



# **NEPAD Dialogue**

## **Focus on Africa**



3 September

*The NEPAD Secretariat weekly newsletter*

Issue 61

- [> NEPAD – a platform for implementing sustainable development in Africa](#)
- [> President to open NEPAD awareness workshop in Zambia](#)
- [> Calendar of Events](#)

## **NEPAD – a platform for implementing sustainable development in Africa**

### **Lessons learnt and key challenges**



By  
Prof. Wiseman Nkuhlu, Chairman  
of the NEPAD Steering Committee,  
addressing the Johannesburg + 2 Conference  
on 2 September 2004

THE World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in South Africa in 2002 provided African countries with a unique opportunity to present the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) to the world community as the new

policy framework and Programme of Action for comprehensive socio-economic renewal of the African continent. The world community responded with great enthusiasm and embraced the key NEPAD priorities in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

It is two years since this historic event and an opportune time to review progress.

As NEPAD, we believe that for progress to be made in the fight against HIV and AIDS, poverty and the pursuit of sustainable development, especially in Africa, it is critical that international commitments be taken seriously.

### **Regular dialogue is crucial for implementation**

African leaders must take seriously the commitments they have made to the African people and to the international community through NEPAD. At the same time, the international community, especially the highly industrialised countries and multilateral institutions must take seriously the commitments made at the WSSD.

Regular dialogue is crucial in ensuring that the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation is actually implemented.

Our experience at NEPAD has shown that regular interactions with stakeholders are important in sustaining interest and commitment and also in galvanising action. Therefore, we would like to encourage the South African Government and other stakeholders to remind the rest of the world of the importance of giving practical effect to the commitments they made two years ago.

The resolve of the African countries to promote sustainable development is getting stronger by the day.

### **African ownership**

As explained at the WSSD in 2002, NEPAD is a comprehensive socio-economic renewal programme that is anchored on the three interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars of sustainable development -- economic development, social development and environmental protection.

NEPAD's primary objectives are to accelerate eradication of poverty and to place African countries, both individually and collectively, on a path to high economic growth and sustainable development.

The goals that the African countries seek to achieve through NEPAD are the internationally agreed millennium development goals – MDGs. The NEPAD process deepens ownership by African countries of their development agenda, and also provides a framework for actions at national and regional levels.

### **NEPAD process depends African**

The resolve of African leaders to promote sustainable development is demonstrated by the sterling efforts they are putting in laying the foundations for sustainable development at

## **ownership**

all levels; national, sub-regional and continental. During the last two years, we have witnessed the strengthening of the African Union, which is becoming more effective in resolving conflicts and establishing peace in the continent.

NEPAD has also made significant progress in the development and implementation of sectoral programmes. Detailed plans for the renewal of agriculture, provision of infrastructure (energy, water and sanitation), protection of the environment, health, education, science and technology and ICT have been finalised.

The African Peer Review, as a mechanism for fostering good governance is being implemented. To date, 22 African countries have acceded to the APRM and reviews have commenced in four countries; Ghana, Rwanda, Mauritius and Kenya.

## **Firm foundation**

In agriculture, the World Bank has committed US \$500 million for the renewal of research and technology development in support of increasing productivity. African countries have made commitments to increase investment in agriculture and food security to 10 percent of national budgets over five years.

The fight against HIV and AIDS has intensified. Progress is monitored closely by African leaders. There is a report at every AU Summit on this matter.

Plans have been prepared for major projects in energy, water and sanitation. The African Development Bank and the World Bank have financed major components of the Energy Power Pools in West and Southern Africa. The European Union Commission has earmarked 10 million Euros for four shared water basin projects. Agreement has also been reached to establish an EU Water Facility of one million Euros in support of water initiatives across the continent.

On environment, detailed plans and projects covering eight thematic priorities have been prepared and endorsed by the African Union.

## **Detailed plans have been endorsed by AU**

The priority areas are; combating land degradation; drought and desertification; conserving Africa's wetlands; preventing, controlling and managing invasive alien species; conservation and sustainable use of marine coastal and fresh water resources; combating climate change in Africa; cross-border conservation and management of natural resources and cross-cutting issues including health, poverty, technology.

Specific projects, including the NEPAD Cities project, the Productive Lands Pilot Project dealing with the control of invasive alien plants will be presented in later sessions.

This is only the beginning. Implementing an integrated programme to promote sustainable development is a long-term investment. The point to note is that a firm foundation is being laid.

On economic growth, Africa is moving in the right direction. Africa's average economic growth rate in 2003 was 3,7 percent compared to 2,9 percent in 2002. This was higher than the growth in world output which was 3,2 percent in 2003 compared to 3,0 percent in 2002. More importantly, an increasing number of African countries is achieving and sustaining higher economic growth. In 2003, 16 African countries achieved economic growth of between 3 and 5 percent compared to

only 11 countries in 2000.

### **Tide is turning**

Africa is also making progress on democracy, 42 of the 53 African states have multiparty electoral systems. The number was only 8 before 1989. The increase in the number of countries joining the African Peer Review confirms the determination of the African people to move away from dictatorship and embrace democracy, human rights and the rule of law, which are preconditions for sustainable development.

The tide is turning in Africa; this must be applauded and given support. I have no doubt that the Constitutive Act of the African Union and the NEPAD framework have initiated a renewal movement in Africa that is being strongly championed and led by the NEPAD Presidents.

### **African countries are still very vulnerable**

The response is very encouraging but the majority of African countries remain vulnerable. As a consequence of poverty, they lack the capacity to meet the most basic expectations of their people. They are also weak in the sense that they do not have institutional capacity to govern effectively.

The implication is that the African countries cannot sustain the gains referred to if the  
of vulnerability are addressed.

Therefore, the greatest challenges going forward are speedy action to build capacity at all levels national, sub-regional and continental, and secondly the mobilisation of increased resources from the rest of the world.

NEPAD is premised on the principle of partnership. Partnership between the African leaders and the African people, partnerships within countries among governments, private sector, labour unions and civil society, partnerships between African countries and partnership between African countries and the rest of the world.

Africa has been able to make encouraging progress because of the increasing attention to partnership in developing and implementing programmes.

### **International partnership**

One of the thrusts of the NEPAD leadership has been the engagement of the international community. The message has been one of calling for a genuine partnership based on mutual respect, responsibility and accountability.

The international community has responded positively to the call through the G8 African Action Plan, the Monterrey Consensus, the Global Health Fund and other initiatives launched at international forums. Promises were made, not only to provide increased development assistance, but also to create an international trade regime that would be supportive of developing countries. But last year saw the collapse of the WTO Ministerial negotiations in Cancun and the resultant disappointment for developing countries.

## **Political will to act is a major concern**

Matters look better after the recent re-launch of the WTO negotiations in July this year. However, the issue of political will to act on promises and commitments remains a major concern.

The need for increased resources to back the reforms that are taking place across the African continent has become most urgent. African countries need increased support to build capacity as well as implement comprehensive development plans that will enable them to achieve sustainable development.

Up to now the pace at which commitments to provide increased development assistance are being met is slow and unsatisfactory. There has been an increase in development assistance flows to Africa from US \$15,7 billion in 2001 to US \$21,2 billion in 2002. A slight increase again in 2003, but what is needed is much bigger annual increases leading to the doubling of development assistance in about five years.

## **An irreversible march**

The time is now. There is an urgent need to back up the progress we are witnessing in a number of African countries.

NEPAD has provided comprehensive policy frameworks and indicative priority plans for each sector and African countries have demonstrated their commitment to implement the sectoral plans in a co-ordinated manner that will lead to accelerating economic growth and sustainable development. All these efforts must be applauded.

## **No better time for renewal programme**

There can be no better time to launch a comprehensive socio-economic renewal programme. The political will to lead the transformation is being demonstrated on an increasing scale. NEPAD has provided a co-ordinated policy framework. The challenge is to sustain the progress and to mobilize additional resources from the rest of the world.

Africa is taking its commitment to sustainable development seriously through NEPAD. The continent is on an irreversible march towards sustainable development, the rest of the world must partner her in this historic journey.

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# **President to open NEPAD awareness workshop in Zambia**

ZAMBIA's President Mwanawasa (right) will officially open the postponed National NEPAD Sensitisation Workshop which will now be held at the Zambezi Sun Hotel in Livingstone from 10-12 September 2004.

The workshop will involve a cross-section of stakeholders that will include the civil society, the media, the private sector, the academia, Members of Parliament, Government Ministers and officials.

The objective of the workshop is to increase awareness and understanding of NEPAD operations and programmes and the potential benefits so as to enhance stakeholder participation in NEPAD activities.

The workshop, which will be attended by Prof. Wiseman Nkuhlu, Chairman of the NEPAD Steering Committee and Head of the NEPAD Secretariat, will also provide a platform for an exchange of views on how to approach the NEPAD agenda at the national level.

It has been made possible with the sponsorship of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) and the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA).

### **APOLOGY**

*We apologise to His Excellency President Mwanawasa of Zambia for the use of a wrong photograph in an earlier transmission of NEPAD Dialogue Number 61, 3 September 2004. The error is deeply regretted.*

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## **Calendar of Events**

- 3 - 4 September, NEPAD Steering Committee Meeting and Workshop, Johannesburg, South Africa.
  
- 10 - 12 September, NEPAD Sensitisation Workshop, Livingstone, Zambia.
- 14 - 15 September, Global Environment Change and Food Systems, Meeting, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 16 - 18 September, Expert Consultation Meeting with IBAR on livestock development in Africa, Mombasa, Kenya.
  
- 3 - 4 October, Global Tillage Network Meeting, Nairobi, Kenya.
- 4 - 5 October, African Partnership Forum (Meeting between the NEPAD Steering Committee and G8 Leaders' Personal Representatives, other development partners, and OECD Member States), Washington DC, USA.
- 7 - 12 October, UN-Inter Agency Task Force: prepCom for the Second World Conference on Disaster Management in Geneva, Switzerland.
- 11 - 14 October, World Food Programme Executive Board Regular Session, Rome, Italy.
- 14 - 15 October, World Food Prize International Symposium Award Ceremony, Des Moines, Iowa, USA.
- 14 - 15 October, NEPAD / Economic Community for Central African States (ECCAS)

Seminar, Libreville, Gabon.

- 22 - 23 October, NEPAD Multi-Stakeholder Dialogue, Johannesburg, South Africa.
- 25 October, NEPAD advisory panel meeting, Johannesburg, South Africa.
  
- 1 - 2 November, Water Centres of Excellence Workshop, Botswana.
- 22 - 23 November, NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee

(HSIGC) Meeting, Algiers, Algeria.

- 22 - 25 November, Conference on Successes in African Agriculture, Nairobi, Kenya.

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