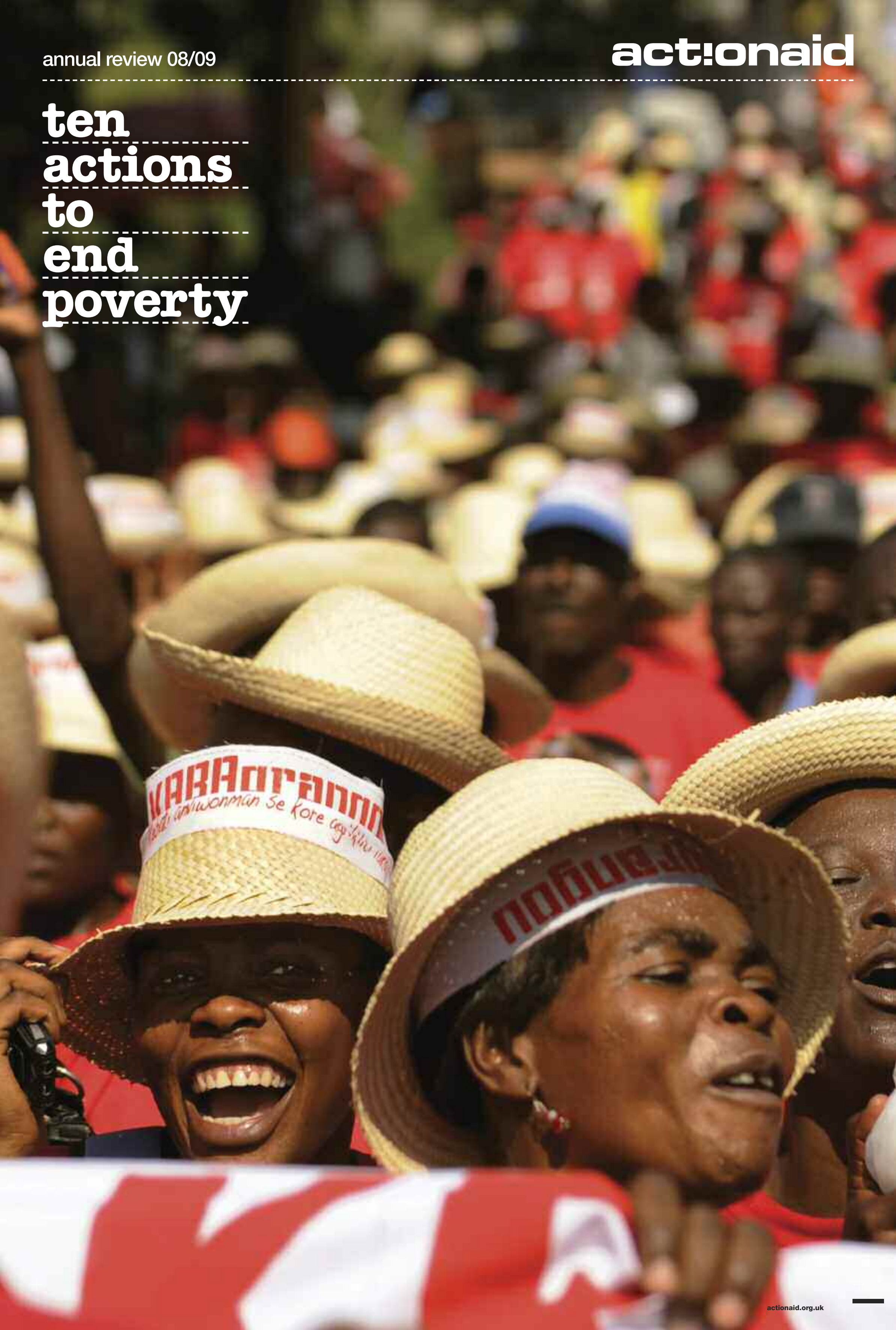


ten
actions
to
end
poverty



ten actions to end poverty

1

tackle women's rights

Tackling women's rights is at the heart of all of our work to create a world without poverty and injustice.

See page 6



PHOTO: GEORGIE SCOTT/ACTIONAID

2

help end hunger

We're taking sides with poor and hungry people to help them secure their right to food and help end hunger.

See page 8



PHOTO: CANDACE FEIT/ACTIONAID

3

fight HIV and AIDS

We're helping people around the world fight HIV and AIDS by defending their right to a life with dignity.

See page 10



PHOTO: NICOLAS AXELFOD/ACTIONAID

4

respond to emergencies

We're helping vulnerable communities cope with emergencies, conflict and disaster more effectively.

See page 12



PHOTO: GIDEON MENDEL/CORBIS/ACTIONAID

5

educate the world

We're helping people all over the world improve their lives by exercising their fundamental right to an education.

See page 16



PHOTO: GEORGIE SCOTT/ACTIONAID

6

give people power

We're empowering people to ask questions, make decisions and hold their governments to account.

See page 18



PHOTO: G.M.B. AKASH/PANOS/ACTIONAID

7

take action

We're encouraging supporters in the UK to take action and work with people in the communities we help overseas to end poverty.

See page 20



PHOTO: KRISTIAN BULLUS/ACTIONAID

8

inspire young people

We're working hard to inspire children and young people to take action to end poverty through award-winning schools and youth projects.

See page 22



PHOTO: AUBREY WADE/ACTIONAID

9

campaign for change

We're campaigning for an end to poverty by mobilising our supporters to take action in the UK.

See page 24



PHOTO MONTAGE: NICK PURSER/ACTIONAID

10

invest with care

We're getting the job done more effectively by making sure every pound we spend helps to end poverty.

See page 26



PHOTO: JANE HAHN/PANOS/ACTIONAID



Janet Everson (right), a home-based care giver with an ActionAid-supported HIV and AIDS project, hugs her friend and patient Soye Wesere at her home near Nyambi village, Malawi.

PHOTO: JAMES OATWAY/PANOS/ACTIONAID



Welcome to our annual review 2008. We hope that reading this report will help you understand why we carry out the work we do, and spur you into taking action on issues you care about.

There's no denying the past year was a tough one for many, as the global economic downturn and the credit crisis hit home. Unsurprisingly, yet unjustly, the repercussions of the crisis were felt strongest in poor communities – those with least to do with causing it. Despite this tough framework, we continued to fight hard to improve people's lives.

Worldwide we responded to 21 emergencies and stood alongside conflict-affected communities in Kenya and Zimbabwe, helping them return home safely to restart their lives.

From Uganda to Afghanistan to Brazil we fought the hunger crisis, promoting sustainable farming through improved seeds and soil conservation, setting up farmers' savings and credit schemes, and helping women gain their rights to owning and working the land.

And our fight for rights wasn't just about food. We helped citizens from Nepal to Nigeria, and from Guatemala to Vietnam, to shape the state in which they live – scrutinising government budgets, pressing for funds for roads and wells, and setting up citizens' information centres to help people tackle corruption. Women's rights remained core to everything we did.

Despite a tough fundraising climate we raised our profile and funds, meeting our income targets through innovative events such as *Call my wine bluff*, while our work in schools through *PowerDown* and *Sukulu Malawi!* helped UK children learn about climate change, and their own power to reduce it. At the same time, campaign initiatives such as *Invisible women* and *Who pays?* helped shape government policy and action, while *HungerFree* helped push the food crisis up the public agenda.

This review reminds us of our mandate, and gives solid examples of how we're meeting it. We hope it gives you a vivid snapshot of how, where there is the will and belief in a better world, good things can happen.

Richard Miller
Chief Executive
ActionAid UK

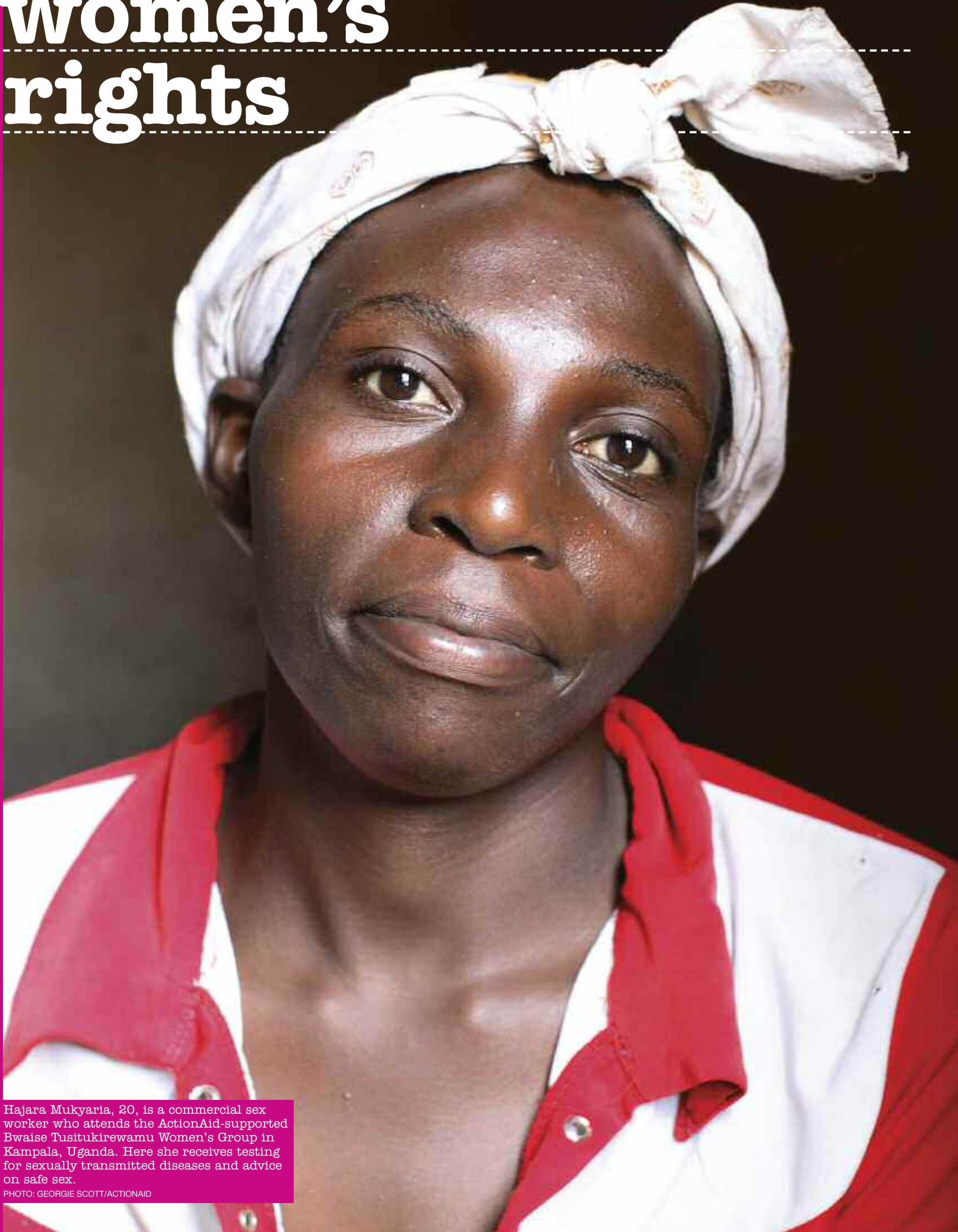
About ActionAid

At ActionAid our mission is simple: to end poverty. We do this by forming partnerships between people in poor countries and people in rich countries, knitting together the work of individual communities, national governments and international campaigns and institutions, to bring about long-term, sustainable change. We are non political and non religious.

ActionAid UK is part of a global ActionAid family, which comprises 45 country programmes and an international head office based in Johannesburg, South Africa.

one.

tackle women's rights



Hajara Mukyaria, 20, is a commercial sex worker who attends the ActionAid-supported Bwaise Tositukirewamu Women's Group in Kampala, Uganda. Here she receives testing for sexually transmitted diseases and advice on safe sex.

PHOTO: GEORGIE SCOTT/ACTIONAID



WE BELIEVE IN A WORLD WITHOUT POVERTY AND INJUSTICE. THIS WILL ONLY BE POSSIBLE WHEN WE SECURE EQUALITY AND RIGHTS FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS. THAT'S WHY THIS YEAR WE CONTINUED TO PUT TACKLING WOMEN'S RIGHTS AT THE HEART OF ALL OUR WORK.

ActionAid works with women and girls to fight blatant discrimination. In **Guatemala** we helped set up the country's first ever network of HIV-positive women, and years of hard work paid off with a long-overdue law to deal with violence against women.

We also support women and girls to claim rights previously denied to them. In **Uganda** this meant helping hundreds of abused women and girls by setting up women's rights centres, providing temporary accommodation for girls and women affected by violence, and giving them access to medical assistance, counselling services and legal advice.

We brought 80,000 women across 20 countries together to demand their rights to food, land and livelihoods. Hundreds of demonstrations and rallies resulted in the redistribution of land and policy changes in **Malawi, Kenya, The Gambia, Vietnam, Nepal** and **Bangladesh**.

In **India** we helped 27,000 women apply for land they had never been told they were entitled to, and 5,000 have already been allotted 8,000 acres between them. This followed a campaign to give land to every *dalit* ('low caste') woman in the country – millions of whom struggle to

survive doing degrading jobs such as manual scavenging (cleaning out toilets by hand).

"No one in the village thought we would get land. My family can have food every day and our children can get a good education. I cannot describe my happiness in words."

Yerrampalli Suseelamma,
Andhra Pradesh, India

ActionAid works with poor women to give them the confidence to speak out. In **Sri Lanka** one woman who attended our leadership and rights training mobilised more than 60 villagers to protest about the local authority not providing safe water. She gained the support of the country's president, securing one million rupees in government funding for a water project.

We also challenge the power imbalances that keep poor women poor. In **China** we are doing this by supporting 45 village projects led by women, including traditionally 'male' activities such as bridge building. They have begun to elect women leaders to local government (eight in the last year), and over 3,000 women organised demonstrations, parades and social events to raise awareness about gender-based violence.

“
1 in 3 women worldwide will be raped, assaulted, physically or sexually abused in her lifetime.
”

Meanwhile, in **Tanzania** we helped 30 times more women than last year seek legal aid after running a campaign to review marriage laws. Our team helped secure extensive media coverage for the issue, including a weekly radio broadcast that lobbied to raise the age of consent from 15 to 18.

ActionAid believes a decent education is the first step towards women realising their full potential. To this end, last year in **Afghanistan** we trained 1,550 women in literacy and numeracy skills, health, hygiene, voting rights and the importance of taking part in elections. We also trained 30 women as paralegals to tackle violence against women.

How are we doing?

We are proud that our hard work on women's rights to land, the needs of women farmers and violence against women has started yielding results. There have been innovative interventions; we have changed laws and regulations and created fundamental improvements in people's lives.

But we need to keep widening our scope, so next year we need to do more with marginalised women such as sex workers and lesbian, bisexual and transgender women, and to be more proactive in our women's rights campaigning.

did you

70% of the world's hungry are female. Our *HungerFree* campaign is pushing the issue up the political agenda.

Our *Women won't wait* campaign highlighted where donors and governments are failing to meet commitments to tackle violence against women, and provided strong grounds for lobbying and campaigning work.

We helped secure a ban on female genital mutilation in **Ethiopia**.

Almost every ActionAid country programme now has a women's rights co-ordinator.

Help us create a world without poverty and injustice by tackling women's rights – take action today and join our 6 degrees project.

See actionaid.org.uk/6degrees

two.

help end hunger



Thousands of women attending a *HungerFree* rally to demand their right to land, Brikama, The Gambia.
PHOTO: CANDACE FEIT/ACTIONAID

Millions of people struggle to provide their families with one meal a day. Help us protect people's right to food and create a world free from hunger – take action now, sign up to *HungerFree*.

See actionaid.org.uk/hunger

“
For the
first
time in
history,
one
billion
people
are
hungry.
”



WE BELIEVE IN A WORLD WHERE EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO BE FREE FROM HUNGER. IT IS PERHAPS THE MOST FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT OF ALL. THAT'S WHY WE TAKE SIDES WITH POOR PEOPLE TO SECURE THEIR RIGHT TO SAFE AND NUTRITIOUS FOOD, TO HELP END HUNGER FOR GOOD.

ActionAid helps men and women farmers claim their right to land, water and seeds. In **Uganda** we helped over 6,000 farmers establish community-managed seed-storage, food reserve and redistribution schemes. In **Ghana** we helped poor vegetable farmers in Tamale successfully fight for the land their chief had tried to sell to private firms.

In **Afghanistan**, over 5,700 families (30,000 people) were helped with seeds or cash-for-work schemes, under which 1,000 people from 12 villages cleaned 6,000 metres of canal to provide irrigation for crops.

We also campaign for women's equal rights to own land and make money from it. In **Ethiopia** our partners helped 15,000 women establish savings and credit cooperatives, trained 197 women to know their rights regarding land ownership and access to tools, distributed 960 sheep and goats, and helped 2,600 households plant vegetable gardens.

And in the **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)**, thousands of women demanded their rights to land, forcing the issue up the agenda and into the government's draft national agriculture policy – a revision of the law is planned for 2009.

How are we doing?

We had planned to focus mainly on women's access to land throughout 2008, but we widened our focus to respond to the emerging food crisis. The *HungerFree* campaign taught us how to work together and make the most of being an international, yet decentralised, organisation.

Looking forward, we need better coordination and decision-making structures, and to communicate campaign needs and expectations more effectively. We also need to expand our work with farmers and agricultural development groups to ensure that food rights at country level are given the attention they deserve.

did you

ActionAid played a key role in making governments across the world pledge over US\$20 billion to fight the international food crisis.

Against a backdrop of political unrest in Pakistan we helped 500 organisations create a declaration on land reform to persuade the Pakistan government to give 100,000 acres of land to landless people.

Our *Selfish Europe* report gained political and media attention for the EU-Senegal trade deals which are set to deplete fish stocks and increase hunger in Senegal.

In **The Gambia** we helped women farmers win 12,000 hectares of land and successfully campaign for a 3% increase in the government's agricultural investment budget.

ActionAid helps poor people put food on the table by promoting sustainable farming, providing seeds, tools, credit and training, and helping small producers join cooperatives or farmers' associations. In **Tanzania** the number of farmers claiming these resources rose nearly 60% to 123,000. We also helped 3,000 farmers by running field farmer schools that helped deliver an increase in the price paid for cashews and secured state backing for farmer credit.

Meanwhile, in **Brazil** we helped persuade the government to give financial support to households struggling with food price increases. In **India** we helped tribal and youth groups in Gujarat campaign for four mobile ration shops supplying over 20,000 people.

In **Sierra Leone** ActionAid was instrumental in getting the government to launch the National Agricultural Response Programme in light of the international food crisis, ensuring the introduction of school feeding programmes and food-for-work schemes for vulnerable people.

And in **Bangladesh**, ActionAid's media work helped convince the caretaker government to guarantee the poorest people 100 days' work. In Gaibandha district, our lobbying led to the local government giving public land to over 1,500 women.

three.

fight HIV and AIDS



WE BELIEVE IN A WORLD THAT IS FREE FROM THE DEVASTATING SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EFFECTS OF THE HIV AND AIDS PANDEMIC. THAT'S WHY WE WORK WITH POOR AND EXCLUDED PEOPLE IN THEIR COMMUNITIES TO STOP THE SPREAD OF HIV AND AIDS, AND SUPPORT HIV-POSITIVE PEOPLE TO LIVE A DIGNIFIED LIFE.

In villages, cities and in the corridors of power around the world, ActionAid supports groups campaigning to reduce the impact of HIV and AIDS. To this end, we helped persuade eight state governments in **India** to agree to make second-line treatment available for people whose antiretroviral treatment has stopped working.

In **Uganda**, ActionAid-supported groups persuaded the government to provide a machine for CD4 counts (a test to measure the number of disease-fighting cells in the blood), and the staff to operate it. HIV-positive members of the groups also persuaded health services to allow one person to collect treatment for other group members, saving time and money and improving antiretroviral treatment.

And in **Afghanistan** we worked with the government to provide HIV and AIDS services in three centres servicing truck drivers. As a result, the government adopted ActionAid's testing and workplace policy for its own staff. We also trained 189 mullahs (Islamic religious leaders) on a peer education programme that reached over 28,000 people with information on HIV and AIDS.

ActionAid believes people living with HIV have the right to free treatment and to other essential care and support, and a right to a livelihood and inheritance – especially women. So in **Africa** we helped the Council of Anglican Provinces bring together female leaders from 24 countries to develop a strategy to advance women's rights through the mothers' union networks and their 1.3 million members. As a result, Anglicans in the Democratic Republic of Congo have started HIV and gender education in schools, and are assisting a widows' support group with income-generating activities.

In **Nepal**, women's groups supported by ActionAid persuaded the government to establish 12 counselling centres, provide skills training for women, build a community hall, introduce livelihood programmes and establish a new health post.

Rape and violence against poor women is a major cause of the increase in HIV and AIDS, so ActionAid stands alongside women and girls to stop it. In **Sierra Leone, Ghana** and **Cameroon**, mothers' unions are running gender-based violence and HIV-prevention programmes. In **Rwanda**, diocesan officers are supporting parent-to-child communication about sexuality and HIV, and are providing counselling on gender-based violence.

did you

Our lobbying work has resulted in changes to policy or guidelines from all top five donors, such as UNAIDS, funding the HIV and AIDS response.

A group we support in **Kalangala, Uganda**, persuaded the local government to build a centre for HIV and AIDS orphans.

We persuaded the government of **Enugu state, Nigeria**, to pass a new anti-stigma law to protect people living with HIV and AIDS.

Meanwhile, in **Zimbabwe** we provided safe sex information to over 1,700 students. As a result, teenage pregnancies and the number of sexual violations have fallen. In **Zambia** we helped improve the lives of more than 3,500 families caring for HIV orphans and people living with the virus, by providing medicines and nutritious food, and starting up fish farming projects for income generation.

How are we doing?

The HIV and AIDS pandemic continues to present a massive human and economic emergency in much of Africa. But the context for HIV and AIDS work is changing, with donors questioning the effectiveness of disease-specific responses and moving towards a broader health systems approach.

Internally, we have found working across different countries and teams difficult, although this approach is clearly crucial for reducing HIV infections and ensuring the rights of people living with or affected by HIV and AIDS.

We need your help to beat HIV and AIDS and defend the dignity of those living with the disease – take action now, help us provide care for HIV orphans in Cambodia.

See actionaid.org.uk/priorityprojects



“

**There are
14,000
new HIV
infections
every day.
95% are in
developing
countries.**

”



Orphan Khan Soroth, aged 11, plays with his friends at an ActionAid-supported school for orphans and vulnerable children, Battambang, Cambodia.
PHOTO: NICOLAS AXELROD/ACTIONAID

respond to emergencies



WE BELIEVE IN A SECURE WORLD WHERE EVERYONE HAS THE RIGHT TO BE PROTECTED FROM EMERGENCIES, CONFLICT AND DISASTER. THAT'S WHY WE TAKE SIDES WITH POOR AND VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES IN TIMES OF EMERGENCY TO HELP THEM COPE WITH EVENTS THAT THREATEN THEIR LIVES, POSSESSIONS AND LIVELIHOODS.

Responding to emergencies

In **China** we helped 18,000 people in 21 villages hit by winter storms with vital supplies such as warm clothes and rapeseed oil, which can be used for both cooking and powering lamps. After the earthquake, ActionAid helped 23,500 homeless people in three provinces, providing items requested by local people including torches, sanitary wear, medicines and gloves.

In times of emergency we also hold those in power to account. So when the Zambezi River flooded we helped displaced people in **Zambia** resist being moved to a place where they felt unsafe, and convinced the government to spend more to give them secure land further away.

In **Bangladesh**, we helped families lobby the government for land and a permanent place to resettle after their homes were wiped out by cyclone Sidr.

And in **Myanmar** (formerly Burma) we helped 150,000 people affected by cyclone Nargis, and convinced the government and big fishing companies to incorporate representatives of 685 small fishing groups into the Myanmar Fisheries Federation.

Responding to conflict

ActionAid works with vulnerable communities ravaged by conflict to break the cycle of violence against women. In the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, we supported 70,000 displaced people with relief supplies and psychosocial support (for example, providing a safe space to discuss rape or sexual assault). We trained 840 police officers to be aware of violence against women, and helped 30 women pursue cases of rape.

In the post-election crisis in **Kenya**, we provided 750 people with emergency supplies, 25 families who could not return home with money, and 5,000 people with food. We also provided school uniforms, psychosocial support on issues of violence and reproductive health, training in peace building, and helped women and young people start businesses.

We also responded to conflict-related emergencies in **Zimbabwe** (protracted political, electoral and economic crisis), **South Africa** (xenophobic violence) and the **DRC** (resurgence of the war in the east of the country).

In **Kenya, DRC, Zimbabwe, and South Africa**, we supported women's groups and networks to negotiate for humanitarian assistance, advocate for protection, and demand participation in peace building processes. In **DRC**, the women's groups we support demanded participation in the peace process, and have been sponsored to take part in

“
35 million
people are
forced from
their
homes
annually
as a result
of conflict
and
natural
disasters.
”

peace negotiations in Nairobi.

Strategic Crisis Fund

Eight hundred and fifty thousand people faced a humanitarian emergency when four tropical storms hit **Haiti** (Faye, Gustave, Hanna and Ike) killing hundreds. ActionAid Haiti's emergency response, funded in part by a £35,000 grant from our Strategic Crisis Fund, included providing emergency kits for 3,000 families and distributing 1,800 school kits to support children's return to school. ActionAid Haiti is implementing a cash-for-work programme, engaging people in a 2km road rehabilitation initiative to repair damaged infrastructure.

We also arranged 3,000 scholarships and school supplies to keep children in education.

“As the water rose, we didn't know where to go. I ran with my family to my aunt's place... All of our belongings – including my books – floated away. [But] I am very happy with everything I received today. I will be happy to go to school next Tuesday.”

Cassandra Merolien, eight,

How are we doing?

We need to strengthen our influencing work as the international humanitarian system for emergencies continues to change. We also need to strengthen our emergency preparedness and response policy. The high staff turnover in the team at the end of 2008 will mean we have to work hard to maintain our momentum and good national-international relationships.

Help us respond to emergencies and conflict and provide support for poor and vulnerable communities – take action now, find out which countries are currently at risk.

See actionaid.org.uk/emergencies



did you

A total of 94 months' worth of emergencies were reported across 21 countries in 2008. South Asia was the worst-affected region, suffering from a range of hazards, particularly floods. Drought, flooding and conflict accounted for 76% of emergencies reported.



Adlene Pierre, 35, tries to salvage some of her possessions after her home in Gonaïves, Haiti, was hit by hurricane Gustave.

PHOTO: GIDEON MENDEL/CORBIS/ACTIONAID

strength in numbers:
women demand their rights





Several thousand women – some of whom travelled for days to be there – take part in a *HungerFree* rally to demand land and food from their government, Chitwan district, Nepal.

PHOTO: BRIAN SOKOL/ACTIONAID

five.

educate the world



WE BELIEVE IN A WORLD WHERE EVERY HUMAN BEING CAN ENJOY THEIR FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT TO AN EDUCATION. ENSURING EDUCATION FOR ALL IS THE SINGLE BIGGEST STEP A SOCIETY CAN TAKE TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT. THAT'S WHY WE HELP PEOPLE ALL OVER THE WORLD GAIN ACCESS TO A QUALITY EDUCATION.

How we are getting more children into school

We believe education is a fundamental human right – one that helps people gain access to other human rights. But you can't learn on an empty stomach. In **Bangladesh** we developed the ActionAid Charter of Free School Meals and we're well on our way to guaranteeing hot school meals, made with locally sourced food, for thousands of children. Health and hygiene standards have improved immeasurably, and children now have access to a balanced, nutritious diet.

ActionAid works with partners and teachers' unions to demand better quality education for children. In **Senegal**, this led us to undertake research with the Ministry of Education, teachers' unions, parents and adult learners. It revealed that a new policy – the 'quota securitaire' – was allowing new, under-qualified teachers to teach in schools. We presented the findings to the Minister for Education, who went on to demand a full review of teacher training and recruitment.

“
Projections based on current trends show that more than 50 countries will not achieve universal primary education by 2015.
”

ActionAid also stands alongside women and girls to fight against discrimination, and help girls go to school. In **Nigeria** we organised leadership training for five representatives of girls' clubs in 28 communities. The training helped the girls resist pressures to drop out of school. A few weeks after the training, three girls who were being forced into early marriages successfully took their own parents to court.

In **Ghana**, the Kosamba School Management Committee successfully lobbied for a new junior high school, while in Sierra Leone we provided furniture, teaching materials, libraries, teacher training, uniforms, textbooks and special awards for best girls' schools to over 120 primary schools.

In **Vietnam** children from remote, rural areas can find it hard to relate to the standard curriculum, as it bears little relevance to their lives. So we worked with teachers and education officials to revise teaching materials, add locally relevant content and get it adopted by the Ministry of Education. Retention and learning rates improved as a result.

Meanwhile, ActionAid **China** has developed the 'little sunshine teacher' model, where children teach their mothers to read and write. This has encouraged parents' involvement in schools and raised basic literacy skills for women.

Elsewhere, ActionAid is using education to empower poor people to counter discrimination in their own communities. In a small village in Dewas district, Madhya Pradesh, **India**, we helped the children of manual scavengers tackle discrimination and get an education. We facilitated discussions with local community groups about 'untouchability' and exposed how these children were either barred from school or mistreated when they went there, for example being made to sit on their own or clean toilets.

Community groups then took up the issue with local schools and local government, and as a result discriminatory practices were challenged in 90 schools. Enrolment of the children of manual scavengers rose dramatically.

How are we doing?

In 2008 we secured £4.3 million to support the work of education coalitions across 50 countries. We also renewed our focus on adult literacy. The *Reflect* adult literacy approach won its fourth UN international literacy prize and there is new interest in the technique in India, Nepal, Vietnam, Nigeria, Malawi, and Zambia. We also secured a £1 million grant for our education work from donors including the Big Lottery Fund.

We continued to shift the focus of our education work from being solely on primary schooling to that of secondary schooling too – in sharp contrast to the progress made on expanding access to primary school, girls and the poorest children are still largely excluded from secondary education.



did you

There are 50 million more children in school today than there were in 2000.

But over 18 million teachers need to be employed in the coming years to get class sizes down to under 40.

ActionAid played the lead role in the Global Campaign for Education, which achieved 92 significant changes of policy or practice across the world, such as supporting education for displaced children in Uganda, and promoting minority language policies in Bangladesh.

Five-year-old Enid outside her classroom in Masindi district, Uganda.

PHOTO: GEORGIE SCOTT/ACTIONAID

We are committed to giving children the tools they need to improve their lives. Help us educate the world – take action now and fundraise for the children of Haiti.

See actionaid.org.uk/priorityprojects

six.

give people power



Hafeza Khatun leads a meeting of the *Nari Akota* (women united) group, where the women come together to discuss how they can improve their lives. Chandpur, Bangladesh.
PHOTO: GMB AKASH/PANOS/ACTIONAID

did you

In Afghanistan we helped communities engage with local government to benefit from 490 projects including building roads, water networks, solar energy systems and walls to protect land from flooding.

In Pakistan we helped 2,500 people develop a 'people's charter' calling for a more open budget process.

Our Economic Literacy and Budget Accountability for Governance (ELBAG) approach helps communities gain information and challenge corruption, and is now used in 20 different countries.



WE BELIEVE THAT PEOPLE HAVE THE ENERGY, COMMITMENT AND IDEAS TO END THEIR OWN POVERTY. THAT'S WHY WE EMPOWER POOR PEOPLE TO IMPROVE THEIR LIVES AND PROTECT THEIR RIGHT TO ASK QUESTIONS, MAKE DECISIONS AND HOLD THEIR GOVERNMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS TO ACCOUNT.

Helping citizens shape the state in which they live

In **Nepal** we helped villagers recover money from the sale of teak trees that had been pocketed by the primary school management committee and school secretary. Another group ensured local government funded an access road, drinking water and public land development works.

In **Nigeria** an ActionAid workshop revealed that the Enugu state government had allocated no money to HIV and AIDS for three years. As a result, government representatives who had attended the workshop announced N3 million funding (£12,500) for HIV and AIDS programmes shortly afterwards.

Meanwhile, in **Rwanda** we organised rights training for 118 people, distributed simplified information about government services, and provided IT equipment to tackle low levels of community participation in local government.

In **India** our work monitoring public policies gave some of the most vulnerable people access to resources. In Madhya Pradesh alone, communities claimed 5,550 new job cards, guaranteeing 100 days of paid work, and secured the construction of 524 new roads, wells and ponds under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act.

In **Vietnam** and **China** we trained university students to work in villages and help local people claim their rights. In **Vietnam** 100 families got access to electricity after students helped them negotiate with the government.

“I was doubtful when I participated in the first meeting, guided by three young students. I was a bit convinced by the way and effort they made to gather people but still worried about the feasibility of the project. Commitment came when the budget and work plan were made public. Then all people became excited and willing to contribute.”

Mrs Pham Thi Huu, 62, Vietnam

We also support citizens to act on corruption and demand the right to information. This year in **Guatemala** we established three citizens' information centres and in **Vietnam** we set up 15 information kiosks to provide access to government policies and budgets.

ActionAid in **Ethiopia** has been using radio to encourage residents to ask questions of their city administrators. After 10,000 people took part, action was taken against administrators who were exposed for their misuse of power and resources.

“
The 500
richest
people
in
the
world
earn
more
than
US\$100
billion.
”

A long struggle in **Bangladesh** led to the high court granting citizenship to Urdu-speaking communities, who now have a right to vote and to receive national identity cards, giving them access to healthcare and education.

In **Mozambique**, ActionAid and partners started a movement to transform the workings of local councils and secured agreement on election criteria, terms of office and the accountability of members to their constituencies.

And in **Brazil** we worked with The Ford Foundation and our partners to monitor three major public policies: a slum upgrading programme, a domestic violence law, and a food purchasing programme for small farmers. In São Paulo's Heliopolis shantytown, we worked with our local partner to persuade the mayor to scale down plans to relocate 100 families and replace shacks with sub-standard housing.

How are we doing?

In almost all countries we work in governance has been identified as a key development challenge, and it is recognised that it is not possible to work on issues such as food rights or HIV and AIDS without also addressing governance and public policy formulation. The collective efforts of this work with local communities and organisations has begun to bear fruit. Such gains are seen most strongly locally, but also nationally and internationally either in the shape of actual changes in laws, or in communities' new found confidence to make change happen.

Help us challenge the causes of poverty and make a real, long-term difference by giving people the power to fight for their rights. Take action now – make a regular donation.

See actionaid.org.uk/donate

take action



WE BELIEVE THAT WHEN PEOPLE IN POOR COUNTRIES AND PEOPLE IN RICH COUNTRIES WORK TOGETHER, WE CAN END POVERTY FOR GOOD. THAT'S WHY WE CREATE INNOVATIVE FUNDRAISING AND AWARENESS RAISING INITIATIVES THAT INSPIRE PEOPLE TO TAKE ACTION AND CREATE LINKS BETWEEN OUR UK SUPPORTERS AND PEOPLE IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD.

What did we do?

We helped people in the **UK** become aware of crisis in the **Democratic Republic of Congo** by launching one of our fastest ever emergency appeals, coupled with media work direct from the crisis zone.

Broadcasting via satellite, the UK media team made what is believed to be the first live broadcast by an aid agency to gain media coverage in an emergency. On the same day, we began sending our UK supporters an appeal letter and email.

On the ground, ActionAid DRC helped a delegation of around 50 women protest to UK foreign office minister Lord Malloch Brown, who was visiting a refugee camp. The women called for peace and protection in the wake of the conflict.

This way of working was extremely successful, with our appeal raising £912,000, which allowed us to provide immediate emergency aid to over 65,000 people.

An ActionAid UK report brought attention to the shocking practice of 'corrective rape' in **South Africa**, where lesbian women are raped by men who believe it will 'cure' them of their sexual orientation. The report gained widespread media coverage and is still being quoted as an authoritative source by media organisations. It also helped draw worldwide attention to the murder trial of a talented young footballer who was murdered because she was a lesbian.

Our new celebrity fundraising evening – *Call my wine bluff* – helped raise £200,000. **Emma Thompson**, **David Mitchell** and **Clive Anderson** entertained 200 supporters with tales about various wines and invited the audience to guess which were true.

Guests were treated to a four-course dinner before a live auction of items including **Sir Paul McCartney's** guitar,

"During the credit crunch people came to help those with no credit to crunch. I was proud of them and hopeful that these difficult times are teaching us that we are all connected and we all need to help one another."

Emma Thompson

We relaunched our website in 2008, complete with blogs, videos, podcasts and user-generated content. And it worked – traffic rose from 345,958 visits in 2007 to 546,545 in 2008 and fans on Facebook rose from 400 to over 2,000.

We also launched new interactive web pages to make it easier to sponsor a child online, which was so successful that a quarter of new child sponsors now sign up in this way.

And our online fundraising community at www.myactionaid.org gained its 1,000 member. The site has received over £800,000 in donations since its launch in 2007.

“
More
than
half a
million
people
visited
our new
website,
an
increase
of
nearly
60%.
”

Martina Topley Bird headlined a sell out concert at London's ICA in April in support of our women's rights project, *6 degrees*. The project is designed to raise awareness of the abuses of women's rights that take place all over the world on a daily basis, and has already secured us media coverage in the *Independent* and the *Guardian*, as well as video postings on YouTube and hundreds of fans on Facebook.

All over the country 4,000 supporters took part in marathons, trekked up and down mountains, cycled, baked, dressed up, dressed down and generally got into the spirit of things to fundraise for ActionAid, raising £2.2 million. Our overseas challenges were especially popular, as they offer a unique way for supporters to interact with communities in developing countries such as Nepal and South Africa, while seeing – and taking part in – our work.

How are we doing?

2008 was a tough fundraising year due to the effects of the financial crisis. However, we were pleased that so many supporters remained loyal (especially those who sponsor children), which we hope will continue into the future. We did well in terms of media coverage, with a rise of 50%, and our 'prompted' brand awareness, at 23%, has increased considerably from a few years ago.

did you

ActionAid supporters joined thousands of people from across the UK on the *Put people first* march for jobs, justice and climate in advance of April's G20 meeting in London.

We sent an aerial portrait of Nelson Mandela, formed by 2,000 South African schoolchildren, to the great man for his 90th birthday.

ActionAid responded to a surge of interest in child sponsorship following the worldwide success of the Oscar-winning *Slumdog Millionaire*, which triggered 500 calls a week during March.

You can take action against poverty, sponsor a child today.

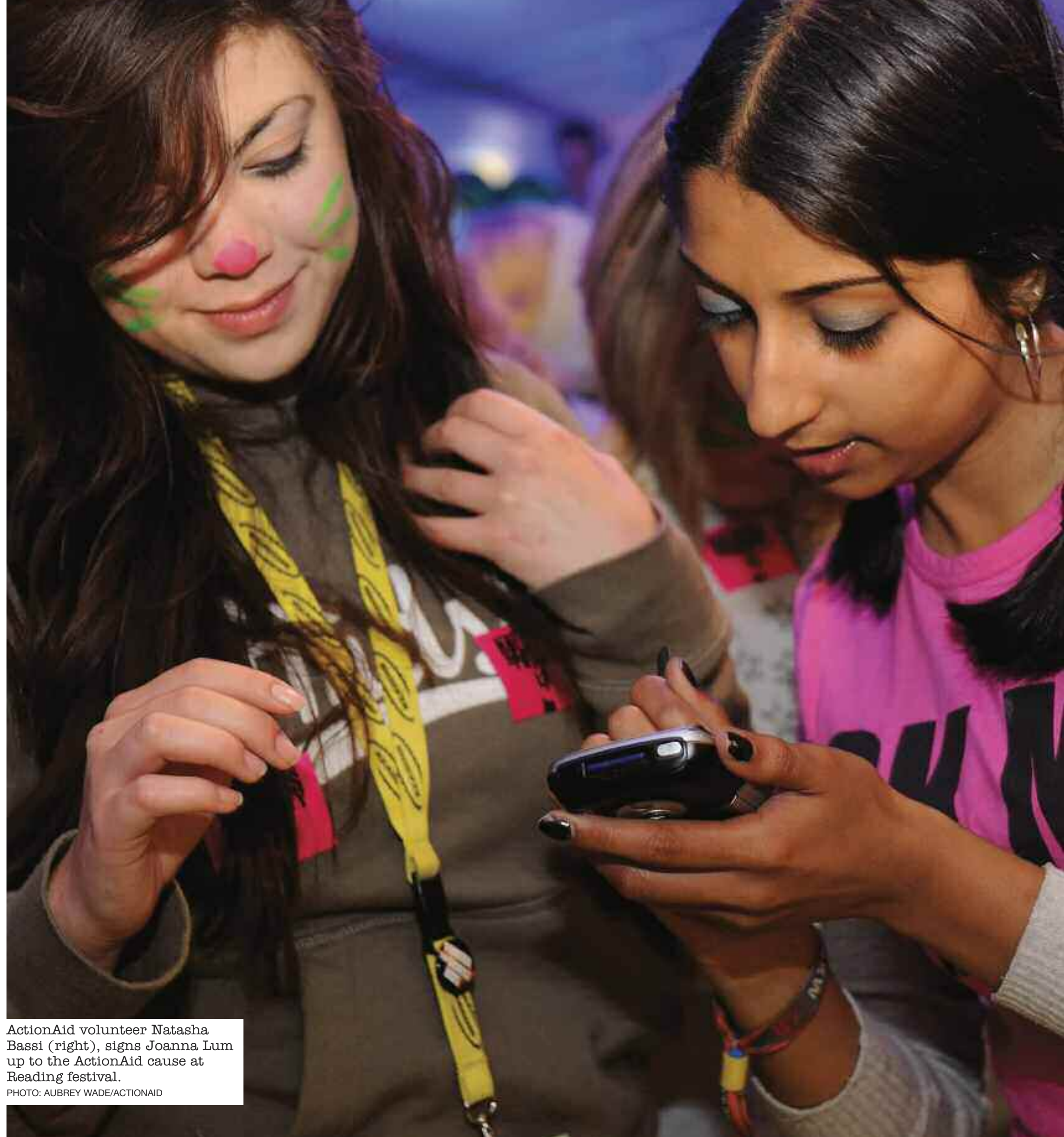
See actionaid.org.uk/sponsor



Our caped crusader, MegaMouth, helped us raise awareness of the *Put people first* march ahead of April's G20 meeting, and got members of the public involved in making demands of politicians.
PHOTO: KRISTIAN BUUS/ACTIONAID

eight.

inspire young people



ActionAid volunteer Natasha Bassi (right), signs Joanna Lum up to the ActionAid cause at Reading festival.

PHOTO: AUBREY WADE/ACTIONAID



Help us foster a lasting desire among children to end poverty. Take action now – download our free schools resources.

See actionaid.org.uk/schools



WE BELIEVE THAT CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE A UNIQUE ENERGY AND PASSION THAT CAN HELP THE WORLD END POVERTY AND INJUSTICE FOR GOOD. THAT'S WHY WE WORK HARD TO INSPIRE THE NEXT GENERATION TO TAKE ACTION THROUGH OUR AWARD-WINNING SCHOOLS AND YOUTH PROJECTS.

What did we do?

PowerDown – a campaign organised by ActionAid as part of Global Action Schools – continued to create a network of schools taking positive action to reduce their impact on climate change and global poverty. Toolkits for schools focused on global issues and provided actions to promote good global citizenship.

Over 6,585 toolkits have been distributed, reaching approximately 392,100 pupils. Schools have taken action in several ways, including investigating their school energy use to see where waste occurs, and introducing simple yet highly effective monitoring systems. One school used a balloon system to show which classes were saving the most energy. Young people are now starting to see climate change not just as an environmental issue, but as a social issue having the biggest impact on the poorest and most vulnerable people.

“I’ve been telling other people that if you see lights on when it’s sunny, look for the switch and turn it off! They tell me they will try. Some people say ‘It’s not my problem’. Then I talk to them about children in other countries who are getting flooded because of climate change.”

Lauren, 10
Hamsey Green Junior School, Surrey

“
Nearly 400,000 children took part in our global campaign on climate change.
”

Sukulu Malawi! launches in primary schools

Sukulu Malawi! got underway – a project linking primary schools in the UK with those in **Malawi**. The educational fundraiser aims to inspire 5–11-year-olds to learn about the world around them, and the challenges facing their counterparts in poor countries. Children in the UK are encouraged to fundraise for Malawian schools, with the money being used to lessen the effects of climate change in this highly vulnerable area. Flood barriers and drainage systems have already begun to be built using funds raised, along with thousands of tree seedlings planted on river banks.

“Chikali river looks peaceful but it is terrible when it floods. We went three weeks without going to school and missed out a lot in learning. It was a disaster for me. I am not sure whether I will ever catch up and fulfil my dreams of becoming a nurse.”

Joyce Mpandeni attends Chikali primary school, which was recently submerged by floodwater

Serious fun at festivals

We broke the world record for the biggest ‘air guitar’ performance at this year’s Reading festival. In 2008 we also worked to develop our relationship with festival organisers. Not only did they donate gifts in kind worth £58,000 during 2008, but managing director **Melvin Benn** donated a further £10,000 to one of our priority projects.

For the first time we used **PDA**s (hand held computers) at festivals to capture people’s contact details and photographs – this meant data was in digital format and could be quickly uploaded. While the use of **PDA**s reduced the overall number of people that could be signed up (just over 2,000 in total), the quality of the data meant that in real terms the same number of people were added to the database as last year. It also meant that festival goers received an email a few days after they signed up at a festival rather than two weeks later.



did you

We broke the Guinness World Record for the largest air guitar ensemble at the Reading festival, when 245 revellers ‘played’ Bon Jovi’s *You give love a bad name*.

As part of *Send my friend* 2008 we helped stage the World’s Biggest Lesson day in April. Schools in 120 countries held the same lesson in two time zones, reminding world leaders to keep their promises on providing primary education.

Some of the UK’s coolest bands, including the Editors, Ting Tings, Subways and Duffy donated goodies such as harmonicas and drumsticks to sell on ebay for ActionAid.

nine.

campaign for change



We mocked up a picture of the destruction of St Paul's to draw attention to the destruction of a holy mountain in India, home to the ancient Kondh tribe, by mining giant Vedanta.

PHOTO MONTAGE: NICK PURSER/ACTIONAID



WE BELIEVE IN CAMPAIGNING FOR A WORLD WHERE EVERY PERSON ENJOYS THE RIGHT TO A LIFE WITH DIGNITY. THAT'S WHY WE HAVE BEEN HELPING UK SUPPORTERS KEEP CAMPAIGNING FOR CHANGE TO HELP US END POVERTY AND INJUSTICE.

Join in with our campaigns – take action, keep up-to-date with the latest campaign actions, visit our blog.

See actionaid.org.uk/campaigns

“
Our
Tesco
campaign
reached
200,000
people
and
recruited
1,000
new
activists.
”

What did we do?

Our *Invisible women* campaign persuaded the UK government to put women first in the fight against AIDS. More than 5,000 ActionAid supporters asked the Secretary of State for the Department for International Development (DFID), Douglas Alexander, to put women's rights at the heart of the government's new global strategy on HIV and AIDS.

And it worked – the government's new HIV strategy now prioritises the rights of women and other vulnerable groups. DFID also promised to improve women's healthcare and pledged £6 billion over the next seven years in order to do so.

We responded quickly to the growing financial crisis. In November, working with other organisations, we had a petition action running in time for the November G20 summit in Washington. This work, and the coalition that made it happen, formed the basis of *Put people first* – an umbrella organisation enabling mass mobilisation for economic and environmental justice during 2009 in the run up to other G20 meetings.

did you

In November, about 4,800 supporters took our 'tax gap' action to Downing Street, calling on Gordon Brown to place the US\$160 billion tax dodge by multinational corporations in developing countries on the G20 finance ministers' agenda. In coalition with other campaigning organisations, our lobbying on tax at DFID, the Treasury and No.10 helped to ensure that the issue remains on the agenda well into 2009.

This year we topped our hugely successful 2007 *Who pays?* loyalty card action with a spoof advert about Tesco. The viral advert, asking Tesco's chief executive to publicly support the recommendations of the Competition Commission for an ombudsman, reached 200,000 people via YouTube and other digital platforms. Eight hundred online actions were taken and we recruited 1,000 new campaigners.

In April 2008 the Competition Commission judged supermarkets guilty of abusing their purchasing power. The Commission reported that the existing voluntary code of conduct was not sufficient to stop this and recommended the establishment of an ombudsman to help regulate supermarkets – the design of which was almost exactly what ActionAid had requested.

“It's time that people stood up to be counted about issues like this,”

said Margaret McIntyre, an ActionAid child sponsor and campaigner from Strathblane, who took her action card into her local store. When the store manager refused to meet and discuss her concerns, she took the issue to the local media.

Last year we led and organised UK development organisations' input into discussions with development minister Douglas Alexander and his special advisers about what to include on the post-2015 Millennium Development Goals agenda. In no small way this helped to form the blueprint for a new White Paper now being written and consulted on by DFID.

ActionAid also applied to demolish St Paul's to make way for a UK mine – a symbolic protest at plans by UK company Vedanta to extract bauxite from the Niyamgiri sacred mountain in Orissa, India – home to the Kondh tribal people. At Vedanta's AGM in July, ActionAid called on company investors to take a stand against the potential environmental and human rights violations that the mine would represent. Members of the Kondh tribe came to the UK to join the protest outside the AGM in London.

ActionAid supporters helped artist Riitta Ikonen create an eye-catching sculpture from unwanted shoes to raise awareness of our *Put your foot down* action, persuading politicians to do more to prevent HIV and AIDS and put an end to violence against women. The artwork was displayed at the offices of the Department for International Development, ensuring the message got home.



ten.

invest with care



WE INVEST THE MONEY WE SPEND WITH CARE SO WE CAN DO MORE WITH EVERY POUND TO HELP PEOPLE TAKE CONTROL OF THEIR LIVES AND END



What did we do?

We set ambitious targets for 2008-2010, including delivering significant increases in both supporters and income, together with steep increases in income from trusts, middle and major donors. Our total income in 2008, at almost £68 million, is almost the same as in 2007, however changes in emergency funding muddy the waters as DEC funds in relation to the Asian tsunami disaster came to an end. Our underlying income, excluding funding for the tsunami emergency, is up 10.7% compared with 2007.

For a second year we made significant investments in raising funds – an increase of almost £1 million, representing an increase of 11% over 2007. Committed giving expenditure increased by £793,000, but as a proportion of the income raised remained virtually unchanged at 19%. This increased resourcing reflected our ambition to secure considerably more supporters than in previous years.

During the first half of the year our recruitment campaigns ran roughly as expected, but the rapid erosion of confidence in the economy meant that the response in the second half of the year was much less successful than anticipated. It became clear that many potential and existing supporters were tightening their belts. As a result, having started the year with about 175,000 supporters who give regularly to ActionAid, we ended 2008 with 3,000 fewer.

While this disappointingly breaks the trend of recent years, with a loss of between 1.5% and 2%, it is a great reflection of the loyalty of our individual supporters in difficult times.

Committed giving income did continue to increase, partly as a result of past growth in supporters, but also because many of our existing supporters chose to give more. This generosity has provided an invaluable boost in 2008 but further falls in the number of regular supporters will inevitably impact on future years.

The good news, however, was the government's decision to temporarily make up the loss on **Gift Aid** as a result of the reduction in the basic rate of income tax. As an organisation where over 80% of our individuals give with **Gift Aid**, this added about £600,000.

How have we done?

A weak pound meant the money we spent in other countries bought less local currency – leading to a significant impact on the amount of work we could fund. In this context we feel we have performed well, though with less success than we had hoped initially.

The next 12 months look to be equally challenging and we are working on the basis that it will take some time for the economy to recover. We continue to take a critical look at our costs to make sure we are getting maximum value for our money, and where the downturn provides opportunities we aim to take full advantage of them.

Help us continue to invest with care and end poverty – take action, leave a gift in your will.

See actionaid.org.uk/legacies



how did we spend our money?

A woman with dark skin and curly hair, wearing a vibrant, patterned dress with blue and gold motifs, is shown from the waist up. She is holding a large, shallow brass bowl high in her right hand, pouring a stream of light-colored groundnut shells into the air. The shells are captured in mid-air, creating a dynamic, cascading effect. The background is a clear, bright blue sky with a few wispy clouds. In the top right corner, there are two large, dark blue chevron arrows pointing to the right.

**did
you**

A full 73% of money raised in the UK goes directly to fund our work overseas.

Kavungu Kazua, age 30, sifts through groundnut shells in Korania, Ghana.

PHOTO: JANE HAHN/PANOS/ACTIONAID

thank you.

The work that ActionAid carries out would not have been possible without the individuals, groups, companies, private trusts and foundations across the UK and Europe, the Big Lottery Fund, Comic Relief, DFID or the EU, all of whom supported our work this year. For this, we extend our heartfelt thanks.

our vision.

a world without
poverty and
injustice in which
every person
enjoys the right
to a life
with dignity.

**help us make our
vision a reality,
take action today.**

Front cover photo:

Three thousand people make their voices heard as they march through the capital of Haiti, Port-au-Prince, as part of ActionAid's *HungerFree* campaign.
PHOTO: Charles Eckert/ActionAid

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To see the full set of accounts for ActionAid UK, please visit www.actionaid.org.uk/accounts.

To see the full set of accounts for ActionAid International, please visit www.actionaid.org.

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