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ANNEX 8
TO MINUTES OF THE OSLO MEETING

FOOD SECURITY, AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY
ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FOOD SECURITY
ADVISORY PANEL ON THE AFRICAN CRISIS
(WCED/85/18)

and

DESCRIPTION OF THE CREATION OF AN
ECO-DEVELOPMENT CORPS IN AFRICA

WORLD COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

**THIRD MEETING
Oslo, 21-28 June 1985**

WCED/85/18

Item 6.3 of the Provisional Agenda

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FOOD SECURITY ADVISORY PANEL

ON THE AFRICAN CRISIS

World Commission on Environment and Development

Advisory Panel on Food Security, Agriculture,
Forestry and Environment

Interim Recommendations to WCED on the
Food and Ecological Crisis in Africa

1. Introduction

The Advisory Panel at its first meeting, held in Geneva on May 12/13 1985, gave detailed consideration to the short and long term implications of the African Food Crisis and decided to make the following interim recommendations to WCED for its consideration at its next meeting in June 1985. The Panel hopes that its recommendations will be implemented as soon as possible by the concerned Governments/bilateral/UN agencies.

2. Basic Guidelines

Protecting the livelihood of the poor, ensuring livelihood to the destitutes and very poor, providing basic goods and services in rural areas and optimising the benefits of existing educational and developmental infrastructure are the most urgent tasks. Helping the poor to earn their daily bread has to be the primary strategy for promoting economically and ecologically sustainable development. Also, steps to develop food security systems will have to be based on the following basic facts:

- (a) More than enough food is already produced in the world to provide a balanced diet for all its inhabitants
- (b) People with purchasing power seldom go hungry
- (c) Small and subsistence farmers will not produce more than what they need for themselves, unless they are assured cash and/or goods acceptable in exchange for the surplus
- (d) Food imports by predominantly agricultural countries will have the same impact as importing unemployment, since imports will lead to keeping local farmers at low levels of productivity and employment
- (e) Youth and the poor constitute the two genuine majorities in most developing countries. Hence, any development plan for sustainable development based on sound principles of ecology and economics which fails to involve them both as participants and beneficiaries is unlikely to yield the expected benefits.

3. Recommendations

The following four sets of recommendations are offered for immediate consideration and implementation:

A Food Security

(a) Food aid and emergency relief

We commend the on-going efforts in providing the needed food aid and other forms of assistance to the drought stricken countries. Such assistance has helped to save many lives and has provided the breathing spell necessary for the initiation of agricultural and ecological rehabilitation efforts. We expect that continued efforts will be made to achieve a well-integrated programme of relief operations, capable of reaching everyone in need of help.

(b) Incentives to small producers: Programme for the supply of cash and basic goods

Renumerative prices coupled with the supply of basic goods such as clothing, salt, soap, blankets, cooking oil, matches, sugar, batteries, parafin, paper, pencils will help to stimulate small farmers produce and earn more. We hence recommend that out of the amount available for emergency relief, a certain proportion may be reserved for purchasing at renumerative prices surplus produce from small producers. Both cash and the basic goods farm families need can be given in exchange for locally produced agricultural commodities. The food grains thus procured may be utilized within that country for operation of "Food for Work" programmes for assetless agricultural labour families.

The basic goods to be supplied may include not only consumer and household goods but also farm inputs like seeds, fertilizers, etc. If such a small producers' incentive plan is intelligently prepared and imaginatively implemented, there will be an immediate upward swing in agricultural production and productivity in many African countries.

A self replicating and propelling growth pattern can be hastened by using external aid to end the prolonged need for such aid.

B Livelihood Security

The Livelihood Security plan will have to cover poor farmers and farm labour with particular attention to women and small producers. Assets such as land, livestock and trees are usually sold by the poor in years of acute distress and they thus become assetless. The challenge lies in preventing such distress sales. There is need for a multi-pronged strategy for Livelihood Security consisting of:

- (1) enabling poorer households to own assets such as goats, sheep, poultry, cattle and trees
- (2) introducing an Employment Guarantee Scheme for unskilled labour such as the one operating in the Maharashtra State of India, which is a chronically drought prone State, and
- (3) developing and popularising technologies which can help to generate more on-farm and off-farm employment and income.

C Agricultural and ecological rehabilitation

Even as human life saving operations are in progress, no time should be lost in initiating steps for strengthening the ecological infrastructure essential for sustained agricultural advance. A National Ecological and Agricultural Rehabilitation Plan should be developed for this purpose in each country. Such a plan should consist of a portfolio of well defined tasks. Once the tasks to be implemented are carefully defined, steps should be taken to identify the most appropriate agency (Government, non-governmental, bilateral, UN or other multilateral agencies, etc.) for implementing each specific task.

Such a "Task Adoption" approach will help the country to derive the maximum advantage from the specific expertise and competence of different national and international agencies. The aim should be the integration of external and internal inputs in a manner that the benefits from all available institutional, technical and financial resources are optimised. The proliferation of programmes and agencies should be avoided. An integrated national Eco-development and Agricultural Rehabilitation Board with representation to all the task adopting agencies should be set up.

D International Eco-development Corps for Africa

We recommend the immediate organization of an Eco-development Corps of young professionals for helping to find effective solutions to location specific problems. There is urgent need for developing location specific technologies and approaches for agricultural rehabilitation and eco-development in Sahelian countries. Generalised prescriptions and programmes should be avoided, since they do more harm than good. Present patterns of technical assistance are very expensive and cannot be replicated on a scale necessary for generating a critical mass of meaningful efforts. The following will be some of the principal characteristics of the International Eco-development Corps for Africa:

- (1) The Corps would consist of young professionals preferably in the age group 20 to 30 drawn from the concerned countries in Africa and from all over the world. They will thus be joint teams of nationals and foreigners. The persons selected for serving on the Corps should have a combination of desirable professional skills and personal qualities, particularly humility and compassion.
- (2) The African Eco-development Corps should constitute a special component of the UN Volunteers Programme but will be administered under the guidance and direction of an International Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). TAC will consist of eminent scientists, technologists, educationists, social scientists and development administrators known both for their knowledge of African problems and their concern for harnessing science for the welfare of the poor.
- (3) The members of this African Eco-development Corps should serve on a modest honorarium and should look upon the opportunity given to them as an opportunity for learning and service.

Conclusion

We believe that through concerted efforts in promoting ecologically and economically sound food production plans coupled with steps to ensure livelihood security to the poor and renumerative prices to the small producers, the present crisis can be converted into an opportunity for rapid advances in agricultural progress and agrarian prosperity. By tapping the imagination, know-how and commitment of young professionals both from developed and developing countries in the challenging task of making hunger a problem of the past in drought ravaged Africa, we will not only help Africa but will release a unique opportunity of working and learning together.

M.S. Swaminathan

M.S. Swaminathan
Chairman
Advisory Panel, WCED

INTERNATIONAL ECO-DEVELOPMENT CORPS
FOR AFRICA

Basic Guidelines

1. Preparation of Action Plans:

The first step is the preparation in each country of a National Conservation for Development Programme consisting of detailed action plans at the local level for eco-development. Where such plans exist or can be prepared soon, the kinds of professional expertise needed for implementing the plan could be articulated in fairly precise terms. Where they do not exist, one of the early tasks of the Members of the Eco-Development corps will be the preparation of detailed action plans in consultation with the local population and authorities. Thus, the corps could help in the preparation of eco-development plans as well as in the conversion of plans into accomplishments.

2. Organisation of a global grid of back-up institutions

A very important pre-requisite for the successful implementation of this programme is the availability of a global grid of outstanding support institutions. Depending on the nature of the job to be done, as for example, anti-desertification measures, production of food, fodder, fuel and fertilizer (through biological or organic sources), control of animal and human diseases, irrigation and drinking water supply, biomass utilization, improved management, etc... the support of advanced institutions located in developed and developing countries should be enlisted for (a) providing technical help when needed throughout the duration of the project and (b) training of members of

the corps. The back-up institutions will serve as an umbilical cord supporting the project until the work reaches a self-reliant and self-propelling state. The organization of such a consortium of scientific and technical institutions for supporting the Eco-development Corps in a meaningful manner will not only help in harnessing the best available know-how and do-how, but will also generate a sense of participation among large numbers of professional institutions and experts in a programme of great human significance.

3. Selection and Deployment of Members of Corps

This is the key element of this programme. Once the precise tasks to be performed under the National Eco-development plan are articulated, the nature of the expertise needed will be clear. There has to be a proper match between the nature of the expertise and skills needed for successful task implementation and the nature of the skills possessed by the candidate. Interest in do-how is more important than just interest in know-how.

Once the candidates have been chosen carefully according to the needs of each action plan, they should be given suitable pre-deployment training and orientation in an appropriate institution belonging to the back-up consortium as well as in a suitable institution in the country concerned.

Deployment of Members of the Corps will be in clusters. For example, for a project aiming at agricultural and ecological rehabilitation, there will be need for a group consisting of an agronomist, a forester, a Veterinary expert, and a home scientist. In addition, every cluster should have a Medical graduate who can

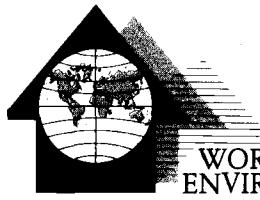
attend to human health problems. Whenever the members of the corps are unable to find solutions to some of the field problems (such as new soil health and plant health problems), they should seek the assistance of the appropriate back-up institution. In the initial stages, Members of the Corps could help in optimising the benefits from the Food for Development programmes.

4. Duration of the Project

In order to achieve some tangible results, this Programme should be planned until 2000 AD. Obviously, many of the young professionals agreeing to give a part of their early life for this emotionally satisfying and intellectually challenging work, may not be prepared to stay for more than 3 years. Each person who is leaving the project should be replaced with a person with similar expertise so that the continuity of the work is maintained. In work designed to achieve ecological rehabilitation; a 15 year period is the minimum before visible and lasting impact is achieved.

5. Remuneration

The monthly honorarium paid to the volunteers should not exceed the amount which a national doing similar work may receive in his/her country. However, suitable dormitory and other arrangements which will help to provide free lodging and boarding and recreational facilities will be needed.



Oslo, 27 June, A.M.

AFRICA - SPECIAL CONCERN OF THE COMMISSION'S OSLO MEETING

A press conference held midway through the Third Meeting of the World Commission on Environment and Development featured the Commission's debate on the current African situation.

The wide ranging agenda of the Commission's meeting also includes such items as acid rain, hazardous chemicals, and international economic relations. Commissioners visited sites of environmental interest, in particular, wave power prototypes. These items will be covered in a later release when the Commission brings its current meeting to a close.

The Commission examined especially the crisis in Africa based on interim recommendations made by an Advisory Panel headed by Dr. Swaminathan, Director of the International Rice Research Institute and President of IUCN, as well as a presentation by Mr. Lester Brown of Worldwatch Institute. It pointed out that the African crisis is more than just the result of the current drought. It is a tragic manifestation - the worst in human history - of a breakdown in the balance between environment, development and population growth. The crisis results from a combination of adverse internal and external economic and environmental trends, which have made Africa especially vulnerable to the impact of the prolonged drought.

The crisis is not just an African concern, but a portent of what may face other parts of the world if these pressures are not managed on an ecologically sound basis. Environmental breakdown in Africa has given rise to human tragedy on a scale as great as any war in history. It can not be dealt with by "business as usual" measures.

African leaders and scientists have diagnosed their problems well. But they will require the mobilization of resources by the international community over an extended period and on a scale beyond anything yet being done to support their efforts to recover from this tragedy and achieve the kind of sustainable and self-reliant development that is the key to Africa's future. The Commission is convinced that this is feasible. But it will not be easy.

And the task must begin now even as the massive international response to Africa's needs for immediate relief continues.

The Commission in particular endorsed a recommendation from its Food Security Advisory Panel that a portion of emergency relief be made available to support purchases of surplus produce from small farmers in Africa. It also established a special task force of the Commission under the leadership of the Vice Chairman, Dr. Mansour Khalid, to consult in depth with African governments and institutions and the donor community as to the further measures which must be taken to ensure the recovery of the African countries affected by this crisis and the renewal of their development on a sound and sustainable basis. These measures must include a massive programme of resource and environmental rehabilitation.