

## **Notes on the situation of development cooperation in Italy**

The Budget Law 2011 dismissed last week by the Italian Council of Ministers sets the final tombstone on Italian cooperation.

In fact, less than a month after the UN General Assembly dedicated to the Millennium Development Goals, the Italian Government has decided to cut 45% of the (already few) funds dedicated to development cooperation, reaching a record low of 179 million € for 2011. A figure - the lowest in 20 years - which must be subtracted of about 80 million € for operating expenses, leaving less than 90 million for new operations on the ground. To give a proportion, Italy contributes to the fight against poverty to less than one sixth of the annual funding of international Medicins sans Frontieres.

The government decision this year is taken not only contrary to international commitments made by Italy, but also to the clear request from the Parliament in June that committed the Government to not to reduce funding for development cooperation.

There is no sign that this short-sighted policy will be overturned by the Parliament discussion in the next weeks.

In the meantime the NGOs side is also very problematic and fragmented. Many NGOs are setting up groups of interests out of the Italian NGOs Association (the national platform) challenging its comprehensive representativeness, and looking for more visibility and perhaps more chances of funding. Iscos-Cisl, Progetto Sviluppo-CGIL and Progetto Sud-UIL (the three Italian Trade Union Solidarity Organisations) are strongly committed to be a significant component of the Italian national platform for development cooperation and are engaging initiatives putting the decent work agenda high in the debate of development effectiveness.