

# **Africa after the Africa Commission: What priorities for the German G8?**

For the closing plenary, Lawrence Haddad, IDS Director summarised the messages to the G8

## **1. Africa is changing fast**

Growth is historically high, investment from China is sweeping the continent, it has all sorts of environmental assets the rest of the world wants, and Africans are more confident, and are more leveraged due to the interests of new investors.

But Africa remains fragile. Growth in Africa is not yet translating this into large poverty reductions. The recent 'elections' in Nigeria provide an example of how hard-fought permanent change really is. Some of the fragility is due to G8 action - examples include greenhouse gas emissions, weak G8 governance of arms, narcotics and capital, and the unpredictable delivery of low quality aid.

The picture of Africa painted by the Commission for Africa is already out of date.

## **2. Honour your past commitments**

Reaffirm your intent to deliver on your commitments at Gleneagles and St Petersburg. If this does not happen, trust will be eroded along with the new partnerships with Africa (NEPAD, EU-AU etc) that depend precisely on such trust.

Setting aside debt relief, aid levels to Africa have increased by \$2bn, with the target of a \$25bn increase by just 2010. Even if the 2006 increment doubled in each of the next 3 years aid increases would not reach \$25bn.

Take the responsibility to protect seriously, and be sensitive to the tradeoffs between the actions of G8 Ministries of Defence and the actions of G8 Ministries of Development.

Fulfill your commitments to Climate Change.

Get Doha going again.

## **3. Consider adopting some new initiatives**

Other G8 countries to adopt legislation similar to the UK International Development (Reporting and Transparency) [Bill](#) introduced by Tom Clarke, MP, requiring the UK to report regularly and fully on the progress it has, or has not, made on meeting the Gleneagles commitments.

Find ways to support civil society in the G8 and in Africa to hold leaders to account - especially on Trade.

Support private public partnerships in Africa and elsewhere to develop new energy and adaptation technology for Africa. Africa may have a comparative advantage in developing some of this technology, technology that could be transferred to the G8.

Establish a Mobile (telephone) Opportunities Task Force, similar to the Digital Opportunities Task Force to look for additional ways to support the role of ICTs in African development.

Establish funds in addition to Gleneagles to support Climate Adaptation efforts in Africa.

Revise the governance of the multilaterals - from the way the leaders are selected to the accountability of staff and Boards - the G8 has to lead in this domain if it expects to influence others.

#### **4. Change the way you think about and behave towards Africa**

Deliver aid so that it does not undermine African institutions

Review your assumptions about exactly what aid can do given the rapidly changing African landscape - Chinese investment has reminded us about the key role that the trade and the private sector must play in Africa's development.

Don't pursue the MDGs at the expense of Africa's medium term resilience. Sometimes resilience has to come first. Start thinking about how you can support development post-2015.

In your own minds, link climate change and African development. If the models are to be believed, climate change will result in threshold effects, irreversibility, and feedbacks that will radically re-write African water, soil and agriculture maps.

Treat Africa as part of the global community - not as an item apart. Chinese and Indian engagement with Africa has helped to globalise Africa - both in reality and in perception. If things go wrong in Africa, it spells trouble for the rest of the world. Africa's success affects the chances of success in a wide range of global endeavours - whether economic, political or environmental. If things go right in Africa, lots of things that the G8 cares about (climate change, security, national identity, energy) will become easier.

#### **5. Evolve the G8 process**

Become more inclusive. Some think the G8 is on the road to becoming an anachronism. How can the G8 deal with global issues when it represents a smaller and smaller share of the global economy and less and less control over global welfare? African issues are global issues. Emerging economies are likely to form their own G-group. The M20 of Finance ministers from leading economic countries was set up in response to the infectious financial crises of the 1990s - don't wait for a global crisis to evolve the G8 to a bigger group (a 'GN'), a group which can support the more representative but less agile UN.

If such a GN is not possible, work more with multilaterals and regional bodies (African Development Bank, NEPDA, AU, Africa Partners Forum) in preparation for summits.