



# Civil society voices for **Better Aid**

## **Policy Paper on the Paris Declaration INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION - ITUC**

### **“Putting Decent Work at the Heart of Sustainable Development Effectiveness”**

*The Accra high level meeting on aid effectiveness comes at a critical juncture for the international community, with the global economy beset by a series of crises – the food and energy crises, and the financial market slowdown that threaten to put the clock back on hard-won gains in poverty alleviation, and plunge 100 million people back below the \$1 a day poverty threshold. Those crises were not inevitable. They are the result of wrong policy choices, and inappropriate governance arrangements at global level, that have put the liberalization of markets and the quest for profits above human well-being. The International Trade Union Confederation, representing 168 million workers in 155 countries worldwide believe these policies and institutional arrangements can and must be changed.*

#### **THE PARIS DECLARATION: A FIRST STEP BUT LARGELY INSUFFICIENT**

While countries of the global South must seek their own democratic path-ways to self-sustaining growth and development, many of them will require development assistance for some time to come. The 2005 Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness represents a first step in the establishment of a framework for development cooperation, but its implementation is far behind expectations.

Despite the five partnership commitments, the Paris Declaration has not put an end to the prevalence of economic policy conditionality and tied aid, still largely undermining democratic country ownership and policy space. In only a limited number of cases have genuine partnerships between donor and recipient countries been established. Accountability requirements continue to apply largely to recipients, whereas donors are not accountable to their country partners. Further, the OECD-DAC remains a donor-oriented body, too often failing to reflect recipients' views and priorities. Finally it is worth noting that the challenge of achieving policy coherence in development cooperation is not likely to be taken up until all policy dialogues on this issue become more closely linked to existing UN frameworks on human rights, gender equality, environmental sustainability and international labour standards.

## **FOR DEMOCRATIC OWNERSHIP BASED ON RIGHTS TO ORGANIZE AND TO PARTICIPATE, AGAINST UNILATERAL IMPOSED CONDITIONALITY**

Trade unions, through their struggle for social justice, are key actors of sustainable development. Unions' democratic representation makes them legitimate actors to negotiate with employers' organizations and governments and to hold them accountable. Trade unions reject unilateral imposed conditionality. They call upon donor countries to support and not undermine the fundamental rights of workers to form a union and to bargain collectively. Building democratic society, through constructive dialogue with representative civil society organizations, is indeed essential to achieve sustainable development. Governments have a central role to fulfill in promoting democratic ownership by creating an enabling environment for citizens' organization and participation. In measuring the implementation of the Paris Declarations' commitment towards democratic ownership, the compliance and respect by governments and donors with the international agreed on standards human rights, gender equality, environmental sustainability and international labour standards, should be essential indicators.

## **DECENT WORK = EFFECTIVE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Undoubtedly, decent work must be at the heart of the development paradigm. Recent steps have been taken in this direction at the UN level such as illustrated by the 2005 World Summit Outcome Document, or by the recent adoption of a new target 1B on full and productive employment and decent work within MDG1, and more recently by the 2008 ILO Declaration on Social Justice for a Fair Globalization.

It is indeed urgent to make the creation of decent work an explicit objective of aid and development policies and to increase the coordination between donors in the pursuit of this goal. This can be achieved in many ways, ranging from the involvement of socially responsible local entrepreneurs in ODA-supported infrastructure projects to donor project support as well as general budget support aimed at stimulating the productive base of local economies, and overcoming supply-side constraints.

Given women's disadvantaged position on the labour market, special measures need to be taken to address gender related issues such as women's concentration in precarious, unprotected low-paid work, women's lack of access to income-generating resources or gender pay inequity. Equally important are policies and programmes to address youth unemployment and underemployment.

## CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS AND TRADE UNIONS ACTORS FOR DEVELOPMENT OUT OF THEIR OWN RIGHT

The trade union movement advocates, as do the CSO's, for the recognition of civil society organizations and trade unions as actors for development, based on their own right. For the trade union movement this has been recognized as a fundamental principle of by the standards on trade union freedom as laid down in the ILO Conventions 87 and 98. This longstanding strategy of inclusive and participative cooperation and tripartite co-decision in the ILO framework should serve as a model for further tri-lateral mechanisms of governance for Development Effectiveness.

## POLICY COHERENCE FOR DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS

It is high time for development actors to harmonize their policies with sustainable development objectives, including decent work objectives. With due attention paid to national ownership and preservation of national policy space, multilateral and bilateral donors should prioritize support for national ILO- supported decent work strategies as part of development cooperation, and maintain adequate and predictable levels of ODA budgetary allocations for this purpose. Consultation with trade unions and other representative actors in both donor and recipient countries constitutes an important aspect of governance for aid effectiveness.

## THE ITUC AT THE ACCRAHLF AND CSO PARALLEL FORUM ON AID EFFECTIVENESS

The ITUC who is part of the CSO International Steering Group for both the Accra Aid Effectiveness HLF and the Doha Financing for Development Conference, will be present in Accra with a delegation from all continents. The ITUC will organize during the CSO parallel conference (1/09) a "Village Voice"-workshop on "**Decent Work at the Heart of Sustainable Development Effectiveness**". The ITUC is also organizing together with other CSO's a Village Voice workshop on "**Development effectiveness? Beyond aid dependence**".



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