

ITALY ALL STAFF CONFERENCE

The third AA Italy all staff conference – an occasion for taking stock, sharing and discussing past and future activities – took place on the 19th of December in Milan. Following the path started three years ago, we wanted to extend our reflections to the dimension of change, focusing on the interconnections between our work in the North and our work in the South. To highlight them we used the **Global Monitoring Framework** – already rolled out in an ad hoc workshop this summer – and the field experiences of some colleagues who had the chance to visit our projects. The agenda of the day was structured mixing games, working groups and presentations by colleagues. The main morning session required the staff to reflect on 2007 activities through the power and change lenses offered by the GMF. Divided into five groups – each focusing on one macro area of our work (namely HIV/AIDS, food, aid, women's rights and funds) – they had to list the actions made and place them outside the corresponding petal of change in the GMF flower. The groups were then invited to discuss the areas of change that were not addressed, and suggest ways that activities could have been done differently, linked together or further developed in order to achieve more significant changes in the future. The main changes and gaps identified by the five groups were then collected on a bigger flower to get a clearer picture of the organisation's work as a whole to be discussed during the plenary session. The afternoon was entirely dedicated to the staff contribution, with the Communications Department distributing their photo-book on our HIV/AIDS and Education projects in Cambodia, the Activism and Campaign Unit showing the video of our latest *No Poverty No AIDS* campaign initiatives and the Individuals Unit presenting their fundraising products. Finally, the last session was dedicated to North-South connections as emerging from field visits, with three interventions on right to food issues (Tanzania), HIV/AIDS (India) and participation of former sponsored children to the life of their communities (Bangladesh). This kind of stories were exactly what the Italy staff was looking for: concrete examples of the changes brought through our work in the lives of the poor and excluded, which is what we lack most having no direct links with the field. For further details and info on the GMF roll out, as well, please feel free to contact me.



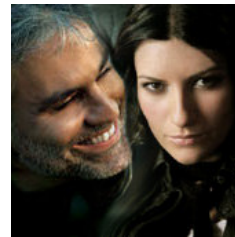
ITALY GOVERNANCE

On the 18th of January, the Italy Board gathered in Milan for their first 2008 meeting. Trustees discussed about the new composition of the Board Committees and agreed the annual governance agenda as follows:

- **Board meetings:** March, 20th – May, 16th – September, 19th – November, 22nd/23rd;
- **Assembly meetings:** June, 7th – December, 4th.

The Board was then given updates on the International Governance Development Project and asked to contribute to the list of possible new independent members to be appointed in the near future. As for the national governance, it was agreed to present a new series of potential candidates to reach the number of 28 members as stated for 2009 in our national strategy. The following day, a **training for new members** (five since last Board meeting) was organised to present the organisational evolution, structure and mission, giving also highlights on finance management and fundraising strategies. Another training day is scheduled next to the Board meeting in November. For further info, please contact Christian Quintili, Governance Officer (christian.quintili@actonaid.org).

DARE TO LIVE



ActionAid Italy has just engaged in a partnership with two of the major Italian artists worldwide. On the occasion of the Italian TV Awards, **Andrea Bocelli** and **Laura Pausini** presented their latest duet "**Dare to live**" in support of our projects on access to water. The video of the song – partly shot in Africa – was launched on Saturday night during one of our major prime time TV shows and will represent the first step of a longer term support to ActionAid. The aim is that of making the most of this partnership, building on the international visibility of these two pop stars also towards national and global institutions. For further info, please contact our Press Office (leonora.tantaro@actonaid.org).

MARCO CORRE

As part of our HungerFREE promotion efforts, ActionAid Italy has just launched a new website: www.marcocorre.it. The name of the website (*Marco is running*) refers to the participation of our Secretary General, Marco De Ponte, to the **Rome Marathon** scheduled on the 16th of March. Marco is working hard to get prepared for the competition, as you can read on his diary (available in English, as well) despite a disturbing injury to his tendon. While surfing the website, it is possible to join him on the Rome streets running in a virtual game and also to make donations online. This website is hosted on the broader HungerFREE one (www.hungerfree.it), with further details on the campaign and on right to food issues.





HIV/AIDS

On the occasion of the World Aids Day we launched the **third edition of our report Ogni Promessa è Debito** (*A promise is a promise*) on the progress made against Italy pledges in the fight against HIV/AIDS. The report complaints about the following aspects:

- lack of a multi-year strategic document clarifying the Italian approach to this fight in developing countries;
- geographic fragmentation of the Italian interventions supporting health systems;
- lack of multi-year financial commitments;
- institutional indifference on low cost treatment availability.

Therefore, the report asks for:

- a ministerial consultation to adopt a strategic plan defining the Italian contribution in order to grant access to treatment;
- a legislation granting the 4 billion dollar commitment for the next 10 years will be certain and predictable;
- more resources for the health sector in Sub Saharan Africa (equal to those allocated for the fight against HIV/AIDS);
- support to the generic drug industry, promoting partnerships and technology transfers.

For further info, please contact our Policy Officer, Iacopo Viciani (iacopo.viciani@actionaid.org).

BANGLADESH APPEAL

Last November the Italian network **AGIRE** launched an appeal in favour of the population affected by the Sidr cyclone in Bangladesh. Italian citizens responded immediately and massively, with more than **900.000 euros** raised in two months. After immediate relief response, an action plan was developed for house reconstruction, recovery of natural areas and resumption of income generating activities, within a longer term program for disaster risk reduction. As part of the network, ActionAid Italy started a 11 month project for food delivery and temporary and permanent shelter building in favour of 235 families in Bagerhat district with a 110.000 euro budget. In general, 160.000 people will benefit from AGIRE's interventions. Pregnant women, widows, elders, orphans and people with disabilities will be prioritised. 20.000 people will be given fishing licences, agricultural tools, seeds, "cash for work" and professional trainings. Some 450 houses will be rebuilt or restructured, while the Sundarban area will be reforested with 5.000 mangroves - a natural and effective barrier against the Indian Ocean waves - allowing the inhabitants to resume their economic and tourism related activities. For further info, please contact Patricia Bozzetti, Programmes and Reporting Officer (patricia.bozzetti@actionaid.org).

ANNUAL REPORT TO MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS

As per the Italian law, we've just produced the 2007 report on activities required by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs to all the NGOs accredited in Italy. In the introduction to our report, we underlined the inadequacy of these mere reporting tools in highlighting the impact of the NGOs work and showed our interest in promoting a different legislation and practice in the relations with the public administration. A new reporting style should be adopted, focusing on results linked to clear strategic goals rather than on a series of activities implemented. For further info, please contact Patricia Bozzetti, Programmes and Reporting Officer (patricia.bozzetti@actionaid.org).

Virtual Link - January

NEWS FROM ITALY

2009 G8 and Oxfam

In sight of the 2009 G8, Oxfam International officially entered Italy starting a partnership with the Italian NGO UCODEP. Oxfam won't launch any fundraising activity but will participate to the Italian debate on poverty issues in association with the UCODEP Campaigns Office. The first occasion was a public meeting held in Rome on the Italian role in the G8.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

According to the latest CSR monitor by Eurisko, the 47% of Italian consumers declares they adopted punishing behaviours against corporations they find unresponsable, due to their negative impact on the environment or their exploitation of workers in the South.

ITALIAN FUNDS TO CENTRAL AMERICA

Part of the 200 millions euros destined to the NGO sector through the last financial Bill will be devoted to a Fund aimed at social inclusion in the countries of Central America and Andes, focusing on local handicraft and agriculture.

KENYA EMERGENCY

The Vice Minister for Cooperation to Development announced the creation of a 500.000 euro fund for Italian and Kenyan NGOs to prevent violence against women and ethnic clashes. One million euro will also be destined in support of Unicef and Unifem activities addressing the victims.

ITALIAN POVERTY

According to the ISTAT (Italian Statistic Institute) survey on national income and living conditions, half of the Italian families earned less than 22.460 euros in 2005, that is about 1.872 euros a month. The 18.5% of single-income families declares their salary doesn't take them to the end of the month.