

UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY (UNU)

Support to NEPAD

Period of Report: 2004 - 2005

Being an academic institution of the United Nations system, the UNU is aiming through research and capacity development to contribute to finding solutions to the pressing problems of global dimension. African development has always been a priority on the UNU agenda since its inception, which is brought into relief by the NEPAD initiative for renewed and refocused approaches.

Under two main programme areas of peace and governance and environment and development, UNU research oriented to policy formulation addresses a wide range of issues and has produced numerous titles in the form of books, reports and policy briefs, including a recent publication of UNU Press entitled *Managing Agrodiversity the Traditional Way*. Drawing on a 10-year multidisciplinary, participatory research work in West Africa (mainly Ghana), the book illustrates how, traditionally, farmers cultivate and conserve biodiversity while using the land for food production at the same time. In the area of capacity development, UNU organizes, among others, training courses directed to postgraduates and young postdoctoral researchers from developing countries with fellowships granted to selected participants. One of such specialized courses is the UNU geothermal training programme of six months' duration held annually in Iceland, which has to date over 80 graduates from 10 African countries. UNU also cooperates with and contributes to the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) led by the Government of Japan. In preparation for TICAD III held in 2003, UNU organized a workshop of experts in cooperation with the African Diplomatic Corps (ADC) in Tokyo to contemplate the role of infrastructure, capital flows, integration and the possible synergies between NEPAD and TICAD III. The main conclusions with policy considerations and suggestions drawn from the meeting were presented at the Third Conference.

As part of and in parallel to the aforementioned programmes, advocacy activities to promote the development of Africa are actively and consistently undertaken, which include public fora by heads and dignitaries of African governments and "Africa Day Symposium". This annual symposium is organized with the ADC to increase dialogue in Japan on selected timely issues for the benefit of African development. In 2004, UNU and ADC agreed that the 2004 "Africa Day" symposium should focus on the importance of enhancing trade and investment in Africa. This aim was in harmony with the recommendations adopted on the occasion of TICAD III and was timely. The symposium's discussion provided a valuable input for the important forum organized by the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs in October 2004: the Asia Africa Business Forum. UNU prepared a report on 2004 Africa Day Symposium. The fifth "Africa Day" symposium in May 2005 highlighted bridging the digital divide and promoting "digital partnership" in view of the second phase of WSIS to take place in Tunis in November 2005.

The United Nations University (UNU) has a research and training institute devoted to African development, UNU Institute for Natural Resources in Africa (UNU-INRA). This institute

operates in Accra, Ghana with its operating units in Zambia and Cameroon to contribute through research and capacity development to the conservation and productive use of Africa's natural resources. The outcome of annual lecture series by UNU-INRA is provided to African governments in the form of data, policy and technical guidance. UNU-INRA also contributed to a locally grown school feeding programme in Ghana, which is supported by NEPAD, by taking part in its planning and development phase.