfall at Latille on the west coast has a huge bathing pool surrounded by a tropical garden of fruit trees, herbs and tropical plants. Another takes in the Folk Research Centre and the traditions of Saint Lucia and its *Kwéyòl* language.

The Piton Flore nature trail is a hike through tropical rain forest and Mamiku is a collection of tropical gardens on a historic site dating back to the 18th Century. Another tour around the Fond Latisab Creole Park celebrates Creole traditions and practices including the preparation of cassava bread, traditional cooking practices, catching crayfish in the river and wood sawing. Another trip goes to Maria Island, home to one of the world's rarest reptiles, the Kouwes snake. And for the fit, a strenuous two-hour climb to the top of the Gros Piton in the south is another option. The descent is just as taxing, however. The Heritage Tourism Association is considering improving the trail.

Finisterre says the range of “branded tours” is now being privatised, including the transportation component, an essential part of any tour. In the middle of organising a week's events to publicise the programme – from a fish fry in Anse La Raye to a church service – he explains that beyond revenue from straight tour sales there has been a \$EC150,000 spin off from the sale of related products over the past seven months.

Pushing involvement even further

Some Saint Lucians believe that the involvement of rural communities in sustainable tourism could go a lot further. Llewellyn Xavier, whose paintings evoke the full, sensual, natural beauty of the island, is a passionate supporter of its conservation. He recommends building a hotel, perhaps using funds available under the National Insurance Scheme. At such a “home grown” hotel, Saint Lucian nationals could participate at every level. It could cater for all types of accommodation, from one to five stars. It would also make environmental conservation a priority.

Once it is up and running, Xavier suggests that each citizen could take a share or stake, however small, thereby reinforcing the pride of the population and enabling them to run the hotel as they see fit. Such a project, he says, would be another win-win situation for the Saint Lucian nationals.

“Red Piton II”, water colour by Llewellyn Xavier

Water - the challenges ahead

Fresh water is a finite and precious resource essential for sustaining life, supporting economically productive activity and for the environment. The analysis of water challenges in developing countries shows that any strategy for reducing poverty must address people's vital requirements for water. *The Courier* reports on the many challenges ahead.

André Liebaert, DG Development

A sustainable development policy that addresses the need for equitable and sustainable management of water resources is in the interests of society as a whole. Sound environmental sanitation, which interacts with water provision, is equally essential for human health, dignity and productive work.

Water security: a critical situation

Today, there is a large backlog of unmet need. In 2000, 1.1 billion people (17 percent of world population) were without access to a safe water supply and 2.4 billion people (40 percent) lacked adequate sanitation. The majority of them live in Africa and Asia. Population growth, rapid urbanisation, changing lifestyles and economic development increase pressure on water resources everywhere, especially in developing countries. The situation is particularly critical in peri-urban settlements.

This is further complicated in many developing countries because water availability is subject to large seasonal fluctuations, and periodic cycles of drought and flooding. Climate change is and will continue to be a source of additional stress, to which certain developing countries are particularly vulnerable and need support for adaptation. By 2025, two thirds of the world's population could be living in countries subject to water stress.

Water security is most critical at household level, but reliable supplies are also needed for agriculture, industry and energy production. Agriculture is the largest consumer of water. In some developing countries irrigation accounts for 80 percent of water use. Even though its share may decline with improved water productivity, using large quantities of water for food security is crucial in a world with a rapidly expanding population.

An increasingly contentious resource

Allocation of water among different users will become increasingly contentious. Mismanagement can lead to drought and desertification. Under such circumstances, the fact that many major rivers, lakes and underground aquifers cross national boundaries is a growing source of potential conflict. Sharing of water resources up- and downstream between countries with different development goals and institutional capacities is an issue in conflict prevention demanding increasing policy attention.

Water is also severely threatened by human activities. Many industrial and agricultural activities use chemicals that often end up in surface and ground waters. In the developing world most waste is discharged directly into rivers, lakes and coastal waters without treatment.

The ongoing depletion of water quality has severe implications not only for resource availability and human health but also for vital ecosystems that support essential services. Some global and long-term issues become increasingly critical as water resources become scarce. The impact of climate change on access to water leads to higher risks of extreme events and resource depletion. The impacts of global trade, including products that may affect water management, are also being felt. The international debate During the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade 1980-1990, meeting basic needs for water supplies and sanitation were the key goals. The Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro in 1992 recognised the importance of water in environmental sustainability and the need to safeguard ecosystems by treating it as a precious resource. The need to develop an integrated approach to water resources management was emerging.

The overarching global objective of achieving water security both in quality and quantity was recognised at the 2nd World Water Forum at The Hague in March 2000. These issues will be further addressed during the International Conference on Freshwater in Bonn in December 2001, leading to the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development to be held in Johannesburg.

Water and development priorities

Water management must be seen as a cross-sectoral issue to be mainstreamed within most development policies associated with poverty reduction. Because water is a social, economic and environmental good fundamental to all human activity, there are many ways in which sound management of the resource and of services dependent on it interact with the thematic priorities and cross-cutting issues of EC Development Policy, particularly:

- regional integration and cooperation, where water is a cross-boundary economic, social and environmental issue. This relates to conflict prevention, which is a political priority;
- equitable access to social services. Access to a safe water supply, sanitation and hygiene education is closely inter-related with health. In pursuing poverty eradication, social sector policies must aim at widening access, in both rural and urban areas;
- food security and sustainable rural development. Integrating the management of land and water resources and improving efficiency are key to water and food security, particularly in areas with competition for water resources.

In addition, institutional capacity building is a key component of sound water management strategies. There are linkages with trade issues, transport, as well as horizontal aspects such as gender, environment and research.

In 1998, the EC published a set of Guidelines for water resources development cooperation, whose centrepiece is a "strategic approach for the equitable, efficient and sustainable management of water resources".

Many industrial and agricultural activities use chemicals that often end up in surface and ground waters

Danni Widdie pictures





©Getty Images/Isopress

Ethiopia: Women collecting water in the Erer Valley

They illustrate how EC support has evolved by having stronger social and environmental concerns, more emphasis on management and increased support for education, training, capacity building and institutional strengthening.

The Guidelines established policy principles for water resources and water services management. Environmental concerns are addressed by specific principles such as:

- Water-related activities should aim to enhance or to cause least detrimental effect on the natural environment and its health and life-giving properties.
- The allocation and consumption of water for environmental purposes should be recognised and given appropriate emphasis.

An important component of cooperation

Water is an important component of cooperation programmes in ACP countries, amounting to three to five percent of funding under successive European Development Funds. Water supply and sanitation projects remain the major activity. Regional support is also given, such as water provision via solar energy throughout the Sahel (Regional Solar Programme).

Countries are assisted in adopting an integrated approach to water resources management, as in the case of the establishment of the Zambezi Water Authority in Mozambique and the installation of the Hydrological Cycle Observing System in Southern and Eastern Africa. Water related activities are also carried out in the framework of NGO co-financing, micro-projects and decentralised cooperation as well as within humanitarian aid.

Water management is emphasised in the Cotonou Agreement:

- Economic development. Sustainable development of water resources and fisheries.
- Social and human development. Increasing the security of household water and improving access to safe water and adequate sanitation.
- Regional integration. Water resources management is an area of regional cooperation and of conflict prevention and resolution.

Meeting the challenges

The policy profile of water should be high on the development agenda as an essential component of poverty reduction strategies and within the overarching policy framework of integrated water resources

management. Good governance, political and sectoral reforms are necessary. Awareness raising, institutional strengthening and capacity building activities are essential to support planning and decision-making, while ensuring participation of all stakeholders and ownership of policies and strategies. A shift in thinking is necessary to recognise that all water users have a responsibility to take an integrated approach whereby all actors cooperate as partners to integrate land and water management and to prevent pollution. This involves moving towards sustainable water behaviour and looking for innovative long-term solutions. Action is needed to tackle urgent and long-term priorities in providing water services, expanding sanitation coverage and hygiene education, meeting the urban challenge, achieving water-food security, protecting water eco-systems and managing floods and coastal areas.

The environmental challenge is to improve protection and restoration of water resources and ecosystems. Specific actions within integrated water resources management are required to maintain ecosystems so that fresh-water supplies are not compromised by over-exploitation or pollution.

Finding the proper balance

Actions need to ensure that key ecological systems are kept operational and that loss of species, habitat and bio-diversity do not deplete other resource bases such as fish stocks. Countries must find the proper balance between human needs and the intrinsic value of ecosystems at all levels of water management.

Declining water quality exacerbates the need to address the causes, not just mitigate the effects of increasing water pollution. For this reason, support should be directed at pollution abatement rather than curative measures.

Conflict prevention and peace building, which are EU political priorities, include sustainable and equitable management of shared natural resources, such as water. In all these activities, the EU, with its experience and resources, has an important role to play. Good practices must be developed and promoted, building on research as well as the experience of water management within EU river basins and in the diverse European approaches to management of water services. More commitment, thinking and action are needed from everyone to achieve water security, in quantity and quality, for the earth and its population today as well as for future generations.

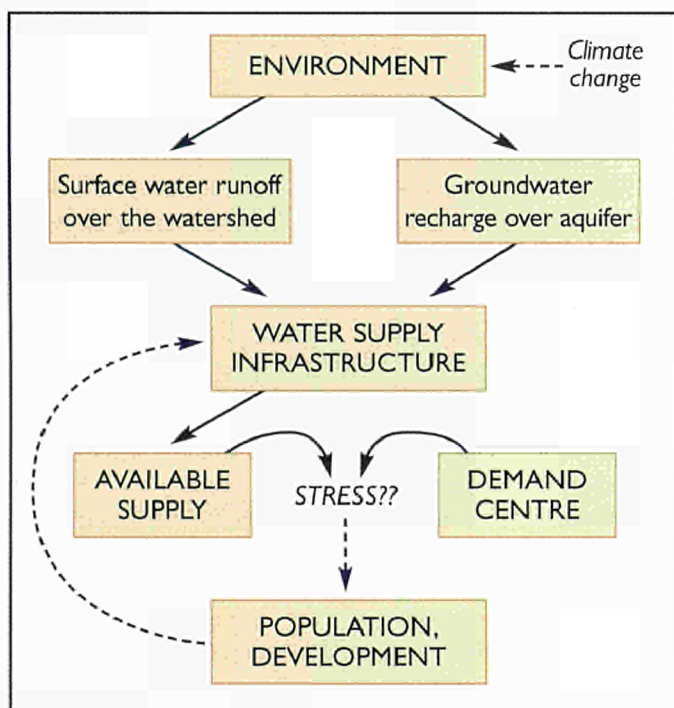
Southern Africa – water stressed by 2021?

Southern Africa's water resources are considered critical to any sustainable economic development strategy. As a result, planning in the region requires information on both sustainable water resources and the future driving forces of water consumption. This article reports on a recent project that analysed the population, water resources and economic interactions in Botswana, Namibia and Mozambique.

Molly Hellmuth*/Warren Sanderson**

Many of Southern Africa's water-related problems will be caused by urbanisation and the resulting increases in population and industrial-induced pressures on water resources. Earlier studies have emphasised that rapidly growing populations would lead to the rapid degradation of the region's natural resources.

During a three-year project by the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA) sponsored by DG Development, an integrated model of the water resources, population and economy of each country was created with the aim of understanding their interactions and their implications as these countries move towards 2021.



Water influence model diagram

To better understand the current and future sustainability of the water resources, Botswana and Namibia were broken into three SocioEcological Regions (SERs). The capital cities of each country were analysed in separate case studies. Because water supply is a function of climate and infrastructure, it was modelled for each watershed. Water requirements are a function of population, economics, and climate. Thus, changes in the welfare of the population will have an impact on the amount of water that is consumed.

HIV/AIDS – a significant challenge

Intricately related to the question of water sustainability is the impact that HIV/AIDS will have on the populations and economies of the region, because changes will directly affect water consumption. In light of the epidemic, the severity of perceived future water scarcity has lessened somewhat, but still exists primarily in urban centres. The direct incorporation of such driving forces into the water demand model allows for more insightful results for water planners and social scientists alike.

HIV/AIDS poses a significant challenge to these countries. Because of uncertainty in HIV/AIDS policies and future treatments a number of different forecasts of population and economic output were produced. In Botswana, the rates of HIV infection are the highest in the world. In the absence of a vaccine, it is estimated that Botswana will experience very little population growth over the next 20 years.

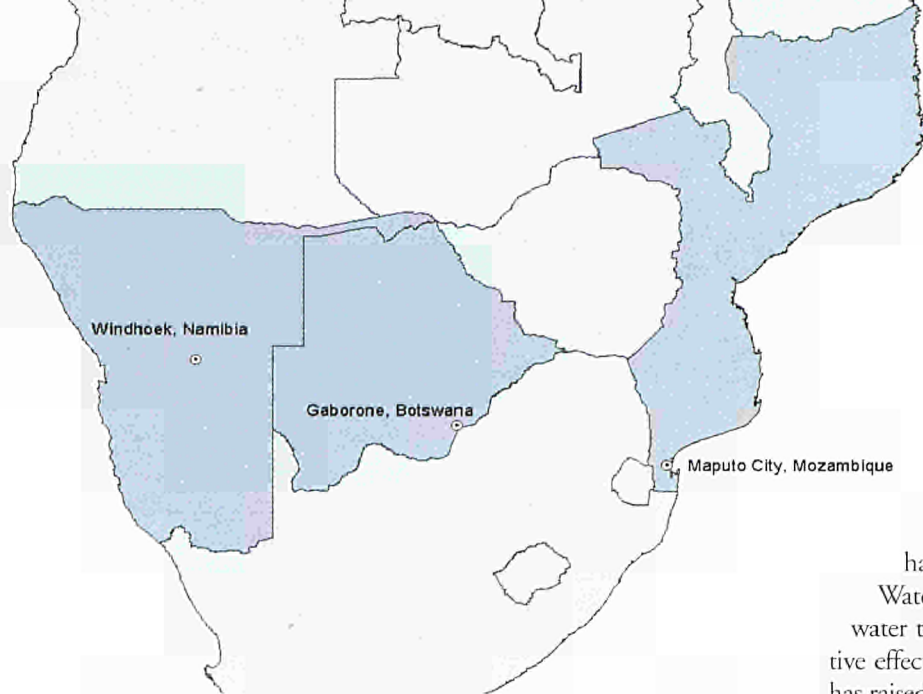
There is likely to be some population growth in Namibia and Mozambique, but not very much. There are several different paths of growth the populations may take, which partly depend on how the population responds to the threat of HIV/AIDS, whether medication programmes are implemented and their respective effectiveness in combating the epidemic.

HIV/AIDS could affect the economy through reducing exports, diminishing the number of skilled workers and reducing investment. The direct costs of HIV/AIDS, such as additional healthcare costs, influence the economy mainly by decreasing investment.

If per capita income increases as expected, people will consume more water as they become wealthier. In addition, industrial water use requirements will rise as the economy grows. If economic production decreases due to HIV/AIDS, a decrease in water consumption may result as the population becomes poorer and/or industrial outputs decrease.

Urbanisation leads to hot spots of water scarcity

Total country population levels may stagnate due to the effects of HIV/AIDS, causing a reduction in growth of domestic water requirements. However, an increasing trend of urbanisation will



continue to put pressure on the ability of urban water supplies to meet water demands.

For example, the eastern portion of Botswana is dominated by the large population centres of Gaborone and Francistown. Plotting the urban population (even on the assumptions of no behavioural changes from the mid-1990s and no use of anti-retroviral medication) and the urban water demands of the eastern portion of Botswana, revealed an increase in water demands despite the fact that the total population is changing very little. In fact, domestic water demands continue to increase as the per capita income increases.

Central to the consideration of the sustainability of a country's water resources is the question of scale. Studies that disregard the spatial heterogeneity of population and water resources are missing an important part of the story. Urbanisation will lead to hot spots of water scarcity in these countries.

In its study IIASA considered the capital cities of each country to get a clearer picture of the challenges that each city will face in the future. Each capital faces a similar challenge of providing enough water to sustain the expected growth in population and industry.

Gaborone water stressed by 2021

In Gaborone, Botswana, concerns that the water infrastructure would be unable to meet the water requirements by the year 2003 led to the commissioning and construction of the North South Water Carrier (NSC), which will transport water via a 360-km pipeline from the Letsibogo Dam in the north to the Mmamashia treatment works in the south. Due to problems with the pipes, it is not clear when the pipeline will be fully in service.

The project analysed the expected water stress for Gaborone in December 2021 with and without the pipeline in place by 2003. Because there is much uncertainty regarding how much rainfall Botswana will receive every month over the next 20 years, it analysed future levels of water stress based on 30 model runs given different possible realisations of monthly precipitation, temperature and vapour pressures.

Even if the pipeline comes fully online within the next three years, Gaborone will be considerably water stressed by the year 2021. The second phase of the NSC, a parallel pipeline bringing water from the north, must be in place before then to avoid water shortages.

Resourceful water managers in Namibia

Namibia is the most arid country in Southern Africa. Windhoek, the capital city, has relatively few water resources in the near vicinity. As a result, Windhoek's water managers are well versed in the use of water saving technologies and advanced water systems.

The question of where to find new water resources to meet the expected increases in demand have led to the idea of extending the Eastern National Water Carrier (ENWC) to the Kavango River to provide water to Windhoek. This option could have potentially negative effects on the downstream Okavango Delta ecosystem and has raised much criticism internationally.

IIASA's simulations suggest that conservation along with other approaches such as artificially recharging the Windhoek aquifer and bringing groundwater from the northern aquifers would reduce water stress in Windhoek enough to make withdrawals from the Kavango River unnecessary within the next 20 years. (An aquifer is a water-bearing stratum of permeable rock, sand or gravel.) However, this scenario assumes a significant decrease in risky sexual behaviour and an associated decrease in HIV/AIDS prevalence.

A supply deficit in Mozambique

The water supply of greater Maputo City (Maputo/Matola), Mozambique, is currently unable to provide enough water to meet the combined demands of its population, industry and agricultural users. Currently, only 29 percent of the population in Maputo/Matola has water in their homes; 21 percent take water from public taps. Half of the people in the city do not have any piped water, but use wells.

This situation will be exacerbated by the expected growth in demand by industry and agriculture as a new aluminium plant is near completion and plans to increase upstream agricultural production are in place. However, Mozambique can improve water supply quantity by repairing broken down systems.

For example, the water treatment plant does not currently operate at full capacity, and some of the pumps that transport water from the dam to the treatment plants are out of order. Project simulations showed that if 82 percent of the population was connected to the water system in 2021, there would be a supply deficit within the next 10 years.

Learning from each other

In many ways, being the driest of the three countries, Namibia has been able to forge a path towards sustainability through inventiveness using water reclamation plants and exploring underground water banking techniques. Also, the use of rational-cost pricing for water has been beneficial in both Namibia and Botswana.

In many ways these countries can learn from each other. In the case of Namibia and Botswana this dialogue could be crucial in avoiding long-term negative impacts on vulnerable ecosystems.

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The Kyoto Protocol – any benefits for the poor?

The eradication of poverty and reversing climate change are among the biggest global challenges of the 21st century. What is the connection between the two? Does a reduction in poverty and more economic growth mean more climate change? What do recent efforts to reverse climate trends under the Kyoto Protocol mean for the poor? Are they being asked to pay a price for other people's mistakes?

Artur Runge-Metzger*

The internationally negotiated UN Framework Convention on Climate Change and, particularly, the Kyoto Protocol, try to address the problem of climate change. Halving global poverty by 2015 is the acknowledged number one sustainable development objective. So are these two aims compatible and what does climate change mean for development cooperation?

The results of scientific research, analysing possible climate change scenarios and their potential adverse impacts, clearly show the linkages between poverty and climate change. The poor contribute least to greenhouse gas emissions and, hence, global warming, but they stand to lose the most from its adverse effects. At the same time they have the least means to adapt to climate change.

Vulnerability to climate change

Most poor people live in rural areas and their livelihoods depend to a large extent on natural resources. Their family incomes are highly dependent on weather and climate. The following examples are taken from the Third Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). They illustrate how the poor will be affected.

In Africa, grain yields are projected to decrease for many climate scenarios, reducing food security particularly in small, food-importing countries. Desertification would be exacerbated, especially in the southern parts of North Africa and in West Africa. Extreme events have increased in temperate and tropical Asia, including floods, droughts, forest fires and tropical cyclones.

Sea-level rise would put ecological security at risk, threatening mangroves and coral reefs. Subsistence farming in some regions in Latin America could be threatened. In small, island states the projected sea-level rise of five millimetres per year for the next hundred years would have drastic consequences. It would enhance coastal erosion, loss of land and property, dislocation of people, risk from storm surges and saltwater intrusion into freshwater areas. The cost of the resources needed to respond and adapt to these changes would be very high.

Less poverty = more global warming?

There is no doubt that satisfying the economic and social needs of the poor will require economic growth. The World Bank esti-

mates that every additional percentage point of growth in average household consumption reduces the proportion of people living on less than one dollar a day by two percent. However, for many environmentally concerned people the idea that one day over a billion people, currently living on less than a dollar a day, would drive their own car and live in air-conditioned or heated homes is frightening. A vicious circle of greater wealth leading to more global warming would, of course, only become a reality if developing countries were to follow a development "blueprint" similar to that which developed countries have followed.

De-coupling economic growth and consumption from greenhouse gas emissions is, therefore, one of the biggest challenges for sustainable development. This can be achieved through the development and transfer of climate-friendly technologies. There is ample room for improving the overall efficiency of developed and developing economies.

The amount of energy needed varies considerably from country to country. Significant reductions of greenhouse gases are therefore feasible without compromising economic wellbeing. It seems clear that there is enormous scope for knowledge transfer to enable greater resource efficiency. For instance, China has cut its carbon dioxide emissions considerably during the 1990s while at the same time achieving strong economic growth and reducing poverty levels.

What can the poor gain from Kyoto?

The Kyoto Protocol addresses the connections between poverty and climate change in two ways: by attempting to mitigate climate change and by helping adaptation to its adverse effects. There will be a number of potential major benefits for the poor from the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol.

First, there is the slowing down of climate change itself. The emission reduction targets for developed countries will in the long run reduce its adverse impacts and reduce the need to adapt.

Secondly, Kyoto is a spur to the development of climate-friendly technologies. Fulfilling their reduction targets forces industrialised countries to promote scientific research and other economic policies aimed at the development of "climate-friendly" technologies. For instance, the EU agreement with car manufacturers is designed to reduce fuel consumption considerably. Economic incentives are provided for renewable energies that will push up demand and bring down the production costs of these technologies.

Thirdly, there are new financial resources for technology transfer to poor countries. The so-called Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) will provide an economic incentive to the private sector to invest in environmentally sound technologies in developed countries. This will reduce greenhouse gas emissions in developing countries while supporting sustainable development.

Finally, there will be help for adaptation. The Kyoto Protocol Adaptation Fund will be set up to provide financial resources for

"Global warming, in particular, has the potential to totally transform global agricultural production, and to wipe out the gains that have been made in bringing about food security and poverty reduction in recent decades. This underlines the urgent need for all countries to ratify and implement the Kyoto protocol. To today's children in Africa, the trends in global warming, desertification and changing patterns of rainfall, with the potential dramatic decline in agricultural productivity, are not conference topics: they are grim challenges to the chances of survival." Commissioner Nielson addressing the International Conference on "Sustainable Food Security for all by 2020" in Bonn, Germany, 4-6 September 2001

developing countries to adapt to the adverse effects of climate change. This fund will be financed from an international levy on CDM projects and from voluntary contributions. Furthermore, as part of the Political Agreement in Bonn, a Special Climate Change Fund and a Least Developed Countries (LDC) Fund will be established in 2002. A number of donors, including the EU, have committed themselves to providing €450 million per year for climate-related programmes by 2005.

Kyoto is not enough

One should be realistic about what the Kyoto Protocol really can achieve for the poor.

The Kyoto emission reduction targets are far from sufficient to halt global warming. In the medium to long run, more radical cuts in greenhouse gas emissions will be needed. The withdrawal of the US from the Kyoto Protocol has created uncertainty over which measures the US will take to reduce emissions, and consequently about the extent to which greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced overall during the first commitment period between 2008 – 2012.

Future commitments will also have to include more countries. It is estimated that within a decade the greenhouse gas emissions from those without a Kyoto target will surpass the levels of the industrialised countries. So ways need to be found over the next decade for developing countries to limit the growth of greenhouse gas emissions without compromising their fight against poverty or the achievement of sustainable development objectives.

Furthermore, the potential benefits to the poor from the CDM will also depend on actions by developing countries themselves. First and foremost they need to ratify the Kyoto Protocol. So far only ten out of sixty-three low-income developing countries have done so. Secondly, an institutional framework for the implementation of the CDM needs to be set up. Thirdly, the business environment for private investment needs to be right to avoid repeating the skewed distribution of foreign direct investment, from which only a handful of more rapidly emerging economies benefit.

Fourthly, combining poverty reduction with the fight against climate change will require innovative forms of private-public partnership. The private sector cannot be expected to act alone in poverty eradication, which is in the broadest sense a "public good" and necessitates strong public involvement. One way to favour the poor is to favour small investment projects. This is why simplified fast-track procedures have been put in place for small-scale projects under the CDM.

It is clear that climate change is already taking place. Its adverse effects will occur more frequently and become more and more obvious to the poor. Developing countries need to prepare themselves to respond to these changes in the most effective manner.

Development cooperation challenge

The fight against poverty and the fight against climate change are closely inter-linked. In the long run, the poor are likely to benefit the most from action to mitigate climate change. The Kyoto Protocol is definitely not a panacea for all development problems, but it can bring clear benefits to the poor and to the sustainability of their livelihoods. These benefits will not fall like manna from heaven. Development cooperation must help the poor to realise the potential benefits of the Kyoto Protocol.

The starting point must be the integration of climate change considerations into national strategies for poverty reduction and for sustainable development. Capacity building and the setting up of an institutional framework for the CDM are essential. Above all development cooperation needs to put partner countries on a path of sustainable development that will help to de-link greenhouse gas emissions from economic growth, instead of contributing to more global warming.

**Principal Administrator in the European Commission's, Directorate-General for Environment (Climate Change unit)*

The international climate negotiations – state of play

For more than a decade there have been international negotiations on how best to tackle climate change. The first important milestone was the adoption of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1992. It calls on all 186 parties that have ratified the Convention to undertake adequate policies and measures to stabilise greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities will guide such actions. This means that the industrialised countries (so-called Annex I Parties) are expected to take the lead in reducing their greenhouse gas emissions over time.

However, the targets remained vague and actions were therefore unsatisfactory. The Kyoto Protocol was adopted in late 1997, setting for the first time mandatory emission reduction targets for the majority of industrialised countries. During the first commitment period from 2008–2012 emissions from Annex I Parties listed in Annex B are supposed to be reduced by 5.2 percent compared with 1990 levels. The Protocol also outlines how such emission reductions can be achieved.

Since then, the Kyoto Protocol has not entered into force as many details of implementation remained unresolved. In July 2001, after almost three years of very difficult negotiations, a Political Agreement was reached in Bonn clarifying the outstanding issues. On this basis the European Community and the EU Member States are now in the process of ratifying the Kyoto Protocol.

The "55/55" formula. For the Kyoto Protocol to enter into force at least 55 parties have to ratify it, and the ratifying Annex I parties have to account at least for 55 percent of the total carbon dioxide emissions in 1990. So far 84 parties have signed the Protocol, and 40 parties have ratified it, including only one Annex I country (Romania). This means that with the withdrawal of the USA almost all other industrialised countries need to ratify for it to enter into force. The EU's ambitious political objective is that this should happen before the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002.

Global warming the polluter is not the first to pay

Nicaragua devastated by Hurricane Mitch, flooding in Mozambique, the Mekong delta and Bangladesh, yellow fever in Côte D'Ivoire, mudslides in Venezuela, droughts in central Asia. The list is long and the results similar. Millions of victims, displaced people living in unhealthy conditions whose sole means of subsistence has been destroyed, and entire regions needing to be reconstructed. The link between these "natural" disasters and global warming is continually evoked by scientists. It is the people who contribute least to emissions of greenhouse gases who pay the highest price.

Isabelle Saussez

Ever since concern was first expressed in the early 1970s, a large number of climatologists have shown that human activity considerably modifies the balance of gases in the atmosphere, resulting in an increase in the average temperature on the planet's surface. Some gases (carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, etc) retain the heat of the sun on the earth's surface. Without these greenhouse gases, the temperature would fall by almost 30°C. Carbon dioxide is the main greenhouse gas produced by human activity. It results from burning fossil fuels such as oil, coal and gas. Human emissions have clearly increased considerably since the start of the industrial revolution and the mass consumption of hydrocarbons.

The world's political community took note of what the climatologists were saying and responded by organising a number of international conferences. Measures to deal with these climatic effects depend on a specific immediate commitment to observe the principles of the Kyoto Agreement.

Hurricanes, storms, droughts ...

Although it is no longer necessary to prove the existence of global warming, there is still uncertainty about its scale and specific effects. Analysing the various climatic models that have been developed over the last ten years or so makes it possible to get indices about the development of climatic phenomena. The IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), appointed by the G7, assesses the research work carried out by laboratories all over the world. Its last report predicted an increase in temperature of between 1 and 3.5°C between now and 2100.



The results of the climatic models reveal a significant risk that there will be an increase in the frequency and seriousness of extreme conditions and other natural disasters such as floods, droughts, storms, cyclones, etc. The negative impacts of the change in the hydrological cycle are not confined to extreme and one-off phenomena. In the long term, we will also see a great many changes in the environment: a reduction in water resources in arid regions, desertification, a raising of the sea level (between 15 and 95 cm according to the IPCC), erosion of coastal regions, reduction in harvests in tropical and subtropical regions, greater vulnerability of the marine food chain, mudslides, disturbances in the make-up and functioning of ecosystems, etc.

The increase in temperature risks encouraging the proliferation of parasitic illnesses and viral infections. There is a danger that pathogenic micro-organisms will become virulent and adaptable. The IPCC report predicts that the number of people living in an area in which malaria can be transmitted will increase from about 45 percent to about 60 percent of the world's population between now and the mid 21st Century.

The first victim: human development

It is obvious that no region of the world will be immune to the effects of climatic change. Up to now, it has been difficult to produce projections quantifying the impacts of climatic change on a particular system and in a particular place. The El Niño phenomenon, which devastated part of the Pacific Belt in 1998, is a good illustration of the difficulties scientists face in localising phenomena.



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Flooding in Mozambique in March 2000

This was due to a temperature change of several degrees at the surface of the waters of the Pacific and caused severe droughts and torrential monsoons thousands of kilometres away from the point of origin.

Despite the uncertainty, the IPCC report notes that some parts of the earth are more vulnerable to the effects of climatic change than others: people living in arid or semi-arid regions, low-lying coastal areas, regions that are dry or subject to floods or on small islands are particularly vulnerable to the risks associated with climatic change. Some regions have become more vulnerable to phenomena such as storms, floods and droughts because of the increase in the population in various vulnerable areas such as river basins or coastal plains.

Apart from "natural" extreme weather conditions that are frequently difficult to predict, the vulnerability of ecosystems and of human health also depends on socio-economic conditions and the organisational infrastructure. The developing countries are therefore the most vulnerable to the effects of climatic change, partly because they are the most vulnerable in geographical terms and partly because they lack the means of prevention (in particular with regard to the spread of disease) or of reconstruction if a disaster occurs. For example, the people who had escaped from the mudslides in Venezuela in 1999 were compelled, for financial reasons, to go back to their ruined homes and therefore to run the risk of being killed in another disaster. According to the 'World Disasters Report 2001' published by The Red Cross, 211 million

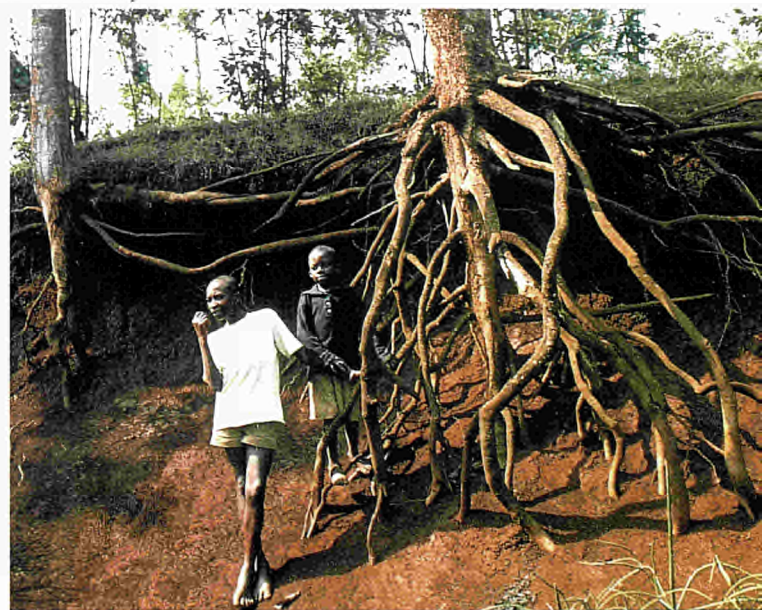
people are affected by natural disasters each year. Two thirds of the victims live in countries with a low level of human development.

And tomorrow ?

Global warming is inevitable, because the greenhouse gases already contained in the atmosphere have an estimated life of between 40 and 50 years. It is therefore time to concern ourselves with the longer term and not forget about the precautionary principle in particular. The developing countries, which are not included in the Kyoto commitment, can also play a significant role in solving this global problem. At present, emissions per head in the developing countries are approximately one tenth of emissions per head in the developed countries (approximately 0.4 tonnes of carbon per inhabitant per year as against three in the OECD countries). However, if current trends continue, China will be the biggest emitter of greenhouse gases in a few decades, ahead of the USA. The people of the North must be aware of these trends and encouraged to use alternative energies, such as renewable and biodegradable sources of energy, as far as possible. Biodegradable sources of energy are undoubtedly the most accessible source, since they do not require much investment or technical knowledge; they are provided by fast growing trees, grains, vegetable oils, agricultural waste and sugar cane (as in Brazil). Animal waste can also be used to produce energy using a fermentation process. China has been using this technology for over 20 years and now has 10 million biogas digesters using animal waste.

The earth's future depends on the way in which the developing countries choose to invest in energy resources. For this reason and in view of the current consumption levels, it is clear that the developed countries must set an example, in particular by saving energy.

Erosion, Kenya



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AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

An uneasy coexistence

Ten years after the Rio environment conference and one year before the conference on sustainable development in September 2002 in Johannesburg, a number of organisations and countries in the southern hemisphere are turning their thoughts to the relationship between agriculture and the environment. According to the FAO (United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation), between 1990 and 2000 13.7 million hectares of forest per year disappeared from developing countries. Most of this deforestation is a consequence of the work of European forestry companies, as is the case in central Africa.

Eyoum Nganguè

According to a report produced by the non-governmental organisations (NGO) Friends of the Earth and Forests Monitor, the Congo basin is the largest area of dense tropical forest after the Amazon region. Known for its biodiversity, this forest is home to populations who depend directly on the forest for their food resources, building materials and medicinal products. By sounding the forest-conservation alarm bell, the NGOs are concerned about the fate of the people who usually make their living from agriculture.

Population numbers and political will

Although external factors do have an impact on environmental integrity, one should not lose sight of the fact that those who make their living from the forest are sometimes also those who are responsible for its degradation. In Madagascar, 200,000 hectares of forest

In Madagascar, 200,000 hectares of forest are destroyed every year by bush fires which are mostly started by peasant farmers

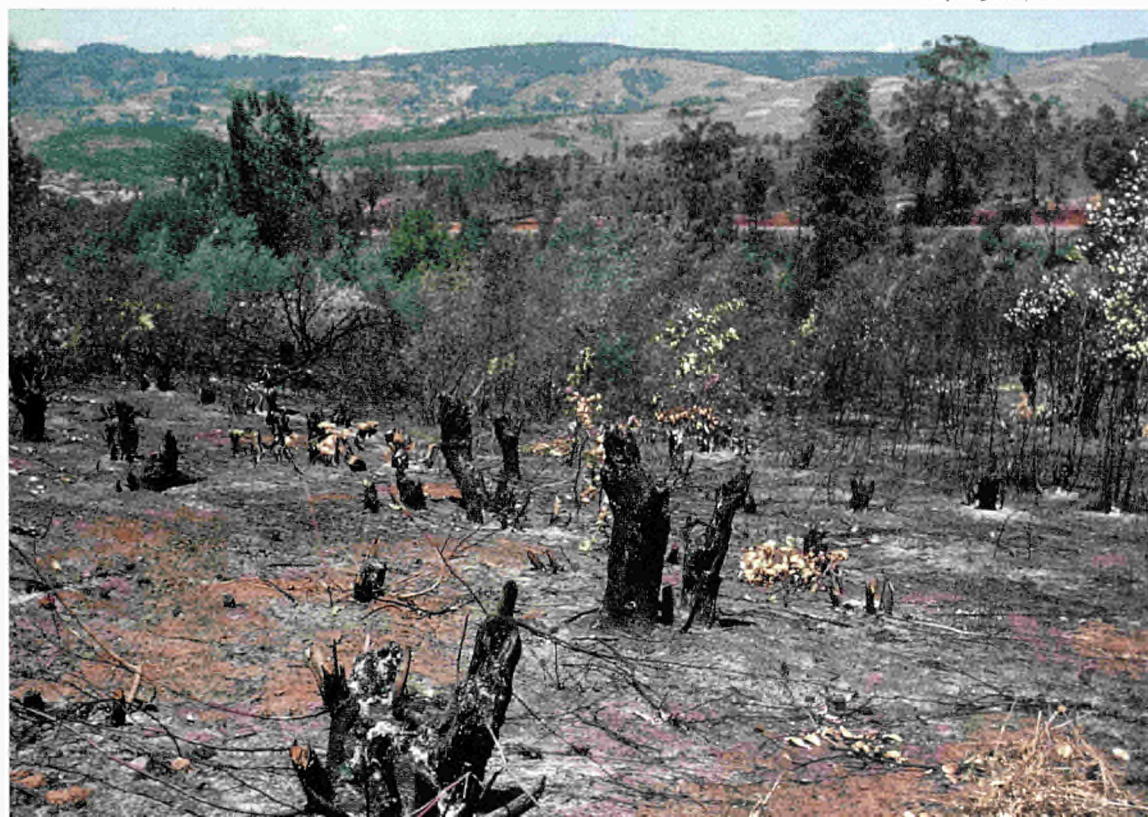
are destroyed every year by bush fires which are mostly started by peasant farmers.

In the opinion of Christian Castellanet, director of the GRET (Research and Technological Exchange Group) environment and sustainable development activity group in Paris, peasant farmers in developing countries are often accused of not respecting nature. He says that consideration ought to be given to factors such as demographic pressure, cash-crops development and mechanisation. He takes, as an example, Côte d'Ivoire, where for thirty years or so the authorities have encouraged the farmers to clear new areas in order to increase the extent of their crops. Generally speaking, in several countries there is land and forestry legislation which grants the right of use of land to those who farm it. This is why farmers tend to clear more land than they actually need for their immediate requirements.

This phenomenon was observed in Brazil over twenty years ago. There, to solve a political and social problem, the authorities in Brasilia encouraged peasant farmers to take over land in the Amazon region - with mixed results.

In Yetenga, in the arid north of Burkina Faso, demographic pressure and the climate favoured the intensification of agriculture by all possible means. This led to soil degradation, a shortening of the periods during which land lay fallow, and a drop in fertility. Peasant farmers were then forced to go further and further from their villages until they encroached upon ancient hunting lands.

Getty Images/Isopress



For Christian Castellanet, Haiti is the archetypal example of the impact of population density on the environment. In this Caribbean country, the economic situation offers no alternative to the sons of peasant farmers who have to divide up family lands and are thus forced to cultivate areas which get smaller and smaller from one generation to the next. The consequence is that the forest has disappeared, and even small copses surrounding the houses have succumbed to people's desire for greater crop-growing areas.

Trafficking in inputs

In developing countries, fertiliser can prove to be very useful in small-scale farming intensification strategies. The director of GRET told us that "if fertiliser is used to reconstitute organic matter and to boost fertility, this can only be positive in terms of agriculture". He also believes that a small amount of pesticides can sometimes save a harvest. Problems arise when the amount of fertilisers and pesticides used is too high. Proper training of farmers in their use would help to alleviate some of the ill-effects, which can impinge on the health of the farmers, the traders and the consumers.

Nevertheless, training does not prevent trafficking: some unscrupulous importers sell products that are prohibited in the United States and Europe, and there are also counterfeit products manufactured in West Africa. In 1994 and 1995, in the wake of the devaluation of the CFA franc, the price of imported inputs doubled. Tomato producers in the Fombot region in West Cameroon thought they were getting a good deal by purchasing inexpensive fertilisers from a retailer. They were sorely deceived, and a large part of their harvest had to be destroyed. In the same country, another scandal involving counterfeit fertiliser in genuine packaging also affected small-scale agriculture. No longer knowing which pesticide to trust, farmers have to rely on luck in order to maintain their smallholdings.

Another phenomenon is the development of urban subsistence farming. Within towns and cities, office workers are "returning to the land". In the lower-lying areas of certain capitals, such as Bangui (Central African Republic), heads of families have begun cultivating market-garden crops. Although regions with an equatorial climate have no genuine water management system, the same situation does not apply in the Sahel. In the Senegal River valley, governments in neighbouring countries need all their diplomatic skill to ensure that water usage runs smoothly. Over-irrigation of a farm in one country can dry up all the plantations in one region of another.

Genetically modified organisms: miracle or mirage?

Intensive, industrial farming also poses serious environmental problems. Banana-growing, for example, requires significant irrigation, with plantation holders in the

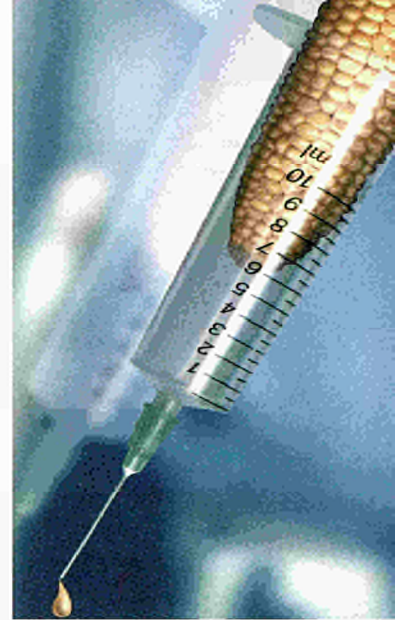
Caribbean and Africa being tempted to sink bore holes for their supplies, which threatens the water-table. Similarly, over-use of fertiliser constitutes a serious environmental risk insofar as the ecosystem is likely to be polluted by chemicals.

Cirad, an agronomic institute, recommends the use of composts rich in organic materials, but is also working hard to reduce the incidence of parasites on behalf of major groups in Africa and the Caribbean. It is also encouraging "expansion of varieties' genetic base, which should ease the constraints imposed by parasites", in order to increase production and to respond to the growing food needs of certain parts of the world.

Cirad is sometimes accused by anti-GMO militants of being a Trojan horse for genetically modified organisms in the Third World. Anti-GMO militants have two lines of argument: They believe that genes from other species should not be introduced into a plant: They point to an economic risk, which could arise by introducing GMOs into agriculture in poor countries - these poor countries could then become dependent on major GMO producers.

For Christian Castellanet (GRET), "many of the miracles promised with the advent of GMOs are simply an illusion". In his opinion, some researchers are no more than charlatans who advocate GMO use more through personal and financial interest than in order to improve the lot of the farmers. His is not a cut-and-dried opinion, but he believes that the majority of peasant farmers in the Third World have no need for GMOs. The other danger he foresees is that "there's a risk that all the research money will go to genetic sequencing", which, in the long term, could result in the abandoning of more conventional research, for example in fields such as crop combinations, biological combating of parasites, improved varieties, soil restructuring, etc., which are very much to the fore amongst the concerns of southern-hemisphere farmers.

This is why the global debate on GMOs should not conceal the fact that developing countries need an agroecology which takes account of specific realities and of the crops that local populations actually grow and which aims to feed the growing number of mouths. This is already a fairly difficult challenge. Between all-out deforestation by foreign timber companies and the increasing demands of a form of agriculture that is striving to be competitive, the room for manoeuvre of those advocating organic farming in the developing countries is therefore highly restricted.



Genetically-modified organisms



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MOROCCO

Organic farming is back in business

Just outside of Marrakesh, goats are busy nibbling away at the vegetation on the side of the road, and are particularly appreciative of the argan trees. These thorny trees are native to Morocco and produce oil with widely acclaimed qualities. They are spearheading the country's return to organic farming. Morocco is following close on the heels of countries in the southern hemisphere that are actively attempting to gain a foothold on the 'organic' market. The Moroccan example illustrates the socioeconomic advantages provided by this niche and the benefits for the most deprived people. It shows that working the land whilst respecting the environment can also be a path out of poverty.

Lisbeth Labetoulle

Morocco has every reason to be proud of the diversity of its ecosystems and bioclimatic levels which are among the richest in the Mediterranean. Farmers are learning how to exploit this potential whilst still protecting it. They are gearing their efforts essentially towards market gardening in the Agadir region and arboriculture around Marrakesh. The argan tree (*Argania spinosa*) grow in the arid plains of the High Atlas. In the north of the country, around Fez, Safi and Casablanca, are small olive and caper-bush plantations. Recently, Morocco gained a foothold on the organic market by adapting its potential to international demand and has begun producing fruit and vegetables out of season – that is, outside those periods when domestic markets can meet national demand. Morocco also exports tropical and subtropical produce – bananas, avocados and citrus fruits – to Europe. The country is the world's premier producer of certain native species, such as saffron, capers and the argan tree. This potential is particularly important for the poorest people in Morocco, as it is they who cultivate these crops. Starting off as a philosophical concept, the organic industry is having an impact on the socioeconomic situation of entire regions in Morocco.

The organic boom

The first tentative steps in organic farming in Morocco were taken in 1986, mostly involving citrus fruits and olives. It was not until 1992 that the sector began to take off. There are now over 20 producers who have opted for this market



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Women harvesting organic haricots, south of Agadir

niche, which was in the past the preserve of more adventurous entrepreneurs. Forty or so different species are cultivated over an area covering more than 12,500 hectares. Exports of organic produce in 2000 amounted to more than 2,500 tonnes.

Nowadays, the international organic market is increasing each year by 10 to 20 percent, and Morocco looks set to carve out a place for itself within that market. Moreover, in October 2001, Agadir was the venue for the International Symposium on Organic Agriculture, which brought together over 250 specialists from 35 countries.

Returning to basics

Organic farming is not a new phenomenon in Morocco. A review of the country's agricultural past throws up, for example, the word *beldi*, describing produce from the countryside cultivated by small-scale producers using natural methods – organic farming before its time. This tradition is still followed today, especially during religious festivals, when Moroccans consume *beldi* produce. The arrival on the scene of organic farming is to some extent a return to basics: some fifty years ago sowing and planting were organised on the basis of the lunar cycle, a language and practice in use once again in biodynamics.

Organic farming and *beldi* are very similar in terms of their cultural methods, but there is difference between them. The majority of *beldi* products are not currently bio-certified. This is natural production on a small scale, and they do not benefit from international accreditation and cannot therefore be exported in that form. Moreover, organic products are still unfamiliar to Morocco's population because they are not yet

fully integrated into the country's marketing circuits. Yet *beldi* has significant potential in the bio sector on both the national and international markets.

Trees and women

Organic farming offers real possibilities to the most vulnerable strata of the population. This is illustrated by the example of the argan tree – whose almond-type fruit is pressed to yield the famous oil. Argan farming represents a specific social function in agriculture, as argan trees are traditionally cultivated by women from the rural environment who have low socio-economic standing.

Because of their conversion back to organic-farming, these women have made their mark on the domestic and international agricultural market: argan-tree oil is now exported to Europe and North America, and the increase in its price has promoted the creation of new jobs and improved the social status of producers. Increased access to education bears witness to the beneficial consequences of this change.

No legislation, but courses and associations are being set up

Farmers are waiting for legislation which will regulate the sector, as is the case in Tunisia and Egypt. Currently, there is no regulation or accreditation in Morocco for organic produce despite the fact that this would enhance its status on domestic and international markets. Nor is there a specific working group within the Agriculture Ministry nor a specific budget for research in this field.

Despite this lack of training, organic farming is becoming institutionalised to a certain extent through university courses. The Hassan II Agronomic and Veterinary Institute in Agadir was the first to take the initiative by introducing specific courses in organic farming. This was an essential step because,

traditionally, the course had been tailored to conventional agriculture using synthetic chemicals and soluble fertilisers. University exchanges have also been organised, particularly with the Bari Agronomic Institute in Italy.

There are two national associations working to enhance appreciation of organic farming in Morocco. The Organic Producers' Association (APB) groups together professionals in the organic sector (such as producers, manufacturers and input importers, certification bodies). It aims to enhance development and promotion of its members' activities by encouraging training and technical assistance endeavours in the organic-farming sector. The MaghreBio Association is a body made up of organic-farming professionals and representatives from other sectors – such as teachers, doctors, dieticians, technicians, pharmacists. Their objective is to raise awareness of the advantages of organic farming and organic food by highlighting the importance of respect for the environment, preservation of health and quality of life.

Preservation of biodiversity

Organic farming, an economic growth sector, is a formidable weapon in the struggle for environmental conservation, and especially for the preservation of biodiversity. In an arid climate, it is also a method of production which not only saves water and prevents water pollution but also preserves soils and the atmosphere. At the other end of the chain, environmental protection encourages farming.

So, a good number of organic farms, which have a foothold on the international market, are enabling certain regions in Morocco to develop efficiently. The setting-up of a domestic market will undoubtedly make this trend more sustainable, particularly if *beldi* is combined with bio. Thanks to the MaghreBio Organic Producers' Association, efforts at raising people's awareness, university courses and international support, bio-farming has every chance of breaking into and enlarging its share of the market in Morocco.

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Men at work on an organic agricultural project, south of Agadir

New trade agreements aim towards sustainability

Trade relations between ACP countries and the EU will change considerably under the Cotonou Agreement. Instead of unilateral preferences granted to ACP countries, Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) will be negotiated from September 2002 and will enter into force in 2008. These agreements will take a more comprehensive approach to trade and will progressively remove all barriers to trade. **Christoph Wagner**, EC Trade Directorate-General, explains that the environmental dimension will be a key issue in this consultation process ahead.

Unilateral preferences have generally not worked to improve the balance of trade between ACP countries and the EC. Despite very favourable market access conditions – for example textiles imports are duty and quota free for ACP countries – the share of the ACP in total EC imports has decreased constantly from 6.7 percent in 1976 to 2.8 percent in 1999.

This is one of the main reasons that ACP and EU agreed on new trading arrangements and negotiations of EPAs. This will be a long-term process. Negotiations are expected to take about six years and implementation of the agreements will be step-by-step, taking into account the level of development, the economic and social constraints as well as the progress in the regional integration among ACP partners.

EPAs will lead to the creation of largely integrated economic areas between the ACP and the EC governed by a stable, predictable and transparent framework. Key economic objectives include enlarging ACP markets, allowing for economies of scale, improving the level of specialisation, increasing the ACP's competitiveness and attracting investment. The resulting increase in trade flows should contribute to sustainable economic and social development

What about the environment?

How were the environmental effects of such a policy taken into consideration when the parties agreed to negotiate EPAs? Is trade and economic cooperation dominated solely by economic and perhaps social considerations? These are important questions. Their answers describe how to tackle trade and environmental issues.

The Cotonou Agreement outlines the environmental component of the future trade regimes in Article 49. As a general principle, both sides committed to promoting “the development of international trade in such a way as to ensure sustainable and sound management of the environment, in accordance with the international conventions... and with due regard to their respective level of development”.

EPA negotiations will be based on this principle, which takes into account the dynamic factor in multilateral environmental agreements that is shaping a common basis to promote sustainable development. The second part of Article 49 deals with enhancing cooperation in this area and identifies three main objectives of cooperation:

- The establishment of coherent national, regional and international policies.
- The reinforcement of quality controls of goods and services related to the environment.
- The improvement of environmentally-friendly production methods in relevant sectors.



Capacity building is key

EPA negotiations provide a framework to be filled in by cooperation activities. This will reflect the fact that ACP countries and regions are especially vulnerable to environmental dangers and may not have the necessary capacities to mitigate adverse effects.

The reinforcement of quality controls of goods and services related to the environment should be central to agreements on certification and standardisation schemes. Assistance and adequate capacity building for developing environment-friendly production methods can contribute substantially to enhancing the competitiveness of certain ACP sectors.

For example, support might focus on promoting organic products, eco-labelling or fair trade schemes. Such initiatives would have positive environmental effects, broaden North-South trade, provide new market opportunities and generate income for developing countries.

A comprehensive approach is required

The Cotonou Agreement also recognises sustainability of trade as a core principle for future economic and trade cooperation. In other words, negotiators must consider environmental, social and economic effects. This is in full conformity with the EU's Cardiff process, which calls for integration of environmental considerations in all EU policies, and the strategy for sustainable development as agreed in Gothenburg.

A holistic approach to ACP countries is required, linking trade policies with economic reform as well as social and envi-

"...any trade strategy that leads to the establishment of new industries or an increase of agricultural output will have social, economic and environmental effects"



ronmental policies. For example, any trade strategy that leads to the establishment of new industries or an increase of agricultural output will have social, economic and environmental effects.

Clearly, an appropriate analysis of possible effects should be carried out before such a trade strategy is implemented. Results of this analysis should then influence the final definition and fine-tuning of policies. This could also lead to the introduction of appropriate flanking measures such as strengthening of the administrations responsible for drafting and implementing the environmental and social regulatory framework.

To be prepared for such a holistic and comprehensive approach, the Commission will launch a Sustainability Impact Assessment (SIA) in February 2002, which will prepare and accompany the first phase of ACP/EC negotiations. The SIA should help to advance trade growth while enhancing sustainable development by identifying positive and negative impacts.

The SIA is both an analytical and prescriptive tool that should help negotiators to build EPAs in a sustainable way. It will enable negotiators to identify policy areas where trade liberalisation is desirable, but where certain modifications are necessary to enhance positive effects and allow them to mitigate negative impacts. One important role of the SIA will be to identify accompanying measures that should complement trade policy implementation. This should then be linked up to cooperation and support measures.

For example, liberalising the tourism sector could be linked to a general master plan on tourism development, taking into account environmental and social factors. This could then lead to drafting the appropriate regulations, strengthening the administrative structures and helping private sector and civil society to take advantage of reforms in tourism policy. Social gains (employment, recruiting women) and environmental impacts (strengthened standards, water treatment) should be enhanced and negative impacts mitigated.

Involving all the actors

SIA results will be published regularly and discussed in consultation meetings with representatives of civil society. It will be important to receive comments and suggestions regarding issues such as the different criteria and indicators used, the priority sectors covered or the general conclusions of the analysis.

Coherence between trade and environment, or more generally, achieving sustainable development, are not objectives that can be reached uniquely by government intervention. On the contrary, meeting these goals will depend on sustainable behaviour by all actors, including private enterprises and individual consumers.

Therefore, it will be important to open up the EPA process, to bring in different voices and to create possibilities to involve all actors concerned.

Forestry management must take account of the local populations



Learning to manage the forest sustainably, Papua New Guinea

The fairy-tale image of virgin forests on the paradise islands of the Pacific looks likely to become just a memory depicted on a picture postcard – more and more foreign forestry companies are moving to the Solomon islands, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu. In the short term, the inhabitants of these islands profit from these new businesses, which are a significant source of income. But, in the long term, wholesale deforestation prevents the forests from renewing themselves, with businesses intensively exploiting exportable timber and leaving behind other species, creating a genuine risk to biodiversity. No policy attempting to “eco-manage” the Melanesian forests can afford to fail to take into account the urgent situation of local populations.

Colette Fort/InfoSud

Rural areas suffer doubly from foreign companies' uncontrolled exploitation of their forests: firstly, their environment is degraded and, secondly, profits from the sale of timber are primarily repatriated to the towns and cities which are home to the marketing syndicates.

In sustainable forestry management, it is important to take account of the way in which indigenous communities function, according to the Food and Agriculture

Organisation (FAO). Land use - and especially the use of trees - is enshrined in the islands' customary laws which distribute ownership of plots of land. However, customary laws are ineffective when it comes to preventing over-exploitation of forests – there is, in fact, no body of legislation that is comprehensive enough to ensure sustainable forest management.

A number of remedies to deal with deforestation have been proposed within the context of the SPCEF (South

Pacific Community Eco-Forestry) pilot project by local associations affiliated to the Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI) and by the UK Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific (UKFSP), with financial support from the European Union. This involves strengthening national policies to force large companies to fell trees in an ecological manner. The anti-deforestation campaign also includes increasing the awareness of local communities with a view to promoting the considered use of arboricultural resources.

New techniques and recycling

From a technical standpoint, a number of projects - conducted firstly on Vanuatu by the Vanuatu Department of Forests (DoF) and by the UKFSP - have encouraged the use of mobile power saws, which are easy to move from place to place and to store. These are standard saws which are mounted on a lightweight frame equipped with a guide rail. The guide rail is placed along the felled tree, and this allows easy straight cutting. This simple, easy-to-transport tool allows work to be done faster, so that the local people have more time to devote to other tasks, such as agriculture and fishing. The income generated by this new form of small-scale forestry enables indigenous peoples to provide for their basic needs, such as education and health. They are also in a better position to respond to local timber requirements, as the felled trees can be converted directly on site using this mobile equipment.

However, the introduction of small mobile saws has generated tension within the customary hierarchy, this forestry equipment being more "individualist" than traditional methods which unite an entire community in timber-extraction work. Certain communities, particularly on Vanuatu, have successfully solved the problem by grouping together in associations or local cooperatives.

Another facet of eco-management advocated by various environmental-protection bodies is the processing of the waste material left on site after felling. This waste is a menace to wildlife and increases the risks of fire. Wood chips can be gathered for conversion into paper, as proposed by the FAO, or used to enrich soils via a decomposition method, as suggested by the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR). In the past, waste was burnt and used as short-term nutrient and fertiliser. With the new decomposition method, the soil

receives more sustainable nourishment, and this technique also reduces the risks of forest fires and emissions of carbon into the atmosphere. The Kyoto protocol also proposes paying farmers for the carbon retained by the trees, thus discouraging over-felling.

Ecological solutions to economic problems

A number of other solutions for safeguarding the Melanesian forests have been suggested, particularly by CIFOR. Utilising "secondary" forests as ecological reserves is one example of this. Most secondary forests are used as fallow land in order to enrich the soil for subsequent cultivation. They can also provide products which are added to agricultural production and improve the living conditions of small-scale farmers. Secondary-forest plots could also be preserved in a more permanent manner to provide commercial forestry products or for an ecological purpose, such as protecting water resources for livestock.

Secondary forests act as water filters, rendering it suitable for consumption, CIFOR explains. There is also innovation in the field of new, low-impact forestry techniques: but these methods require greater investment to guarantee monitoring, train staff and for better planning of felling. The advantage is that they allow regular examination of the forests' condition and better control of the trade in timber, thereby combating smuggling.

In the long term, productivity is higher thanks to better organisation of felling work.

Tourism has been in a state of stagnation for ten years or so, and eco-tourism - which represents a substantial advantage in terms of financial resources and a tool in the service of biological conservation - is not taking off as expected. Travel is expensive, qualified personnel few in number and adequate equipment sorely lacking, as illustrated by an EC-commissioned study by Danagro Adviser A/S. The forestry potential of the Pacific Islands is therefore the principal source of income for populations in the area. The financial means at their disposal are often meagre, and exploitation of their timber wealth is seen as a solution. In order to "eco-manage" the Melanesian forests in the long term, no technique can afford to fail to take into account the urgent situation of local populations.

The Kyoto protocol also proposes paying farmers for the carbon retained by the trees, thus discouraging over-felling

CAMEROON

Controlling the environmental impact of road construction

For some years now, an environmental unit within the Ministry of Works in Cameroon has been taking a lead role in the environmental and social management of road construction and road rehabilitation throughout the country. It is a unique and active unit, initiating new and practical measures and controls in road works, to better protect nature and people. In this article, **Jacques Ntep**, deputy-directory of the unit, explains the background and how the unit works.

Some 10 years ago, the Cameroon government drew up an environmental strategy for the transport sector and adopted a sectoral programme with the overall objective of guaranteeing improved efficiency and sustainable development of road transport whilst contributing to economic growth,

poverty reduction and environmental protection. Within the Public Works department, the general principles governing road-maintenance policies and the organisation, management and execution of such work were considerably modified, and in 1996 an Environmental Protection Office was also set up within the Roads Department of the Public Works Ministry. One year later, through this new body, the Public Works Ministry published its directives on the environmental impact of road maintenance.

These directives currently apply to all road maintenance and repair projects in Cameroon. The Office monitors application of the directives during implementation of projects by contracting companies. When work finishes, reports are prepared on the restoration of damaged sites to their previous condition, and these reports have to be signed. If no report is filed, the company that has carried out the work may be banned from tendering for at least three years. The Office is supported by the World Bank and the European Union.





© Jacques Ntep

The World Bank has provided basic training in environment sciences for office managers, and has provided IT equipment. Support for these managers is ongoing, in the form of training at international level. European Union support takes the form of seminars for consultancy firms and companies active in the public works sector. The training courses offered relate essentially to the environmental management of road works.

Small measures, but wide-ranging effects

The Ministry's directives contain a series of measures aimed at protecting both the environment and people during the execution of the works. Degraded sites have to be restored to their previous condition. Structures set up for the duration of the works, such as drainage ditches, concrete slabs for storing hazardous materials, or refuse pits, have to be demolished. Machinery and used parts (batteries, tyres, spark plugs, filters, etc.) are removed. Those areas that have supplied laterite and quarries are also rehabilitated, with consideration being given to their specific requirements in terms of rainfall and hydrography. In areas of heavy rainfall, natural run-off channels are reestablished. Conversely, in Sahelian areas, sites may be set up as water-retention points. If needed, large-scale replanting of appropriate species is organised, with existing flora and fauna being protected. Trees may not be felled unless absolutely necessary, and if it is impossible to avoid deforestation operations, tree trunks are sawn up and the wood is made available to local populations. Moreover, site-team base camps may not be set up in protected environments, such as reserves or parks. Rules governing life inside the camps also contain measures aimed at protecting the environment (a ban on poaching, exploitation of the forest, etc).

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Two recurring problems linked with road infrastructure work are soil degradation and pollution. To limit these, the directives require servicing, toxic-material storage and site machinery washing areas to be concreted. Systematic sprinkling of roads, work areas and crushing sites also reduces the amount of airborne dust. To limit erosion risks, embankments, trenches and outfalls are strengthened.

Repair, maintenance or construction of road communication routes are also an opportunity to improve the way of life of the people living in the immediate neighbourhood - access routes to dwellings and water-supply points are improved, and parking or trading areas are created. Unskilled labour is recruited predominantly locally, from among the population affected by the works.

Finally, although not directly linked to the environment, sites are also preferred vectors for awareness-raising and prevention. In small camps, information on AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases is circulated at meetings and by means of poster campaigns. At large road-construction and repair sites, a specialist NGO takes care of prevention, training local organisers who will carry on its work in order to raise awareness among site employees and road users, and also among local populations in the project area. As is the case with environmental protection measures, the prevention campaign monitors the site throughout its lifetime in order to achieve maximum human benefit.



How does the EC integrate the environment into development cooperation?

The main objective of Community development policy is the reduction and eventual eradication of poverty. **Simon le Grand**, DG Development, looks at how the environment fits in, and what instruments the Commission uses to integrate environment into development cooperation activities.

The overall objective of poverty eradication necessitates support for sustainable economic, social and environmental development. Poor environmental quality undermines the developing countries' efforts to alleviate poverty and jeopardises future prospects for sustainable economic and social development.

The Commission has developed a comprehensive strategy¹ which identifies opportunities and key entry points for the integration of the environmental dimension into development cooperation and in particular into the six priority areas identified in the EC Development Policy Statement.

The new ACP-EC Partnership Agreement also clearly identifies sustainable management of the environment and natural resources as an essential element of good governance (Art. 9)².

The Commission has developed a number of instruments to integrate environmental issues into development cooperation efforts in order to:

- identify and avoid harmful direct and indirect environmental impacts of programmes and projects which can undermine sustainability and counteract achieving the development cooperation objectives;
- recognise and realise opportunities for enhancing environmental conditions, bringing additional benefits to development and advancing environmental issues.

Main channels

The main channels for development cooperation are the Country and Regional Support Strategies (CSS)

The CSS must include a section on environmental issues, and the areas of concentration must incorporate environmental issues through the use of Strategic Environmental Assessments³. An assessment of the environmental situation (Country Environmental Profile or CEP⁴) must be annexed.

Manual

To improve the environmental integration in the programme and project implementation phase, the Commission has updated its environment integration manual of 1993. A draft version is currently available on the Commission Sustainable Development website. The manual contains procedures (for policy, programming and projects), and sector notes (with background information on a variety of sectors - agriculture, transport, waste etc) on relevant environmental issues (impacts, mitigation measures, etc), which can be used as guidance for preparing terms of reference for impact assessments. Standard terms of reference can be downloaded for different types of studies, including (Strategic) Environmental Assessments and Country Environmental Profiles.

Other instruments

The purpose of the B7-6200 Budget line for environment and forestry in developing countries is to promote pilot projects, so that approaches can be identified that can subsequently be integrated in the main funding instruments (EDF and geographical budget lines). It is used to fund studies, capacity building (both inside and outside the Commission). A number of environmental training courses have been organised, at Headquarters as well as in the Delegations, to familiarise staff and government counterparts with environmental issues.

Web-page

The Commission has a web page with information on its activities with respect to environment in development cooperation⁵. This site provides information on environmental issues, such as policies, geographical information, some project information etc, with links to other relevant sites. The Commission also intends to make the results of environmental impact assessments available, as well as more comprehensive data on environmental projects.

Policy dialogue

Last, but not least, the Commission has an ongoing policy dialogue with its partners (developing countries, EU Member States, other donors, international organisations) in order to ensure effective and co-ordinated implementation and complementarity of activities and also to enrich the development/environment debate, also in the context of the Multilateral Environmental Conventions.

¹ See Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament and the Economic and Social Committee COM(2000) 264 final of 18 May 2000, and Commission Staff Working Document SEC(2001) 609 of 14-4-01 on the comprehensive strategy for "Integrating the environment into EC economic and development co-operation".

² The Cotonou Agreement states (Part 3, Section 4, Article 32): "Co-operation on environmental protection and sustainable utilisation and management of natural resources shall aim at: a) mainstreaming environmental sustainability into all aspects of development co-operation and support programmes and projects implemented by the various actors; b) building and/or strengthening the scientific and technical human and institutional capacity for environmental management for all environmental stakeholders; and c) supporting specific measures and schemes aimed at addressing critical sustainable management issues and also relating to current and future regional and international commitments concerning mineral and natural resources."

³ An SEA may be used to identify potential environmental risks of macro-economic and sectoral policies (e.g. harmful subsidies) and environmental constraints for sustainable development, and to define broad opportunities and potential benefits of improved environmental management.

⁴ A CEP, *inter alia*, outlines the major environmental characteristics and important issues in a country, summarises major environmental trends and analyses their linkages with poverty. It identifies how the country is affected by transboundary and global environmental problems and how it contributes to these, and reviews the status of environmental legislation and institutional capacity.

⁵ See: <http://europa.eu.int/comm/development/sector/environment/index.htm>.

Freddy Bienvenue Tsimba: “Works which are meaningful”

“It was certainly a shock to the system: leaving the Congo for the first time after so many years, being in a country like Canada, exhibiting my works there and meeting other people.

It was a fantastic experience. When I won the Francophonie second prize for sculpture, I knew immediately that I had a mission in life.

This prize belongs to all those who suffer and who will never have the opportunity to see what I see today.”

Aya Kasasa

The artist with the heart of gold has won the silver medal. Freddy Bienvenue Tsimba, a 34-year-old sculptor, left the Academy of Fine Arts in 1989 and since then has worked tirelessly for what he believes in. His obsessive ongoing passion is to learn to work in bronze, whatever the cost. And this quest has required of him an unflinching will. For seven years he travelled the length and breadth of “all the nooks and crannies of Kinshasa”, listening, working and developing the particular style which is the driving force behind his work. “I wanted to do something other than work in wood, which was the fashion at that time”.

Six years later, his projects led him to stage an exhibition at the *Wallonie-Bruxelles* centre in Kinshasa. But the public found his work difficult to grasp, and they didn't properly understand what he wanted to express. Tsimbe carried on with exhibitions and, without realising it, his works began to acquire a following. In 1996, *Revue Noire* published an article about the sculptor, speaking very highly of his work and finally “launching” him on the path trodden by genuine professionals. The revue described him as “an artist evolving in a symbolic universe of expressive sculpture, with complex, tense forms, between voids, hollows and intertwining”.

“People began to understand that I had something original to say, something very personal.” He then began to exhibit his works everywhere he could in Kinshasa, – cultural centres, embassies, etc. Nevertheless, even after twelve years of intensive work, he had still never left the Congo.

At last, opportunity knocked at his door: “I had the opportunity to submit my works to a selection jury organised for a Francophonie competition. Out of about a hundred artists who submitted works, I was the only one to be selected to represent

© Francophonie



“The glances of others”

A group of people on a boat travelling towards a better world. There are figures, silhouettes, worried looks about the future of the world, symbolised by the boat. We have to struggle so that the boat – the world – doesn't sink.

my country in the competition. The pressure was enormous, but I was also extremely proud”.

“Yes, I rummage through dustbins!”

Where can one find the right materials in Kinshasa? Freddy is all in favour of recycling, and he also works with the street children who love to watch him creating his sculptures. He helps them when he can: a meal, perhaps a few coins, or simply a listening ear. “They think about me all the time – when they see something they think about ‘the old man’ as they call me”.

He has his “workshop” in his father's house, although this is rather a grand description of the premises! When his father realised that Freddy was really determined, having heard him hammering away on his creations in the middle of the night, he made a corridor available to him, just outside the house. “Gradually, I began to understand that I was a creator. I am with my works from start to finish, in my workshop, where the smallest square centimetre is ready to receive the work in progress.”

He has the ability to work rapidly, and those who have trained him are often impressed by his beginners' luck.

“By offering them a drink, and letting them know I was interested in their work, these craftsmen gradually taught me. I would take them my works for finishing – I went everywhere, all over Kinshasa, to work. I also learned the virtue of patience, which came from tramping across town with my sculptures on my back, so that I could cast them.

“First cries, or the displaced”

A refugee family flees from war. The father talks to his child, who appears to be ill. The mother's head, bent, indicates the gravity of the situation.

© Miss Photo



That's how I was able to complete three sculptures and submit them to the Ciciba in Brazzaville”.

Inspiration from life

Freddy's works are quite different from what tourists usually buy in Kinshasa. His approach is original in that he does not set out to please: “I have never accepted commissions imposing a certain way of working – even for a big fee. What I aim to do is to speak about what I see. I want to represent reality in my own way. I'm not going to produce works which show smiling people dancing or singing. I come from a family where there are 15 mouths to feed; I know what suffering is. I want to pay homage to my country's people, and to help them be understood. My figures are sombre, bent and thin, intermingled. I try to make a contribution. It's a form of gift. There is war, refugees and hunger, and I can do nothing specific, but I watch and bear witness. I work for others.”

***Victime malgré elle* (Victim, despite herself), 2001**

He said that he wept when he heard his name. Tsimba's sculpture, which won the Francophonie second prize, touched the jury with its subtle blend of artistic perfection and the message it sought to convey. Who better than the artist to explain?

“I wanted to show the absurdity of war and the damage it causes, so I made use of cartridge cases I picked up on a battlefield in the Congo. I set up a large case to represent a woman's body: she is symbolised by breasts which I created from smaller cartridge cases. A spoon, which I've also recycled, is used to portray her head. Perhaps this object belonged to a woman who sold food by the roadside and who was killed by an explosion. It also symbolises the act of eating, survival. The spoon has a hole in it because it can no longer contain anything. Is it really necessary to translate this work into words? If so, I would say that it's an affirmation: we are children of the world, and this is what we have done with it. We now need to get a move on and to put an end to all this”.



© Magaly Jacq

The cost of recognition?

“In the Congo, people are beginning to understand what I do. I know that my work hurts and that some find it disturbing. Visitors now come to see “what he's done now”.

Après la guerre (After the war) is a sculpture shown at an exhibition entitled *Arts et la paix* (Art and peace). It provoked a great many questions. A lot of people came to find me, to ask why I had done it! It was a structure into which I had incorporated an army boot that I had found by the roadside. It might have belonged to a soldier who chose life and left the army instead of fighting. After war comes ruin: I included a spade without a handle, to show that there is no more work, and a clock to symbolise time in suspension – it has no hands and no longer indicates anything. Just after the gallery preview exhibition, some soldiers came to see my work, and I know that some of them were deeply shaken. The piece was finally withdrawn.”

The market in Africa

For Tsimba, as for the majority of African artists, it is difficult if not impossible to make a living from art. “In Africa, people do not purchase art. Particularly in a country at war, there is no investment in art. It is the immediate that is preferred: a nice car, a comfortable home, pretty women. You also have to remember that, to an African mind, works of art are not for showing “at home”. The work has something to say, it has a social function - here, people are afraid of art. Weren't statues used to honour the dead? Don't some of them represent spirits? Aren't they vectors between the next world and ours? You have to take all that into account” .

Influences

When one looks at Tsimba's sculptures, it is impossible not to make certain comparisons. “But the fact is, no one comes out of nothing! It would be ridiculous to claim not to have been influenced by other artists. We are taught to look, and, fortunately, I was able to study the great masters. If you really want me to talk about what I like, I should mention Zadkine, the Bulgarian. His forms also reflected suffering, because he himself was a refugee. It has often been said that some of my works are reminiscent of Giacometti – I do indeed like his work, and he also drew his inspiration from African art, Dogon art, in fact. In this country, I like a whole series of artists, particularly those who portray what is close to themselves.”

After the prize...

Although it is difficult for a Congolese artist to travel, Tsimba dreams of foreign destinations: “I would love to spend longer in Europe, to absorb what's being done there. My thoughts are now turning to other biennial festivals – I would like to go back in order to improve, to have the opportunity to do more things. I'd like to immerse myself in more ambitious, larger creations. I had the opportunity to discover new techniques, to which I would never have had access at home. Yet, what I really want to do is to carry on portraying what is dear to me, and to encourage others to do the same. In Montreal, I met some really great people. I hope I left a good impression”.

Genius burning brightly

What Bandia Camara, Kambel, Baye Xaly Sene and Moussa Sakho have in common is not that they all live in Senegal, nor is it the source of their inspiration. But they all deal with materials in the same way – converting, manipulating and recycling. Nothing is lost, nothing is created; everything is converted. This is one of Senegal's creative secrets – Art and materials.

Angela Scillia

Creative diversity is one of Senegal's natural resources, with ingenuity shining through all artistic expression. According to the Senegalese, nothing much is really known about this unexpected dynamism, whether it is learned either at school or in the fields. But curiosity is soon satisfied, and art enters the consciousness by chance.

From waste to art

Twenty kilometres from Dakar is a courtyard cluttered with wonders smelling of burnt tyres. This is the workshop of Bandia Camara, a young and inspired artist. "As a child, I was simply awful, but very early on I learned how to sew and played with coconuts and bamboo - all kinds of recycled materials."

One day, at a fashion show in France, someone told him he was creating art.

Bandia Camara has always had a leaning towards breaking things to create a new function for them. He explores materials such as gourds, buffalo horn and even bones. The artist creates new structures; his furniture is worthy of a royal court. Why this compulsive modelling and recycling of "waste"?

"The fact is that the world stays the same size, but its population is growing," he explains. "We have to accept that there'll be waste – tyres, plastic, old cars – and make something of it. Man's only useful legacy on earth will be to protect his children's generation."

Colours from nature

Kambel, a painter, is inspired by colour. Now famous and highly rated in Europe and the United States, he began experimenting by a return to basics. "I travelled to Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso to make contact with artisans

and traditional artists, and my research went on to include trying out colours derived from kola nuts, henna, cactuses and any product yielding a natural dye."

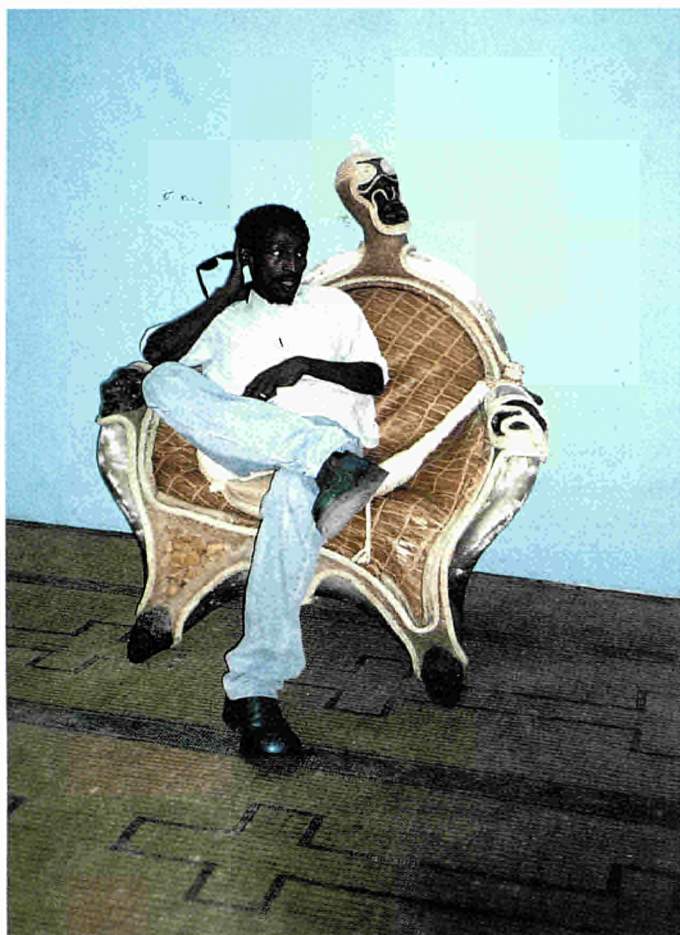
Kambel then lived in the streets to paint and to be in touch with himself. It was there he realised that any life experience can be depicted on canvas – with no constraints. Next came his experimental phase and the search for materials.

"At the Sacré Pop exhibition in Dakar in 1990, I wanted to prove that Africa is still capable of producing items of value, competitive products created by Africans themselves," he says. "Art is important in society and I see a continual stream of young people who come to look at my work and who like what I'm doing."

Baye Xaly Sene has the dream office



*The Kambel touch:
Africa – proud of her creativity
and materials*



©TERRA NEGRA ASBL

For Bandia Camara, even a sofa has a sense of humour

Passing on xam xam

Baye Xaly Sene explains that in Wolof, a local language, *xam xam* means both knowledge and communication. In a huge abandoned warehouse in Rufisque on Senegal's south coast, the artist is following in his father's footsteps. He converts material into useable objects and teaches his techniques to young people.

Baye Xaly Sene creates objects such as a stool, a desk, an armchair or a complete room by working in metal, often using recycled barrels. Then his pupils, aged from 12 to 18, reproduce it, thereby learning industrial design techniques.

"We set up this centre to help the town's youngsters and to give them a way into society. It's quite exceptional, as there's no other kind of vocational training available," he says.

Today, more than 100 children have their training financed entirely by profits from sales. Baye Xaly Sene also set up a school to integrate young people into rural life, teaching them, for example, how to construct water pumps.

"It pleases me to produce an object and to pass on my technique. It's a desire I have within me. Work is the principle I live by and firmly believe in," he says.

A second lease on life

The desire to train young people and to use artistic creation as a means of expression and even of social integration also inspires Moussa Sakho. He constructs amazing bookcases,

using cable rolls. He frames his paintings under glass with pieces of old chairs, and uses wire, tin cans and old photos.

"My message is to save materials and to give them a second lease on life. I use everything that comes to hand, without distinction," he explains. "This method goes down well with children, and every one of them gives me fresh inspiration because they are spontaneous and full of life."

Moussa Sakho says he works with neighbourhood kids, schools and deprived children from Dakar, helping to train them and "prevent them being left to their own devices".

Always ready to pass on knowledge

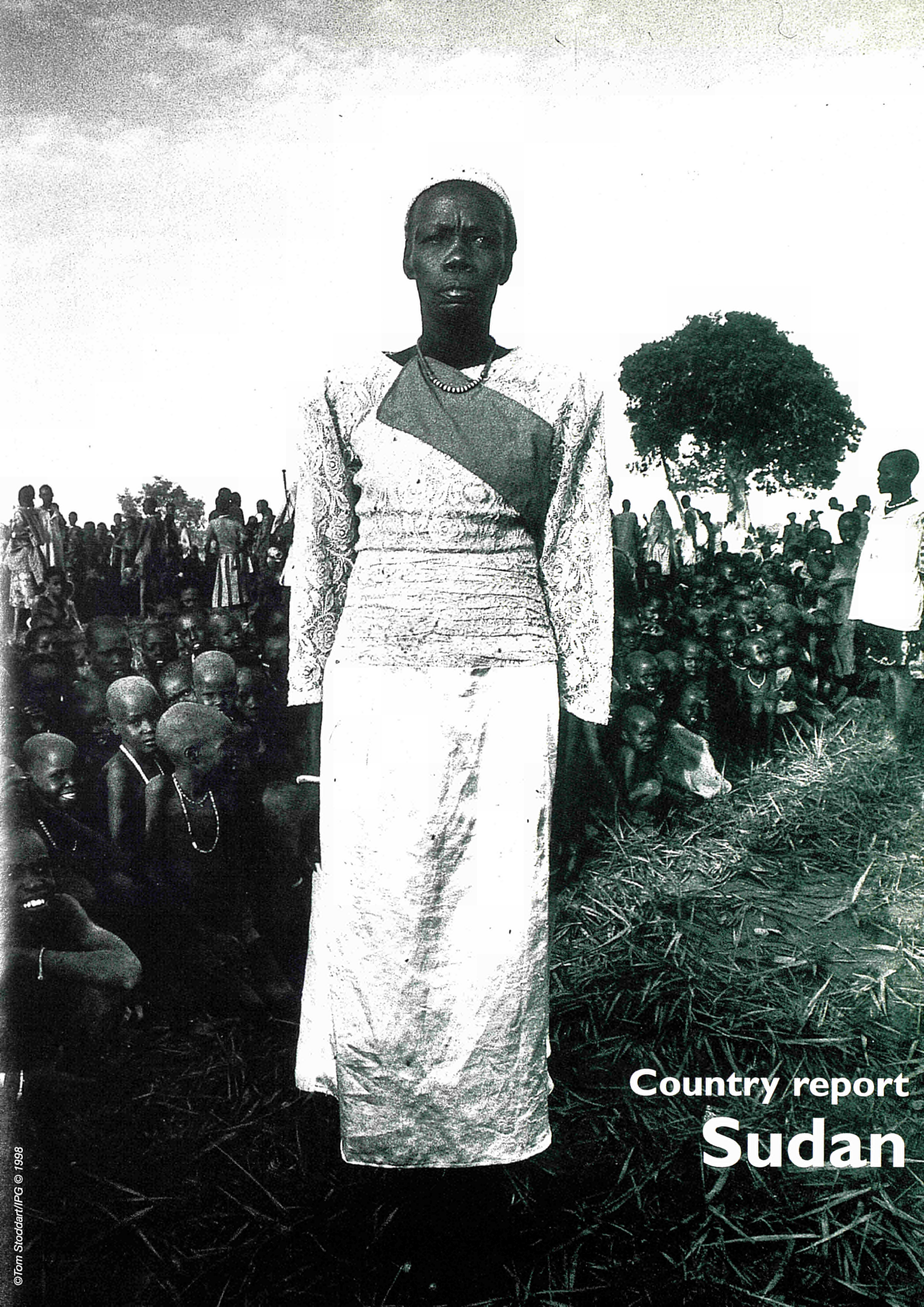
Talented and altruistic, what these four artists also have in common is the fact that they are different. They embrace the world, despite its frenzied consumerism; they are seeking roots in universal heritage and they are, without any complexes, experimenting with ways of creating.

Far from the glare of the media, their genius continues to burn brightly. Young or old, they are always ready to pass on their knowledge.

Moussa Sakho – glass, wood, cables... materials get a second life



©TERRA NEGRA ASBL



Country report
Sudan



Sudan

after a decade of international isolation and forty years of intermittent civil war

Report and photos: Jos Van Beurden

Sudan is Africa's biggest country and faces some of its biggest problems. There is civil war between the central government and opposition groups, most notably in the south of the country.

The form of Islamic fundamentalism favoured by the government since a military coup in 1989 not only heightened tensions within the country but took it into a decade of self-imposed international isolation. During the past year, however, there have been signs of change and a recognition that international cooperation is vital to the country's development and to peace in the long term.

Civil strife is the rock on which Sudan's development founders. There is unrest in the east and in the west, and in the Nuba Mountains far to the south of the capital, Khartoum. But the most serious opposition comes from further south still. In the current phase of the conflict between north and south, the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) has been fighting government forces since 1983.

The war is about central power and the country's major natural resources, water and oil. It is aggravated by racial differences, and by religious division between the Muslim north and the Christian south. An estimated two million people, mostly civilian, have died. Many more have become internal refugees. The war has had serious implications for the region as a whole, since several neighbouring states have been supporting the SPLM.

There is also ethnic division in the South itself. The Dinka and the Nuer, the two largest groups, have had a long tradition of bloodshed, usually about cattle, pastures and water. The abundant supply of small arms and the "divide and rule" policy of the government have fuelled their conflict. This and other divisions have prevented the south from dealing as one bloc with the government. Some southern groups have aligned themselves with the government since a peace agreement was signed in 1997. But the majority has continued to fight.

A decade of isolation

Sudan's problems have been aggravated by its self-imposed isolation. The military and the National Islamic Front have ruled the country since a coup in 1989. Many believe that its fundamentalist approach involves trying to "Islamicise" the whole of Sudan, including the Christian and animist regions. The imposition of Islamic law (*shari'a*) began long before 1989 and is a focus for opposition. The country's isolation was intensified in 1995, when the United Nations imposed economic sanctions – which were lifted in September 2001 – because of Sudan's alleged involvement in the assassination attempt on Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Addis Ababa.

Donors confined their aid to strictly humanitarian interventions for victims of war and drought, and channelled it through foreign aid organisations. European Commission development aid – on the basis of the Lomé Convention – was suspended. In 1998 American planes bombed a Khartoum pharmaceutical factory, under the mistaken belief that it had been used to manufacture bombs.

Oil and political change

Two events have caused the country to move away from this isolation. Sudan has become an oil-exporting country. Because of the civil war the exploitation of oil resources had been delayed for a long time, but in August 1999 the first barrel left Sudan. Both Western and East Asian companies are involved in its exploration and exploitation. Oil has become part of the civil war. Most of the oil fields are located near the frontline between north and south, and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (the armed wing of the SPLM) has carried out several attacks on them.

The other event crucial to a change of direction was the ousting late last year of Dr Hassan el Turabi, the rabid ideologue and former strongman behind the government. President Omar el Bashir is now talking more reconciliatory language. Some people argue that Sudan has now begun to change from a flagrant violator of human rights into a country with a human rights problem. Others have serious doubts about the government's intentions.

Renewed contact with the West

Both the European Union (EU) and the United States are intensifying their contacts with Sudan. The EU has done so by renewing a dialogue with the Government and by offering rehabilitation aid, in addition to the emergency aid that was never suspended. The USA is Sudan's biggest donor but so far has mostly earmarked funds south, away from the government's control. It recently announced a new initiative for a peaceful solution of the civil war.

The civil war, the divisions in the south and the self-imposed isolation have led to serious underdevelopment and a deep sense of mistrust among the country's thirty-six million people. Everyone realises that the civil war remains the key issue in Sudan. Nobody believes in a quick fix.

Khartoum - economic stagnation and repression

Since the 1989 coup Khartoum has changed. In the centre new buildings have been put up or are under construction for banks or company headquarters. They contrast sharply with the rest of the city. A brown layer of fine sand and dust cannot hide the fact that most buildings are in need of major repairs. They have not been painted for years. Stairs are broken and roll-down shutters do not work properly. Many of the shops, on the ground floors, have been closed.

Figures over the past few years show signs of economic growth, but most Sudanese have great difficulty in making ends meet. Shopkeepers say they do not have enough customers. When the owner of a patisserie opened his shop twelve years ago with seats for forty people, he needed glass cases full of local sweets and two refrigerators with soft drinks. "We filled all of them in the morning, and at night they were empty." Now one glass case and one refrigerator are sufficient. "Look, only six seats are occupied. There should be many customers, but people have no money". The owner has his own explanation: "The 'Islamists' (supporters of the ruling National Islamic Front) are the only ones profiting from the present system. And the civil war has been going on too long. It is exhausting us." The owners of a nearby bookshop, a music shop, and a computer repair firm have similar complaints.

Not far from the patisserie two women are selling tea, one dressed in green, the other in blue. There are many like them in Khartoum. They have a small oven, a teakettle, some small glasses, tea and sugar. A friendly customer translates one of the women's stories. "My husband has no employment, so I am the breadwinner for our three children. At the moment the riot police are leaving us alone. But several times they have come and kicked over our things. Once they even took us to the police station. We could choose between a jail sentence and a high fine. The fine was equivalent to a few weeks' earnings."

The security apparatus plays a significant role in many people's lives. Their meetings are disrupted. Christians, who want to build a church, have to wait endlessly to get all the necessary permits. Foreign diplomats and aid workers feel hindered by a wall of procedures and distrust. One late afternoon I walk to where the Blue and the White Nile meet, about half a kilometre from the Presidential Palace. I see several young couples and a few middle class families enjoying their leisure time. They watch a breathtaking sunset. When I take a picture of the red ball, as it touches the tops of the trees along the water, two soldiers appear and forbid me to take pictures here. Showing my photo permit does not help.

Construction activities in Khartoum



The fall-out of famine and war – thousands uprooted from their homes

Decades of famine in Darfur and Kordofan (western and central Sudan) and of civil war in the south and elsewhere have driven more than four million Sudanese from their homes. Only a few of them have crossed the border to one of the nine neighbouring countries, so Sudan has been saddled with the largest number of so-called internally displaced persons (IDPs) in the world. Most of them live in extremely poor conditions. They have no prospect of returning home. Greater Khartoum - consisting of Khartoum, North Khartoum and Omdurman - has huge numbers.

Aid workers accuse the government of indifference to their fate. "Many Government officials consider the problem of the IDPs a temporary one. Some of them even deny it exists. As a result there is no mid-term or long-term policy," explains one of them. "Some IDPs have been here for fifteen or twenty years. They are desperate and disoriented. The northern environment is a hostile one for them. At best the government offers them some emergency aid."

Some years ago the government transferred a lot of IDPs to places well away from the capital. They were cut off from most facilities and employment opportunities. The government distrusted the aid organisations that tried to help these people. "When the Muslim fundamentalists came to power in 1989 the government became especially strict towards NGOs," says the same aid worker. He has more than ten years' experience of working in Sudan.



Dr Sulaf Eddin Mohamed Salih, Humanitarian Assistance Commissioner

The Government's Humanitarian Assistance Commissioner, Dr Sulaf Eddin Mohamed Salih, denies vehemently that IDPs have no help. "These people are entitled to aid. The government is committed to support all in need." The Commissioner is open about his beliefs. "We like to link our humanitarian activities

with our faith and quote the Koran when we put it into action. The Koran does not forbid cooperation with other religions. We welcome international support." He admits that the government's efforts to help those in need can be only small, as "more than fifty or even sixty per cent of its budget is spent on the civil war".

A better climate for development cooperation

It is the choice of the donor community that most assistance has been for short-term humanitarian programmes. Dr Sulaf Eddin criticises the donor community for chan-

nelling most help through international aid organisations. "That hampers local NGOs from becoming stronger." He praises the European Commission's Humanitarian Plus programme of as one of the few that go beyond relief work.

NGOs have recently seen some improvements. International organisations, some of them financially supported by the European Commission, are helping IDPs in areas such as the provision of drinking water, healthcare and education. They are also running courses about civil rights. Sometimes officials from the army, police and prisons attend meetings about human rights and peace building. Although the war is not over, peace is now becoming an issue. "Most of those who come", says a NGO spokesperson, "have never considered that IDPs, women, AIDS-victims, children or detainees have certain basic rights."

Partnership and greater openness about the country's problems

Someone who strongly favours closer cooperation, between the Western donors and aid organisations on the one hand and the government and local NGOs on the other, is the new Minister for International Cooperation, Dr Karam al Din Abdalmoula. He is the National Authorising Officer (NAO), a key player in relations with the

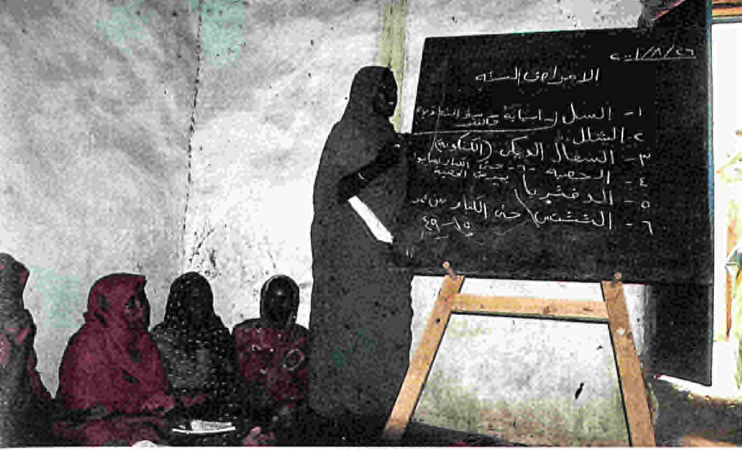


Dr Karam al Din Abdalmoula, Minister for International Cooperation and the NAO

European Commission and other donors: "We have made mistakes. The old policy of isolation and distrust has to be changed. The Most High created the world in six days, the Koran says, but human progress is not made in such a short time. Sudan has to become part of the world again. International technical cooperation is a must."

His first step as a minister was to invite all donors and aid organisations to set up a partnership with government, local communities and local NGOs. "At the top of the agenda are not only short-term but also medium-term plans. I will use the joint sessions to get rid of many mutual misunderstandings. Western donors often think our government's institutions are inefficient. Government officials do not trust westerners. They do not understand what you have come for and often think that you are spies."

A second step was to be more open about the problems Sudan faces. Earlier this year thousands of inhabitants of the Southern town of Raja had to flee after fighting broke out following a very strong SPLA military offensive. "We did not hide anything but asked the donor community for immediate help. Both sides were happy with the way we cooperated. That was new."



IDPs in Greater Khartoum discussing micro-credit

The harsh realities of refugee life

Half an hour's drive from the centre of Khartoum twenty women are gathered in a classroom with only a blackboard and some mats to sit on. They have been attending classes for more than two years and today they will discuss micro-credit. They come from different parts of Sudan. One, from Nyala in Darfur (in the west) fled drought and famine in 1983. "I have seven children. My husband has left me. There is no money to return to Nyala." Another came from the Nuba Mountains in 1990, driven away by the lack of security when the mountains became a zone of conflict between the army and the SPLA. "The fighting came nearer and nearer to our village. In the end we could not stand it any longer." The government has given all these women a plot of land, on which they have built clay houses. Food and drinking water remain problems for most of them.

But they do receive some emergency aid and support for rehabilitation. The Irish aid organisation, Goal, is responsible for their education, with the support of the European Commission. "Learning arithmetic and reading and writing in Arabic offers some hope for the future. We have not had that for over ten years", says the refugee from the Nuba Mountains. In spite of the women's different backgrounds they have begun to form a community and tribal friction has been minimised.

Ending the cycle of dependence and conflict in Southern Darfur

In the west of Sudan, eighty-five kilometres south of Nyala in Southern Darfur, lies Sanam al-Naga. Here three NGOs - Oxfam, Save the Children and the German Development Service - have begun to resettle 4,000 IDP families on land belonging to the government. Most of them moved up to Darfur because of the permanent crisis in Bahr al Ghazal further south. In Darfur they had tried to feed themselves and to reach an accommodation with the Arab population. "There came a point when we had to admit that all these efforts had failed," says Oxfam team leader, Hussein Abdallah. During one incident in 1987 in the town of Ed Da'ein one thousand IDPs, all Dinka, were killed. In 1998 two camps had to be evacuated because of the threat of another massacre.

After the famine of 1998 the NGOs concluded that the only solution was for the IDPs to have their own cultivable land in a safe area. The Government offered a large piece of land at Sanam al-Naga. With European Commission money, NGOs began to set up a school, a clinic and sanitation - all on a self-help basis.

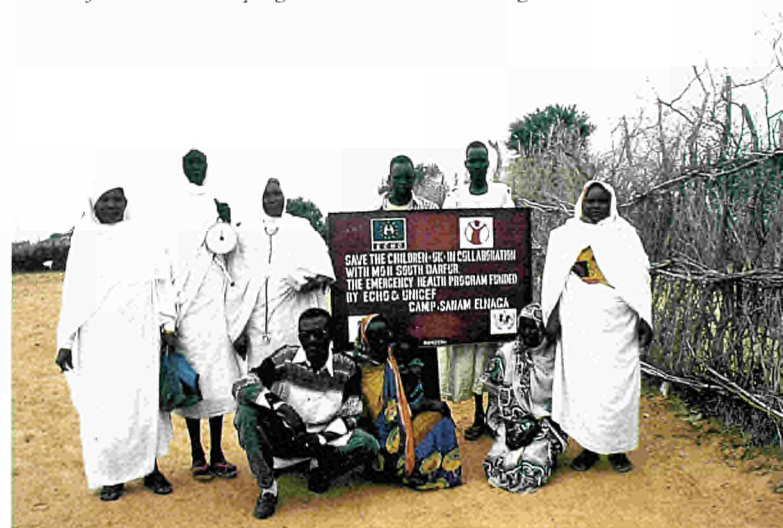
Garang Doud's story

Garang Doud, a forty-seven year-old Dinka, is happy to have settled here. Like others, he and his family received nearly ten hectares of land, which the government put in their name for twenty years. "My wife, our daughter and I left my village in Bahr al Ghazal in 1988. By that time I had lost all my thirty cattle, either to SPLA soldiers or to government supported militia. We spent many years in a camp but had scarcely enough to survive. When I left for Sanam al-Naga I was so much indebted to the landowner that I had to leave my first wife behind to work for him until all our debts were repaid. Now she is also here."

To have his own land is the most important thing for Garang Doud. He is growing millet, groundnuts, cow-pea and watermelon. "My father and grandfather never needed other people's help, but in the past years I had no choice but to hold out my hand. The land will enable us not to depend on others any more." Garang Doud is one of the first IDPs with some hope for his future.

In the community building close to the newly erected market of Sanam al-Naga the management committee has just finished a meeting. The local policeman, a committee member, says their problems are largely confined to drunkenness and disturbances with pastoralists, who used to pass through this area before it was cultivated. "We are usually able to solve these rows peacefully. I do not hear of friction between the Dinka newcomers and the host community, which is also benefiting from the new health and education facilities."

ECHO funded medical programme in Sanam al Naga



Renewing the dialogue

Debate among the international community about whether to engage in dialogue or cut off a beleaguered nation through sanctions and silence could consider the positive results of the Renewed Dialogue between the government of Sudan and the EU. The Dialogue is attempting to lay a foundation for peace and open up other avenues of cooperation.

Jos Van Beurden/The Courier

Formal cooperation between the EU and Sudan was suspended in March 1990 due to several factors, but mainly human rights. As Sudan's second largest donor, however, the EU did continue substantial humanitarian assistance. Sudan has signed the Cotonou Partnership Agreement.

The beginning

Things changed in November 1999 when the EU and the government of Sudan initiated a political dialogue for one year, with the purpose of discussing developments in democratisation, human rights and the rule of law, policies against terrorism and the peace process, as well as relations with neighbouring countries.

Fifteen meetings were held during this first year of dialogue, bringing together the representatives of the EU member states, the head of Delegation in Khartoum, and the Sudanese authorities. This year of dialogue made it possible for mutual understanding to develop, as well as an atmosphere of trust.

Since December 2000 the dialogue has been stepped up, with the decision to extend it for a further year. Now, the aim is to eventually resume normal cooperation, according to the progress of the dialogue.

The EU and Sudan agreed that the dialogue will now focus on the peace process in southern Sudan, human rights and democratisation, and civil liberties issues.

“The civil war is to be solved by the Sudanese, and nobody else”

Ambassador Nouri Karim Khalil talks about the situation in Sudan today against the backdrop of civil war and the renewed dialogue.

“Sudan's relations with the EU reached a peak in the 1980s. The deterioration began after 1989, when the EU imposed many restrictions and suspended aid from the Lomé Convention. At present, some €400 million is frozen. In 1994 the EU sent an invitation for a dialogue. It lasted one year but had no substantial results. When the EU sent an invitation for a renewed dialogue, the government welcomed the initiative.

In the field of human rights and democracy we have failed to make substantial progress. Human rights is a very wide field that covers controversial issues. We did make some progress as far as abduction is concerned, which is an old tradition in this country. The government is trying to abolish it but it is complicated.

The EU wanted us to drop or amend certain laws, such as the Public Order System because of its interference in the life of the people. We agree that in some incidents the police overreacted, for example when the Government of Khartoum State forbade a public meeting in the Green Park where a German preacher was to talk. The government of Sudan later criticised the State Government for this.

What is the situation with religious minorities, in particular Christians?

As to the permits for constructing churches, there are so many Christian denominations that it confuses the government. Outside Khartoum and Omdurman internally displaced people from the South have built many churches without permission. Some of these have been deserted. The procedures for obtaining a permit are long and complicated in this country.

The paramilitary Popular Defense Forces (PDF) operating in the South are a source of many troubles. What is the relationship between

the government and the PDF?

They are not, as is often suggested, part of the government. We do not pay them. You should consider them as cowboys who have their own income. They protect the trains with food aid travelling to the southern town of Wau. But sometimes they rob villages.

Why doesn't the government take measures against such forces?

We know they should be punished but we need their help in protecting the trains and we need their information.

In their report, 'Scorched Earth,' the British NGO Christian Aid accuses the government of burning villages and human rights violations in frontline areas where oil has been found. Do you agree with their conclusions?

The report is propaganda. With its sensational stories Christian Aid is exploiting Christians to raise more funds. Their conclusions have never been confirmed by independent sources. Let the UN send an independent mission to the oil areas.

Has oil changed the balance of power?

We buy most of our arms from abroad. But our strategy is not to use the oil to buy arms. Oil revenues should be spent on improving infrastructure in the area of production and then to benefit the whole country.

How important is the Libyan-Egyptian peace initiative?

This initiative has come as a result of the stalemate in the IGAD peace process. In the Libyan-Egyptian proposal self-determination for the South is not mentioned. This initiative finds a lot of sympathy in the North and among the Northern political parties. The government supports both initiatives and has not decided which one it prefers. However, the civil war is 100 percent a Sudanese problem, to be solved by the Sudanese and nobody else. All initiatives should help us to solve it and bring us together.

Sudan's National Authorising Officer (NAO), Dr Karam al Din Abdalmoula, Minister of International Cooperation, is also responsible for humanitarian assistance. He plays a key role in EU-Sudan relations and meets regularly with the EU Commission's head of Delegation, Xavier Marchal.

Discussions focus on what needs to be done to support the Sudanese people with humanitarian assistance and how to reinforce the EU-Sudan political dialogue with concrete actions funded by the Commission. The NAO has asked the Commission to fund several critical consultancies in the framework of the peace process, including landmines, demobilisation and reintegration of combatants.

They also regularly review humanitarian assistance with a view to improving its effectiveness. Particular focus is on the proper interaction of short-term emergency assistance with longer-term sustainable assistance.

Encouraged by these developments, the EU started the 'Humanitarian Plus' Programme, to the value of €15 million. This programme is designed to go beyond a strictly humanitarian approach, and to allow the beneficiaries to reduce their dependence on emergency aid. It is being implemented by the Commission and involves primarily UN agencies and European NGOs. For the first time in many years local NGOs can now have direct access to funding.

Some hopeful signs

British Ambassador Richard Makepeace discusses the renewed dialogue, the peace process and human rights against the backdrop of a country in transition.

What is your view on the Renewed Dialogue?

The Renewed Dialogue has an intrinsic importance and the peace process has remained the absolute priority. It is encouraging that many EU member states are active in the IGAD Partner Forum (The Intergovernmental Authority on Development, which brings together Sudan, Uganda, Kenya, Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea and Djibouti). We have tried to push for effective negotiations, but unfortunately not much progress has been made.

In the 1994 IGAD framework both the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) accepted the principle of self-determination for the South. Should this principle be included in the dialogue of the more recent Libyan-Egyptian peace initiative?

This initiative is certainly something we will discuss. Until now our focus has been on the IGAD proposal because both parties and the majority of international opinion are in favour of it, including the right of self-determination of the South.

Some argue that IGAD has been seriously weakened by the frictions between Sudan and its neighbours and also by the border conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Is it as good as dead?

The IGAD peace process faces difficulties and there are some hopeful signs. The relations between Sudan and Uganda are better than before. Sudan is now in the IGAD chair. Sometimes there are tensions between the African IGAD negotiators who do the day-to-day talks and the IGAD Partner Forum about the slow progress. We are fed up with paying for humanitarian assistance while the war is going on.

Are the warring parties genuinely committed to peace?

The people in the North and the South undoubtedly want peace. Sometimes the political leadership on both sides underestimates the need for peace. The leaders are used to war. They do not dare to take the risk of making peace.

What progress has been made in the fields of democracy and human rights?

There is a significant improvement in the human rights situation. Abduction is now being discussed openly. The government is making serious efforts to reduce it and the EU is supporting this effort financially. There are some new Arabic and English newspapers. Former president Sadiq el-Mahdi has returned from exile.

Some political prisoners have been released. One can say that Sudan has moved from a flagrant violator of human rights to a country with a human rights problem.

The improvement is not fully satisfactory and many Sudanese leaders admit this. The recent upsurge of fighting in Bahr el-Gazal has led to a new increase in abduction. There are still political prisoners. The civil war is a large restraint for the improvement of civil liberties but it should not be an excuse for the abuse of human rights.

Have the rights of religious minorities been part of the dialogue?

Certainly. It is regretful that especially in Greater Khartoum not a single formal agreement for a new Christian church has been reached. Many internally displaced from the South live here. Lower ranking security personnel often harass the Christians among them. The government looks differently at the traditional Christian churches, which have been in the North for a long time, than at those from the South. It suspects the latter.

In their report, Scorched Earth, the British NGO Christian Aid accuses the government of burning villages and human rights violations in frontline areas where oil has been found. Do you agree with their conclusions?

We did a mission to the government's side of the relevant areas, and hope to do one to the non-government side as well. On both sides forces inflict endless suffering on people. That villages are being attacked and burned is probably true and we know of incidents of individuals who have been chased away and of other human rights violations committed by both sides. I find it difficult to square the claim of a systematic policy of moving Southerners out of the oil concessions with the Southern communities still present in that region.

Would it be correct to say that the government has allowed an environment to be created in which this type of serious human rights violations easily occurs?

We are certainly very worried about the use of paramilitary forces by the government and will continue to express this.

Has the oil changed the balance of power?

The civil war began long before the first barrel of oil was exported. The oil has certainly brought a degree of financial flexibility for the government and might enable it to buy new armaments but Sudan is not an oil rich state. Oil will not bring a military solution nearer. Neither side can win the war by military means.

Civilians in Southern Sudan - oppressed from all sides

From the air there is only bush, savannah and grassland to be seen – and water. Through the apparently empty landscape the River Nile and its tributaries wind like huge snakes. But the landscape is not empty. Almost invisible among the high grasses and trees, along the marshes and well-stocked streams, and spread over the sunburnt plains are several million people. Many of them fled their homes years ago – many are still fleeing. They carry with them stories of torture, murder, rape, abduction and robbery. Southern Sudan is crying out for help.

Poor infrastructure and the lack of security in the south means that most places can only really be reached by small aircraft. Under the auspices of Operation Lifeline Sudan, the UN aid project for both the north and the south of the country, international organisations fly emergency help and staff into rebel-held areas. Strangely they do this under an agreement between the UN and the government of Sudan. This acceptance of what amounts to the infringement of its own sovereignty is probably unique. For each flight the security office of Operation Lifeline Sudan, based in Lokichokio in Northern Kenya, has to give a green light.

Flying in aid

In the southern state of Western Bahr al Ghazal, south of the capital, Wau, lies the junction town of Mapel. When the World Food Programme aircraft lands at 9.00 am, it turns out to be a busy spot, with huts and houses on both sides of the landing strip and a lot of people. Some local and international organisations have offices here and the only vehicles belong to them. Although the state capital is government-controlled, Mapel is held by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (the SPLA).

The town has seen the number of its inhabitants grow every year. It has become an ethnic melting pot, bringing together the original Luo with Dinka, Acholo and other southern peoples. They have survived both the terrible famine in 1998 and two days of air bombardment by government forces in August last year. In some places farmers - men and women - have begun to grow maize and vegetables. At simple stalls in the market men sell sugar, textiles, tea, soap and salt. Most of these come from Kenya, as supply lines from Northern Sudan have been almost completely cut off. Other stall-holders offer dried fish, caught in the nearby streams. Some of the women sell sorghum and peanuts or run tea and local beer shops or restaurants.

Fleeing from fear

Mr Ngor Angui is a 48-year-old trader from Wau. He left the town some time ago. "Anyone who did not want to convert to Islam was in danger. He was even not allowed to buy at the market." He tells the story of a primary school teacher whom he saw killed for that reason.

Ngor Angui, with his two wives and children, decided to escape from Wau. They built a raft to cross the river. "The military had taken all our possessions. Even the women were stripped of their clothes. I walked in my underpants. After the crossing, each of us took one of the younger children and we went on by foot. It took us several days to reach Mapel."

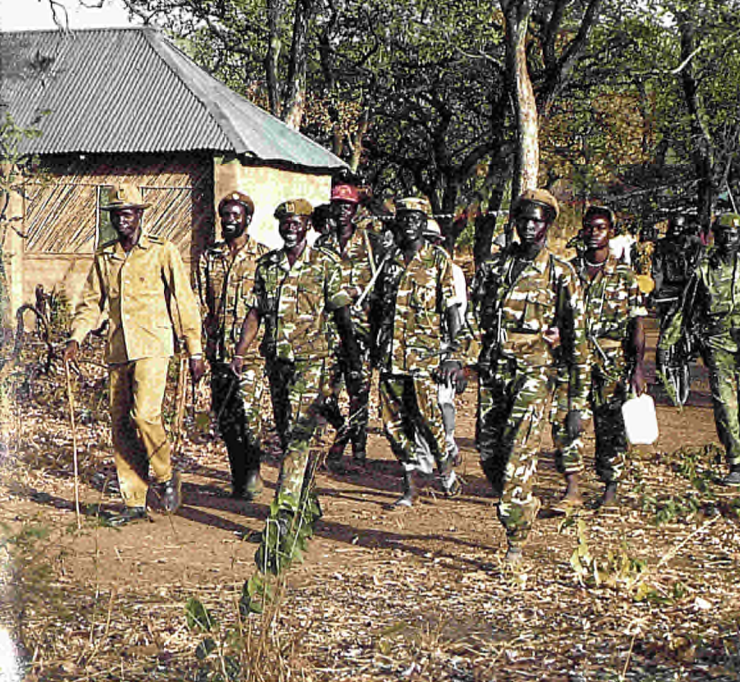
Flight from warlords and government militia

Ms Adut takes care of recent women arrivals in Mapel in her hut near the market. She herself is from Gogrial, about two hundred kilometres from Mapel. She says that soldiers of a Dinka commander – who had split from the main Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), – killed her husband. "His soldiers arrested me and my five children." Her youngest son (aged one and a half) was killed. Eventually Adut succeeded in escaping, but there was further danger.

She then had to pass through areas controlled by the so-called Popular Defence Forces (PDF), a militia supported by the government. They have been responsible for looting and killing, and abducting women and children whom they then sell to Arab owners. The victims are forced to work on the land, to herd animals, or to work as household servants or sex-slaves. "For days we were on the run at risk of our lives. We wandered around, sometimes not knowing which direction to take, until we finally reached Mapel." How does she cope with these traumatic experiences? Adut tries to forget the past. "What is over is over. When the crops are ready to be harvested, you gather and eat them. Then you think about the next sowing and harvesting." She now earns a living from small-scale trading.

Topaza people in Southern Sudan, one of the many ethnic groups





SPLA soldiers training

next sowing and harvesting.” She now earns a living from small-scale trading.

In a neighbouring hamlet one of the elders speaks to a gathering of some thirty villagers. “In this country there are two elephants which have to be destroyed. Otherwise there will be no peace and no development.” The two elephants he refers to are the country’s president, Omar el Bashir and the SPLM strongman, John Garang. “Bashir has sent in his army and allows the Popular Defence Forces to behave atrociously. He is doing nothing for the development of our region. Meanwhile Garang’s soldiers rob us of the little food we have. When we complain, they say that a hungry man is an angry man, and that they will take care it does not happen again. Sometimes SPLA soldiers come to recruit youngsters. As soon as we see them we all go and hide in the bush.” The elder wants the West to intervene much more strongly than it does now. “Our own leaders cannot end this war. Please, you should stay with us.”

Putting aid in the hands of the women

North of Wau, the village of Ameth is also in SPLA-controlled territory. The government has given permission for an aid aircraft to land here. Because of the danger from rebel commanders, who might want to rob or kidnap me, I am told by the UN security office not to stay longer than two nights. They say the rebel forces are now at least three days away from Ameth. The plane carries eighty-three sacks of maize and five boxes of medicines. During the thousand-kilometre flight not a village can be seen, although the pilot keeps the plane at a low altitude.

When he lands on the airstrip, all at once hundreds of people, perhaps a thousand - mostly women - appear. For the past few years food aid has been given to the female heads of households, rather than the male community leaders. “Women pass it to their children. They are better guardians of the few things they have,” explains a representative of the SPLM’s humanitarian wing. He says about half the people are from this area; the other half are from places made unsafe by the activities of the PDE.

Abduction of children

Ms Awor Padang is a victim of the PDE. She is a Dinka, to be precise a Dinka-Ngoc, from the town of Abyei, further north in the state of Southern Kordofan. “A year ago hundreds of PDF members arrived in the hamlet near Abyei where I and my sister-in-law had taken refuge. My sister has two little boys. The four of us hid our-

selves between very high grasses where we thought we would be safe. But an Arab on horseback discovered us and came after us. It was clear he wanted to take the boys. We ran and ran, screaming and shouting. We became so exhausted that finally he took the children and disappeared.”

She tells her story in the presence of other displaced mothers whose children have also been abducted – eighty-four people in all. Several mothers nod in understanding. Others hold their faces in their hands to control their emotions. Awor Padang and her sister-in-law soon found out that the boys were working for an Arab owner and that they could buy them back for an amount equivalent to eight cows. “We have begun to save money but in these conditions it will take years before we have enough to buy them back.” So far her community has been able to free sixteen children.

Fuelling traditional ethnic conflict

When Awor Padang and thousands of others fled from the atrocities of the PDF, they had to face another enemy, the Nuer. Southern Sudan has a centuries-old tradition of ethnic conflict. It stems mostly from disagreements about cattle, pasture or water. The availability of small arms and the pitting of ethnic groups against each other by some government officials and military officers has led to an ever-increasing number of casualties. “On our way here some armed Nuer took all the cooking utensils and blankets which we had received from the SPLA humanitarian department,” says Awor Padang.

Ameth lacks most basic facilities. It is a place for dropping food and rather rudimentary medical aid. A health worker says: “We only come here infrequently. When we are here we are in continuous radio contact with Lokichokio. We sleep in tents and our clinic is a tent. If we are warned that bad elements are approaching, we can pack up everything in thirty minutes.”

Mapel is better off. It has a school and a clinic, where fifty patients are treated daily. Women can get trauma care. There are projects to make people less dependent on food aid. The Sudanese Women’s Voice for peace, an indigenous NGO, has set up a Peace Demonstration Centre for women. “Protection is needed more than food or medicine,” says Dolly Anek Odwong, co-ordinator of the centre. “Sudan is not a poor country, but the civil war has thrown us back into the Stone Age.”



IDPs meet in Mapel

Sudan

moving from crisis towards self reliance

The people of Sudan have suffered under a state of permanent crisis for several decades. Famine and war are a part of daily life. A drought in the summer of 2000 resulted in crop failure, further exacerbating an already critical situation. While official development cooperation has been suspended since the early nineties, the European Community has continued to provide humanitarian assistance through ECHO, its humanitarian aid office. Throughout these years, ECHO has provided assistance to both North and South Sudan. Other budget lines have been progressively opening, such as in food security, co-financing, de-mining. In April 2001, the EU established 'Humanitarian Plus', a new programme designed to strengthen the population's self-reliance.

Jos Van Beurden/The Courier

“ The harvest of late 1999 was meagre. By July 2000 most food stocks were exhausted,” says Adam Bushara, a farmer's son from a village close to the town of El Fasher in West Sudan. “The July 2000 rains were so rare and the water in the reservoirs had diminished so much, that farmers did not even begin to plough their land. Hungry birds were picking all that was left in the fields. Our cattle had to do without grass. A new crop failure in late 2000 was unavoidable.”

The European Commission was in the frontline of responding to this pending crisis. Head of Delegation of the European Commission in Khartoum, Xavier Marchal, says that when NGOs and the World Food Programme explained the gravity of the situation, the EC reacted immediately.

“We reacted positively to requests for food assistance,” he says. “Before anybody else, the EU responded with a comprehensive package for the whole Northern Sudan Climatic Transition Zone.”

In the short-term the EU provided 14,000 MT of cereals through NGOs and a €2 million programme targeted at water funded by ECHO. The food aid was not imported but purchased at local markets in the Gedaref region, where there was a surplus. “Local purchases make a country more self-reliant”, adds Marchal.

Nacho Burrull, ECHO



The short-term food assistance was combined with longer-term sustainable support aimed at increasing self reliance, including early warning and information systems, and a couple of NGO co-financed rural development projects. Under the €2 million ECHO project, drought victims and their animals were provided with drinking water. These funds also permitted the drilling of 21 boreholes, the rehabilitation or installation of more than 600 hand-pumps and 40 water yards.

"People should develop the capacity to respond to these crises by themselves and become less dependent upon foreign donations. The combination of short-term and more medium-term assistance should become a priority for the donor community," he urges.

Respecting recognised humanitarian principles

Between 1990 and 2001, EU humanitarian aid amounted to more than €400 million, not including bilateral aid from Member States. The aid is not only meant for victims of the war, but for those suffering from drought, a meningitis outbreak, floods, or for refugees crossing the border from Eritrea in May 2000.

Funds do not go to the government of Sudan. The EU chooses among different channels: ECHO, the Food Security Unit budget-line and co-financing with NGOs. The distribution of food aid and non-food items aims to both respond to the immediate needs and increase food security.

In December 2000 the Food Security Unit was established at the EU Delegation in Khartoum, making it possible now to engage in more sustainable ways of helping the Sudanese population. EU assistance – second to US aid, which so far has been more directed towards areas controlled by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) and the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) – has always been delivered neutrally in both government controlled and opposition held areas.

The EU attaches great importance to the respect of basic internationally recognised principles of humanitarian assistance. When the SPLM/A began to lay down conditions contrary to these principles, ECHO aid to SPLM/A controlled areas was interrupted. Since March 2000, humanitarian aid to SPLM/A areas has been given according to urgent needs, considered on a case-by-case basis. The European Commission intends to support all Sudanese, irrespective of where they live in Sudan.

Queueing for a meal. Children at an ECHO-funded supplementary feeding centre run by Save the Children in southern Sudan

Helping people help themselves

In April 2001 a new programme was agreed upon for the whole of Sudan. 'Humanitarian Plus' aims to strengthen self reliance in the sectors of food security, basic health, water and sanitation. The emphasis is given to medium-term operations.

The new funds and the new approach are also meant to encourage the Renewed Dialogue, a process between the EU and the Sudanese government initiated in November 1999 (see article on page 66). For the first time, local NGOs have access to funding. The issue of human rights is thus coming to the forefront.

The combination of short-term humanitarian assistance with longer-term aid aimed at increasing the population's self reliance is innovative. Says Xavier Marchal: "This is crucial in a country which has been in a state of permanent crisis for several decades."

What he says is firmly supported by the World Food Programme Representative in Khartoum, Masood Hyder. "Because of the artificial distinction between emergency and development assistance, donors have been good at preserving lives but not at preserving livelihoods. If we only give emergency aid, people here will survive. It is better to help them in their ability to face this crisis by themselves."

The most critical task is to meet basic needs such as education, health and capacity building. In a peaceful country primary education belongs to the field of development. In Sudan, it is a component of emergency aid.

Echo contributions to humanitarian assistance in Sudan (north and south) since 1994

Year	Amount (euro)
1994	26.107.000
1995	21.400.000
1996	17.375.000
1997	18.954.000
1998	33.960.000
1999	13.500.000
2000	11.000.000 ¹
2001	17.000.000 ²
2002	17.000.000 ³
Total echo funding	176.296.000

¹ For a period of nine months

² €15 million in the annual programme plus €2 million in a special programme targeted at water.

³ Forecast for 2002 (not yet approved)

Sudan, human rights and Islamic fundamentalism

An interview with Dr Abdullahi Ahmed An-Na'im*, Professor of Law at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, and expert in Islamic law and human rights. Dr An-Na'im taught at the Faculty of Law in Khartoum until he left Sudan in 1985. Here he talks about why he believes Muslim fundamentalism has failed Sudan and why it is a flawed model for government.

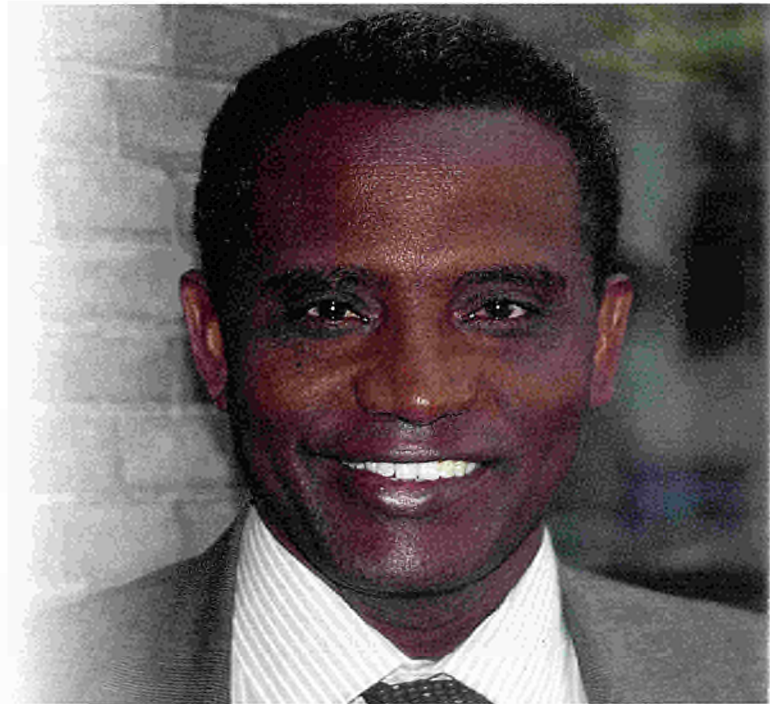
Islamic fundamentalists and Western politicians do not get along very well. Both point to the other as the source of much evil in the world. What do you think?

On the one hand, many Western politicians apparently want democracy, human rights and other liberal values to be accepted world wide. On the other hand, their liberal minds seek to avoid the appearance of telling others they should adopt these values. Most Westerners, who are responsible for foreign policy, are either do-gooder, people with a religious or ideological mission, or people who do not want to tell the other what to do. As far as I am concerned, people should be able to promote their values in other societies, as long as they do not impose them as such.

Fundamentalist leaders have often been educated in Western countries. They stress their right to self-determination as Muslims, who have the obligation to implement *shari'a* (Islamic law). But they also experience tensions inside the *shari'a*, which does not offer a sufficiently practical model for constitutional government and development. They realise this and yet they are convinced at the same time there is no alternative. This contradiction makes them impatient in attempting to impose changes from above. As a result they deny their own people the right to self-determination.

Do Western liberals and fundamentalists share a feeling of superiority?

Certainly. My frustration in the United States where I am living now is how little sensitive even liberal Americans are about conditions in Africa or Asia. But this is true of Muslims also regarding other parts of the world. However, as a Muslim from the Sudan I must admit that Western liberals are better at self-criticism than most Muslims. Moreover, liberal ideas are secular in nature and more open to change. Fundamentalists take certain holy texts literally and ascribe their ideas directly to God. By doing so, they seek to make these ideas immune from criticism or change. Fundamentalists claim the monopoly of truth and consider themselves as the infallible executors of God's will. Even



when they torture and oppress people, they seek to justify that as necessary for the implementation of the will of God. That is why one can equate fundamentalism with fascism. Both groups forget that people and societies are vulnerable and complex. This is true of all fundamentalists, and not only the Muslim ones. Throughout history, fundamentalists – Muslim and Christian – have created similar problems for their societies.

What then makes fundamentalism so attractive?

It is the appearance of being able to offer simple answers to complex problems; and because it seems not to demand major change from its followers. The rhetoric of fundamentalism tells people that they are fine as they are, and that they only need to listen to the fundamentalist message. Strong charismatic leaders take away responsibility from ordinary people. They blame colonialism and the West for their underdevelopment. Power relations and social structures do not have to be changed. Males remain the bosses. Fundamentalists go back to traditional elements in the Koran or in the history of their own countries. Such elements are safe and reliable, and offer consolation.

The present wave of fundamentalism followed the failure of post-colonial governments such as those of President Gamal Abdul Nasser in Egypt and President Habib Bourguiba in Tunisia. They were progressive and secular leaders, oriented towards the Western world. The socialism of the Syrian and Iraqi Ba'ath Parties did not bring much to the people either. Speedy and disastrous defeat by Israel in the Six-Day War in 1967

brought a final end to these movements. Islamic fundamentalism in Sudan, as in most other places, has been a rather spontaneous response to social, political and economic crises after independence. Fundamentalism is not a phenomenon which is in itself prevalent among Islamic societies at any given point in time.

Yet the fundamentalists have been in power for a long time...

Yes, I agree, but this is due more to the failure of alternative leadership than the success of the fundamentalists themselves. The silver lining to Sudan's current tragedy is, I hope, that people have begun to discover that the fundamentalists have no real solutions. Their economic policy does not work. The country is suffering as a result of its international isolation. Basic needs are not taken care of and most people feel the effects of all this.

What is important is not so much dialogue or isolation, but the content of any dialogue.

Could one say that at present there are two Sudans: a small minority benefiting from the regime and the vast majority suffering from the lack of development over many years?

Yes, but this is truer for excluded racial and religious minorities in the eastern, southern and western parts of the country than for poor, northern Sudanese. As regards the country as a whole, we are much worse off than in the seventies when President Jaafar Nimeiri was in power. The infrastructure has deteriorated. Public servants, diplomats and the judiciary have lost their credibility. They are all manipulated by the regime. All the public institutions that would check or regulate policies have been stripped of anyone with experience or integrity.

In addition Sudan is focusing too much on economic development and not enough on human development. Economic growth has been counter-productive for human development, as it has been at the expense of education, health care and other vital services. These problems are magnified by the civil war in the south of the country.

Why do you think it is so difficult to achieve peace in Sudan?

This has to do with a failure to acknowledge elements of racism in the psyche of northerners that make them look down on marginal people as primitive and exploitable - whether they are in the west, south or east of the country. Colonialism may have reinforced this "colonial" state of mind. There has been a long history of northern traders exploiting ordinary people before and during the colonial period, and after independence. By now we have been independent for nearly as long as we had been colonised. And still many Sudanese blame those fifty years of colonial rule for problems almost fifty years after independence. The real problem is unwillingness to acknowledge our racism and exploitative attitudes.

Is abduction, or slavery as some call it, an aspect of this racism?

I would not call it slavery but slavery-like practices. The term slavery has a specific historical meaning. From the legal point of view institutional slavery means that one can enforce a contract for the sale of a slave through the courts and other state institutions. This is the historical meaning of slavery from the Roman Empire, through Islamic history and in the trans-Atlantic slave trade.

While I believe the state is indirectly responsible for the present practices in Sudan, it is rather sensationalist to label it slavery, because ownership is not enforced by the state as such. The ques-

tion is how to hold the government accountable for encouraging abduction by the militias it uses to conduct the war and does not pay, and for failing to prosecute those who hold people in slavery-like conditions. What the government is doing and failing to do is utterly outrageous. It is an unacceptable expression of racism, which should be strongly condemned and opposed, but is not to be confused with slavery.

Would Sudan's inability to end the civil war and to restore human rights justify curtailing its sovereignty?

First, in my view, national sovereignty is not absolute and should be respected only when the state is fulfilling its obligations to its own people and to the international community. So the question is not whether it is legitimate to curtail sovereignty when it is abused, but how and by whom it

should be done. A middle course has to be found between military intervention and doing nothing. Any intervention should enable the people of Sudan to take control of their own affairs and govern themselves with respect for human rights and constitutional principles.

The international community must also be prepared for the consequences of its intervention. If it is not prepared to stay and re-build the country it will only complicate the situation and abandon those who become dependent on it. I would urge other options to be tried first, such as arms embargoes, economic sanctions or diplomatic measures. Once the most drastic measure - military intervention - is taken it may create more serious problems than those it was supposed to solve.

Should some of Sudan's leaders be put before an international tribunal?

As far as I am concerned they should, especially those who have been personally and directly engaged in gross and systematic violations of human rights. I do believe that several of those leaders can be charged with crimes against humanity, and even genocide, in the conduct of war in the south.

Are you pleased with the renewed dialogue between the Government of Sudan and the European Union?

What is important is not so much dialogue or isolation, but the content of any dialogue. I am not disheartened by the re-opening of American and European relations with Sudan. My question is what is going on within that framework. Is it a sustained effort to force the government to realise that it cannot win this war and has no right to subject its own people to oppression - even genocide? That is what must happen immediately - whether by isolation or engagement can be a question of strategy. The main point to emphasise is that we cannot sit idly by at the beginning of the twenty-first century while a war continues that has lasted for decades and claimed millions of lives. The ultimate moral failure is, I believe, the attempt by some people - oil companies in particular - to carry on "business as usual" in Sudan in the face of this human tragedy, the civil war.

**Professor An-Na'im was born in Sudan and studied law at the University of Khartoum and in the United Kingdom. From 1993 to 1995 he was the director of the US-based Human Rights Watch Africa.*



Hassan Omar, a successful tenant in Gezira checking his sorghum

South of Khartoum the Blue and White Niles form a triangle that stretches for some hundreds of kilometres. It has been the granary of Sudan since the time of the Pharaohs. Gezira – Arabic for island – has also provided one of the country's major exports, cotton. When the Gezira Agricultural Scheme was set up a century ago it was probably the largest project of its kind in the world. But it is now in serious need of reform.

We have been driving through endless fields of cotton, sorghum, groundnuts and vegetables. Between the fields, canals provide the water needed to make these crops grow. Cotton was first introduced at the beginning of the last century to provide the textile factories in Lancashire with raw material. After independence it became a major foreign currency earner for Sudan. Gezira uses one-third of the country's allocation of Nile water. The Sudan Gezira Board, appointed by the government and chaired by the Minister of Agriculture, employs some 7,000 people. They work in one of the ministry's departments, for the Gezira Light Railways, in one of the cotton factories or in the Gezira Dairy. Around 120,000 tenants cultivate the land.

Gezira

Sudan's fertile triangle

Last year a report from the Government of Sudan and the World Bank concluded that most tenant farmers did not earn an adequate income from their crops. The majority of them depend on income outside the Scheme to stay above the poverty line. During the peak season many tenants employ migrant labour, whose living conditions are even worse than their own. After many years of unprofitable performance, the Scheme's debt burden has reached \$34 million. Management is too centralised, inefficient and overstaffed. The irrigation infrastructure is in serious disrepair, which is one of the causes of the low yields.

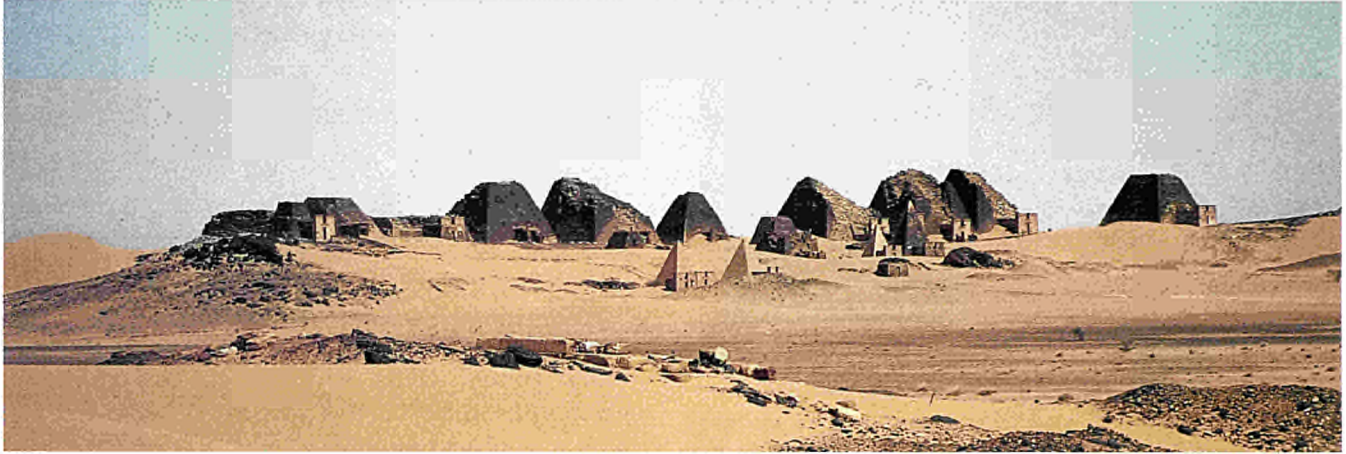
The main conclusion of the authors of the report was that the Gezira Scheme should be privatised and decentralised. Hassan Omar, a successful 60-year-old tenant farmer in the Scheme, supports these changes: "We would like to set up a water users' association. This season we have been cleaning the canals ourselves. It went smoothly. The irrigation water was used more efficiently than before." In Sudan the bureaucracy moves slowly and is a drag on development. The Government has not yet given the necessary permission for such associations to be created.

Canal in the Gezira Scheme



Sudan's cultural heritage

a new challenge to preserve the country's rich past



Meroë pyramids

Sudan has a rare cultural heritage, much of it derived from the ancient Nubian kingdoms of the Nile Valley which have made it a paradise for archaeologists.

The building of Egypt's Aswan High Dam in the 1950s prompted a surge of archaeological activity in the area now submerged by the dam's waters. Plans by the Sudanese government to build a second dam (in the north of the country) have led to an appeal to fund surveys and excavations – vital to understanding and preserving the past – before a further vast area goes under water.

From a distance you see the pyramids at the Royal Cemetery of Meroë rising in the desert. The hot sun and glaring light makes the sand look ochre. This is Sudan at its most beautiful. Thirty kings, eight reigning queens and three princes each have their own grave here. Thirty-four of the forty-one ancient constructions have remained at least partly visible. The oldest pyramids were built several hundred years before Christ. The most recent one dates from the fourth century AD. In the old part of the Royal Cemetery lie blocks of stone, each one numbered. From them a pyramid will be rebuilt. Other graves have already been restored.

Altogether there are 225 pyramids in the Sudanese Nile Valley – a precious heritage. Nubia's once-powerful rulers moved their capital several times, so ruins of old cities and royal burial places can be found at several locations along the river. The pyramids contain glassware, pottery, jewels and other valuable artefacts. Herodotus first wrote about Nubian culture in 430 BC. Modern Europeans started coming here in the eighteenth century. In recent decades there have been more than two dozen archaeological digs every year. Specialists from Europe, North America and Japan have worked closely with their Sudanese colleagues.

Foreign aid dries up

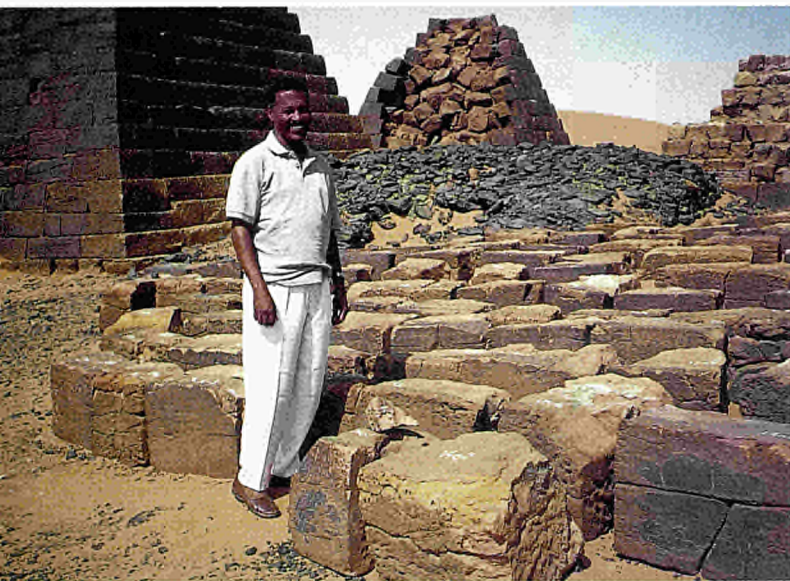
But the military coup in 1989 and the intensification of the civil war have meant that for the past decade this work

has been severely constrained. Dr El Hassan el Hassan of the National Corporation of Antiquities and Museums explains: "Since 1990 no foreign aid has been coming in and we have been dependent on private donations." He is standing next to the huge numbered blocks. "Because of the heat we work here for only three months of the year. Each December we start to rebuild a pyramid. We make cement stones ourselves to fill the gaps."

Losses from desecration and theft

Such a paradise for archaeologists has disadvantages. In 1834 an Italian medical practitioner, a Dr Fellini, destroyed the pyramid of Amani Shakhito, the queen who ruled the Meroë Kingdom in the first century BC. She built the Amon Temple in the Royal City, the pillars of which are ten metres high. It is ringed by a giant wall and guarded by four lamb statues. Remnants of the pillars show how impressive this temple must have been. The wall has completely crumbled but the lambs are still there, though one has lost its head. It was Queen Shakhito who led Nubian armies against the Romans and defeated them.

The doctor sold his booty of gold and jewels in Germany and France. Most of it is now in museums in Berlin and Munich. The country has also suffered in recent times from thieves and looters. Ten years ago ancient treasures were stolen from a glass case in the National Museum of Sudan.



Dr El Hassan el Hassan, archaeologist in Meroë

The following year a female statue was stolen from a Roman bath in Meroë. None of these has yet been found. One stolen statue, dating from the ninth century BC, was recovered in London. It had been offered to the British Museum, which tipped off Scotland Yard.

Protecting the country's treasures

Dr Hassan Edriss, Director-General of Antiquities and Museums, says Sudan is doing its best to protect its ancient sites. The necropolis and the royal city of Meroë, as well as most other locations, have been fenced with barbed wire. But the sites are so extensive that it is difficult to keep desecrators and thieves out. "Cases of illegal digging are increasing", says Dr Edriss. "Last year thieves knocked down a guard and took statues from a pyramid that had just been restored. Fortunately the statues were copies – the original ones are held in the National Museum. We also know of foreign diplomats who have smuggled antiquities from here. We work very hard, using radio, television and the press, to make the Sudanese people aware of our heritage."

Many Sudanese love their ancient treasures. One guard at the Amon Temple in Meroë is so dedicated that every time a visitor comes, whom he thinks is trustworthy, he takes him to the location of some 2,000-year-old blue and white tiles. He wipes away the sand with a rag, which he keeps under a nearby stone. When the visitor has seen enough, he brushes back the sand and makes the tiles invisible to thieves.

Aswan and the World Heritage Convention

One event in the 1950s played an important role in global cultural politics. When Egypt decided to build a dam on the Nile near Aswan – to provide more water for agriculture – many ancient cities, burial places and churches in Sudanese Nubia were destined to be lost. An international campaign began in order to save as much as possible. At the request of the Sudanese

government, and strongly supported by UNESCO, teams of specialists from all over the world came to make inventories of the buildings and the numerous treasures inside them. During that campaign a debate began about global responsibility for the preservation of cultural and natural treasures that are precious to the whole of humanity. This led in 1972 to the UNESCO World Heritage Convention. This convention, now ratified by some 164 countries, was a landmark in cultural history.

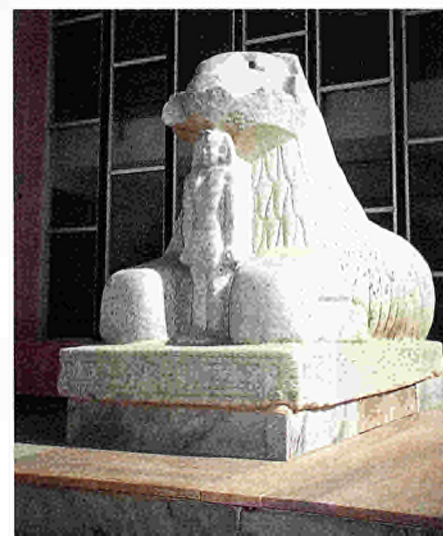
In addition to the inventories, four ancient Nubian temples, which would have been submerged, were dismantled and transported piece by piece to the National Museum in Khartoum. There they were rebuilt and are still the pride of the museum. Most of the hieroglyphics and drawings have remained remarkably sharp. The condition of the four temples is much better than that of the museum building. Its air-conditioning no longer functions. Lights do not work. Walls, glass cases – everything needs repair. It does not do justice to the ancient ornaments, pottery, statues, wall paintings and other treasures, which represent the country's rich history. "We want to begin as soon as possible to refurbish it," says Dr Edriss, "but in a hungry country, paralysed by civil strife, culture is not a priority."

A new dam – a new challenge

The Sudanese government now plans to build a new dam between the towns of Abu Hamed and Karima in the north of the country where the ancient Nubian kingdoms flourished. So the country will soon face the same problem again. "The area to be flooded by this new construction will be 280 kilometres long, while the length of river valley flooded by the Aswan High Dam in Sudan itself was only 160 kilometres", says Dr Edriss. "A first inventory has led to the registration of more than five hundred archaeological sites, but the figure could be as high as one thousand, if more research is done."

Sudan has launched an appeal to save its heritage and asked for systematic surveys and excavations in the area to be flooded. "In the 1960s four temples were saved. Many more buildings, including some very old Christian churches, disappeared under water. Fortunately, the Government has promised that they will hold back the construction of this dam until we have finished our research." Dr Edriss does not say so, but it is clear that Sudan's international isolation will make it more difficult now to raise the financial support needed from abroad for a new archaeological adventure on such a scale as this – with or without the World Heritage Convention.

*Khartoum
National museum*



Oil and troubled waters

For thousands of years the waters of the Nile have provided Sudan with fish, drinking water, irrigation and transport.

Now the country has another precious liquid in equally massive quantities: black gold.

Oil was discovered as long ago as 1978, but Sudan was still dependent on imports until two years ago. In August 1999 the first barrels were exported along a 1,600-kilometre pipeline connecting the oilfields around Bentiu in the south with Port Sudan on the Red Sea.

So far the Government has issued concessions for six oil fields - all are located in areas of conflict. Three of these are in production, while another is under exploration. The other two have remained un-exploited because they are under the control of rebel commanders.

In addition to the national oil corporation, Sudapet, Sudan is host to oil companies from China, Malaysia, Canada, Sweden and Austria. The opposition National Democratic Alliance and the SPLM (Sudan People's Liberation Movement), want all exploration and exploitation to stop until a proper peace agreement is in place - one which includes an agreement about the distribution of oil wealth. Rebel forces have carried out several attacks on the pipeline, but have not been able to stop the flow of oil to the coast.

Oil has been an important factor in improving the government's relations with Ethiopia. "We are planning a road to Gondar in Western Ethiopia," says Transport Minister Dr Lam Akol. "Ethiopia will become a big customer". Some argue that the export of oil has changed the nature of the conflict and the balance of power between the belligerents. The UN Special Rapporteur for Sudan, Gerhart Baum, has said that oil "exacerbates the war". But the British Ambassador in Khartoum, Richard Makepeace, argues that its importance should not be exaggerated: "Black gold enables the government to buy new armaments but will not create a military breakthrough."

In June the American House of Representatives voted through the Sudan Peace Act, intended among other things as a deterrent to American involvement in oil operations. It "enhances the reporting requirements" of companies which operate in Sudan and want to raise money on the American financial markets. The House argued that the Government of Sudan would use oil income to acquire arms. In Europe the British NGO, Christian Aid, has accused Khartoum of a scorched earth policy in the oil areas and the NGO umbrella group, the European Coalition on Oil in Sudan (ECOS), has called for an interruption to oil production. But Sudan's Foreign Affairs Department has claimed that "oil profits will be used mostly to finance new infra-structural projects".

Petrol station



Abduction - facing unpalatable facts



Abducted boy at Peace Building Centre in Nyala

Dhol is twelve years old. Some time ago he was abducted by a militiaman. This man sold him to an Arab landowner, for whom he herded animals and was a general dogsbody around the house. A few weeks ago a so-called Joint Tribal Committee found him and took him away.

Since then he has been at the Peace Building Centre in Nyala in western Sudan. "I want to go home. And when I am home I want to go to school," says the boy.

It is estimated that between 14,000 and 20,000 people, mostly boys and young women, are still being held against their will after being abducted. The boys have to work in the homesteads or fields of their new bosses, or to herd animals. Women have to work around the house. Often they are forced to sleep with their "owners". Quite a few become pregnant. Although abduction is a tradition of inter-tribal conflicts, the civil war has led to a huge increase in the numbers involved. 80 per cent of them have come from areas controlled by the SPLM. Most of these have been abducted by members of the Popular Defence Forces, the government-supported militia.

Breaking a taboo

For a long time the subject of abduction was taboo in northern Sudan. Most people thought it an objectionable practice and did not want to be confronted with it. But in May 1999 the Government of Sudan formally recognised that abduction was a real issue and made a commitment to its eradication. The authorities established the Committee for the Eradication of Abduction of Women and Children (CEAWC). This was done with the support of UNICEF and Save the Children, while the EU provided most of the funds. So far five Peace Building Centres have been set up. One of these is in Nyala.

At the end of the first two years 700 children had been reunited with their families. A further 275 were waiting to return home and 400 were under investigation. But at the

same time UNICEF believes that since June last year at least another 2,000 people have been abducted. "Abduction remains an extremely sensitive issue in Sudan," says a Western diplomat. "Sometimes it is not clear whether the government is really dedicated to its eradication. A stronger commitment at the highest level is needed."

Paying for freedom

There has been much criticism of the activities of some Christian NGOs from the West in this field. They have been paying money to middlemen who in turn pass it on to the "owners" to buy the freedom of abducted women and boys. During an earlier visit to southern Sudan I was told by one aid worker: "The money these NGOs pay makes abduction more attractive. Sometimes these NGOs are cheated, as they pay for people who behave as if they have been abducted. Their main motivation seems to be their hatred of the Muslim fundamentalist regime. They themselves carry fundamentalist traits as well."

The director of the Peace Building Centre in Nyala says that no one will receive a penny for the return of Dhol and the seven others currently staying there. He admits that the CEAWC does not succeed in bringing the abductors to court. "Our priority is to reunite children with their parents or relatives. If the abductors and owners come to know that they will be punished, it will become more difficult to set free the abducted women and children."

Planning for peace one day

For more than two years the peace talks have stopped and started. Not many Sudanese or foreign observers are optimistic about the outlook. But thinking ahead – planning for a future without conflict – is part of the peace process itself. This involves talking to internally displaced persons (IDPs) and preparing for their safe return home or secure settlement.

Jos Van Beurden/The Courier

Fifteen years ago six African countries – Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda – formed the group now known as the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD). Eritrea joined them when it achieved independence in 1993. Its mandate was to cooperate in tackling drought and preventing famine.

With a slight change of name its role was formally widened in 1995 to include, among other things, the prevention and resolution of conflict. At the request of the Sudanese government and the Sudanese People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), IGAD took on the task of mediating between them with a view to securing a lasting peace. Three rounds of peace talks have taken place under the auspices of an IGAD Peace Committee, chaired by Kenya.

The peace process is in turn supported by an informal grouping of mostly western countries, the IGAD Partner Forum (IPF). The IPF has set up a working group (chaired by the UN), which is looking ahead to a time when the civil war has ended and Sudan's huge internal refugee problem can be addressed. The EU is an active member.

This planning work is taking place in close cooperation with the country's Ministry of International Cooperation. At the request of the Minister, Dr Karam al Din Abdalmoula, several consultancy exercises have been carried out. One of these has involved talking to as many "stakeholders" as possible in both the government-controlled areas and in the south.

Marv Koop of the UN Development Programme has been in charge of consultations in government-controlled

areas. "During all the conversations we had with internally displaced persons, they have told us they are so tired of the conflict. They have no control over their lives. They feel discriminated against. They ask for freedom to return to their native regions in security or to live in security where they are now."

Paul Murphy, who has co-ordinated the consultations in the SPLM-controlled areas, has encountered a lot of cynicism. "People do not see a way out of the war. They were sceptical about the consultations and often questioned their sincerity. They lost confidence that their voices would really be listened to."

Another consultancy has been carried out on the subject of landmines. All parties have used them since the first outbreaks of civil war some forty years ago. The International Campaign to Ban Landmines estimates that landmines have killed or injured some 70,000 people in the past fifteen years alone, and that there are still between half a million and two million mines planted across the country.

In many areas the safe passage of thousands of IDPs to their home villages cannot be guaranteed. Nomadic pastoralists are especially vulnerable. The exercise concluded that so far "the threat has been largely un-recognised and underestimated. An effective first-response, evacuation, surgical treatment and after-care system for landmine victims is almost totally absent." The question is whether any of these measures will be taken until a firm peace agreement is in place, and how far the situation will deteriorate before this happens.

The desperate face of an aid worker, wrought with exhaustion, feeding yet another victim of malnutrition



Profile

SUDAN



General information

Area:	2,503,890 sq km
Population:	34 m
Population density:	14 per km ²
Capital:	Khartoum
Other main towns:	Omdurman, Nyala, Port Sudan, Kassala, El-Obeid, Wad Medani, Gedaref, Juba, Malakal, Wau, Kosti
Languages:	Arabic, Nubian, Dinka, English
Religions:	Islam, Christianity, traditional religions

Political structure

President:	Omar Hassan Ahmed el-Bashir Lieutenant-General Omar el Bashir came to power in 1989 after a military coup d'etat supported by the National Islamic Front of Hassan el Turabi. Lt-Gen el-Bashir was appointed president in 1993. In 1996 he was elected president; re-elected in December 2000. The president, who is also prime minister; appoints the cabinet.
National legislature:	400-member National Assembly (parliament), of which 264 members are elected and 136 appointed by the president. Political parties were banned after the June 1989 coup. Since January 1999 multiparty politics was introduced and political parties allowed to register.
Main opposition groups:	the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) includes; the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP); the Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM); The SPLA – the military wing of the SPLM – fighting a guerilla war in the south, is now split into several factions; the mainstream movement, led by Colonel John Garang, is part of the NDA; Other opposition groups include the Sudan Allied Forces (SAF), a guerilla force also in combat in the south, and the Popular National Congress (PNC). The leading opposition groups, united within the NDA (National Democratic Alliance), boycotted the 2000 elections. In 2000 the former speaker of the National Assembly and National Islamic Front strongman Turabi lost his power. Since then the exiled leader of the opposition UMMA, Sadiq el Mahdi, returned to Khartoum and his party joined the NDA. Former President Jaafar el-Nimeiri has also returned to the country, and formed his own opposition party. In areas controlled by John Garang's Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), administrative structures are weak. Communication is difficult. There is little education or health, unless provided by a local church or aid organisation.

Economy

Currency:	The Sudanese dinar replaced the Sudanese pound in 1999. 258 Sudanese dinar or 2.580 Sudanese pound = 1US\$
GDP per capita:	US\$310
GDP growth:	5,2%
Total external debt:	56,9 m
Main (potential) economic sectors:	Minerals: oil Agriculture: cotton, grains, animals, skins

Social indicators

Life expectancy at birth:	54 years (men), 56 years (women)
Adult literacy:	69% (male), 45% (female)
Urban population:	35%
Population with access to safe water:	n.a.
Enrolment in education:	49%
Population growth rate:	2,3%
Infant mortality: 67,2; under-5s:	109
Human development index rating:	0.439 (138 out of 162)

Sources: World Bank, UNDP, Economist Intelligence Unit

NB Because of the civil war data on many regions are not available or are less reliable. In general, people in the North are better off than those in the rest of Sudan. Those in the South and in the Nuba Mountains are the worst off.

Famine in Sudan

A photographic essay by Tom Stoddart/IPG©1998

Famine – a result of drought and the civil war – is part of the daily life of many Sudanese. Lack of rain and the displacement of people prevents farmers from cultivating their land and becoming self-sufficient.

All pictures taken in Ajiep, Southern Sudan, the main centre of the 1998 famine.



A man runs through the feeding station during a downpour



The long wait for aid

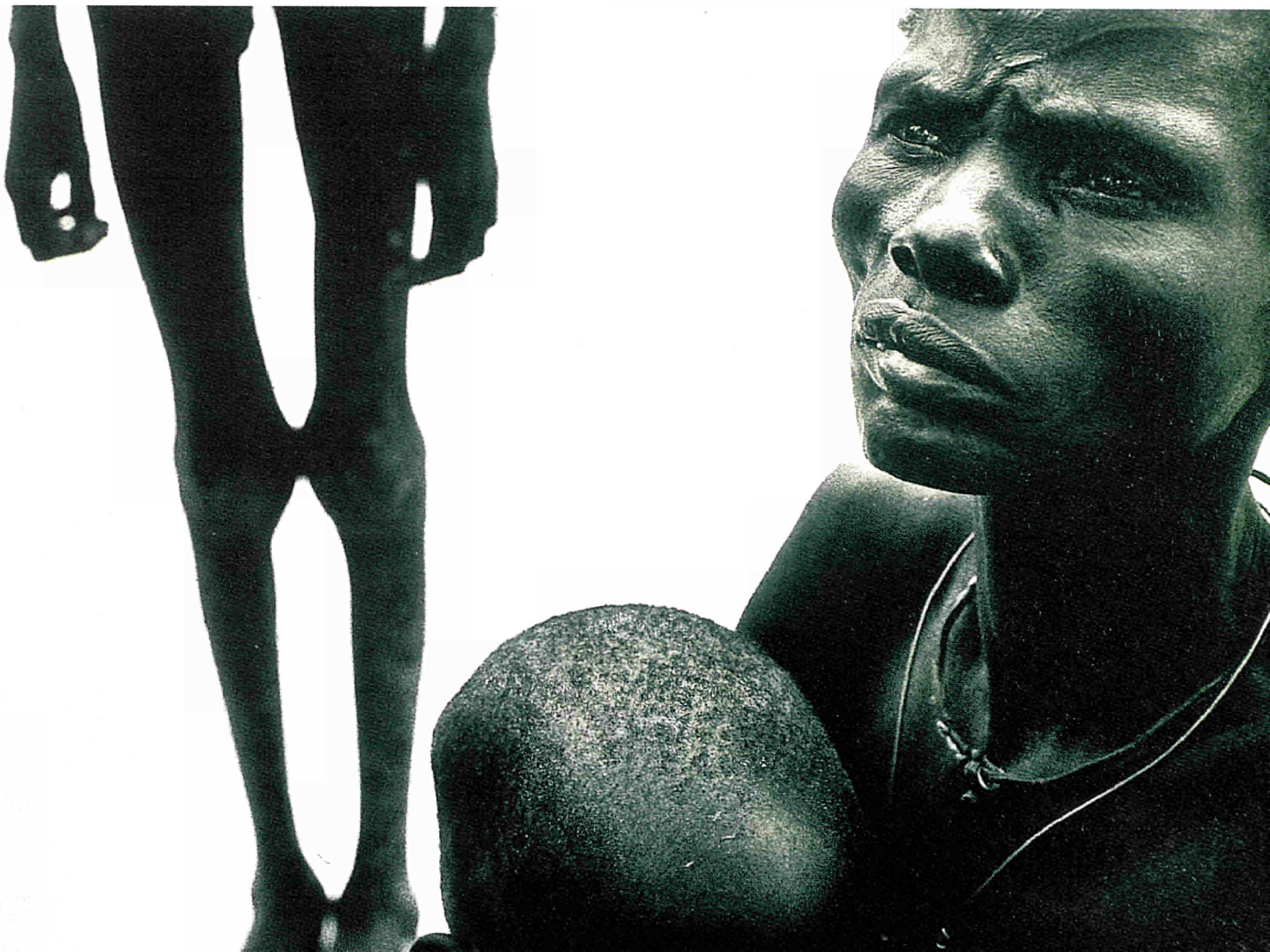
A family wait for aid





The rush for food as a UN plane makes its drop of vital supplies

A mother and child wait for supplies in the feeding centre



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