

A return to normalcy is not good enough. The famine was no accident. It was the product of the economic, social and political disintegration that has beset Africa for at least 20 years. As recovery from this famine takes place, problems of long-term development must be addressed.

### **The Food Producer**

It is generally agreed that the main hope of expanding African agricultural production lies with the smaller producer. This is not a new priority but it is one that has been pursued indifferently by African governments and international aid donors. Governments have, on average, expended only 5 per cent of their budgets on agriculture: little of that has gone to the small producers who grow 70 per cent of Africa's food. Women play a critical role in African economies and must be given far greater support in the future. International aid, tied to the products and the policies of the donor countries, has sometimes reinforced the worst tendencies of African development. It is a measure of how slowly we learn our lessons that the International Fund for Agricultural Development — the one international agency that has focussed with notable success on small farmers — is jeopardized by threatened cutbacks in donor contributions.



*Farming in Mali*