

The Changing Pattern of African Development Strategies and the South-South Development Platforms

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Abstract

This paper investigated the prospects and the challenges of the South-South development platforms. The research findings which were generated through secondary sources reveals that development challenges in Africa are legion and are noticeable in virtually all the development sectors. The study reveals further that the North-South development platforms generated marginal success and has not sufficiently aided development efforts in Africa because the development programme were foreign in content, largely borrowed, less understood, largely irrelevant and very draconian in nature. Such development programmes of action have promoted the greatest hardship to the greater majority of Africans, especially those from the poorest households. The South-South development platforms have however generated reasonable levels of socio-economic development. However, different ideological leaning, especially during the cold war era, lack of institutional charters and poor infrastructural development have hampered the optimal utilisation of the South-South development platforms as efficient development avenues. Efforts are being made to repackage and refocus the platforms through the formation of micro-development frameworks within the Southern Hemisphere.

Introduction

Since independence, African countries have been grappling with the problems of sustainable development. Though blessed with abundant natural resources at independence, virtually all the post independence African states were characterised by shortage of skilled professionals (to maximally explore the resources) and a weak leadership that were unable to promote sustainable development resulting in a deficient development strategy. Post colonial African states thus inherited an

exploited weak states and dysfunctional economies that were further aggravated by concert of other internal factors such as corruption, debt overhang and bad governance in many countries. The weak state status of many African countries remains a major constraint to sustainable development in Africa.¹ The continent development experiences have shown that the rate of accumulation and governance style in the post-colonial period have not been sufficient to rebuild the African societies nor sustain

improvement in the standard of living of Africans. The net effect of these development burdens in Africa has been the entrenchment of a vicious cycle of underdevelopment in which economic decline coupled with reduce capacity for the utilisation of development resources and poor governance have continue to reinforce each other leading to Africa's peripheral and diminishing role in bringing about sustainable development to the African people.

In spite of its socio-political and economic backwardness, many African leaders have remained consistent in the task of developing the continent. Prominent amongst Africa's development strategies is the adoption of a North-South development framework which encompasses the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), an externally imposed development framework by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the United Nations Programme of Action for Africa's Recovery and Development (UNPAERD). Another prominent North-South development programme designed to resolve Africa's development challenges is the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

Concerned by the near economic paralysis of many African countries in the eighties, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) imposed the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) on Africa in order to bail the continent out of its development burden. As noted by Elaigwu,² the logic of SAP derives from the classical economic thought which recommends that the determination of product out put, the engagement of workers and price allocation are to be determined by the forces of demand and supply. Having successfully rebuilt the war torn

economies of the Western Europe, the IMF was not pleased with the socio- economic stagnation recorded in Africa and many other Third World nations. Making a specific appraisal of the African case, the Fund argued that the negative distortion of the African economies is not natural but structural in nature.

The IMF position pre-supposes that naturally, Africa's economies have tendency to respond to growth just like the economies of the developed countries. But unlike the latter, the fiscal policies and the institutional structures put in place by African countries to achieve most policy objectives towards sustainable growth are faulty, hence the introduction of SAP to correct it. However, after more than twenty-nine years of its introduction to most African states, statistics have shown that the success of IMF in Africa is very scanty.³ For instance, though Africa's combined exports in 1999 is 30 percent above what it was in 1980 when SAP was introduced, Africa's foreign exchange earnings within the same period reduced by 40 percent because the regular supplies of African primary raw materials outweighs the demand thus forcing down the prices of African commodities in the international market and by extension reducing the income with which to improve the standard of living of Africans. This is an indication that even though SAP temporarily stimulated economic growth through the removal of product subsidy which are diverted to the repairs of public goods, it has not led to adequate socio-economic development as predicted by the IMF because the cost of the unsubsidised goods and services are too exorbitant for many Africans to bear. Many

Africans equally lost their jobs to the privatisation and commercialisation policies of the IMF which recommended right sizing and down sizing of government workers to save recurrent administrative cost of governance. Though many African countries like Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya and South Africa designed poverty reduction programmes (Such as the establishment of the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) in Nigeria), poor funding, logistics problem and official corruption curtailed the overwhelming success of SAP relief measures in Africa.⁴

In an earlier effort to bail Africa out of its development burden through the North-South development platform, the UNO convened a special session on the critical economic situation in Africa in 1986 in New York (Adedeji, 1991).⁵ At the end of the session, the conference adopted a UNO Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery (UNPAERD) (1986-1990). The UNO recovery action plan drew substantially from Africa's Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (APPER), a recovery development programme that was adopted from the OAU's Lagos Plan of Action of 1980.

The central elements of the UNO action Plans for Africa were in two directional folds. First was the determination and commitment of African governments to assume primary responsibility for their economic development through deregulated economy. Africa's anticipated commitment as contained in APPER document borders on the preparedness of African countries to mobilise internal resources for Africa's development and to take actions to re-order their development priorities by focusing more on agriculture and food

production. Africa's effort was also geared towards establishing a more dynamic, self-reliant and self sustained economies through focused and pragmatic leadership.⁶

The UNO Action Programme for the Development of Africa was estimated to cost \$128.1 billion Dollars out of which Africa was billed to generate \$82.5 billion Dollars while the continent's developed partners chose to provide the balance of \$45.6 billion Dollars to be spread over five years, under the some conditions. The first condition borders on the need for African countries to adopt market-oriented reforms. There was equally the need for case by case treatment of Africa's debt relief measures depending on how much reform each country was willing to adopt the reform programme. The advanced countries under the UNPAERD also insisted that African countries must adopt measures that will address the problems of the disadvantaged groups like the minorities, rural population and women through affirmative action while equally implementing development policies in such a manner as to encourage the broadest possible participation in development and productive use of scarce resources .

In keeping with their promises, three developed members of the UNO: Canada, Britain, and France cancelled the debts of some of the least developed countries. The debt cancellation totaled about US \$7.4 billion.⁷ Some of the African beneficiaries of debt relief assistance under the UNPAER scheme include Uganda, Rwanda, Burkina Faso, Mozambique, Ethiopia, Guinea-Bissau and Mauritania.

Though dotted with limited successes as many development partners were not forthcoming with their promised development aid

and promises of debt relief measures, the UNO special conference on Africa was a considerable improvement on its previous efforts to solve the economic problems of Africa. The holding of the special session in itself was unprecedented as it marked the first time the General Assembly primarily focused on the problem of one region (Africa) only.

The UNO Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), through its resolution of 29 April 1958, established the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)⁸ as a catalyst to design and participate in the implementation of key measures to relieve Africa of its economic and technological problems and to sponsor and participate in scientific investigations that could aid the growth and development of the economy of African countries. ECA was equally designed to advise African countries on their economic policies, to make them respond to positive growth and development, amongst other functions.

Within its development mandate, ECA carried out various studies and training of African economists and statisticians in preparing long term statistical programmes to pave way for easy data collection on Africa's development profile and performance indicators. The Commission was also carried out surveys on the optimal utilisation of the untapped mineral resources in African countries for possible developmental purposes and better market strategy (integration) that could benefit the continent.

ECA also made an advisory and logistic input into the establishment of the African Institute for Economic Development and Planning (IDEP) in Dakar. IDEP trains Africans in economic development strategies.

The Commission also made a technical input into the establishment of the African Development Bank (ADB). The primary aim of the Bank is to make funds available through loans for the infrastructural development of Africa. ECOWAS and most other sub-regional African Organizations were created on the advice of ECA to promote cooperation and integration in the area of market and production. According to Malaba,⁹ ECA served as the high-powered think-tank behind the formation of the OAU's Lagos Plan of Action in 1980, as a strategy and comprehensive economic blueprint for the development of Africa.

Some of the factors that were responsible for ECA's limited impact on the economic progress of Africa included sovereignty consciousness by most African countries, which has delayed Africa's integration for long (Malaba, 2001). Other factors include Anglophone and Francophone ideological split, leading to non-harmonisation of efforts to confront development challenges confronting Africa with common strategy as suggested by ECA. Also included among the factors that curtailed the overwhelming success of ECA is the duplication of the commission's activities by other UNO specialised agencies like the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), amongst others. Thus the North-South development platform was not implemented in Africa as an internally inspired evolutionary sustainable development processes as they were largely imported and less relevant to the development needs of African countries.

Such imported development paradigm was equally characterised by a consumerist lifestyle

and import substitution rather than being productive based. It was therefore difficult for many African countries within the North-South development paradigm to build a self-reliant development framework without first dismantling the oppressive and exploitative international development structures and linkages within the African states. African countries were equally aware, as distilled from the Lagos plan of action meeting in 1980 that any adopted development paradigm in the continent would not achieve much success unless it is built on the development paradigms that African countries knows, understands and overwhelmingly controls, hence the continent emphasis on the South-South cooperation. Owing to the limited success of developing Africa through the North-South development platforms, the poverty and backwardness of the continent still stand in contrast to the prosperity of the advanced countries of the Northern hemisphere. The continued poverty in Africa as a continent and African peoples and the marginalisation of the continent from the globalisation process has constituted a serious threat to global peace, security and stability, hence the concerted efforts of the African countries to bring about sustainable development to the continent through the South-South development platforms. An attempt is made in this paper to examine and evaluate the prospects and challenges of such efforts through secondary source of data which are generated from relevant text, journals, magazines, newspapers and other relevant sources.

Conceptual Clarifications

The South-South platform as a political concept has a geographical and economic connota-

tions.¹⁰ Geographically, the South-South platform comprises of the developing countries that are situated within the Southern hemisphere of the globe. These countries are mainly found in Southern America, Africa and part of Asia. Most of these Southern Countries (often referred to as Third World Nations) are characterised by underdevelopment; dependent economy, low literacy rate, high unemployment rate, avoidable diseases, among others.¹¹ It is pertinent to note also that in spite of high incidences of poverty level and the general ranking of the countries in the Southern hemisphere as developing, there are still differences in their ratings and levels of development. For example, Brazil's 2007 Gross Domestic Products (GDP) of over \$1.3 trillion is more than Chad's \$15 billion.¹² Politically, the South-South cooperation represents concerted efforts by the countries of the Southern hemisphere to cooperate towards solving their common development problems. The platform also serves as the authentic agitation forum of the developing countries through concretisation and reinforcement of collective self-reliance and collective bargaining for the common development interest of the Third World nations. The Southern cooperation takes place at formal, informal, bilateral, and multilateral and inters regional levels. The South-South Commission, which is the administrative organ of the Southern cooperation, is located at Geneva, Switzerland.

Development

This concept is concerned with capacity building for the optimal utilisation of human and material resources in order to generate the

requisite competences, knowledge and skills which are regularly updated with the aim of improving the quantity and the quality of the standard of living of the people.

Development Strategy

This is a set of ideas which deals with tactical and credible planning and implementation of development designs in order to achieve and sustain desired results.

Changing Pattern

The consistent diversification and intensification of Africa's development strategic action plans in order to meet the development aspirations of the people.

Theoretical Framework of Analysis

The primary focus of development theories have been the study of causes of underdevelopment and the conditions for the required cooperation to eliminate such challenges from the international system.¹³ Mutual cooperation thus serve as one of the major development theories through which states achieve their national interests in the international system by working together to achieve a common goal. The principle of cooperation represents a set of relationship which benefits the cooperating units without coercion. Functional cooperation equally denote the determination and resolution of the cooperating units to comply and implement an agreed rules and regulations in order to promote mutual benefits.¹⁴ It is a collective decision making mechanism around which actor's expectations converge. Through cooperation, states define their national interests within the

range of coalition, alliances and treaties with other states with similar goals. A particular state could also cooperate with others in order to collaborate with them to achieve collective rather than personal interest, such effort include cooperation for the maintenance of international peace and security for the benefit of all states within the international system.

Cooperation may equally arise to protect the selfish interest of individual nation. For instance, smaller and weaker states often cooperate with stronger nations under a military alliance for their protection. Under such alliance, attack on one nation means attack on all and a collective will to repel it. Thus the interest of such weaker nation is more protected under a joint effort even though such a state may not be able to handle her security needs single handedly. The classical model for proper understanding of cooperative behaviour amongst nations in the pursuit of their selfish national interest is found in the Prisoner Dilemma Game,¹⁵ in which two prisoners, each held in isolation from the other has an incentive either to cooperate so that neither confesses to the crime in which case both may be free for lack of evidence. But if one of them confess to the offence and implicates the other in the hope of a free bargain with the investigating authority, both might receive a greater sentence. The central thrust of the theoretical understanding of cooperation amongst nation is the extent to which mutual benefits arising from such cooperation supersedes a conception of interest based on unilateral action and competition. Christine¹⁶ explains further in his game of "stag hunt" that the key to cooperative behaviour lies in the extent to which each person or state believes that it will derive

sufficient benefits from such agreement and the assurance that others will exhibit the same level of cooperation towards achieving collective interests. In the absence of such assurance from others, none of the participating actors is unlikely to cooperate. The concept of cooperation may be explained further for better understanding by making reference to a situation in which two states maintains international trade barrier. If both remove the barriers from their individual territories, both will benefit, but if one nation only gets rid of trade restriction unilaterally while the other closed its own border and at the same time have access to the other country's market, the one which closed it border alone will have benefits of such unilateral liberalised market. The benefits under such arrangement are one-sided.

What the above theoretical postulation suggests is that cooperation amongst various entities is symbolic and symbiotic in nature in that it borders on the spirit of "help me and I help you" in order to achieve individual and collective goals Neo-functionists like Keohane posits that cooperation can only be guaranteed if it involves mutual and equal benefits. As noted by Keohane,¹⁷ cooperative understanding is better handled by technocrats in each cooperative entity. This position pre-supposes that those countries that have superior technical bargaining power will benefit more than the others making it impossible for dividends of cooperation to benefit members equally. Since most technical international organisations are by-product of political decisions whose primary aim is to promote their own selfish national interest, many countries often come into the negotiating table to negotiate in favour of what will mainly benefit them at the expense

of other countries thus defeating the spirit of cooperative mutual benefits. In spite of the criticisms of the concept of cooperation, the paradigm has contributed to the building of integrated entities beyond nation states especially at the regional and global levels such as the establishment of the European Union (EU) from where the concept of integration was transformed into functional reality.¹⁸ Integration amongst nations has thus further stretched cooperative efforts to a condition of single economic and political condition leading to a unified economy and quasi-government. Under the integrative process, political actors in several distinct national settings are persuaded to move from cooperative economic domain having been persuaded by share greater mutual benefits, to shift a greater percentage of their political independence and loyalties towards a new unique centre whose collective institutions possesses a jurisdiction over the pre-existing national states. A good example of this theoretical transformation into practical reality is the establishment of the EU which upheld the four basic principle of free movement of goods, services, single currency (Euro) and capital amongst its members.

Global integration could be vertical or horizontal.¹⁹ Vertical integration is one in which there is the unification of trade and economic development and quasi-government either amongst the Northern or Southern Hemispheres while horizontal integration is the socio-economic and political unification between the Northern and Southern Hemispheres.

The link between the theory of Cooperation and Integration lies in the fact that cooperation is the foundation of any functional international development platforms which often take place

initially under a decentralised, collaborative and systematic setting that could develop into an integrative economic and political communities in order to bring more benefits to the cooperating units. Within this context, nation states have no option than to work with one another because global problems are now beyond the capacity of one nation to solve.

Origin of the South-south Cooperation

The creation of the South-South cooperation could be traced to the Bandung conference of 1955, which eventually led to the formation of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM). NAM as a movement supposedly demonstrated the neutrality of the Southern countries in the then cold war rivalry between the defunct Soviet-led Eastern bloc which promoted the socialist and communist ideas and the American led Western bloc of capitalist ideology. The neutral position of the Southern countries in the cold war contributed to the containment of the war and the promotion of the world peace. Though Southern countries like Cuba, Angola, Mozambique, Ethiopia and Libya supported the Eastern bloc while some African countries including Nigeria, Uganda and Liberia tactically supported the capitalist ideology, the neutrality of an overwhelming majority of the Southern countries helped to prevent the cold war from snowballing into full scale war. It is arguable that had majority of Southern countries not been neutral, the cold war would have involved virtually all the countries of the world with its potential of leading to another world war.²¹ Equally established to promote the development agenda of the South-South cooperation was the Group of Seventy-Seven Developing Countries (G77). The G77 emerged

in 1964 as a lobbying bloc which seek to pursue the development interest of the developing countries.²² The first major focus of the G77 was to lobby for the sustenance of the agitation for a New International Economic Order (NIEO) at the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) held in 1964. The NIEO as earlier examined in this paper represents the agitation of the developing countries for a fairer and a more equitable distribution of the world resources. Apart from the G77, other earlier pro-South development blocs include the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC). Established in 1960 and with headquarters in Vienna, Austria, OPEC fixes quota restrictions and price control on crude oil. Owing to cooperative efforts within the Southern hemisphere, some of the countries within the Southern development platform have witnessed tremendous progress in their economies, science and technology. For instance, India has become a world leader in technology churning out over 3,000 engineers per annum. Malaysia which drew her first set of palm seeds from Nigeria has emerged the world's largest producer of palm oil. Singapore is one of the world leaders in electronics products. India and Indonesia are fast supplanting the Western countries as the leading exporters of drugs including the life-saving anti-retroviral drugs for the Humuno Infectious Virus (HIV) patients. China has the fastest growing economy in the world.²³

Prospects and the Challenges of Africa in the South-south Development Platforms

The first major involvement of Africa in the South-South development cooperation was

expressed through the Afro-Asian Cooperation. Owing to common historical colonial experiences by the two continents (Africa and Asia) the platform chose to confront the development challenges of the two continents through bilateral and multilateral efforts. As a result of multilateral agreement between India and African countries, the former provided consultancy services to two Nigeria Steel Rolling Mills at Ajaokuta and Jos in 1984.²⁴ India had about thirty universities shortly before her independence, hence her advancement in education, science and indigenous technology. As a result of this development, two hundred and fifty three Indian scientists and teachers were sent to Africa to help in the continent's education project in 1989.²⁵ India's experience in (over one million) functional small-scale industries (which turned out fifty percent of the country's production base as of 2000) was also shared with many countries in Africa including Nigeria, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Ghana, Zimbabwe, Kenya and Uganda. India also has a Technical and Economic Cooperation Training Programme (ITECTP) which reserves sixty percent of its 1,500 training spot for African countries.²⁶

Malaysia also provided training assistance to some African countries including Ivory Coast, Senegal, Liberia, and Cameroon on the best strategy for palm oil and rubber planting, land enrichment and better strategy for land development and the cure of tropical diseases. Nigeria established a Technical Aid Corps Scheme (TACS) to provide human resource needs in specific areas (such as, Medicine, law, education) to needy African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries by sending 1,080 Nigerian professionals to ACP countries

annually.²⁷

Pakistan provides yearly scholarship for 103 Africans in her institutions of learning to train Africans in human resource development, especially in the areas of medicine and engineering. The Newly Industrialised Countries (NICS) within the South-South platform also played reasonable roles in the development of the African continent. Having achieved appreciable level of economic development, these countries began to complement the South-South efforts at development. The NICS, such as Brazil, Mexico, Taiwan, South Korea, assisted Africa, especially through bilateral trade relations. For instance trade between Asia and Africa took a remarkable growth from less than \$6.6 billion in 1990 to about \$17.3 billion in 2000.²⁸ Lots of South Korean and Taiwan products are imported into Africa at a cheaper cost compared to the products imported from Europe. But some of these products are noted to be sub-standard.

However, despite the non-aligned stand of the South-South Group, many still had ideological support for the Eastern and the Western world. For instance, while Nigeria and Liberia supported the capitalist Western Europe, Libya and Cuba chose socialism to achieve her socio-economic goals. These diverse approaches caused a great distortion in the South-South development platform because it was devoid of common development approach.

Differences in cultural background, colonial history and political system also hindered a well-coordinated development plan for all the members of South-South Cooperation. Further more, the Non-Aligned

Movement had no charter, organs nor structure that could effectively play a key role in implementing the South-South decisions or resolutions, amongst other set backs.

There is an attempt at evolving better strategy for achieving the aims and objectives of Africa and Asian Development Cooperation through a new strategic partnership framework between the two continents. The strategy centres on cooperation between Africa and Asia in the area of agriculture, human and infrastructural development. Within this new understanding, Africa's three main leading economies (South Africa, Nigeria, and Kenya) have established functional trade relationship with India. Nigeria has a \$ 6 billion investment package for the development of her power, oil and gas sectors. This project was awarded to the India's state owned National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC).²⁹ India has equally exported more than \$250 million of textiles, pharmaceutical, metals and agricultural machineries to Kenya in 2005, with Kenya exporting some \$40 million cotton, semi-precious stones and skins to India in the same year (Jonathan and Smith, 2006:64).³⁰ South Africa and India along Brazil have formed a Group of Three (G3). The G3 is a dialogue forum under which the three countries consult regularly to harmonise positions prior to important international meetings. This new development in Afro-Asia cooperation reveals a new seriousness about South-South cooperation and coordination on economic and political issues. Another unfolding South-South development platform is the cooperation amongst Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS). The primary focus of this development platform is to establish a

development Bank that is dedicated to the repairs of infrastructures in member countries to stimulate socio-economic development. The details of its implementation is been worked out.

Summary and Conclusion

This paper investigated the prospects and the challenges confronting Africa in the South-South development platforms. The research findings which were generated through secondary sources reveals that development challenges in Africa are legion and noticeable in virtually all the development sectors. The study reveals further that the North-South development platforms that was initially adopted to tackle Africa's development challenges generated marginal success having failed to sufficiently aid development efforts in Africa because such horizontal development platforms were largely borrowed, foreign in content and implementation, less understood and less controlled by Africans. Many of the North-South development platforms were also very draconian in nature. Such imported development strategy mainly succeeded in promoting the greatest hardship to the greater majority of Africans, especially those from the poorest households. The South-South development platforms have however generated reasonable levels of socio-economic development in Africa but different ideological leaning, especially during the cold war era, lack of institutional charters and poor infrastructural development have hampered the optimal utilisation of the South-South development platforms as efficient development avenues for Africa. Efforts are equally being made to repackage and refocus the South-South

development platforms through the formation of micro-development frameworks within the Southern hemisphere as recently witnessed in the formation of BRICS. Nevertheless, there is the need for capacity building and continued repairs of public infrastructures for African countries to be able to benefit maximally from the South-South development cooperation.

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