

**SUDAN NATIONAL REPORT TO THE  
CONFERENCE OF PARTIES ON THE  
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS  
CONVENTION TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION**

## **1. Introduction:**

Most of the African Sahelian zone was severely inflicted by drought that prevailed in the early sixties and late seventies of this century. Drought, coupled with irrational land use practices has led to a serious state of desertification and devastation of the natural resources. The phenomenon has extended as far as the savannah belt south of the Sahara and mid - Africa.

As a Sahelian country and because of being mostly arid and semi-arid the Sudan has suffered most from the state of desertification environmentally, socially and economically. Being aware of the compound impact of the problem at the local, regional and international levels, the country has taken serious steps to collaborate with the International Community for combating the problem. By signing the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in June 1994 and ratifying it in November 1995, the Sudan had become the 16<sup>th</sup> country that has authenticated its legal commitment towards the convention.

As it has already been conveyed to your knowledge, the UNCCD CoP3 will be held in Brazil in November 1999. Pursuant to resolutions 11 and 5 of CoPs 1 and 2 respectively, the conference will review and assess reports of the African Country Parties to the convention. In this connection, the secretariat of the Intergovernmental Agency for Development (IGAD) called representatives from its member states for a meeting in Nairobi / Kenya to agree on a framework for preparing their country reports. Having setting the guidelines, two options were suggested for each country to adopt either of them for preparing its report. These were: -

1. Report Preparation by a selected team under supervision of the person assigned.
2. Report Preparation by an assigned person.

The first option was adopted for the Sudan's country report. The report team was composed of representatives from:

- The Desertification and Desert Cultivation Studies Center (DADCSC).
- The National non-governmental Organization for Voluntary work on UNCCD (RIOD).
- The National Drought and Desertification Control & Monitoring Unit (NDDU).

The reason for adoption of the first choice was to maintain the principles of participation among the concerned partners.

The report in its draft form was presented before a National Forum held in the period 1-2/5/1999 for reviewing and assessment. The forum was composed of 10 representatives from 10 affected States and 13 persons at the federal

level representing natural resources organizations, research and academic institutes, NGOs, UNDP and IGAD Focal Point.

## **2. Strategies and Policies:**

### **2.1 Before Declaration of UNCCD:**

Prior to the declaration of UNCCD, the Sudan adopted various measures to control desert encroachment and mitigate the effect of drought. The following is a brief account of the main strategies, plans and procedures that were formulated and pursued: -

#### **2.1.1 The Desert Encroachment Control and Rehabilitation Programme (DECARP) 1976:**

The programme was prepared and presented to the United Nations Conference on Desertification in Nairobi in 1977. It incorporated a full description of the ecological zones and included 23 project documents for desert encroachment control all of which were centered around rehabilitation of the vegetative cover, soil conservation and reclamation and, rational use of ground water, wildlife protection and awareness. The Sudan had endeavoured to get support for execution of some of these projects namely: Restocking of the Gum Arabic belt in Kordofan and Darfur - The Integrated resource management for desertification control in Kordofan and the shelterbelt project in the Northern Province.

#### **2.1.2 The National Workshop on Control of Desertification (1991):**

In 1991, the NDDU sponsored this workshop with participants from the political sectors, executive sectors and research institutes. In addition to its evaluation of the existing projects and addition of new projects, the workshop set directives for a national policy to combat desertification.

#### **2.1.3 The Sudan Comprehensive National Strategy (1992 - 2002):**

The plan has been focused on agriculture as the main economic sector towards which all activities should be directed. This sector contributes 36% of the G.N.P and incorporates 75% of the labour force and constitutes 95% of the returns from exports. In addition, it provides most of the raw materials for home industries. It is for these reasons that the sector has been supported with a substantial portion of the public sector development budget. Recently the support has reached 26%.

The strategy for natural resources development concentrates on:

- Soil Conservation
- To declare 25% of the country's total area as reserved forests i.e. 63 million hectares. The reserved area is to include the natural forests, 10% of the rainfed schemes and 5% of the irrigated schemes.

The main objectives with regard to the natural resources are: -

- Preparation of natural resources maps for rational use and protection.
- Conservation of biodiversity and the ecological balance.
- Soil Conservation and protection against erosion, desertification and chemical pollution.
- Development of forestry and the natural range and protection against overgrazing.

With respect to the water resources, the strategy is centered on: -

- Gravity Irrigation during the flood periods.
- Rehabilitation of new dams.
- Extending pump schemes for winter cropping along the Blue Nile and White Nile and the River Nile.
- Maximum and efficient use of ground water and surface water by constructing embankments along the seasonal streams.
- Explore measures for desilting of existing dams and make necessary future precautions.
- Take steps for manufacturing, locally, water-lifting devices, contracting canal weirs and drilling machines.

The strategy has also put special emphasis on some sectors, which have direct impact on the socio-economic welfare of the population.

In this connection the following objectives are aimed at: -

- Attainment of balanced regional development.
- Conservation and improvement of the environment and realization of sustainable development
- Poverty alleviation and equity in distribution of the national product.
- Environmental education and awareness with more opportunities for the rural-oriented programmes in the national information media.
- Facilitate accessibility of information to rural communities.

In the field of energy the biomass in the Sudan satisfies 80% of the country's energy demand. The remaining 20% is met by fossil fuel and hydropower.

The strategy on the use of energy sources is based on: -

- Environmental Conservation by pursuing a rational plan for afforestation and use of the forest resources.
- Economic and efficient use of energy.
- Development of alternative energy sources with concentration on the new and renewable sources and the technology that depends on domestic sources.

#### **2.1.4 The 5 Year Plan for Combating Desertification (1993):**

The plan was prepared by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to comply with Agenda 21 of Rio Declaration which has called for more care for the natural resources to safeguard their availability for future generations. During this period, a technical report on the geographical extent of desertification was produced.

#### **2.1.5 The Local Conferences:**

It worth mentioning that two of the local conferences were held during the past period. These were: - the conference on development of the pastoral sector in 1995 and the pastoralist women conference for development of the local communities.

### **2.2 After Ratification of the Convention:**

Following ratification of the convention in November 1995, two significant actions have been accomplished: -

#### **2.2.1 Preparation of the National Plan on the Environment (1996):**

The document has recognized desertification as the main environmental problem in the Sudan. It was jointly prepared by the relevant government departments and the National and International NGOs under the umbrella of the Ministry of Environment & Tourism.

#### **2.2.1 The National Forum for Preparation of the National Action Programme (1998):**

The National Forum has put forward a set of priorities which vary from one state to another taking into account the site specific characteristic of each State. The recommendations are a direct feedback from the States' workshops and seminars which have raised the level of awareness of the participating stakeholders. Also the forum has gained consensus on some national recommendations such as the financial mechanism (NDF), identify of the focal point and coordination and partnership. More details about this forum will be discussed later under a separate sub-title.

### **3. Institutional and Legal Measures for Implementing CCD:**

#### **3.1 Institutional Measures:**

On its preparatory arrangement for implementing the UNCCD, the NDDU received a technical support from the European Economic Community for strengthening its capacity. The support was devoted to training, purchase of 2 vehicles and GIS unit.

NDDU has a data bank of information from the affected States. The data are on vegetative cover, soil, surface and groundwater, distribution of rainfall and human population.

Using available information and applying the GIS, the state of desertification in the affected areas has been classified.

The indicators used were: geomorphology and soils, rainfall distribution, water resources, land use and population distribution. The following table shows the degree of desertification and Table (1) depicts the desertified areas and the degree of desertification:

**Table (1): Degree of Desertification "Using G.I.S."**

	<b>Degree of Desertification</b>	<b>Area Km<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>% in Relation to Total Country Area</b>
1.	Desert	593366	23.8
2.	Very Severe	109599	4.4
3.	Severe	72674	2.4
4.	Moderate	82822	3.3
5.	Slight	96038	3.9
6.	Very Slight	305243	12.2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>1259743</b>	<b>50.0</b>

*Source: NDDU Files (1997)*

Subsequent to the ratification of the convention, a ministerial resolution authorizing and recognizing the NDDU as the sole focal point and co-ordinating body for the UNCCD was issued. A steering committee chaired by the Under-Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture was then constituted for the unit. The Unit's co-ordinator is a rapporteur to the steering committee.

The committee includes members from the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, UNDP, the Ministries of Social Planning, International Co-operation and Investment, External Relations and the High Council for Environment and Natural Resources. Legal measures are now under-way for authorizing the already existing desertification control co-ordinating council. A technical committee has also been constituted for the unit. It's members include representatives from the High Council for Environment and Natural Resources, the NGOs, UNDP and the Desertification and Desert Cultivation Studies Centre (DADCSC). A Co-ordinator was assigned to the technical committee. His main duties were to make contacts with the states for holding the states and specialized workshops and the national forum on the specified time according to the schedule.

Within the UN Voluntary Action Programme for African Countries, the UNDP assigned a National Volunteer to assist the unit in executing its duties.



A close link and co-ordination is being maintained in the process of implementing the UN Conventions on desertification, climate change and biodiversity. This is manifested by appointment of the national co-ordinator for climate change, the principal consultant and the information consultant to the project for strengthening the strategic planning, in the NDDU technical committee. In the same manner the NDDU is represented in the technical committee for climate change. At the States' level three States, Gezira, Northern, and Sennar have taken the initiative and formed their coordinating councils.

In connection with the voluntary work, it is worth-mentioning that in 1994 all of the NGOs which are involved with combating desertification and accredited by the UNCCD CoP have united under the term RIOD. RIOD's membership is open to all relevant NGOs and CBOs. They have now reached 12 member organizations. RIOD has a strong contact with the NDDU, the sub-regional regional and World Organizations. It is the Sudan Focal Point of the World NGOs network which is working for combating desertification. It takes serious initiatives in social animation, awareness and participation in combating desertification. Its work is currently being supervised by a temporary steering committee. Its office is being housed temporarily in the premises of one of its member organizations.

RIOD's work is governed by the Sudan Council on Voluntary Action (SCOVA) and under supervision of the humanitarian aid agency. The organization has formed the Group of Women and Desertification in 1997. The Group has institutional contacts with the women activities co-ordinating committee in the Ministry of Social Planning, in addition to its contacts with the World Women Group.

### **3.2 The Legal Status:**

At present the NDDU is institutionally under the land use and Desertification Control Administration which in turn comes under the Federal Ministry of Agriculture. There was a trend for upgrading it to a national council with subsidiary branches in the affected states. Recently the national forum has set forth two recommendations:

These recommendations can be illustrated as follows:

- \* Establishing of an organization which will be accountable to the presidency and mandated with all aspects of the environment including desertification.
- \* An organization which will be directly responsible to the Federal Minister of Agriculture and Forestry and concerned with the control of desertification.

The three options are still being under thorough investigation.

Existing legislative acts pertaining to the use and conservation of natural resources have been applicable since the colonial era. They are periodically reviewed and strengthened. They include among others the Wildlife and National Parks Act 1986 and the Forestry Policy and Law 1989.

Measures are now underway for passing a legislation for protecting the grazing resources.

#### **4. Concept of Participation and Awareness:**

##### **4.1 Information and Awareness:**

In July 5-7/1995, the NDDU in collaboration with the UNCCD Secretariat sponsored a workshop on information and national awareness raising on the convention. The list of participation included: the National Co-ordinating Council for Combating Desertification, UNDP, the EC, the UNCCD Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee, IGAD, the Arab Organization for Agricultural Development, the Pastoralists and the Farmers' Union, the Women's Group and the NGOs. During the workshop, the 5-year programme on desertification was reviewed.

During the workshops and the forum, the radio and some daily newspapers have helped in disseminating of information about the Convention. Also some printed material was distributed to the participants.

The NGOs (RIOD) issue a two month periodical; it's main target groups being the community based organizations in order to acquaint these organizations with the UNCCD, the trials of the local communities in combating desertification and alleviating drought effects. The NGOs under RIOD make use of the information media (daily papers, radio and TV) in introducing the UNCCD and their activities across the country.

Beside the aforementioned activities, the government's strategy in its awareness campaigns concentrates on the following:

- \* Environmental education which will focus on formal education. Efforts are being made to adjust curricula in the primary and secondary stages to include environmental studies. It is known that education is continuous and its impact is more effective. At present environment is an optional subject in the secondary school certificate examinations. Environment has been included in the curricula of Gedaref, Wadi El Nil, Ahfad Universities in the faculties of engineering, economics, education and agriculture via the sustainable development support project.
  
- \* Popular awareness campaigns have a direct effect on the concerned population. They present one of the commitments of the desertification control programme. Work in this field needs support in transport facilities, equipment in order to reach the target groups.



Contact with the rural communities has only been made through their representatives who took part in workshops in the state during the preparation for the national forum to formulate the national programme for combating desertification. In a large country like the Sudan, lack of means of transportation is a real obstacle that prevents the people from realizing their aspiration and ambition. Contact and transfer of knowledge which help in efforts to combat desertification are always welcomed by all partners. Hence support of these efforts is one of the top priorities of the states to carry out the desertification control programme efficiently.

The establishment of the national council for combating desertification with branches in the states affected with drought will help a great deal in strengthening partnership and consultation approach.

Rural dwellers who suffer from the impact of drought and desertification will be represented in the states' desertification control councils via their popular organizations e.g. pastoralists' union, farmers' union. In the absence of consultation mechanism contact is made between the centre and the States' Ministries of Agriculture and Natural Resources in the affected States in order to arrive at the desired coordination.

The partnership approach has been sincerely adopted in dealing with all the concerned stakeholders at the domestic level as well as at the regional and international levels. For instance, UNDP office in Khartoum holds a membership of both the steering and technical committees of NDDU. Meetings with national NGOs have been maintained throughout the process and is still continuing.

Sudan also has maintained its real and old friendly relationship with UNSO. One of its staff attended the national forum.

Sudan celebrates the desertification day in a jointly manner with NGOs, UNDP.

At the International level the Sudan represented by NDDU attended most the international, regional and sub-regional conferences. Specifically the following were attended:

1. IGAD Sub-regional Conference: it was held in Eritrea in 1995. Both National and sub-regional programmes were discussed at the conference. Sudan presentation included both government and non-government organizations.
2. IGAD Sub-regional Conference for follow-up UNCCD Implementation: It was held in Addis Ababa in July 1997.
3. IGAD Sub-regional Conference, Nairobi, December 1996: it was a preparatory meeting towards the 10<sup>th</sup> Session on the Convention.

4. IGAD Sub-regional meeting, Nairobi, March 1999: On consultation for preparation of country reports on the Convention.
5. All Meetings of the International negotiating committee except the 10<sup>th</sup> Session.
6. The First and Second Conference of Parties.

A similar role has been executed by the national NGOs which are involved with combating desertification. These organizations have a special role with regard to women activities for control of desertification. The NGOs under (RIOD) have accomplished many programmes in the way of reaching a common strategy and definition of roles for the Convention.

#### **4.2 Procedures Adopted for Preparation of NAP:**

On embarking on the preparation of the national action programme to control desertification and mitigate the effect of drought in the Sudan, several factors have been considered:

- \* The country is expansive with an area of 2.5 million km<sub>2</sub>. It includes different ecological zones extending from the desert in the north to the rain forests in the south. The arid land comprises 72% of its area. The 13 affected states are found within this arid land.
- \* Poverty is prevalent in the desertified area and it has been given special consideration in the programme priorities.
- \* The successes and failures of past experiences.
- \* The plan for desertification control was the outcome of consultation of the consultants team with the affected citizens, state governments, NGOs and community based organizations. The plan included the following directives: -
  - Measures to improve the environment and alleviate poverty.
  - Conserve the natural resources by rational management, raising people's awareness and provision of alternative sources of energy.
  - Improvement of the institutional framework by defining the roles and authorities at different levels in land use planning and encouragement of decentralization, provision of security and equity in distributing of land to local inhabitants.
  - Support research institutes that deal with drought and desertification issues.
  - Provision of the various required information.

- Give more attention to monitoring and evaluation.

After receiving the draft of the plan steps have been taken for the formulation of the national action programme. These steps can be illustrated in the following manner:

\* Step One:

Workshops have been held at the States' level. In each affected state 30 persons participated in the workshop, 20 participants represented the rural communities while the remainder came from the government, NGOs and UN projects. Three papers written by people from the states were presented and discussed by the participants. The papers covered the following areas of interest: -

- State's previous experience in combating desertification;
- Programme priorities;
- Division of roles among the main concerned stakeholders.

The outcome from the mentioned above exercise can be explained as follows:

- Consensus on the programme priorities;
- Strengthening the principle of partnership among the concerned stakeholders;

\* Step Two:

At this level, special workshops were held in Khartoum to discuss some issues related to planning and decision-making. The number of participants ranged between 50 and 80 persons. The participants came from different backgrounds such as management and decision-making, research institutes, universities, NGOs and pastoralists trade union. The papers were prepared by experts from the Ministries of Agriculture and Forestry, Social Planning, Environment & Tourism and the Universities of Khartoum and Sudan for Science and Technology, Agricultural Research Corporation and some independent experts. Nine papers were presented and covered the following topics: -

- Funding Mechanism;
- Role of National NGOs in combating desertification;
- The government institutional framework and its compatibility to the work of NGOs and CBOs;
- Assessment and review of the role of research institutes that deal with drought and desertification;

- Constraints in adoption of research findings in the field of combating desertification;
- Introduction of participation and partnership approaches in combating desertification;
- Education and communication and their role in combating desertification;
- Strategic planning for sustainable development; and
- Monitoring and evaluation.

These workshops concentrated on: -

- \* The establishment of the national desertification fund;
- \* The use of the scientific approach in dealing with drought and desertification, and
- \* Strengthening of trust and co-ordination among all the concerned stakeholders.

Step Three:

Under the auspices of H.E the Federal Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, the National Forum was held in Khartoum. A total of 126 persons participated in the forum; 74 participants represented the affected states and the other 52 participants represented a variety of institutions at the federal level.

Six papers were introduced and they focused on:

- \* The funding mechanism;
- \* Capacity building and human development;
- \* Traditional knowledge;
- \* Programme priorities and co-ordination;
- \* Monitoring and evaluation.

It is quite evident that the national forum has been the end point in the planning process for the preparation of the national action programme. This process is regarded as the sole activity that reflects what has been done on the implementation of UNCCD.

The main recommendations of the national forum can be summarized as follows: -

**Recommendations of the National Forum:**

**1. Institutional Framework for Programme Administration:**

Pursuant to UNCCD it is recommended that the country should constitute a national co-ordinating council for combating desertification and mitigating the effect of drought, from relevant institutes and organizations. The council is to be lawfully and politically empowered and have subsidiary branches in the states affected by desertification.

**2. Financial Resources:**

Pursuant to articles 20 and 21, it is recommended that financial mechanism i.e. a national desertification fund for combating desertification be established and the government to be the main contributor in establishing this funding mechanism. Furthermore, the government is to shoulder responsibility of approaching and urging potential financiers e.g. government organizations, private sector, CBOs, national and international organizations and agencies to participate in establishing and administering the proposed funding mechanism.

**3. Programmes Priorities Administration and Co-ordination:**

- It is recommended that methodologies of project preparation with respect to the national action programme be unified in order to comply with the UNCCD concept and directives.
- Pursuant to article 16, Sudan is to open channels for co-operation with country parties to prepare and implement regional and sub-regional programmes and co-ordinate the collection and exchange of relevant information.
- The country is to adopt a unified system of policies, decisions and regulations with regard to control of desertification and mitigating the effect of drought. This approach is to be maintained through a consultation process involving the federal government, the States' governments and the local communities. In the same manner it is recommended that a bank of information on environmental, constitutional and economical issues pertaining to drought and desertification be established for provision and exchange of information among the Federal Government, States' governments and relevant institutions and organizations.
- Bottom-top approach is to be adopted in planning, execution, follow-up and decision-making.



#### **4. Capacity Building and Human Resource Development:**

- Training of local leaders and raising their capacities in management, perception and application of environmental rules.
- Strengthening the role of women, youth organizations, NGOs and pastoralists' and farmers' groups through awareness raising and encouragement of their activities and innovations.
- Application of suitable intermediate technology.
- Approaching the private and expertise organizations to support application of new technology and research findings in combating desertification.
- Training and capacity building of those who are involved with combating desertification at the Federal and State's level.
- To direct research work and all institutions involved with desertification to be responsive to the needs of the local communities.
- To make use of the intermediate technology and traditional knowledge.
- A special consideration for training the sub-ordinate cadre.
- Take advantage of the use of international co-operation for provision of expertise and equipment.
- To incorporate desertification control programmes in the national education curricula and make use of all communication means (information media, clubs, and mosques) in the training programmes for environmental awareness raising in the affected states.

#### **5. Indigenous Knowledge, Science and Technology:**

- Establishment of a national mechanism for collection, classification, and authentication of indigenous knowledge which is connected with the concept, belief and practice for coping with drought and desertification.
- Conduct research work based on indigenous knowledge, for combating desertification and mitigating the effect of drought.
- To make all possible arrangements for coordination and follow-up with respect to application of the research findings.
- To incorporate all factors of sustainability in the feasibility studies of development and investment projects. Issue and apply environmental laws to safeguard environmental sustainability of these projects.

- Establishment of a mechanism to follow-up and evaluate implementation of projects which are meant for combating desertification and mitigating effect of drought. This mechanism is to work in harmony with both the centre and the States.

### **4.3 Contribution of National NGOs:**

The national NGOs through networking structure, they have worked in close association with the government concerned institutions. The following are some activities reflect part of the participation of the networking of the national NGOs: -

- \* The Forum on Desertification and Co-ordination / UNCCD - Khartoum - March 1997.
- \* Participation in the Preparation of the National Action Plan for the National Action Programme.
- \* The Workshop on the Role of the Information Media in Implementing the UNCCD - Khartoum, 1997.
- \* Preparation of NGOs directly.
- \* This was based on surveying 10 of the affected States in the period (June 1997 - March 1998). The tour included awareness raising and programme priorities.
- \* Workshop on Strategic Planning of the Role of Women in Implementing the UNCCD - N. Kordofan, December 1997.
- \* The Workshop on the Role of Research Institutes in Implementing UNCCD, Khartoum - March 1998.
- \* NGOs Networking for Implementing UNCCD, Khartoum - March 1998.
- \* Workshop on Women Opportunities in obtaining Loans and Donations and the possibility of obtaining support from Donor Organization in support of UNCCD, Khartoum - June 1998.
- \* NGOs and CBOs Participatory Approach in the Preparation of NAP - October 1998.
- \* The Five Sessions of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee.
- \* IGAD Workshop on Role of NGOs work on the Sub-regional Level - Addis Ababa, June 1996.

- \* Role of NGOs and Research Institutes in Implementing IGAD Sub-regional Programme with regard to UNCCD.
- \* The First and 2<sup>nd</sup> Conference of Parties.
- \* Workshop on the work of Women on Desertification - Oslo, 1997.
- \* The Regional Workshop on Women and Desertification - Cameroon, 1998.
- \* The International Conference on Women and Desertification - Nairobi, 1998.

**5. Consultation and World Community Support:**

Sudan co-operation with the International Community in combating desertification has been going on for a long time. This co-operation has continued and is continuing now. It enabled the NDDU to execute the State's workshops and the national forum for formulation of the NAP.

In addition to the Local Government contribution to satisfy the running cost and staff salaries, the unit, in 1997 received support from UNDP for preparation of a national plan to assist in the formulation of the national action programme. Later in 1997 additional support was received from the United Nations office to Combat Desertification and Drought (UNSO) for carrying out the process of the national action programme on the National Action Programme.

**Table (2) illustrates items of expenditure:**

<b>Source</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Items of Expenditure</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
UNDP	\$60000	Project Document for Preparation of NAP	
UNSO	\$160000	State's workshops, specialized workshops and National Forum.	\$30000 for capacity building of NGOs and \$10000 for support of research institutes.

Source: NDDU Files (1998)

**6. Measures Adopted for Activating the Implementation of Desertification Control Programmes:**

Previous measures have not been studied and scrutinized precisely. State-wise a limited number of trials in desertification control has been studied but not all factors leading to desertification have been analyzed. The on-going projects have not been evaluated yet. This is attributed to the absence of a lack of financial resources.

Within the context of the convention, research institutes have not been engaged in the process at this stage except for some consultancy work. Furthermore, local people did not take part in natural resource management except for trials in social forests.

Sudan has founded from its own resources an academic centre for desertification and desert cultivation studies. This centre lies under the umbrella of Khartoum University.

At present, the States governments have put forward one-year pilot project proposals. It is anticipated that financing will be provided jointly by the local community, the States' governments and an international donor.

#### **7. Government Financial Support:**

The Government continued to supervise, support and endeavour to implement the UNCCD. Both the political and executive leaderships who participated in the national forum committed themselves to support the national programme to combat desertification.

There are still some projects in reforestation, improvement and development of pasture which lack funding and need the government helping hand.

On the States level, Governments of states contributed to expenses incurred in the States' workshop and national forum. The contribution covered cost of travel and accommodation of participants, facilitators and discussants.

With regard to the support for implementing the national action programme, this is pending establishment of the financial mechanism "National Desertification Fund". Guidelines for establishing the mechanism will be made through consultation of the government with UNDP and UNSO. However, some of the financial support priorities are envisaged as follows:

- Training in the various fields of natural resources.
- Provision of transportation and communication means in all of the affected states.
- Support for scientific and research institutes.
- Support for national NGOs.

#### **8. Benchmarks and Indicators:**

Based on all activities, consultations and recommendations that have come out of the seminars and workshops, a consensus has been reached on the nature of priority projects in each state. The presence of an early warning system with the relief and humanitarian agency has helped in monitoring environmental anomalies.

Presently methods for monitoring all aspects of the environmental changes are lacking. The only available information which is obtained on an annual basis is on meteorology, forestry, range and pasture and wildlife. Its

availability for evaluation of the expected changes depends on the annual surveys which are usually untimely and have no sustainability. Use can be made of the available information by applying GIS.

In the context of applying research findings for combating desertification and sustaining development, a technological package for soil reclamation and breeding of drought resistant crops has been developed. A similar package in alternative energy is now being introduced. However, most of these findings are in need of the necessary support for sustainability.

Indigenous knowledge for combating desertification and coping with drought furnishes an additional early warning method. However, the main constraint is the inaccessibility and lack of communication for gathering the information in time.

The degree of desertification in each state has already been interpreted through the use of GIS. However, field checking for verifying and updating the information remains as a cornerstone.

With regard to the States' experience from projects executed for combating desertification, it has also been suggested that the stakeholders' i.e. the rural people are to participate in the process of monitoring and evaluation.