



# NEPAD in PERSPECTIVE

*A New Development Agenda for the Peoples of Africa*



# Publisher's Note

*"NEPAD in Perspective" is published by the Christian Relief and Development Association (CRDA) and Partnership Africa Canada (PAC)*



*Christian Relief and Development Association is an umbrella organisation of over 210 national and international NGOs operating in different parts of Ethiopia. Poverty eradication is the guiding vision of the Association. Members participate in such major areas as food security, health, environment, education and HIV/AIDS. CRDA, as a hub, facilitates conditions and provides support to its members so that they become more dynamic in the creation of a vibrant civil society. Enhancing capacity of its members and networking are the two major programmes of CRDA. [www.crdaethiopia.org](http://www.crdaethiopia.org)*



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## *A New Development Agenda for the Peoples of Africa*

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# Preface

CRDA and PAC have collaborated to produce this booklet entitled "NEPAD in PERSPECTIVE" in an effort to popularise and demystify the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). Both CRDA and PAC see NEPAD as a useful catalyst for Africa's development. They consider it as an opportunity that may guide continental recovery and unity.

This booklet aims to summarise in plain and accessible language the main concepts, concerns and questions surrounding NEPAD. CRDA and PAC held two consecutive workshops on NEPAD in Addis Ababa. The first was a familiarisation and consultation meeting in April 2002 for national and international NGOs operating in Ethiopia. The second was for representatives of African CSOs and NGO networks and was held in June 2002.

CRDA and PAC believe that in an ever-increasing deluge of initiatives and programmes, a booklet that lays down the bare bones of the NEPAD initiative is necessary. Although some over-simplifications have been made, these have been included in favour of accessibility and clarity, as dissemination of information on NEPAD is seen as a major challenge.

Both civil society organisations and the public at large have been targeted in this booklet to enable them grasp the essentials of NEPAD and decide where they want to go from here.

Hopefully, everyone will learn more about what NEPAD is and how stakeholders can engage to bring about its realisation.

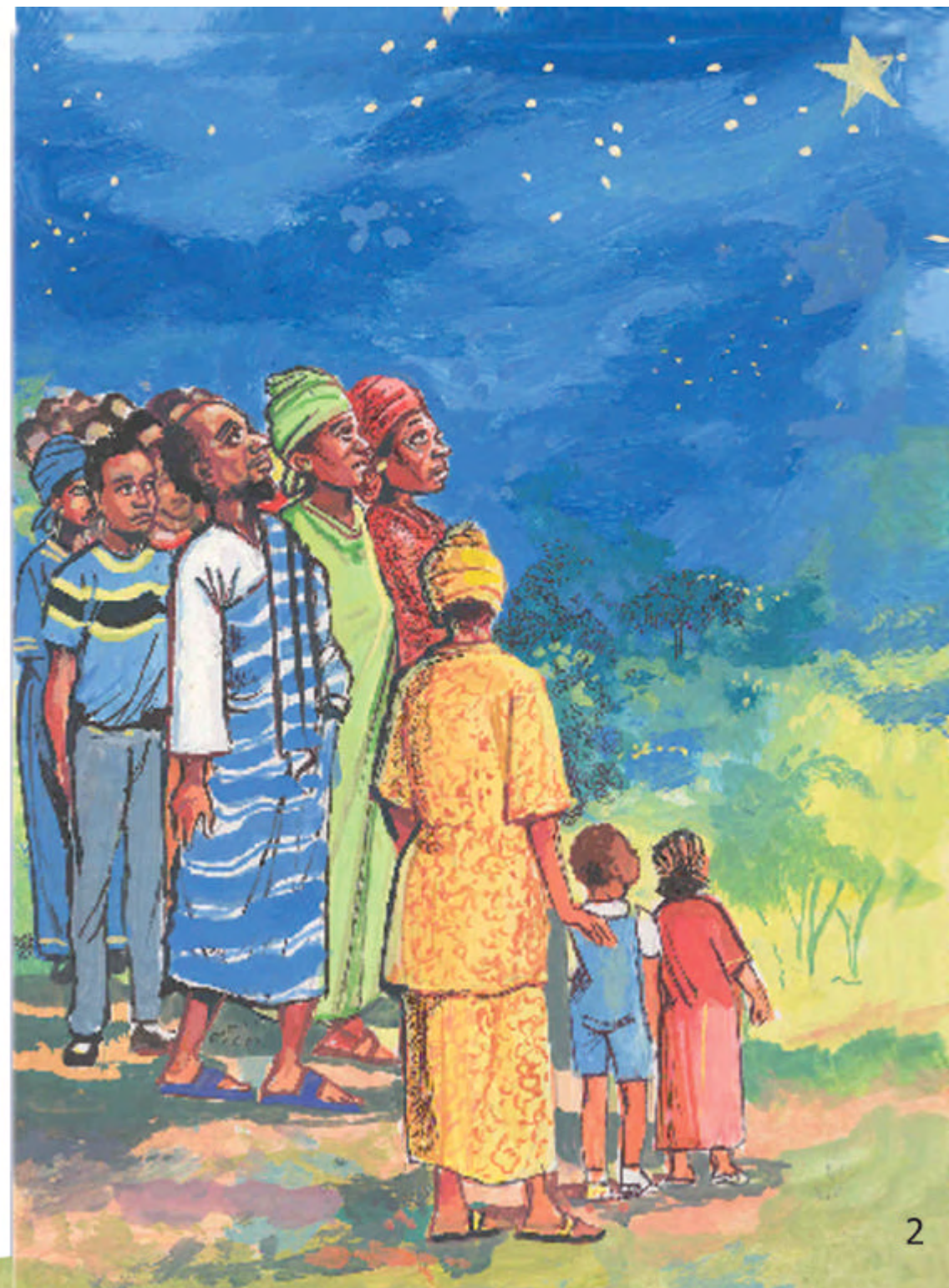


## What is NEPAD?

The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) has been called many things in the past including; "a plan of African leaders", "a commitment to good governance, democracy, human rights, economic and social development", "a holistic, integrated sustainable development initiative for Africa's revival", and "a pledge to eradicate poverty".

NEPAD is basically a dynamic concept constantly being developed. It is a framework for development and has been adopted as a programmatic policy document of the African Union. It could also be considered as a process of producing and refining programmes to strengthen Africa. CSOs, especially, have a major role in refining NEPAD, as they did not have substantial input in the production of the main document. However, NEPAD cannot be a panacea to all of Africa's ills and everything should not be loaded on the NEPAD cart.

NEPAD could be perceived as a guiding star, to be closely followed and whose movements can help us to navigate towards a brighter and better Africa. Yet this star is not only to be followed, but also influenced and guided as well by the peoples of Africa.





## Why NEPAD?

There has been scepticism about previous development initiatives in Africa. However, the reason for NEPAD is quite simple. The initiative is anchored in the determination of Africans to extricate themselves and the continent from the malaise of underdevelopment and exclusion in a globalising world. Strengthening Africa's profile and role in the global framework requires a programmatic policy document like NEPAD.

The international community has also much to lose as poverty in one corner of the world can destabilise the world as a whole. Moreover, the economies of developed countries may also stagnate. Therefore, serious efforts will have to be made to put the whole world on a path of sustainable development through developing partnerships and sharing a common vision of peace and prosperity.





## Who Does NEPAD Belong To?

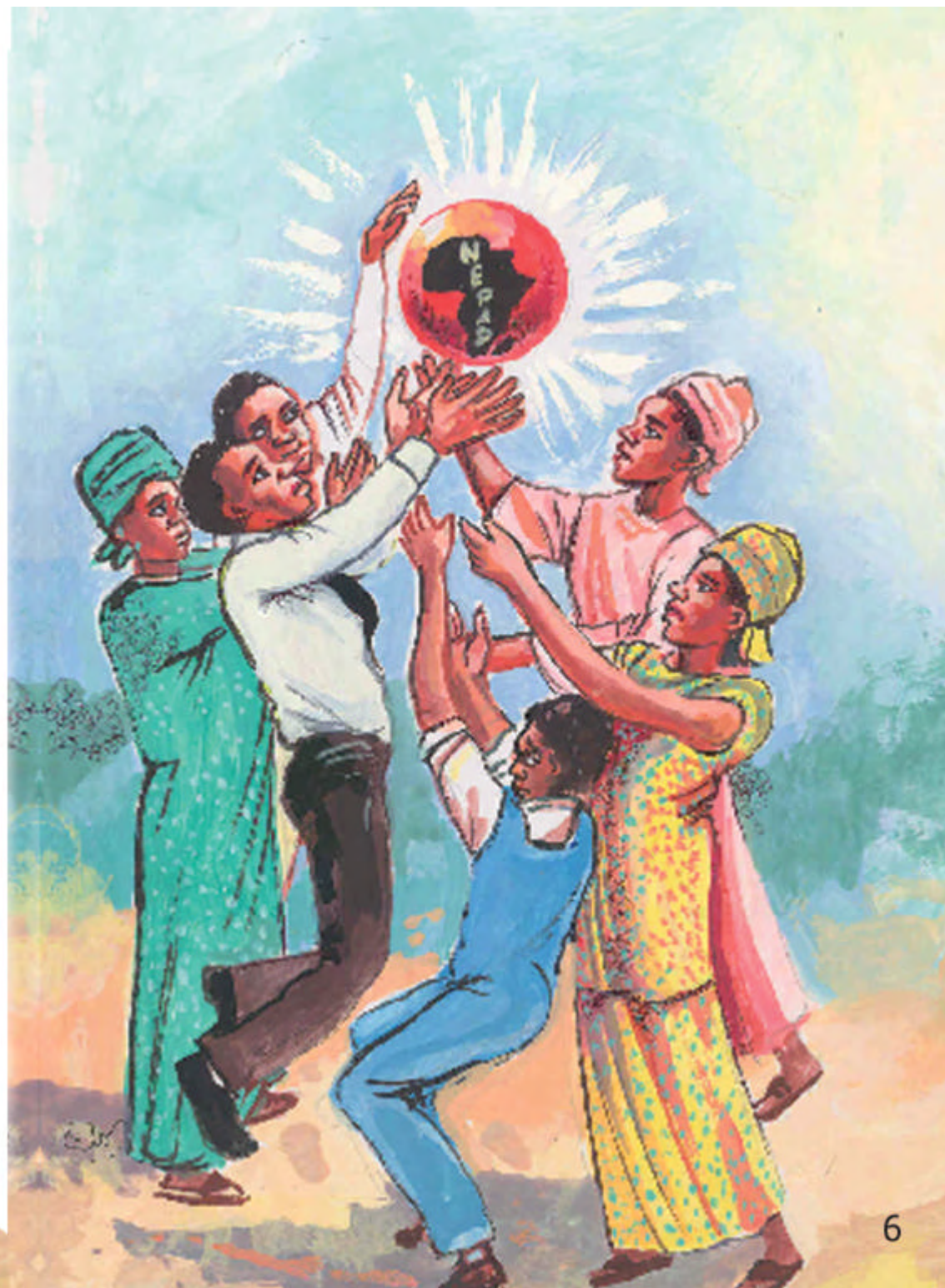
In the last century, several movements for a united Africa existed. Some of these were Black Consciousness, Pan Africanism, Ubuntu and Negritude and are associated with names like Nkrumah, Nyerere and Senghor. President

Nkrumah of Ghana was one of the first advocates for a united Africa in the 60s.

Presidents Mbeki from South Africa, Wade from Senegal, Obasanjo from Nigeria, Bouteflika from Algeria and Gaddafi from Libya, have played a major role in the current movement for a united Africa, which has NEPAD as its principal document.

Many documents were merged to create NEPAD. Some of these included the "Millennium Partnership for the African Recovery Programme (MAP)", the "Omega Plan for Africa", and a "Compact for African Recovery." The final draft was adopted by the Heads of State at their summit in Lusaka in 2001 as "A New African Initiative," later to be renamed as NEPAD.

NEPAD will belong to whoever transforms it into action, as a vision can belong to all who accept it. But what matters is who implements it! Thus the importance for all to participate in its implementation.



# How Will NEPAD Function?

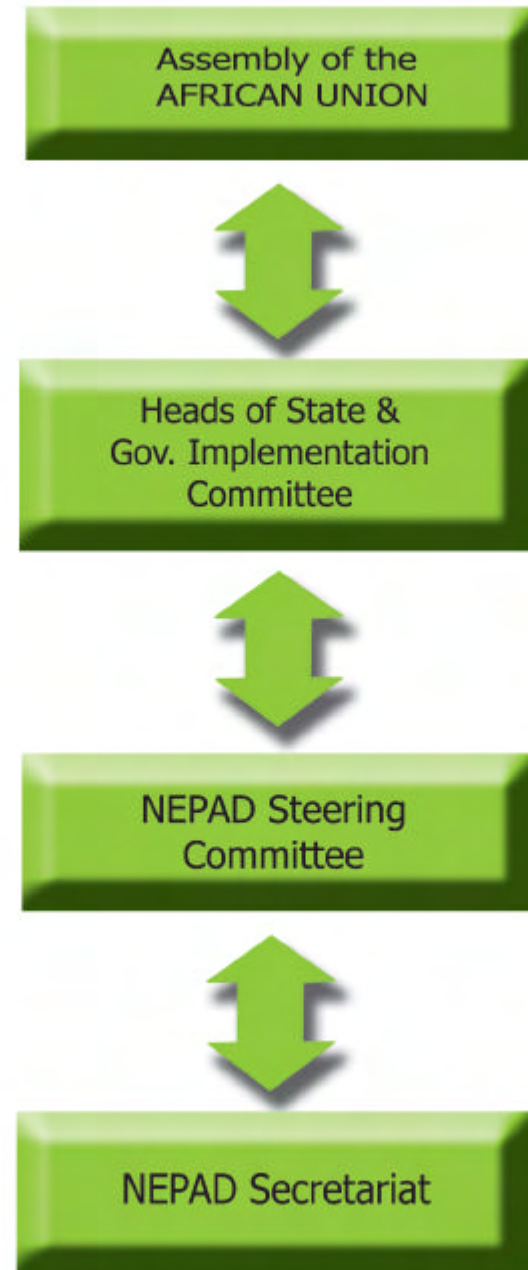
NEPAD will be supervised by a "Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee" (HSGIC), which currently has President Obasanjo of Nigeria as its chairperson. Presidents Wade of Senegal and Bouteflika of Algeria are serving as vice-chairpersons. The committee is composed of several countries and is accountable to the Assembly of the African Union. These countries represent the five regions of Africa.

Below the implementation committee comes the "Steering Committee" which is composed of the personal representatives of the Presidents of Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa. This committee develops the terms of reference for identified programmes and projects, as well as overseeing the NEPAD Secretariat.

The NEPAD Secretariat is based in the Republic of South Africa. It is in charge of liaison and coordination, administration and logistics, and the outsourcing of work on technical details.

NEPAD has three major component areas that include:

- Creating favourable conditions for sustainable development.
- Setting sectoral priorities.
- Mobilising resources.



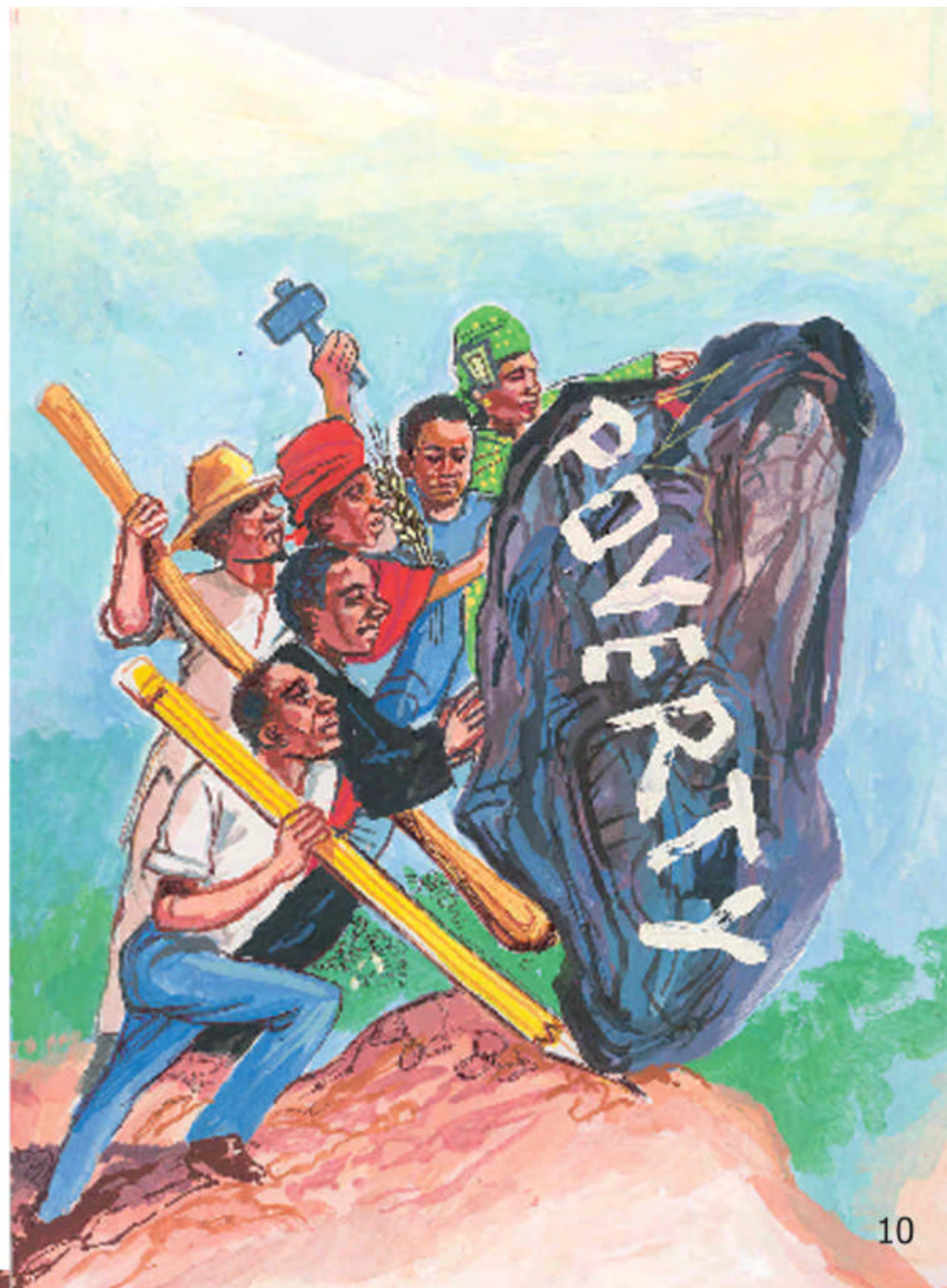




# What are NEPAD's Primary Aims?

NEPAD covers a wide range of issues. Various actors might want to selectively choose aims to target according to their own interests and needs. The aims include;

- Replace aid with local entrepreneurship and self-empowerment.
- Bring about economic growth, development and increased employment.
- Reduce poverty and inequalities.
- Increase revenue through exporting more diverse and competitive products.
- Improve regional integration to form a fully functional African Union.
- Strengthen mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution.
- Promote and protect democracy and human rights by developing clear standards of accountability, transparency and participatory governance, through mechanisms such as the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).
- Promote the development of infrastructure, agriculture and its conversion into agro-industries and manufacturing to serve both the domestic and export markets.
- Promote the role of women in social and economic development by reinforcing their capacity in the domain of education and training.
- Revitalise and extend the provision of education, technical training and health services (with priority to diseases like HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB).
- Restore and maintain macro-economic stability by developing standards and targets for fiscal and monetary policies and appropriate institutional frameworks.
- Institute transparent legal and regulatory frameworks for financial markets and auditing of private companies and the public sector.
- Build the capacity of African states to set and enforce the legal framework and maintain law and order.



# NEPAD's Priorities and Strategies



Although advancement in any one sector is meaningless without similar advances in all sectors, a few sectors have been prioritised. The following sectors have been selected as immediate action areas for NEPAD;

- Governance
- Infrastructure
- Information and Communications
- Human Development
- Agriculture
- FairTrade

NEPAD is primarily a framework for development rather than a blueprint that should be subscribed to by all actors. Consequently, the NEPAD document can be considered as an overarching strategy, with different sectoral strategies being proposed.

Strategies may vary. For example, for fair trade there is the strategy of promoting diversification of exports with a focus on market access for Africa's exports to industrialised countries. Regarding finances, some are advocating for unconditional debt cancellation, while others are seeking debt reduction. Many governments are attempting to negotiate for debt reductions, while CSOs in the North and South see debt cancellation as the moral obligation of developed countries. The issue of fair trade is high on the agenda of many CSOs as farming subsidies given to farmers in the North are not creating level playing fields for farmers in developing countries. The African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) is to be used to bring about good governance, with African countries guiding one another as to how to improve their governance. However, each actor should have strategies that best suit its strengths.

The African Union is already laying down its plan of action just as the G8 have their Africa Action Plan. The African Union is in the process of preparing detailed projects and programmes for implementation. Some of these include the integrated action plan for land and water management, energy, transport and telecommunications selected in light of sub-regional priorities, (details can be found at [www.mapstrategy.com](http://www.mapstrategy.com)). CSOs can create parallel projects or involve in ongoing ones.



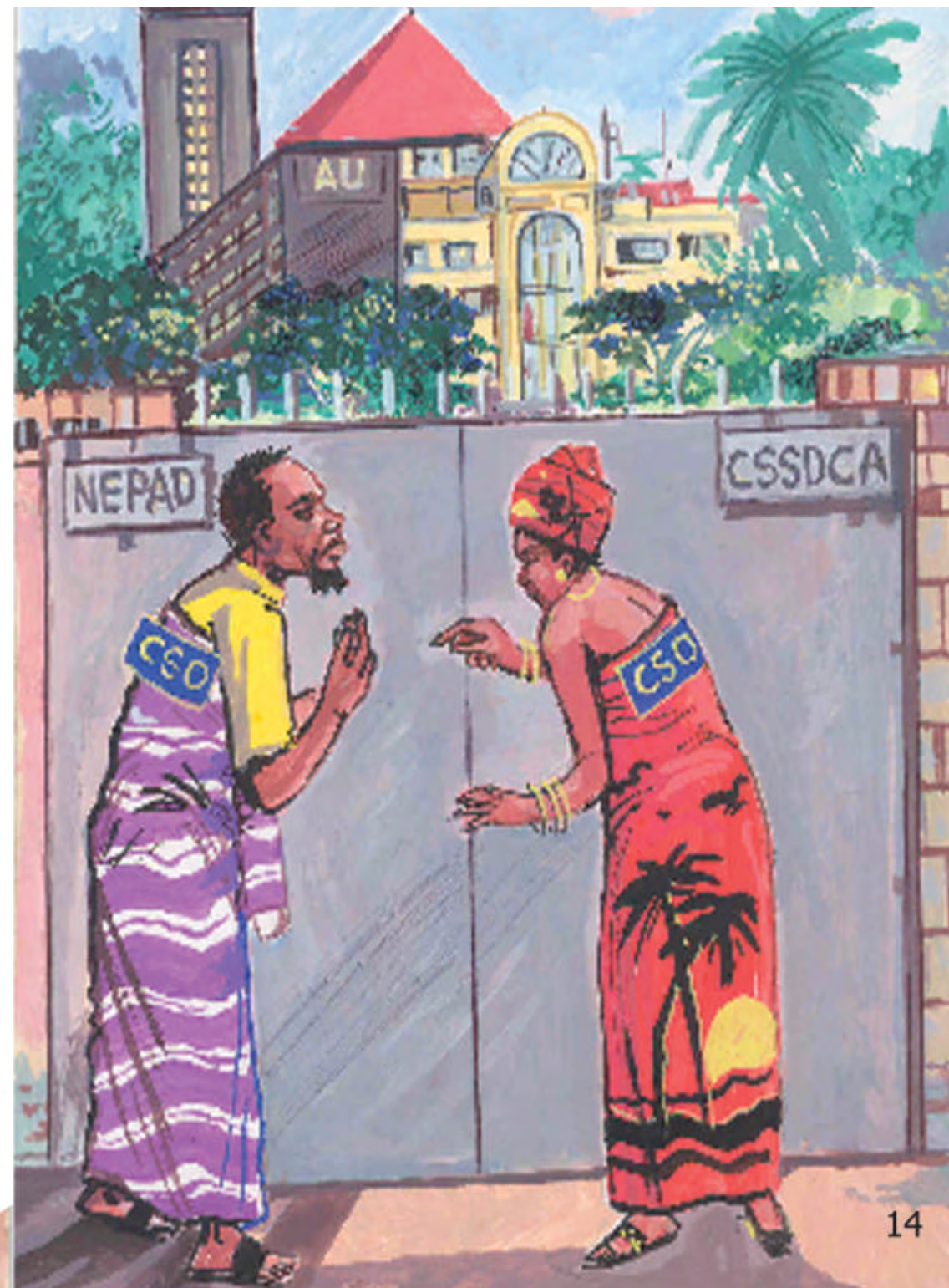
# NEPAD and the African Union

The African Union (AU) sees NEPAD along with the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Co-operation in Africa (CSSDCA) initiative as its most important tools to achieve the AU objectives.

Nevertheless, the almost simultaneous transformation of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) into the AU and the launching of NEPAD led to some confusion in the relationship between AU and NEPAD. In fact, both were being run in parallel structures at the beginning.

However, now that the AU is firmly standing on its own feet, NEPAD will be one of its programmes to bring about Africa's Renaissance.

This does not mean that NEPAD is the exclusive property of the AU. In fact, one of the strong points of NEPAD has been described as its ability to influence the state as the key player in the process of development through mechanisms like the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and encourage the participation of all stakeholders. Therefore, the AU can be considered as the residence of NEPAD, where everyone can visit and interact.



## NEPAD and the G8 Countries

Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, are the eight most industrialised and richest countries in the world known as the "G8". They have hailed NEPAD as a welcome initiative for revitalising their partnership with Africa. At Kananaskis, Canada in 2002 the G8 countries adopted an Africa Action Plan in response to NEPAD. This plan aims at using NEPAD as the basis upon which to build future relations with Africa.

Canada pledges to make significant increases in its assistance to Africa by 2010, while France has promised to meet the assistance target of 0.7% of GDP by 2012, with half of its additional aid being for Africa. Russia has cancelled billions of dollars of African debts. The UK and USA promise to greatly increase their assistance by 2006.

The G8 countries see a democratic and well-governed Africa as a necessary prerequisite to global peace. Unfortunately, there exists a difference of opinion between African countries and the G8 countries. The G8 see the fulfilment of NEPAD aims as a precondition for increasing aid to Africa. However, African countries see increased aid as a precondition to the achievement of NEPAD's aims. Nevertheless, a number of significant trade initiatives like the Everything But Arms initiative of the European

Union and the African Growth Opportunities Act (AGOA) of the United States of America are encouraging first steps. However, plans, such as NEPAD's peace and security initiatives, do need financial assistance and compromises will have to be reached.

**Ultimately, NEPAD is Africa's egg and so is the sole responsibility of hatching it!**



## Financing NEPAD

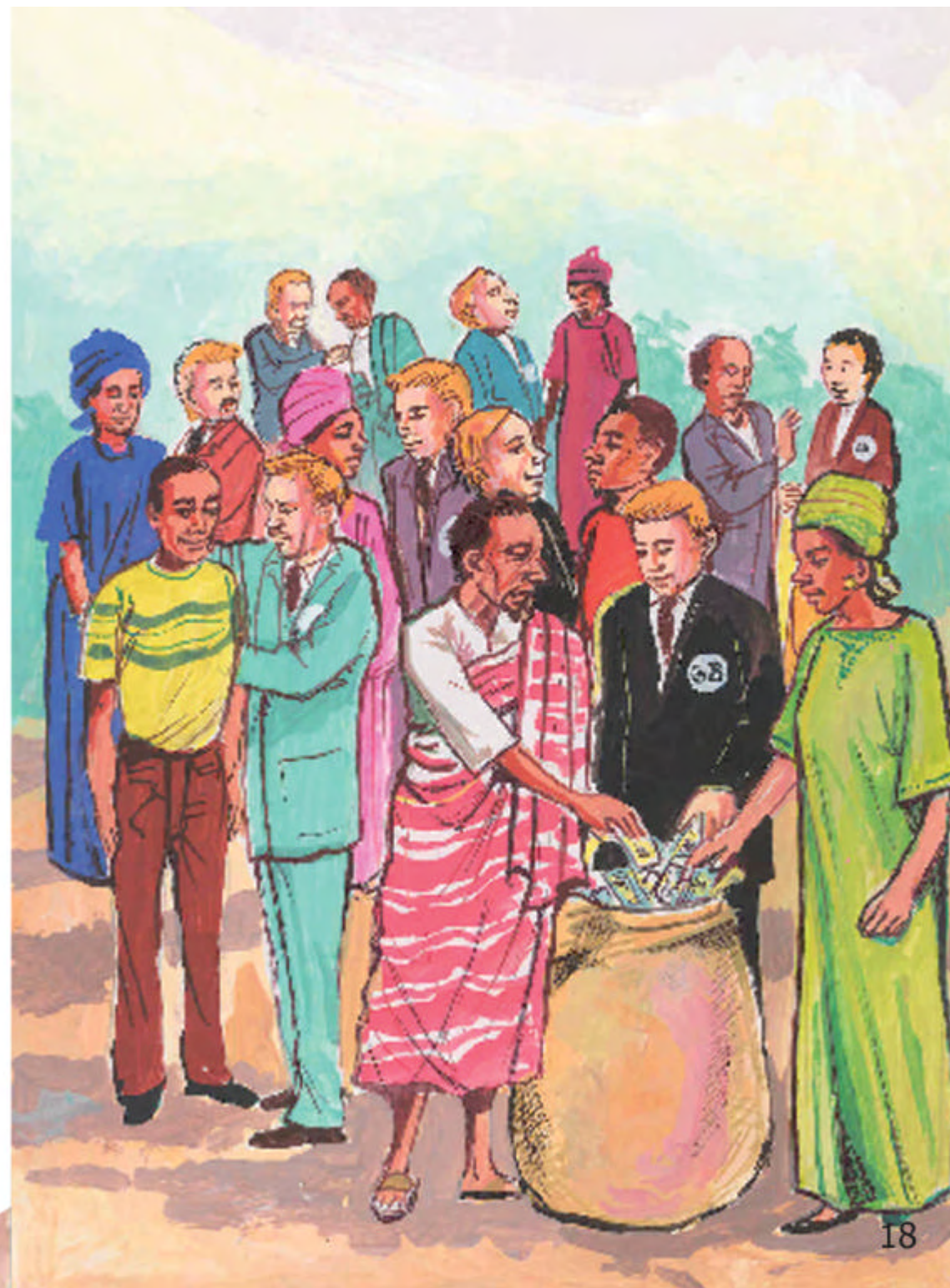
Ultimately, NEPAD will have to be funded out of Africa's own pockets, if it is to remain truly African. Therefore, a vibrant private sector, an efficient government taxation system, and systematic fund-raising are to be the financial powerhouse of NEPAD.

However, in the short term, a lot is being expected from foreign direct investment and international assistance. This international assistance could pose the threat of providing aid with strings attached, while foreign direct investment is too low to have any significant impact.


The international financial environment will also have to be revisited as currently only highly indebted poor countries (HIPC) are getting assistance and the moment an African country starts improving, the sources of assistance become less. Moreover, European and American subsidies to their farmers are hindering the creation of level playing fields in trade and are negatively impacting on Africa's agriculture.

Therefore, the promise that countries that have good governance will be rewarded with trade, investment and assistance should be fulfilled.

NEPAD needs proper financing if it is to succeed, and raising the funds is of paramount importance.



## Criticisms of NEPAD



In the past, many initiatives relating to African development have failed for various reasons. Therefore, it is beneficial to consider some criticisms of NEPAD as they are driven by serious concerns rooted in analysis and arguments aimed at making NEPAD a success. Fortunately, NEPAD is open to criticisms. For instance, to mention a recent phenomenon at the African Union, amendments were made to ensure that the senior posts of the African Union Commission are occupied by as many women as men as a step toward addressing gender equity. Some of the major criticisms are:

- NEPAD was a top-down process initiative not open to participation in the initial stages.
- NEPAD is based on neo-liberal foundations, which may not prove adequate.
- NEPAD is too focused on donor priorities.
- NEPAD is more outward looking than self-reliant.
- A Lack of funding threatens to leave NEPAD as another dream.
- NEPAD lacks clarity of implementation. There appears to have been no serious thought given to implementation mechanisms and country differences. Radical and transformative measures are still to be incorporated.
- Goals set in NEPAD are borrowed from various initiatives like the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that are unlikely to materialise within the given deadline.
- Many Africans are sceptical of the political commitment, the proper use of funds and their governments' good faith.

- NEPAD will serve to legitimise existing global power relations rather than restructure them, as in the case of not enough attention being paid to gender relations.

To conclude, all stakeholders should listen to each other's criticisms as they can learn from each other.

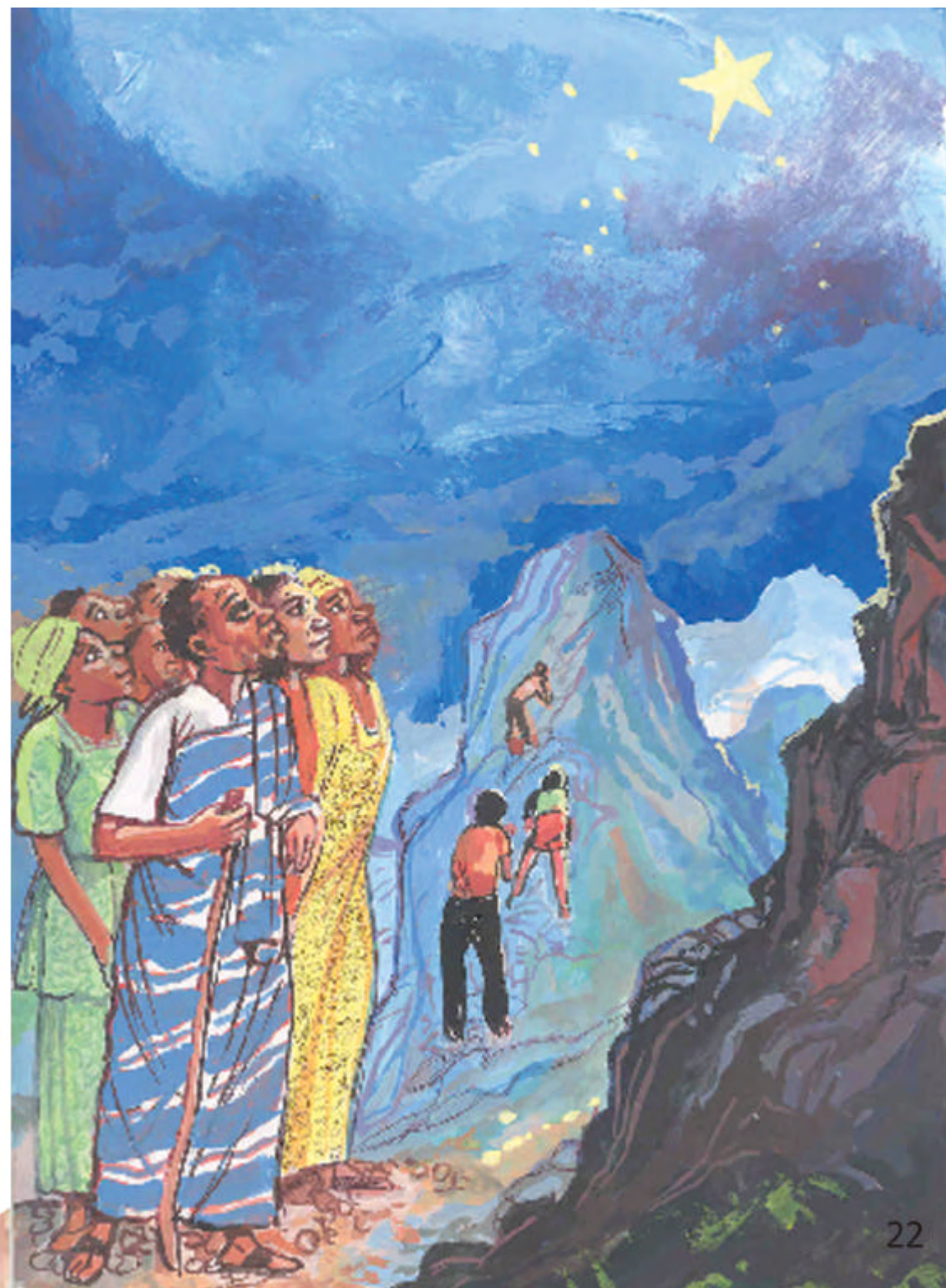


# Challenges of NEPAD



NEPAD is definitely not without its own huge mountain of challenges that need to be surmounted. It is a sobering reality that despite excellent planning, top-down initiatives frequently fail. Participatory approaches, although entailing detours, conflicts and controversies, tend to come up with more positive results, or at least with the commitment to try again stemming from the feeling of ownership. Therefore, if all actors are willing and contribute, NEPAD can find solutions to Africa's challenges. These have been identified as:

- Founding partnerships on a realisation of common interests, obligations, commitments, benefits and equality.
- Ensuring that NEPAD remains Africa owned, led and driven.
- Ensuring the implementation process is focused and always on track.
- Ensuring the well-being of the people is not compromised.
- Creating mechanisms for African civil society to access and contribute to the implementation of NEPAD.
- Raising foreign funds without compromising Africa's interests.
- Persuading the North to release its power stranglehold.





## The Role of the Individual

Everyone should have a say in plans that affect their lives. All members of society will be affected by NEPAD. Therefore, they have both the right and the duty of expressing their views.

Practically speaking however, it is highly unlikely at the present time for each and every African to provide her/his comments on NEPAD. Therefore, to have a visible impact, individuals will have to organise and unite their voices, so that they can ensure that their rights and benefits are safeguarded in all proceedings. The best way of achieving this is through uniting traditional and modern community structures. Civil society organisations have proven effective in being able to negotiate with bigger players and ensure that the benefits of the individual are not overlooked or trampled upon in the eagerness to achieve a united Africa.

The rights of women, children and marginalized groups in particular deserve special attention. This can only be achieved by individuals expressing their concerns through coordinated channels that can amplify the voice of the individual to an intensity high enough for it to be heard at all levels.

The proverb that "if cobwebs unite, they can tie down a lion (in this case a rhino!)", should be kept in mind.







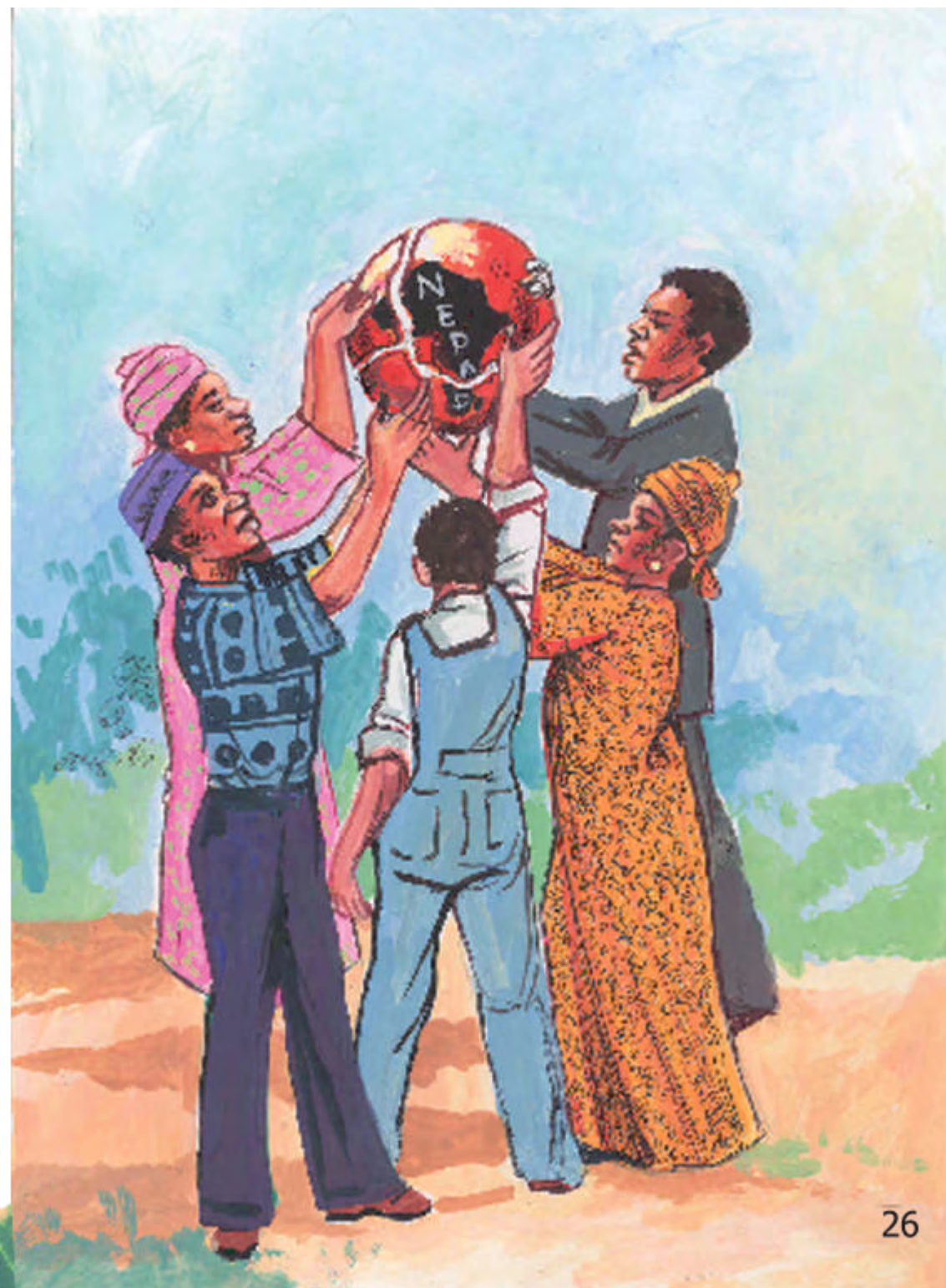
## CSOs' Contribution to NEPAD

Participatory approaches to development, policy formulation, planning, implementation and monitoring are crucial for macro-economic growth and stability. Therefore, the active participation of all members of society is the only way of developing a free and fair world, where no one group or nation dominates and exploits another. Moreover, participation is a democratic value in itself to which there is no sensible alternative.

Therefore, civil society participation in the NEPAD process is imperative for its success, so civil society can and should play its part in the NEPAD process. The increasing strength of African civil society may well offer a real chance to tackle the ills of the continent.

Hopefully in the future, there will be high interaction between states and civil societies and they will both act upon the development challenges in complementary and co-ordinated ways.

To conclude, the expensive option of disengagement is not in reality a viable option. CSOs would not like to be by-passed in this important initiative that could profoundly affect Africa's future. Moreover, it is both their right and responsibility to engage in NEPAD.

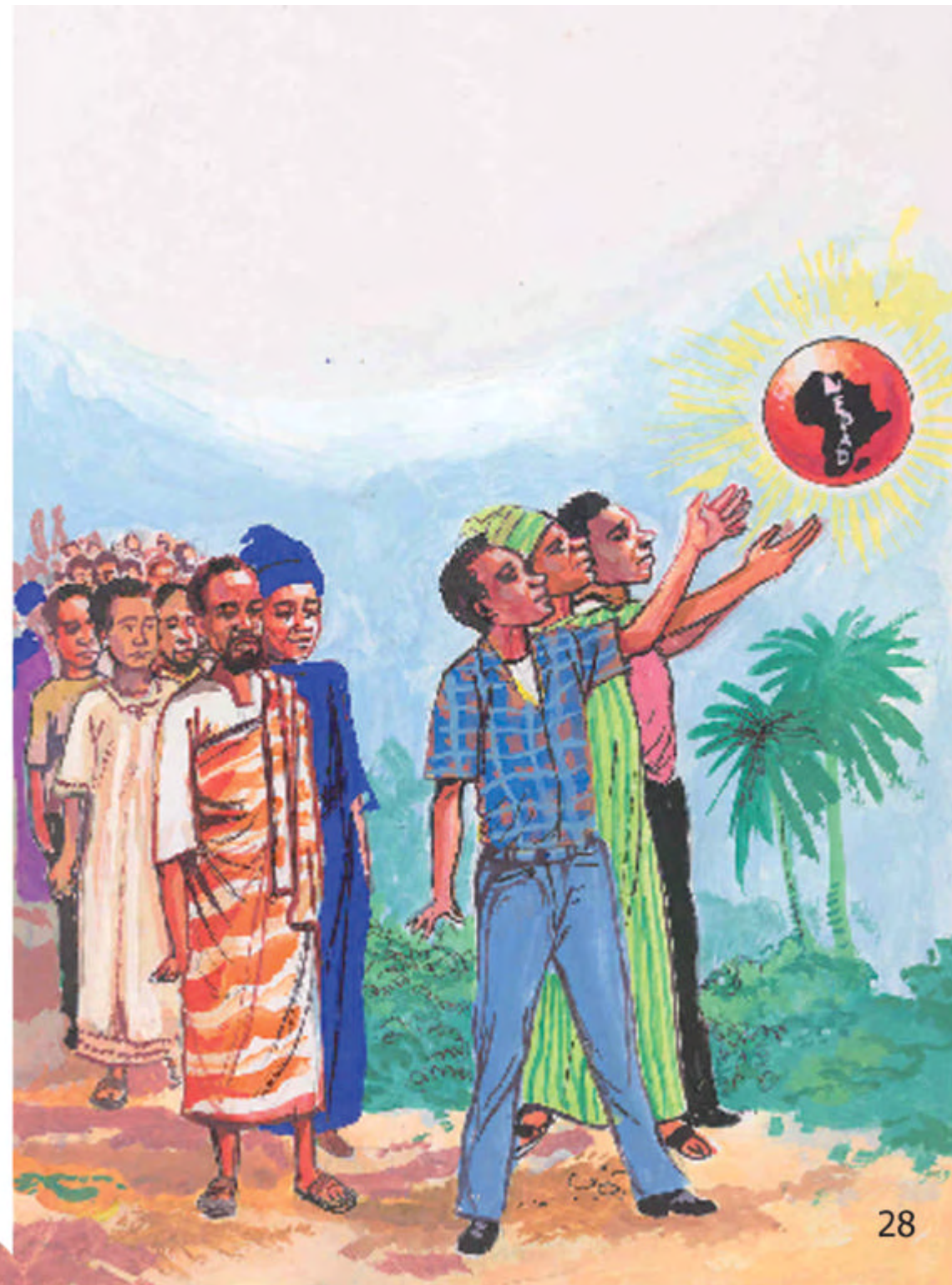





## The Role of CSOs in NEPAD

Changes are being observed in both civil society organisations and their government counterparts in relation to the role and responsibility of CSOs. Civil society organisations are convinced that their role should not be limited to service rendering. Service rendering alone will not ensure achievement of the intended changes in the livelihood of the poor and the marginalized. Accordingly, CSOs must be more actively involved in policy dialogue and consultation on issues of local, national, regional and global concern. The major roles of CSOs in NEPAD could therefore be to:

- Raise the awareness of civil society on issues regarding NEPAD and popularise the NEPAD document.
- Mobilise support for the NEPAD process.
- Safeguard the people's ownership of the process.
- Assist the people of Africa to gain maximum benefits from NEPAD.
- Monitor and evaluate the NEPAD process.
- Engage with the APRM planning and implementation process.



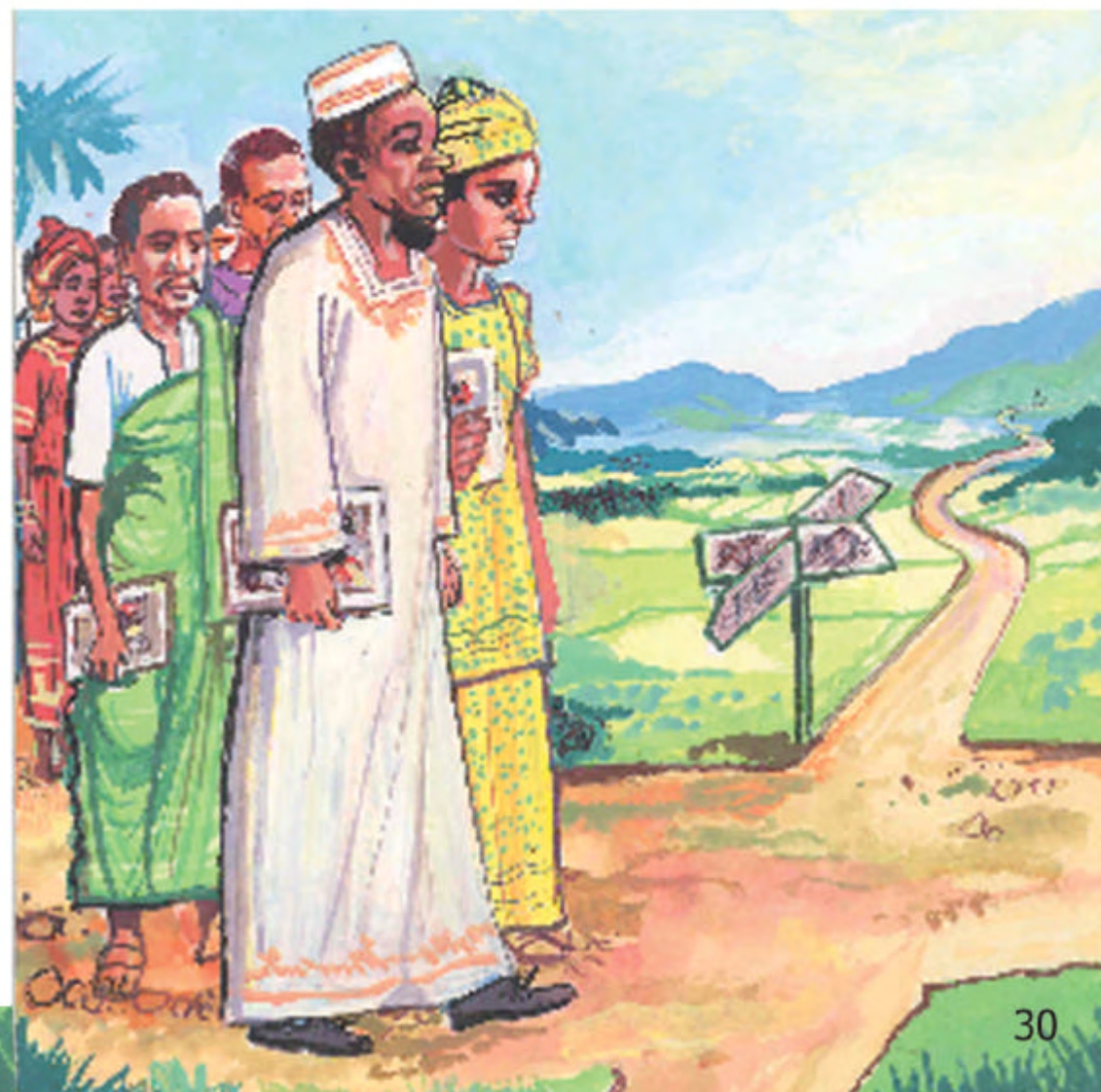
## Possible Immediate Actions for CSOs



The NEPAD process is already underway. Therefore, CSOs must include in their plans what they want to do. Major achievements so far have included securing civil society participation in the African Peer Review Mechanism and organising civil society fora to develop engagement principles and establish firm national priorities. Moreover, attempts to raise awareness in the form of workshops, meetings and booklets, such as this one, have been made. However, a lot remains to be done. Some immediate actions could be:

- Securing civil society participation in the African Peer Review Mechanism.
- Reviewing and engineering common positions on NEPAD's approach in general and its specific components in particular.
- Advocating for increased external assistance and systematic use of resources from HIPC and financing for development initiatives.
- Designing and implementing programmes and projects with realistic goals, expediting the successful implementation of NEPAD.
- Advocating and raising awareness focusing on making complicated international and national issues and policies accessible to the public in simple and understandable language.
- Creating awareness among the CSOs about NEPAD, as well as among governments and leaders on the indispensability of the inclusion of the civil society.
- Creating space in the structure of NEPAD to ensure that CSOs could assist in the analysis of issues, implementation, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

- Sending clear messages to donors that CSOs are not happy with the exclusionist approach of NEPAD, so far.
- Creating an enabling environment that gives CSOs access to financial resources and information to participate actively.



# Conclusion

The political commitment of African leaders, appropriate institutional structures, increasing domestic resources and a pledge of practical support from the international community give NEPAD a good chance of being implemented.

So, it is crucial that all actors willingly contribute what they are capable of, to make it successful. NEPAD needs to be mainstreamed into the existing frameworks, legislation, and institutions. CSOs should play a major role in this process. As Africans, we have the primary responsibility for our own development and now is an opportune moment for us to act.

CSOs have to work hard to influence policy and bring about improvements in NEPAD's implementation. Rights are not offered on a silver platter, as they involve the relinquishing of unfair privileges by the powerful. Rights are gained through persistently striving for them. So CSOs have both the right and the obligation of participating in NEPAD and should have no reservations in demanding entrance into a process that will affect the African people.



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