

What About Italy?

Responsibilities for development cooperation

- The main responsibility for development cooperation is primarily divided between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF).

Contribution to the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's)

- During the G8 in L'Aquila, the Italian Presidency presented the "Whole of country approach" adopted by the G8 with the aim to promote policy coherence for development.
- As an outcome of the civil society mobilization, the MFA formed a Task Force for Aid Effectiveness in 2009. As one of the early achievements of the Task Force, the MFA approved an Aid Effectiveness plan of action that sets 27 priority actions to reform the MFA Cooperation policies in line with the Accra Action Plan.
- The Parliament formed an MDG Committee in 2008 to focus its work on advocating the importance of the Goals and the need for resources.
- Italian Civil Society has a strong voice in monitoring the government's commitments towards the MDGs. In strong partnership with the UN Millennium Campaign, Italian civil society partners mobilized over 800,000 people during the 2009 Stand Up mobilization.

Italy's record on aid

Aid quantity

- **The preliminary 2009 DAC data estimates Italian ODA/GNI at 0.16%.** This places Italy last out of all the EU-DAC countries, even lower than Greece. It also implies that Italy is far from the agreed upon target of 0.51% by 2010 and 0.70% by 2015.
- Debt relief grants, i.e. grants which relieve the developing countries of its debt, comprised approximately 39% of total ODA in 2009.

Aid quality

- **Currently, Italy's share of multilateral aid exceeds bilateral.** Of Italy's net ODA in 2008, 41% (USD 1.8 billion) was bilateral and 59% (USD 3 billion) was multilateral aid. In 2009, the share of bilateral aid reduced further to 26%.
- **Italy allocated only about 9% of total ODA to LDC's (least developed countries).** Middle East and North Africa received the greatest percentage of Italian ODA (two-thirds of bilateral ODA) followed by Sub-Saharan Africa (one-third of bilateral ODA).
- Country Programmable Aid (CPA) is the proportion of aid that developing countries can allocate according to their needs. In 2007 it represented only 21% of Italian gross ODA. Italy's share of CPA was lowest among all the priority countries and **below the combined figure across all OECD countries (46%).**
- **According to the DAC, Italy untied 70% of its total bilateral aid in 2008.** Tied aid is assistance given to

developing countries which must be used to purchase goods and services from the donor country.

- In 2006 and 2008, The OECD/DAC conducted a Survey on Monitoring the Paris Declaration to gauge the progress of donor nations toward improving aid effectiveness. **Italy's performance is below average on most of the indicators of aid effectiveness, even though Italy has significantly improved its performance in several areas.**

Policy coherence

- The OECD defines policy coherence for development as "working to ensure that the objectives and results of a government's development policies are not undermined by other policies of that same government which impact on developing countries, and that these other policies support development objectives where feasible".
- Policy coherence is a priority for Italy as set in the Italian guidelines (2009-2011) and from the Italian proposal of the "Whole of countries approach" approved by the 2009 G8 in L' Aquila. However the difficulties in the dialogue between different institutional players, and particularly between the Financial and the Foreign Affairs Ministries, risks jeopardizing all the action to improve PCD in Italy.
- Inconsistencies between trade and development objectives also exist. Italy implements the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) and gets some of the highest subsidies from the CAP.

Public Opinion

- **Current Italian public opinion supports development cooperation and the fight against extreme poverty.** A 2009 Eurobarometer survey shows the number of people responsive to the MDGs in Italy has increased from 18% to 32%.
- A poll commissioned by Oxfam International/YouGov in 2009 found that 38% of Italians strongly agree and 71% agree that the Italian Government should uphold its promise to spend 0.7% of gross national income on aid for developing countries.

Commitment to Development Index

- The Centre for Global Development (CGD) ranks 22 of the world's richest countries based on their dedication to policies that benefit poor nations. CGD's 2009 Commitment to Development Index ranks **Italy 19th among 22 countries.** The Italian government scores below average on every component except for trade.

Updated: June 2010

For a more in-depth analysis and list of sources, please refer to the long version of the What About.

United Nations Millennium Campaign Europe

www.endpoverty2015.org/en/regions/europe

info.europe@endpoverty2015.org