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**International Organization and Poverty Reduction in Africa: A Case Study of New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This research work examined the role of poverty in the African continent. It investigated what international organization like the African Union (AU) is doing and achievements they have made so far concerning poverty reduction. This research also compared the rate of poverty in Africa with that of other continents. The importance of this research cannot be over-emphasized since it will help the public and policy makers in various African countries to checkmate the scourge of poverty ravaging the continent. This research will also expose both scholars and the general public on what African leaders are doing through New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Structural-functionalism was adopted in the research since it helped us to understand the basic function of the African Union, the structures that are put in place by the African Union and the conditions whereby the objectives of the Union can be achieved.*

**Key words:** Poverty Africans NEPAD and AU.

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**INTRODUCTION**

International organization is an Association of State bound together by a secured common goal. International organization can be defined as the multilateral structures or arrangements which are more or less permanently linking different states based in different territorial units [1]. Also, international organization is the transitional organization created by two or more sovereign states who come together or are bound together to pursue their common objectives.

According to Walter Rodney, poverty is the inability of a particular state or country to meet up to the modern day basic needs of life. According to United Nations 2005, Poverty is the denial of choices and opportunities, a violation of human dignity. World Bank 2006, defined poverty as the pronounced deprivation in well being and comprises many dimensions which include lack of job opportunity, local health facility and high level of illiteracy [2].

To me, poverty is a condition characterized by deprivation of basic human needs such as, food, shelter health, education and it does not only depend on income but also on access to social services.

OWEN BARDER April 21/2009, Center for global development defined poverty reduction as the shorthand for promoting economic and social growth that will perm

anently lift many people as possible over a poverty line [3]. According to Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) August 6-2012, they see poverty reduction as all the processes that are geared towards poverty deduction.

To me, poverty reduction is all the action and inactions of individual or state towards stopping the term poverty.

That is process of making available things that are not available but is essential as the basic needs of man. It is pertinent to note that no problem is of greater worldwide today than poverty that shackles one-third of the world's population [4]. This well published economic gap between, have a and have not is one of the dimensions of these problems.

The gap between cities and rural areas is another. It is clear now than perhaps it was a decade or so ago, that only through concerted efforts to develop rural areas and as well urban areas and the people of the world poorest nation, like Africa countries take the first step beyond their substances [5]. The cause of poverty includes the following factors such as, High Rate of Unemployment, High Rate of population growth, High Rate of Inflation, Inadequate Health Facilities, Low Standard of Living and High Rate of Illiteracy.

The rate of unemployment is high in most African countries compared to the developed countries like Canada, U.S.A, British and China; African continent has high rate of population growth. Expectancy of life at birth in less developed countries is not very high 39 years in Ethiopia and 42 years in India as against 71 in U.K. family tend to be larger and there is remarkable proportion of young people, usually 40 and 50 percent are mainly consumers; the rate of inflation in Africa continent is high.

This is a common phenomenon in the African continents; the African continent has inadequate health facilities likewise the number of physicians. The continent lacks far behind the advanced countries in the availability of health facilities; the standard of living of most people in Africa is low. For example what is considered as essential needs of man like, refrigerator, air condition etc in developed countries like America and Britain could be regarded as luxury in the underdeveloped countries in African; the rate of adult literacy and the rate of technology in Africa countries are low. Education is a luxury long denied the masses of the third world people, consequently, illiteracy rate are high [5].

NEPAD is a programme of the African union designed to meet its development objectives. The highest authority of NPAD implementation process is the heads of States and Government Summit of the African Union formerly known as the organization of African union (A.U). The head of State and Government implementation committee (HSIC) comprises of three states per African Union (AU) region as mandated by the O.A.U summit of July 2011 and ratified by the (A.U) summit of July 2012.

The HSIC reports the A.U summit on an annual basis. The steering committee of NEPAD comprises the personal representatives of the NEPAD of State and government. This committee oversees projects and programmes development. NEPAD secretariat co-ordinates the implementation of projects and programmes approved by the HSIC. As a programme of A.U a new partnership for African development is developed. The New Partnership for Development (NEPAD) is a vision and strategic

framework for African Renewal.

The NEPAD strategic framework documents arise from a mandate given to five initiating heads of states which includes (Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa) by the organization of Africa Unity (O.A.U) to develop an integrated social-economic development framework for African. The 57 th summit of O.A.U. in July 2011 formally adopted the strategic framework document.

NEPAD is designed to address the current challenges facing the African continent issues such as the escalating poverty levels, underdeveloped and the continued marginalization of Africans in the international arena.

These and many prompted the idea of initiating NEPAD that will be spearheaded by African leadership, to develop a vision that would guarantee Africa's renewal. NEPAD is a pledge by Africa leaders based on a common vision, a firm and show of conviction that they have a pressing duty to, eradicate poverty achieve sustainable growth and development individually and collectively [4].

To drag it home, NEPAD is a platform for mobilizing the Africans. The movement we see that we have to do these things ourselves, that we used to rely on our foreign partners to do for us, we will begin to create developmental impacts. Among the general objectives for the setting-up of NEPAD are the following specific objectives; Poverty eradication in the African continent and sustainable development; Addressing sincerely, the issues of women and youth empowerment as well as caring for the elderly Africans; Fighting the marginalization of African as a continent by the western world, ensuring that Africans takes its pride of place in global issue generally and attracting general good will for the African continent [3].

Through NEPAD African leaders agreed collectively to make a dear commitment to a set of principles that will foster economic growth and development, banishing from their midst poverty, hunger thus ensuring human fulfilment. This principle includes; good governance as a base requirement for peace, securing and sustainable political and social-economic development; African ownership and leadership as well as broad and deep participation by all section of society; Achieving the development of African its resources and resourcefulness of its people; Partnership among African people [4].

Acceleration of regional and continental integration; Building the competitiveness of African countries and the continent forging a new international partnership that changes the unequal relationship between Africa and the developed world; ensuring that all partnership with NEPAD are linked to the millennium development area and other agreed development goals; Strengthening of the mechanism of conflict prevention, management of conflict at all levels; extend the provision of education technical training, adequate health service to address like courage of communicable diseases like HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, Malaria, food security, water sanitation and For the implementation of the above principles to be effective, NEPAD must be owned and led by Africans and continent level to ensure that all African countries have come to the NEPAD table.

The former president of Nigeria Chief Olusegun Obasanjo was the chairman of Global Implementation Committee (GLC) of NEPAD and states starting committee. Besides the singular honor done to Nigeria coupled with the fact that NEPAD was formalized at Abuja Nigeria, in 2001 gave some indication as to the pivoted role Nigeria is expected to play in the process and off course reflects the country's record of engagement across

the African continent [8]. Nigeria is also responsible for economic governance, issues pertaining to economic governance how our bank are going to be working, the issue of debt relief for Africa ODA (Office Development Assistance) corruption and money laundering on the continent, the financial institutions etc as can be seen, the role of Nigeria is critical especially when realized that the capital flows committee is tasked with devising means to meet African's resource gap. South Africa is working after issues that have to do with peace, security, conflict resolution and democracy. Egypt handles markets access and agriculture, poverty alleviation, food safety and rural development. Egypt is also leading in inter Africa trade and the main plan is that of market access, issues, that have to be taken to the world trade organization (W.T.O) that relate to Africa.

Algeria is in charge of all human development issues, education, health, capacity building etc. Senegal is leading in infrastructure, transport, energy, governance and all issues of I.C.T (information and communication Technology) these countries are not solely responsibly for these programmes but they are playing leading roles [9]. This means that they are in charge of the implementation of the project and the distribution of responsibilities of those projects on the continent.

Nevertheless, African leaders are compelled to pursue the program of NEPAD through the Africa peer-review mechanism (A.P.R.M) the role of the APRM is to take a look at the performance of Africa countries one by one in a pane-like manned. The immediate desired outcome of NEPAD to African continent includes the following: Africans became more effective in conflicts prevention and the establishment of enduring peace on the continent; Africans adopted and implemented the principle of democracy and good political, economic and co-operate governance and the protection of human right becomes further entranced in every African countries; African develops and implements effective poverty eradication program and accelerate the pace of achieving, set African development goals particularly human development.

African achieved increased level of domestic savings, as well as investment, both domestic and foreign; African achieved desired capacity for policy development, coordination and negotiation in the international arena to ensure its beneficial engagement in the global economy, especially on trade and market access issues; Regional integration is further accelerated and higher level of sustainable economic growth in African is achieved; genuine partnership has been established between African and the developed countries based on mutual respect and accountability and Some African countries like Nigeria has some of the immediate achievement of NEPAD and it is also hope that more will be achieved in no distance time based on the NEPAD activities [4].

Statement of Problem: It is imperative to note that this research work is posed with the problem of propounding solution to solve and when they become known, the direction of the investigation becomes clear. There must be some inherent difficulties which will be placed by efforts to find solution to the problem diagnosed. However, this research work is to be extensively carried out on the following grounds.

To what extent has African Union through NEPAD gone in eradicating poverty in Africa?

Have the African Union through NEPAD helped to raise the standard of living of Africa?

### WHAT ARE THE DAMAGES OF POVERTY IN AFRICA?

Objectives of Study: One embarks on a research project either to explore a given field for purpose of knowledge on that particular field. The purpose therefore, is on an attempt to resolve existing inconsistency or controversy. This work emphasized on two concepts in field of international organization and poverty reduction in African continents. Therefore, the aims of this research work include the following:

- To find out why Africa Countries are underdeveloped
- To investigate what international organization like the African Union are doing through NEPAD to reduce poverty in Africa.
- To examine the danger of poverty in Africa continent.
- To analyze the various steps taken by the African Union through NEPAD in eradication poverty.

Significance of Study: The importance of this research work cannot be over-emphasized since it evaluates how international organizational organization cum the African Union is working towards poverty reduction in Africa through NEPAD. It would bring to the notice of individuals and the government the fact that poverty is indeed a problem that is about destroying the African continents and the need to check it. To the political scientists and the general public, this research work will bring to their notice what the African Union is doing through NEPAD in other to reduce poverty in the African continent. This research work will also make commendation and recommendation to the individuals, governments and the various international organization on the ways that poverty could be reduced or tackled. It will add to the existing knowledge available in the area of investigation or research work.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

Theoretical Framework:

Every research work or finding is expected to have a focused framework. Based on this premises, the researcher exploits the structural-functionalism analysis approach. The proponents of this structural-functional analysis like Gabriel Almond, Trauma and Talcot, Marian level, Junior and Robert Merton, emphasized that for any political system to operate effectively, there should be structural's to perform certain function. The scholars also opined that these structures should be interdependent in the sense that a breakdown of any one might affect the entire system. More importantly, the concept of functions and structure are involved and they are as follows:  
What basic functions are fulfilled in any given system?  
What structure? And under what condition?  
Besides the concept of function, another very important concept in structural functionalism analysis is that of structure.  
While function deals with the consequences involving objectives as well as processes of patterns of action structure refers to those arrangements within the system which perform the functions. Using this theory as a framework of this research, international organization and poverty reduction in Africa. An attempt will be made in

answering the three basic questions of functionalism.

Above what is then the applicability of the theoretical framework to research topic. The basic functions that are fulfilled in the African continent by international organization like the African Union includes:

To eradicate poverty in Africa;

To place African countries both individually and collectively on part of sustainable growth and development; To halt the marginalization of Africa in the globalization processes and enhances its full beneficiary integration into the global economy and To accelerate the empowerment of women etc. And the structure that is used by the Africa Union to achieve these objectives is NEPAD.

Data Collection:

Four main research steps were taken in collecting materials for this study. First; extensive discussion were held with experts in numerous international organizations, foundation and research organization together information and obtain suggestions on possible causes to be examined.

Secondly, documents, both published and unpublished were assembled and critically reviewed.

Thirdly, analytical working papers were prepared on some topics. Fourthly, a diversified sample of on-going NEPAD projects was been selected in various Africa countries and examined. Finally, all the evidence and ideals collected in the previous steps were examined and analyzed in the preparation of this research work.

Data Analysis: In this study, the method of data analysis that is being used is content analysis. This is because, issues are analyzed in a qualitative manner. This research

Work has examined both seen and documented data relating to international organization especially the African Union efforts towards poverty reduction in Africa.

Method of Data Collection: The researcher made use of secondary source of data collection therefore, the researcher collected data from the following ways: Collection therefore, the researcher collected data from the following ways. Published works or textbooks, Daily newspapers, weekly magazines and journal articles, unpublished material such as internet material and articles, discussions with scholars of international organization, etc.

Method of Data Analysis: This research work is a quantitative discourse, therefore, the researcher made use of secondary mode of data analysis called content analysis. Thus, this method will enable the researcher to provide exhaustive analytical and systematic description and generalization of the phenomena under empirical study. However, judicious use of this form of analysis will be strictly observed to eliminate the use of inaccurate assessment.

Hypothesis: The researcher, test the hypothesis question raised with the available source of literature discussing on the phenomenon under empirical investigation.

Hypothesis (I): Efforts of international organization like the African Union should be commended for initiating NEPAD.

Hypothesis II: On the 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2012, in Johannesburg, South Africa, the new partnership for African development (NEPAD) agency hosted joint meeting with international development commission to revive the effective management of African Union (NEPAD) environment action plans. The meeting brought together expert from the United Nations environment programme (UNEP) and Regional Economic Commission Civil society organization, UN agencies and academia as well as pilot countries of the Environment Action Plan (EAP). This plan was adopted by the African Union in 2003 to tackle African environment challenges which at the same time value wealth creation and promotion of social and economic development. The plan also was aimed at building African capacity building to implement regional and international environments. The pilot countries include Libya, Ghana, Cameroon, Mozambique and Ethiopia. Speaking on behalf of the director of rural economic and Agriculture at the African Union committee (AUC) Mr. Almani Dampha commended NEPAD for the implementation of the African plan while stressing the fact that significant effort were made especially in the pilot countries. Yet a lot of challenges remains which the work shop aim to take stock of. According to Mrs. Estherine Linsinge Fortaboung, Director of programme implementation and coordination at the NEPAD agency said that, environment is a key component to achieve sustainable development because the African economy is strongly driven by natural resources. Therefore, the workshop outcome should be a robust document which will identify the implementation gaps and move forward to ultimate eradicating poverty and focus on economy growth.

On the 18<sup>th</sup> August 2012, experts gathered to Laud NEPAD's ten years achievement. In its bid to review the work of the new partnership for African development (NEPAD) since its establishment a decade ago, an expert group meeting was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia by African Union through (NEPAD). The experts, led by professor Nnadozie Emmanuel after inspecting the work of NEPAD acknowledge that NEPAD had executed its assigned tasks rather creditably, although many challenges still lay ambush.

The experts also agreed that the greatest success registered by NEPAD have been in the areas of infrastructural development, agriculture and food security, the African bio-safety network of expert partnership for African fisheries and good governance. In the area of infrastructural sector, they observed that African presidents are spearheading the construction of roads and railways, optic fiber network and gas pipeline across the continents. Another area with remarkable success is that of agriculture and food security where the comprehensive agricultural development programme set up by NEPAD is considered as one of its success. The experts said, apart from massive funding African countries have benefited from increased bilateral commitment to agriculture. Thanks to the (CADP) Comprehensive agricultural development programme framework, the experts commended. The experts also noted that another remarkable success has been in the building of regulatory capacity in biotechnology for enhancing food and nutritional security and social economic development of Africa with the putting in place of NEPAD development of African with the putting in place of the NEPAD African network of expert (ABNE) in Burkina Faso on April 2010. There is also the partnership for African fisheries programme. (PAF) another NEPAD initiatives which has created working groups across Africans to address trade and market access, good governance and illegal fishing and aquaculture development. A 60 million U.S Dollar seed fund has been established in West, Central and South African as part of this programme, they discussed. Concerning good governance, the experts highly commended NEPAD and launch of the African Peer Reviewed Mechanism in 2003 by the African Union which has up to date been acceded 30 countries, 14 of which have been actually preview, saying it is another important milestone for (NEPAD). In arriving at those deductions, the group examined issues such as what is the main achievement of NEPAD.

What can be done to better accelerate the implementation, how the capacity building programme process and the role that regional coordination mechanism of United Nations system support to African Union system and its NEPAD programmes. (RCM) can play in addressing the challenges to the implementation of NEPAD. According to Mr. Maurice Forbinake, a veteran journalist and NEPAD champion from Cameroon said, thanks to NEPAD, African countries now have improved platform for collaborating among themselves and with their developed partners, based on a shared vision of the continent development he added, saying that the bid (NEPAD) has played a critical role in developing common African position in global events with the recent being a forum on aids effectiveness in Busan, Korea and the Rio climate change conference. The dark spot of NEPAD work in the past ten years were however summarized into structural political and economic constraint although the experts agreed that these constraints are not of a nature to negate the huge success registered by NEPAD.

Hypothesis III: Poverty reduction is among the responsibility of the international organizations.

Hypothesis Testing: According to Danida, an African Union development programme agent said that, the African Union through NEPAD has declared that Africans will no longer allow ourselves to be conditioned by circumstances. We will determine our own destiny and call on the rest of the world to complement our efforts. There are already signs of progress and hope. Democratic regime that are committed to the protection of human rights, people centered development and market oriented economies are on the increase. African people have begun to demonstrate their refusal to accept poor economic and political leadership. These developments are however, uneven and inadequate and need to be further expedited. The new partnership for Africa development is about consolidating and accelerating these gains. It is a call for a new relationship of partnership between Africans and the international communities, especially the highly industrialized countries, to overcome the development chosen that wildered over continued of unequal relation.

Hypothesis IV: International organization is succeeding in their efforts towards poverty reduction in Africa.

Hypothesis Testing: According to United Nations development program report 2012, they said that, most developing countries in Africa shown remarkable improvement in key indicators of poverty through NEPAD; these indicators include Health, Economy and Food security. Concerning health, they said that most African countries have shown marked improvement.

The life expectancy at birth in African countries progressed in 2001 at 46 years and steadily rising to an average of 65 years. Over the period of 2001 and 2011, African countries have witnessed remarkable growth in the per capital measure of Annual Economic Growth (Gross Domestic Production) it was accelerated to 3.6 percent. Food production per-capital grew by 2.3 percent in most African countries. Finally, they said that, limits of geography are being addressed particularly illness. Increasingly, education and science are also seen as a mechanism to escape the poverty trap. New initiatives to rebuild major universities provide basic human needs and provide access to scientific literature, make internet

connection widely available.

## DISCUSSION

From empirical investigation, it is understood that African continent have experienced holistic success through the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD) since their inception as a body to fight poverty in African [5]. This achievement includes, The establishment of the conditions for sustainable development through; Peace and security in Africa; Democracy and good political, economic and co-operate political government; Regional co-operation, integration; Capacity building policy resources and increased investment in the following sectors; Agriculture; Human development with focus on health, education, science and technology and skills development; Building and improving infrastructure including information and communication (ICT) energy, transportation, water and sanitation; Promoting diversification of product and exports, particularly with respect to Agro-industries, manufacturing, mining, mineral and tourism and Accelerating intra-African trade and improving access to make it developed countries [8]. They equally mobilizes resources by, Increasing domestic selling's and investment; Improving management of public fund and expenditure; Improving African share in the global economy or trade; Attracting foreign direct investment and Increasing capital focus through official development assistance (O.D, A) through function debt reduction and increased flows. The key providing of NEPAD activities are: Operationalization of the African poor review mechanism; Facilitating and supporting the implementation of short-term regional infrastructural programme covering transport energy ICT, water and sanitation; Facilitating the preparation of a co-ordinate African position on market access, debt relief and official development assistance reform and Facilitating the implementation of food security and agriculture development programmes in all sub-regions [5].

## CONCLUSION

This research assessed the impact of the African Union towards poverty reduction in Africa through NEPAD. While this work is commending the African Union for initiating NEPAD as a programme aimed at eradicating poverty in African continent, this work is concluded with the point that the African Union stills more to do inspite of whatever it has achieved through NEPAD. In conclusion, let us remember that without peace and security there can be no meaningful development. This is the least that the people of Africa can ask of their leaders.

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