

NEPAD and the G8 Africa Action Plan

New Partnership for Africa's Development

Africa is the only continent where poverty is on the rise. Life expectancy there is 47 years and declining. (In Canada, life expectancy is 79 years.) Of the 40 million people living with HIV/AIDS worldwide, more than two-thirds live in sub-Saharan Africa, where there are also 12.1 million AIDS orphans. The continent accounts for 10 per cent of the world's population but only 1.5 per cent of global trade.

To combat this trend effectively, African leaders developed the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) a comprehensive and integrated development plan that addresses key social, economic and political priorities. Its principal goals are to promote accelerated growth and sustainable development, to eradicate widespread and severe poverty, and to halt the marginalization of Africa in the globalization process.

NEPAD was endorsed by the 53 members of the Organization of African Unity in 2001. It is the first comprehensive development program for Africa's development to originate in Africa and to be formally supported throughout the continent. NEPAD has also enjoyed strong support internationally. UN General Assembly Resolution 57/2, adopted on Sept. 16, 2002, makes NEPAD the basis for UN support in Africa. As well, G8 leaders adopted the Africa Action Plan, supporting NEPAD, at the Kananaskis G8 Summit in June 2002.

A commitment by African leaders to their citizens, NEPAD also calls for a new global partnership, based on shared responsibility and mutual interest. The initiative

- encourages global partnerships with African countries that demonstrate a commitment to good governance and to their economic, social development and poverty reduction strategies;
- seeks to create, with the help of development partners, the conditions necessary to secure further public and private sector investment and to optimize economic growth;
- encourages better co-ordination among donor countries, with a greater focus on technical assistance, debt relief, and market access; and
- establishes an independent and voluntary African peer-review mechanism that will give countries feedback on political, economic, and corporate governance.