



ALL AFRICA CONFERENCE OF CHURCHES CONFERENCE DES EGLISES DE TOUTE L'AFRIQUE

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African Church Leaders' Statement On AID Effectiveness

1. We delegates of various Churches across the African continent under the auspices of the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC) and the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (SECAM), met from 21 – 23 May 2008 to review the aid reform process as articulated in the Paris Declaration, at the Archbishop Desmond Tutu Ecumenical Centre in Nairobi, Kenya.
2. We critically reviewed the aid reform process as stipulated in the Paris Declaration under the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA). We examined the five pillars of the Declaration in the light of our great command of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ “to preach, teach, heal and liberate the people of God...” (Luke 4:18f). This command also compels us to adhere to the biblical and theological values that include the fundamental human dignity, respect for the integrity of creation and the common good, in the spirit of *Ubuntu*, “*I am because you are and you are because I am we are*”, as well as the ongoing African Union integration processes and initiatives.
3. The African Church recognizes the efforts and the spirit of the Paris Declaration in development and affirms the Better Aid position by the International Civil Society Steering Group. We acknowledge the development work undertaken by religious institutions in Africa. We encourage the Working Group of Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the African Governments in strengthening their engagement with religious institutions.
4. The African Church views aid for development as aid that promotes the integrity of creation, social justice, sharing, participation of all stakeholders, responsible stewardship, upholding of the rule of law, democracy, good governance, respect for human dignity, gender equality and accountability at all levels.
5. The African Church's engagement in political processes is rooted in the scriptures, its mission, its involvement in lives of communities and its long

history in aid for holistic development. This is evident in Her contribution towards development in such areas as education, health, environment and rural development. The role of the African Church as a major provider of social services, political advocacy and the upholding of human dignity on the continent is immense. The African Church appreciates the support that the global Diaconia continues to give, as She pursues Her objectives. In future, The African Church envisages a situation where the support of development partners and the donor community towards the government is based on participatory consultation, especially with all the stakeholders in the country where aid is directed. The conditionality for the aid should be embedded in just and equitable conditions as well as consideration of the recipient's objectives.

6. The African Church recognizes its role in the conscientization, the provision of moral and ethical guidance as well as being the custodian of reparation, peace building, social stabilization and reconciliation especially in fragile situations.
7. The African Church recognizes development as horizontal and bottom up rather than top down. The African Church views "aid effectiveness should be measured in its contribution to sustained reduction of poverty and inequalities; and its support of human rights, democracy, environmental sustainability and gender equality". It must be a transformational development that is based on the theological affirmation that all persons are created *in the image and likeness of God* (Genesis 1:27) with the potential to live just, humane and dignified lives in sustainable communities.
8. In the context of the High Level Forum (HLF) III on Aid effectiveness, the African Church proposes to the OECD Working Group, donors and recipient Governments to receive and address the following on the Paris Declaration:

Ownership

9. The African Church views democratic ownership as active citizenry and participation in local, national and regional agendas.
10. It is well-known that imposed policy conditionalities continue to undermine democratic ownership. Democracy should be practiced as a broad-based participatory process that ensures the principles of good governance, transparency, accountability, responsibility and good stewardship are upheld.
11. The African Church is deeply concerned about the inadequacy of interaction and awareness on the Paris Declaration and the lack of popular ownership in the process among different development stakeholders. The African Church therefore calls for an intensified democratization process of the aid effectiveness agenda that must be entrenched in the Paris Declaration.

12. The African Church expects that the HLF III in Accra (2008) and its accompanying meetings as well as the HLF IV (2011) offer a conducive platform for broader stakeholder involvement. The African Church therefore demands for practical engagement of the African people to ensure ownership and their input into aid effectiveness agenda.
13. The African citizenry ought to be actively involved in the process and be sensitized regarding the subsequent processes and emerging issues on aid effectiveness. All actors at all levels must participate to ensure ownership of the process and participation of the African people.
14. The African Church therefore calls upon donors and recipient governments to raise capacities within the framework of aid effectiveness amongst the African citizens, parliamentarians and other stakeholders in the process.
15. We challenge our African leaders to engage their citizens, the Church and parliamentarians, among others, to be co-creators of good governance.

Alignment

16. The African Church calls for the alignment of the Paris Declaration to acknowledge and support the African integration and its regional integration processes such as the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NePAD).
17. The Paris Declaration must enhance policy coherence and consistence, for sustainable development by capturing the inter-connectivity of aid, debt cancellation, good governance, just and equitable trade regimes and financial markets that erode local gains (e.g., inequitable taxation, maintenance tax havens and the lack of government control of capital flight).
18. The African Church notes that existing statistics as indicated in OECD studies show that as much as 50% of all aid is tied to technical assistance and supply-driven. The African Church further notes the continued militarization of aid and the promotion of consumer culture at the expense of sustainable development. Technical assistance must be demand-driven after sourcing from African expertise that contributes to the strengthening of local economies. The African Church therefore calls on all donors to offer aid with no such policy conditionalities.

Harmonization

19. The African Church notes that there is minimal policy space and structural engagement within the framework of the national governments to engage effectively on development and national agenda setting.

20. We call on Governments and donors to define policy space and mechanisms that allow the engagement of civil society organizations and religious institutions in the planning, implementation and evaluation of development plans.

Managing For Results

21. The African Church calls for the inclusion of qualitative indicators that measure the impact made on peoples' lives particularly for the betterment of gender equality, improvement in provisions for human rights and increased respect for these rights as well as environmental sustainability.

22. The African Church urges for the recognition of existing stakeholders' contributions and notes that development and poverty eradication through aid delivery is a multi-faceted process that is filled with learning opportunities and is not necessarily a linear process.

23. The African Church urges for the inclusion of all stakeholders in data collection on development and the recognition of data that is generated by stakeholders at the point of contact with communities, as such data reflects various people centred dynamics.

24. The African Church urges donors and our governments to ensure a proactive participation and the democratization of monitoring and evaluation processes.

Mutual Accountability

25. The African Church demands that development be defined as both horizontal and bottom up rather than top down as a fundamental basis for ownership of national policies and development systems by the citizenry. Governments must nurture, create democratic space and processes for civil society participation.

Sustainable Development

26. The African Church notes that the Paris Declaration ignores sustainable development as a pillar of aid effectiveness for holistic development.

27. The African Church therefore strongly recommends that sustainable development be included as a core pillar of the Paris Declaration.

28. The African Church reaffirms that aid brings with it a sense of despondency. In fact, nowhere in the world has aid brought about sustainable development.
29. The African Church realizes that aid for development must have a *pro-rata diminishment* parallel to pro poor economic growth, equitable wealth distribution and empowerment of the African People.
30. The African Church calls upon the governments and donors to promote environmental sustainability, food, water and energy sovereignty in the continent.
31. The African Church denounces the shift from subsistence food production to farming practices that solely serve agro or bio-fuels. The African Church urges African governments that have signed or are considering signing such proposed bi-lateral agreements to reconsider their positions in consultation with the Church and other constituents.
32. Africa people are facing a terrible threat from climate change among others. The African Church calls for the developed countries to ensure they proactively attain the objectives set regarding environmental degradation, especially, reduction of carbon emissions. The Church therefore calls upon African Governments to ensure all adaptation and mitigation funding is included in the Accra aid effectiveness process.
33. The African church warns governments and donors to review initiatives that are in line with patenting of life forms in relation to intellectual property rights directly as this undermines the fundamental principle of the integrity of creation.

Conclusion

34. We the delegates of the African Church firmly assert that Africa can develop, for the better, by utilising local resources and capacities as well as through poverty eradication and realization of human rights. The prophetic voice of the Church ought to be heeded by governments and donors.
35. The African Church in collaboration with other actors is a creative, catalytic, and empowering force for the transformational change that Africa seeks.
36. The reality and position of the place of Africa as it is today, is unacceptable to the African Church whose more than 600 million membership is still growing.

37. The African Church commits herself to demonstrate her role as a custodian of peace building, reconciliation and social stabilization especially in fragile situations.
38. The African Church commits to undertake her social, political and economic responsibilities to her constituencies and to re-dedicate herself as God's instruments in the transformation in our continent.
39. Thus the African Church acknowledges that the Aid Effectiveness process at Accra and beyond offers us another instrument and avenue to this transformation.
40. The African Church calls upon all Africans to find African solutions, driven by Africans, to address problems facing Africa.
41. The Accra process must be a step forward in the journey for Africans to stand with pride with no begging bowls in their hands, but with bowls in our hands ready to contribute to help others around the Globe.

THE END