

## **Aid is only one part of the answer to Africa's woes...by Greg O'Keefe**

by Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Sunday, July 17, 2005

<http://politicsrespun.org/2005/07/aid-is-only-one-part-of-the-answer-to-africas-woes/>

I like the idea of Live8. Attention on the eradication of poverty is a good thing. I just wish the promoters and some supporters of it were not so blinded by the poverty trifecta. The people behind [Live8](#) insist that poverty can be eradicated through more aid, debt forgiveness and the reduction of trade barriers. While the eradication of poverty includes these three issues, it is only a part of the greater solution. Like all solutions in international politics, change must come inside as well as outside.

Consider [this argument](#) by Kenyan economics professor James Shikwati. Shikwati argues that there has been too much aid given and not a chance for local and regional economies to grow themselves. Why invest in a business when you can get the money for free? Instead of a nation of entrepreneurs, Africa has become a nation of foreign aid dependents.

Furthermore, how will change come when tyrants and thugs rule? Robert Mugabe, and even Stephen would agree with me here, might have to go before any good may come out of Zimbabwe. I am not calling for regime change (yet), but we cannot continue to reasonably believe that poverty will end while thugs continue to rule.

Instead of aid we should be talking about African development. Markets, not aid, is the answer to Africa's woes. If we do bear the responsibility for Africa's current situation, as Stephen believes but I do not, then it should fall on us to provide the solution the only solution that has proven to work—or at least better than the others. If it is not our responsibility, but rather in our self interest to do so, we should again provide a proven model for success.

The Live8 trifecta is a good starting point. But it will only be through political and economic reform/development that will truly bring about and end to poverty.