Development Mechanism in Africa: Lagos Plan of Action, 1980-2000: An Assessment.

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Abstract

The paper examines the Lagos Plan of Action as development mechanism in Africa, based on self-reliance and economic growth. The work highlights the revised framework of the ideas of ECA technocrats, its implementation on the Monrovia Strategy for economic integration of Africa that was adopted by African Leaders at the April Summit in Lagos, which became "Lagos Plan of Action for Economic Development 1980-2000, and the Full Act of Lagos. The article evaluates NIEO Campaign/LPA design that provided the agenda for North-South dialogue and international economic order and x-rays LPA/SAP packages by World Bank to overcome underdevelopment in Africa. The work identifies LPA implementations to improve agriculture, industrialization, food production to achieve food security, and its challenges through external funding and dependent from external sources. The paper concludes that the policies imposed on Africa affed its development. The article recommends African self-reliant and self-sustenance as the bedrock for Africa's development.

Keywords: Development Mechanism, LPA, Africa, World Bank, Self - reliance,

Introduction

The importance of the Lagos Plan of Action resulted in a heated debate regarding Africa's development, before, during and immediately after decolonization process, which was launched at the Bandung Conference in 1955, and it was during the 1970s that the questions pertaining to how and where would Africa 'fit' into the wider international political economy became very prominent. A lot of resolutions adopted by African Leaders through the OAU now AU in the early

years of independence had aimed at the notion that the economic integration of Africa was a prerequisite for real independence and development of State and Government in Monrovia, they became known as the "Monrovia Strategy and the Monrovia Declaration of Commitments respectively. (Anaemene & Bolarinwa, 2017, p.36).

Therefore, it was the bottom line of the declarations from Algiers (1968), Addis Ababa (1970 and 1973), Kinshasa (1976), and Libreville (1977) (Taylor, 2006:12). Thus, from the late 1970s onwards, Africa successfully went into different development mechanisms, plans, agendas, frameworks, and declarations, which at various degree aimed at promoting development and, later, democracy.

The adoption of LPA was in response to the realization that past policies were not viable and sustainable for the realization of the objectives of self-reliance, poverty eradication, equitable distribution of the benefits of development and economic growth, sovereignty over natural resources and equitable participation in international decision-making processes. African Heads of State and Government summed the LPA formulation as "the effect of unfulfilled promises of global development strategies that has been more sharply felt in Africa than in the other continent of the world" (Browne and Cumming: 1985, p.151). In the light of the above, by the late 1970s, development gap emerged amongst African states, as the continent was slowly dividing into semi-periphery and periphery states (Mkandawire, 1982:.45).

However, the revised framework was an articulation of the ECA technocrats, whose ideas envisage for the African peoples and development mechanisms in which their basic proposition was that an increasing measure of self-reliance and self-sustaining development was more important accomplishment of political independence since it was to lead to economic decolonization. The point was that Africans needed a development mechanisms based on the four pillars – self-reliance, self-sustenance, democratization of the development process, and the fair distribution of the fruits of development. They called for a departure from the past. It was to be inward-looking rather than externally-oriented. The Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), therefore, embarked on evolving and promoting a

development strategy and ideology, which was to be genuinely African and not imitative of western models as had hitherto been the case (Adedeji, 2002, p.7).

In 1976, African Ministers of Planning and Finance (who constituted the Executive Committee of the ECA), approved the Revised Framework. In June 1977, the Assembly of the Heads of State and Government of the OAU also endorsed it. The ECA technocrats interpreted this endorsement as marking the beginning of a breakthrough in bringing about Africa's long-cherished self-reliant development strategy (Bolarinwa, 2010, p.44).

Therefore, the awareness persisted that a lot still had to be done. As a result of this awareness, between1976 and 1979, the ideas contained in the Revised Framework were expanded and improved upon through series of internal ECA Secretariat meetings and conferences, alongside numbers of specialized consultation such as the "OAU-ECA Colloquium of Perspectives of Development and Economic Growth in Africa up to the year 2000," held in Monrovia in February 1979 and the joint ECA-UNEP seminar on "Alternative Patterns of Development and Life Styles for the African Region," held in Addis Ababa in March 1979 (Adedeji, 1983, p. 328 &331).

Particularly, the constant search for genuinely African approach to development was given a great spur by the need to prepare the International Development Strategy for the Third UN-Development Decade (IDS) (Adedeji, 1983, Pp.331-332). To ensure that Africa play an important role in determining the contents and the scope of the international development strategy for the decade of the 1980s, and to avoid being left out like the previous decades, the ECA technocrats, together with African ministers of Planning and Development agreed to prepare a development strategy for Africa. With valuable input from proposals, worked out by a number of sectoral conferences (such as the conference of African Ministers of industry, Trade, Transport, Communications and Planning (Adedeji, 1983, p.332), an African strategy was finalized during the ECA Conference of Ministers of Development and Planning and the fourteenth session of the commission held in Rabat, Morocco, in March 1979 (Brown and Cunning, 1985, p.150).

Immediately after the preparation of the African Strategy, the African Ministers of Planning and Development equally resolved to prepare a "Declaration of Commitments of the Heads of State and Government of the OAU/AU on Guidelines and Measures for National and Collective self-reliance in Social and Economic Development for the Establishment of an NIEO." These two documents were then presented to African Heads of state and Government during their meeting in Monrovia in July 1979. Upon the adoption of both the Strategy and the Declaration of Commitments by the African Heads of state and Government in Monrovia, they became known as the "Monrovia Strategy and the Monrovia Declaration of Commitments respectively (Adedeji, 1983, p.332).

During the ECA Conference of Ministers in Addis Ababa, in April 1980, the African ministers and the ECA technocrats came up with a detailed Plan of Action for endorsement by African heads of state and government, titled: "The Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Monrovia Strategy for Economic Development of Africa (Nyong'o, 2002, p.1)

Besides, this document was adopted by the African leaders, at their Economic Summit in Lagos later in April, and it became known as the "Lagos Plan of Action for the Economic Development of Africa 1980-2000."(Adedeji, 1983, p.332). The LPA was accompanied by the Full Act of Lagos, which consisted of a statement of the kinds of economic and political institutions and agreements that were to be put in place for the effective realisation of the principles, programmes and projects enunciated in the LPA. The Plan was also presented to the United Nations General Assembly at its eleventh special session in September 1980 and it became an integral part of the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade (Adedeji, 1983, p.333).

An Assessment of LPA Objectives and Strategies:

It was designed to lay a durable foundation for internally generated, self-sustained processes of development and economic growth based on the twin principles of national and collective self-reliance. The LPA emphasised the reorientation of Africa's development strategies with implications for sectoral linkages, processes of planning and plan implementation, and participation in the development process.(Adedeji, 1984, p.5). More importantly, the emphasis was on the

production for African consumption (markets), although (African countries were urged to continue to grow export crops for vital-foreign exchange earnings) (Brown and Cummings, 1985, p.85). The LPA preamble emphasised that "efforts towards African economic integration must be pursued with renewed determination in order to create a continent-wide framework for the much needed economic cooperation for development based on self-reliance."

An approaches to planned development that emerged from the LPA twin principles of self-reliance and self-sustenance, as LPA called for a fundamental restructuring of African economies, not only in increasing the share of goods and services but in changing the sources of inputs into the process of production and distribution and the ownership of the factors and institutions of production and distribution.(Adedeji 1984, Pp.4-5).

As geographically planned, the LPA called for a systematic exploitation and exploration of trade and economic cooperation potentials with other developing countries and regions within the framework of the proposals. (Bolarinwa, 2010, p.52). Meanwhile, within the ambit of calls for a New International Economic Order (NIEO), the LPA resolved on setting up a new trading framework at the international level including agreement on new trading rules and principles covering, amongst others, structural adjustment, preferential treatment for developing countries, and elimination of protectionist measures that hampered access of manufactures and semi-manufactures from developing countries to markets of developed countries(Bolarinwa, 2010, p.53).

Assessment of the LPA and Self-Reliance Model

One of the most impressive aspect is that LPA was the off-shoot of the combined influence of the unsettling realities of the international political economy in terms of the constraints and limitations imposed on developing countries by the structures and the operational principles of the Post-WWII trade and monetary orders, the dominant economic and development ideas as they tended to interpret and explain the post war global order, and the overall nature of North-South relations within the context of the Cold War, the lessons of the OPEC cartel's concerted action and the challenge posed by the call for a new international economic order (NIE0).(OAU,LPA,1981, p.9).

However, these external constraints were mediated by poor domestic institutions and policies, African leaders discounted the role of domestic political factors in Africa's economic failures. They tended to believe that the removal of external constraints was most crucial in Africa's development prospects. Therefore, the nature and character of the LPA were informed more by perceptions about the external environment than by considerations of the realities of the domestic environment itself. The oil price hikes created a situation wherein, suddenly, the oil-rich nations earned billions of dollars while on the other hand poor oil importing nations were made to suffer. (Nyerere, 1983, p.46). The issues of extreme vulnerability of the developing countries to the oil crunch of the l 970s underscored the implications of their dependent relationship with the North. The dramatic success of OPEC between 1973 and 1979 has been described as a seismic event in world affairs that directly affected virtually all dimensions of international politics. Most Third World countries took great pleasure in seeing the non-western oil-producing states of OPEC wrestle control over the international oil market from northern industrialised states and their multinationals. It ended the developed world's previous domination of virtually every important dimension of international economic exchange.(Stoessinger, 1993, p.220)

Assessment of NIE0 Campaign and the LPA Design

The issue of a development mechanism for the Third World in general and Africa in particular has been complex and ambiguous. The debate over a development paradigm for the developing world has revolved around the question of whether development should be conceived in accordance with the demands of the prevailing international order' or conversely, whether it is necessarily in conflict with it. The question has always been, as Samir Amin puts it, "can the international order be transformed and adjusted to the priority demands for Third World development, or conversely, can the latter only be the result of the reverse adjustment? (Amin: 1990, p.3).

The developing countries concluded that only a transformation of the world order, to incorporate their priority needs could engender genuine development. They conceived what became, perhaps, the most widely publicised plan for bridging the

gap between the North and the South, the project for a new international economic order (NIEO) (Lewis, 1977, p.3).

It is important to note that the NIEO negotiations prompted African states to adopt the alternative policy of partial disengagement embodied in the Lagos Plan of Action. The demands were intended to bring about increased resource transfers from rich to poor states on improved terms and in a manner that could facilitate the initiation and implementation of development policies in the South (Walters and Blake, 1992, Pp.217-218).

The Issues Tabled for Negotiation by the Least Developed Countries(LDCs) under NIEO includes**:**

a) The implementation of the UNCTADs, Integrated Programme for commodities, alongside the establishment of the Common Fund as its centerpiece. b) The liberalisation and extension of the Generalised System of Preferences for LDCs exports of manufactured and semi-manufactured goods. c) Increase in LDCs' share of the world industrial output to 25% by the year2000, d) The establishment of a link between the creation of new special drawing rights in the IMF and development assistance;

The overall demands were informed by the conviction that the Northern-dominated global economy had produced an uneven distribution of income and influence at the expense of the South. The resource transfer that was sought in the NIEO was, in the view of the Third World, to 'eliminate the international sources of their economic and political weakness. Besides the call for resource transfers, the NIEO also focused on the establishment of new principles to guide international economic relations. Understandably, the NIEO was as much a demand for alteration in standards of conduct and norms governing economic relations as a demand for resource transfers (Walters and Blake, 1992, Pp.218-219). Therefore, the need for concerted action for meaningful and fruitful participation in the NIEO negotiations induced greater cooperation amongst African states that eventually evolved to the inward-looking, collective-self-reliance development strategy contained in the LPA (Adedeji, 2002, p.4). The most concrete manifestation of this new African resolve was the self-reliant and self-sustenance agenda defined in the Lagos Plan of Action

The Lagos Plan of Action (LPA) State- led model and the issues of SAP packages

The issues relating to LPA and SAP, was when the World Bank set-up an assessment of possibilities of overcoming underdevelopment of Africa, using a strategy different from that of the LPA. A team was form as evaluators to assess the situations in African countries, Professor Elliot Berg was appointed to head the team, which came up with a report tittled: Accelerated Development in Sub-Sahara Africa, An Agenda for Africa. The Berg Report, like LPA also analyzed the African economies sector by sector, bothered how Africa has been developing, therefore, disagreed and criticized LPA for its less concern on issues of bad governance, corruption, mismanagement of public funds, the role of overblown bureaucracies and the parasitic nature of of the African countries (Anaemene and Bolarinwa, 2017, p.42). Thus, the LPA as the state-led development model, relied upon heavily subsidized welfare, industralisation through tarrif-supported import-substitution, foreign exchange control and deficit financing of public expenditure, was castigated by the World Bank to be unsuitable and antithetical to growth in the private sector, and recommended that the solutions to underdevelopment in Africa are 1.) To roll back the state to the traditional role as regulator, 2.) To open up the economy to private sector participation and the rule of market forces through liberalization. The World Bank and other donor countries introduced new economic reform policy packages to African governments as conditions for aid disbursements, the policies which were put in place in the Structural Adjustment Programme at the mid-1980s.

Implementations and the activities of Lagos Plan of Action

Consequently, African countries embarked on national policies to improve agriculture and food production to achieve food security and industrialisation, but instead of this, there were growing dependence on food imports which was accompanied by an increase in agricultural production of non-food crops for export, instead semi-finished or finished products were imported to African countries.

Particularly, in Burkina Faso, during the 1960s and part of the 1970s, cotton production was roughly 2000 tons a year; by 1984 it was 75, 000 tons. Even Chad, with all its difficulties, had a record high of cotton harvest in 1984. Kenya, while promoting its agricultural policy encouraged large scale of production of coffee

between 1982-1986. Lesotho continued its land tenure policy which led to inefficient land utilisation and lack of improvement largely for the agricultural sector. (Lundahl, 1993, p.118).

Thus, the Green Revolution, was a major agriculture policy in Nigeria. It was introduced in 1980s and was intended as a programme to ensure self-sufficiency in food production and to introduce modern technology into the Nigerian agricultural sector largely through the introduction of seeds which included rice production, fertilizers and tractors. It encompassed a wide range of projects supportive to the nation's agricultural development; this included 11 River Basin Development Authorities, Ministry of Water Resources, National Food Production Programme and the Agro-Service Centres, even the distribution of fertilisers was part of the efforts to develop agriculture (Waterworth, 1980, Pp.2-5).

The introduction of Economic Recovery and Agriculture Sector Rehabilitation Programme in Ghana, the goal was to enhance the Ministry of Food and Agriculture's capacity to provide effective policy and institutional support for rehabilitation and recovery of agricultural production and productivity covering crop and fishery and thereby contribute to overall economic growth and improvement in living conditions of the citizens (Ayittey, 2005:3-5).

Also, in Tanzania, agriculture performed relatively well in the 1980s especially in crops like pulses, starches, oilseeds and cereals, while export crops like coffee, cotton and tea performed poorly reflecting unfavourable terms of trade (Crees, 2000. P.172). Algeria consolidated its agricultural policy of 'collective estate farms and producer cooperatives' which built on the production of cereal crops and livestock. Though, like many other African countries it was characterised by huge failures (Laoubi and Yamao, 2012, p.3). In the 1980s, Cameroon embarked on agricultural reforms which led to the increase in the production of cash crops like cocoa, coffee and cotton among others, instead of food crops. (Tina, 2012, p.2)

Importantly, there was bias in favour of cash crops to generate foreign exchange in many parts of Africa from 1980 onwards. This became significant across the continent after the adoption of the LPA. The strategy of export-led growth was seen by most African leaders and their foreign advisors as the route to

industrialisation and requiring cheap food supplies and in turn the subsidisation of food prices, yet, while these policy deficiencies (i.e. inappropriate domestic policies), were increasingly recognised, it must be acknowledged that African countries have been victimised by external forces too, especially the introduction of Structural Adjustment Programme which eclipsed the enthusiasm towards the LPA and to overlook its prescriptions. Unfortunately, the LPA had no binding force on the member states. Thus, not only was the effective impact on member countries difficult to assess but, more importantly, it was difficult to compel member states to observe fundamental commitments made in treaties and conventions considering the character of regimes in African states. (Lundahl, 1993, p.118).

Issues and Challenges of the LPA

The challenges of self-reliant model as the main principle on which Africa's future for development was based, the plan appeared to have diverted the attention of African governments away from the radical economic reforms, African countries, with the external assistance, can make full use of the favourable external economic factors to increase development to enhance the self-reliant capabilities.

Unfortunately, the LPA relied on external funding for its implementation, that was not forthcoming as the external donors especially the World Bank had already expressed its dissatisfaction with the provisions of the economic blueprint through an assessment report prepared by a team led by Professor Elliot Berg. Objectively, African leaders and technocrats see the LPA with its collective self-reliance model as a viable framework for reversing dependence and underdevelopment in the continent, but after adoption, the implementations was disappointing, as a result of the behaviours of the African government's unwillingness and inability to respect and respond to the many commitments made in the regional treaties and conventions for concerted regional self-reliant efforts.

The acceptance of the LPA was hampered due to profound influence in the 1980s by the multi-dimension economic crisis in the continent, which made it difficult for African leaders to avoid accepting and adopting SAPs prescribed by the Bretton Woods Institutions. They had to choose between implementing LPA or joining SAP, for their desperations, they choose SAP with the aim to increase

resources, ensure the continous functioning of government services, to execute vital development projects, and to appease potentially challenging political constituencies, with all these reasons, they abandoned the LPA goals for SAP prescriptions, the self-reliant regionalism embodied in the LPA document brought little success, and the continent's economic problem worsened. The report accused the LPA document of assigning so many roles to the States, particularly, in the provisions of social and essential services and recommended removal of subsidy and less role to the State. Though, some African countries still went ahead to implement the provisions of the economic blueprint.

In nutshell, as seen by Adebayo Adedeji, Africa experienced severe and widespread drought in 1984-1985 which affected as much as 34 African countries in all -sub-regions of the continent and resulted in dramatic food scarcity, depletion of livestock and water shortages in countries such as: Angola, Mozambique, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Algeria, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia, Rwanda, Burundi, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Nigeria and Uganda among others. Indeed, between 1980 and 1990, Africa's growth rate was -2.5 percent of the population growing at 4.5 percent. In fact, the 1980s was regarded as Africa's lost decade because the LPA could not achieve its stated objectives (Lundahl, 1993, p.120).

It is observed that the LPA which was adopted in 1980 to ensure self-reliant and self-sustaining development among other objectives especially by increasing food production, food security and reducing food losses through the improvement of agriculture and by so doing, industries can be developed; could not be achieved. The LPA document explicitly stated that it will be funded from the internally generated resources and that external resources and aid would only be complementary, but the plan provided only a sketchy outline of the direction of getting to the promise land.

The target date of achievement of the plan's several short- medium terms within a twenty-year period was certainly not realistic. In the financing, implementation requires more than the partial figures in the agriculture, transportation and communication sectors. There were serious issues on an attempt to distinguish financial, between domestic real resources and external resources; therefore, the

LPA proposed new methods for managing domestic financial resources was nowhere documented.

Conclusion

The policies that were imposed and adopted by African countries in the 1980s were privatisation, liberalisation and fiscal austerity. There were domestic policy shortcomings in terms of patterns of production and expenditure, specifically, between 1979-1981 the prices of some African leading export commodities such as coffee, copper, cocoa, groundnuts, tobacco, cotton, rubber, tea and oil experienced sharp declines, loss of revenue. There were also increasing external indebtedness. Since, the adoption of the LPA, the main preoccupation of African countries was crisis management for economic revival and growth.

Recommendation

There should be vibrant economic stability and growth through self-reliance and self-sustenance to enhance Africa's Development.

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