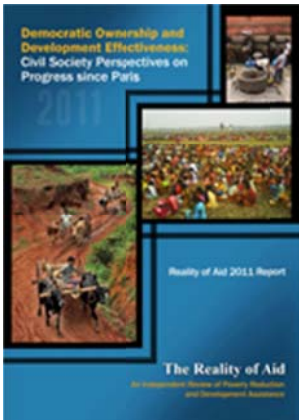


# The Reality of Aid

An Independent Review of Poverty Reduction and Development Assistance

## New report shows aid can still matter for those who need it most



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The report, titled "[Democratic Ownership and Development Effectiveness: Civil Society Perspectives on Progress since Paris](#)", finds that at best only two of the 21 aid effectiveness targets have been achieved since 2005, and these have not always translated into poverty reduction. This is a wake-up call for key actors to

agree on aid and development effectiveness commitments for 2012 and beyond, to be finalized at the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness - which Hilary Clinton and Ban Ki Moon have announced they will be attending. The report's results should push them to ensure that this time, the forum results in commitments that are kept, and ones that really ensure that the people most affected by development initiatives are being empowered.

The report finds that past commitments have had some positive influence on improving relationships between many country governments and their international cooperation partners.

"In Latin American countries Peru, Bolivia and Ecuador, the decline in poverty rates is linked to sustained increases in social spending, in which development aid has been a factor," said the chair of the Reality of Aid at the launch of the report in Paris last October 5 during the meetings of the Working Party on Aid Effectiveness.

In Indonesia, the Jakarta Commitment, forged in 2009, obliges donors to let Indonesia identify its own priorities for using the aid it receives. In Uganda, a new National Planning Authority ensures that citizens, and not just governments, are involved in development decisions. In Cambodia there has been some good progress in improving gender equality policy and plans.

But such policies have not always been matched with government action, or they have not helped to deal with the structural underpinnings of poverty. In Ecuador, "the continued existence of a patriarchal order, resistance of the political parties to admission of women, harassment and forms of violence, among other factors" still limit the participation of women in policy decisions.

In Bolivia, the report shows that increases in social spending do not address issues of employment and persistent vulnerability. There is little evidence that citizens have had a say in development decisions, and evidence shows that political space for civil society organizations is being undermined and is shrinking in many countries.

At the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in November, civil society organizations worldwide call on donors and recipients of aid to:

1. fully evaluate and deepen existing aid effectiveness commitments (Paris Declaration and Accra Agenda for Action);
2. commit to a human rights based approach to development and development cooperation with gender equality, decent work and environmental sustainability at the centre;
3. agree minimum standards to support the work of civil society organizations as development actors in their own right; and
4. initiate fundamental reforms for fairer aid governance at the crucial high level forum on aid effectiveness which starts in November in Busan, Korea.

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Reality of Aid (RoA) is a nonprofit initiative of Northern and Southern non-government organizations focusing on poverty reduction and development assistance. It is a member of BetterAid which represents civil society at the DAC Working Party on Aid Effectiveness (WP-Eff). The RoA 2011 Report was officially launched on October 5 at the OECD Conference Centre in Paris, France. Preparations are also underway for regional launches in Africa, Asia Pacific and Latin America. RoA has been publishing reports on aid and development cooperation since 1993. For copies of the RoA 2011 Report, please email [secretariat@realityofaid.org](mailto:secretariat@realityofaid.org). The electronic version of the Report can also be downloaded from [www.realityofaid.org](http://www.realityofaid.org).



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