

# The Reality of Aid Network

A pre-eminent Southern-led North-South CSO Network on Reforming Aid Policies and Practices

**E**nding poverty and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) need dedicated resources to support economic, environmental, and social investments that benefit the poorest people.

Current narratives and trends in ODA, however, risk undermining the unique contribution that ODA can make to the elimination of poverty and inequality in developing countries.

The idea that ODA must be used to “leverage” private finance and investment for development is gaining increasing traction among many bilateral donors and multilateral bodies. Recent trends have also demonstrated increasing diversion and use of aid resources to promote security interests of donor states, while undermining the democratic interests of people in conflict and fragile states.

Donors are also increasingly promoting as ODA spending on a range of activities that do not involve transfer of resources to developing countries, or do not contribute to poverty reduction efforts in the South.

The Development Assistance Committee of the donor states’ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD-DAC) is one of the primary arenas of engagement for The Reality of Aid Network, particularly as the OECD-DAC plays a critical role in defining bilateral aid and shaping the practices of traditional donors. The network carried on with its

work in coordinating Southern CSO engagement in the OECD-DAC.

## Leading CSOs in engaging the DAC

Early in the year, RoA played major roles in the DAC-CSO consultation, in close coordination with Development Cooperation Directorate (DCD)/DAC Chair’s office, by coordinating and ensuring meaningful CSO participation — from drafting of the agenda for the CSO delegation, to briefing Southern CSOs, convening the CSO Reference Group and discussing next steps with the DAC civil society work stream.

From July onwards, close coordination within the CSO Reference Group and with the OECD-DAC Civil Society Work Stream took place in preparation for the Senior Level Meeting (SLM). RoA facilitated the selection of the two CSO representatives to the SLM and discussions on how to promote CSOs’ concerns at the meetings.

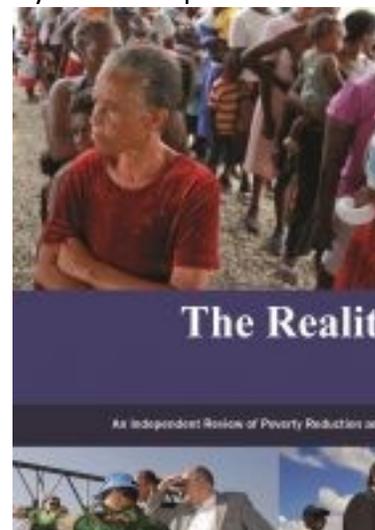
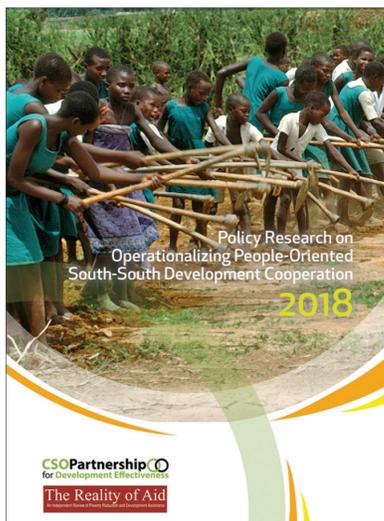
## Raising CSO concerns at the UN-DCF

In the UN Development Cooperation Forum (DCF), RoA highlighted the importance of ODA historical commitments and preserving its integrity as a resource for poverty eradication, and pointed out shrinking civic space and the importance of democratic country ownership. The network delivered its research findings to underscore the significance of citizen-based monitoring, particularly in strengthening human rights-based approaches (HRBA) in development cooperation; and forwarded suggestions on the next steps/ways forward for the DCF.

# 2018 AT A GLANCE

## Advancing people-centered South-South cooperation

RoA pushed for people-oriented and rights-based approaches to South-South cooperation in various arenas. Together with CPDE, RoA published the "Policy Research on Operationalizing People-Oriented South-South Development Cooperation" and formed a broad alliance that would engage in the 2nd UN High Level BAPA+40 Conference.



This 49-strong Southern CSO Alliance on South-South Cooperation reached out to governments and the UN Office for South-South Cooperation (UNOSSC) to promote CSO inclusion and its human rights-based framework for monitoring and measuring SSDC.

RoA consistently engaged the BAPA+40 outcome document, submitting position statements to governments and the UNOSSC, for which we have gained a certain level of acknowledgment and recognition. RoA also promoted the HRBA framework for SSC during the UNDP-UNESCAP Asia Pacific Technical Meeting on Measuring South-South Cooperation.

## Continuing leadership within CPDE

The network continued its involvement as a leading organization in CPDE – with RoA Africa and RoA Asia Pacific as regional secretariats, with RoA Africa's continued chairing of the Working Group on CSO Enabling Environment, and RoA-AP still participating in the working group on Conflict and Fragility. The

global secretariat meanwhile continued chairing the working group on South-South cooperation. In GPEDC, RoA Africa's Coordinator was elected as CSO non-executive co-chair of the GPEDC.

## Upholding the Integrity of ODA

RoA published the 2018 Global Report on the theme "Changing face of development aid and cooperation: Will new directions and forms of aid benefit the poor?" The 2018 Reality of Aid Report took stock of

the current debates and narratives on the role of ODA, and examined how these debates were translated at national level.

The Report has 29 contributions comprising 15 country chapters, 14 thematic articles and a Global Aid Trends chapter. The opening political chapter brought together the various themes in the contributions of the different authors of the Report. Remarkably, the Report set out 10 areas for future direction and recommendations for transforming the aid regime towards one based on solidarity, human rights, feminist principles, reducing poverty and tackling inequalities.

*Send us feedback or  
Share updates on your work!*

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**More updates at [www.realityofaid.org](http://www.realityofaid.org)**

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