


Europe 2009-2014: Ending Poverty Together

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to end poverty

An ActionAid Manifesto for the European Parliament 2009/2013



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ACTIONAID MANIFESTO - ELECTIONS 2009

ActionAid is an international development NGO, present in over 40 countries around the world. Our goal is to end poverty by building a global movement on human rights realisation. ActionAid strongly believes that policies made at European level have enormous potential to contribute to global development. Striving to improve the lives of those living in poverty is not just a moral issue. It is about creating the conditions for a fairer, more peaceful and stable world. Ending poverty is in everyone's interest.

ActionAid has identified 6 areas where MEPs can make a difference:

- 1. Provide more and better aid**
- 2. Make trade justice a reality**
- 3. Insist on a hunger-free world**
- 4. Get serious about climate justice**
- 5. Promote gender equality and women's rights**
- 6. Budget to end poverty**



1. Provide more and better aid

- Ensure that EU governments **keep to their promises of increasing aid by 2015** and commit to stop inflating their aid figures by including debt relief, refugee and students costs
- **Change current policies to make EU aid more effective.** ActionAid's 10 point plan for real aid reform identifies how the EU can improve the effectiveness of its aid: by ensuring that it is more accountable and transparent, provided regularly and predictably, by ensuring that poor countries are in the driving seat for their own development, by dropping policy conditions attached to aid, by ending the practice of tying aid to EU goods and services and by reforming technical assistance.
- **Make sufficient and coherent financing for development available** by stepping up the fight against tax evasion and avoidance by multinational companies, making companies report transparently on their operations and profits in all countries where they work, and by cracking down on tax havens.



2. Make trade justice a reality

- Work to **end unfair trade deals** being imposed on developing countries. For example, the Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) with African, Caribbean and Pacific countries and the Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) being negotiated with India , ASEAN and other poorer nations, which would exacerbate poverty and the food security situation of millions.
- Ensure that the EU **urgently revises its trade strategy** - as set out in Global Europe - to ensure it prioritises human rights, food security, development and environmental sustainability in poor countries
- MEPs should use the 'health-check' or CAP reform process as an opportunity to **end subsidies that have a detrimental impact on poor people in developing countries** - for example direct and indirect export subsidisation of agricultural exports and financial incentives to agrofuels. For years, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) - which accounts for about half of the entire EU budget - has dumped subsidised exports into developing countries, flooding poor country markets, undercutting the prices of local farmers and undermining their livelihoods.



3. Insist on a hunger-free world

In 2000, governments around the world committed to halving the proportion of people who suffer from hunger by 2015. Eight years later, the number of hungry people is actually rising.

MEPs have a crucial role to play to:

- **Make sure the EU invests in and empowers women.** In Sub-Saharan Africa, women do at least 70% of the agricultural work. They are the farmers. Research shows that better access to land and natural resources for women is a key way to fight hunger in developing countries.
- **Make sure the EU invests in poor farmers,** especially women, to improve production capacities. Support developing governments to invest in agriculture, in agrarian reform, in farmers' access to local markets, in research, tools and technology to develop ecologically friendly, GM-free farming.
- **Actively promote economic, social and cultural rights.** EU member states and their partners must adopt and implement UN legal frameworks. The EU should support the implementation of social protection measures that will enable poor and marginalised populations to enjoy a full range of rights.
- **Respect the sovereignty of economic and trade policies** of partner countries while negotiating bilateral trade agreements.
- **Ensure that the EU refrains from pushing third countries into development export-led agricultural models** which have caused diversion of fertile land and has led to increased dependency of many small farmers.
- **End targets and subsidies for agrofuels** and conduct an independent assessment on the impact of agrofuels on hunger and food security.



4. Get serious about climate justice

MEPs need to take action in three areas:

I. Mitigation: The EU should be at the forefront of global mitigation efforts and adopt targets at the upper end of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change recommendations i.e. that rich countries should reduce greenhouse gas emissions by up to 40% by 2020 and up to 95% by 2050 (on 1990 levels). The Bali Action Plan, agreed in December 2007 by all signatories to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, recognised that this level of ambition from rich countries was necessary for an effective global response to the challenge of climate change.

II. Adaptation: The EU should help develop new and additional sources of finance for adaptation, additional to the EU15 commitment to reach 0.7% ODA/GNI by 2015. The UNDP estimates that developing countries will require an additional \$86 billion a year by 2015 to meet the costs of adapting to climate change.

III. Low-carbon development: The EU must help to support sustainable, low-carbon development worldwide. Enormous poverty challenges remain and climate justice requires that development aspirations are addressed in a carbon-constrained world. This will require a large-scale transfer of new clean technologies to the developing world and support for an economic model that marries environmental sustainability with economic prosperity.



5. Promote gender equality and women's rights

Gender equality is essential for poverty eradication and a right in itself enshrined in political and international agreements. Advancing the rights of women and girls is not only the most effective route to achieving the 2015 goals, it is also a moral necessity.

MEPs have a crucial role to play to:

- Hold the EC and Member States to account in **promoting gender equality and women and girls' empowerment** as stressed in the European Consensus for Development (2005) and in the EU strategy on "gender equality and women's empowerment in development cooperation";
- Ensure that policy commitments are backed by the **allocation of adequate financial and human resources to promote gender equality** at all levels;
- Support the **'twin track' approach** of mainstreaming gender equality and putting in place specific actions to promote women and girls' empowerment;
- **Ensure that the EU plays a leading role in ending HIV & AIDS and violence against women and girls**, through effective programmes and by mainstreaming these issues in broader external relations and policies;
- **Reinforce policy dialogue with women's networks and women's rights advocates** to support and monitor their governments;
- Ensure that the **reform of the EU's External Action brings about the delivery of a strong policy in support of gender equality**;
- Advocate for the appointment of a **EU Envoy for Women's Rights** to ensure that women's rights are taken into account in decision making, raise the EU's voice or mediate whenever violence arises against women and spur on national governments to live up to the gender-related Millennium Goals.



6. Budget to end poverty

With the upcoming EU budget review, MEPs have a chance to make sure that the EU keeps to its commitments on achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

We ask MEPs to support the following measures:

- A **strong and independent voice for development** within EU External Relations;
- An **EU development policy which provides the principal framework** governing the EU's cooperation with all developing countries;
- An **EU development policy that is on an equal footing with EU foreign, security and commercial policy agendas**;
- A **coherent institutional set-up** and approach to development cooperation where policy, programming and implementation go hand in hand;
- An **External Action Service that takes fully into account development objectives** and the securing of economic and social rights for all;
- **Appropriate financial mechanisms** to ensure the ownership of aid programmes lies in the hands of developing countries and their citizens;
- **Legal instruments** covering EU cooperation with developing countries that are **clearly oriented towards the objectives of the EU's development policy**;
- **Separate legal instruments established to finance other external policy areas**, such as foreign policy, security, etc.



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ActionAid is an international anti-poverty agency

working in over 40 countries, taking sides with poor people to end poverty and injustice together.

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