



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
1 December 2016
English
Original: French

Commission for Social Development

Fifty-fifth session

1-10 February 2017

**Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development and
the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly:
priority theme: strategies for the eradication of poverty to
achieve sustainable development for all**

Statement submitted by Association malienne de savoir construire, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Introduction

There are poor people in every country in the world. Poverty is a widespread phenomenon, but one which varies from country to country owing to differing political, social and environmental circumstances.

Poverty eradication has to be an integral part of sustainable development, as poverty is a situation in which people lack the financial and material assets necessary for survival. This includes insufficient resources to meet basic needs such as food, access to potable water and health services, and also electricity and education.

Many factors impede the attainment of the related goals, factors having to do with policy, with society or with the environment.

Policy:

There has been some progress, but the fact remains that some populations are still living in extreme poverty owing to failures in the policy arena.

The policy decisions in question may be either international or domestic.

– At the international level, there is a need for:

Debt relief to benefit poor countries, as the latter have been bearing financial burdens for years, and will never be able to recover sufficiently to escape from that situation.

International trade liberalization, which fosters the free circulation of people, goods and services.

Without such action, there is inequality among States, and it benefits the developed countries, which have placed restrictions on access to their markets.

– At the domestic level, in the institutional arena, commitments have to focus on fundamental activities.

These would include agriculture, stockbreeding, fishery, drinking water, health, education and electricity. Here, there must be investment in human resources, diversification of sectors of activity, job creation, mobilization of funding, and follow-up and evaluation.

- * Agriculture is the driving force of development, and agricultural inputs and equipment are expensive for farmers. There is a need to facilitate poor people's access to land.
- * Stockbreeding and fishery are sectors of considerable importance. We must invest in cattle-raising and in aquaculture.
- * The main adversary of mankind is disease.
- * The primary source of energy is electricity.
- * High-quality education will make it possible to pursue research into diseases and to diversify energy sources without creating negative climate impacts.

In addition, there is a need to improve governance, all the way from decision-making, through implementation, to enforcement. Because the key to good governance is justice.

None of these aims will be achieved without participation by the most vulnerable groups (women, children and persons with disabilities).

Society:

It has been established that policy decisions do not reflect the needs of the poor. Yet the latter are the main focus of development. If the poor are excluded from decision-making, it will not be possible to set sustainable development in motion.

Projects and programmes must be aligned with the aspirations of these target populations.

Jobs offering equal opportunities must be created. That will make it possible to draw full benefit from natural resources. If that is not done, it must be recognized that unemployment leads to criminality, theft, drug trafficking and armed conflict. Conflict and development cannot go hand in hand.

Environment:

Natural disasters: drought, typhoons, earthquakes and more, are inimical to development, impacting all fields of activity.

In our view, an emergency aid fund should be set up to help the victims of such catastrophes. This should lead to the signing of a treaty on the “right to assistance” for the benefit of the victims of these disasters and of all forms of internal armed conflict.

Conclusion:

The Millennium Development Goals are the foundation for development. But as long as fundamental rights are not respected, and equality of access to consumer goods and to employment is not a widespread reality, all these efforts will be in vain.
