Aid and Development Effectiveness: Towards Human Rights, Social Justice and Democracy

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REALITY OF AID 2010 REPORT

The Reality of Aid

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Writer/Editor: Alex Wilks

Copy editor: Jose Enrique Africa

Layout and Cover Design: Jennifer Padilla

Translators: Marie-Gabrielle Denizet (French); Ruben Fernandez,
Rosa Ines Ospina and Ana Judith Blanco (Spanish)

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The Reality of Aid Network

The Reality of Aid Network exists to promote national and international policies that contribute to new and effective strategies for poverty eradication built on solidarity and equity. Established in 1993, the Reality of Aid is a collaborative, non-profit initiative, involving non-governmental organisations from North and South.

The Reality of Aid publishes regular, reliable reports on international development cooperation and the extent to which governments, North and South, address the extreme inequalities of income and the structural, social and political injustices that entrench people in poverty.

The network has been publishing reports and Reality Checks on aid and development cooperation since 1993.

These reports provide a critical analysis of how governments address the issues of poverty and whether aid and development cooperation policies are put into practice.

The Reality of Aid Project Management Committee is made up of regional representatives of all participating agencies.

REALITY OF AID NETWORK Management Committee (2010)

Chairperson/representing Asia/Pacific CSO members
Antonio Tujan, Jr.
IBON Foundation and
Reality of Aid Asia/Pacific
3/f IBON Center
114 Timog Avenue, Quezon City 1103
Philippines
Telefax: +632 927 6981
atujan@ibon.org

Vice Chairperson/representing Non-OECD country CSO partners
Brian Tomlinson
Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC)
1 Nicolas Street Suite 300, Ottawa
Ontario, Canada K1N 7B7
Fax: +1 613 241 5302
Tel: +1 613 241 7007
btomlinson@ccic.ca

Representing African CSO members
Vitalice Meja
Reality of Aid Africa
Kirichwa Road, Kilimani
P.O. Box: 5252-00100
Nairobi, Kenya
Tel: + 254 20 3861590 /+ 254 20 2494795
roaafrica-secretariat@realityofaid.org

Representing Latin American CSO partners
Ruben Fernandez
Asociación Latinoamericana de Organizaciones de Promoción al Desarollo, A.C. (ALOP)
Calle 55 No. 41 - 10, Medellin-Colombia
Tel: +57 4 2166822
presidencia@region.org.co

Representing European Country CSO partners
Bodo Ellmers
European Network on Debt and Development (EURODAD)
Rue d'Edimbourg 18-26
1050 Brussels, Belgium
Tel: +322 894 4645
bellmers@eurodad.org

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Overall editorial control of the Reality of Aid 2010 Report lies with the Reality of Aid Management Committee, but the views expressed in the reports do not necessarily reflect the views of the Management Committee, or of IBON Foundation that published this Report.

The Management Committee was assisted by Alex Wilks and Edward Thorpe as editorial consultants, Jose Enrique Africa as copy editor, and Josephine Dongail as managing editor.

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Preface

The aid effectiveness agenda for reform of aid quality has evolved progressively since commitments were made for donor harmonisation in the first High Level Forum in 2002 in Rome. A more comprehensive approach was adopted in the Paris Declaration at the second High Level Forum in 2005, but these reforms remained limited to technocratic approaches for efficiency in aid management and delivery.

Even then Reality of Aid reports challenged the reform agenda, calling for an end to conditionality in its 2002 Report and proposing a comprehensive range of reforms in aid governance in its 2004 Report. Towards the 2008 High Level Forum in Accra, an even broader platform of organisations both from rich and poor countries called for a more thoroughgoing reform of development cooperation. Civil society organisations (CSOs) at the Accra Forum made a strong call for development effectiveness as a new agenda for reform that went deeper and way beyond the management parameters of aid effectiveness.

The Accra High Level Forum responded to the proposals and challenges presented by CSOs, developing countries and other aid actors, resulting in the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA). The AAA deepened to some degree the understanding of aid effectiveness and broadened its scope to include civil society and parliamentarians, besides other actors, as well as to encompass South-South cooperation with its unique approaches and contributions to development.

But a thoroughgoing reform of the development cooperation system remains largely incomplete and undefined. This 2010 Reality of Aid Report demonstrates that implementation of aid effectiveness reforms for management and delivery under the Paris Declaration and the Accra Agenda for Action are far from optimal at country level. Furthermore, the severe fragmentation of cooperation efforts and the dichotomies of North-South and South-South cooperation perpetuate ineffectiveness and anti-development power relationships. A more comprehensive and equitable approach to development cooperation is urgently required. All stakeholders must embrace development effectiveness as a "third reform agenda" focusing on results to achieve the goals of poverty reduction and human rights-based development. In doing so, these reforms should address the urgency of policy coherence for development, with a renewed development cooperation architecture that promotes the centrality of the poor and their developing countries in the aid system through equality and mutuality in development cooperation.

The fourth High Level Forum (HLF4) in Busan, South Korea in 2011 presents a unique opportunity for these reforms. But the objectives for HLF4 will have to reach beyond taking stock of the achievements and shortcomings of the Paris/Accra aid effectiveness reforms and the need to press forward on these earlier reforms. The challenge and opportunity for Busan is a new political agreement, a "Busan Declaration", which establishes a development effectiveness framework for aid effectiveness reform and sets the path for the construction of an equitable, inclusive and progressive architecture for development cooperation, possibly towards a new United Nations (UN) Convention on Development Effectiveness.

This 2010 Reality of Aid Report articulates Southern and Northern civil society perspectives through the lens of development effectiveness. It draws from the rich experience of CSOs in 30 countries, revealing the problems and potentials of remaining in narrow aid effectiveness approaches, and pointing to the needed transformation in development cooperation to achieve poverty reduction, human rights, social justice and sustainable development.

The Reality of Aid Network focuses on those aspects of development effectiveness relevant to achieving genuine aid effectiveness, while acknowledging that the totality of development in all its economic, political, social and cultural aspects is expansive. However development cooperation and assistance do play catalytic roles in hastening development, and in certain countries can be central to reducing poverty and achieving development goals.

This Report seeks to provide rigorous analysis for challenging accustomed notions in aid and development cooperation, as well as suggest practical measures for moving forward on urgent reforms. Its proposals are addressed to government and non-government stakeholders at international, national and even community levels. We hope it helps guide what will certainly be a complex process as well as stimulate thinking in further creative and productive directions.

Antonio Tujan, Jr.
Chairperson
Management Committee
Reality of Aid Network

Political Overview: Towards Development Effectiveness

The Reality of Aid Management Committee

1. Introduction

Aid effectiveness was high on the political agenda when the last Reality of Aid report was launched in August 2008. In early September 2008 the Accra High Level Forum resulted in significant extra commitments by both donor and aid recipient governments. But then, less than two weeks after the end of this conference, the investment bank Lehman Brothers collapsed and plunged the entire international financial system into an unprecedented panic.

Governments focused their attention on trying to stabilise the system – shoring up their finances and then plugging the holes that the crisis exposed in the financial architecture. Aid effectiveness was deprioritised, with few governments producing substantial Accra implementation plans and even fewer throwing serious political weight to put them into practice.

The financial crisis response shows how countries can work together and support each other in times of difficulty. Rich country governments managed to find astonishing sums of money to spend on bank bailouts and fiscal stimulus to rescue their own economies. Yet the long-term effort to resolve the poverty and environmental crises in Southern countries also requires political attention. Millions of people worldwide have insufficient food to eat, are vulnerable to disease and disaster, and receive minimal income. Rich countries have already made a series of pledges on poverty reduction and environmental protection. These must not be abandoned now following the financial meltdown that rich countries caused by their own lax policies and regulation.

Until the Lehman Brothers collapse, the last decade had been encouraging. There was renewed political commitment to international poverty eradication, significant increases in aid levels and some major reforms in aid delivery. Partly because of civil society pressure, governments adopted a series of aid effectiveness agreements, notably the Paris Declaration of 2005 and the Accra Agenda for Action of 2008. These contain many useful principles and commitments. But they are being implemented in a way that is too technical and instrumental to transform how aid is governed and how it relates to poorer people. The 2008 Reality of Aid report summarised: "The [Paris] Declaration has not fundamentally changed the reality of aid relationships. The principles are in practice limited to technical issues of aid management rather than to successful development policy-making."[1]

Yet several governments are showing signs of neglecting even these limited commitments. This is partly due to the general tightening of public spending as governments try to reduce their yawning budget deficits. There is also political pressure to support struggling home country exporters and to use aid as a foreign policy tool, for example by countries which have deployed troops abroad.

Facing such pressures, aid advocates need to be clearer than ever about what aid should aim to achieve and how it should operate. Development cooperation will be best placed to resist budget cuts if it is clear that it will be well-spent and achieve its objectives of poverty reduction, and if there is transparent reporting on its results.

This report – with 36 contributions from Reality of Aid members in 30 countries – sets out a civil society view of current and future aid and development relationships. It provides insights from aid-recipient and aid-providing countries that reveal the problems and potentials of aid and aid effectiveness approaches. The official steps towards aid effectiveness are assessed and the limitations of the steps being taken are pointed out.

Back in 2005, decision-makers chose 2010 as the deadline year for several aid-related official targets including doubling aid to Africa and a series of aid effectiveness reforms. While there has been some significant progress in the last five years, governments and international institutions have still clearly fallen far short of the goals they set for themselves.

Now, looking ahead to the 2011 High Level Forum on aid effectiveness in South Korea, the Reality of Aid network is putting forward a new and more comprehensive vision with a new set of goals and new practices. This report fleshes out Reality of Aid's vision of development effectiveness. It emphasises that development cooperation should be judged on the basis of outcomes on the ground. These outcomes are not just in the delivery of goods or services, or higher income, but in terms of social and economic justice, and the increased capacity of poor and marginalised populations to shape policy and practice.

The Reality of Aid network calls for a bolder, broader approach that will lead to genuine development effectiveness – an approach that is based on protecting and fulfilling the rights of impoverished and marginalised people and on empowering them to claim their rights on an on-going basis. A thoroughgoing transformation of aid thinking and of the aid architecture is needed to achieve this. This transformation will have to be accompanied by a series of reforms beyond aid encompassing trade, investment, migration, debt, taxation, intellectual property, climate change and security.

Development effectiveness is centred on shifting power and enabling rights. Rather than aid being provided as a charitable contribution to the well-being of others, it should be a formal commitment to empower poor and vulnerable communities to claim their rights. Rather than depend on voluntary principles, Reality of Aid calls for an affirmative action approach where stronger parties commit to provide support to weaker ones. Only when development cooperation is recast as a relationship of committed solidarity in the fight against inequality can it lead to social and environmental justice. Aid relations should be based on independence and autonomy following national sovereignty and democratic governance principles, and responding to priorities set through local democratic participatory processes and institutions. Transparency and responsive reporting are also required to ensure that aid providers and recipients are accountable and responsible to their citizens.

2. Aid spending – another victim of the crisis?

Development is about much more than money, and development cooperation is about much more than aid budgets. However money is certainly required. The governments of rich countries and their citizens have a moral and political obligation to help less wealthy countries meet their human rights obligations to their citizens. This obligation is enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted by the United Nations (UN) over forty years ago and has been reaffirmed at many subsequent summits, including UN and G20 meetings held in 2009 and 2010.

Aid levels have increased in recent years. However official development assistance (ODA) remains below half the UN target of 0.7% of gross national income (GNI). (See ROA article in Chapter 4) Only five donor countries have reached this target and very few others – including Belgium, the United Kingdom (UK) and perhaps Spain – are currently on course to join them. ODA levels declined between 2008 and 2009 and several governments have reduced aid spending or pushed back their timetabled aid increases. The financial crisis should not be an excuse for such measures but the US government for instance has already postponed its pledge to double aid by 2012. The example of Japan is also worrying. Since Japan's 1990s financial crisis the government has slashed the aid budget for 11 years in a row and this is now down to just around half of its 1997 peak. This pattern need not repeat itself, however, if politicians and civil society groups mobilise to protect development spending.

The reality is that rich countries were already off-target on aid levels even long before the financial crisis. While donor country GNI per capita grew by more than 200% between 1961 and 2008, aid per capita increased by just 66% over the same period. At 1.8% of government revenue in 2007, the level of aid is even lower than the 2% level in the 1980s and early 1990s.

Most bilateral donors provide mainly grants. After the crisis, however, loan finance for developing countries increased faster than grant finance with a 20% increase in ODA loans in 2009 from the previous year. France, Germany and Japan were among the governments which increased their ODA lending dramatically; the World Bank (WB), regional development banks and the European Commission (EC) also provided extra loans. This means that many recipient countries are accepting more expensive finance than before, indebting future governments who will be using citizens' taxes to repay foreign creditors instead of investing these in self-reliant development.

Official figures are misleading. Governments are allowed to report debt cancellation, spending in their countries on refugees and students from developing countries, and spending on technical assistance by their own service providers as aid. Reality of Aid calculates that less than half (45%) of bilateral aid in 2008 was actually available to developing country partners to program according to their own priorities. Donor governments also count spending in support of their foreign policy objectives as aid, and are even maneuvering to use ODA to fulfill their international climate finance obligations despite a clear agreement that climate funding should be new and additional.

There is therefore still much for rich governments to do in terms of providing sufficient aid in line with their pledges.

3. Aid effectiveness – a balance sheet

Governments set several goals when they agreed to aid effectiveness reforms. These were to reduce transaction costs in the aid system, increase the predictability of financial transfers, increase accountability through developing country ownership of programs, and achieve greater results in reducing poverty. The official aid effectiveness agenda calls for rationalising the number and type of donor interventions, making these more predictable and transparent, allowing recipient governments to determine how to spend incoming aid, and improving accountability for results.

It is now five years after the Paris principles were adopted, and two years after they were affirmed and extended in the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA). Some processes are underway to improve spending efficiency but few fundamental relationships and ways of doing business have changed. By mid-2010, about half of donors introduced new or updated aid effectiveness implementation plans in line with the AAA. But many of these are incomplete and cherry-pick aspects of the Agenda while ignoring others. For example the UK's aid effectiveness plan uses "a minimalist implementation of the Paris Declaration" that ignores key AAA pledges on technical assistance and country systems. The Canadian government reworked the AAA and came up with its own seven goals for aid effectiveness while omitting some of those that governments had agreed upon in Accra.

Governments which have yet to produce aid effectiveness plans and update their procedures must do so. Governments which have produced plans must review them, in consultation with civil society, to ensure that they are comprehensive and thorough. Then these plans must be followed through with meaningful action. The rest of this section reviews what governments have done to implement their Paris and Accra aid effectiveness pledges.

Country allocation

Official aid effectiveness agreements correctly argue that one of the best ways to reduce transaction costs and increase efficiency is for donors to focus their funding on fewer countries and fewer sectors. Several countries – such as Italy, Spain, Sweden and Canada – are indeed now concentrating their aid in fewer countries. The governments of Italy and Sweden, for example, plan to halve the number of countries they support. However these governments are making their reductions on unclear grounds and with minimal civil society and recipient country consultation. In many cases these processes do not take account of the multiplicity of agencies at national and local levels that are involved in aid finance. In the USA, for example, aid reforms are limited to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and some State Department funding, leaving out foreign assistance managed by approximately 19 other US departments and agencies. Each of Spain's 17 Autonomous Regions plus many City Councils provide aid.

Development agency processes on country specialisation are only donor-driven tinkering at the margins of a larger problem, largely ignoring the interests especially of the poorest countries. Aid allocation still too frequently prioritises foreign policy objectives more than fighting poverty objectives. Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan appear in the top five of aid recipients for many donors, especially those countries with a military presence in that region. Some 17% of new aid programs since 2000 has been just for these three countries.

In contrast, countries in Latin America – a continent with few conflicts and few low-income countries – are being squeezed out (with the exception of Haiti). Impoverished Latin Americans in middle-income countries with high inequality are being overlooked. This redistribution is partly a result of pledges made at the 2005 G8 summit in Gleneagles where governments agreed to provide an additional US$25 billion a year to Africa by 2010 compared to 2004 levels. Still, while donor governments have made some reallocation towards Africa they are less than halfway to meeting this pledge this year. Overall aid levels have simply not increased fast enough to allow the additional spending promised for Africa while maintaining the spending for people living in poverty in other regions.

Within Africa some countries are even in danger of becoming aid orphans as donors concentrate their funding in a few "donor darlings" such as Ethiopia, Ghana or Mozambique. In 2008, excluding debt cancellation, 58% of Development Assistance Committee (DAC) aid to Sub-Saharan Africa went to only 10 African countries, with the remaining 38 countries left to share 42% of aid.

A similar phenomenon is occurring in India. There is a concentration of aid projects in relatively developed areas with donors increasingly directing aid to the few Indian states that they consider to be 'reform-minded'. The poorest states with weak economic management are neglected. The South Asian Network for Social and Agricultural Development comments that this "amounts to punishing the poor for the failures of their rulers".

Another example of punishing the poor, and a worrying extension of the use of conditionality, is the allocation of aid to governments that agree to crack down on migration from their countries. France, Italy and Switzerland are among the governments now overtly allocating aid on this basis. In Italy the link between aid allocation and immigration control is outlined in a new law that was backed by the government. This law clearly conflicts with the main objectives of Italian development cooperation legislation and its international aid effectiveness commitments. Such conflicts illustrate the profound pressures that aid faces in many countries.

Sector allocation

The allocation of aid to sectors and end goals is not much better. Even though aid has increased, less than half of the new aid since 2000 has been spent on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The health sector has gained the most and aid has clearly contributed to the impressive 28% reduction in the child mortality rate in developing countries between 1990 and 2008. Aid to education also doubled between 2000 and 2008, encouraging large increases in school enrolments although raising concerns about questionable quality and graduation rates. Aid to agriculture has been slowly increasing from all-time lows in the 1990s, especially since 2008 when food prices peaked. But such spending is still at the mercy of donors' whims: there is little predictability and recipient countries are vulnerable to sentiments and fads in donor administrations over which they have no control.

The Canadian government has announced that it will focus its aid programming in three thematic areas: food security; sustainable economic growth; and children and youth. The Canadian Council for International Cooperation (CCIC) points out that this donor pre-determination of focus areas ignores the AAA commitment to country ownership and restricts the choices of governments and civil society in recipient countries.

The donor division of labour process moreover appears to be diverting attention from important cross-cutting issues. Women in Development Europe comments that donor division of labour "can lead to the marginalisation of gender equality and women's empowerment because division of labour efforts are organised around sectors – such as agriculture, transport, or health – rather than around development policy goals". The European Union (EU) report on division of labour gives the impression that gender equality is not considered at all during negotiations among donors about sectoral aid allocation.

Conditionality vs. ownership

Sector allocations should be decided by recipient countries themselves through their own national political processes. This idea of ownership has been accepted in international agreements on aid effectiveness. However while some donor governments have taken steps to listen to and respect recipient country views, and to use country systems, too many retain old habits of making the key decisions. Also, too many donors insist on financing projects rather than sectors or the budget as a whole. This restricts recipients' choices and often distorts the overall quality of health and education systems, for instance, where projects are driven by donors' emphasis on quick and measurable results.

Conditionality, the antithesis of ownership, is still alive and well in 2010. Several international organisations such as the WB and International Monetary Fund (IMF) have reviewed their practices, and governments such as the UK and Norway have introduced policies that severely limit conditionality. Yet recipients still concede policy space to donors and pledge specific donor-determined reforms to receive funding. The WB and IMF remain the worst offenders, indeed becoming even more powerful since the financial crisis, but they are not alone.

Mauricio Gómez, former Vice Minister of External Cooperation in Nicaragua, complained that when he was in office, "Everyone wanted to enter with their conditions. The World Bank wanted its conditions, then others like the European Commission entered and wanted other things with their criteria." This shows that conditionality is a problem of both interference and incoherence among donors who are failing to harmonise their approaches or align behind country systems. This is despite a clear commitment at the Accra conference that donors should use country systems and approaches unless there is a clear reason why they should not do so.

Tied aid

Too much aid is still tied to the purchase of goods and services provided by rich countries despite several agreements prohibiting this practice which Australian campaigners have dubbed "boomerang aid". This happens both formally, as in the case of US food aid or much of its technical assistance, or informally by structuring contracts and tendering procedures in ways that favour home country suppliers.

The Danish Institute for International Studies recently analysed hundreds of aid contracts tendered by different donors and they found that over 60% went to companies from the donor country concerned. Another study of UK aid found that 88% went to UK companies despite the UK's formal policy of 100% untying of its aid. This needs to be tackled head-on by reorganising donor procurement and dramatically scaling back donor-imposed and -directed technical assistance.

Conclusion

The initial motivations for introducing aid effectiveness reforms were to "increase the impact aid has in reducing poverty and inequality, increasing growth, building capacity and accelerating achievement of the MDGs".[3] However these worthy intentions have been lost in the translation into technical donor task teams, comparative advantage analyses, country context analyses and monitoring surveys. In many cases these aid effectiveness processes have been added on top of existing processes, rather than substituting for or simplifying them. These exercises are mainly donor-controlled and are unable to capture the quality of relationships or decision-making.

Aid programming has been reconsidered from the top down rather than from the bottom up. This has led to confusion and contradiction – for example, the US government has committed to increase the use of country systems while retaining legislation that mandates tied aid in some sectors.

Accountability is still too often a matter of the power of the purse rather than of power to the people. Mutual accountability, another key tenet of aid effectiveness agreements, is still largely rhetorical at present and has yet to acquire a clear meaning or established practice. Few donor governments are prepared to bind themselves with specific commitments, for example to provide predictable amounts of aid according to a clear timetable. When mutual accountability is applied it is generally reserved for the relationship between a donor and a recipient government and does not extend to the people themselves who are left with few means of redress if something goes wrong with a development intervention.

4. Towards development effectiveness

A new approach to prioritising aid and measuring its impact is urgently needed. Reality of Aid proposes one: development effectiveness. This emphasises building and strengthening long-term processes for citizens to claim and act on their rights. Rather than just short-term results on the ground, development effectiveness is needed for the fight against poverty, social exclusion and inequality to be placed on a sustainable footing.

Development effectiveness is more than just about aid and about finance. A range of additional policy changes are required to allow developing country governments to develop more self-sufficient economic policies that can lift their people out of poverty and continue to do so on an on-going basis. These include policies on debt, trade, investments, tax, migration, governance, and security.

Reality of Aid's comprehensive development effectiveness approach will be the basis for advocacy in the period leading up to and beyond the High Level Forum on aid effectiveness in South Korea in 2011. This approach comprises measures on:

- Human rights, social justice and empowerment;
- Reforming development partnerships based on solidarity, sovereignty and mutuality; and
- Transforming the aid architecture and ensuring policy coherence for development.

4a. Respecting human rights, empowering impoverished people, promoting gender equality and sustainability

Official aid effectiveness agreements state that aid must be managed to obtain clear results. The MDGs for example provide a useful set of benchmarks. Yet, too often, official development agencies still focus on macroeconomic indicators as much as on social and environmental ones. Aid frameworks are often too limited or imprecise in what they measure and in establishing links between financial inputs and outcomes on the ground. Instead, donor results for their development programs should be clearly and systematically assessed by their impact on broader concerns such as human rights, justice, gender equality and sustainability.

Human rights obligations

All governments – donor and recipient – are bound by human rights obligations. These have been set out in a series of UN summits and review meetings. Very often, however, implementation of these treaties and accountability to them has been slow and handled by officials different from those overseeing development cooperation, resulting in little connection between these agendas. We are a world away from the desirable situation where policy dialogue is based on shared obligations derived from international human rights law, obligations which are duly referenced in aid agreements that spell out what each party must do while respecting country ownership.

Donors must ensure that they promote a rights agenda when providing programmatic aid and when financing specific projects. This report puts forward several examples of where that is not happening. One is in the Philippines where the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) funded a dam that displaced 2,500 families and ruined the livelihoods of thousands of gold panners. When JBIC approved the funding it had no social or environmental guidelines. The Philippine government's Office of the Presidential Assistant on Indigenous People's Affairs reported that the free and prior informed consent of the Ibaloi people was not obtained before constructing the dam. Studies also showed that the project contractor tried to minimise the compensation payments it had to make. Construction continued, however, as Filipino citizens had no power to halt it or to demand that their rights be respected.

Australian aid to Indonesia for the Kalimantan Forests and Climate Partnership is another case that reveals many of the tensions emerging with a new wave of climate funding.[4] The project will flood around 100,000 hectares of land yet project documents do not mention the rights of affected indigenous or forest-dependent communities living in the project area. The project is moreover misdirected and focuses on changing the subsistence practices of small-scale farmers rather than on the agricultural industries, such as palm oil plantations, that are the main causes of large scale deforestation in the region. A major international NGO with implementation responsibilities on this project says that the major challenge for the project was "to change the behaviour of the community". The article on climate aid to Indonesia points out that this amounts to "conservation colonialism" and argues that the major behaviour change needed is in fact to increase the sensitivity of outside organisations coming in to work on projects.

Legal regimes governing aid and human rights as well as implementation practices are very varied. Many donors and international institutions have little or no specific policy on human rights and do little to examine how their project and policy interventions help or hinder the fulfilment of rights. Some others are making progress, at least on policy frameworks.

Many European donors have formally adopted a rights-based approach to aid. In Canada, parliament passed a law mandating aid ministers and officials to examine whether proposed aid interventions are "consistent with international human rights standards" as well as whether they "take into account the perspectives of the poor". This approach matches development effectiveness thinking and is completely in line with AAA which states that: "Gender equality, respect for human rights, and environmental sustainability are cornerstones for achieving enduring impact on the lives and potential of poor women, men and children. It is vital that all our policies address these issues in a more systematic and coherent way."[5]

However even though this rights approach is enshrined in Canadian domestic law, Canadian civil society is still highly critical of the Canadian government's failure to ensure systematic and coherent implementation of a human rights approach for its aid. Similarly, the Australian Council for International Development points out that it is still not clear "how the human rights framework is meaningfully applied to improve people's lives in the plethora of aid and development activities". Civil society groups are pushing for aid agencies to produce detailed policy guidelines on operationalising a rights-based approach.

Among the mechanisms that civil society and official donors have at their disposal are cutting some or all aid to governments that breach fundamental human rights norms. Examples of this that are explored in this report include the cutting of aid to Fiji after a coup there, and to Nicaragua after the new government oversaw fraudulent municipal elections and clamped down on national and international civil society groups. Donor moves to cut off aid are frequently seen as political gestures that infringe on sovereignty. However they are also efforts to fulfill donors' responsibility as rights duty bearers. In such situations it is important that donors do not entirely abandon the country but work to support and strengthen other aid delivery channels to ensure that poor and vulnerable people are not further disadvantaged.

The rights agenda also has implications for work on the ground by civil society groups. In Australia, among other countries, civil society groups are considering what a rights-based approach will mean for their own aid decisions and delivery. They correctly recognise that international NGOs are themselves power bearers who can influence how rights are exercised. Belgian NGOs have signed an agreement with the government where the NGOs made commitments on Paris Declaration implementation and the government made pledges on aid effectiveness and policy coherence for development.

A major international process of analysing civil society organization (CSO) effectiveness and practices has started – the global, CSO-led, Open Forum for CSO Development Effectiveness.[6] This is examining ways that international NGOs can introduce operational mechanisms to ensure accountability to their stakeholders, including local civil society groups on the ground. This is necessary, as the article from the Latin American Network on Debt, Development and Human Rights shows. This article cautions that too many European NGOs now implement priorities set by official organisations. Several have thus lost the more principled solidarity connection with Latin American groups and have even entered into direct competition with these groups for funding.

Some donors and other aid actors have begun to think seriously about the rights agenda. But they all need to introduce clear and binding human rights protocols to guide their future work at both project and program levels.

Gender equality

The reason why all donors need detailed policy guidelines is clearly exposed in several articles, including those by the Forum of Women's NGOs of Kyrgyzstan and by Women in Development Europe. The seven major donors to Kyrgyzstan, for example, produced a Joint Country Support Strategy for 2007-2010 which mentioned women's rights and gender equality as areas of assistance and concern. However, they did not allocate a budget for gender needs and did not link this strategy to the country's National Action Plan on Gender Equality. Nor did women's NGOs contribute to its creation. This shows, at best, a lack of joined-up thinking, and, at worst, a cynical tokenism in the treatment of women's rights.

Donors themselves report very limited progress on gender issues. They indicate that gender equality is a "principal objective" for just 4% of official aid funding. The amount of donor finance available for family planning has declined per woman since the mid-1990s. Direct ODA support to organisations and institutions working on women's equality amounted to only US$411 million in 2008.

Both donor and recipient governments know that women comprise the majority of the world's poorer people and that economic downturns affect women disproportionately on top of existing care work and prejudices. They need to ensure that gender equality becomes a major objective of aid interventions and that data differentiated by gender is produced to enable effective monitoring. A major way forward will be empowering women to be fully involved in key decisions about aid and about national policies.

Conclusion

Many donor organisations have begun to consider how to integrate human rights language and concerns into their policies and funding decisions. However none fully pass the test of having a systematic and coherent way to address this, as demanded by the AAA. This is because human rights are in many cases an afterthought rather than a core concern. As with environmental protection, it is best to change the core process design rather than add "end-of-pipe" solutions. This will require a major rethink by many official bodies and a whole new way of prioritising and making decisions. Nothing less is required if we are to make a bold move towards development effectiveness.

4b. Reforming development partnerships based on solidarity, sovereignty and mutuality

Development has too often been seen as a process of using outside expertise and finance rather than of using the knowledge and resources that are present in developing country communities. Inappropriate ideas brought in from the outside have led to social tension, environmental problems, cost overruns and other difficulties. But above all they have trampled on the sovereignty and rights of the communities that development is supposed to support.

Donor governments and institutions have agreed to shift 'ownership' of development to recipients. This is a positive and long overdue step. But this is often practised in only a limited way involving just ministers and senior officials. There is much talk and writing, but little practice, of downward accountability, mutual accountability and ownership. Detailed evaluation reports and donor-government working groups will be meaningless for accountability and ownership if impoverished people are not at the front and centre of the development process. It is vital that ownership rests not just with governments but with the people.

An open government with channels for popular participation at all stages of policy and project initiation, delivery and monitoring is vital. Parliamentarians, as representatives of the people, must play a crucial role in cross-checking the actions of the executive in aid negotiations. But popular scrutiny and control must also go beyond parliaments and other state bodies to encompass citizens' own organisations.

In Sri Lanka for example, citizens groups have worked for many years to urge international development organisations to press for true community participation before project planning phases. They continue to ensure that international financial institutions (IFIs) and their contractors are "constantly aware of watchdog action and monitoring by CSOs and communities". This has led to successes such as water privatization being prevented on 12 occasions and a proposed protected area management project being stopped. Learning from this experience, the WB included genuine engagement of CSOs in the formulation stages of a subsequent Forest Management Project.

The Green Movement of Sri Lanka forcefully argues that communities that take ownership of their own development futures can deliver far better results than externally planned and directed action. Direct people-to-people support can also substitute for the failings of participation in official assistance. Following the devastating tsunami in late 2004, the Kalametiya fishing community linked up with another fishing community in Maine, USA which undertook micro-scale fund-raising activities such as selling lemonade and toffee. The intervention at Kalametiya was recognised as one of the best post-tsunami rehabilitation projects in Sri Lanka.

What is needed for genuine people-led development is a change of mindset by officials. Rather than hire expensive consultants to conduct pro forma exercises, officials need to listen more to the people on the ground. This will require capacity and training for much increased cultural sensitivity and an awareness of the situation of poor and marginalised populations in national and sub-national politics.

Donor governments working in Nicaragua were so blinded by very limited and merely technical initiatives for improved aid effectiveness that they lost sight of the bigger picture. Hence they came to occupy a "virtual reality where everything felt fine despite the severe political crisis facing the country", according to KEPA. The aid effectiveness reforms promised by Nicaragua had shallow roots only in the executive branch of government and did not involve parliament and broader civil society. This made it easy for the new government which came into power in 2007 to distance itself from the reforms and move in a different direction.

In Colombia, as will be shown by the researcher Rosemary McGee, the government has used official aid effectiveness processes as a way to undermine and displace a tripartite government/donor/civil society forum. This forum had previously allowed civil society groups to influence national planning and discuss rights, conflict and governance issues. The aid effectiveness processes that replaced it were more managerial and enabled the government to exert control over civil society groups. The government succeeded in distracting attention from on-going human rights problems at home while obtaining international visibility and kudos for its efforts on aid effectiveness, positioning itself to receive extra funding at a time of an aid squeeze for middle-income countries. Citizens groups conclude that aid effectiveness concepts such as ownership are a blunt instrument that needs to be sharpened in practice if it is to help citizens on the ground.

Empowerment

People living in poverty must have the power to make choices and to take decisions on development programs. For development to be effective it must be set within an empowerment framework that is locally-initiated and founded on what the people decide. Former president of Ireland and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson recommends moving beyond the Paris Declaration and the AAA to an era where "legal empowerment" is the catchphrase for the future of international cooperation.

The Development Effectiveness Primer produced by IBON International explains that "empowerment is a process of enabling people, in particular the least privileged, to: (a) have access and control over productive resources – land, technology, financial resources and knowledge – that enable them to meet their needs and develop their capabilities; and (b) participate and lead in the development process and the decisions that affect them".[7]

Aid should support redistributive policies and practices such as genuine agrarian reform, the expansion of social entitlements, and universal access to essential goods and services. To empower the poor, development strategies must promote the voice and participation of women, youth, minorities and other excluded groups in identifying needs and priorities, formulating policies, and designing, implementing and evaluating programs, including those part-financed by international agencies.

The poor and especially women and other marginalised sectors in society must be able to hold their governments and donors accountable through participatory governance mechanisms. Empowerment sounds attractive to most people but is often anathema to officials who mistrust the public's ability to understand issues or make decisions and who want to retain power for themselves. The article by SANSAD reviews the many layers of public institutions in India and points out: "While the multiple institutions and procedures of democracy are increasingly in place, the critical challenge is how to deepen their inclusiveness and substance. Monitoring and evaluation agencies fail to enforce the functioning of the system. CSOs' roles in these institutions are minimal, restricted to filing complaints and sending their comments or inputs."

Changing their own practices and procedures so that officials can work genuinely with low-income marginalised communities will be a very difficult challenge for official aid agencies. But without this, development interventions will be unable to reach those who need them most and will only have short-term results at best.

Towards transparency

Civil Society for Poverty Reduction, a Zambian network, writes that "information is cardinal". In Zambia, there has been a lack of participation on aid issues. Donors have imposed conditionalities and created an atmosphere of mistrust of donor motivations. Now "this mistrust extends to the aid effectiveness agenda" as its implementation has in many cases also been negotiated behind closed doors.

Accountability and citizen participation require all development organisations and recipient governments to work within a culture of full transparency. This should cover decision-making and implementation of all aid transactions and development programs. Over 50 countries have already introduced national freedom of information legislation. Mechanisms to enhance implementation must be brought forward, including appeals procedures for citizens who feel their rights to information have been compromised.

At the minimum, international donors must sign up to and implement the principles and measures outlined in the International Aid Transparency Initiative. These include detailed technical standards and a code of conduct to ensure that donor documents and financial transaction data are made available rapidly and in a format that is comparable, freely accessible, and easy to understand.[8] Each donor ministry involved in aid decisions must sign up to a comprehensive national aid transparency plan drawn up in consultation with civil society groups and parliamentarians.

Recipient governments must also continue to become more transparent so that their citizens can see how aid and the national resources put up as counterparts are allocated. The Open Budget Index is a useful reference point for such budget transparency.

Untying aid and using public procurement

Transparency is necessary but not sufficient to rebalance who gains from contracts and who implements development projects. Transparency must be complemented by proactive efforts to include suppliers and implementing partners from developing countries. In many cases, developing country companies struggle with the technicalities of bidding requirements or with establishing sufficient track record to be a credible bidder. For development from below to become a reality, donors must yield power over jobs and responsibilities in the short-term as well as provide opportunities for companies and civil society organisations to expand and to build and maintain infrastructure and other forms of development programming over the long-term.

The European Network on Debt and Development suggests a series of measures to introduce development effective procurement. Donors should recognise that public procurement systems often take account of factors other than cost. Public procurement has been used as a policy tool for advancing social, ethical and human rights goals, for mitigating regional, social or ethnic disparities, and for promoting decent work. However some donor rules do not allow aid agencies to use recipient country systems unless they prioritise least-cost bids. For instance, the US Millennium Challenge Corporation cannot use the Namibian national procurement system because the Namibian Tender Board Act guarantees preferential treatment for local firms as well as firms owned by groups that were disadvantaged under the apartheid regime. This kind of restriction is another example of aid rules that restrict genuine national ownership.

Another telling example is in Uganda which has an advanced factory producing Anti-Retro Viral drugs – yet drugs for the huge donor-supported HIV/AIDS treatment programs in Uganda are still procured from foreign producers which are often based in donor countries. Deals like this mean that a large proportion of ODA is not an inflow to developing countries but a "roundflow" where funds flow from Northern budgets back to Northern firms. Even when local production capacities exist, they are often not used.

These examples show the problems related to procurement. Yet donor exercises such as WB Country Procurement Assessment Reports do not review these aspects but emphasise a narrow approach to cost effectiveness. Aid recipient countries are told they have to spend their public money without consideration of long-term environmental costs or the need to empower minority communities. This is a wasted opportunity and another example of double standards since many rich countries have introduced non-cost elements to their national procurement systems.

Conclusion

The aid regime must refocus on creating an enabling environment for all citizens, particularly the most marginalised, to enjoy their rights. This requires a change of culture and of practice. Transparency is a key enabling factor and the way that procurement and financial decisions are made will also have to be altered dramatically.

4c. Transforming the aid architecture and ensuring policy coherence for development

Before the financial crisis, private banks claimed that the financial architecture was solid and that self-regulation would ensure good behaviour. Both these arguments have been clearly exposed as false. Likewise, in international aid, the architecture is anything but robust and well-designed. In fact, the aid system is becoming more chaotic all the time with ever more funding mechanisms, reporting structures and approaches. More architects and more builders are crowding onto a limited construction site with little clear planning or health and safety rules.

The OECD DAC agrees that "the current architecture and institutional set-up of development institutions must be changed" and calls for "simplified organisational structures, instruments and procedures".[9] The aid architecture must be reviewed and rebuilt to promote development effectiveness. There should be a moratorium on creating new institutions or mechanisms for aid delivery while this is being done.

Too many donors

Many governments channel their aid through multiple bilateral agencies as well as multiple multilateral ones, including specialised vertical funds. They have pledged to reduce the number of agencies delivering assistance and to target their support in fewer countries and sectors. However implementation of this pledge is slow. As the Southern Aid Effectiveness Commission reported earlier this year, "attempts to cut down on the institutions that deliver aid have so far failed, due to the many interests involved".[10]

There are now at least 300 bilateral and multilateral agencies. These are fragmenting internally with ever more earmarked funds and special initiatives. New players are even entering the system leading to what some commentators term "anarchy".[11] These new entrants include private foundations, southern governments, vertical funds, NGOs and the military.

The array of organisations prepared to provide finance could be helpful if they each brought something distinctive and if they collaborated well. However this is not the case. Recipients spend too much time second-guessing donors' intentions, negotiating with them, and reporting to them. The Southern Aid Effectiveness Commission found that "fragmentation and proliferation became a major driver for the increase in transaction costs and administrative burdens of contemporary aid on both sides, donors and recipients alike".[12]

The increasing links between security strategy, military operations and aid receive special attention in several contributions to this report, with Reality of Aid members raising concerns that this is diverting funding from poverty reduction purposes.

Denmark, historically a leader on aid policies, is now using aid linked to military operations in Afghanistan which has become a top recipient of Danish aid. Moreover, the Danish Parliament has recently agreed to provide ODA funds for an initiative under Denmark's defence policy. Astonishingly, military personnel delivered some 22% of US ODA in 2008, up from just 3.5% in 1998. Fortunately there are counterexamples. Spain's new Humanitarian Action Sectoral Strategy has reduced the amount of humanitarian funds allocated to the Defence Ministry. Leadership has passed to a Humanitarian Action Office in the heart of the Spanish Agency for International Development Cooperation.

Several articles of this report – including the ones on Fiji, India and Sri Lanka – comment on the rise of non-Western donors such as China and Iran. These governments are increasing their development funding for a wide range of motives including humanitarian, developmental, commercial and strategic reasons. This phenomenon of South-South cooperation is not entirely new but is growing rapidly with increasing implications for official DAC donors and recipient countries alike. Estimates of South-South cooperation range from 10% to 15% of total world ODA.

Authors in this report argue that the non-interference approach espoused by China and other Southern donors might yield an increase in cooperation between equals rather than condescending donor-recipient relationships based on historical power games. Several of these Southern donors have shown that they are prepared to step in when other donors step back for governance or other reasons, as happened in Fiji recently.

However, most of the Southern donors lack social, environmental and transparency procedures which undercuts opportunities for citizen scrutiny and empowerment. They also tie their financial assistance to the provision of goods and services from their countries and provide very limited transparency on their operations. In its report on South-South cooperation published earlier this year, Reality of Aid concluded that "respect for national sovereignty should not mean ignoring gross human rights violations, environmental destruction, corruption and blatant abuse of power in partner countries".[13] This finding is reinforced by the Reality of Aid report at hand.

Weak monitoring systems

Relationships between donors and recipients are still driven by power games. Aid effectiveness monitoring systems such as the bi-annual Paris Monitoring Survey, based on self-reporting, have proved weak and prone to institutional capture by donors. The fact that official aid effectiveness processes originated in the OECD DAC, a rich-country club that excludes the vast majority of countries in the world, is a problem of donor-recipient power relations that has yet to be properly addressed. This is the case even though aid effectiveness discussions are held in the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness that, though still housed in the DAC, has a broader membership. Many developing countries have been invited to participate in selected OECD DAC processes and in conferences such as the Accra High Level Forum but they often feel that their standing and their capacity to get their voices heard are limited.

From policy incoherence to joined-up thinking

Aid is a vital part of creating a just and sustainable future for the world's citizens. But it is not the only measure that governments need to take. At the minimum these must also extend to trade, investment, migration, debt, taxation, climate change and security policies.

A clear example of policy incoherence is provided in the article on Swiss aid. Switzerland has for years maintained an extensive aid program to promote peace and human rights in Colombia. During 2009 deliberations in parliament on the bilateral free trade agreement with the country, development NGOs and left-of-centre parties advocated linking the agreement to human rights concerns. Yet the parliamentary majority followed the arguments laid out by the Economics Minister who stated that the promotion of human rights was not a matter for trade policy but only for development co-operation. Similarly, Sweden has continued arms exports to Saudi Arabia and Pakistan despite serious human rights violations there.

As Latin American Network on Debt, Development and Human Rights (Latindadd) points out in its article, illicit capital outflows from developing countries total around ten times the amount they receive each year in aid. Debt payments are another huge cost and will become more so now that the proportion of aid being provided as loans has increased.

Uganda Debt Network sets out the many problems with the trade policies frequently imposed on low-income countries as a condition for aid. It finds that "an outright liberalisation/free-trade policy will continue to inflict heavy costs on African countries because they are still net exporters of raw and semi-processed materials". They also point out that donor countries are hypocritical in preaching liberalisation and free trade while they continue to subsidise their own agriculture sectors and promote other exports that they consider strategic.

This book does not have the space to analyse all of these policies in depth but it still seeks to situate aid in a broader policy framework. The principle of "policy coherence for development" is long established in several countries but has not been vigorously applied. This application may become even weaker in the period to come as the current crisis context may make countries which have not yet introduced such an approach reluctant to do so, and as some countries bring development matters more firmly under their foreign affairs or trade ministries. Yet some positive examples do exist, for example in New Zealand where the government has encouraged banks to make remittance transfers more flexible and cheaper.

Conclusion

The current aid architecture is not fit for the purpose of development effectiveness. It is an amalgamation of different institutions created at different times by different politicians. Very few organisations have been disbanded and, on the contrary, it is always a case of adding new ones. Even with the best will in the world, individual officials cannot build a sane and effective system from this melange of bodies with overlapping mandates and tools. A thoroughgoing review of current agencies and a halt to initiating new ones is required to start turning back the tide.

Development aid decisions are not taken in a vacuum either in richer countries or poorer ones. Many other policies influence poverty outcomes on the ground and prevent or enable communities and governments to implement sustained policies and programs. These must be tackled at the same time that aid is improved to achieve the maximum benefits for people in developing countries.

5. Conclusion and recommendations

Aid is not dead, as some commentators claim, but it is certainly in a poor state of health. Limited technical reforms agreed at a high level between donors and recipient officials and ministers will not be sufficient to change the nature of the aid relationship and lead to real effectiveness. The poverty, climate and financial crises will not be solved without a thorough change in mindset and of rules. This applies to all governments, international institutions and other organisations involved in channelling finance, including many civil society organisations.

The aid effectiveness approach that was agreed in 2005 at the Paris conference was a useful recognition that all is not well in aid delivery. Official aid effectiveness reforms have delivered some benefits at the margins and limited the difficulties that might otherwise have resulted from programming increased aid. However they have not made a decisive difference in how aid is perceived or in who takes key decisions.

Solutions are not just a question of more efficient application of current orthodoxies. Reality of Aid members will continue to work tirelessly to challenge problematic donor interventions and call for a transformation of the aid agenda so that it empowers those who most need help to take action to help themselves.

The Paris Declaration set out a series of targets to be met by 2010. These were extended slightly at the Accra High Level Forum in 2008. The next High Level Forum will take place in Busan, South Korea in 2011.

This book outlines a new development effectiveness approach which must become the organising principle for international cooperation on the road to the Busan conference, throughout the rest of this decade, and beyond. The Busan meeting will take place in the context of a harsh global economic climate and difficult decisions for governments worldwide. As CONCERN points out in the article on Ireland's aid, aid effectiveness used to be about doing more with more but is in many cases now about doing more with less. Either way, aid needs to become far more efficient and effective.

The climate crisis beginning to bite in many regions of the world only makes this more urgent. There is as yet no global deal on climate change and this will need to be negotiated over the next few months and years. A financial transfer mechanism for richer countries to compensate poorer ones will be a vital part of this deal. The design and governance of climate funding must draw on the lessons of official aid to date – ensuring that key decisions are in the peoples' hands, that transactions costs are minimised, and that rights are respected.

Reality of Aid recommends that all governments, by the 2011 High Level Forum in Busan, commit to:

- Provide, as grants, sufficient volumes of aid in line with international agreements;
- Be transparent in aid decision-making and with their aid data;
- Ensure democratic ownership by the poor and not just by recipient governments;
- Introduce binding measures to ensure that aid respects human rights agreements and empowers poor and vulnerable communities to claim their rights;
- Measure impacts on social inclusion and social justice;
- Untie aid and ensure that public procurement takes account of public policy goals such as combating inequality and environmental damage;
- Halt the proliferation of aid agencies;
- Ensure that division of labour processes do not squeeze out important goals such as gender equality or environmental protection; and
- Introduce strong policy coherence for development measures.

Reality of Aid is joining with other members of the BetterAid Platform to promote an international process, coming out of this High Level Forum, to develop a binding UN Convention on Development Effectiveness. CSOs, along with allies among governments, will explore the implications of a more binding framework that holds governments accountable for the commitments they make in various international meetings. A UN Convention of Development Effectiveness could strengthen the coherence between these commitments and accountability to international human rights law which, as this report argues, is the basis and standard for measuring development effectiveness.

Endnotes

1 The Reality of Aid 2008, Aid Effectiveness, Democratic Ownership and Human Rights, Reality of Aid, 2008, p. 11. At: www.realityofaid.org/roareports/index/secid/365/part/1.

2 Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, Financing Global Health 2009: Tracking Development Assistance for Health, University of Washington, 2009, Chapter 2, accessed February 2010 at www.healthmetricsandevaluation.org/resources/policyreports/2009/financing_global_health_0709.html.

3 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, (2005) p. 1.

4 See also Financing climate change mitigation, adaptation and sustainable development, Reality Check, 2009. At: www.realityofaid.org/publications/index/content/Reality%20Check/view/category/pubsecid/9.

5 Accra Agenda for Action (2008), para

6 See http://www.cso-effectiveness.org/.

7 Ibon International (2009), Primer on ODA and Development Effectiveness.

8 See: www.aidwww.aidtransparency.net/resources.

9 OECD DAC (2010), International Cooperation Report 2010, page 30.

10 Southern Aid Effectiveness Commission (2010). Towards more effective Aid Assessing reform constraints in the North Report of the Southern Aid Effectiveness Commission, p. 24. Available at: www.eurodad.org/uploadedFiles/Whats_New/Reports/Towards_More_Effective_Aid.pdf?n=133.

11 See David Fidler (2007), "Architecture amidst Anarchy: Global Health's Quest for Governance", Global Health Governance, Volume 1, No 1. See also EURODAD (2008), "Global Vertical Programs, A Tale of too many funds", Reality Check, accessed at http://realityofaid.org/downloads/realitycheck_jul2008.pdf.

12 Southern Aid Effectiveness Commission (2010). Towards more effective Aid Assessing reform constraints in the North Report of the Southern Aid Effectiveness Commission, p. 25.

13 Reality of Aid (2010) South South Development Cooperation: a Challenge to the Aid System? p.17. At: www.realityofaid.org/roareports/index/secid/373/part/3.

Governments have signed international human rights and environmental treaties and in principle accept that development must be about enabling people to fulfill their rights. But in practice they too often overlook the rights agenda. The same is true of environmental sustainability which is frequently noted but too rarely prioritised. Donors must change their priorities and practices accordingly.

Sarah Winter examines how Australian development non-governmental organisations (NGOs) grapple with the question of integrating human rights into all aspects of their aid planning and delivery. There is a broad range of approaches, from informal arrangements based on trust to fuller rights analyses as part of a social accountability model.

Further studies are needed to demonstrate the impact of human rights-based approaches which can cover a broad agenda. Australian NGOs are committed to further sharing experiences among themselves and with official donors such as Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID).

The growing evidence base is supported by the work of donors, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC) and the United Nations (UN) that explore the incorporation of human rights in different development sectors. This sectoral approach, focusing for example on what the rights to food and to water mean for an infrastructure project, is a practical way to respond to an organisation's existing and evolving expertise.

Alberto Croce looks at the relationship between the European Union (EU) and Latin America. He points out that the emergence of new powers is shifting international relations. The region is exploring how to introduce new regional institutions. Latin America is receiving less aid money than before despite significant poverty in middle-income countries.

Civil society organisations point out that it is difficult to hold governments to account for their spending especially for money received as budget support. Furthermore, tax evasion and avoidance – particularly by multinational companies – drains the budgets of Latin American governments.

The links between Latin American and European NGOs have weakened. The NGOs have replaced a relationship based on trust and a common political vision with one based on technical and professional interaction. Trade unions, municipal governments, universities and international consulting businesses compete with NGOs for development funding.

Croce concludes that development policies that damage or weaken recipient-country NGOs should not be pursued. New indicators will be needed to measure this and other elements of development quality to cover a human rights- and quality of life-based approach.

Nurgul Djanaeva summarises the impact of aid on the achievement of women's rights in Kyrgyzstan. Aid effectiveness agreements mention gender equality and women's rights as key targets yet donor and recipient governments are doing little to implement these. Some key aid documents reference women's rights but these are not well linked to the national action plan on gender equality. Neither donor programmes on gender nor the national plan have sufficient financial resources or staff to implement them. Recent revisions to donor plans have weakened the focus on gender, and the most recent joint donor progress report does not mention gender equality.

As of April 2010 there was still no action plan for implementing the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA) in Kyrgyzstan, and women's organisations have still not increased their influence on aid decisions. International and national gender-equality and human rights strategies should be part of aid effectiveness plans. Official bodies should publish gender-disaggregated information on the technical aspects of aid and on development results. Involving and empowering women will bring forward real development effectiveness.

James Goodman and Ellen Roberts outline the difficulties with climate aid, a fast-growing category. The programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) has been introduced as a result of international talks on responding to climate change. Tackling forest issues is important but requires environmental and human rights safeguards. REDD also requires careful application as investors can speculate on the price of carbon.

A REDD pilot project funded by the Australian government demonstrates some of these problems. The Kalimantan Forests and Climate Partnership documents make no mention of the rights of affected indigenous or forest-dependent communities who currently live in the project area, or of human rights in general. The project focuses on changing small-scale subsistence practices rather than the agricultural industries such as palm oil plantations that drive large-scale deforestation in the region. A local peoples' organisation has been opposing the project, concerned that the project will deny them access to resources they need.

There are alternatives, based on ecological justice, which should inform future climate aid.

Kevin J. Barr describes the way that donors have interacted with governments in Fiji. Many of them cut their aid to the country following a military coup in 2006. Yet the coup claimed to protect indigenous Fijian rights and may in fact have been necessary to create a stable democratic country in future.

The loss of aid from Australia, New Zealand and the EU has had a serious effect on Fiji's economy. Fiji has turned to the International Monetary Fund, Japan, China and India for support. The availability of this substitute funding has persuaded previous donors to begin to change their minds about using aid as a political tool to enforce specific democratic governance requirements.

Brian Tomlinson outlines the Canadian government's progress in implementing a law on aid accountability which was adopted in 2008. The law enjoins ministers to ensure that Canadian aid takes account of the perspectives of the poor, is consistent with human rights standards, and contributes to poverty reduction.

This seems to be a big step forward but implementation is weak. Indeed the Canadian government is making major decisions on aid, such as slashing the number of countries it supports, without reference to this Accountability Act.

Canada should systematically consider how its interventions will support marginalised people realising their rights. Canadian overseas development assistance (ODA) programs should create opportunities for popular participation and build the capacity of affected populations to participate in development. This includes promoting the rights to organise and to freedom of speech, as well as of access to information. Canadian ODA should also support mechanisms of accountability and redress.

The chapters show diverse experiences and approaches in addressing human rights and sustainability. International agreements, whether on human rights, aid effectiveness or climate, are being interpreted in a range of ways. Some implementation is purely token, some is partial, and some is more whole-hearted. But there is a clear reluctance by many donors to follow the letter of the agreements and to allocate finance according to how it will best support the rights and sustainability agenda. This must be changed to permit genuine development effectiveness.

This chapter shows that donors frequently fail to understand the complex dynamics of national institutions. This can lead them to undermine grassroots engagement and consolidate government power. National governments must also accept responsibility for opening channels for community engagement, whether about projects or policies. Only when they do so will it be possible to achieve development effectiveness.

William Chilufya argues that donor good will and increased aid has not reduced poverty in Zambia. Many citizens are excluded from the benefits of development because Zambia still struggles with patronage politics and other exclusive governance practices. The government has failed to deliver services to the majority of citizens and especially to the poor in rural areas.

Citizens need access to information on aid so that they can hold decision-makers accountable for their decisions. However citizens are often denied the information they need to intervene in the various phases of aid negotiations and implementation. Conditionalities that donors imposed on the government have led people to mistrust donor motivations. This mistrust now extends to the aid effectiveness agenda.

Some progress has been made in harmonisation, however, with donors producing a Joint Assistance Strategy for Zambia in alignment with the country's National Development Plan. This joint strategy has streamlined some dialogue and information-sharing processes, for example in the agriculture sector, although there is no direct linkage with poverty reduction results. The government should develop specific channels of participation for disadvantaged and underprivileged segments of Zambian society.

Rosemary McGee and Irma García Heredia, in their article on Colombia's attitudes to the Paris Declaration (PD), point out that aid has to be understood against the broader backdrop of international relations. The Colombian government saw the adoption of the Paris Declaration as a way to pursue its own interests.

In Colombia, PD principles of ownership, alignment and harmonisation may conflict with donor and civil society efforts to pressure the Colombian government on human rights and conflict issues. Donors are now supposed to align with government policies. Instead of exchanging views on Colombia's internal conflict, donors are engaged in a technical dialogue about aid ownership, harmonisation and alignment. The government has increased its legitimacy and rebutted accusations that it lacks a focus on poverty and spurns democratic dialogue and dissent. Aid officials do not expect that Colombia's adherence to the Paris Declaration will lead to significant improvements in transparency, financial management or other features of good aid governance.

Civil society groups have been squeezed out of discussions on aid effectiveness but hope the Accra Agenda for Action's legitimisation of civil society involvement in aid and policy dialogue may provide space to raise human rights. The authors urge donors to pay more attention to political analysis when applying the Paris Declaration, and adapt its principles to particular contexts.

Toni Sandell, in an article on Nicaragua, similarly accuses donors of naivety in dealing with the government there. Donors recorded an apparent aid effectiveness success story under the Bolaños government when several new dialogue and planning processes were initiated. However these were approved without proper national debate and, for example, parliament was bypassed. This lack of due process meant that donors inhabited a pseudo-reality, a reality that was shattered with the advent of a new government in 2007.

The overly technocratic approach, lack of democratic ownership, and dependence on international financial institution (IFI) conditions made it too easy for the subsequent Sandinista government to abandon aid effectiveness processes which had shallow roots in the country. Sector roundtables and other donor-government coordination mechanisms were ended by the new government. The government cracked down on independent civil society groups and obtained a large amount of aid from Venezuela that is not channelled through the government budget. The IFIs however turned a blind eye to these issues inasmuch as the government fulfilled their macroeconomic objectives.

The Nicaraguan experience indicates that donors should not demand and monitor detailed plans but should instead adopt a more holistic and long-term approach which addresses national politics more openly. Donors should support dialogue between the government, parliament and civil society, and demand more public guarantees on basic human rights.

Anil K. Singh details India's experience with foreign aid and national planning. He argues that donors need to improve the way they deliver aid, but aid recipient countries are also responsible for the limited and inequitable impact of aid on development outcomes. He explains that the array of institutions and constitutional safeguards aiming to achieve development goals does not add up to a functioning system. There are no significant consequences for non-compliance with financial rules, regulations and procedures.

Partly because of dysfunctions in its systems, India has failed to use US$17 billion of the external assistance that international donors allocated to it. In June 2003, the Indian government announced that India would stop receiving grant aid from most countries and would repay all outstanding bilateral creditors. This was partly because the government was exasperated by the strong terms and conditions on utilisation of funds which donors tended to set out for it.

The remaining donors to India are increasingly directing aid to India's relatively developed areas in keeping with the results orientation of aid effectiveness. This discriminates against impoverished people living in other states. In India, aid allocation and disbursement is shielded by opaque processes. The allocation of foreign funds across sectors is determined by the finance ministry rather than according to any economic reasoning or parliamentary deliberation. Much more transparency is also required around India's increasing roles as an aid donor that allocates substantial sums to African and South Asian countries.

Suranjan Kudithuwakku, writing about Sri Lanka, addresses flaws in the model of development. He points out that small farmers, fishermen and pastoralists form the majority of the world's population and depend directly on the balance of nature. Thus the environment must be at the crux of any effective development model. Official agencies often fail to demonstrate sensitivity to the environment or local communities. Communities and non-government organisations (NGOs) need to work with the government to change core policy on agriculture, fisheries, and disaster management.

The Green Movement of Sri Lanka implemented grassroots reconstruction efforts after the tsunami. When communities take ownership of their own development futures they can have better results than action driven by external agendas. The government has accepted the principle that community strengths in preparing for and recovering from disasters should be mainstreamed.

The government has refused some loans from IFIs, turning instead to bilateral loans from emerging donors such as Iran, India and China to fund development activities. This raises a new set of challenges.

Arnold Padilla, from the Philippines, analyses the example of the San Roque dam, a controversial mega-infrastructure project funded by the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC). During a typhoon in October 2009 the dam released excess water that forced more than 30,000 people from their homes, killed at least 64 people, and destroyed crops and properties.

The San Roque dam project illustrates the weakness of accountability in aid relations which prioritise the relationship between the foreign aid agency and the government. The Philippine government circumvented domestic environmental and social safeguards that set out its "domestic accountability" to its own people. Legally required environmental and social impact assessments were not conducted before the project was implemented. Peoples' organisations were ignored during project planning and the limited consultations conducted took place only when the project was already underway. Many people were not compensated for their displacement.

JBIC has no clear procedures or reliable grievance mechanisms for affected communities to use. Safeguards – both at national level, in countries such as the Philippines, and at the donor level – need to be strengthened and implemented, notably environmental and social impact assessments. However strong popular mobilisation will always be needed to ensure that local peoples' interests are not undermined in foreign donor-funded projects.

These contributions all show the difficulties of international interventions not meshing well with national and local institutions. Introducing official aid effectiveness practices may consolidate government power, or may enable greater democratisation of decision-making. Planning and consultation mechanisms which involve ordinary people are vital if funds are to be well-spent. Donors can help facilitate interactions between government bodies and communities and ensure that due process is followed in decision-making so that weaker stakeholders can also have their say.

The structural problems in and between the institutions involved in allocating and spending aid money are analysed in this chapter. The aid system which has grown over the past few decades has many inefficiencies and perverse incentives which frustrate sensible planning and delivery of aid programmes on the ground. These must be changed if individual officials are to be enabled to use aid to empower local groups to change lives for the better.

Akongbowa Bramwell Amadasun reviews several of the important international mechanisms which channel aid to Africa. He finds that the many instruments developed outside Africa are ineffective because they have design, accountability and ownership flaws. These criticisms apply to International Monetary Fund (IMF) programmes, debt relief and also budget support. Despite some changes in the way that the IMF and other international agencies operate – for example linking their interventions to Poverty Reduction Strategies – their fundamental way of working remains to pressure governments to take certain actions even at the expense of citizens' views.

Amadasun suggests that new mechanisms that originate in Africa, for Africa, stand a better chance of enabling decisions that empower and support large numbers of impoverished people. These mechanisms include the Pan-African Parliament (PAP) and the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM). However these institutions are nascent and have yet to fulfill their full potential. To reach their potential these African bodies must develop authority to scrutinise the interventions of the international financial institutions (IFIs). These bodies will have to overcome several challenges. These include improving who is selected to represent African citizens, increasing public awareness and discussion of the bodies, and developing an independent source of financing for their own operations. If they overcome these challenges the PAP and APRM may be able to prevent international agencies from imposing policies and pressures from outside the region and enable a flourishing of democracy from below.

Edward Ssenyange also analyses the aid system that has grown since the Second World War through decisions taken by bodies such as the G8. He emphasises that the rich countries repeatedly fail to implement their side of the bargain. The vast majority of them have failed to provide the levels of aid funding they promised, in contrast with their ability to mobilise over US$4 trillion in a few weeks to bail out their banks following the international financial and economic crisis. Furthermore the costs of conditionalities, such as trade liberalisation, privatisation, fiscal austerity and state retrenchment, have far exceeded all the external assistance received.

In particular, aid is increasingly being used to promote a trade liberalisation agenda; the rich countries continue to subsidise their agricultural production and exports, flooding African markets with cheap food stuffs at the cost of local production. Similar challenges result from moves by donor projects to use aid to support their own security and foreign policy agendas as well as from illicit capital flight, much of it facilitated by international companies operating in Africa.

An appropriate governance framework and focus on rural and agricultural development as a basis for social transformation should be at the centre of development strategies. African countries should avoid a rapid integration into the world economy without increasing the value-added of their industries and exports. South-South cooperation can help African countries take advantage of technologies appropriate for their industrialisation.

Lois Woestman analyses two key elements of official aid effectiveness practices: division of labour and harmonisation. She assesses these processes which are intended to reduce transactions costs and enable more money to reach the people on the ground who need it. Woestman examines whether aid effectiveness processes have helped European Union (EU) donors meet their commitments to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

She finds that EU donor harmonisation has prioritised technical mapping exercises rather than the effects on development outcomes such as gender equality. These processes have focused on sectors rather than on policy commitments, excluding cross-cutting issues. When they consider gender at all, EU donor harmonisation processes aim to meet the MDGs which have a narrow definition of gender equality. Harmonisation processes have also tended to be donor-driven rather than based on Southern country policy priorities.

EU harmonisation efforts have marginalised Southern country governments and civil society groups. Europe needs to unequivocally advocate a people-focused development model with gender equality as a central pillar. Efforts need to be based on the highest common denominator of the EU's international commitments on gender equality in order to have a strong link with development effectiveness.

Bodo Ellmers assesses the role of public procurement in determining the impact of aid. A substantial share of public procurement in developing countries is funded through ODA. Public procurement has largely been liberalised over the last three decades with an emphasis on least-cost market approaches. This tendency has begun to reverse with public procurement becoming a key element of governments' attempts to stimulate their economies and address climate change.

Case studies in Namibia, Ghana and Uganda show that social and environmental components of procurement are rarely taken into account in current public financial management (PFM) support programmes. There is evidence that procurement reforms have been used to lever open markets for foreign companies. Certainly, too few development contracts are won by developing country companies even where aid is formally untied.

The Paris Declaration commits governments to assess and improve the transparency, accountability and performance of country procurement systems. Donors agreed to avoid parallel procurement and further untie aid. Since the Paris Declaration was signed there has been a surge in donor funding for public finance management. Donors argue that governments should prioritise putting in place a simple cost-efficient procurement system without additional objectives. Instead of this restrictive approach, development effectiveness principles should be introduced in all procurement related to development cooperation.

Current official processes on aid effectiveness have only scratched the surface of the transformation in systems and mindsets that will be needed to bring about real national ownership and citizen-led foreign aid. The current patchwork of institutions and initiatives causes confusion and prevents genuine bottom-up planning and control of funding. This undermines aid's effectiveness on its own account and has pernicious effects on national governance and planning mechanisms. International and regional commitments and mechanisms are available to help citizens uphold their rights. The articulation between institutions at local, national, regional and global levels will have to be changed to enable effective and equitable development from below.

Crisis Management: An Analysis of Global Aid Trends

Brian Tomlinson, Reality of Aid Network Management Committee

Summary Messages

Section A: Governments missing their aid quantity targets

With just five years remaining to realize the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), donor aid performance has stalled. Official aid levels in 2010 are expected to fall far short of the pledges made in 2005. If all donors had honored their long-standing commitment to provide 0.7% of their gross national income (GNI), aid in 2009 would have been US$272 billion, providing significant resources for the poorest countries to achieve goals in health, education, and environmental sustainability.

1. **Official development assistance (ODA) was US$119.6 billion in 2009**, down from its record level of US$122.3 billion in 2008. Several governments even significantly reduced their ODA in 2009 such as Germany, Italy, Ireland and Austria.

2. **ODA performance as a proportion of gross national income (GNI) rose to 0.31% in 2009**, increasing very slightly between 2008 and 2009 only because of a 3.5% decline in collective donor GNI. If GNI had grown at the same average rate of previous years, donors would have had to produce US$9.2 billion in extra aid to hit this 0.31% level.

3. **ODA falls far short of commitments.** All donor governments, except the United States (US), are committed to the longstanding 0.7% ODA/GNI United Nations (UN) target and in 2005 most donors made additional pledges for 2010. Several major donors are however far off-track to meet their 2010 pledges, and total Development Assistance Committee (DAC) ODA will fall about US$20 billion short of the US$145 billion that would have resulted from implementing donors' 2005 commitments.

4. **"Real ODA" is less than half the United Nations (UN) target ODA level.** "Real ODA" is an estimate of ODA available for allocation to development and humanitarian assistance. It is calculated by subtracting debt cancellation and the costs of spending on Southern refugees and on students arriving in donor countries from reported ODA. Reality of Aid estimates 2009 "real ODA" at US$112.7 billion, which is only 0.29% of donors' GNI or performance far removed from the UN target of 0.7%.

5. **Aid commitments are affordable despite the economic crisis.** In 2008, the amount of aid was equivalent to just 1.8% of total donor government revenues which was below the 2% level in 1990. Aid per donor country citizen was only US$118. With political will, donor commitments are affordable.

Section B: The Quality of Donors' Aid Performance

Despite commitments made in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action (AAA), donor performance in targeting human development goals, gender equality and the poorest countries in Africa has improved only marginally since 2005. In their actual aid allocations and practices, donors are giving only slightly increased priority to poverty reduction and strengthening the rights of the poor. They are still largely failing to transfer leadership on aid to developing country partners. Donors are only beginning to understand the importance of changing a highly unequal aid architecture, and have not yet tabled any proposals for reform. They also have yet to agree to meet their obligations to finance climate change with resources additional to aid and to reduce Northern-driven technical assistance and policy conditions.

1. **Donors have generated only modest new aid resources for human development goals and foreign policy concerns have driven donor aid increases since 2000.** At the Millennium Summit in 2000 governments pledged "to spare no effort" to reduce poverty. Yet only 42% of new aid dollars (above the level reached in 2000) has been spent on human development goals. The remainder has been allocated to increased support for debt cancellation, support for refugees in donor countries, and to Iraq and Afghanistan in support of foreign policy objectives.

2. **Aid has largely failed to prioritise global public goods and the MDGs.** Since the Millennium Summit in 2000, aid has largely failed to focus on public goods such as education, health, food security, and poverty reduction. Reality of Aid's proxy indicator for aid commitments to the MDGs, measured as a percentage of sector-allocated aid, has hardly changed since 1995.

3. **Bilateral humanitarian assistance continues to grow as a proportion of "real aid".** Bilateral humanitarian assistance amounted to 8.3% of "real aid" in 2008, from a low of 2.1% in 1990 and then 4.5% in 2000, with increasing amounts of humanitarian assistance directed to Sub-Saharan Africa. Donors must demonstrate "good humanitarian donorship" in the allocations and practices in responding to humanitarian emergencies.

4. **Gender equality remains largely invisible in donor aid activities.** Only 4.1% of official aid funding goes to activities where gender equality is stated as a "principal objective", with a mere US$2.1 billion in such spending reported by DAC donors for 2007 and 2008. Also, support to organizations and institutions working on women's equality amounted to only US$411 million out of total ODA of US$122 billion.

5. **Donor-driven technical assistance remains a primary aid modality.** Donor-directed technical assistance continues to make up at least one-third of all DAC bilateral aid. Donors should respect country ownership and reduce this. Technical assistance should be Southern-led, utilise Southern technical skills and strengthen Southern-determined capacity needs.

6. **Donors will short-change Sub-Saharan Africa by at least US$14 billion compared to their pledges for 2010.** Donor governments have reneged on their 2005 Gleneagles commitment to provide an additional US$25 billion a year to Sub-Saharan Africa by 2010. By 2010, total donor aid to Sub-Saharan Africa is expected to be only US$36 billion against a target of US$50 billion.

7. **Most donors are reneging on a pledge that financing for climate change must be additional to ODA.** Donors must reaffirm that all financing for climate change adaptation and mitigation will be additional to their obligation to provide 0.7% of their GNI for ODA. In Cancun in December 2010, donors should commit US$100 billion annually in public financing for adaptation to climate change. This money must be channelled via a global Climate Change Fund that operates democratically under the authority of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change's Conference of Parties. Climate change financing must focus on the most vulnerable, particularly women, taking account of international human rights standards as well as of development effectiveness principles.

8. **Donors have not improved country ownership and leadership on bilateral aid.** Despite strong donor rhetoric to give priority to country ownership and leadership on aid decisions, less than 45% of bilateral aid was available for programming at the country level in 2008. This counts aid minus funds that remain under donor control (i.e., debt cancellation, Northern-driven technical assistance, etc.).

9. **Slow progress in untying bilateral aid.** Most donor governments have reported that they have untied their bilateral aid from their national contractors – yet informal tying of aid to donor country contractors is prevalent and remains a common practice.

10. **Donors continue to impose policy conditionality.** Donors continue to determine policies in aid-dependent poor countries particularly through requirements for compliance with International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) program conditions. This undermines the rights of poor and marginalised populations. Reality of Aid calls for an end to policy conditionality and supports an approach to policy dialogue and mutual aid agreements based on shared obligations derived from international human rights law.

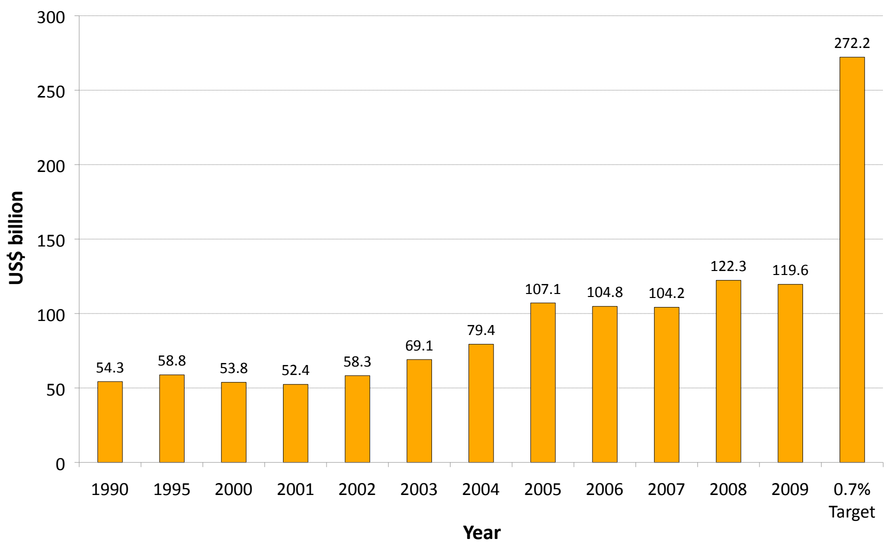
11. **Aid architecture reforms are urgently needed.** The number of channels of official donor ODA has dramatically increased, alongside growing financial flows from Southern country donors and civil society organisations. This has significantly increased transaction costs for recipient governments and further reduced the potential for citizens in the poorest countries to achieve real democratic ownership in support of local and country-determined priorities.

Section A: Governments missing their aid quantity targets

In 2000 all governments vowed at the United Nations (UN) Millennium Summit to "spare no effort to free our fellow men, women and children from the abject and dehumanising conditions of extreme poverty". Aid in 2009 was more than double aid levels in 2000, but still far below the US$272 billion that would represent donors meeting the UN target of 0.7% of gross national income (GNI).

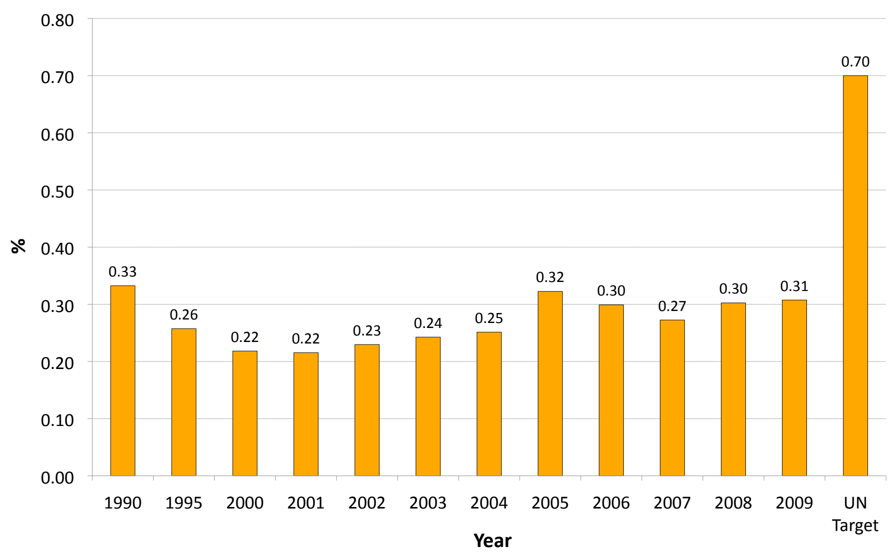
After a significant increase to a record US$122.3 billion in 2008, official development assistance (ODA) declined to US$119.6 billion in 2009. These figures are spelled out by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). (**See Chart 1**) ODA performance against donors' GNI remains weak. The ratio of ODA to GNI rose to 0.31% in 2009 but this is still not even half of the UN target. (**See Chart 2**) This is a significant improvement over the low of 0.22% in 2000 but remains lower than the level of 0.33% in 1990, the base year for the MDGs, and of 0.32% in 2005.

Chart 1: DAC Donor ODA, 1990-2009 (US$ billion, current US dollars)



Source: DAC1 Dataset Official and Private Flows

Chart 2 : DAC Donor ODA, 1990-2009 (% of DAC Gross National Income)



Source: DAC1 Dataset Official and Private Flows

Aid from the United States (US), the world's largest donor government, increased by nearly US$2 billion in current dollars to US$28.7 billion. Other major donors however reduced their aid significantly – Germany by more than 14%, Italy by 32% and Austria by 33%. European Union (EU) ODA as a whole fell by more than 5% in current dollars, from US$71.0 billion in 2008 to US$67.1 billion in 2009. The ratio of EU ODA to GNI is at 0.44% and the EU is now very unlikely to achieve its collective target of 0.56% by 2010. Although a number of EU countries, notably the United Kingdom (UK) and perhaps Spain, continue to increase their aid and are on track to meet their performance goals.[1]

"Real aid" rose slightly in 2009 – defined by Reality of Aid as reported ODA minus debt cancellation and the costs of spending on Southern refugees and on students arriving in donor countries. Official OECD DAC reporting rules allow donors to report the full value of debt cancellation in the year that it is cancelled.[2] Civil society organisations (CSOs) have campaigned for full and unconditional debt cancellation for more than two decades. The long term value of debt cancellation for heavily indebted countries is incalculable. Indeed, donors promised at the 2002 UN Financing for Development Conference to make debt cancellation additional to ODA.[3] However, in practice developing countries only reap a small benefit each year in forgone principal and interest payments.

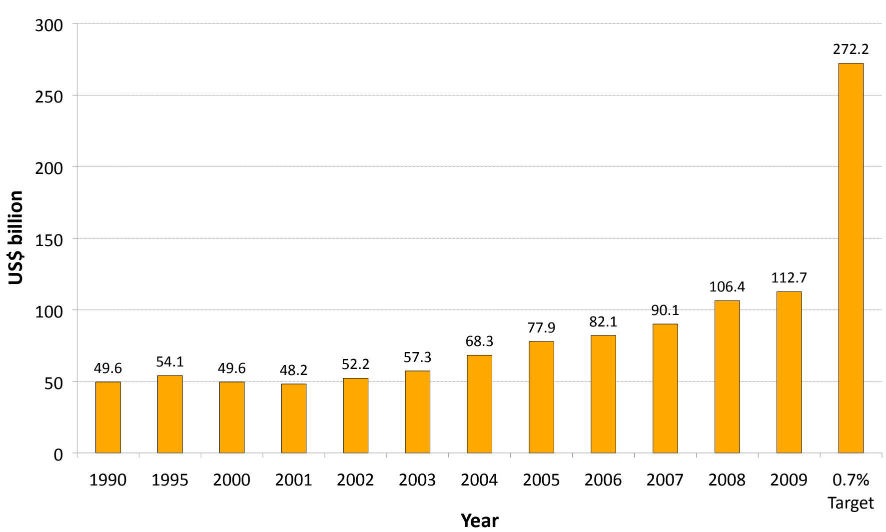
Several donors also continue to provide ODA in the form of concessional loans, further deepening the long term debt of already heavily indebted countries. Many bilateral donors provide all their ODA as grants. But in 2008 DAC and multilateral donors still cumulatively provided a total of US$16.9 billion (2007 constant dollars) in ODA loans. This is a marked increase from the eight-year annual average of US$10.4 billion from 2000 to 2007. The DAC preliminary analysis of 2009 aid suggests that aid in the form of loans increased by 20% in that year. The highest levels of bilateral ODA loans in 2008 were provided by Japan (US$9.1 billion), France (US$3.3 billion) and Germany (US$2.1 billion), all of which increased this form of financial transfer considerably compared to previous years. The WB's International Development Association (IDA) window provided US$8.6 billion in loans and the European Commission (EC) another US$2.3 billion. Developing countries continue to face a heavy burden of interest and principal payments from previous loans. They paid bilateral donors US$3.4 billion in 2008, with a cumulative total of more than US$27 billion in payments since 2000.[4]

The DAC rules also allow donors to count as ODA their support for refugees for their first year of residence in donor countries, as well as an estimate for the education infrastructure costs associated with developing country students studying in donor countries.

While these three areas of government spending are all legitimate and valued in their own right, the Reality of Aid Network and many other CSOs do not consider these to be legitimate ODA expenditures. The calculation of "real aid" discounts these three components and represents dollars that were available for aid transfers to developing countries.[5]

"Real aid" was US$112.7 billion in 2009 or a 5.9% increase from 2008. (**See Chart 3**) "Real aid" was equivalent

Chart 3: DAC Donor "Real ODA", 1990-2009 (US$ billion, current US dollars)



Note: "Real ODA" removes debt cancellation and costs of refugees and students in donor countries
Source: Reality of Aid estimates on data from DAC1 Dataset Official and Private Flows

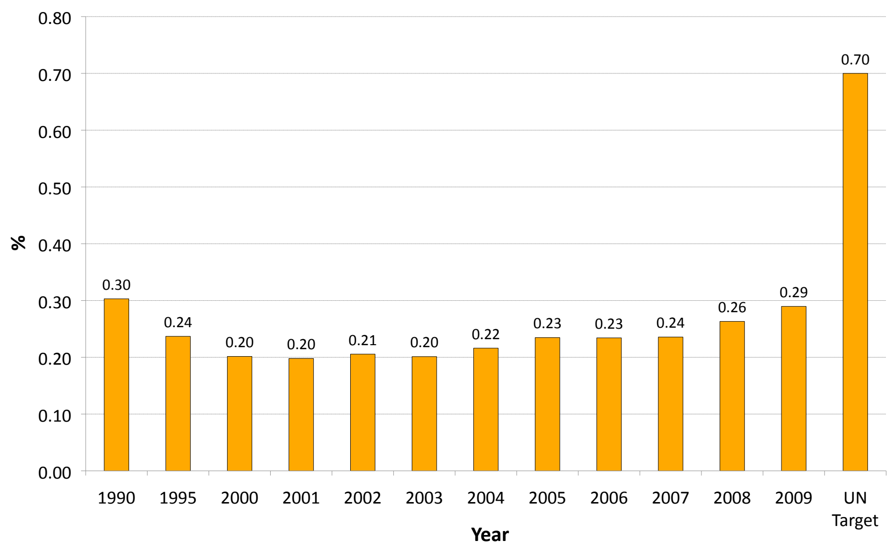
to 0.29% of donor GNI in 2009. This was a modest improvement from the average of 0.23% in the period 2005-2007 when there were very large amounts of debt cancellation included in ODA. (**See Chart 4**)

When comparing ODA levels of different years, it is important to take account of the impact of inflation and US dollar exchange rates. The DAC has produced "deflators" for each year relative to 2007 – that is, the amount of goods and services that could be purchased with the aid level in these years if the US dollar was at its same value as in 2007. When 2009 ODA performance is examined in constant 2007 US dollars, Reality of Aid notes the following:

- Total DAC donor ODA in 2009 was 4.5% less than in 2008.[6] (**See Chart 5**)
- "Real ODA" increased by 53% between 2000 and 2009. (**See Chart 6**)

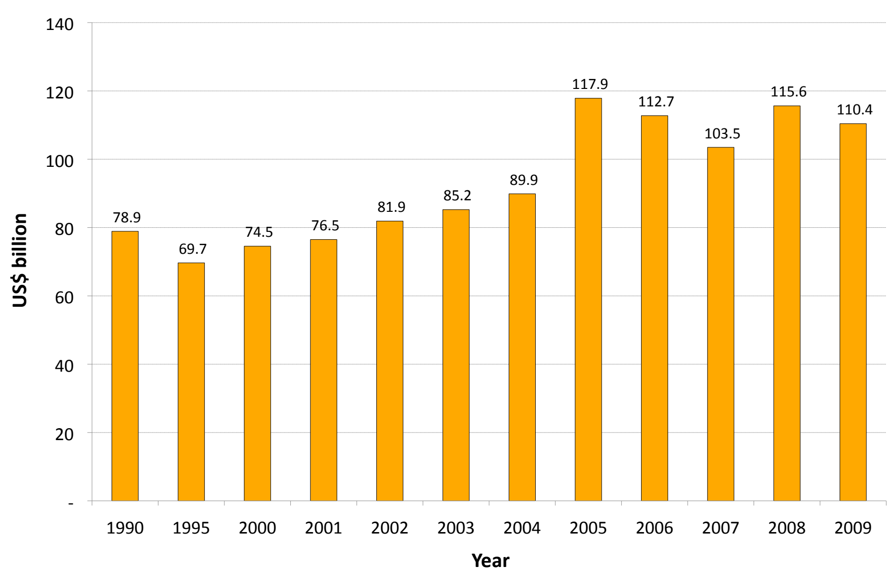
In summary, donors made significant progress in overall ODA levels during the last decade, including on "real aid". However the increases have not kept pace with needs nor with pledges. In 2005 many governments, mostly European, committed to improve their ODA performance and set ODA/GNI ratio targets for 2010 and 2015. Proportional aid levels have been sustained in 2009 although aid volume increases have been affected by the reduced economic

Chart 4: DAC Donor "Real ODA", 1990-2009 (% of DAC Gross National Income)



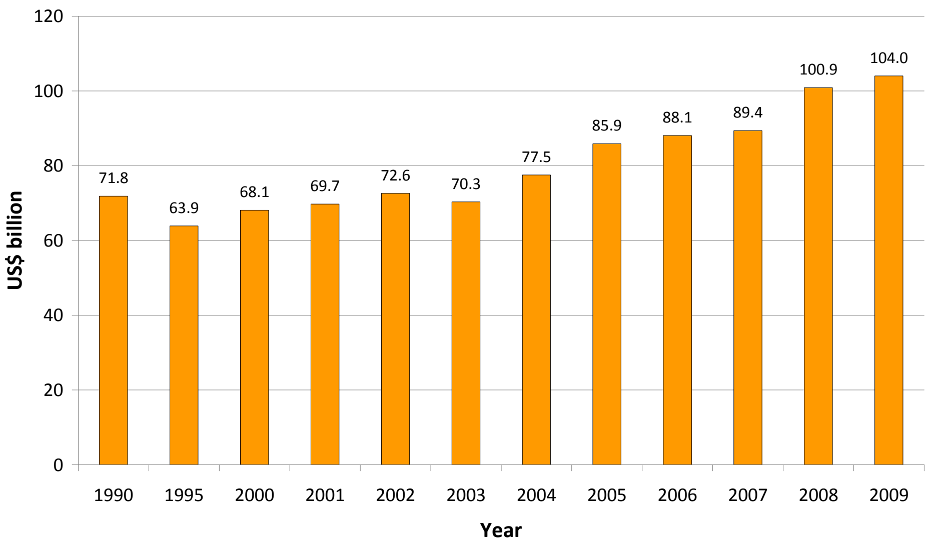
Source: Reality of Aid estimates on data from DAC1 Dataset Official and Private Flows

Chart 5: DAC Donor ODA, 1990-2009 (US$ billion, constant 2007 US dollars)



Source: DAC1 Dataset Official and Private Flows

Chart 6: DAC Donor "Real ODA",1990-2009 (US$ billion, constant 2007 US dollars)



Source: Reality of Aid estimates on data from DAC1 Dataset Official and Private Flows

growth in richer countries. Nominal economic growth was negative 3.5% in 2009. If, for example, growth had instead been maintained at the previous annual average of 5% and assuming the same donor performance ratios, ODA in 2009 would have been approximately US$9.2 billion higher.

1. Expected ODA for 2010 falls far short of 2005 Gleneagles commitments.

At the Accra High Level Forum in September 2008, donors agreed to increase the medium-term predictability of aid by providing developing countries with "regular and timely information on their rolling three- to five-year forward expenditure and/or implementation plans".[7] The predictability of expected aid resources is essential for developing country governments to be able to plan annual budgetary expenditures. This in turn requires donor governments to meet their stated public goals for aid increases.[8]

What did donors promise at the 2005 Gleneagles G7 Summit? Already, five out of twenty-two DAC donors provide more in aid than the UN goal of 0.7% of their GNI: Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Netherlands and Luxembourg.[9] An additional five European donors committed to achieve the UN goal on or before 2015: Belgium, France, Ireland, Spain and the United Kingdom. Another five European donors committed to raise aid to 0.51% of their GNI by 2010: Austria, Finland, Germany, Italy, and Portugal. Greece deferred its 0.51% target to 2012.

Australia targets 0.50% by 2015 with an interim target of 0.37% in 2010. Canada has a target to double "international assistance" by 2010, with the DAC estimating that this will be 0.33% of Canada's GNI in that year. As a candidate, US President Barack Obama promised to double US aid to US$50 billion by 2012. This has now been postponed to the second presidential term and the 2010 US federal budget will increase foreign assistance by 10%, with proposals for the 2011 budget outlining further significant increases.[10] The DAC estimated that if donor governments were on track with their 2010 commitments ODA would be US$145 billion (in 2008 dollars) or 0.36% of GNI.[11]

How have the commitments been affected by the global financial crisis? Even prior to the financial crisis, several donors were already far off-track in achieving their 2005 commitments. In early 2010 the European Commission stated that 14 out of 27 EU donors cut ODA in 2009, and that they expect 17 out of the 27 to fail to meet their 2010 targets. The DAC estimates that several major donors will fall well short of their targeted performance including Austria, Germany, Italy and France.[12] (**See Table 1**)

At the 2009 Ministerial Meeting of DAC, donors pledged to maintain their aid commitments irrespective of the impact of the financial crisis on their economies and government revenue but these pledges have been disregarded. Other countries such as Belgium and Spain were considered "on target" by the DAC but their 2009 performance now makes this seem unlikely.

Table 1: Post-Finance Crisis Changes in DAC Donor ODA for 2009 and 2010

Donor	2008 ODA		2009 ODA (Preliminary)		DAC 2010 ODA Projection	Target Ratio for 2010
	% of GNI	US$ million	% of GNI	US$ million	% of GNI	% of GNI
European Union (EU) Members						
Austria	0.43	1,714	0.30	1,146	0.37	0.51
Belgium	0.48	2,386	0.55	2,601	0.70	0.70
Denmark	0.82	2,803	0.88	2,810	0.83	0.80
Finland	0.44	1,166	0.54	1,286	0.56	0.70
France	0.39	10,908	0.46	12,431	0.46	0.61
Germany	0.38	13,981	0.35	11,982	0.40	0.51
Greece	0.21	703	0.19	607	0.21	0.51
Ireland	0.59	1,328	0.54	1,000	0.52	0.60
Italy	0.22	4,861	0.16	3,314	0.20	0.51
Luxembourg	0.97	415	1.01	403	1.00	1.00
Netherlands	0.80	6,993	0.82	6,425	0.80	0.80
Portugal	0.27	620	0.23	507	0.34	0.51
Spain	0.45	6,861	0.46	6,571	0.51	0.59
Sweden	0.98	4,732	1.12	4,546	1.01	1.00
United Kingdom	0.43	11,500	0.52	11,505	0.60	0.59
Non-EU Members						
Australia	0.32	2,954	0.29	2,761	0.35	0.36
Canada	0.32	4,785	0.30	4,013	0.33	0.33
Japan	0.19	9,579	0.18	9,480	0.18	0.22
New Zealand	0.30	348	0.29	313	0.32	0.28
Norway	0.88	3,963	1.06	4,086	1.00	1.00
Switzerland	0.42	2,038	0.47	2,305	0.47	0.41
United States	0.19	26,842	0.20	28,665	0.19	0.18
South Korea	0.09	802	0.10	816		
Total DAC	**0.30**	**122,296**	**0.31**	**119,573**	**0.32**	**0.36**

Source: DAC Statistics and DAC, "DAC Members' Commitment and Performance: Summary Table of OECD Secretariat Projections [2010]", February 15, 2010 and DAC, "Net Official Development Assistance in 2009, Preliminary Data for 2009", April 14, 2010.

According to the DAC's April 2010 analysis, DAC donors as a group will fall some US$20 billion short of their 2005 Gleneagles commitment to increase aid by US$50 billion between 2005 and 2010.[13] The DAC projects that Africa will receive only about US$11 billion of the US$25 billion a year in aid increases that it was promised. Based on OECD projections for donor GNI, and on estimates by Reality of Aid and the DAC, total ODA for 2010 will be approximately US$126 billion. If GNI had grown by 5% per year in 2009 and 2010, and if donors had met their 2010 commitments, ODA should be at some US$160 billion in 2010. The DAC's 2010 *Development Cooperation Report* recommends that future aid commitments include specified year-on-year increases to improve predictability and accountability.[14]

2. Aid commitments are affordable despite the economic crisis.

From the last quarter of 2008, people across the globe have been severely affected by the most severe and pervasive economic crisis since the Great Depression. No donor country has been spared the consequences of a systemic failure to regulate and supervise banks and financial markets in the US and Europe. Most donor countries had negative economic growth in 2009, according to the OECD. Industrial countries have countered the downturn by spending trillions of dollars in rescue packages. The Brookings Institute suggests that the world will be 7.2% poorer in 2013, in terms of global economic output, than suggested by a pre-crisis five-year economic outlook.[15]

The poorest countries in the South are the victims and not the culprits of this financial crisis. They have been severely affected through lower trade and investment volumes, volatile commodity prices, and falling remittances from migrants living in donor countries. These crisis effects have compounded systemic crises of endemic poverty, worsening food security and the ecological consequences of climate change. Long after Northern economies recover, the poorest developing countries will still be dealing with the impacts on their vulnerable populations. Women are among the worst affected given their significant roles in agriculture, export zone manufacturing, and service sectors.

Donor governments clearly have strong moral and ethical obligations to meet their aid commitments. But do these worsening economic conditions affect donor governments' capacity to honor them? Some severely affected donor countries such as the UK look likely to honor their commitments. As a proxy for the ability to pay, the Reality of Aid has been tracking the long term trend in aid and GNI per capita growth in donor countries in its bi-annual Reports. There is a widening gap between wealth in donor countries and per capita aid allocations, particularly since the early 1990s. (**See Figure 1**) Reality of Aid notes that:

- Donor GNI per capita grew by some US$600 per year between 1961 and 2008 (from US$13,810 to US$42,000), while aid per donor country inhabitant increased by just US$1 per year over the same period (from US$71 to US$118).
- Donor GNI per capita grew by US$28,200 or more than 200% over the last 48 years, while aid per capita has grown by only US$47 or 66%.
- Aid per capita as a percentage of GNI per capita has dropped from 0.5% in 1961 to less than 0.3% in 2008.

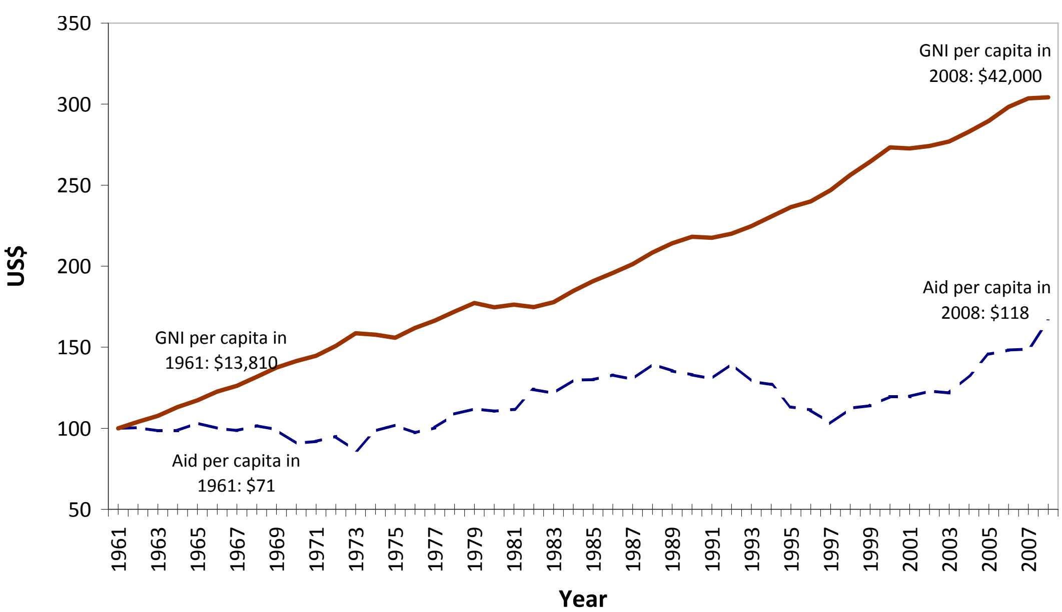
Another important measure of current capacity and political will to meet commitments is the trend in aid as a proportion of government revenue. (**See Chart 7**) In 2007, "real aid" was 1.8% of government revenue which was well above the low of 1.2% in 2000 but still lower than the 2.2% level in 1980 and 2.1% in 1990. If government revenues in 2009 fall by 3.5% below its 2007 level and if "real aid" remains at 2008 levels of US$100 billion, the ratio increases marginally to 2% which is still less than the 2.1% in 1990.

Public opinion in many donor countries remains strongly encouraging for governments to implement their commitments. For example, a Eurobarometer public opinion poll in June 2009 found that 90% of Europeans still believe that development is important, more than 70% agree that the EU should keep its promises, and 24% agree to increase aid beyond what has been promised.[16]

3. Foreign policy concerns have driven donor aid increases since 2000, with only modest new resources available for human development goals.

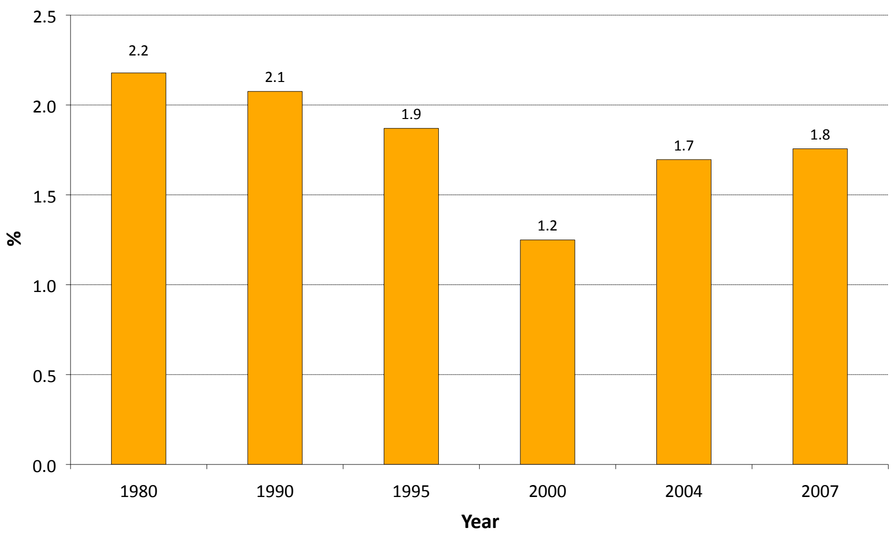
At the beginning of the last decade, the international community vowed in the Millennium Declaration to "spare no effort" to realise human rights and reduce poverty. The value of aid in 2007 dollars increased by 55% between 2000 and 2008, from US$74.6 billion to US$115.6 billion. By 2008 donor governments had cumulatively disbursed US$265.6 billion additional aid dollars above what they had allocated in 2000.[17] But not all of these new aid dollars should count towards the Millennium commitment to human rights for poor and marginalised people. This is the case for increased

Figure 1: The Growing Gap Between Donor Wealth and "Real Aid", 1961-2008
(GNI per capita and real aid per capita, 1961=100, constant 2007 US dollars)



Source: Reality of Aid

Chart 7: Real Aid as a Percentage of DAC Donor Federal Tax Revenue, 1980-2007 (%)



Note: Aid is net of debt relief grants and support for refugees in donor countries
Source: OECD Statistical Reports on Tax Revenues

aid spending since 2000 on debt cancellation grants, support for refugees and students, and allocations based on foreign policy interests of donor governments to Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. (**See Table 2**)

Nevertheless there have been some improvements recently. In 2006, only 28% of new aid dollars each year from the year 2000 were available for the MDGs – but this increased to 42% by 2008 because of aid increases and less amounts going to debt cancellation. Debt relief grants over the period 2000-2009 totaled US$91.3 billion, accounting for 10.5% of all new aid disbursements of US$870.9 billion. The share of debt relief in ODA peaked at 23.3% in 2005, before falling to 9.0% in 2008 and then 2.1% in 2009. (**See Chart 8**)

The country allocation of ODA has also been skewed by post 9/11 'war on terror' foreign policy, particularly to Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan. The proportion of ODA (excluding debt cancellation) allocated to these three countries has markedly increased since 2001, peaking at

Table 2: Allocation of New Aid Dollars, 2000-2008 (US$ billion, constant 2007 dollars)

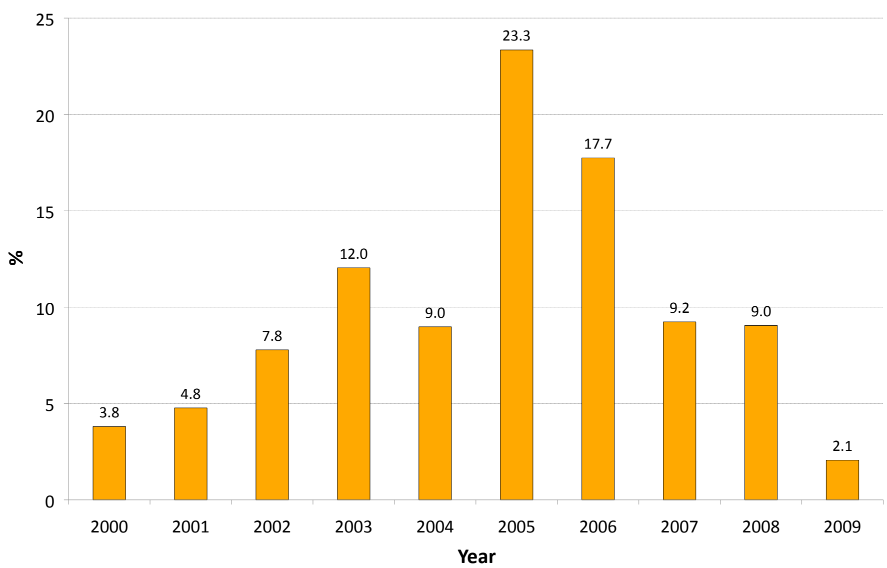
Total Net New Aid Dollars since 2000		**265.6**
Minus:		
Non-Aid Items		82.1
Of which:		
Additional Debt Cancellation	70.4	
Additional Support for Refugees	3.9	
Additional Imputed Student Costs	7.8	
Additional Humanitarian Assistance		25.5
Additional to Pakistan, Afghanistan & Iraq		46.2
New aid dollars for potential use in poverty reduction / MDGs and other development programs over 8 years		**111.8**
Percentage of Total New Aid Resources (%)		**42.1**

Source: Reality of Aid calculations based on DAC1 Dataset and DAC2 Dataset, 2000 to 2008, constant 2007 US dollars. New aid resources in each of these years are compared to aid levels in 2000. Similarly, the deductions made from total new aid resources are compared to levels in 2000.

13.5% in 2005 and still remaining at 7.7% in 2008. (**See Chart 9**) From 2000 to 2008 a cumulative total of US$46.2 billion, or 17% of all new aid resources since 2000, were devoted to these three countries. This was primarily driven by the foreign policy interests of the key donors involved in the wars.

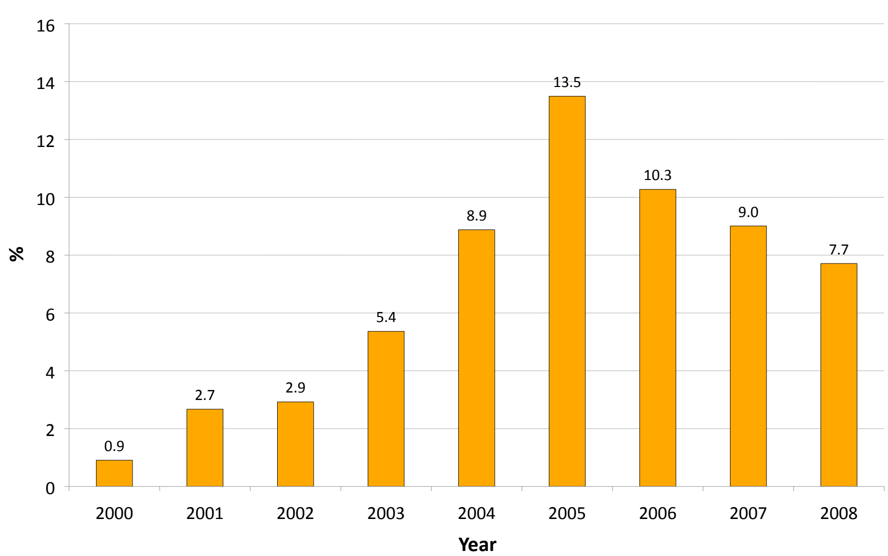
The allocation breakdown of the US$265.6 billion in new aid dollars includes increased support for refugees in donor countries (US$3.9 billion), for support to developing country students studying in donor countries (US$7.8 billion) and for additional humanitarian assistance (US$25.5 billion). (**See Table 2**) Almost 60% of additional aid programmed since 2000 has gone towards donor foreign policy interests in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan and to increases in debt relief grants, plus support for students and refugees in donor countries. Increased debt relief grants in ODA between 2000 and 2008 amounted to US$70.4 billion, some 26.5% of all new aid disbursements in these years. Debt cancellation is often strongly linked to donor foreign policy interests – for instance, fully 70% of debt grants in these eight years were for Iraq, Nigeria, Pakistan and Afghanistan (US$48.9 billion). Overall, too few new aid dollars have been made available for more effective investment in poverty reduction and achieving the MDGs.

Chart 8: Debt Relief Grants as a Percentage of ODA, 2000-2009 (%)



Source: DAC1 Dataset Official and Private Flows

Chart 9: Aid to Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan as a Percentage of Total "Real ODA", 2000-2008 (%)



Source: Reality of Aid estimates on data from DAC2a Dataset

Section B: Aid allocation, aid quality and development effectiveness

Donors have committed to improve aid effectiveness, prioritise poverty reduction, strengthen the rights of the poor, and transfer leadership to developing country institutions. What has their record been on delivering these?

1. Aid allocation to poverty reduction priorities has not grown substantially since 1995.

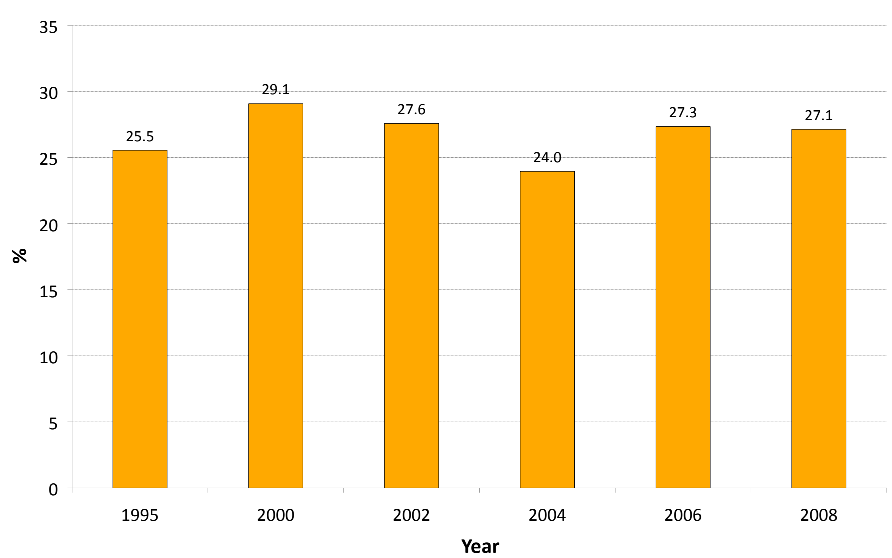
The introduction of the Millennium Goals in 2000 has had a profound impact on donor discourse for aid as well as on stated poverty reduction strategies in many developing countries.[18] But has the increased availability of aid dollars, particularly since 2007, amounted to a concerted effort to reduce poverty and achieve the MDGs? Donors unfortunately do not track the allocation of aid to specific goals.

Reality of Aid, however, has created a proxy indicator to track donor support for the MDGs which demonstrates that the percentage of sector-allocated ODA going towards the MDGs actually increased very little from 25.5% in 1995 to 27.1% in 2008. [19] (**See Chart 10**). The absolute amount of aid allocated to MDG-related sectors grew by 87% since 2000 (measured in constant 2007 dollars) – with most of the increases occurring since 2005 – but the increase in its share is negligible because total aid has also grown significantly during this period.

Accordingly, there is no evidence that donors have lived up to their commitment in the Millennium Declaration to "spare no effort" by devoting an increasing proportion of their aid dollars to tackle the MDGs. It is therefore not surprising that most MDGs remain elusive in most developing countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The 2009 *Millennium Development Goals Report* suggests that progress has been made on many of the targets as set against their 1990 benchmark.[20] Poverty levels have fallen from 50% of total developing country population to 25% in 2005. The international community is on track to achieve a halving of the proportion of people in extreme poverty by 2015. But the Report also points out that this means that the number of people living in extreme poverty has fallen only from 1.8 billion in 1990 to 1.4 billion in 2005, with the likely prospect that between 55 million and 90 million have been added to those living on less than $1.25 a day since the onset of the 2008/09 financial crisis.[21] The number of hungry people rose with the 2008 food price increases. On gender equality the report points out that "since the mid-1990s, most developing countries have experienced a major reduction in donor funding for family planning on a per woman basis, despite the undeniable contribution of such programs to maternal and child health".[22]

Chart 10: Percentage of Sector Allocated ODA Going to MDGs, 1995-2008 (%)



Source: Reality of Aid estimates on data on aid commitments (in current dollars) from DAC Creditor Reporting System

Sub-Saharan Africa is still the region where the least progress is being made. The number of people living in extreme poverty there has increased from 300 million in 1990 to over 380 million in 2005, and the poverty rate remains above 50%.[23] More than 64% of employed people in this region lived on less than $1.25 a day, compared to 44% in Southern Asia and 8% in Latin America.[24] In 2005, donors committed to double aid to Africa by 2010. However the DAC reported in April 2010 that donors delivered only US$11 billion in new aid in 2010 – not US$25 billion as promised in 2005. Still, donors have improved their emphasis on MDGs in Sub-Saharan Africa since 2000, and particularly in 2008. According to the Reality of Aid MDG proxy indicator, the share of sector-allocated aid to Sub-Saharan Africa going to MDGs increased from 31% in 2000 to 38.2% in 2008. (**See Chart 11**)

The 2009 MDG report suggests that modest progress has been made on several MDG targets. These include universal primary education, gender parity in education, and women's political representation. However many CSOs and academics suggest that such country, regional or global level average statistics mask unequal outcomes for some groups of people who may be increasingly poor.

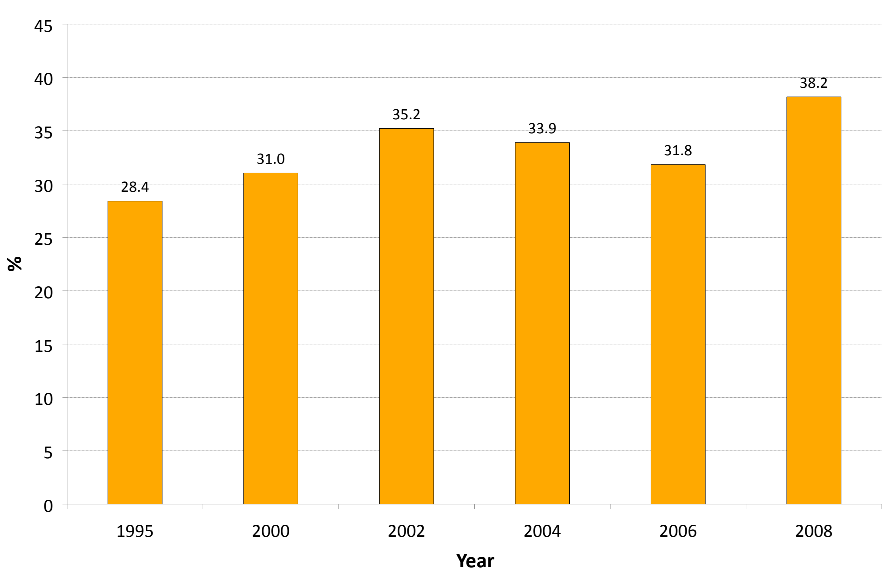
CSOs have also criticised the MDGs for omitting social inequality, and lacking significant goals for women's rights and gender equality. The 2009 MDG report recognises these limitations, with the UN Under Secretary for Economic and Social Affairs suggesting that "achieving the MDGs will also require targeting areas and population groups that have clearly been left behind – rural communities, the poorest households and ethnic minorities, all of whom will have a hand in shaping our common future".[25] Former Irish president Mary Robinson has challenged governments coming to the September 2010 UN Development Summit on the MDGs to acknowledge the importance of a human rights and justice framework for current and future development strategies, bridging the gap between the MDGs and human rights.[26] In assessing progress on the MDGs for poverty reduction and the rights of poor and vulnerable populations. It is therefore essential to look closely at several sectors and assess donor commitments to gender equality.

Basic Health

According to the DAC Creditor Reporting System, donor support for basic health, population and reproductive health has shown the highest increase in aid commitments. These sectors increased their share of sector-allocated aid from 7.1% in 2000 to 11.2% in 2008. The increase from US$3.5 billion in 2000 to US$11.9 billion in 2008 represents a constant (2007) dollar increase of more than 215%.

A study by the University of Washington suggests that the four-fold increase in aid for health contributed to a 28% reduction in the child mortality rate in developing countries between 1990 and 2008 and to giving more than three million people access to anti-retroviral treatment. The study calculates that overall "development assistance for health" reached

Chart 11: Percentage of Sector Allocated ODA Going to MDGs in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1995-2008 (%)



Source: Reality of Aid estimates on data on aid commitments (in current dollars) from DAC Creditor Reporting System

US$21.8 billion in 2007 – a figure that includes significant amounts from private foundations, such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and private US-based NGOs.[27] The share of health assistance provided by official bilateral agencies in turn decreased from 47% in 1990 to 27% in 2007, while the share of UN agencies declined from 32% in 1990 to 14% in 2007. In contrast, the 2007 share of the Global Fund and the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) was 8%, that of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation was 4% and US-based NGOs was 25%.[28 29]

Every human being has a right to health and health is in turn a measure of social justice and equity. People living in the poorest countries still have very limited opportunity to claim this right. A 2009 report by a High Level Taskforce, co-chaired by UK prime minister Gordon Brown and WB president Robert Zoellick, called for an additional US$10 billion to be spent per year on health in poor countries. The report documented that low-income countries spend only US$25 per capita on health, of which US$10 is paid by the patients themselves and only US$6 is provided by development assistance.[30] The report also highlighted a serious imbalance in health development assistance with more than 50% directed to infectious disease, mostly HIV/AIDS, and less than 20% to basic health care services, nutrition and infrastructure.[31]

A high proportion of increased assistance for health has come through the creation of dedicated (infectious disease-specific) initiatives such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund), GAVI and bilateral initiatives such as the US President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). These initiatives have increasingly come to recognise the need to invest in strengthening health systems. This is necessary to avoid situations such as in Uganda where high quality treatment for HIV/AIDs is increasingly available for free even as clinics across the street lack the basics for treating a wide range of common diseases. Uganda's health budget of US$112 million is dwarfed by donor earmarked spending for HIV/AIDs of US$167 million.[32] Recently, US Secretary of State Clinton announced a six-year investment of US$63 billion in PEPFAR, while stressing that these funds will be available for training health workers, basic health clinics and other health infrastructure essential to an effective health system in the poorest countries.[33] Similarly, Prime Minister Brown announced in 2009 the expansion of the International Finance Facility on Immunization, explicitly acknowledging that GAVI, the WB and the Global Fund will earmark a proportion of funding for broader health activities.[34]

Basic Education

Aid to basic education doubled between 2000 and 2008 (in constant 2007 dollars) and reached US$2.2 billion. However in recent years increases in funding have stagnated and new commitments declined by one-third between 2007 and 2008. Progress since 2002 has been strong; enrolment in primary school increased 40 million by 2008 and school fees have been abolished in many African countries. [35]

Enrolment increases in Sub-Saharan Africa however have been at the expense of a low quality education, particularly affecting children of the poor who cannot afford alternatives. The African Child Poverty Forum reports that pupil-teacher ratios in Africa average 43:1, with some countries having ratios far above the average (Congo 83:1; Chad 69:1). In contrast, the global average for this ratio is 25:1.[36] Many countries in Africa lack the basic infrastructure to deliver quality education. This is not helped by donor support that is too often uncoordinated, fragmented and driven by immediate priorities, with some donors continuing to bypass national systems and strategies in many countries.[37] The WB-based Fast Track Initiative, which was to guarantee resources for countries with credible national education strategies, has cumbersome procedures and long delays in disbursements.

Agriculture

The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) highlighted how the food crisis and the economic crisis combined to increase the number of hungry people by 100 million worldwide. There are now more than one billion undernourished people which is more than at any time since 1970.[38] In many countries, the loss of income due to the economic crisis is compounded by continued high food prices in local markets. The poor have been forced to cut back on health and education spending and also on consumption of nutritious food. Three-quarters of the world's hungry are the rural poor, and many of these people are highly vulnerable to climate change impacts on their food production.

According to a 2009 DAC study, donor assistance for agriculture (including multilateral aid) grew from US$5.1 billion in 2002-2003 to US$6.2 billion in 2006-2007 (in constant 2007 prices).[39] But donor agriculture investments at best held steady as a percentage of sector-allocated aid. In historical terms the trend is dramatically downwards: the percentage of such sector-allocated aid fell from a high of 17% in the mid-1980s, to 13% in the mid-1990s, and to 6% in 2006-2007.

DAC bilateral aid to agriculture in the period 2006-2007, the most recent data, amounted to US$3.8 billion or only 6% of sector-allocated aid. Three donors – the US, Japan and France – accounted for almost 90% of this bilateral aid. Some 17% of the US allocation went to drug eradication programs in Afghanistan. The least developed countries and other low-income countries received two-thirds of total aid to agriculture in 2006/07. But more than 38% of this was in the form of concessional loans from Japan, Germany and multilateral development banks.[40]

The G8 countries, meeting in their annual Summit in Italy in July 2009, pledged to reverse "the tendency of decreasing official development aid and national financing to agriculture". They launched a US$20 billion L'Aquila Food Security Initiative, which they expect will be committed to and then allocated over three years. The new US administration promised US$3.5 billion in food security aid at the Summit. According to the DAC Report on aid to agriculture, in 2006/07 donors allocated US$11.9 billion to a broad definition of food security-related sectors.[41]

In a follow-up to the L'Aquila commitment, G20 countries meeting in Pittsburgh in September 2009 called on the WB to develop a new "trust fund" in support of the Food Security Initiative. The WB pledged US$1.5 billion to this trust fund – called the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP) – but it is unclear if donor commitments toward the US$20 billion will be additional money.[42] Many CSOs are concerned that these funds will promote an expansion of high-input, high-technology "green revolution" large-scale agriculture to the detriment of millions of impoverished small-scale farmers and the rural poor. As in the health sector, new aid actors such as the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation have been investing hundreds of millions of dollars into the controversial Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA), building partnerships with major official donors and African governments.[43] The GAFSP was launched in April 2010 with an initial US$880 million, including a commitment by the Gates Foundation of US$30 million alongside Canada (US$230 million) and the US (US$475 million).[44]

Aid for Trade

The OECD argues that "aid for trade is needed now more than ever, to provide much needed additional stimulus, avert the worst consequences of the economic downturn, while addressing underlying vulnerabilities to get the enabling environment for growth right – assisting producers in partner countries to effectively participate and compete in local, regional and international markets". [45] In the wake of the failure of the Doha Round of multilateral trade negotiations, donors pledged to increase their "aid for trade" at the Hong Kong WTO Ministerial in 2005.

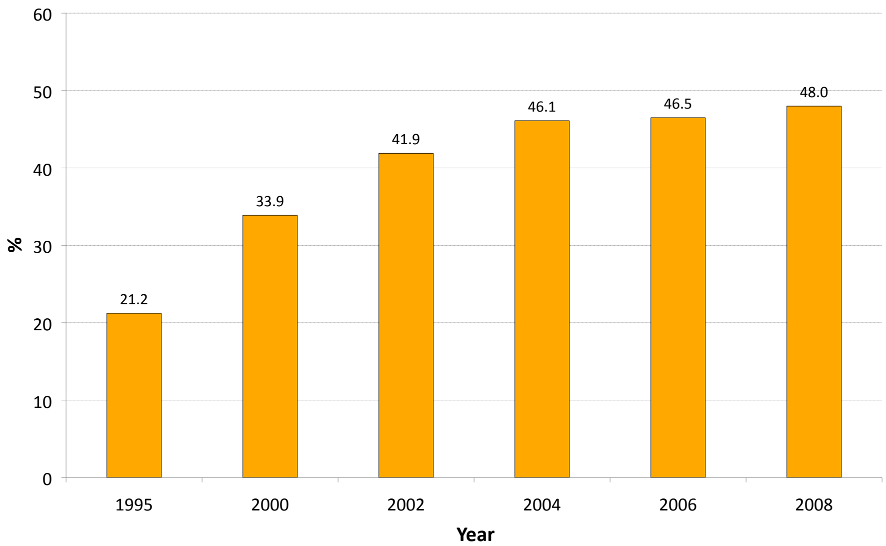
The DAC's measure of "aid for trade" is dubious. Over US$25.4 billion was counted as aid for trade in 2007, and an average of US$21.1 billion in the period 2002-2005.[46] These figures include support for "trade policy and regulation" (US$685.3 million in 2007), and also all aid to "economic infrastructure" (US$13.7 billion) and "building productive capacity" (US$11.1 billion) which includes all aid to agriculture, industry, and banking and financial services. The DAC statistics on aid for trade are therefore a gross exaggeration and meaningless measure of aid that is supposed to target producers including informal and formal sector and their linkages with local, regional and international markets.

2. Bilateral Humanitarian Assistance continues to grow as a proportion of "real aid".

In 2008, bilateral humanitarian assistance reached US$8.8 billion from US$6.3 billion in 2007.[47] Since 2000 an increasing proportion of bilateral humanitarian assistance has been directed to Sub-Saharan Africa, rising from about one-third to slightly less than half by 2008. (**See Chart 12**) As a proportion of "real aid" to this region, humanitarian assistance has grown from 9.1% in 2000 to 16.0% in 2008, which is however down from the peak of 18.8% in 2005. Six countries accounted for 47% of all bilateral humanitarian assistance in 2008 – Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, and Somalia.

Humanitarian assistance is coming from more diverse sources. Non-DAC governments disbursed an estimated US$1.1 billion in humanitarian assistance in 2008 including significant amounts from Arab states, Turkey, China and India (mainly via the World Food Program). The top three recipients for non-DAC humanitarian assistance in 2008 were China, Yemen and the Palestinian Territories.[48] NGOs (including the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement) also disbursed US$4.9 billion humanitarian aid in 2007. Of this, US$2.6 billion was raised from non-governmental sources such as the public and corporations.[49] Another recent annual independent report on humanitarian assistance put the amount spent from all sources by international NGOs (INGOs) at US$5.7 billion, with more than US$1.7 billion accounted for by just six INGOs. The study also pointed out that INGOs account for the majority of humanitarian workers in the field – with about 250 organisations employing 113,000 staff in humanitarian work, with 95% being nationals of the host country.[50]

Chart 12: Bilateral Humanitarian Assistance to Sub-Saharan Africa as a Percentage of Total Bilateral Human Assistance, 1995-2008 (%)



Source: DAC1 Dataset Official and Private Flows

There is considerable overlap between country priorities for humanitarian assistance and donor support for countries with sustained and extreme conflict.[51] In 2008, there were ten countries in extreme conflict which were allocated a total of US$13.8 billion (not including debt cancellation), up from US$11.9 billion in 2006. Some 22% of this US$13.8 billion aid in 2008 was for humanitarian assistance. Aid to extreme conflict-affected countries was 12.3% of total non-debt aid in 2008. While still higher than 9.3% of total non-debt aid in 2000, this is down from more than 20% in 2006. These ten countries accounted for more than a third of total humanitarian assistance in 2008.

3. Gender equality remains largely invisible in donor aid activities.

In the 2008 Accra Agenda for Action (AAA), donors and developing country governments affirmed that "gender equality, respect for human rights, and environmental sustainability are cornerstones for achieving enduring impact on the lives and potential of poor women, men, and children." They committed to ensure that their "development policies and programs are designed and implemented in ways consistent with their agreed international commitments on gender equality". Many donors, such as DFID, CIDA, SIDA or NORAD, have robust long-standing policies purportedly guiding the implementation of this commitment as an essential condition for realizing development goals.

Remarkably little is known about the degree to which donors are implementing their policies. Fifteen years after the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995, there are still no statistical tables on gender equality in the DAC's annual *International Cooperation Report*. A DAC-based Network on Gender Equality (GENDERNET) brings together like-minded donors and some CSOs to track a gender equality "marker" for aid commitments. GENDERNET, whose own future is uncertain in a planned restructuring of the DAC, has produced excellent overviews of "best practices" in connecting gender equality, women's empowerment and aid effectiveness. Yet despite several high profile conferences there are still no gender-specific indicators for donor and government commitments made in the Paris Declaration and the AAA.

The DAC Creditor Report System includes a "gender only" policy objective for development activities against which donors report. Donors reported spending US$10.1 billion against this policy objective in 2008, up from US$3.3 billion in 2006 and US$5.8 billion in 2007. Much of this apparent increase is the result of large donors like the US and France reporting their aid commitments for this policy objective for the first time – although other donors which had been reporting such commitments even before also recorded a 65% increase between 2007 and 2008. In 2008, the "gender only" policy objective commitments were 8.6% of total ODA commitments which is up from 6.5% in 2007.

An analysis of GENDERNET's "gender marker" tracking gives grounds for concern about the degree to which increased reported funding may mask a retreat from supporting gender equality actions. The marker has been in place since 2004 to track aid commitments to gender equality for DAC donors reporting on their bilateral aid. In 2007/08 all donors except Ireland, Portugal and the US reported.[52] This gender marker unfortunately has a very broad definition: an aid activity can be counted if it has either gender equality as a "principal objective" or a "significant objective". Gender equality as a "principal objective" must be "an explicit objective of the activity and fundamental in its design", while gender equality as a "significant objective" has gender equality as "an important, but secondary, objective of the activity".[53]

The "significant objective" category then provides wide scope for overestimating the degree of attention to gender equality in donor programs. The degree to which funding has increased for activities with gender equality as a principal objective however may be a better indicator of the quality of mainstreaming, as this will depend on continued pressures on donors, governments and CSOs to address gender equality concerns in all of their aid activities.

For the 19 donors reporting, the DAC's GENDERNET reported in 2007/08 that US$15 billion was committed to projects that targeted gender equality – representing 30.2% of sector-allocated aid for these years.[54] However of this US$15 billion, 86% were marked as activities where gender equality was stated as a "significant objective" only and not a "principal objective". A mere US$2.1 billion were for activities marking gender equality as the "principal objective" or an almost insignificant 4.1% of sector-allocated aid.[55] The GENDERNET report for 2007/08 also identifies, for the first time, US$411 million for "support to women's equality organizations and institutions"; this accounts for less than 3% of all gender equality focused aid and for 20% of aid identifying gender equality as a "principal objective".[56]

Increases in support for gender equality are in part due to the creation of gender equality-specific funds by several major donors. These include the Dutch MDG3 Fund, SIDA's Global Program for Gender Equality and the UNIFEM Fund for Gender Equality supported by the Spanish Government. These special funds were expected to grow further in 2009.[57] Furthermore, in September 2009, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution to create a new women's agency consolidating the work of the four existing gender bodies in the UN system. CSOs are calling for US$1 billion to launch this new agency.[58]

Donors have been promoting "mainstreaming" gender equality in all their programming. This involves ensuring that gender perspectives and the goal of gender equality are pro-actively taken into account in policy development, research, advocacy/dialogue, legislation, resource allocation, and planning, implementation and monitoring of programs and projects. There is evidence that many donors have improved their emphasis on gender equality, while others such as Canada have seemingly backtracked on progressive policies.[59]

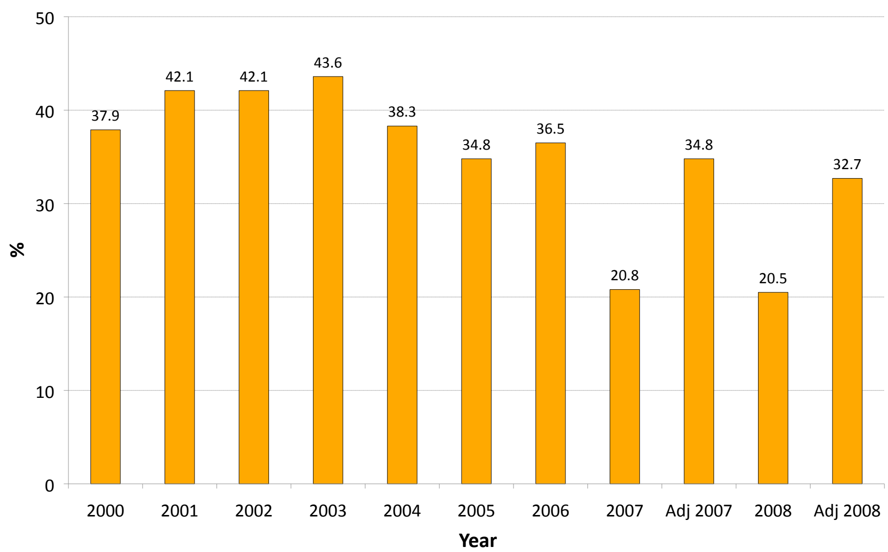
4. Donor-driven technical assistance remains a primary aid modality.

Technical cooperation (TC, or technical assistance) that aims to provide expertise or capacity building continues to be a very significant proportion of donors' bilateral aid. Reality of Aid estimates US$22 billion in "free-standing technical cooperation" in 2008, compared to US$16.2 billion in 2000 (in constant 2007 dollars). Not included in these figures are DAC CRS estimates of an additional US$1 billion for technical assistance in 2007 that is integrated into investment projects and sector programs.

Technical assistance has been slightly declining over the past eight years from a peak of 43.6% of bilateral aid in 2003 to around one-third (32.7%) in 2008, according to Reality of Aid estimates. (**See Chart 13**) Official DAC statistics however suggest a much steeper decline to less than 21% in 2007 and 2008 because the US inexplicably reported a sharp decline in its technical cooperation – from an annual average of US$8.5 billion up to 2006, down to a mere US$720 million in 2007 and 2008.[60] The Reality of Aid estimated a more realistic trend in technical assistance by adding the average of reported US technical cooperation between 2004 and 2006.

In the lead-up to Accra, both CSOs and developing country governments called for ambitious reforms to ensure that 100% of technical assistance is "demand-driven" by developing country aid recipients and effective for capacity development. The AAA calls for developing countries and donors to "jointly select and manage technical cooperation" and states that donors' support for capacity development should be demand-driven to support country ownership. However governments at the Accra High Level Forum did not agree on any specific and measurable actions on this area. There are no detailed proposals for how donors will ensure that all technical assistance is demand-driven and based on country needs.[61]

Chart 13: Technical Assistance as a Percentage of DAC Bilateral "Real Aid", 2000-2008 (%)



Source: DAC1 Dataset Official and Private Flows

The one requirement that was agreed in the Paris Declaration on aid effectiveness is that donors seek to coordinate their technical assistance. In 2008, donors claimed that more than 60% of their technical cooperation with 31 surveyed developing countries was already "coordinated" with other donors.[62] Caution is required in interpreting this figure as "some donors include as 'coordinated' any technical cooperation agreed with government or any assistance within a large program managed by a multilateral donor".[63]

The focus of the Paris Declaration indicator on coordination largely ignores the more serious challenges in Northern-driven technical assistance for realising real country ownership of aid programs. A recent review of the literature on Southern perspectives on technical cooperation highlighted very few examples of "demand-led" Southern-led technical assistance.[64] The Working Party's review of aid untying pointed out that "most donors try to influence project implementation, through long-term technical assistance or management consultants from their home country".[65] Singh comments that:

> "[The] domination of TCIs [technical cooperation initiatives] by expatriates can … raise problems, among them donor credibility. This often happens when donors prescribe cuts in government expenditure and insist upon greater equity in distributing resources, but send in consultants who are paid 20 to 30 times the national salary…. Expatriate consultants not only seem to take jobs from nationals, but often have their own ideas of how things should be done that clash with the way their hosts would like them done. This creates friction … and often raises the question of ownership..."[66]

Issues of capacity development and aid relationship management are real and complex. Yet developing country governments, CSOs and multilateral organisations (notably UNDP) have already put forward clear recommendations over the past decade, but which donors largely ignore in practice.[67] These recommendations include that:

- Developing country counterparts should play a leading role in identifying capacity needs;
- Clear priority should be given to national and regional consultants whenever these are available;
- Donors should encourage and enable South-South technical cooperation wherever possible; and
- When international consultants are engaged, the terms of reference should prioritise cultural awareness, strong interpersonal and communications skills, as well as technical qualifications.

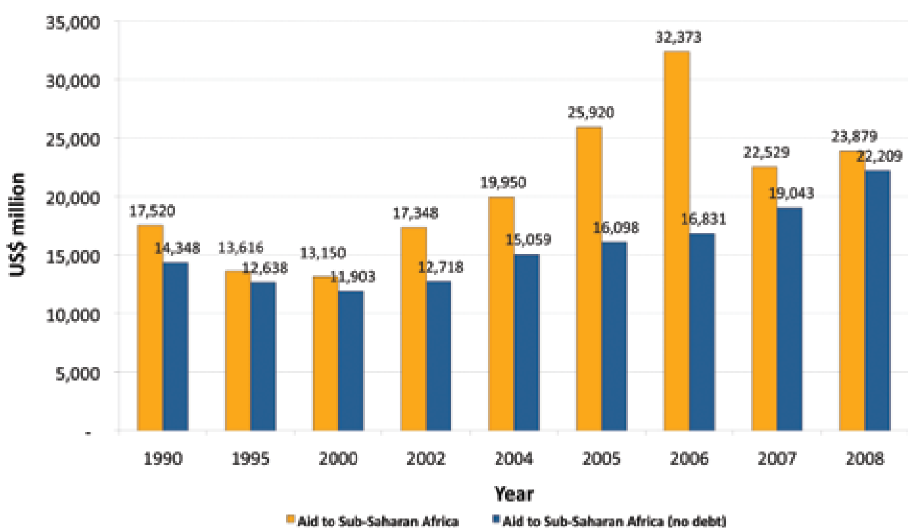
5. Donors will be short at least US$14 billion to meet their pledge to double aid to Sub-Saharan Africa by 2010.

At Gleneagles in 2005, the major DAC donors committed to double aid to Sub-Saharan Africa from US$25 billion to US$50 billion a year by 2010, dedicating half of all new aid increases to the sub-continent. In April 2010, the DAC predicted that donors will only be halfway to this target of providing US$25 billion in new money with donors likely providing only US$11 billion additional aid in 2010 – or a shortfall of US$14 billion. This is "due in large part to the under-performance of some European donors".[68] Between 2005 and 2009, "real ODA" actually increased by US$35 billion a year (not US$50 billion) although Africa did not receive half of this increase. In 2008, three years after Gleneagles and the last year for which detailed ODA statistics are available, aid to Sub-Saharan Africa was only US$29.6 billion in current dollars.

Certainly, the value of aid to Sub-Saharan Africa has been increasing in recent years. Aid to Sub-Saharan Africa increased by 47.5% between 2004 (US$15.1 billion) and 2008 (US$22.2 billion), in constant 2007 dollars and excluding the large debt cancellation grants in the period 2004 to 2006. (**See Chart 14**) But compared to other regions, the proportion of donor aid to Sub-Saharan Africa has changed at a much slower pace – largely due to the large donor allocations for Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan in Asia in recent years. (**See Chart 15**)

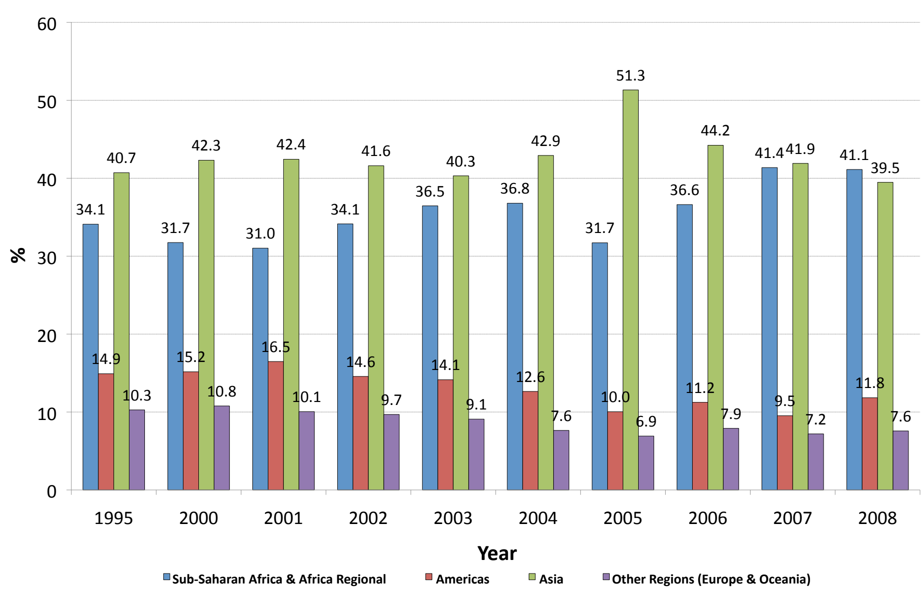
Donors are focusing their aid on fewer and fewer countries with several African countries in danger of being the "forgotten ones".[69] In the AAA, donors and developing countries committed to "work together … on country-led division of labour" in which there will be "dialogue on

Chart 14: ODA to Sub-Saharan Africa, 1990-2008 (US$ million, constant 2007 dollars)



Source: DAC Dataset by Region

Chart 15: Geographic Distribution of Regionally Allocated ODA (no debt), 1995-2008 (%)



Note: Net ODA disbursements, excluding debt cancellation
Source: DAC Dataset by Region

international division of labour across countries by June 2009" and "work to address the issue of countries that receive insufficient aid". Aid is currently allocated in a highly unequal basis across Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2008, excluding debt cancellation, 58% of DAC aid went to only 10 out of 48 African countries (and 37% to just five countries).

6. Donors are reneging on a pledge that financing for climate change would be additional to ODA.

In its 2008 global report, Reality of Aid joined other CSOs in calling for "increased donor financing for climate change adaptation … channelled through equitable North/South mechanisms based within the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) … additional to the donors' commitment to reach the 0.7% aid target for ODA". Years of unfulfilled aid promises made financing a crucial issue in the lead-up to the December 2009 Copenhagen Conference which was to set in place a post-2010 Climate Change Agreement. Environment and development CSOs pressed for government finance to meet urgent adaptation and mitigation needs. Estimates for climate adaptation financing alone between 2010 and 2050 range from US$75 to US$100 billion per year. CSOs called on donors to prioritize addressing the impact of climate change on the billions of poorest and most vulnerable people who bear no responsibility for the climate crisis.[70]

Climate finance must be additional to existing ODA commitments – otherwise scarce ODA dollars will be diverted from current development priorities. The 2008 Bali Action Plan, a roadmap for a new climate change treaty, reiterates donor pledges in the 1992 Framework Convention and says that climate change finance must be "'measurable, reportable, and verifiable" and also "new and additional, not taking the place of previous commitments of foreign aid (official development assistance)".[71]

The Copenhagen Conference ended with failure to create consensus, not least on the essential issues of developed country responsibility and commitments for climate change financing. The "Copenhagen Accord" was a last minute agreement drafted in closed side-rooms by heads of states from the US, China, India, and Brazil and a few other countries in the dying hours of the Conference. Other countries complained that it was drawn up in an inadequate and undemocratic manner yet, nonetheless, 120 have now signed. Many developing countries qualified that they signed on with the understanding that any future agreement must be reached by consensus, including all countries, and within the UN Framework Convention.

Prior to the Copenhagen Conference, donor financing for climate change has been very modest and highly fragmented into many separate funding windows, some of which were developed under the aegis of the WB's Climate Investment Funds and heavily criticised by CSOs and developing country governments. An Adaptation Fund with more equitable governance established under the UNFCCC is expected to raise only $300 million by 2012 through the Clean Development Mechanism credits. Two additional funds under the UNFCCC – the Least Developed Countries Fund and the Special Climate Change Fund – have pledges amounting to less than US$300 million as of December 2010.[72] In contrast, Climate Investment Funds organised under the governance of the WB has attracted US$6.3 billion in donor funds.[73]

The Copenhagen Accord acknowledged the importance of ramping up finance for climate change with a "fast start" commitment to bring together US$30 billion as "new and additional resources" for the period 2010 to 2012. It goes on to commit developed countries to the goal of mobilising US$100 billion in annual financing by 2020 "from a wide variety of sources, public and private, bilateral and multilateral, including innovative sources of finance".[74] While public finance will remain an essential part of post-2012 climate change resources, proposals for "alternative finance" range from a tax on financial transactions, a levy on greenhouse gas emissions from shipping and aviation, to a special allocation by the IMF of Special Drawing Rights (an IMF basket of currencies).

To date, commitments towards the fast track US$30 billion are already at approximately US$24 billion provided by eight donors, all with their own terms and conditions, and with most of it directed via WB funding windows.[75] Much of this finance remains highly uncertain. Japan, for example, is providing US$15 billion, but "on the condition that [a] successful political accord is achieved at COP15 [the 2010 Cancun Conference of the Parties] that is a fair and effective framework with participation of all major emitting countries and agreement of their ambitious targets".[76] For other donors, the situation is as with the UK whose US$800 million pledge annually is a mix of new and old funds already disbursed to the WB and which has opted to include these commitments as part of their annual ODA. The UK government has said that only climate change financing after 2013 will be over and above ODA at 0.7% of GNI.[77] There is also growing concern that donors have been communicating that access to these "quick start" resources will be available only to developing countries that have signed the controversial "Copenhagen Accord".[78]

In 2010 the DAC will implement an "Adaptation Marker" for donor ODA activity reporting to the DAC's Creditor Reporting System. An earlier "Rio Marker" was implemented in 1998 to track mitigation financing with bilateral ODA resources following the Rio Treaties in the early 1990s. According to the DAC, donors reported US$3.9 billion in bilateral aid commitments for climate change mitigation in 2007 despite pledges to use non-aid resources for these treaty obligations. The adaptation marker should enable improved transparency about the use of aid funds for climate change purposes but may also encourage diversion of existing aid resources towards these purposes.

The DAC *International Cooperation Report 2010* has a chapter dedicated to "incorporate adaptation into development co-operation policies from the local and project level up to the national level". Yet, this chapter fails to even mention the question of "additionality" and the impact of high levels of adaptation financing on current aid priorities.[79] These could be significant. A recent study by the Overseas Development Institute (ODI), commissioned by the ONE Campaign, estimates the potential impact of a large-scale use of ODA resources for climate change. It concludes that without additionality of climate finance, "increased climate finance activities might lead to less aid flows to Sub-Saharan Africa and lower aid flows to sectors such as education, health or aid for trade, thereby putting development efforts in jeopardy". Without additional resources aid priorities would shift by necessity to agriculture, coastal areas and the water sector.[80]

Some CSOs have also developed perspectives on the overlap between sustainable development goals and efforts to adapt to climate change impacts facing poor and vulnerable populations.[81] Key principles for development effectiveness are relevant: strengthening capacities for vulnerable populations to claim their rights, inclusion and "democratic country ownership" of domestic plans for adaptation and mitigation, avoidance of multiple channels for resource delivery and thousands of stand-alone projects in favour of a UNFCC global fund and country-based programmatic approaches, and strong democratic accountability to beneficiary populations.

7. Donors fail to advance on improving country ownership and leadership in bilateral aid.

In recent years the DAC has produced data on Country Programmable Aid. This shows how much bilateral ODA "developing countries are free to allocate, or program, in accordance with their development priorities".[82] The DAC calculated that US$55.6 billion or 57% of bilateral ODA was bilateral country programmable aid in 2007, up from 47% in 2005.[83] The DAC calculates that US$19.7 billion or 78% of gross multilateral aid was country programmable in 2007. But it warns that this figure underestimates multilateral administration costs and does not account for repayments of capital and interest on multilateral loans.[84]

Reality of Aid finds that the DAC systematically overestimates country programmable assistance. Reality of Aid calculates that only 44.6% of bilateral aid in 2008 was actually available to developing country partners for programming against their own priorities. (**See Chart 16**) This performance has reversed the declining trend in the period 2000 to 2006, but still remains well below the DAC's calculation of 57% for 2007 and the experience for aid through the 1980s. Reality of Aid's figures differ from the DAC's because Reality of Aid estimates that at least 80% of technical assistance is still Northern-directed and -determined and that aid tied to Northern contractors should also not be included in the measure.

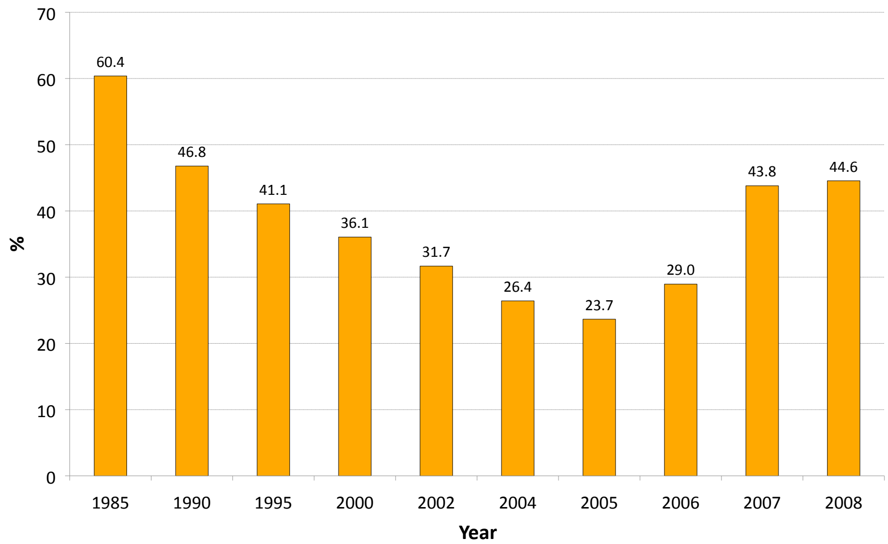
8. Bilateral aid remains tied to provider country contractors, despite claims to the contrary.

At the 2008 Accra High Level Forum, donors agreed to a modest commitment to "elaborate individual plans to further untie their aid to the maximum extent".[85] To date, 13 donors have provided their plans.[86] There is however evidence that a considerable proportion of bilateral aid remains tied through informal means and agreements to exclude certain types of bilateral aid from consideration. In its 2010 annual *Development Cooperation Report*, the DAC stated that "the share of aid still going to donor country suppliers is a cause for concern" and, among those that have untied their aid, "the high share of aid that still goes to domestic suppliers is [also] a cause for concern".[87]

Donor governments have reported significant progress on untying aid in recent years. Discounting debt cancellation, the DAC records that tied aid as a whole has dropped from 22% in 2000 to less than 15% in 2008 (including both tied and partially tied aid).[88] The US, which has had consistently high levels of tied aid, started reporting the tying status of its aid in 2006. However, the figures provided to the DAC mask a continued donor practice of allocating their aid in ways that benefit donor country suppliers.

The DAC tied aid reporting requirements do not include technical assistance or food aid. Technical assistance

Chart 16: Reality of Aid's "Country Programme Aid" as a Percentage of Bilateral Aid, 1985-2008 (%)



Note: Reality of Aid Calculation: Bilateral Aid less Debt Cancellation, Refugee Costs, Administration, Support to NGOs, Humanitarian Assistance, 80% of Technical Assistance
Source: Reality of Aid

averaged 38% of net bilateral aid between 2000 and 2008, amounting to an estimated US$22.1 billion in 2008. The US continues to tie its food aid and is the only country doing so. US food aid amounted to US$2.6 billion in 2008.[89]

The US reported 57% of its 2007 bilateral aid as tied. This is partly because Congress has passed a law making it impossible for the US to participate in program-based pooled funding arrangements with other donors. In contrast, several donors such as the UK and Norway have policies that commit them to formally untying 100% of their bilateral aid. Canada, Spain and Korea have also announced their intention to fully untie their aid.

A recent OECD evaluation of five donors that have largely untied their aid has however shown that companies registered in donor countries continue to receive many contracts even after formal aid untying.[90] The study reported for example that of 54 aid contracts examined from the UK, 88% of these (by value) were still awarded to UK companies in 2007. Of the 327 contract examined across the DAC, 60% by value were awarded in the donor's own country.[91]

Untying aid gives more choice to developing country counterparts and provides greater positive impact through local procurement of goods and services. It should stimulate developing country enterprises and take advantage of local expertise. While there were some differences between countries examined in the OECD study, the use of country systems by donors is very weak in aid-dependent countries. While donor aid contracts are mostly subject to competitive tendering, donors do little to strengthen local suppliers' access to aid resources.[92]

De facto untying was found to be strongest when donors adopted programmatic and pooling aid modalities, "combined with efforts to use and strengthen partner capacities in financial management and procurement". But project aid was still predominant in the surveyed countries such that "in most investment projects the primary or head contracts and most of the TC components are still procured in the donor country, even if procurement is channeled through recipient systems".[93] Donors have a long way to go to honor their commitment at Accra to "promote the use of local and regional procurement by ensuring that their procurement procedures are transparent and allow local and regional firms to compete".[94]

9. Donors continue to impose conditionality in aid relationships.

In the lead-up to the 2008 Accra High Level Forum, CSOs and developing country governments highlighted the continuation of donor policy conditionality. This was undermining the Paris Declaration commitment to "country ownership" and compromising developing country governments' democratic accountability to their citizens. CSOs demanded that donors agree in Accra to "set time-bound and measurable targets … to reduce the burden of conditionality by 2010 so that aid agreements are based on mutually agreed objectives". [95]

Under pressure from the WB the AAA contained a largely vacuous proposition "to review, document and disseminate good practices on conditionality with a view to reinforcing country ownership and other Paris Declaration Principles". Signatory governments agreed to work with developing countries to "agree on a limited set of mutually agreed conditions based on national development strategies".[96] In Accra donors also agreed to make public all conditions linked to aid disbursements. Countries such as the UK, Holland and Norway have recently distanced themselves from use of economic policy conditions.

Yet research by Eurodad suggests that each WB operation has an average of 37 conditions and that conditions in more than 70% of these operations relate to sensitive policy reforms for privatisation and further economic liberalisation. Similar research on the IMF concluded that the institution had not managed to decrease the number of structural conditions attached to its development lending, many of which still include privatisation and liberalisation conditions. The Eurodad Report quotes the IMF's own Independent Evaluation Office in its finding that "the Fund dramatically increased both the number of structural conditions and their intrusiveness in recipient countries' domestic affairs".[97]

Indirect conditionality is also unchecked as the financial institutions and donors insist on measurable "benchmarks" for their aid. The WB's Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA) tool acts as a filter for all donors, measuring the policies of recipient countries and their eligibility for aid. The CPIA has been roundly criticised by CSOs and developing country governments. In 2009 the WB's Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) called for a complete overhaul of the CPIA, a review of every indicator, and the abolition of the index, stating that "the literature offers only mixed evidence regarding the relevance of the content of CPIA for aid effectiveness broadly defined".[98] In another study, the IEG found that the WB systematically failed to assess the impact of its advice on poor people.[99]

The WB and IMF still exercise significant power in the aid system as budget support and sector programs in the poorest countries insist on compliance with WB/IMF programs. General Budget Support according to the DAC has grown from an average of US$210 million per year in the period 2000 to 2003, to more than US$4 billion in 2008. This amount does not include multi-donor sector budget support programs in health, agriculture or education. The DAC's survey of indicators for donor commitments made in the Paris Declaration include Program-Based Approaches (PBAs), a much broader and somewhat indistinct category for delivery of aid than budget support but nevertheless still often governed by joint donor conditionality. Donors reported US$19.8 billion in PBAs in 54 developing countries amounting to 44% of total aid disbursed.

The 2008-2009 financial crisis has further increased the influence of the multilateral banks and of the IMF. G20 governments further empowered the IMF by channelling additional balance of payments support for crisis-affected countries through it. They also called for an increased capital base for the WB and the regional development banks. CSOs point to the hypocrisy of promoting fiscal stimulus for Northern countries while continuing to "advise" developing countries to reduce deficits and restrain public expenditures. The IMF insisted, for example, that Pakistan reduce its fiscal deficit from 7.4% of gross domestic product (GDP) to 4.2% by lowering public expenditure, gradually eliminating energy subsidies, raising electricity tariffs by 18% and eliminating tax exemptions.[100]

10. Reforms to create a more effective and more democratic aid architecture are urgently needed.

The DAC's 2010 *International Cooperation Report* agrees that "the current architecture and institutional set-up of development institutions must be changed". The Report goes on to suggest that "this will require a better focus on poor countries and people as the beneficiaries; simplified organisational structures, instruments and procedures; greater synergy and coherence among bilateral and multilateral assistance; and a more effective division of labour among institutions".[101]

Reforms in official aid architecture are indeed urgently needed. There has been a proliferation of international organizations involved in delivering ODA. A 2009 DAC Report on multilateral aid counted 263 international organisations which are ODA-eligible, up from 47 in 1960, and they continue to grow in numbers. The Report points out that 20 new organizations were added between 2000 and 2006, particularly in the health sector. Over 100 of these 263 international organizations managed less than US$20 million each. On the other hand, five accounted for two-thirds of the US$43 billion managed by these 263 organizations.[102]

The proliferation of funding windows for health-related investments has also come under increased criticism for creating an increasing "anarchy" for developing country governments and other health partners.[103] The 2008 AAA addressed the proliferation of vertical funds with donors and governments calling on "all global funds to support country ownership, to align and harmonize their assistance proactively, and to make good use of mutual accountability frameworks". In contemplating new vertical funds "donors will ensure that existing channels for aid delivery are used and, if necessary, strengthened before creating separate new channels that risk further fragmentation and complicate co-ordination at country level". Others have suggested that health-related funds must focus on developing country-level capacities in favor of health systems strengthening, support country mechanisms with predictable funding, reduce complex application and reporting burden from multiple channels, and use indicators relevant to health systems strengthening rather than disease outcomes, tailored to country capacities and situations.[104]

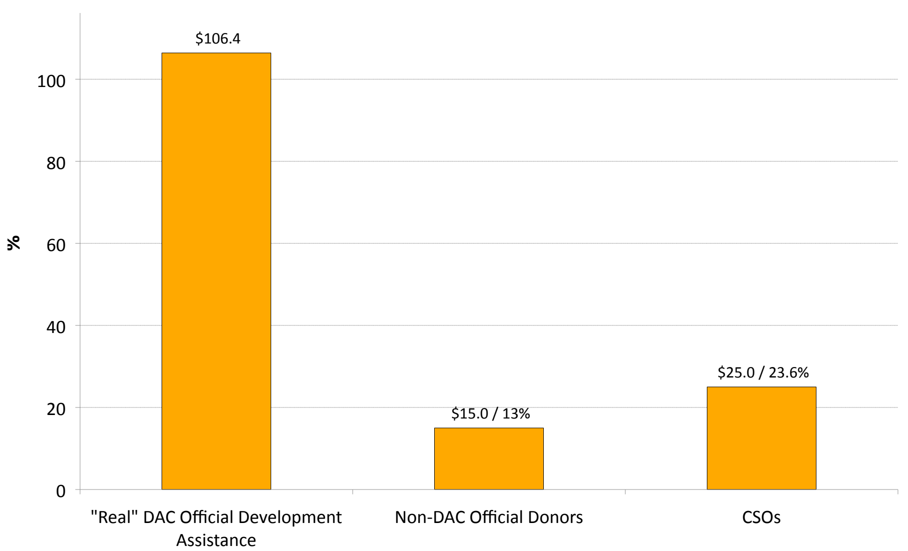
The transaction costs for developing country counterparts from these 263 organisations are compounded by requirements of at least 56 official bilateral agencies. Bilateral proliferation and fragmentation has also grown exponentially with the use of "trust funds". The WB currently manages more than 1,000 Trust Funds with earmarked resources provided by bilateral donors. These WB Trust Funds – each with specific purposes, criteria and governance – cumulatively spent US$28.5 billion in 2009. Bilateral donors continue to create similar trust funds, earmarked funds and special accounts within the UNDP, UNICEF and the regional development banks.[105] Bilateral donors are often driven to set up such funding mechanisms by internal pressures to reduce their management costs – but they seem to have little overall strategy or consideration for recipient transaction costs caused by such fragmentation.

The OECD Development Centre has calculated that there were at least 93,517 distinct bilateral projects being implemented in developing countries in 2007. Their research demonstrates that donor interventions are most fragmented in the social sectors such as education, health, and support for civil society and government. Based on 2007 CRS disbursement data, the study counted 4,162 bilateral donor projects in Iraq, 2,409 in Mozambique, 2,110 in Uganda, 1,601 in Tanzania, 1,763 in Vietnam.[106]

There are already an estimated 19 global funds related to climate change with mandates that touch the interests of developing countries, with new climate finance mechanisms launched at an average rate of one every six months.[107]

The aid architecture is becoming even more complex as aid flows from countries that are not members of the DAC and from private foundations and voluntary organisations grow in significance. (**See Chart 17**) Based on UNDP data, Reality of Aid has estimated ODA equivalent flows from 25 Southern countries who were not DAC members to be approximately US$15 billion in 2008. South-South ODA has grown quickly and is roughly 13% of "real ODA" from DAC donors in 2008. More than 40% of this aid is provided by Arab countries, particularly Saudi Arabia. Aid from China, judged on DAC ODA criteria, is estimated at more than US$2 billion in 2008.[108]

Chart 17: Estimates of Aid by Selected Aid Actors, 2008 (US$ billion, % of DAC "Real ODA")



Source: Reality of Aid estimates on data from DAC and UNDP

CSOs were recognised in the AAA as development actors in their own right. One of their growing roles is as a donor. In 2008, the DAC reported that "grants by private voluntary agencies" (i.e. CSOs) amounted to US$23.7 billion, up from US$14.7 billion in 2006. There are no systematic reporting mechanisms for CSOs in donor countries, nor at the DAC, and therefore these amounts are imputed by the various DAC donors in their annual reports to the DAC. Research by the pre-Accra Advisory Group on Civil Society and Aid Effectiveness suggests that this is an underestimation of these grants. At the minimum, CSOs have contributed up to US$25 billion in development cooperation in 2008.[109] Recognising their responsibilities as development actors, CSOs are currently engaging in an exercise to strengthen their effectiveness and accountability based on CSO-determined principles for development effectiveness.[110]

Foundations also spend significant sums of money in developing countries. The Gates Foundation alone provided US$2.3 billion in international grants in 2008. There are no comprehensive statistics available for all foundations.

The military is also directly determining and delivering ODA in conflict areas. In Afghanistan, the US military has "made the rapid delivery of government services, including education, health care and job programs a central part of [their] strategy".[111] Prior to the Obama presidency, the US military was reported to be delivering 22% of US ODA, up from 3.5% in 1998.[112] At a special North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) seminar in March 2010, NATO's Secretary General stated: "We need to open up the way we plan and run our operations to include the indispensable civilian expertise – from rule of law to alternative livelihoods; from public health to cultural aspects and education. And we should also include the gender aspect and enhance the engagement of women in the prevention and resolution of conflict."[113]

CSOs, human rights organisations, and UN representatives on the ground have strongly rejected this confusion of actors in humanitarian assistance and an approach by the military that makes development a tactic of war.

The current unequal, fragmented and ineffective architecture for delivering financing for development is being challenged by both developing country governments and by CSOs worldwide, including those in the Reality of Aid network. It is no longer acceptable that the governance and terms for development cooperation continue to be de facto controlled by DAC donors – which they exercise through their significant command over aid decisions at the country level, their engagement with each other in the DAC itself, and their dominance of the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness agenda. CSOs are calling for more equitable multilateral structures for determining global policies and practices that will ground aid relationships in international human rights standards and a vision of development cooperation that goes beyond issues in aid delivery processes to focus on development effectiveness and concepts of solidarity and partnership.[114]

Endnotes

1 DAC, "Development aid rose in 2009 and most donors will meet 2010 aid targets", April 14, 2010, accessed April 27, 2010 at http://www.oecd.org/document/11/0,3343,en_2649_34487_44981579_1_1_1_1,00.html.See also Bodo Ellmers, "Official Development Assistance 2009: Poverty on the up as EU aid falls", Eurodad, April 14, 2010, access April 27, 2010 at http://www.eurodad.org/whatsnew/articles.aspx?id=4082.

2 Donors periodically revise what is counted as ODA. Recently several donors sought to include costs associated with the military aspects of mandated peacekeeping activities, but the DAC failed to reach consensus on the inclusion of these expenditures. See the DAC's Is It ODA? [November 2008] at http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/21/21/34086975.pdf.

3 At the 2002 Financing for Development Summit in Monterrey creditor countries promised "to take steps to ensure that resources provided for debt relief do not detract from ODA resources intended to be available for developing countries". (Monterrey Consensus para 51). Nevertheless almost all donors continued the practice of including the full value of debt cancellation in ODA.

4 Figures in 2007 constant dollars. All data taken from DAC analysis.

5 Starting in 2006, the DAC began to make its own, similar, calculations of "Country Programmable Aid", i.e. ODA available for development programming by donors and developing country partners. Country Programmable Aid discounts debt cancellation, refugee costs and imputed student costs, but also humanitarian aid, NGO funding and administrative costs. See OECD DAC, Scaling Up: Aid Fragmentation, Aid Allocation and Aid Predictability, page 7, May 2008, accessed February 2010, at http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/37/20/40636926.pdf.

6 Note that the author has recalculated an approximation of 2009 ODA in 2007 dollars from available information. The preliminary report for 2009 by the DAC provides a calculation of 2009 ODA in 2008 dollars.

7 Accra Agenda for Action, para 26.

8 See the DAC table of commitments reproduced in the 2008 Reality of Aid Global Report, page 204.

9 Beginning in January 2010 Korea joined the DAC and is included in DAC statistics for 2009, making 23 DAC donors.

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14 OECD DAC, Development Cooperation Report 2010, April 2010, page 26.

15 See Laurence Chandy, Geoffrey Gertz and Johannes Linn, "Tracking the Global Financial Crisis: An Analysis of the IMF's World Economic Outlook", Wolfensohn Centre for Development, May 2009.

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21 Ibid., p. 4.

22 Ibid., p. 4.

23 Ibid., p. 7.

24 Ibid., p. 8.

25 Ibid., p. 5.

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28 The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund) and Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI).

29 Institute for Health Metrics and Evaluation, op.cit., p. 19-20. These numbers are likely an underestimate for the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, as they do not track the origins of funds provided by other sources like the Global Fund, to which the Foundation makes significant contributions.

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48 See Development Initiatives, op. cit., Chapter 5 for an extensive discussion of the role of non-DAC donors in humanitarian assistance from which these numbers have been drawn.

49 Ibid., Chapter 6.

50 Paul Harvey et al, The State of the Humanitarian System: Assessing Performance and Progress: A Pilot Study, ALNAP (Overseas Development Institute), January 2010, pages 19 – 20, accessed March 2010 at http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900sid/ASAZ-829FLP/$file/ALNAP_Jan2010.pdf?openelement.The six organizations are CARE, Catholic Relief Services, MSF, Oxfam, Save the Children, and World Vision International.

51 In the 2008 Report Reality of Aid began to measure the amount of aid disbursed to countries in conflict, which were defined as those countries where conflict had resulted in more than 100,000 casualties since its inception. The list of countries in from the annual Project Ploughshare Report on Armed Conflict Report for 2009 (see www.ploughshares.ca.). For 2008 the countries include Afghanistan, Iraq, Algeria, Burundi, DRC, Palestinian Administered Areas, Philippines, Uganda, Somalia and Sudan.

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54 Note that GENDERNET does not address the discrepancy with the DAC Creditor System policy objective "gender only" described above.

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Trends and Challenges for UK Aid
Gideon Rabowitz, UK Aid Network

United States of America

The Reality and Uncertainties of US Foreign Assistance Reform
Kimberly Darter, InterAction

ROA Members Directory

ROA AFRICA

Africa Leadership Forum
Address: ALF Plaza, 1 Bells Drive, Benja Village,Km 9, Idiroko road, Ota, Ogun State, Nigeria
Email: info@africaleadership.org
Phone #: (234) 803 4543925
Website: www.africaleadership.org

Africa Network for Environment and Economic Justice (ANEEJ)
Address: 123, First East Circular Road Benin City Edo State Nigeria, West Africa
Email: aneej2000@yahoo.co.uk
Phone #: (234) 80 23457333
Website: www.aneej.org

African Forum and Network on Debt and Development (AFRODAD)
Address: 31 Atkinson Drive, Harare, Zimbabwe
Email: afrodad@afrodad.co.zw
Phone #: (263) 4 778531/6
Fax #: (263) 4 747878
Website: www.afrodad.org

Center for Economic Governance and Aids in Africa (CEGAA)
Address: Room 1009, Loop Street Studios, 4 Loop Street, Cape Town 8001/ P.O. Box 7004, Roggebaai, 8012 South Africa
Phone #: (27) 21 425 2852
Fax #: (27) 21 425 2852
Website: www.cegaa.org

Centre for Peacebuilding and Socio-Economic Resources Development (CPSERD)
Address: Lagos, Nigeria
Email: ayokenlegagbemi@yahoo.co.uk

Centre for Promotion of Economic and Social Alternatives (CEPAES)
Address: P. O. Box 31091, Yaounde, Cameroon
Email: cepaes2003@yahoo.fr
Phone #: (237) 231 4407

Civil Society for Poverty Reduction (CSPR)
Address: Plot No. 9169, Nanshila Road Kalundu-P/B E891 Postnet No. 302, Lusaka, Zambia
Email: william@cspr.org.zm
Phone #: (260) 211 290154

Economic Community of West African States Network on Debt and Development (ECONDAD)
Address: 123 1st East Circular Road, Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria
Phone #: (234) 52 258748

Economic Justice Network (EJN)
Address: Church House 1, Queen Victoria Street, Cape Town. Republic of South Africa
Email: ejnetwork@mweb.co.za; admin@ejn.org.za
Phone #: (27) 21 424 9563
Fax #: (27) 21 424 9564
Website: www.ejn.org.za

Forum for African Alternatives
Email: dembuss@hotmail.com

Forum for the Reinforcement of the Civil Society (FORCS)/ Forum pour le Renforcement de la Société Civile (FORSC)
Email: forsc@cbinf.com

Forum National sur la Dette et la Pauvreté (FNDP)
Address: BP 585 Abidjan cidex 03 Riviera, Abijan
Email: kone@aviso.ci
Phone #: (225) 05718222

Foundation for Community Development - Mozambique
Address: Av. 25 de Setembro, Edifícios Times Square Bloco 2 - 3º andar
Email: divida@tvcabo.co.mz
Phone #: (258) 21 355300
Fax #: (258) 21 355 355
Website: www.fdc.org.mz

Foundation for Grassroots Initiatives in Africa (GrassRootsAfrica)
Address: Foundation for Grassroots Inititives in Africa (GrassRootsAfrica) House Number 87 Bear Regimanuel Gray Estates, Kwabenya-Accra PMB MD 187 Madina- Accra Ghana
Email: grassrootsafrica@grassrootsafrica.org.gh
Phone #: (233) 21-414223
Fax #: (233)-21-414223
Website: www.grassrootsafrica.org.gh

GRAIB-ONG
Address: BP 66 AZOVE Benin
Email: isiagbokou@yahoo.fr
Phone #: (229) 027662; 91 62 22
Fax #: (229) 46 30 48

Groupe de Recherche et d'Action pour la Promotion de l'Agriculture et du Développement (GRAPAD)
Address: c/1506I Maison DJOMAKON Jean VONS Guindéhou VEDOKO, Benin
Email: reid_consulting@yahoo.fr
Phone #: (229) 21 38 01 72 / 21 38 48 83
Fax #: (229) 21 38 01 72

Grupo Mocambicano da Divida (GMD) / Mozambican Debt Group
Address: Rua de Coimbra, nº 91 - Malhangalene, Maputo
Email: divida@tvcabo.co.mz
Phone #: 21 419523, cel. 82 - 443 7740
Fax #: (258)21-419524
Website: www.divida.org

Habitat of Peace - Congo - DRC
Phone #: (243) 99811818

Institute for Security Studies/Institut D'Etudes de Securite
Address: PO Box 1787 Brooklyn Square Tshwane (Pretoria) 0075 South Africa
Email: iss@issafrica.org
Phone #: (27) 012 346 9500/2
Fax #: (27) 012 346 9570
Website: www.iss.co.za

ROA Members Directory

Institute of Development Studies (IDS) University of Zimbabwe
Address: PO Box MP167, Mt Pleasant, Harare, Zimbabwe
Email: gchikowore@science.uz.ac.zw
Phone #: (263) 4 333342/3
Fax #: (263) 4-333345

Jubilee Angola
Address: PO Box 6095, Luanda, Angola
Email: Jubileu2000.ang@angonet.org
Phone #: (244) 2366729
Fax #: (244)2335497

Jubilee Zambia
Address: P.O. Box 37774, 10101, Lusaka, Zambia
Email: debtjctr@zamnet.zm
Phone #: (260) 1 290410
Fax #: (260) 1 290759
Website: www.jctr.org.zm

Kenya Debt Relief Network (KENDREN)
Address: C/O EcoNews Africa, Mbaruk Road, Mucai Drive, P.O. Box 76406, Nairobi, Kenya
Phone #: (254) 020 2721076/99
Fax #: (254) 020 2725171
Website: www.kendren.org

Kenya Private Sector Alliance (KEPSA)
Address: 2nd Floor, Shelter Afrique Along Mamlaka Road, Next to Utumishi Co-op House P.O. Box 3556-00100 GPO Nairobi, Kenya
Email: info@kepsa.or.ke
Phone #: (254) 20 2730371/2 and 2727883/936
Fax #: (254) 2 2730374
Website: www.kepsa.or.ke

Malawi Economic Justice Network (MEJN)
Address: Malawi Economic Justice Network,
entre House Arcade, City Centre,
PO Box 20135, Lilongwe 2 Malawi
Email: mejn@mejn.mw
Phone #: (265) 1 770 060
Fax #: (265) 1 770 068
Website: www.mejn.mw

Social Development Network (SODNET)
Address: Methodist Ministry Center,
2nd Wing, 4th floor, Oloitoktok Road,
Off Gitanga Road, Kilimani Nairobi 00619 Kenya
Email: sodnet@sodnet.or.ke;
po-edwardoyugi@gmail.com
Phone #: (254) 20 3860745/6
Fax #: (254) 20 3860746
Website: www.sodnet.org

Southern African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (SACCORD)
Address: P.O. Box 37660,
Lusaka, Zambia
Email: saccord@zamtel.zm
Phone #: (260) 1 250017
Fax #: (260) 1 250027

Tanzania Association of NGOs (TANGO)
Address: Off Shekilango Road,
Sinza Afrika Sana Dar es Salaam
P. O. Box 31147 Tanzania
Email: tango@bol.co.tz
Phone #: (255) 22 277 4582
Fax #: (255) 22 277 4582
Website: www.tango.or. z

Tanzania Coalition on Debt and Development (TCDD)
Address: Shaurimoyo Road, Mariam Towers, 8th Floor, PO Box 9193,
Dar Es-Salaam, Tanzania
Email: ttcdd@yahoo.com
Phone #: 255 (22) 2866866/713 - 608854
Fax #: (255) 22 2124404
Website: www.ttcdd.org

THISDAY
Address: 35 Creek Road, Apapa, Lagos
Email: thisday@nova.net.ng;
etimisim@hotmail.com
Phone #: (234) 8022924721-2;
8022924485
Fax #: (234) 1 4600276
Website: www.thisdayonline.com

Uganda Debt Network
Address: Plot 424 Mawanda Road, Kamwokya Kampala / P.O. Box 21509 Kampala, Uganda
Email: Info@udn.or.ug
Phone #: (256) 414 533840/543974
Fax #: (256) 414 534856
Website: www.udn.or.ug

Uganda NGO National Forum
Address: Plot 25, Muyenga Tank Hill Rd, Kabalagala, PO Box 4636, Kampala, Uganda
Email: info@ngoforum.or.ug
Phone #: (256) 772 408 365
Fax #: (256) 312 260 372
Website: www.ngoforum.or.ug

Zimbabwe Coalition on Debt and Development (ZIMCODD)
Address: 5 Orkney Road, Eastlea, Harare, Zimbabwe; P O Box 8840, Harare, Zimbabwe
Email: zimcodd@zimcodd.co.zw
Phone #: (263) 4 776830/31
Fax #: (263) 4 776830/1
Website: www.zimcodd.org.zw

ROA ASIA/PACIFIC

Advancing Public Interest Trust (APIT)
Address: 107/ Ground Floor, Sher Sha Shuri Road, Mohammadpur, Dhaka 1216 Bangladesh
Email: info@apitbd.org
Phone #: (880) 2-9121396; (880) 2-9134406
Fax #: Ext-103
Website: www.apitbd.org

ROA Members Directory

Aidwatch Philippines
Address: 114 Timog Avenue, Quezon City, 1103 Philippines
Email: aidwatch-philippines@googlegroups.com
Phone #: (63) 2 927 7060 to 62
Fax #: (63) 2 929 2496
Website: aidwatch-ph.collectivetech.org/node/2

All Nepal Peasants' Federation (ANPFa)
Address: PO Box: 273, Lalitpur, Nepal
Email: anpfa@anpfa.org.np
Phone #: (977) 1-4288404
Fax #: (977) 1-4288403
Website: www.anpfa.org.np

ANGIKAR Bangladesh Foundation
Address: Sunibir, 25 West Nakhalpara, Tejgaon,
Dhaka 1215 Bangladesh
Email: angikarbd@yahoo.com
Phone #: 881711806054 (mobile)

Arab NGO Network for Development (ANND)
Address: P.O.Box: 5792/14, Mazraa:
1105 - 2070 Beirut, Lebanon
Email: annd@annd.org
Phone #: (961) 1 319366
Fax #: (961) 1 815636
Website: www.annd.org

Asia Pacific Mission for Migrants (APMM)
Address: c/o Kowloon Union Church, No.2 Jordan Road,
Kowloon Hong Kong SAR
Email: apmm@hknet.com
Phone #: (852) 2723-7536
Fax #: (852) 2735-4559
Website: www.apmigrants.org

Centre for Human Rights and Development (CHRD)
Address: Baga toiruu, Chingeltei district, Ulanbataar 17, Mongolia
Phone #: (976) 11325721
Fax #: (976) 11325721
Website: www.owc.org.mn

Centre for Organisation Research and Education (CORE)
Address: National Programme Office A-5 Vienna Residency
Aldona Bardez 403 508, Goa, India
Email: anarchive.anon@gmail.com; core_ne@coremanipur.org
Phone #: (91) 832-228 9318
Website: www.coremanipur.org

China Association for NGO Cooperation (CANGO)
Address: C-601, East Building, Yonghe Plaza, 28# Andingmen
Dongdajie, Beijing, 100007, P.R.China
Email: info@cango.org
Phone #: (86) 10 64097888
Fax #: (86)10 64097607
Website: www.cango.org

COAST
Address: House# 9/4, Road# 2,
Shyamoli, Dhaka 1207 Bangladesh
Email: info@coastbd.org
Phone #: (880) 2-8125181
Fax #: (880) 2-9129395
Website: www.coastbd.org

Coastal Development Partnership (CDP)
Address: 55/2 Islampur Road, Khulna-9100, Bangladesh
Email: cdp@cdpbd.org
Phone #: (880) 1916033444
Fax #: 88 02 9564474
Website: www.cdpbd.org

Cooperation Committee for Cambodia (CCC)
Address: #9-11, St. 476, TTPI, Chamkarmorn, Phnom Penh,
Cambodia, PO Box 885, CCC Box 73
Phone #: (855 23) 216 009 or (855 -16) 900 503
Fax #: (855 23) 216 009
Website: www.ccc-cambodia.org

Cordillera People's Alliance (CPA)
Address: # 2 P. Guevarra Street, West Modern Site, Aurora
Hill, 2600 Baguio City, Philippines
Email: cpa@cpaphils.org; pic@cpaphils.org
Phone #: (63) 74 304-4239
Fax #: (63) 74 443-7159
Website: www.cpaphils.org

Council for People's Democracy and Governance (CPDG)
Address: Quezon City, Philippines
Phone #: (63) 2 3741285

East Timor Development Agency (ETDA)
Address: P.O. Box 30, Bairro Pite, Dili, Timor-Leste
Email: etda@etda-dili.org
Phone #: (670) 723 3674; (670) 723 3816

Ecumenical Center for Research, Education and Advocacy (ECREA)
Address: 189 Rt. Sukuna Rd. G.P.O 15473 Suva
Republic of Fiji Islands
Phone #: (679) 3307 588
Fax #: (679) 3311 248
Website: www.ecrea.org.fj

Forum LSM Aceh (Aceh NGOs Forum)
Address: Jl. T. Iskandar No. 58 Lambhuk,
Banda Aceh, Indonesia
Email: wiraatjeh@yahoo.com; forumlsmaceh@yahoo.com
Phone #: (62) 651 33619; 081514542457
Fax #: (62)65125391
Website: www.forumlsmaceh.org

Forum of Women's NGOs in Kyrgyzstan
Address: Isanova 147, kv. 7; 720033 Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
Phone #: (996) 312 214585; (996) 555 996612
Website: www.forumofwomenngos.kg

Green Movement of Sri Lanka (GMSL)
Address: No 9, 1st Lane, Wanatha Road, Gangodawila,
Nugegoda, Sri Lanka
Email: office@greensl.net
Phone #: (94) 11 2817156
Fax #: (94) 11 4305274
Website: www.greensl.net

IBON Foundation Inc.
Address: 114 Timog Avenue, Quezon City, 1103 Philippines
Phone #: (63) 2 927 6981
Fax #: (63)2 927 6981
Website: www.ibon.org

ROA Members Directory

INCIDIN Bangladesh
Address: 9/11, Iqbal Road, Mohammadpur,
Dhaka-1207 Bangladesh
Phone #: (880) 2-8129733
Website: www.incidinb.org

International NGO Forum on Indonesian Development (INFID)
Address: JL Mampang Prapatan XI,
No. 23 Jakarta 12790, Indonesia
Email: infid@infid.org
Phone #: (62) 21 7919-6721 to 22
Fax #: (62)21 794-1577
Website: www.infid.org

Law & Society Trust (LST)
Address: Law & Society Trust, No. 3, Kynsey Terrace,
Colombo 8, Sri Lanka
Email: lst@eureka.lk, lstadmin@sltnet.lk
Phone #: (94) 11 2684845 / (94) 11 2691228
Fax #: (94) 11 2686843
Website: www.lawandsocietytrust.org

Lok Sanjh Foundation
Address: House 494, Street 47, G-10/4, Islamabad, Pakistan
Email: lok_sanjh@yahoo.com
Phone #: (92) 51-2101043
Fax #: (92) 51 221 0395
Website: www.loksanjh.org

LOKOJ Institute
Address: No. 706, Road No. 11, Adabor, Shamoli,
Dhaka 1207, Bangladesh
Email: lokoj@aitlbd.net; aruprahee@yahoo.com
Phone #: (880) 28150669
Fax #: (880) 29664408
Website: www.lokoj.org

Mindanao Interfaith People's Conference (MIPC)
Address: 2F PICPA Bldg., Araullo St.,
Davao City 8000 Philippines
Email: mfat_mipc@meridiantelekoms.net
Phone #: (63) 82 225 0743
Fax #: (63) 82 225 0743

National Network of Indigenous Women (NNIW)
Address: National Network of Indigenous Women (NNIW),
Kathmandu Metropolitan- 34, Baneshwor,
PO Box 7238, Nepal
Email: nniw@wlink.com.np
Phone #: (977) 1-4115590
Fax #: (977) 1-4115590
Website: www.nniw.org.np

Nepal Policy Institute (NPI)
Address: 60 Newplaza Marga, Putalisadak, Kathmandu, Nepal
Email: subedirabin@gmail.com;
npi.info@wlink.com.np
Phone #: (977) 1-4429741
Fax #: (977) 1-4419610
Website: npi.org.np

NGO Federation of Nepal
Address: Post Box No 8973 NPC 609,
New Baneshwor, Kathmandu, Nepal
Email: info@ngofederation.org
Phone #: (977) 1 4782908; Cell : 977 9841212769
Fax #: (977) 1 4780559
Website: www.ngofederation.org

Pacific Islands Association of Non Governmental Organisations (PIANGO)
Address: 30 Ratu Sukuna Road, Nasese, Suva, Fiji Islands;
Postal: P.O. Box 17780, Suva, Fiji
Email: piango@connect.com.fj
Phone #: (679) 330-2963 / 331-7048
Fax #: (679) 331-7046
Website: www.piango.org

Pakistan Institute of Labor and Education Research (PILER)
Address: Pakistan Institute of Labour Education & Research
ST-001, Sector X, Sub Sector - V, Gulshan-e-Maymar,
Karachi – Pakistan
Email: piler@cyber.net.pk; info@piler.org.pk
Phone #: (92) 21 6351145-7
Fax #: (92) 21 6350354
Website: www.piler.org.pk

Peoples Workers Union
Address: B-25, Bano Plaza, Garden East,
Nishtar Road, Karachi, Pakistan
Phone #: 92-30-02023639

Proshika
Address: I/1-Ga, Section-2, Mirpur,
Dhaka-1216, Bangladesh
Email: idrc@proshika.bdonline.com
Phone #: (880) 8015812; (880) 8016015
Fax #: (880) 2-8015811
Website: www.proshika.org

Public Interest Research Centre (PIRC)
Address: 142, Maitri Apartments, Plot No. 2,
Patparganj, Delhi – 110 092, India
Phone #: (91) 11-43036919
Fax #: (91) 11-222-4233

SEWALANKA Foundation
Address: # 432 A, 2nd Floor, Colombo Road,
Boralesgamuwa, Sri Lanka
Email: south@sewalanka.org
Phone #: (94) 773524410; (94) 112545362-5
Fax #: (94) 112545166
Website: www.sewalanka.org

Shan Women's Action Network (SWAN)
Address: PO Box 120 Phrasing Post Office,
Chiangmai 50200, Thailand
Email: charmtong2@yahoo.com;
kenneri@shanwomen.org
Website: www.shanwomen.org

ROA Members Directory

Solidarity for People's Advocacy Network (SPAN)
Address: Cebu City, Philippines
Email: gigilabra@yahoo.com

South Asian Network for Social and Agricultural Development (SANSAD)
Address: N-13, Second Floor Green Park Extension
New Delhi India - 110016
Phone #: (91) 11-4164 4845
Fax #: (91) 11-4175 8845
Website: www.sansad.org.in

Tamil Nadu Women's Forum
Address: Kallaru, Perumuchi Village and
Post Arakkonam 631 002, Vellore District, amil Nadu, India
Email: tnwforum@gmail.com
Phone #: (91) 041421 70702

The NGO Forum on Cambodia
Address: #9-11 Street 476, Toul Tompong, P.O. Box 2295,
Phnom Penh 3, Cambodia
Email: ngoforum@ngoforum.org.kh
Phone #: (855) 23-214 429
Fax #: (855) 23- 994 063
Website: www.ngoforum.org.kh

Third World Network (TWN)
Address: 131 Jalan Macalister, 10400 Penang, Malaysia
Email: twnet@po.jaring.my; twn@igc.apc.org
Phone #: (60) 4 2266728/2266159
Fax #: (60) 42264505
Website: www.twnside.org.sg

UBINIG (Policy Research for Development Alternative)
Address: 22-13, Khilzee Road, Block # B, Mohammadpur,
Shaymoli, Dhaka 1207, Bangladesh
Email: nkrishi@bdmail.net
Phone #: (880) 2 81 11465; 2 81 16420
Fax #: (880) 2 81 13065

Vietnam Union of Science & Technology Associations (VUSTA)
Address: 53 Nguyen Du Str. - Ha Noi - Viet Nam
Email: nguyenmanh155@gmail.com
Phone #: (84)4 9432206
Fax #: (84)4 8227593
Website: www.vusta.vn

Vikas Andhyayan Kendra (VAK)
Address: D-1 Shivdham, 62 Link Road,
Malad (West), Mumbai 400 064 India
Email: vak@bom3.vsnl.net.in
Phone #: (91) 22-2882 2850 / 2889 8662
Fax #: (91) 22-2889 8941
Website: www.vakindia.org

Voices for Interactive Choice and Empowerment (VOICE)
Address: House #67, 4th floor, Block-Ka, Pisciculture Housing
Society, Shaymoli, Dhaka-1207, Bangladesh
Email: voice@gmail.com
Phone #: (880) 2-8158688
Fax #: (880) 2-8158688
Website: www.voicebd.org

Wave Foundation
Address: 3/11. Block-D, Lalmatia,
Dhaka 1207, Bangladesh
Email: info@wavefoundation.org
Phone #: (880) 2-8113383

ROA LATIN AMERICA

Asociación Arariwa para la Promoción Técnica-cultural Andina
Address: Apartado postal 872, Cusco, Perú, Avenida Los Incas
1606, Wanchaq Cusco, Perú
Email: arariwa_cusco@terra.com.pe
Phone #: (5184) 236-6887
Fax #: (5184) 236889
Website: www.arariwa.org.pe

Asociación Civil Acción Campesina
Address: Calle Ayuacucho oeste No. 52,
Quinta Acción Campesina Los Teques,
Estado Miranda, Venezuela
Email: accioncampesina@gmail.com
Phone #: (58 212) 3214795
Fax #: (58 212) 321 59 98
Website: www.accioncampesina.com.ve

Asociación Latinoamericana de Organizaciones de Promoción al Desarrollo, A.C.
Address: Benjamín Franklin 186, Col. Escandón, Del. Miguel
Hidalgo, México, D.F. C.P. 11800
Email: info@alop.org.mx
Phone #: (5255) 52733400
Fax #: (5255) 52733449
Website: www.alop.org.mx

Asociación para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos (ADP)
Address: Apartado postal 4627,
Managua C.S.T. 5 cuadras al Sur, 1 1/2; cuadra al Oeste
Managua, Nicaragua
Email: adp@turbonett.com
Phone #: (505) 2281360
Fax #: (505)2664878
Website: www.adp.com.ni

Base, Educación, Comunicación, Tecnología Alternativa (BASE-ECTA)
Address: Avenida Defensores del Chaco, piso 1
San Lorenzo, Paraguay Código
Postal 2189 San Lorenzo
Email: basedir@basecta.org.py
Phone #: (59521) 576786/ (59521) 580239

Central Ecuatoriana de Servicios Agrícolas(CESA)
Address: Apartado postal: 17-16 -0179 C.E.Q.
Inglaterra N 3130 y Mariana de Jesús,
Quito, Ecuador
Email: cesa.uio@andinanet.net
Phone #: (593 2) 524830 / 2529896
Fax #: (5932) 503006
Website: www.cesa.org.ec

ROA Members Directory

Centro Andino de Acción Popular (CAAP)
Address: Apartado postal 17-15 – 173 – B Martín de Utreras 733 y Selva Alegre Quito, Ecuador
Email: caaporg.ec@uio.satnet.net
Phone #: (5932) 252-763 / 523-262
Fax #: (5932) 568-452
Website: www.ecuanex.net.ec/caap

Centro Cooperativista Uruguayo (CCU)
Address: Edo. Víctor Haedo 2252, CP 11200 Montevideo, Uruguay
Email: ccu@ccu.org.uy
Phone #: (5982) 4012541 / 4009066 / 4001443
Fax #: (5982) 4006735
Website: www.ccu.org.uy

Centro de Assessoria Multiprofissional (CAMP)
Address: Praca Parobé, 130-9o andar Centro 90030.170, Porto Alegre – RS Brasil
Email: camp@camp.org.br
Phone #: (5551) 32126511
Fax #: (5551) 32337523
Website: www.camp.org.br

Centro de Derechos y Desarrollo (CEDAL)
Address: Huayna Capac No 1372, Jesús María Lima 11, Perú
Email: cedal@cedal.org.pe / jql@cedal.org.pe
Phone #: (511) 2055730
Fax #: (511) 2055736
Website: www.cedal.org.pe

Centro de Educación Popular (QHANA)
Address: Apartado postal 9989, La Paz, Calle Landaeta No. 522, La Paz, Bolivia
Email: qhana@caoba.entelnet.bo / lapaz@qhana.org.bo
Website: www.qhana.org.bo

Centro de Estudios y Promoción del Desarrollo (DESCO)
Address: Jr León de la Fuente No. 110, Lima 17, Perú
Email: postmaster@desco.org.pe
Phone #: (511) 613-8300 a 8307
Fax #: (511) 613-8308
Website: www.desco.org.pe

Centro de Investigación y Promoción del Campesino (CIPCA)
Address: Pasaje Fabiani No. 2578 Av. 20 de Octubre / Campos y Pinilla, Casilla 5854,
La Paz, Bolivia
Email: cipca@cipca.org.bo
Phone #: (591 2) 2432272, 22432276
Fax #: (5912) 22432269
Website: www.cipca.org.bo

Centro de Investigaciones (CIUDAD)
Address: Calle Fernando Meneses N24-57 y Av. La Gasca, Casilla Postal 1708-8311, Quito, Ecuador
Email: ciudadinfo@ciudad.org.ec
Phone #: (5932) 2225-198 / 2227-091
Fax #: (5932) 2500-322
Website: www.ciudad.org.ec

Centro de Investigaciones y Educación Popular (CINEP)
Address: Apartado postal 25916, Santafé de Bogotá, Carrera 5ª No. 33A-08, Bogotá, Colombia
Email: info@cinep.org.co
Phone #: (571) 2456181
Fax #: (571) 2879089
Website: www.cinep.org.co

Centro Dominicano de Estudios de la Educación (CEDEE)
Address: Santiago 153, Gazcue (Apdo. Postal 20307) Santo Domingo, Dominicana, Rep.
Email: cedee@codetel.net.do; cedee@verizon.net.do
Phone #: (1809) 6823302; 6882966
Fax #: (1 809) 686-8727

Centro Félix Varela (CFV)
Address: Calle 5ª No 720 e/ 8 y 10 El Vedado, Ciudad Habana, Cuba
Email: cfv@cfv.org.cu / maritzar@cfv.org.cu
Phone #: (537) 8367731
Fax #: (53 7) 8333328
Website: www.cfv.org.cu

Centro Latinoamericano de Economía Humana (CLAEH)
Address: Zelmar Michelini 1220 11100 Montevideo, Uruguay
Email: info@claeh.org.uy
Phone #: (5982) 9007194
Fax #: (5982) 9007194 ext 18
Website: www.claeh.org.uy

Centro Operacional de Vivienda y Poblamiento AC (COPEVI)
Address: Calle Primero de Mayo #151 Col. San Pedro de los Pinos, Del. Benito Juárez México, D.F. C.P. 03800, México
Email: copevi@prodigy.net.mx
Phone #: (5255) 55159627 y 4919
Website: www.copevi.org

Centro para la Acción Legal en Derechos Humanos (CALDH)
Address: 6ª. Avenida 1-71, Zona 1, Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala
Email: caldh@caldh.org
Phone #: (502) 2251-0555
Fax #: (502) 2230-3470
Website: www.caldh.org

Centro Peruano de Estudios Sociales (CEPES)
Address: Av. Salaverry No. 818, Jesús María, Lima 11, Perú
Email: cepes@cepes.org.pe
Phone #: (511) 433-6610
Fax #: (511) 433-1744
Website: www.cepes.org.pe

Comisión de Acción Social Menonita (CASM)
Address: Barrio Guadalupe 21-22, Calle 3, Av. NE, 2114 San Pedro Sula, Cortés, Honduras
Email: direccioncasm@sulanet.net, casm@sulanet.net
Phone #: (504) 552 9469/70
Fax #: (504) 552 0411
Website: www.casm.hn

ROA Members Directory

Corporación de Estudios Sociales y Educación (SUR)
Address: José M. Infante 85, Providencia, Santiago, Chile
Email: corporacionsur@sitiosur.cl
Phone #: (56) 2 235 8143; 236 0470
Fax #: (56) 2 235-9091
Website: www.sitiosur.cl

Corporación Juventudes para el Desarrollo y la Producción (JUNDEP)
Address: Fanor Velasco 27, Santiago, Chile
Email: jundep@jundep.cl
Phone #: (562) 3611314 - 3611316
Website: www.jundep.cl

Corporación Región para el Desarrollo y la Democracia
Address: Apartado postal 67146 Medellín, Calle 55 No. 41-10, Medellín, Colombia
Email: coregion@region.org.co
Phone #: (574) 216-6822
Fax #: (574) 239-5544
Website: www.region.org.co

Corporación Viva la Ciudadanía
Address: Calle 54, No. 10-81, piso 7, Bogotá, Colombia
Email: director@viva.org.co
Phone #: (57 1) 3480781
Fax #: (57 1) 212-0467
Website: www.viva.org.co

Deca-Equipo Pueblo, AC
Address: Apartado postal 113-097 México, D.F., Francisco Field Jurado No.51, México, D.F. México
Email: equipopueblo@equipopueblo.org
Phone #: (52 55) 5539 0055 – 5539 0015
Fax #: (52 55) 5672 7453
Website: www.equipopueblo.org.mx

Enlace, Comunicación y Capacitación, AC (ENLACE)
Address: Benjamín Franklin 186 Col. Escandón CP 11800, México, D.F., México
Email: direccion@enlacecc.org
Phone #: (52 55) 52733343 – 52734648
Website: www.enlacecc.org

Federación de Órganos para Asistencia Social Educacional (FASE)
Address: Rua das Palmeiras, 90 Botafogo, 22270-070 Río de Janeiro, Brasil
Email: fase@fase.org.br
Phone #: (5521) 25367350
Fax #: (5521) 25367379
Website: www.fase.org.br

Fondo Ecuatoriano Populorum Progressio (FEPP)
Address: Apartado postal 17-110-5202 Quito Calle Mallorca N24-275 y Coruña, Quito, Ecuador
Email: fepp@fepp.org.ec
Phone #: (5932) 2520408 – 2529372
Fax #: (5932) 250-4978
Website: www.fepp.org.ec

Fundación Foro Nacional por Colombia
Address: Carrera 4 A No 27 62 Bogotá D.C., Colombia
Email: info@foro.org.co
Phone #: (571) 2822550
Fax #: (571) 2861299
Website: www.foro.org.co

Fundación Nacional para el Desarrollo (FUNDE)
Address: Calle Arturo Ambrogi #411 entre 103 y 105 Av. Norte, Col. Escalón, San Salvador, El Salvador, P.O. Box 1774, Centro de Gobierno
Email: funde@funde.org
Phone #: (503) 22095300
Fax #: (503) 22630454
Website: www.funde.org

Fundación para el Desarrollo en Justicia y Paz (FUNDAPAZ)
Address: Calle Castelli 12, segundo piso “A” (C1031AAB) Buenos Aires, Argentina
Email: buenosaires@fundapaz.org.ar
Phone #: (5411) 48648587
Fax #: (5411) 48616509
Website: www.fundapaz.org.ar

Fundación Promotora de Vivienda (FUPROVI)
Address: Del costado Norte de la Iglesia de Moravia 700 mts. Este, 100 mts. Norte, 100 mts. Oeste Moravia, San José, Costa Rica
Email: fuprovi@fuprovi.org
Phone #: (506) 2470000
Fax #: (506) 2365178
Website: www.fuprovi.org

Fundación Salvadoreña para la Promoción y el Desarrollo Económico (FUNSALPRODESE)
Address: Apartado postal 1952 Centro de Gobierno, 27 Calle Poniente y 17 Av. Norte, No. 1434, Colonia Layco, San Salvador, El Salvador
Email: dfunsal@funsalprodese.org.sv
Phone #: (503) 22252722 / 22250414 / 0416
Fax #: (503) 22255261
Website: www.funsalprodese.org.sv

Fundación Taller de Iniciativas en Estudios Rurales (Fundación Tierra)
Address: Apartado postal 8155, La Paz Calle Hermanos Manchego No. 2576 La Paz, Bolivia
Email: fundaciontierra@ftierra.org
Phone #: (5912) 2430145 – 2432263/2683
Fax #: (5912) 211 1216
Website: www.ftierra.org

Grupo Social Centro al Servicio de la Acción Popular (CESAP)
Address: San Isidro a San José de Ávila, final avenida Beralt (al lado de la Abadía), Edificio Grupo Social CESAP
Caracas, Venezuela
Email: presidencia@cesap.org.ve
Phone #: (58212) 8627423/7182 – 8616458
Fax #: (58212) 8627182
Website: www.cesap.org.ve

ROA Members Directory

Instituto Cooperativo Interamericano (ICI)
Address: Apartado postal 0834-02794, Ciudad de Panamá, Avenida La Pulida, Pueblo Nuevo, Ciudad de Panamá, Panamá
Email: icicod@cwpanama.net
Phone #: (507) 2246019/ 2240527
Fax #: (507) 2215385
Website: www.icipan.org

Instituto de Desarrollo Social y Promoción Humana (INDES)
Address: Luis Sáenz Peña 277, 5to. Piso, oficina 10, 1110 Buenos Aires, Argentina
Email: indes@arnet.com.ar indesmisiones@arnet.com.ar
Phone #: (5411) 43726358/ (543752) 435764
Fax #: (5411) 43726358/ (543752) 435764
Website: www.indes.org.ar

Instituto de Estudos Socioeconomicos (INESC)
Address: SCS quadra 08 Bloco B-50, salas 433/441 Edificio Venáncio 2000, CEP 70333-970 Brasilia – DF, Brazil
Email: protocoloinesc@inesc.org.br
Phone #: (55 61) 212-0200
Fax #: (55 61) 226-8042
Website: www.inesc.org.br

Instituto de Estudos, Formacao e Assessoria em Politicas Sociais (Instituto Pólis)
Address: Rua Araújo, 124 Centro, Sao Paulo - SP Brazil
Email: polis@polis.org.br
Phone #: (55) 11 2174-6800
Fax #: (55) 11 2174 6848
Website: www.polis.org.br

Instituto Hondureño de Desarrollo Rural (IHDER)
Address: Apartado postal 2214,
Tegucigalpa, D.C., Honduras Colonia Presidente Kennedy, Zona No. 2, Bloque No. 37, casa #4416, Súper Manzana No. 5 Tegucigalpa, Honduras
Email: ihder@amnettgu.com
Phone #: (504) 2300927

Juventudes para el Desarrollo y la Producción (JUNDEP)
Address: Fanor Velasco 27, Santiago, Chile
Email: jundep@jundep.cl;
corpjundep@123.cl
Phone #: (56) 3611314; 3611321
Website: www.jundep.cl

La Morada
Address: Purísima 251, Recoleta Santiago, Chile
Email: secretaria@lamorada.cl
Phone #: (562)732 3728
Fax #: (562)732 3728
Website: www.lamorada.org

Productividad Biosfera Medio Ambiente - Probioma
Address: Equipetrol calle 7 Este
No 29 Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia
Email: probioma@probioma.org.bo
Phone #: (591) 2 3431332
Fax #: (591) 2 3432098
Website: www.probioma.org.bo

Programa de Promoción y Desarrollo Social (PRODESO)
Address: Apartado postal 168, Santiago de Veraguas, Calle 4 Paso de las Tablas, Santiago de Veraguas, Panamá
Email: prodeso@cwp.net.pa
Phone #: (507) 998-1994
Fax #: 998-6172
Website: www.prodeso.org

Proyecto de Desarrollo Santiago-La Salle (PRODESSA)
Address: Apartado postal 13 B, 01903, Guatemala, Km. 15 Calzada Roosevelt, Zona 7 Guatemala, Guatemala
Email: codireccion@prodessa.net, federico.roncal@gmail.com, edgargarciatax@yahoo.com.mx
Phone #: (502) 24353911
Fax #: (502) 24353913
Website: www.prodessa.net

Servicio de Información Mesoamericano sobre Agricultura Sostenible (SIMAS)
Address: Lugo Rent a Car 1c al lago, Esq. Sur oeste parque El Carmen, Reparto El Carmen, Managua, Nicaragua
Email: simas@simas.org.ni
Phone #: (505) 22682302
Fax #: (505) 22682302
Website: www.simas.org.ni

Servicio Ecuménico de Promoción Alternativa (SEPA)
Address: Apartado postal 23036 Fernando de la Mora Soldado Ovelar 604 esq. Marcos Riera, Fernando de la Mora, Paraguay
Email: sepa@sepa.com.py
Phone #: (59521) 515-855/ 514365

Servicio Habitacional y de Acción Social (SEHAS)
Address: Bv. del Carmen 680, Villa Siburu (5003) Córdoba, Argentina
Email: sehas@sehas.org.ar
Phone #: (54 351) 480-5031
Fax #: (54 351) 489-7541
Website: www.sehas.org.ar

Servicios para la Educación Alternativa AC (EDUCA)
Address: Escuadrón 201 #203 Col. Antiguo Aeropuerto, Oaxaca, México C.P. 68050
Email: dirección@educaoaxaca.org
Phone #: (52 951) 5136023 – (52 951) 5025043
Website:www.edudaoaxaca.org

(SUR) Centro de Estudios Sociales y Educación
Address: José M. Infante 85, Providencia, Santiago, Chile
Email: corporacionsur@sitiosur.cl
Phone #: (562)2642406 / 2360470
Fax #: (562)2359091
Website: www.sitiosur.cl

Coordinacion de ONG y Cooperativas (CONGCOOP)
Address: 2a. Calle 16-60 zona 4 de Mixco, Residenciales Valle del Sol, Edificio Atanasio Tzul, 2do.
Nivel Guatemala, Centro America
Phone #: (502) 2432-0966
Fax #: (502) 2433-4779
Website:www.congcoop.org.gt

ROA Members Directory

Red Latinoamericana sobre Deuda, Desarollo y Derechos (LATINDADD)
Address: Jr. Daniel Olaechea 175, Jesús María - Perú
Email: latindadd@latindadd.org
Phone #: (511) 261 2466
Fax #: (511) 261 7619
Website: www.latindadd.org

Fundación SES (Latindadd)
Address: Avda de Mayo 1156 2º piso,
Ciudad de Buenos Aires. Argentina
Email: Dir@fundses.org.ar / e-grupo2-latindadd@fundses.org.ar
Phone #: 54-11-4381-4225/3842
Website: www.fundses.org.ar

ROA EUROPEAN OECD COUNTRIES

11.11.11 - Coalition of the Flemish North-South Movement
Address: Vlasfabriekstraat 11, 1060 Brussels, Belgium
Email: info@11.be
Phone #: (32) 2 536 11 13
Fax #: (32) 2 536 19 10
Website: www.11.be

Action Aid Italy
Address: ActionAid International - via Broggi 19/A - 20129
Milano, Italy
Website: www.actionaid.it

Action Aid UK
Address: Hamlyn House, Macdonald Road, Archway,
London N19 5PG, UK
Email: mail@actionaid.org
Phone #: (44) 20 7561 7561
Fax #: (44) 20 7272 0899
Website: www.actionaid.org.uk

Alliance Sud
Address: Monbijoustrasse 31, PO Box 6735 CH-3001 Berne,
Switzerland
Email: mail@alliancesud.ch
Phone #: (41) 31 390 93 33
Fax #: (41) 31 390 93 31
Website: www.alliancesud.ch

British Overseas NGOs for Development (BOND)
Address: Bond Regent's Wharf 8 All Saints Street
London N1 9RL, UK
Email: bond@bond.org.uk; advocacy@bond.org.uk
Phone #: (44) 20 7520 0252
Fax #: (44) 20 7837 4220
Website: www.bond.org.uk

Campagna per la Riforma della Banca (CRBM)
Address: Mondiale (CRBM), via Tommaso da Celano 15,
00179 Rome, Italy
Email: info@crbm.org
Phone #: (39) 06-78 26 855
Fax #: (39) 06-78 58 100
Website: www.crbm.org

CeSPI - Centro Studi di Politica Internazionale
Address: Via d'Aracoeli 11, 00186 Rome, Italy
Email: cespi@cespi.it
Phone #: (39) 06 6990630
Fax #: (39) 06 6784104
Website:www.cespi.it

Christoffel-Blindenmission Deutschland e.V. (CBM)
Address: Christian Blind Germany e.V., Nibelungen Straße
124, 64625 Bensheim, Germany
Email: christian.garbe@cbm.org
Phone #: (49) 6251 131-0
Fax #: (49) 6251 131-199
Website: www.christoffel-blindenmission.de

Concern Worldwide
Address: 52-55 Lower Camden Street,
Dublin 2 Ireland
Email: olive.towey@concern.net
Phone #: (353) 1 417 7700; (353) 1417 8044
Fax #: (353) 1 475 7362
Website: www.concern.net

Coordination SUD
Address: 14 passage Dubail, 75010 Paris, France
Email: sud@coordinationsud.org
Phone #: (33) 1 44 72 93 72
Fax #: (33) 1 44 72 93 73
Website: www.coordinationsud.org

Diakonia-Sweden
Address: SE-172 99 Sundbyberg,
Stockholm, Sweden
Email: diakonia@diakonia.se
Phone #: (46) 8 453 69 00
Fax #: (46) 8 453 69 29
Website: www.diakonia.se

European Network on Debt and Development (EURODAD)
Address: Rue d'Edimbourg, 18–26 1050
Brussels Belgium
Email: bellmers@eurodad.org
Phone #: (32) 2 894 46 40
Fax #: (32) 2 791 98 09
Website: www.eurodad.org

Eurostep
Address: Eurostep AISBL, Rue Stevin 115,
B-1000 Brussels, Belgium
Email: admin@eurostep.org
Phone #: (32) 2 231 16 59
Fax #: (32) 2 230 37 80
Website: www.eurostep.org

Forum Syd
Address: PO Box 15407, S-104 65
Stockholm, Sweden
Email: forum.syd@forumsyd.org;
maud.johansson@forumsyd.org
Phone #: 0046 8-506 371 62
Fax #: 46 8 506 370 99
Website: www.forumsyd.org

ROA Members Directory

Global Responsibility Austrian Platform for Development and Humanitarian Aid
Address: Berggasse 7/11, A-1090 Vienna, Austria
Email: office@globaleverantwortung.at
Phone #: (43) 1 522 44 22-0
Website: www.agez.at

IBIS
Address: IBIS Copenhagen, Norrebrogade 68B, 2200 Copenhagen N, Denmark
Email: ibis@ibis.dk
Phone #: (45) 35358788
Fax #: (45) 35350696
Website: www.ibis.dk

Intermón Oxfam
Address: Calle Alberto Aguilera 15, 28015 Madrid, Spain
Email: info@intermonoxfam.org
Phone #: (34) 902 330 331
Website: www.intermonoxfam.org

KEPA
Address: Service Centre for Development Cooperation- KEPA Töölöntorinkatu 2 A, 00260 Helsinki, Finland
Email: info@kepa.fi
Phone #: (358) 9-584 233
Fax #: (358) 9-5842 3200
Website: www.kepa.fi

MS Action Aid Denmark
Address: MS ActionAid Denmark Fælledvej 12 2200 Kbh N., Denmark
Email: ms@ms.dk
Phone #: (45) 7731 0000
Fax #: (45) 7731 0101
Website: www.ms.dk

Networkers South-North
Address: Ullveien 4 (Voksenåsen), 0791 Oslo, Norway
Email: mail@networkers.org
Phone #: (47) 93039520
Website: www.networkers.org

Norwegian Forum for Environment and Development (ForUM)
Address: Storgata 11, 0155 Oslo, Norway
Email: forumfor@forumfor.no; oerstavik@forumfor.no
Phone #: (47) 2301 0300
Fax #: (47) 2301 0303
Website: www.forumfor.no

Novib - Oxfam Netherlands
Address: Mauritskade 9, P.O. Box 30919, 2500 GX The Hague, The Netherlands
Email: info@oxfamnovib.nl
Phone #: (31) 70 3421777
Fax #: (31) 70 3614461
Website: www.novib.nl

OEFSE- Austrian Foundation for Development Research
Address: Berggasse 7, A-1090 Vienna, Austria
Email: office@oefse.at
Phone #: (43)1 317 40 10 - 242
Fax #: (43) 1 317 40 15
Website: www.oefse.at

OIKOS
Address: Rua Visconde Moreira de Rey, 37 Linda-a-Pastora 2790-447 Queijas, Oeiras - Portugal
Email: oikos.sec@oikos.pt
Phone #: (351) 218 823 649; (351) 21 882 3630
Fax #: (351) 21 882 3635
Website: www.oikos.pt

Terre Des Hommes - Germany
Address: Hilfe für Kinder in Not Ruppenkampstraße 11a 49084 Osnabrück, Germany Postfach 4126 49031 Osnabrück, Germany
Email: info@tdh.de; gf@tdh.de
Phone #: (05 41) 71 01 –0
Fax #: (05 41) 71 01 –0
Website: www.tdh.de

UK Aid Network (UKAN)
Address: UKAN, Action Aid, Hamyln House, London, N19 5PG, UK
Email: advocacy@bond.org.uk
Fax #: +44 207 561 7563

ROA NON-EUROPEAN OECD COUNTRIES

Aid/Watch - Australia
Address: 19 Eve St Erskineville NSW 2043, Australia
Email: info@aidwatch.org.au
Phone #: (61) 2 9557 8944
Fax #: (61) 2 9557 9822
Website: www.aidwatch.org.au

American Council for Voluntary International Action (InterAction)
Address: 1400 16th Street, NW, Suite 210 | Washington, DC 20036, USA
Email: ia@interaction.org
Phone #: (1) 202 667-8227
Fax #: (1) 202 667-8236
Website: www.interaction.org

Australian Council for International Development (ACFID)
Address: 14 Napier Close Deakin Australian Capital Territory (Canberra) 2600, Australia
Email: main@acfid.asn.au
Phone #: (61) 2 6285 1816
Fax #: (61) 2 6285 1720
Website: www.acfid.asn.au

ROA Members Directory

Canadian Council for International Cooperation/Conseil canadien pour la coopération internationale (CCIC/CCCI)
Address: 450 Rideau Street, Suite 200 Ottawa,
Ontario, K1N 5Z4, Canada
Email: info@ccic.ca
Phone #: (1) 613 241-7007
Fax #: (1) 613 241-5302
Website: www.ccic.ca

Council for International Development (CID)
Address: 2/F James Smith's Building cnr. Manners Mall
and Cuba St., Wellington, New Zealand/ PO Box 24 228,
Wellington 6142, New Zealand
Email: pedram@cid.org.nz
Phone #: (64) 4 4969615
Fax #: (64) 4 4969614
Website: www.cid.org.nz

Friends of the Earth (FOE) Japan
Address: International Environmental NGO, FoE Japan 3-30-8-1F Ikebukuro Toshima-ku Tokyo 171-0014, Japan
Email: aid@foejapan.org; finance@foejapan.org
Phone #: (81) 3-6907-7217
Fax #: (81)3-6907-7219
Website: www.foejapan.org

Japan International Volunteer Center (JVC)
Address: 6F Maruko Bldg., 1-20-6 Higashiueno, Taito-ku,
Tokyo 110-8605 Japan
Email: kiyo@ngo-jvc.net; info@ngo-jvc.net
Phone #: (81) 3-3834-2388
Fax #: (81) 3-3835-0519
Website: www.ngo-jvc.net

Japan ODA Reform Network-Kyoto
Japanese NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC)
Address: 5th Floor Avaco Building, 2-3-18 Nishiwaseda,
Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 169-0051, Japan
Email: global-citizen@janic.org
Phone #: (81) 3-5292-2911
Fax #: (81) 3-5292-2912
Website: www.janic.org.en

ODA Watch Korea
Address: 110-240 #503 Dong-Shin Bldg.,
139-1 Anguk-dong, Jongno-gu, Seoul, Korea
Email: odawatch@odawatch.net
Phone #: (82) 2-518-0705
Fax #: (82) 2-761-0578
Website: www.odawatch.net

Pacific Asia Resource Center (PARC)
Address: 2, 3F Toyo Bldg., 1-7-11 Kanda-Awaji-cho,
Asia Taiheiyo Shiryo Centre, Chiyoda-ku,
Tokyo 101-0063, Japan
Email: office@parc-jp.org
Phone #: (81) 3-5209-3455
Fax #: (81) 3-5209-3453
Website: www.parc-jp.org

People's Solidarity for Participatory Democracy
Address: 132 Tongin-Dong, Jongno-Gu,
Seoul, 110-043, South of Korea
Email: silverway@pspd.org/ pspdint@pspd.org
Phone #: (82) 2 723 5051
Fax #: (82) 2 6919 2004
Website: www.peoplepower21.org/English