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NEPAD: What Partnership? Whose Development?

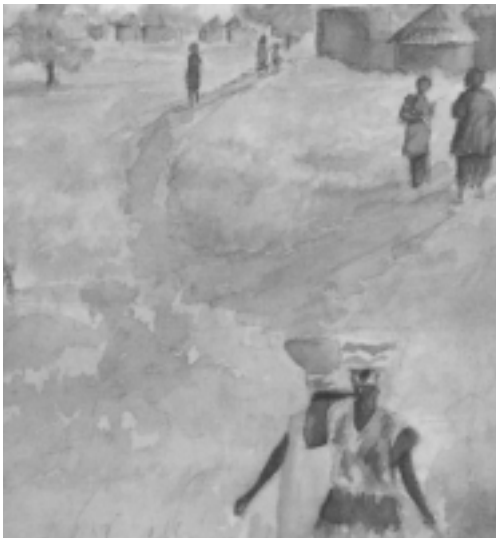
by Claudie Gosselin

In Ghana, Mary Agyekum, aided by her children, ekes out a living breaking stones. Life was not always this difficult: her family used to own a farm in the west of the country. But unfortunately for the villagers, underneath their land was gold—gold wanted by foreign mining firms, attracted to Ghana by the laxed regulations urged on the government by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. Mary and the other villagers were forced off their land. They are not benefiting from the enormous profits made by the mining companies.

Mary's story was reported early this year by John Kampfner in *The Guardian*. Pointing out that Ghana has been a model pupil of the international financial institutions, Kampfner concludes that "after two decades of structural adjustment, the poor are poorer and the government more dependent than ever on outside help." Ghana's failed economic model is now a candidate for the Highly Indebted Poor Countries debt relief. This situation is far from being unique to Ghana, yet a recent proposal put forward by a number of African heads of state to the G8 countries entitled the "New Partnership for Africa's Development" (NEPAD) calls not for a rejection of such policies that have increased the number of poor in Africa, but for more of the same.

CCIC's Africa-Canada Forum (ACF), in consultation with its partners, has produced a detailed commentary on NEPAD (available on CCIC's web site). Some of the ACF concerns, revolving around both the content of NEPAD and the process by which it was developed, are articulated throughout this issue of *Au Courant*.

During a recent meeting between representatives of the ACF and Ambassador Robert Fowler, the Prime Minister's Personal Representative for Africa and for the G8 Summit, Tetteh Hormeku, a leading trade analyst from Third World Network-Africa (Ghana), critiqued the economic strategy at the heart of NEPAD, centred on efforts to attract



From book cover published by Écosociété.

Sur les petites routes de la démocratie, painting by Mamadou Togola.

foreign direct investment (FDI). Not only have such efforts not worked in the past, they have exacerbated internal economic problems. Where FDI has been attracted, the small profits made by Africans have been lost to disadvantageous terms of trade.

In response to this critique, Ambassador Fowler recommended to his African interlocutors at CCIC not to scrutinize the details of the document but to see is as a context, a "meeting place," for a revitalized discussion on Africa. So far, however, it appears that the African statesmen promoting NEPAD favour European and North American meeting places over engagement and consultations with their own citizens. Witness the testimony of Father Jean-Patrice Ngoyi, a human rights activist in Nigeria working with the Justice, Development and Peace Commission:

"Because we are used to hunting for policy documents, we stumbled upon NEPAD. We were not surprised not to have heard about it because we are used to the government not telling us what they are doing. We called our Canadian partners who sent us NEPAD. With our limited means we made copies and called for a meeting of intellectuals and activists to discuss it. Only through our partnership with our brothers in Canada was this possible."

In this issue:

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Father Ngoyi concluded with a request for Ambassador Fowler: "Since our leaders have brought NEPAD here to you before bringing it to us, tell them that we came here and we want a real partnership, not just between the leaders of Africa and the leaders of the G8, but also between leaders and civil society in Africa."

Another guest of the ACF, Dr. Agnes Abuom, of the Building Eastern African Community Network (Kenya), welcomed a statement by African leaders that shows a commitment to the development of Africa, but expressed concern that NEPAD fails to promote participatory, people-centered and truly sustainable development. A renewed commitment to Africa must make use of a more thorough and sophisticated gender analysis, and must start from the perspective of human rights.

Had the poor been consulted, they would most likely have proposed different "solutions" than those outlined in NEPAD. Based on her personal experience, for instance, one can imagine that Mary Agyekum would not have recommended the privatization of such basic services as potable water. Recently, World Bank loans to Ghana have been made conditional upon the privatization of the urban water supply. This policy, Mary Agyekum experiences first hand, as each morning she has to pay to be let in the public toilet, then pay again for a bucket of water. This is what the World Bank calls "full cost recovery." A human rights approach, on the contrary, would start with recognizing that water is a basic human right and that it is the state's responsability to ensure its provision to all households.

Participants at a recent ACF meeting to analyse NEPAD stressed that "good" government is first and foremost accountable to its citizens—and not primarily, as in "good governance" technocratic approaches, to its international creditors and aid providers. Further, the notions of "good governance" and "partnership" in NEPAD fail to acknowledge global power relationships. For instance, Tetteh Hormeku reviewed the losses of African countries at the last World Trade Organization (WTO) ministerial meeting in Doha, where their well-prepared proposals were for the most part rejected. Hormeku gave personal testimony of the way African negotiators were bullied into submission by countries which currently benefit from the status quo, including Canada.

Secluded in the Canadian Rocky Mountains in June, the leaders of eight of the richest nations on earth will release their Action Plan for Africa in response to NEPAD. What would a truly renewed partnership with Africa require?

Transforming Africa will require a commitment to genuinely listen to the alternatives that have been proposed by African civil society, independent analysts of Africa, and some African governments. These alternatives reject neo-liberal approaches to development. They call for the democratization of global governance and for the redress of structural injustices in the "international economic disorder," to borrow a phrase from economist Dr. Gerald Helleiner.

An obvious place to start for the G8 would be with a cancellation of the debt of the poor and highly indebted countries. This proposal has long and strongly been voiced by civil society organizations. Yet this is a request the authors of NEPAD are too timid to make, calling only for the extension of debt relief beyond its current levels. This self-restraint, and the fact that several of the African proposals to the WTO do not reappear in NEPAD, demonstrate what Bonnie Campbell of UQAM has recently called "the narrowing of African political space for manoeuvre in the world order."

If Kananaskis were to be a true "meeting place" where African civil society actors were invited and had a genuine opportunity to change the paradigm, tremendous improvement in the lives of millions could be achieved.

Claudie Gosselin coordinates the Africa-Canada Forum at CCIC. (The AFC was formed three years ago when the Canadian NGO community felt a need to come together for renewed energy and coherence in their work to promote social justice and sustainable development in Africa. The 40 members critically assess their own practices, and do joint policy work.)

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commentary

Summit Stepping Stones in a Development Debate

The tumultuous "battle in Seattle" and the failure there of the new "round" of WTO trade talks put a premium on inclusion of the Global South and generated a fierce resolve, in the minds of global managers, that the Seattle failure would not be allowed to repeat. But when trade delegates arrived in Qatar last November there was an undercurrent of unease. Third World delegates had arrived "with issues".

First, many in the developing world opposed a new round of trade talks. They wanted relief and reassurance that intellectual property rights issues (TRIPS) would get a new approach. The rights of countries to produce and access generic drugs to save and prolong lives were being eroded. Third World negotiators also wanted special ("Development Box") measures for those living in rural poverty and dependant on farm incomes (and domestic markets).

The most prominent "victory" for the Global South in Qatar (re-asserting rights regarding the licensing of generic drugs) owed a lot to pressure from civil society groups and developed economies who added crucial political weight to the voice of Southern advocates. It was a victory which prompted some Third World activists to call for stronger links to the solidarity movements in the North.

Untroubled by Third World frustration, and without detectable irony, global managers named the new negotiating round the "Doha Development Agenda".

A walking version of the Doha Development Agenda has now emerged for Africa. It is a new US$ 64 billion plan for African development called the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). A group of African States, led by Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, sold the NEPAD to G8 leaders at Genoa.

NEPAD is a development strategy for Africa that relies on deepening current macro-economic and governance "reforms" that will open up the continent to foreign direct investment (FDI). The idea of NEPAD is to spend aid dollars to effect these reforms. FDI takes care of the rest.

NEPAD critics point out that the current fragility of many African economies is due to the sort of reforms now advocated by the WTO and the World Bank and advanced in NEPAD. They say FDI shows up in growing economies but that doesn't mean that FDI makes economies grow. In Africa, FDI is at a low ebb. The global share of FDI directed to African economies in the mid 1990's was about 11 percent in contrast to 3 percent today.

Although NEPAD is proposed by some African heads of government it barely touches the ground on the continent itself. There has been little or no consultation in most African countries and civil society is out of the picture.

If NEPAD is the walking version of Doha, the recent statement of heads of government at the UN Financing for Development (FfD) Summit in Monterrey is a kind of sitting version. It is Doha re-articulated—a faithful commitment to trade and FDI as a cure for underdevelopment.

Global leaders took some attention away from the FfD statement with unanticipated aid pledges; the United States promised to move to $15 billion annually by 2006; Europe pledged to enhance overall spending by $7 billion annually (also by 2006); and Canada pledged annual increases of 8 percent.

It sounds like a major boost in aid spending but according to former Mexican President Ernesto Zedillo (who chaired a panel assessing the costs of the UN Millenium Development Goals) it will take an infusion of US $65 billion annually to reach the new development targets. Unfortunately, these new funds (the American funds in particular) are linked to layers of conditions and will be awarded, in the words of US President George Bush, to countries that will "walk the hard road" of economic, political and social reform.

The G8 summit this summer in Canada represents a stepping stone in the continuing debate about development, trade and global governance. With Africa on the agenda, the summit is a key chance for Northern development advocates and their African colleagues to raise questions about NEPAD and the Doha Development Agenda.

The G8 summit is also a signpost pointing to the WTO 5th Ministerial in Mexico in 2003. Careful work and alliances between activists North and South may add new "throw weight" to the Global South. Certainly nothing less will do the trick. Less gives us Doha. NEPAD comes from less. Monterrey is less. But more is what is needed. A lot, lot more.

Gerry Barr
President and CEO

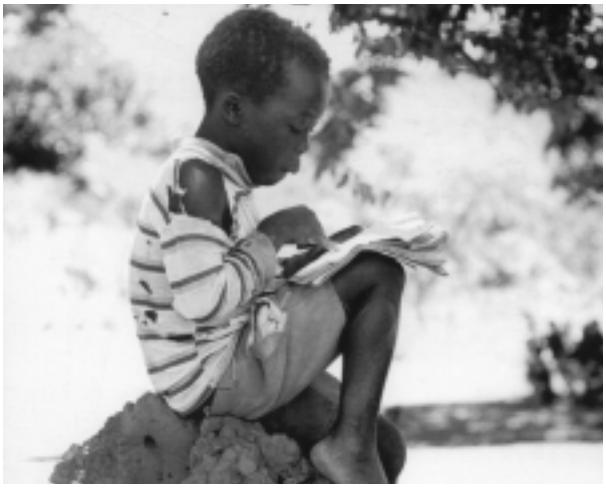
Beyond Stereotypes: Seeking New Images *By Anne Buchanan*

Canadians open their newspapers and turn on their television news one day to the story of the rescue, by a white South African helicopter crew, of a woman who has given birth in a tree in the flooded plains of Mozambique. The shocking image attracts attention and triggers public sympathies to the point that donations for emergency aid, which has been slow to arrive until this point, pour in. Canadians are not told the stories of how the local population, including the Mozambican navy, organize around the emergency and assist the thousands of other people in need of help before international assistance arrives. The public is left with, and responds to, an image of white people saving black people, not of black Africans saving one another. Would they respond to any other kind of image? This is a media image, but are NGO images counteracting or reinforcing media images of Africa?

The Africa-Canada Forum (ACF), a working group of CCIC, has begun a process of self-reflection and assessment of images of Africa used by CCIC members for fundraising purposes. This process springs from a concern that images portrayed in the media and in NGO materials contribute to afro-pessimism among the public. The ACF process dovetails with CCIC Ethics Review Committee work on related sections in the Code of Ethics. The Committee is interested in developing a greater understanding among members of the ethical considerations in communications to the public.

Participants at an ACF workshop in May 2001 were asked to think of words or images that came to mind when they thought of Africa. They were then asked for words or images to describe what came to mind when they looked at a display of print fundraising materials provided by members of ACF. There were noticeable differences between the two lists. The display highlighted the impact these images can have when seen collectively. For the most part, it reflected bleak images of hopeless victims and stereotypical images such as cute children and a rural continent with few men. Most of the images reflected people in need, rather than the obstacles they face, and the images failed to show the full diversity of life that exists in Africa.

Participants realized how close to home the issue was. Most conversations about fundraising images have dealt with concerns about so-called 'poornography' images: portrayals of people as helpless, passive, objects. The display illustrated how doom and gloom images are only part of the problem. Organizations that would never consider showing a starving child, instead choose to show a smiling child, but there is still no evidence of parents, or any family. This in a continent where a child is considered a village child, raised not only by their parents. Other organizations will have wording to the effect that a small donation will make all the difference. Are stereotypes or oversimplifications any better than pathetic dirty faces?



Jenny Mathews

Promoting education.

What impact do these kind of images have on the public perception of Africa? Recently VSO looked at this issue in their study: *The Live Aid Legacy: The developing world through British eyes—a research report*. The research found that when asked "when I say to you developing or third world what words come to mind", 80% responded with words such as war, famine, disaster, starvation and corruption. Additionally 74% of adults agreed with the statement: "Developing countries depend on the money and knowledge of the West to progress". When respondents were presented with an alternative view, their reactions included expressing relief that there are positive stories as well as negative ones and expressing anger and a feeling of having been manipulated. The latter reaction resulted in them questioning the media's values and accuracy and blaming charities' fundraising materials for promoting 'victim' images.

But fundraisers know that the public, whether in Britain or in Canada, responds to images of children. They may say in focus groups that they don't like to see bleak images, but the power of the purse speaks differently. Canadians have

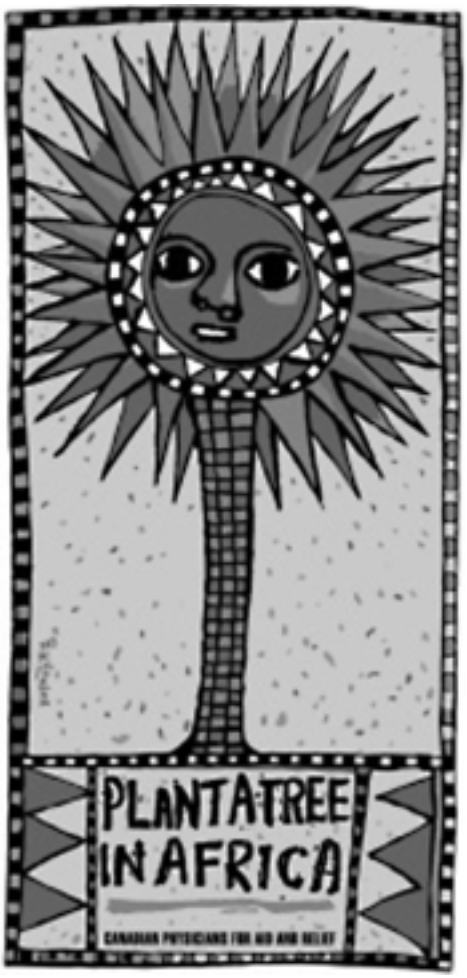
traditionally donated more often to images that draw their pity. There are other practical reasons that lead NGOs to choose particular images. Eighty percent of the African population lives in rural areas and this is where most of the work of NGOs takes place so images of rural Africa are not surprising. Rural life is more photogenic. Urban programming usually involves capacity building and is much harder to portray as images that will appeal to Canadians.

What does appeal to Canadians? According to the recent report from the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy: *Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians*, most donors' reasons for giving "were related to feeling compassion toward people in need (94%) and wanting to help a cause in which they personally believe (91%)". In addition, people's reasons for not giving more to charities, or for not giving at all include "disliking the way in which requests are made (47% versus 41% in 1997)" and "do not think the money will be used efficiently (46% versus 40% in 1997)". People appear to be getting tired of not seeing solutions to problems and are asking why they should keep giving if it's not working and all they get are requests for more.

Therein lies an example of the many tensions that underlie this issue. Canadians respond to images of need but they want to see efficient solutions. NGOs have to raise funds to continue their work and Canadians donate to images that have a head-to-heart connection, not head-to-head intellectual connection with messages about vague terms like 'partnering' or 'sustainable human development'. Have NGOs mastered "yellow development" by providing the public with sensationalist style images and horrific stories that tug at their heartstrings in order to sell programs? Or perhaps NGOs are making efficient use of their funds by providing images to which the public will make donations? More 'intellectual' messages could be less successful and the resulting low income-to-cost ratio may raise questions about the proper/efficient use of funds.

As long as Canadians respond, should NGOs be concerned with the kind of images that are currently popular with many organizations? Not everyone is concerned, believing images can be emotional and still remain ethical. But many CCIC members are not happy with stereotyping and use of bleak, hopeless images.

A mix of programmers and fundraisers from organizations involved in the ACF were asked why they were concerned.



Canadian Physicians for Aid and Relief

Re-forestation program poster.

Their answers ranged from the economic concern that in the long term Canadians will be turned off by constant bleak images and close their wallets, to ethical concerns about truthfulness, respect, fairness and dignity. For some, the greater damage done is to the integrity of our missions.

Many of the images perpetuate a model of human suffering that ignores the complexity of the situations and is in contrast to NGOs' long-term aim. The same story is repeated: helpless victim(s), villain (take your pick among war, weather or want) and a Northern saviour. Images portray Band-Aid solutions while NGOs' work involves trying to get long-term resolutions to problems that are often political and economic. Sudan, for example, has been portrayed merely as starving refugees without reference to the wider contexts and political priorities that led to such conditions. Canadians

get a skewed image of Africa that is taking them on a spiral of despair with little if any understanding of the factors surrounding the situation. Do images inspire pity when they should be inspiring outrage and broader action to address injustice? Have NGOs engaged the public in the broader policy issues enough to encourage participation in discussions around issues at the G8 for instance? Some argue that fundraising images should not be confused with public education materials and it is in the latter that people receive the larger context explanations. But it is not everyone who receives that material. The general public also needs to get the balanced picture without having to wait for the donor package.

The CCIC Ethics Review Committee has examined what some of the ethical considerations should be for images. The Code of Ethics has a specific section on communications to the public. These rules of conduct are a first step in understanding what is right and good, but ongoing dialogue is still necessary to address the complexity of ethical considerations. Images must be truthful, but must also respect people's dignity. Providing context to pictures helps to ensure accuracy. It is easy to show a 'real' photo, but it may not be a reflection of the full situation. An explanatory text will help to provide more context. Balancing the reality of hardship with the reality that Africans are active in working toward solutions is a necessary part of the equation. Other considerations, such as respect for privacy (i.e. whether the person in the photo has given permission for it to be used for fundraising purposes) need to be taken. There are imbedded ethical tensions in this, as in any, issue: duty to Canadian donors and duty to Africans; looking out for others and letting others look out for themselves; consideration of individuals and consideration of wider community/society; responsibility to organizational efficiency and responsibility to development goals; etc. This is not to say that these tensions are mutually exclusive, or that they can be treated on the same level of ethical concern. They are part of the ethical deliberation required to understand what together we consider as 'good' images. We need to ask questions that encourage inquiry rather than quick solutions, but we must begin by asking why we are doing what we are doing.

The deliberation has just begun.

Anne Buchanan is with the Organizational Development Team at CCIC and is the staff liaison for the Ethics Review Committee.

CCIC Code of Ethics (excerpt)

3.4.1 Fundraising solicitations shall be truthful, shall accurately describe the Organization's identity, purpose, programs and need, shall only make claims which the Organization can fulfill, and shall avoid using high-pressure tactics in soliciting donations. There shall be no misleading information (including material omissions or exaggerations of fact), no use of misleading photographs, nor any other communication which would tend to create a false impression or misunderstanding. Information in the Organization's appeals should give accurate balance to the actual programs for which the funds solicited will be used.

3.4.3 Any and all communications to the public by the Organization shall respect the dignity, values, history, religion, and culture of the people supported by its programs. In particular, the Organization shall avoid the following:

- messages which generalize and mask the diversity of situations;
- messages which fuel prejudice;
- messages which foster a sense of Northern superiority;
- messages which show people as hopeless objects for our pity, rather than as equal partners in action and development.

3.4.6 The Organization will ensure that the content of the messages sent out in disaster appeals does not undermine the work of development education which calls for long-term response.

Congo's Forgotten War *by Serge Blais and Denis Tougas*

A recent volcanic eruption in the Goma region of the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) drew the attention of Western media. The DRC, is also the site of the largest war on the African continent and it was hoped, by Canadian NGOs and their Congolese partners, that media attention could help to explain the causes and consequences of this war that started in 1998. Pressure could also be placed on the Canadian government to make a more significant commitment to peace in that part of Africa. Unfortunately, the coverage was confined to the immediate humanitarian consequences of the disaster. The dominant images were of the volcano, the lava flows and the arrival of major aid organizations.

Magnitude of the Consequences of the War

After September 11 and the ensuing media attention, it is appropriate to recall that, since August 1998, Congo's forgotten war has directly or indirectly caused more than 3 million deaths. Living conditions for the people involved have reached critical proportions.

In September 2001, in a joint appeal for the DRC, the United Nations (UN) estimated the vulnerable population to be 16 million, with nearly 2 million displaced. Health services, schools and infrastructure have disappeared or are in pitiful condition. Younger generations are less educated than those preceding them, rates of infant mortality have returned to the levels they were at 50 years ago, and the maternal mortality rate is 3000 deaths per 100,000 births in the eastern part of the country, according to the International Rescue Committee.

…foreign armies are fighting each other for control of resources while massacring ordinary citizens. The West has turned a blind eye to these violations.

Among the 6 million people living in Kinshasa, only a few thousand are receiving wages. The formal economy has almost completely disappeared and state employees sporadically receive a salary of less than $20 per month. The population survives due to the informal sector. But this, too, is being seriously disrupted as the war cuts off supply routes.

In rural areas, the war has boxed in populations, leaving them isolated. There is no access to agricultural inputs or to essential products such as salt, soap and matches. Produce can not be sold and it seems as if the clock has turned back 60 years. Some are living in primitive conditions in the forests. The UN Inter-Agency Consolidated Appeal for the Democratic Republic of Congo reports that "This group of displaced is legitimately believed to be the most vulnerable among all IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) communities. Most commonly, these people have been displaced several times, having left their home communities seeking security in remote and barely accessible areas. Communities then cleanse a portion of forest and start cultivating. This category of displaced has practically no access to health care and is reduced to consuming wild berries and 'non-human' and raw food. Ashamed of their physical appearance and nudity, precarious health conditions (infections, dermatosis, parasitosis, etc.), 'forest dwellers' avoid any contacts with the outside world and seek to further distance and alienate themselves from the neighbouring communities. … The number of people in this category is estimated at 200,000."

The War and Looting

The DRC is now divided into several areas. One area is controlled by Joseph Kabila from Kinshasa, with foreign armies, in the guise of local rebels, controlling the remaining areas. These foreign armies are fighting each other for control of resources while massacring ordinary citizens. The West has turned a blind eye to these violations. Various investigations by the UN and international NGOs show how that these foreign armies are stealing resources and organizing various trafficking rings. Those responsible are known and named in these reports, yet no action has been taken against them. Despite resolutions of the Security Council calling on the foreign armies to withdraw from Congolese territory and to cease their looting, the military occupation and the illegal commerce continues.

Certain regions of Africa, like the Congo, are awash in natural resources that can be mined with a shovel and a pail, requiring little investment. It is enough to establish an armed militia in a region, terrorize the people, pay ridiculous sums in (narco)dollars to famished populations and mobilize thousands of people to extract gold, diamonds, coltan, lumber, etc. These substances are sold in international markets to bring in currencies then used to purchase arms from East-European mafias. Warlords, whose interests may (or may not) overlap with those of government cliques, traditional chiefs or private

companies, battle each other and establish savagery. The Congo has become a new Far West where private armies are openly fighting to control resources with the knowledge and acquiescence of the North. Northern companies, officially, are not involved as they do not invest in unstable environments. The minerals mined in the Congo are, however, sold outside the country and processed into circuit boards: the coltan stolen from Kivu is used by multinationals to manufacture our cell phones.

Peace Missions: underfinanced, underequipped, underqualified…

It took 9 months for the UN Security Council to speak up about the invasion and occupation of the DRC by foreign armies (by comparison, Iraq's occupation of Kuwait prompted quick reaction). The invasion of the DRC by the foreign armies has been justified as a means of ensuring security for Rwanda. But it is the UN that should be providing this security by assuming its responsibilities for enforcing international law and locating and neutralizing the genocidal factors present in the Congo. It was the UN and not the Congolese people who were responsible for the lack of aid in Rwanda that led to the genocide and, subsequently, the indescribable management of the refugee camps in Kivu.

"no developed country currently contributes troops to the most difficult United Nations-led peacekeeping operations…"

After the deaths of American soldiers in Somalia in 1993, and Belgian soldiers in Rwanda in 1994, Western powers re-evaluated the pertinence of sending their troops to Africa. The West's official line became that it was up to African authorities to settle their own conflicts. Applying this approach to the murderous wars that have ravaged the continent in Angola, Sierra Leone, the Sudan and the Congo, has sufficiently demonstrated the hypocrisy of this new doctrine. A report by Ingvar Carlsson, Chair of an independent inquiry into UN actions during the Rwandan genocide, concluded "that Rwanda was not of strategic interest to third countries and that the international community exercised double standards when faced with the risk of a catastrophe there (in Rwanda), compared to actions taken elsewhere." The Panel on United Nations Peace Operations, chaired by Lakhdar Brahimi, recommended that peace missions be completely reorganized. The panel reported that "no developed country currently contributes troops to the most difficult United Nations-led peacekeeping operations from a security perspective, namely the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC)."

It is, therefore, not surprising that during Security Council discussions on African issues last January, certain delegates accused the Council of having a "coldness toward Africa" and they discredited the "Security Council's attitude, which consists of shifting the full responsibility for the continent's peace and security onto the African countries." The delegates also called for the world community "to renounce humanitarian favouritism" and demanded "equal treatment" for Africa.

Troops from MONUC were deployed to the DRC in April 2001, almost three years after the start of the war. In January 2002, there were about 2500 soldiers in a country of 50 million. By comparison, 42,000 soldiers are present in Kosovo, a country of 2 million. Last January, in Goma, there were a few dozen military observers for MONUC. When the volcano erupted they fled, abandoning their munitions and fuel dumps, which were looted by Rwandan soldiers and DRC rebels. After millions of deaths in the Congo, it is time to begin implementing the reforms proposed in the Brahimi report and to send in a force capable of imposing peace.

War Aid

International aid, particularly from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, unduly favours certain countries involved in the war in the DRC while refusing or sparsely allocating aid to others. Under various programs of these two institutions, Uganda, in 2000, received US $635 million, Rwanda received US $80.5 million, and the DRC received nothing. Since then, Rwanda and Uganda, despite their involvement in the war, have continued to benefit from the largess of the Bretton Wood institutions, especially with regard to reducing their foreign debt. The Congolese government has recently been granted US $55 million for reconstruction. This initial grant has brought to an end nearly 10 years of boycotting the DRC by international financial institutions and Europe.

It is appropriate to note that this boycott began in the early 1990s, when the Congolese people were beginning

to demand democratic changes. After years supporting Mobutu, a supposed shield against communism, the North decided to shut down aid programs to what was then called Zaire. Civilian leaders in Congolese society, who were fighting for democratic reforms, and the ordinary citizens following these changes, did not understand why the cuts took place, given the process of political transformation underway. It was as if the victims were being penalized just as they were attempting to get their heads above water.

Civil Society and Peace

Groups in the Congolese civil society nonetheless continued their work. Despite the limited means and lack of experience, with the assistance of organizations from the North, some from Canada, they succeeded in maintaining and even broadening the space for expression to promote rights and democracy.

Shortly after the start of the war in 1998, various components of civil society came together to re-launch the process of democratizing the country and promoting lasting peace in the DRC. This movement was opposed to using arms, military solutions and political trickery to settle the country's deep problems. This was the start of the National Campaign for Lasting Peace. Since November 1998, it has been consistently saying that without democracy there can be no peace or development in the Congo. Its members have organized meetings, marches, press conferences, concerts, and theatrical productions. They have published manifestos and bulletins, produced radio shows on peace and on relaunching the process of democratization. Speaking to religious leaders, traditional chiefs, politicians, and the embassies in Kinshasa and other African and Western capitals, they have pressed for lasting solutions.

According to a number of observers, civil society played a crucial role in the development of various positions that lead to the signing of the Lusaka Cease-fire Agreement. The agreement calls for a cease-fire, an inter-Congolese dialogue (internal process for setting up mechanisms and institutions enabling the country to have free and democratic elections), withdrawal of the foreign troops present in the DRC, the deployment of UN forces and the neutralization of the foreign militias present in the country. The Lusaka Agreement gives civil society the same status as government, rebels and the political parties in the inter-Congolese dialogue, not because of its responsibility for the conflict but because of its role in the resolution. This recognition of the role of civil society constitutes a significant gain for popular participation in the process of resolving the conflicts affecting Africa.

This movement was opposed to using arms, military solutions and political trickery to settle the country's deep problems. This was the start of the National Campaign for Lasting Peace.

After much equivocation, the inter-Congolese dialogue finally began on February 25, 2002. The majority of Congolese see this as their best hope for peace—a peace they aspire to as they no longer can bear the sufferings of the war. The international community must now respond by putting an end to the illegal occupation of Congolese territory and the looting of its resources.

Epilogue

In Goma, Congolese vulcanoligists from the Institut de recherches scientifiques et agronomiques du Congo had predicted the eruption of Nyiragongo. Although these researchers could not count on the outdated detection tools and even though they had not received their meagre salary of $15 per month since the start of the Rwandan occupation of Goma in 1998, one month before the eruption they warned local authorities and the international organizations present of the dangers of an imminent eruption of the volcano. No one took them seriously.

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NEPAD: Is it New for African Women? *By Mohau Pheko*

Africa's leaders are actively working on a set of new continent-wide development strategies. With the gap between the world's rich and poor nations growing ever wider, it is more imperative than ever to end the marginalization of Africa and the social exclusion of its people.

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) gives African women the opportunity to examine whether previous partnerships around development have benefited them. It is also an opportunity to analyse whether NEPAD offers a framework for a new relationship and partnership with African women. A partnership that can move them away from merely surviving to advancing them as key players in the development of their countries, economically, politically, culturally, and in ways that give them the space to influence the discourse around partnership.

The word partnership is one of the most popular concepts in international development today. Partnerships, however, vary. Partnerships can exist when individuals freely and deliberately come together for the purposes of promoting or achieving common objectives or interests. Such partnerships emerge after a long process of consultation with the goal of arriving at the same place with the same vision.

There is another type of partnership. A partnership that promotes the interests of a certain class, gender, race, or interest groups. This is an imposed or engineered partnership by a few individuals over the collective.

Many African women have memories drawn from the long battle to free themselves from colonization, racism, bigotry, and so called "civilizing agendas" attempting to modernize Africa through capitalism. In this regard, African women generally and African feminists particularly have been linking women's issues to other concerns as part of their critique of development models, especially the manner in which structural adjustment programs have impacted upon women in Africa. A document "Development, Crisis and Alternative Visions: Third World Women's Perspectives", written prior to the World Conference on Women marking the end of the United Nations Decade for Women (1975–1985) concluded that African women's ability to fully enjoy human rights is integrally linked to their economic empowerment, and that the starting point must be with poor women.

This conclusion is still valid today. The increasing number and rate in which women are being informalized in the economy, the feminization of poverty, the increase of gender violence, the shrinking political space to debate

Denise Fournier

Women gather for a public meeting in Kandadji, Niger.

Structural Adjustment Programs (SAPs) have placed a great burden on African women.

Coupled with this is an emerging global order that is driven and characterized by enormous economic growth and worldwide expansion named globalization, facilitated and promoted by liberalization. Women are caught in a quagmire of declining social expenditure in key sectors like education, health, electricity, water, food security and environmental sustainability.

More significantly, this contestation between economic and social policy has impacted on the social and political fabric. It has changed relations with governments in favour of the private sector and multinational corporations producing for profit. African women are paying a high price for these policies that are increasing the gap between rich and poor.

In this scenario, it is clear that women in Africa have long opted for the need for an alternative vision of the economy and development in Africa. The challenge has been to oppose the notion that markets are adequate in meeting women's need.

NEPAD at the outset states that African leaders are implementing it on behalf of their people and not with the African people. This is a significant nuance that will be a deciding factor in terms of how African women participate within NEPAD.

NEPAD has experienced a low profile among the rank and file at the national and even continental level. The idea, according to the managers of this initiative, is to hand it over to a marketing company that can begin to raise awareness about it among the African people. This brings into question the nature of this 'partnership'. A plan that is to fundamentally

change African lives has curiously not been a part of the discourse or subject of debate within African communities. How then does it become implemented? Who is it being implemented for? For African women these are old questions. In the struggle to fight for space in political decision-making these same questions have been asked of development discourse—what kind of partnership, what type of consultation, what kind of participation and collaboration?

An in depth analysis of the NEPAD document underscores its dependency on World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) policies in Africa. It refers, for example, to the World Bank's Poverty Reduction Strategies as a key way of routing poverty out of Africa. African women have consistently offered a sharp critique of the failed policies of the IMF and World Bank. The reintroduction and reintegration of SAPs through NEPAD shows a paucity of innovation and thinking around development, and negates the detrimental impact that these policies have had on the livelihoods of women.

NEPAD fails to give a clear history of domination in Africa and the impact this has had on women economically, socially and politically.

Research and experience by African women show how these policies have displaced the development vision of many African countries and destroyed the industrialization process necessary to make Africa a formidable force in world affairs. One of the objectives of NEPAD is "to promote the role of women in social and economic development by reinforcing their capacity in the domains of education and training by the development of revenue-generating activities by facilitating access to credit and assuring their participation in the political and economic life of African countries". What is new about this? Major UN conferences have already called for the participation of women, as equal partners in economic social and political development, as well as in all sectors of economy in decision-making, and in the areas of science and technology. NEPAD is far behind as it keeps women in areas of the economy that perpetuate exclusion from the macro economy.

The indictment on SAPs is not only based on a critique of fiscal and monetary policies, but on the fact that they have fundamentally destroyed the social policies of many countries in Africa. It is primarily women who have suffered through privatization, HIV/AIDS, job losses, and declining literacy and nutrition rates. It is, therefore, necessary for women to rearticulate an agenda that will bring back elements of the developmental state that can invest in its people.

NEPAD calls for investment in education and infrastructure as a means of improving labour force productivity. African women are calling for investment aligned with the needs and aspirations of the African people.

NEPAD fails to give a clear history of domination in Africa and the impact this has had on women economically, socially and politically. It describes globalization as neutral, not recognizing that Africa's manufactured goods are closed to Western markets because of the growing wall of protectionism in industrialized countries. Women need to clearly define globalization as a new form of imperialism which serves to consolidate Western economic and political domination. The relationship between the spread of markets and the changing nature of poverty is not examined in NEPAD. It ignores the fact that women's poverty in Africa is shaped by gender, class, ethnicity and religion and by unequal relations in the international economy.

NEPAD is a complex document produced in another reality that argues that in order for Africa to 'recover' it must take responsibility for itself. This is a dangerous notion because it ignores the other reality of wars, corruption, and debt that the West continues to contribute to in order to support its strategic economic interests.

The women of Africa are unambiguous. The problems of Africa are not only internal—they are also external. Northern women's movements need to show solidarity with African women by stating clearly to Northern governments that there must be an alternative to the vision of development in NEPAD. They need to call for a reconstruction of the global economic system in favor of poor African women.

In challenging the key themes of NEPAD, such as concepts of global governance, globalization, agriculture, technology, aid, foreign direct investment, education, economic management, regional integration, political will and a host of other ideas put forward in the document, African women will need political and economic support to prevail against the current power structures.

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NEPAD: Resource Extraction for Whose Benefit?

By Groupe de recherche sur les activités minières en Afrique

Many Canadians have read with horror and outrage of the conflicts and grave human rights violations related to the exploitation of oil in Sudan and diamonds in Sierra Leone, Angola and elsewhere in Africa. Fewer know of the distress and violence caused by the displacement of 20,000 villagers by mining operations in Western Ghana, or of the current threat to the fragile and beautiful Kenyan coast posed by a project to exploit titanium. Canadians would be shocked to learn that while such "incidents" have complex origins, they are not pure "accidents" and that they are very likely to increase. Even worse, in many ways they are predictable —they have been and are being allowed to happen.

Why is this so? Here is an illustration of part of the answer. Seven years ago, a very diplomatically worded report by Oliver Maponga and Anderson Mutemererwa to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, commented on the implications for Zimbabwe's mining sector of a revised investment code adopted to streamline the country's investment climate and make it more competitive:

"The policy actually emphasizes intensive use of local raw materials without any mention of the sustainability of such use. The need for increased investment and generation of employment has tended to overshadow environmental issues. When the environment is mentioned, it is almost invariably only in passing."

At that time, over 35 African countries had revised their mining codes in order to make them less constraining for foreign investors.

Since then, the trend towards ever-increasing liberalization appears to have accelerated. The recommendations of a recent study commissioned by the World Bank call for a shift in policy orientation of developing countries, not one towards increased control over extractive activities but rather one: "Allowing or expanding private access to resources previously reserved to the state, which involves a major change in the concept of sovereignty for many developing countries."

Since the beginning of the 1990's, the examples of recurring conflicts occasioned by mining activities in Africa, whether with regard to the displacement and terms of compensation of affected communities, the pollution of water supplies, the contamination of the environment or the respect of labour standards, have continued to multiply. Although presented as unfortunate, isolated "incidents", the frequency of their occurrence suggests that such conflicts are in fact part of a pattern. The most dramatic situations, while the result of complex and country-specific internal and external factors, are also very much a part and symptomatic of a continuum of situations where the general process of weakening of the state sovereignty has been carried to near its near collapse.

How has this process of dismantling the state occurred? This outcome is obviously the result of a complex process. One important common characteristic is present—the orchestrated withdrawal, over the last 20 years, of local states from key areas of policy making as the counterpart of the introduction of structural adjustment measures. This has resulted in the absence of regulatory frameworks designed to:

- build a national economy capable of balancing growth and income redistribution;
- ensure the right to an equitable share of the wealth drawn from local mineral resources;
- protect the social and economic rights of their citizens; and
- protect the environment and ensure compensation for the depletion of non-renewable resources.

In many cases, the legitimacy of local states has been undermined, notably with regard to their capacity to ensure the enforcement of local norms and standards.

In view of this heritage, what does NEPAD propose? Three objectives:

- "To improve the quality of mineral resource information;
- To create a regulatory framework conducive to the development of the mining sector;
- To establish best practices that will ensure efficient extraction of natural resources and minerals of high quality".

In order to achieve these objectives, six Actions at the African level are proposed:

- "Harmonise policies and regulations to ensure compliance with minimum levels of operational practices;
- Harmonise commitments to ensure reduction in the perceived investment risk in Africa;
- Harmonise information sources on business opportunities for investment;
- Enhance collaboration for knowledge-sharing and value addition to natural resources;

- Enhance principles of value-addition (beneficiation) for investments in the African mining sector;
- Establish an African School of Mining System (for the development and production of education, skills and training at all levels)."

What does NEPAD not include? It says nothing about how to:

- create conditions to ensure further local processing;
- ensure a net "sustainable" return from mining activities to cover the costs of the depletion of resources, environmental and social consequences, etc;
- ensure the establishment by local governments of minimal norms concerning environmental and social impacts and labour standards; and
- develop local governance capacities to monitor and to ensure the enforcement of such norms and standards.

More fundamentally, as a plan of action, NEPAD is silent concerning what measures are required to confront the problems facing African countries wishing to develop their mining sector in view of their obligations under the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO). These obligations include the prohibition of investment measures and subsidies making it harder to encourage domestic industry, and higher costs for and lower access by developing countries to industrial technology.

Consequently, in the absence of the capacity for states to enact and enforce legislation, the issue is not merely "re-regulating" a deregulated situation through the introduction of voluntary codes of conduct. The key point concerns the establishment of sufficient local control over the development process, over the definition of objectives and the choice of development strategies, over the conditions under which mining activities are carried out and the terms of local access to the wealth which they generate.

In Canada, and without single exception in every industrialized country, policies allowing mining to contribute to the development of a country have been encouraged. NEPAD, however, fails to recognize this important fact.

Which leads us to a paradox. On the one hand, the mineral rich countries of Africa are being pressed by the rules of the WTO and the recommendations of the World Bank to open up further their economies to private investment, to deregulate, to give up control over the management of their resources. On the other hand, NEPAD is presented as an illustration of Africa "ownership" over the development process.

If it is recognised that the current process of deregulation and state weakening makes it impossible, in the short term, for local states in Africa to establish and enforce norms capable of ensuring the respect of environmental standards and the social and economic rights of the communities in which foreign mining companies are presently active—is it not incumbent on the governments and societies of the origin of such companies to ensure the respect of these rights and norms?

Canada is unique in that mining companies from our country are at the forefront of activities in Africa. Between 1992 and 1999, the number of mining titles held in Africa by companies of all sizes listed on Canadian stock exchanges increased at an average annual rate of over 40 %. As a result, these companies held interests in around 630 mining properties in 39 African countries by the end 1999.

Canada supports forms of deregulation which have gone far in weakening the control over the development process by African states, yet Canada underlines that NEPAD is an African initiative. The ambiguity of Canada's position can be turned into an opportunity to show leadership in calling for greater coherence and more caution concerning development strategies in Africa at upcoming G8 meetings.

The need for greater self-sufficiency and autonomy on the part of African nations was stressed by African heads of state in the Lagos Plan of Action (adopted by the Organization of African Union Extraordinary Summit of 1980). This Plan may now serve as a sobering reminder of the narrowing of the margin of manoeuvre which our present, very asymmetrical patterns of liberalization have bestowed on African leaders.

The question which must be addressed in Africa and in the countries responsible for the present world order appears to be the following: Is NEPAD about the development of Africa's natural resources for the benefit of the people of that continent or about ensuring the efficient management of the exploitation of Africa's mineral resources for interests other than those of its people—for our own?

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Village democracy

By Bernard Aubin, Moussa Konaté and Lyne Caron

Like many African countries, Mali has a centralized administration that is poorly integrated into the culture of the community. In rural areas, local power generally rests with an elite group of senior men (a gerontocratic system) leaving little room for women and youth.

In the 1990s, SUCO began testing a local development approach based on participatory democracy. This approach is currently being reviewed with the aim of developing alternatives based on community values and the incorporation of education and training opportunities for civil society. In its search for alternatives, SUCO has drawn inspiration from the results of pairing two villages: Sainte-Élisabeth in Quebec and Sanankoroba in Mali. The farmers of Sainte-Élisabeth, with the support of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities, set aside a community field and used the income from the produce to support development in Sanankoroba.

SUCO

Workers in the Sanankoroba region.

Paring Sainte-Élisabeth and Sanankoroba yielded impressive results. Socio-economic projects such as cultivating a community crop, creating a grains bank and running three grain mills emerged from Sanankoroba. Remarkably, men were managing the activities side by side with youth and women. The villagers created an implementation organization, known as *Benkadi*, which means "harmony" in the Bamanan language. *Benkadi* brings together members of all the village clans and manages the community funds dedicated to local development.

Neighbouring villages approached SUCO and *Benkadi* for help in setting up other projects. How could the experiences of Sanankoroba be adapted to other villages with different conditions? SUCO and *Benkadi* took up the challenge.

After analyzing the successes and difficulties encountered in Sanankoroba, it was suggested that the villagers engaged in a process focussed on popular education and training. The aim was to create a new structure for village cooperation and management. Forming a representative democratic organization was a prerequisite to mobilize the community and its resources to improve living conditions and secure financial self-reliance.

Overview of the development approach

With the broad lines defined, the approach was tested in four villages near Sanankoroba between 1994 and 1997. During the pilot project phase, the team developed a four-fold approach:

Strengthening village organization. Villagers create or strengthen a representative and dynamic organizational structure, capable of providing leadership, co-ordinating and following-up on activities for the community's development.

Developing Human resources. At all stages of the development process, training is provided to the entire community in a popular education format through discussions under a "talking tree". More technical training on management of socio-economic activities is added to this type of popular education.

Supporting the implementation of economic activities. In the long-term, villagers need profitable economic activities to improve their living conditions. Transforming external financing into income-generating economic activities fosters capital accumulation. Capacity-building, human resource development, and the emergence of a community-owned economic process are indispensable tools for taking charge of local development.

Developing communications. The principal means of communication in the villages is oral. This creates special challenges for ensuring that the process remains democratic. Strategies are designed to enhance the flow of information both within the village and with the outside. Traditional channels and of newer ones such as committees, assemblies and community radio are used.

At the end of a one-year training process, each community had set up a development association and defined two economic projects: one for men and one for women. Before receiving any funding, the village associations sign a memorandum of understanding concerning the management of the projects.

The income generated by these economic ventures is placed in a village fund, which then serves as the start-up fund for the next venture. In the long term, the funds are to be used for health and education projects. The villagers plan the implementation of new projects and are regularly informed of the fund's progress.

Social and economic spin-offs

Over three years, the pilot villages capitalized and reinvested 68% of the initial financing. They purchased agricultural supplies and supported the poorest families. While continuing to promote its economic growth, one village succeeded in recruiting two teachers and a midwife, paid for by the community, while another village reopened an abandoned health centre.

In terms of local expertise, some fifteen members of village associations became internal resources working jointly with the SUCO and *Benkadi* team to train villagers.

Beyond the economic results, the victory lies in ownership of the development process. Women, for example, are no longer trailing men. They manage mills, pharmacies and village shops. Within the village assemblies, women represent 30% of those present and they speak publicly, despite their traditional timidity. "Words are no good from a single mouth," they say. Collectively defining local priorities for economic development has enabled women to express and satisfy their needs. According to the women, decision-making within families is being democratized and dialogue between spouses is strengthened as a result. Women are consulted more often and their opinions are taken into account.

Democratization and modernizing power structures

Transforming power structures and decision-making practices promotes change. Local resources and community management previously dominated by an entirely male gerontocracy resistant to change is now open to youth and women. Elders within the new village structures are called upon, along with the general population, to understand the importance of the organizational changes. Relationships with traditional chiefs are maintained throughout the process. New relationships are incorporated as are the responsibilities assumed by men and women for developing the village. The positive results have prompted certain male elders to argue for sharing power.

Regional perspective

By 1996, SUCO had extended the implementation of this approach to 38 villages in the Sanankoroba area. The inter-village association *Ben Ba*, meaning "great harmony" grew out of meetings between villagers and *Benkadi*, and is now in the process of expanding this approach to a total of 60 villages. The fact that this approach is increasingly sought out by more and more communities, legitimizes the work of managing and defining development options at the local level.

The economic and socio-political effort at both the village and the extended community level, provides benefits in terms of democratization and strengthening of technical and financial capacity. The communities, supported through this approach, have acquired skills in planning and management. Before the economic development activities can begin, communities must have already mobilized their resources and must be involved in strengthening structures and mechanisms of local management. SUCO's experience in Mali clearly shows that a participatory approach effectively contributes to community development.

Mali is a landlocked Sahelian country in the heart of West Africa with an area of 1,240,000 km. Its population is an estimated 10 million, with 52% women. It ranks among the poorest countries with a GNP of US$275 per resident. About 80% of the population lives in rural areas. Livestock, grains and cotton are the basis of the economy along with gold mining. Since 1991, Mali has undergone democratic change (elections in 1992 and 1997) and following a national process of decentralization, 701 counties were created with elected leadership.

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The Case for Basic Education *By Anne Bernard*

That conflict, HIV/AIDS, social dislocation and economic collapse persist in so much of Africa is tied to the fact that millions continue to be denied their basic human rights to survive, thrive and engage with the world in positive, transformative ways. The Convention on the Rights of the Child and World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) make the link: all people have the right to develop the knowledge, attitudes and skills they need to understand, to participate and to initiate change. All societies have the obligation to provide them opportunities to do so.

Basic education is a right, therefore, as a first and necessary condition of social equity and equality of opportunity. No child is to be denied access to learning the fundamentals for living and developing to full potential; gender, culture and ethnicity, ability and poverty cannot justify exclusion. Recognition of this right is especially crucial for Africa's most marginalized. Basic education is essential if they are to manage, and to break, the barriers against them.

Basic education is a right as the necessary complement to realizing other rights. Capacities for identifying, gathering and analyzing information, framing arguments, communicating ideas and taking action are, in turn, the tools for protecting and promoting one's health, nutrition and safety; freedom of expression and democratic participation; security of identity, ethnicity and citizenship.

Framing basic education as a right is critical to empowering the demand-side; to enabling families, students, communities and educators to come together with a more articulate and unified voice in asserting the right to learn. Such push is key to compelling action on the supply side, in mobilizing governments and the international community to act on EFA commitments. Co-operation in building a rights-based argument for education creates potential for stronger civil societies.

Basic education is key to empowering families. The primary school is the main physical place, and most profound socio-cultural "space", in which African families (especially mothers) and the education system come together—and come apart—over core beliefs and practices about the nature of childhood, the rights of children and implications of gender; the rights and responsibilities of parents; the value and use of learning. It is here that most children, especially girls, first interact with the world of barriers and opportunities beyond the family. Experiences here, the images developed of who they are and what they can do, the type and quality of knowledge and skills they acquire, are crucial determinants of how effectively they connect home, school and community—and progress within all of them.

Societies plant the seeds for future human resource capacity, civil society participation and equity in the way they handle basic education provision. Where interactions are conflictive and negative, patterns of systemic exclusion are perpetuated. Alternatively, where they are positive, issues of enrolment, retention and progression tend to be less problematic. Messages promoting non-risk behaviour, peaceful co-operation and mutual respect move more effectively from school to home. Uganda's progress on HIV/AIDS parallels its action on basic education. Parents become more tenacious and effective as joint-owners of the school; capacities gained here are more likely to be generalized to other key issues of child protection and security. In Mozambique, mothers' success in literacy class and their daughters' in school are mutually reinforcing, and inter-generational.

Basic education is necessary for sustained socio-economic development. In the language of democratic governance, it is a public good, crucial to effective action on all development initiatives. It is not the well-educated few who produce constructive and equitable social change, achieve market liberalization, enable decentralization or eliminate disease. Coherent, consistent implementation of development is ultimately in the hands of the majority. It is successful when broad numbers of individuals and institutions are able to decide and manage its direction, costs and benefits; assess and manage risk; take co-operative, technically sound and monitored action; assume rights and responsibilities of ownership.

Basic education does not ensure such populations; its absence most certainly impedes, perhaps precludes, them. Where universal and effective, it reaches the greatest number of people, the heart of a nation's producers, laborers, local decision-makers, service providers. It has the widest potential of all education levels to foster innovative thinking and entrepreneurial action, to enable adoption of ideas from elsewhere and to sustain intervention outcomes.

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The African University—The Missing Link *By Dieudonné Ouedraogo*

To achieve Education For All (EFA) by 2015, we must indeed build schools, purchase furniture and supplies, recruit and train teachers and undertake numerous adult literacy campaigns for which international aid is needed. However, we must also, and we often forget this, understand the economic, social, political and cultural implications of EFA and the critical role that Africa's higher education and research systems must play.

First projected for 2000 by African governments in 1961 and then by the International Community in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990, EFA—essentially meaning universal access to the first five primary school grades—then became feasible by 2015, thanks to the support of Northern countries. The potential of reaching this target exists in Africa's Sub-Saharan countries as they succeeded in almost doubling their primary school enrolment rate between 1960 (43.3%) and 1980 (79.5%). Currently, two out of every three children are enrolled in schools and some important funds will be made available to improve these numbers. Mechanisms and specific monitoring and evaluation indicators are already in place. The only EFA challenge is to increase the retention capacity of African schools. One out of every three pupils does not finish primary school (the dropouts belong to the targeted population, i.e., rural area girls and children) due to socio-cultural (school maladjustment) and especially socio-economic factors (poverty, traveling distances, bad health, malnutrition, and child labor).

Even free schooling means that a majority of households have to incur relatively high costs (transportation, loss of income in domestic economies) and many are legitimately wondering what real gains their children can derive from being educated. Indeed, they know empirically that if the best pupils can reach secondary school, it is even more expensive and they are also aware that many university graduates remain unemployed. Because of the deficiency and higher costs of a professional training structure, many, in fact the majority, prefer to remain in the cities and fill one of the short term jobs in the informal sector. This analysis is of particular relevance, because if schooling provides basic knowledge (reading, writing and arithmetic) which allows one to reinforce household survival strategies, only access to secondary and especially professional and university education favors social mobility. This mobility is due to a better position in the labor market, a market which has become more limited and yet, more demanding in terms of human capital. However, professional and university education is not yet sufficiently integrated into the political and technical discourse which tends to associate all benefits accruing from education, in general, to primary education and literacy which are only minor components and the least decisive in the matter. What strategies would African countries need to develop, on the one hand, to increase school retention capacities and, on the other hand, to deal with all post-schooling issues, namely those related to secondary school access for the best pupils and to professional schools for the rest?

One of the most predictable effects of achieving EFA will be, for example, the sudden enrolment explosion at the secondary, professional and university levels. Even if current mediocre school performances were maintained, we would have to at least double the training capacity by 2015. Indeed, the private sector will certainly have to make its contribution, in particular at the higher and professional levels which are the most cost-efficient. But what strategies will governments then have to develop in order to find the best institutional arrangements between the public sector and the private sector, guarantee that private schools respect norms and standards and regulate the rapidly growing access to on-line training and education? All EFA effects on the economic, political, social and cultural life should be identified and clarified through in-depth research as there is a real risk of: increasing social exclusion associated with labor market saturation; alienating the public to formal educational systems, and/or to the development of training alternatives; and accelerating socio-cultural changes.

Meeting our EFA goals requires that research centers and universities provide and share the knowledge needed to understand the implications of this achievement and to also develop appropriate strategies to maximize success. Moreover, African universities have another challenge in that they have to play, as part of their mission, a central role in teachers' initial training as well as professional development. The knowledge and values aquired by these teachers determine, in good part, school performance and influence the development of their pupils' personality.

African universities, as privileged institutions for the acquisition and transmission of knowledge in the region, are, however, almost absent from this vast worldwide EFA movement. In fact, during these last years, they have, for various reasons,

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Basic education is essential to an effective education system overall. As a necessary condition of sustainable development, it must be a pre-eminent part of any education system, but can never be an end-point. Its support, if isolated from the whole, is counter-productive, as are policy and resource allocation discussions presented in "either-or" terms. Primary level dropout and repetition rates are higher where children are without an adequate secondary level to go to. Good quality senior level graduates are essential as policy and program developers, managers and teachers of basic education.

But the circle must be virtuous. Quality at the base is fundamental to quality throughout. A strong basic education system is a condition of effective and sustainable upper levels. Without it, too few children progress. Those who do are ill-prepared, limiting scope for innovation in methods and content and perpetuating public disillusion and staff demoralization. Basic education provides core tools for independent learning. Secondary and tertiary levels build on this base and are most effective where students are able to manage their own learning.

Efforts to produce more and better teachers falter when trainees lack the basic language, math, science and communication skills they are expected to teach their students. The few with education and the majority without cannot sustain higher levels. Many African universities are in decay, lacking the requisite social and economic base on which to build, well-prepared students wanting to get in, and strong support from people with sufficient education to recognize their value, for themselves and their children.

Unfortunately, basic education is the most difficult of all to "get right": a large and diverse stakeholder base; wide-ranging learning and high quality teaching requirements; complex support systems; difficult measures of progress. Realizing and sustaining effectiveness and meeting expanding demands are labour-intensive, iterative and long-term. Fatigue sets in and pressures mount for more visible and high-profile tertiary activities and other sector priorities. Synergies are, therefore, critical. Open public discussion needs continually to think "beyond the box", beyond questioning the legitimacy of any one component toward how best to support them all.

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been involved in developing survival strategies: low enrolment rates (less than 5%); successive years of student struggles against reductions of bursaries; lack of equipped laboratories and research funds; brain drain related to poor working conditions and, therefore, inadequate numbers of highly qualified teachers. Not being able to count on political support and the required financial and human resources, the universities have deteriorated and can no longer fulfill their mission. The proof is that with close to 10% of the world's population, Sub-Saharan Africa only contributes 0.8% to scientific publications; 0.5% to research and development; and in such conditions, they can only participate marginally in world trade (less than 2%).

EFA's long-anticipated positive impact on the living conditions of the most deprived populations will no doubt depend on the importance and quality of Africa's higher education and research systems. From this perspective, only the reconstruction of these systems will allow Africa's universities, on the one hand, to develop the required expertise for labor markets through the improvement of scientific and technical educational programs, and on the other hand, to educate truly committed citizens who are convinced of the universal values and principles of human rights and solidarity in order to help resolve development problems in their respective countries. It is under these conditions that they will be able to fully play their role as incubators of new ideas and as technological innovators thereby allowing Sub-Saharan Africa to contribute to the development of a post-modern society. A society that carries the hope for the future of humanity.

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