

THE COOPERATION BETWEEN UNIDO AND THE AFRICAN UNION

A longstanding partnership for
poverty reduction and green growth



UNITED NATIONS
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATION

A Nigerian proverb says that “the Earth moves at different speeds depending on who you are”.

It is true that, over the past few years, Africa was blessed with mixed fortunes, for many different reasons. Some economies resisted better, some rebounded stronger. Still, Africa has not yet fulfilled its true potential and alas remains, in its majority, in the “bottom billion”. Many of the critical challenges that Africa faces today are related to poverty reduction, full integration into the global trading system and access to energy; and they are all at the very core of UNIDO’s expertise.

For decades, the African Union and UNIDO have been trusted partners and have together sought to play a more catalytic role in addressing these issues, thereby contributing to the continent’s sustained growth. UNIDO has provided sound analysis and policy advice, brokered stimulating information and knowledge sharing, and implemented numerous tailor-made technical cooperation activities with its African public and private counterpart institutions, at the national, regional and continental level.

The joint UNIDO-AU activities have resulted in steady growth in targeted key sectors, including leather, textile and garment, bamboo, fruits and vegetables, to mention a few. At the same time, UNIDO has contributed to strengthening the strategic and operational capacities of many industrial support institutions both in the public and private sectors.

This UNIDO-AU partnership report takes a closer look at joint activities between 2006 and 2011, drawing on successful joint programmes and future perspectives for making this new century a truly “African century”.

More than ever, the unique partnership that unites the African Union and UNIDO is needed, to address today’s



Kandeh K. Yumkella,
Director-General,
UNIDO



Jean Ping,
Chairman,
African Union Commission

challenges and to prepare Africa for a brighter future; as another African proverb says, “for tomorrow belongs to the people who prepare for it today”.

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UNIDO and the African Union

A longstanding partnership

UNIDO is a partner of the African Union, and shares the continent's ultimate quest for poverty reduction, growth and wealth creation.

A longstanding partnership

For as long as most Africans can remember, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) has been a trusted partner of the African Union (AU), actively contributing, through its efforts for sustainable industrial development, to the continent's ultimate quest for poverty reduction, growth and wealth creation.

UNIDO's support has always followed the main developments of the continent; for instance, when Apartheid ceased in South Africa, and when the Organization of African Unity (OAU) gave way to the AU, UNIDO further developed and enhanced its cooperation for the benefit of the African people. Concurrently, and throughout the years that followed, numerous AU decisions and resolutions called upon UNIDO, as one of its most valued multilateral partners, to play a growing catalytic role in the continent's growth.

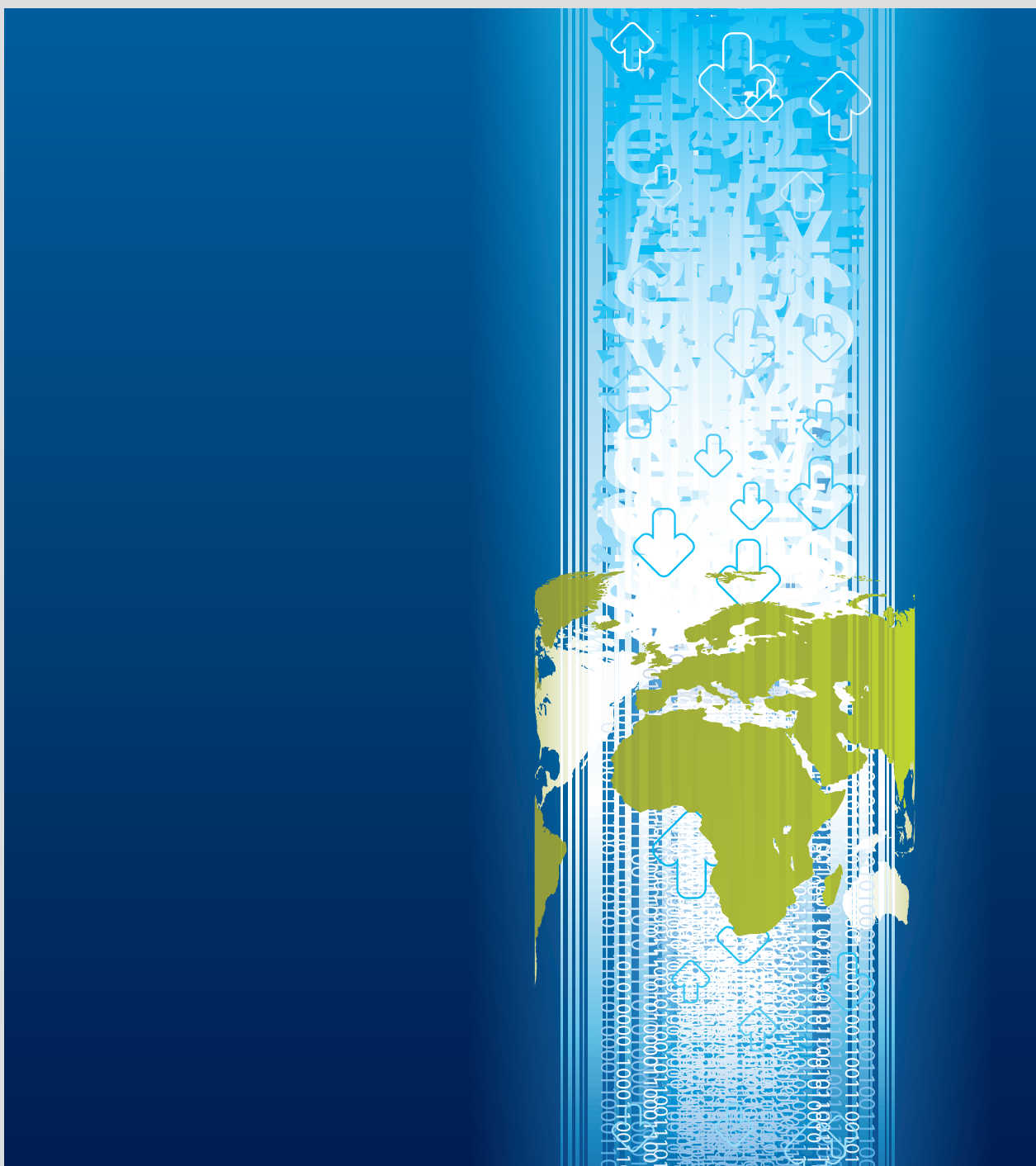
UNIDO has spared no efforts to provide the full range of its technical competencies and policy knowledge for implementing, together with its partners from the international community, numerous tailor-made technical cooperation activities with African public and private counterpart institutions, at the national, regional and continental levels.

To date, UNIDO implements over 400 projects worth almost US\$200 million in Africa, with over 150 projects in the pipeline that would result in additional support worth over US\$400 million in a medium-term perspective.

Within the period covered by this report (2006-2011), UNIDO's efforts have continued to focus on agribusiness and value chain development as well as on trade capacity-building and supplier upgrading. At the same time, greater efforts were invested in unleashing the continent's potential related to environment and energy, and in the development of sound public-private partnerships as well as of mutually beneficial South-South cooperation. As a result of UNIDO's immediate support, and of its partnership with the AU and its subsidiary organs, key sectors such as leather, textile and garment, fruits and vegetables, etc., experienced significant growth rates. At the same time, the joint UNIDO-AU activities yielded strong institutional improvements.

Yet, while steady growth figures have been reported between 2006 and 2011, the continent's targets have still not been fully attained, and many African countries still remain in the bottom billion. African leaders recognize that much still needs to be done and that sustainable industrial development can provide a robust foundation for their future growth ambitions. Therefore, they committed to the industrialization of the continent, both in the short and long-term, also by dedicating their 2008 Summit to "the Industrialization of Africa" and, by extension, to strengthening UNIDO's support function to the AU.

During the Summit, the Heads of State and Government adopted the Plan of Action for the Accelerated Industrial Development of Africa (AIDA) and further called on UNIDO to continue its assistance for concrete and immediate actions; UNIDO's support has thus been accelerated to address Africa's crucial challenges.



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