



UNITED NATIONS  
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UNITED NATIONS  
OFFICE OF THE HIGH REPRESENTATIVE  
FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES,  
LANDLOCKED DEVELOPING COUNTRIES  
AND SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES

**STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE ALMATY PROGRAMME OF ACTION  
AFRICA REGIONAL REPORT**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**(Draft)**

## **1. Introduction**

1. The objective of the Almaty Programme of Action (APoA) is to establish a new global framework for developing efficient transit transport systems in landlocked and transit developing countries, taking into account the interests of both landlocked and transit developing countries. It recognizes the direct link between transport, international trade and economic growth, and aims at ensuring fuller and more effective integration of the landlocked developing countries into the global economy through implementation of specific actions to be undertaken by both landlocked and transit developing countries with the support of their development partners in five priority areas, namely: Fundamental transit policy issues; Infrastructure development and maintenance; International trade and trade facilitation; International support measures; and Implementation and review.
2. As called for by the United Nations General Assembly resolution 66/214 and 67/222, a comprehensive ten year review conference on the implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action will be held in 2014. The Africa Regional Report on the Status of Implementation of the Almaty Programme of Action therefore provides a basis for the regional review meeting for Africa. It is prepared by UNECA in cooperation with UN-OHRLS and covers the following 16 countries in Africa which are classified as Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs): Botswana, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Central African Republic, Chad, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Swaziland, South Sudan, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, as well as the semi-landlocked Democratic Republic of Congo. Figure 1.1 shows the geographic locations of African LLDCs.

## **2. Economic and Social Development**

3. Africa as a whole achieved significant and steady economic growth over the decade since the Millennium Declaration of the United Nations in 2000 which identified key development parameters encapsulated in the eight-point Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Political conflicts have declined, economic growth is robust and economic management, governance and political stability have improved. All these have contributed to a marked shift in global perception of the continent, from pessimism to that of enormous potential, with both traditional and new economic powers clamouring to offer their partnership.
4. Yet this impressive growth story has not translated into economic diversification, commensurate jobs creation or faster social development. Most African economies still depend heavily on commodity production and exports, with too little value-addition and few forward and backward linkages to other sectors of the economy. One upshot of the above factors is that, although Africa's growth exceeded the world average in the 2000s, it did not translate into commensurate poverty reduction at a time when poverty elsewhere fell heavily, skewing the global poverty reduction picture.

5. The Human Development Report 2013 notes that, over the last decade, all countries accelerated their achievements in the education, health, and income dimensions as measured by HDI, to the extent that no country for which data was available had a lower HDI value in 2012 than in 2000. The LLDCs in Africa as a group registered lower average rankings and scores in HDI than their counterpart transit countries in 2000 as well as in 2012. However, the gap in average HDI scores between LLDCs and transit countries narrowed from 0.094 in 2000 to 0.086 in 2012.
6. Over the last three years, developments around the world have had significant impact on Africa's efforts to mobilize resources for development. Total ODA inflows to Africa, excluding debt relief, increased in nominal terms from \$17.4 billion in 2002 to \$50.0 billion in 2011, but they still remain below international commitments under both the Monterrey Consensus and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness of 2005. The Paris Declaration estimated ODA flows to Africa to increase to \$64 billion by 2010, but Africa received only around half the increase implied by the 2005 commitments, partly owing to lower global ODA compared with commitments, and partly due to Africa's lower than expected share of the global increase. For African landlocked developing countries in particular, total ODA rose only 2 per cent between 2009 and 2010. More than half the 15 African landlocked developing countries saw a decrease in ODA.
7. Growth in flows of foreign direct investment (FDI) also declined. Since reaching a historic high of about \$58 billion in 2008, FDI inflows to Africa have been on the decline, reaching a three-year low of \$42.7 billion in 2011. Three key factors have led to this downward trend: weak global economic performance emanating from the 2007 global economic crisis; continued weak performance in developed countries, especially in the euro zone; and political and social developments since early 2010 in North Africa. Since FDI flows are largely targeted on the natural resources sector, it may be assumed that a significant share went to the LLDCs, who are mostly mineral and oil rich.
8. Remittances on the other hand present a different picture. They have surged over the past decade, and annual inflows to Africa are estimated to reach \$60 billion by 2014, from \$11.4 billion in 2000. Therefore, despite malaise in the developed countries—their major source—and the impact on migrants' jobs, remittances present an opportunity for many African countries to raise external capital. More serious policy efforts are needed, however, to maximize the potential gains.

### **3. Priority 1: Fundamental Transit Transport Policy Issues**

9. Freedom of transit is essential for all landlocked countries in the world. From the time of independence African countries have adopted regional cooperation and integration as the anchor strategy for achieving continental development. Although many African countries signed and in some cases ratified many of the international treaties/conventions, they preferred to operate at the regional and sub-regional levels, and sometimes on bilateral basis. Of course, most of the legal instruments used are based on relevant international agreements and conventions to which many African

countries are parties. Most of the transit transport instruments have been updated after the APoA Declaration to focus on transit transport facilitation.

10. Transport corridors are seen today as a primary area of focus in trade facilitation and infrastructure development strategies to be pursued across Africa at both sub-regional and continental levels. Various facilitation measures and initiatives have been instituted at regional, sub-regional, corridor and national levels. Corridor management bodies are set up to promote and develop the various transit corridors across Africa through consultation and coordination, given the diversity of stakeholders and a large number of government agencies that oversee different activities within a corridor. It has indeed been realized that corridors with corridor institutions have usually been better equipped to address challenges than those without an institutional arrangement.

#### **4. Priority 2: Infrastructure Development and Maintenance.**

11. At the Continental level, infrastructure development and maintenance has continued to be the core component of all regional development initiatives in Africa, the most recent of which is NEPAD. Since 2003 various institutional mechanisms have been put in place to facilitate implementation of NEPAD infrastructure projects, including the Infrastructure Consortium for Africa (ICA) and the Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility (IPPF), both based at AFDB. In order to further stress the importance of infrastructure in Africa, the African Union Summit of Heads of State and Government in 2009 launched an initiative for its accelerated development by formulating the Programme for Infrastructure Development in Africa (PIDA). Notable progress has been achieved in the areas of road transport and international sea ports, ICT and to some extent, energy. However, other modes of transport (railways, inland water and air) are still neglected.

#### **5. Priority 3: International Trade and Trade Facilitation.**

12. While international trade is recognized as an engine of development, there has been slow progress in improving Africa's trade with the rest of the world. The continent's share of world exports has increased, but only slowly, over the last decade, from 2.3 per cent in 2000 to 3.2 per cent in 2010. The export trade structure in general shows high levels of concentration in single commodity in most of the countries. Such high concentration levels, however, make the countries very vulnerable to inevitable fluctuations in world markets – the case of too many eggs in one basket. Another aspect of international trade is the issue of market concentration. With the aggressive entry of the emerging economies, notably China and the other BRICS partners, African LLDCs have started to diversify their markets away from the traditional links to colonial history.
13. While the quality and availability of trade-related infrastructure, especially roads and railroads, is still a constraining factor, efficient border management and the coordination of agencies involved in border clearance have emerged as more critical

than ever. Critical solutions to transit trade bottlenecks that could bring immediate benefits to both landlocked and coastal developing countries are improved transit system to simplify, standardize and harmonize documentation requirements; the creation of one-stop border posts to avoid duplication of procedures; automation of customs to reduce direct contact with officials; reform of trucking regulation to promote competition; and the establishment of inland clearance depots or dry ports to facilitate clearance procedures. The African LLDCs have taken some significant steps in this direction, at the national level, regionally as well as internationally.

#### **6. Priority 4: International Support Measures**

14. The transformation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) into the new African Union (AU) and formulation of NEPAD as the framework for partnership in achieving the development objectives were welcomed by the development partners and strengthened their support to Africa in this regard. The interventions of the majority of development partners often cut across all the first three priority areas of APoA. Global level support was spearheaded by UN and supported by global initiatives by G-8, OECD, WTO, WCO, EU, WB, AfDB, and bilaterals including DFID, USAID, TICAD/JICA, France and Canada, as well as the emerging economies of China, India, Brazil, and Turkey. Such support includes infrastructure financing (ICA, NEPAD/IPPF, etc.); technical assistance for trade promotion such as Aft of WTO and capacity building by WCO; special arrangements such as AGOA, EPA and ABA; and transit facilitation measures such as OSBP/JBP, corridor diagnostics studies, etc.

#### **7. Priority 5: Implementation and Review.**

15. The implementation framework agreed during formulation of APoA clearly outlined actions required at the various levels, laying greatest emphasis on the national level of LLDCs themselves and the transit countries. The respective transit management bodies and RECs were expected to provide the basic framework for collaboration among the LLDCs and their transit countries, while drawing support from the relevant African development institutions, UN and other international agencies and development partners. Furthermore, bilateral support from various development partners would enhance the implementation of the programme.

16. As the designated UN system-wide focal point for the preparation and review process, UN-OHRLLS has collaborated with all the relevant UN agencies, including UNCTAD, UNDP, Regional Commissions and relevant international and regional development and financial organizations to provide necessary support and actively contribute to the preparatory review process and the comprehensive ten-year review conference. In this regard, several global meetings were organized at which African LLDCs and transit countries participated.

17. The mid-term review of implementation of APoA in Africa region was held in 2008 with the participation of 14 landlocked and 7 key transit countries. Only DRC among the LLDCs did not participate, while four key transit countries did not take part, namely South Africa, Namibia, Ghana and Cote d'Ivoire. For the current review, reports on national level implementation have so far been received from the following countries: Burundi, Burkina Faso, Swaziland and Zambia. They varied in accordance with the peculiar situation of each country. In general, the four countries reflected significant progress in their respective economies as a result of implementing APoA.

## **8. Emerging Issues**

18. The world is dynamic and ever changing. It is therefore logical that some changes have taken place since the adoption of APoA in 2003, which have significant impact on the social and economic developments in the LLDCs over the ten years of its implementation, both positive and negative. These include global events that had impact on African LLDCs: natural developments such as climate change and consequent impact on livelihood, changes in population dynamics and their impact on urbanization and migration; advances in technology such as ICT and energy which facilitate global connectivity and trade, or in production technologies which changed the structure of the value chain; the emergence of new economic power poles such as BRICS and G-20; recent global financial and economic crises; and increasing social inequality within and among nations..

## **9. Way Forward.**

19. It is evident that all the African LLDCs made good progress in economic and social development during the implementation of APoA. Their HDI have generally improved, with notable progress towards achievement of at least four of the MDGs: education, gender equality, fight against HIV/AIDS and development of global partnerships. However, much more remains to be done in the other four goals: poverty reduction, child mortality, safe motherhood and environment.

20. No doubt, LLDCs will continue to face challenges induced by their geographic locations in the global context. Some of these challenges are a continuation of those previously identified in the formulation and implementation of APoA, while others emerged during its implementation. The recommendations for follow-up actions are herein considered along the priority action areas of APoA, including some issues which arose during implementation.

### **9.1. Development of Fundamental Transit Transport Policy**

LLDCs and transit countries have implemented or are undertaking several transit transport facilitation policies which have contributed to significant reductions in transit times and transport cost. Going forward, LLDCs and transit developing countries are urged to ratify and effectively implement the relevant international, regional and sub-

regional agreements on transport and trade facilitation since these can significantly improve LLDCs' access to the sea. In this regard, steps should be taken to build capacity and greater awareness and understanding of the implications of accession to and implementation of such agreements and mainstreaming them into the national plans and budgetary allocations.

## 9.2. Improving Transport Infrastructure

21. Since the adoption of APoA, Africa in general and landlocked and transit developing countries in particular have made substantial progress in transport infrastructure development and maintenance, especially along the major transit corridors. Continental programmes in the framework of NEPAD (ICA, PIDA) have attracted significant participation of the private sector in infrastructure development especially in ICT and energy sectors. Similarly, many development partners have also supported transport development, particularly in combining road infrastructure and transit transport and trade facilitation aspects.
22. Nevertheless, the establishment of a secure, reliable and efficient transit transport system, which is the overarching goal of the Almaty Programme of Action, still remains critical for LLDCs to reduce transport costs and enhance their competitiveness in regional and global markets. Further development and maintenance of supportive infrastructure including distribution centres, intermodal points, dry ports/ICDs, border structures and rest areas that are secure is therefore still necessary.
23. Future infrastructure developments in the transport sector should also take into serious consideration two important aspects: the need for viable alternative transit transport Corridors and rebalancing the modal mix. Regarding alternative routes, the experiences in East Africa in 2008 following the elections in Kenya and the recent closure of the oil pipeline in Sudan clearly demonstrated the need for alternative transit routes for LLDCs in the region. This contrasts significantly with the situation in West Africa where the LLDCs used alternate routes during civil unrest in Cote d'Ivoire. It is therefore strongly recommended that East African LLDCs develop with urgency alternate routes in the Central Corridor, LAPSET and the North-South Corridor. This would not only alleviate their vulnerability to disruptions in the Northern Corridor due to natural or human disasters, but also introduce much needed competition and better services to the region.
24. The second aspect concerns the need to rebalancing inter-modal mix in the transport sector. Road is the dominant mode of transport in Africa, accounting for over 80 percent of all transit freight for LLDCs, and in some cases nearly 100 percent. Given that the freight is mostly of bulky and non-perishable commodities, both exports and imports, it is recommended that serious consideration be given to rebalancing the inter-modal mix. In the long run, rail and inland water transport would reduce the cost of transport not only in terms of lower operating costs, but also in cost of maintenance of the transit road infrastructure.

25. Further investment in the development of information communication technology infrastructure and services is also crucial for facilitating international trade of African LLDCs. connecting LLDCs to international markets and for improving trade and transport facilitation. Energy infrastructure is important for enhancing the participation of LLDCs in international trade and it is important to further develop trade-related regional and national energy infrastructure.

### 9.3. **Strengthening International Trade and Trade Facilitation**

26. New developments in the world economic structure over the past decade offer challenges and significant opportunities for Africa in general, and LLDCs in particular, to transform their economic structure for increased competitiveness in the global trading system. Some of the major aspects of trade that should be considered, together with the fundamental facilitation policies and infrastructure development already identified above, to form the core of Africa's development agenda beyond 2015 include:

- (i). Developing productive capacity and diversifying the export base;
- (ii). Management of natural resources;
- (iii). Promoting investment;
- (iv). Deepening regional cooperation and integration;
- (v). WTO trade negotiations; and
- (vi). Relations with emerging economies