

# Virtual Link

## MTV – School in Action

**School in Action**, the TV programme usually taking place in Italian schools where MTV Italy involves students in the production of a show, moved to the Ataliba De Oliveira school in Heliopolis, the largest San Paolo favela, where ActionAid has been working for several years. From the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> of April a daily mini-series showed the preparation and the setting of the show “**The future in your hands**”, broadcasted on the 29<sup>th</sup>. The initiative aimed at giving an idea of the lives of young people of a poor community in an innovative and appealing way, showing that they have the same dreams and hopes of their Italian mates, but too few opportunities to fulfil them and decide of their lives. The project in partnership with MTV started in November, when *Stefania Donaera* - Promotions Officer - went to Heliopolis for a first visit to the field. The shooting took 2 weeks in March, involving also *Glauce Arzua* - Communications Coordinator from AA Brasil - and **UNAS** (the local partner we’re working with since 2001) as well. The final show, involving 51 students, was presented in UNAS premises to 300 people, including the Italian Consul and the local authorities. The students were really enthusiastic of this opportunity that, beyond fun, also helped raise their confidence, as one of them told us: “At first, I was afraid I couldn’t make it, but was ashamed to confess it. But then I saw the others felt exactly the same and once we got together, we realized we could succeed!”. The event got a good media coverage, both in Italy and Brasil and paved the way towards a stronger involvement of the students in the community, as *Adriana Ferreira Lima* - Director of the school - told us: “I saw my dream coming true, getting the students closer to the community and viceversa. Our relationship suddenly turned from tutoring to cooperation and I hope the community won’t leave the school when the show is over”. This is the challenge according to *Joao Miranda* - UNAS Director - as well: “We must find a way to get the young people who didn’t attend UNAS activities to join us. We must try and recreate the same cohesion and enthusiasm brought by the MTV program in the daily activities we carry out”. The Consul himself found our initiative really worthy and promised to promote it among the Italian schools in Brasil. For further info, please contact Stefania ([stefania.doanera@actionaid.org](mailto:stefania.doanera@actionaid.org)).



## Fantasio Festival

From the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April, the historical centre of Perugia hosted the **Fantasio Festival**, a four-day creativity and fantasy fair for the social and cultural growth of children. The city turned into a huge workshop of music, theatre, painting, games and shows. A moment of fun but also of reflection, where ActionAid presented a **photo exhibition** dedicated to the children of the Southern communities we work with portrayed while playing, laughing or going to school just as their Northern mates. The exhibition was based on the pictures taken by four of our colleagues during some of their field visits: *Andrea Comollo* back from India, *Teresa Solinas* from Tanzania, *Alice Grecchi* from Ghana and *Arianna Banfi* from Nepal. This initiative offered us a good opportunity to create links with journalists and childhood publishing and to hand out materials on our organisation and work, according to the different audiences coming to our stand.

*Alice Grecchi*, our Publications Officer who was in Perugia for the whole festival, found it a great opportunity for ActionAid in terms of visibility and brand awareness: “We were the only association present and the exhibition, thanks to its strategic



position, raised interest not only in the participants (50.000 people) but also in the tourists visiting the city” . Besides, it was also important for a member of the staff to meet our supporters and have their direct feedback on our work and initiatives. For further info, please contact Alice ([alice.grecchi@actionaid.org](mailto:alice.grecchi@actionaid.org)).

## Welcome to

**Isabella Di Ruggiero**, AA Italy OE Director. The Italian OE Department was officially set up on the 10th of April and will include the HR Unit, the IT Unit and the Office Management Unit. Isabella worked both the not for profit and profit sector and will surely give a precious contribution to the growth of our organisation. You can contact her at the following address: [isabella.diruggiero@actionaid.org](mailto:isabella.diruggiero@actionaid.org).

**Cinzia Penati**, former intern and now HR Assistant covering Gaia Melloni’s maternity leave since the 26th of March ([cinzia.penati@actionaid.org](mailto:cinzia.penati@actionaid.org)).

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## GFATM

443 pairs of shoes were placed in front of the Italian Parliament on the 27<sup>th</sup> of April, symbolising the 443 people condemned to death every day due to our country's insolvency towards the GFATM. Through this initiative CINI (the Italian Coordination of International Networks we're members of) and the cultural association *Punto Rosso* launched an appeal to the Italian civil society, intellectuals and politicians to mobilize and ask the immediate contribution of our 280 millions euros missing.

## European Union and HIV/AIDS

ActionAid Italy, together with AIDOS (Italian Association of Women in Development), CESTAS (Italian Center for Health Education and Technologies) and other two NGOs from Germany and Poland, received the approval of the European Union for their joint project "True health through development". The consortium is aimed at getting funds for the concrete implementation of the activities related to the Gates project, which focuses more on network building. The project is over three years time and AA Italy will be coordinating the policy and research activities, leading the HIV/AIDS work (with AIDOS focusing on reproductive health and CESTAS on children) and the evaluation part (adapting our monitoring framework and the ALPS principles). Our contribution will also include all the activities related to the advocacy, networking, campaigning and awareness raising work. One of the initiatives in plan will probably be the promotion of the *Positive Lives* exhibition, starting from Italy on the occasion of the *No Poverty No AIDS Campaign* relaunching. For further info please contact Paola Giuliani, Head of Campaigns and Activism ([paola.giuliani@actionaid.org](mailto:paola.giuliani@actionaid.org)).

## University & Job

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April we took part to **Bocconi & Jobs**, a Career Event organised by the Bocconi University, one of the main Italian economy academies, to connect students and the employment world. We took the occasion to present some internship ads in the fundraising and administration areas and collect CVs of people interested in entering the third sector. The response was quite good and we found a lot of students interested in our themes and work. For further info, please contact Cinzia Penati, Human Resources Assistant ([cinzia.penati@actionaid.org](mailto:cinzia.penati@actionaid.org)).

## Women's Rights

Our work with the **Gender Group of the States General of Cooperation** is going on successfully. During the meeting of the 12<sup>th</sup> of April the group set the building of a stronger network as their short/mid term priority. Beatrice Costa - as AAI representative in the group - will contribute on economic access and empowerment, governance, HIV/AIDS and violence. The next meeting is due on the 24<sup>th</sup> of May, when all groups of the States General will meet Patrizia Sentinelli, Vice Minister for Cooperation to Development, for a review of her commitments 6 months after the beginning of her mandate. For further info, please contact Beatrice ([beatrice.costa@actionaid.org](mailto:beatrice.costa@actionaid.org)).

## NeWs FrOm ItAlY

**OCSE** - with only 0,2% ODA/GNP, Italy is the second last European donor country after Greece and the third last in the world. This is what the latest OCSE data reveal on the status of official development aid in the world. With only 3,67 billion euros, the Italian contribution decreased of 30% compared to the 2005 one.

**AID/EDUCATION** - according to a report released by Save the Children, between 2003 and 2005 Italy was the last donor for international aid to primary education, contributing only for the 3% of the 15 billion dollars required to fulfil the MDG on education.

**G8** - Africa development and global warning must be the key issues of the 2008 and 2009 G8 hosted by Japan and Italy, as declared by Premier Prodi in Tokyo.

**EPAs** - on the occasion of the World Day Against EPAs between EU and ACP countries, on the 19<sup>th</sup> of April the "Africa is not on sale!" campaign was launched in Italy, promoted by a group of 10 NGOs and associations calling for a stop in unfair trade deals between Europe and developing countries.

**DARFUR** - the Global Day for Darfur will be celebrated on the 6<sup>th</sup> of May around the Colosseum in Rome (and simultaneously in other 50 countries), asking the Italian government - as a member of the UN Security Council - a stronger commitment in ending the conflict.

**KOROGOCHO** - the initiative "People United for a New Korogocho" was presented at the LUISS University in Rome: 18 young people from the Nairobi slum are presenting their exhibition in 25 Italian cities, as an occasion of union and cultural exchange with their Italian mates.

*April*