Policy and Development: A Fifty Year Assessment of the Pitfall sand Innovation in Agricultural Performance in Post-Colonial Kenya

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Abstract

From the womb of colonialism, independent Kenya was faced with the formulation of agrarian policies aimed at addressing the inherent problems of the colonial regime. Some of such policies were illustrative of colonial structures, though some infused drastic changes. In the first decade of post-colonial Kenya, as a result, the agrarian performance was laudable. The decade of the 70's heralded problems, both internal and external to Kenya, rendering agrarian policies "irrational and inappropriate". What started as the world oil crisis in the 1970s led to unbalanced international terms of trade, thus causing serious internal agrarian problems of the 'lost decade' of the 1980's. Foreign prescriptions in the form of structural adjustment programmes, and internal maladministration and mismanagement of the 1990s almost ground agrarian performance in most sectors. Kenya almost became a net importer in a number of foodstuffs. Agriculture, which provides the livelihood of about 85% of the population and accounts for 30% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employs about 75% of the labour force, is a sector that needs to be redeemed in the decade of 2000s. The Kibaki era provided a major relief in a falling economy. This paper, using a political economy approach, sets to examine Kenya's agrarian performance for the last fifty years with a view to identifying the challenges and prospects of revitalizing this crucial economic sector.

Introduction

Forty years ago Kenya attained its political independence. But the economy in general, and agriculture in particular, is far from breaking from the colonial structures and de-linking itself from the metropolitan state(s) and economy. The post-colonial state in Kenya is basically a neo-colonial state (Aseka, 2000:92). The post independent Kenyan agricultural economy is a product of the post 1945 agricultural reforms (Omwoyo,1999; Aseka, 2000). Agriculture, the mainstay and backbone of Kenya's economy, has since the colonial period received much attention. An analysis of the forty years of post-independent period can only acquire bearing when the situation in the colonial period is reviewed.

During the Second World War, the mobilization of all the potential resources of the colonial British Empire, both men and material, for the war purposes had to be done. Colonial production was therefore increased on an immense scale (Omwoyo, 1997, 2000). Self-sufficiency in all essential foodstuffs was advocated, in addition to producing what Great Britain wanted most (Zeleza, 1989:145). Depleted of their able bodied male manpower through conscription and migration to towns, devoid of any government assistance and exploited through price differentials, many African peasants were condemned to abject poverty (van Zwanenberg, 1974). After the war, colonies were expected to help in the reconstruction of Britain which emerged out of the war as the greatest debtor in the world. Cowen (1982:142) indicates how the post-war drive to increase colonial production arose out of a national response by the leadership of Britain to the hegemony which was possessed by the state of the United States on the British state. The clarion call after the war seems to have been the increased and expanded commodity production. The Colonial Development and Welfare Programme injected a lot of funds into agricultural production in Kenya. Though much of these funds went to settler farmers, a general realization that African agriculture needed to be revamped and improved was slowly dawning on the colonial government. In 1946, for example, the African Land Development Programme (ALDEV) was started with the sole objective to recondition African agriculture. A number of other factors were at play during the 1945-1955 period that drew attention to African agriculture. These included land enclosures and privatization, the worsening conditions of the landless and squatters and the widening gap among the African peasantry (Kanogo, 1987). Up to this point, African agricultural production could not be ignored any further. The growing number of vociferous African capitalist farmers who had risen in spite of various odds wanted more opportunities to advance. The frustration of the evicted squatters could no longer be contained. The demands of the poor labourers could not be quenched with anything less than land. The agrarian revolution was in the making, and the Mau Mau became inevitable (Omwoyo, 1999:46).

The Development of Small-Holder Farming

Many interpretation of the Mau Mau abounds but one fact that will never be ignored is the intricate relationship between land and the Mau Mau. The problem of landlessness among the poor African peasants and squatters especially in Central and Rift valley provinces of Kenya fueled the demand for the lost lands (Kibwana, 1990; 230). The Mau Mau, also called the land freedom army and composed of largely small-holder and landless men, in turn highlighted the suffering of the landless and squatters and forced the colonial government to review the situation pertaining to the development of African agriculture (Kanogo, 1987).

The Swynnerton Plan of 1954 provided for land reform in the shape of land consolidation programmes and the registration of individual titles. Nevertheless, funds were availed under the Swynnerton Plan of 1954 programmes to increase services, processing and marketing services and a small amount of credit to African farmers (Maxon,1990:33). The plan also sought to encourage the output of cash crops among African farmers after such restriction on coffee, pyrethrum and tea were removed. African farm production exploded. Thus the main objective of the Swynnerton Plan was to create family holdings which would be large enough to keep the family sellf-sufficient in food and also enable them to practice alternative husbandry and thus develop a cash income Ogot, 1995:48). Talbott (1992:85) gives interesting statistics on the growth of coffee, tea, and pyrethrum. From 1950, coffee cultivation covered 1,372 acres, which increased to 33,137 acres in 1960 representing an increase of 2,312% in a decade. Production leaped from 85 tons to 7,769 (an increase of 9,040%) and value from £31,798 pounds to £ 2,211303 pounds (an increase of 6.854%). At the same time, as a proportion of total acreage, coffee grew from 2.2% to 32.3%, and as a proportion of total production from 0.9% to 23.5%.

The expansion of pyrethrum cultivation was equally substantial. Land devoted by African farmers to pyrethrum increased from 600 acres in 1950 to 1800 acres in 1960 (2,900%). Production originating from African farms leaped from 15 tons in 1950 to 1,157 tons (8,280%) in 1960. Value increased from £2,861 pounds to £545,000 pounds (18,949%) in the same period. The African proportion to total acreage increased from 3.7% to 31.2% while the proportion of total production went from o.7% to 14.8% (Department of Agriculture, An Agriculture Gazetteer of Kenya, 1961, Mimeo).

The amount of land devoted to tea by Africa farmers equally increased from 25 acres in 1952 to 1,683 in 1960. Production increased from 12,872 pounds in 1957 to 363,218 pounds in 1960. Africans started playing an important role in the production of tea. In all, Talbolt (1992:86) attributes the enormous expansion in African production of coffee, pyrethrum and tea during the 1950s to the pre-existing traditional production system as characterized by the four themes of commercialization, innovation, diversity and adaptation. These four themes set the stage for the rise of African farming as a dominant factor in Kenya's economy in the early 1960s.

The Swynnerton Plan was an effective tool of suppressing the Mau Mau insurgency especially in Kikuyuland. Through the Plan land reform measures of consolidation and registration coincided with the war against the Mau Mau. It was envisaged that physically, the brutal counter-insurgency war was to be waged alongside economic reforms, which if fulfilled would erode local support for Mau Mau significantly (Maloba, 1989). The main purpose for such an ambitious agricultural reform programme was to create a stable African landowning class with access to capital and income to be derived from the growth of cash crops which had been the preserve of white farmers. Mazrui (1994) contends that, as several hundred thousands of Kikuyus were forcibly resettled in new fortified villages, their farmlands were being reorganized and only the loyalists and home guard were handsomely rewarded in land as the militants lost all their land.

The Sywnnerton Plan has been hailed by some as an agricultural success story because of its land reform programme and increased cash crop production (Havelock 1963, Harbeson, 1973). The British were not ashamed to admit that the aim of this plan was not only to increase the income of the Africans in the rural areas, but also to create a new class, a rural-based middle class which would offer a moderating influence on African politics (Maloba, 1989). The plan was also to create a class of Africans who would identify with British interests long after the British have relinquished power.

This brings us to another observation; that despite the marked rise of both food and cash crops in 1950s and 1960s not all Africans involved in agriculture benefited. The removal of restrictions on cash crop production accelerated the rate of enclosure of personal and private land to a degree that was not known before. The rich peasants were able to acquire more land, rendering more people landless. Besides the production of cash crops deepened social and economic stratification among the Kenyan peasantry, most of the poor peasants could not meet the cultural conditions imposed in the growth of such crops; they could not afford fertilizers and other inputs. It is needless to be over-emphasized that it was the rich peasants who were more likely to meet such conditions. The emerging class of petty bourgeoisie and rural capitalists could afford to employ the labour of poor peasants, further deepening the process of rural class differentiation. Consequently, the Swynnerton Plan amplified differentiation among the rural peasants creating a landless and poor peasantry on one hand, and a rich landed peasantry on the other (Bernstien, 1977; Swainson 1980; Njonjo 1981 and Kaplisky, 1980).

The settlers on the other hand continued witnessing expansion and improvements. As more multinational companies came in, and as more funds were availed, the settlers planned and built irrigation dams, roads, and fences and formed co-operatives. The outbreak of the Mau Mau and the emergency accelerated the government's implementation of “the dual” policy, the policy in which both European and African interests received similar attention (Kenyanchui 1992:118). Despite facing competition from the Africans in the production of tea, pyrethrums and coffee, the settlers however made strides in agricultural production because of their accumulated experience, availability of facilities, capital and government support (Ibid.).Thus before independence Europeans dominated agriculture and of course, industry.

The Post-Independence Period

After independence, a great majority of settlers left Kenya, and settler agriculture in the white highlands gradually stalled. One of the most urgent and pressing problem was to break the foreigners' dominance of the Kenyan economy and to transfer it to Kenyans (Ochieng' 2000:85). Much of their land had to be made available to Africans. The British government provided funds to compensate the evacuating settlers from their land. Therefore, the most significant agricultural event of the early 1960s was the transfer of mixed large-scale farming lands in the former "white highlands" to African small-scale farming. The Agricultural Finance Corporation, established in 1963, was concerned primarily with providing credit for buying and rehabilitating large farms, although it sometimes extended credit to small holdings as well (Ibid). The "million acre" settler schemes were undertaken to provide for the transfers of land to Africans. About one sixth of the "white highland" was divided up to plots for landless families (Maxon 1990:33). This transfer of land to Africans was reduced from about 500,00 acres per year in 1963 and 1964 to nearly 100,000 acres in 1968 due to enormous costs involved (Gray, 1968:28). Later on, the government adopted a policy of Settlement Schemes where by individuals and companies purchased land from willing Europeans. Basically, there were two types of settlements schemes; first, there were high Density Schemes regarded as turning good farming land into agricultural slums. This includes the Million Acres settlement schemes. Second, there were the Low-Density schemes, with large-scale production economies. Consequently, among the new owners were individuals, partnerships, companies and cooperative societies, which operated at different levels both small- and larger-scale. Already successful African small-scale farmers were able to obtain large farms and according to Maxon (1990:33), approximately one sixth of the large settler farms were sold intact to what became a new elite of African large-scale farmers.

Thus, right from independence agriculture was regarded as the crucial springboard of Kenya's economic, industrial and social growth. A large proportion of public expenditure was made on the agricultural sector, particularly on land transfers and adjudication, research, veterinary services, training, crop development, machinery and soil conservation services. By 1970 the government was strongly represented in rural areas through its agricultural extension services, which employed about 6000 people Ochieng' 2000:88)

Land distribution in post-colonial Kenya was uneven, and not all the landless people were located in the settlement schemes. The problems of landlessness and squatters remained a permanent feature of Kenya's agricultural landscape. In 1966, the government issued a sessional paper on African socialism, which though it stipulated equitable distribution of resources was unable to establish ceilings on individual ownership of property (Kenya: 1965:28-29). Since then emphasis has been on land consolidation and registration, and land held under customary law continued to be converted into individual tenure. It was argued that consolidation and registration would make farm credit and modern methods of agriculture possible and should expand employment much more rapidly than settlement in order to bring more land into productive use (Herbeson, 1973:174).

The latest land policy pursued since the early 1980s was prompted by a presidential directive that all land companies and cooperatives subdivide their land amongst members who should be conferred with land certificates and title deeds guaranteed by the state in total recognition of rights of ownership. This was as result of rampant malpractice and fraudulence among the directors of such land companies. So far, this policy is still being pursued and it is hoped to subdivide a number of large-scale lands into agricultural small holder plots. Land grabbing, largely confined to urban areas, and mainly done by the political elite of the ruling political establishment and its agencies gradually spread to peri-urban areas and forests around the country.

Agricultural production on the other hand attracted much attention from the independent government as it was viewed as the backbone of the economy. Roads and other important infrastructure important for agriculture were provided. Credit for smaller farms was made much more widely available through such bodies as the Agricultural Finance Corporations. The resettlement of the landless and other land reforms were effected. Provision of extension services was strengthened, co-operative societies were emphasized, acquisition of farm inputs through the Kenya Farmers' Association (AFC) and Kenya National Farmers' Corporation (KNFC) was simplified, and a host of other measures aimed at expanding agriculture production became important parts of government policy. As Ochieng' (1989: 204) aptly argues economically the KANU government concentrated more on growth than redistribution.

Rapid economic growth took place in the initial years of independence under the Kenyatta regime. The 1960s and the first half of the 1970s witnessed the rapid growth of marketed output (Maxon, 1990:23). Ndege (2000a:110) sees this as part of the continuity from the past colonial regime. Except for the slump of 1973-5 when the economy was shaken by a quadrupling of petroleum process, the Gross Domestic Product grew steadily at 5.4% annually since independence (Ochieng'; 1989:209). Kitching (1980) asserts that in the period 1958 to 1968 the gross farm revenue of African small- holder in Kenya grew from a little under K£8 million to over K£34 million, an increase of 420% in a decade. From 1964 to 1970, small farms increased their gross marketed production by nearly 70% compared with 10% increased for large farms (Langdon., 1981:22). The expansion and intensification of African smallholder farming cannot therefore be gainsaid.

The major crops behind this expanded agricultural production were mainly coffee tea and pyrethrum. Coffee production which was worth a little of K£ 1 million in 1958 rose to nearly K£8.5 million in 1967 (Ibid). After 1967, the value of marketed output from small farms exceeded that from large farms. As a result, Kenya moved to a position among the world's leaders in the production of tea, sisal, pyrethrum and coffee. Large-scale agriculture production which was the preserve of multi-national corporations (MNC) was overshadowed by smallholder production, though not totally obscured. Dinham and Hines (1983) contend that agribusiness firms play a major role in African's food and agricultural production. In Kenya such agribusiness firms are involved in coffee, tea and sisal production in addition to wattle bark. These multi-national companies have come to play a substantial role in the Kenyan economy after independence, not only in agricultural production, but also in manufacturing and primary processing. African Highland Produce Company, Brook Bond and Williamson are typical examples of multinational companies in tea production. Plantation production has remained important in Kenya, and rural wage employment on plantation remained significant. But as Langdon (1981:22) posits, it was the increased peasant production, which most clearly led to expanded agricultural production after independence. Evidence has been adduced to indicate that over the first two decades of independence there was a stead growth of indigenous capitalist enterprise in Kenya whose primary source of accumulation had been land and agriculture (Kitching 1980).

Despite impressive success attained in agricultural production and increased returns to growers, Kenya's agriculture started experiencing a number of problems in the 1970s an 1980s. Ndege (2000b:204) identifies 1973 as the beginning of the " decline of the economy". For instance, the

GDP that grew at the average rate of 6.5 percent between 1964 and 1971 dropped to 5.1 percent in 1972-80, 3.2 percent I, 1981-85, slightly rose to 4.9 in 1986-90 before going down to 0.6 in 1991-93 (Ibid). The agricultural boom obviously came to an end in the mid 1970s and a number of reasons have been put forward to explain this phenomenon, both international and local. Zeleza (1986) enumerates some of these factors at the continental level; weather, especially drought, population “explosion”, misguided policies pursued by African governments since independence, the prevailing international division of labour, and the fall of prices for primary commodities in the international market have been singled out. In Kenya, the per capital income for small-holder farmers remained relatively low since 1972 because the population growth rate was higher than the annual growth in agricultural output. There was drought in the early 1970s, which was worsened by steep increases in petroleum prices. This witnessed spiral increases in the cost of agricultural producing and transportation. The world recession of the early 1980s led to a deterioration of world prices in primary products, which are Kenya's main export crops. Balance of payments problems kept on mounting as the debt slowly accumulated. Intermittent recoveries have, however, been hampered by persistent droughts, as was the case in 1984-85, 1990, and 1997, such droughts have adversely affected Kenya's self-sufficiency in food production. Kenya's public sector was characterised by bureaucratic and political inefficiency and corruption. Ndege (2000b:204) explains that while inefficiency manifested itself in government's inability to implement the country's development plans, corruption led to the misuse of authority for personal gain, in the form of diversion of state resources, outright theft of funds, and the granting of favours to personal acquaintances by civil servants, politicians and heads of parastatals. The author further asserts that the development of what he terms as "excessive statism" also politicised resource allocation, aided and abetted inefficiency and corruption. He concludes rightly that these internal factors blocked economic growth and made the economy quite vulnerable to external factors. The external factors range from recession in the international economy, the depression of the commodity prices, decline in levels of foreign investments and of foreign aid disbursement to Kenya, the two major oil crise of 1973 and 1978/79; bad weather especially the drought of 1973,1979-80 and 1983. The collapse of the East African Community constricted the regional market for Kenyan commodities while the imposition of the Structural Adjustment Progmmes (SAPs) had dire negative consequences on Kenya's economy (Ibid).

Perhaps of interest are these solutions offered by the international community especially the World Bank and International Momentary Fund (IMF) to alleviate the malaise facing Kenya's economy in general and agriculture in particular. These so-called solutions are given as part of the conditionalities accompanying economic aid given to debtor countries and are christened as Structural Adjustment Prgrammes (SAPs). The major argument behind the introduction of SAPs is that there are certain economic structural distortions and imbalances giving rise to an economic crisis. Some of the factors responsible include oil crises and the coffee boom of the late 1970s, drought and famine of early 80s, declining foreign exchange earnings from primary products and other exports, corruption and mismanagement, and excessive growth of public sector expenditure that continues to outpace government revenue (Ngugi, 1993:5), and too much government control of the economoy. These factors have led to a decline in the country's economic growth. SAPs were, therefore, introduced to resuscitate economic growth. These economic policies for economic recovery have been there since the 1980s, but more pronounced in the 1990s, and aim at increasing economic productivity.

The viability of SAPs has been a contentious issue, suffice it to say that, as Adedeji (1989) says, SAPs offerred solution that can only cope with symptoms of the crisis and not with the core. Ndumbu (1991:28) contends that "SAPs seem to work for the rich by sapping the poor" and he enumerates how SAPs were disadvantageous to those countries implementing them. Where governments failed to implement SAPs, it is out of recognition that SAPs had an immediate adverse implication on the population of adjusting countries especially the disadvantaged groups; women, the poor, slum dwellers and many others (Ngugi 1993). There was a general consensus among those affected and sympathizers that SAPs needed to be structurally adjusted to take a humanistic approach (Ndumbu, 1991). These observations are evident when examining the effects of SAPs in Kenya's agricultural production. SAPs were basically neo-liberal responses to the crisis that capitalist accumulation generated. Neo-liberal theory articulates in economic policy instrumentation called SAPs. It merely seeks means of maximizing profit for the capitalist enterprise in a period of global crisis. The neo-liberal globalization plan embraced in SAPs is an attempt to recompradorise Africa to preserve the Cold-War era's economic dominance of the West, which rested on the global Keynesian model.

In the early 80s, bad weather conditions the second oil crisis and the global economic recession left the government with no other option than to embrace SAPs (Ngagi, 1993). In 1986, the government launched Sessional Paper No. 1 which showed its commitment to implement economic reforms. Among its objectives was the promotion of production for export both in the agricultural and manufacturing sectors.

Targeting the agricultural sector were proposals for the freeing of consumer prices so as to reflect market prices. This has largely been achieved through the liberalization of price commodities like maize, sugar and wheat. It is noteworthy that the prices of such commodities assumed an upward trend hence affecting the poor and other vulnerable groups more than the rich. Another proposal was to improve the delivery of services by parastatals to farmers, and this has had mixed feelings. Such parastatals as Kenya Grain Growers Cooperative Union (KGGCU), have since collapsed, while others have performed dismally including the Kenya Cooperative Creameries, Kenya Tea Development Authority, and Kenya Pyrethrum Cooperative Union. The current move now is to privatize these parastatals so that they are run by farmers themselves. Overall, the services offered to framers have greatly deteriorated, while the inputs have become expensive. In 1995, it was noted that it was cheaper to import maize than grow it locally. As returns from maize were becoming lower, farmers planted less, and coupled with the prevailing drought of early 1997, Kenya was forced to import maize to feed almost the entire country. One trade unionist, Joseph Mugalla rightly observed that SAPs..." tampered with the agricultural sector and caused food production to decline. Farmers were unable to invest more in their farms due to lack of competitive market prices for their harvests" (Daily Nation 1/3/1997). The case of maize contrasts greatly with that of sugar whereby the sugar factories in Kenya had sugar in their warehouses worth million of shillings which they were unable to sell at competitive prices due to imported cheap sugar (Daily Nation 2/2/1978). Therefore the liberalization of distribution and marketing of both farm input and output has not necessarily resulted in the desired agricultural growth but created additional problems in agricultural production and marketing.

Maxon and Ndege (1995:162) contend that through SAPs domestic self-sufficiency of maize and milk was attained in the 1980s. But the case of wheat was different. Wheat production went down with the sub-division of the large farms. Wheat production declined by 20 per cent by 1985.

The government responded to the need to spur production after 1984 by offering higher producer prices, greater assistance with inputs, planting and harvesting, and improved marketing measures. Nevertheless, self-sufficiency in wheat was still far from being reached (Ibid). Sugar-cane production on the other hand had attained self-sufficiency by 1979. Kenya exported sugar between 1981-1984. From 1985, however, Kenya was forced to import at least 40,000 tons of sugar per year. This was largely the result of domestic consumption outstripping production. Government measures to promote production and hold back consumption had limited success. Producer prices were significantly raised after 1984 but problems with acceptance and processing of cane and payment to growers served to hold down output. The closure of Miwani and Ramisi sugar mills serves as an example of the latter deterrent to expansion of sugar output. A shortage of sugar in the shops, a phenomenon of the late 1980's and early 1990s, was often attributed to the smuggling of Kenya's refined sugar to the neighbouring countries. Ever since sugar importation has been a regular feature of the government even when local sugar millers have several bags in the stores. Political expedience and greed for profits by the political elite is not hard to detect in this case.

Tea production has witnessed continued expansion even in difficult situations. The opening of the Nyayo Tea Zones was a major booster in the 1980s and 90s. As tea production was being supported with good infrastructure, favourable prices, and the opening of more factories, pyrethrum was almost being wiped out of the agricultural list of Kenya's important export crops. Declining international demand coupled with the 1984 drought and marketing problems brought pyrethrum extract to its nadir in 1984 (Ibid). Increased horticultural production, however, has been one notable feature of Kenya's agricultural history.

As is evident from the above analysis, SAPs stressed a shift of emphasis towards exporter production at the cost of subsistence crops. This has been considered as a “recipe for starvation." Besides, the main objective of SAPs was to rekindle economic growth by improving resource allocation, increasing economic efficiency and expanding growth potential. SAPs therefore became necessary when a country found itself in unsustainable external disequilibrium (Ongile, 1993). It has been argued that by shifting emphasis toward export production SAPs have further destabilized the concerned economics. Kenya like the rest of Africa was a testing ground for the neo-liberal plan entailed in SAPs.

In this framework, primary commodities are sold on world market where the buyer determines prices. Often the buyers are few corporations, properly called “oligopolies," that is, markets where many sellers face only a few powerful buyers. These buyers will definitely seek to buy cheap and sell dearly (Ndumbu 1991:42). Competition among exporting countries of a given commodity leads to over-production, and global over-supply causes price decline. Ndumbu contends that this destructive competition has cost sub-Sahara Africa a loss of US dollars 50 billion. As African framers produce more coffee, tea pyrethrum, and sisal paradoxically they realize less and less returns i.e. they work harder to become poorer (Ibid.) These unfavourable features have dogged the agricultural economies of independent African countries whose policies have been unable to reverse the exploitative situation prevailing at the international level. Kenya, forty years later, is no exemption.

Conclusion

It has been demonstrated that the inherited economic structures, that were largely colonial and exploitative, were not best suited for the development of the country. The inherited economic institutions in many countries, asserts Maloba (1995:13), do not have the capacity to lead to sustained growth and development.

They were established to exploit and not to develop these countries. In Kenya, it has been observed that the post-colonial state, in its post-independence dispensation, was essentially a reproduction of the colonial state at the level of ideological orientation, laws and the basic economic structures (Gutto, 1993: 265). Further, Ahluwaha (1996) who has explored some of the political and economic problems, which faced post-independent Kenya concludes that the Kenyan nation-state has, in its postcolonial experience, served the interests of Western imperialism. With this view the two preceding regimes under presidents Kenyatta and Moi have reinforced this scenario with differing intensity. The new government under president Kibaki, though promising, may not be very different from the preceding ones if the same economic structures and institutions remain in place.

Due to their repulsive and unworkable nature, SAPs have been found largely inappropriate in most affected countries and alternatives have been sought. One such alternative has been suggested by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), namely the African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programme for Social-Economic Recovery (AAF – SAP). It urges that African governments to move beyond narrow preoccupations with short-term adjustments and embrace policy reforms that seek to transform the structures of their economies and generally calls for adjustment and transformation centered on the human conditions rather than balanced accounts with the World Bank and the IMF. Among other things, it proposes land reforms, increased public expenditure on agriculture and gives high priority on food self-sufficiency and the recognition of women as food producers. Whereas the African crisis has been dubbed a crisis of the state, hence, a crisis of governance, it is also an economic crisis. Solutions out of the crisis are posed within a neo-liberal perspective. It is recognized that Kenyan agriculture is beset with numerous problems. Solution to such problems must be multifaceted taking into account the local needs and the world economic trends. Neither have the NEPAD proposals to revitalize African economies been well received by some African countries who have christened the proposals as a 'knee-pad' for begging from the west. So far, this remains a fertile ground for propositions in which short-and long-term solutions are sought. The new government has the benefit of forty years of stagnant development not to take the same course.

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