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Staff Conference 2007

As a conclusion of our PRRPs, ActionAid Italy held its second Staff Conference on the **2nd of February**. If last year we focused on our organisation and on the single departments identities, this year we decided to widen our perspective on relations among us and on our stakeholders' perceptions and expectations. We kept our national strategy as a reference, focusing on the objectives that require collective efforts and commitment. Compared to last year, we're a much more integrated and mature organization, also thanks to complex events such as the telemarathon or the World Food Summit Project, which both involved different departments in extra-ordinary activities. In general, in 2006 we did a lot to increase our visibility and authoritativeness, both working with institutions and the general public, on our own and through our networks. One of the outstanding issues raised during the staff conference was the gap between the identity we want to communicate and the identity that is actually perceived outside, which is something we still can and have to fill. We also focused on how we evaluate and communicate the impact of our work in terms of change of unjust power relations, which is often difficult to do for a Northern affiliate as we are. Cooperation among



departments will also be essential, for example, to turn supporters into activists and members into partners for the staff and ambassadors in the external context. Consistence and clearness in our language and messages will be fundamental elements to achieve all these objectives, as well as the capacity to link our national activities to the international and local dimensions of our work. These are the main issues raised during the morning group activities, when we asked the staff to put themselves in our stakeholders' shoes (supporters, activists, members, institutions, partners, other NGOs and the general public) to evaluate our work from their perspective. In the afternoon, the staff took part to a series of lectures held by colleagues on issues they were not so confident with. The day was also a moment of fun with an ice-breaking game to find out what the colleagues actually do in their daily activities and a kind of Trivial Pursuit on our organisation. The meeting ended with a session on values and behaviours facilitated by *Silva Ferretti* - EU IASL Coordinator. We asked the staff what are the values they feel essential to work in AAI: transparency and respect are the first ones, followed by equity, solidarity and courage of our ideas - in line with the "official" ones. Among those not indicated in ALPS but coming out during the session, the sense of responsibility and a collaborative and open attitude towards the others. The 2006 PRRP closed with the **Staff Meeting** on the 19th of February, when we first clarified some misunderstandings on the concepts of PRRP and prouds & sorries, as well as on the annual process and staff conference ratio. We also took the occasion to present the consolidated results of their single reviews and the main successes of the year, as well as to decide how to face the critical issues raised both in the Staff Conference and in the PRRPs (salaries, office cleanness and security, big step roll out, emergencies and self-motivation). We're now drafting our contribution to the Global Progress Report due for the 15th of March. Our annual report will be available on the ALPS tracker, as it is for the 2005 one. For further info, please contact me or *Gaia Melloni* (g.melloni@actionaidinternational.it), IA officers.



OBIETTIVO 2010

On the occasion of the financial G7 held in Germany on the 9th and 10th of February, our Advocacy and Partnership Department launched the report **Objective 2010 - a plan for G8 to stop HIV/AIDS emergency and secure universal access to treatment**. As you can infer from the title, the report asks the G8 to fulfil their promises to fight the diffusion of the pandemic by 2010. Of the 40 million positive people in the world, 10 need antiretroviral treatment but only 1.8 get them, due to the lack of funds. To fulfil the G8 commitment by 2010 we need 23.2 billion dollars against the 8.3 of the present. To secure the universal access to treatment, the G8 financial support is therefore essential. That's why we're asking them to schedule their funding in order to allow a better planning of the interventions in the South. An important tool to fill the gap is the debt cancellation in the countries affected by the pandemic to free resources to stop its diffusion. Another outstanding issue is the Italian situation with its 280 million euros debt with the GFATM. These delays in Italy payments are addressed in two bill proposals presented to the Chamber of Deputies and to the Senate. The two documents ask for a definite contribution to the GFATM through the creation of an additional fund, even if there's no certainty on their approval. For further information, please contact our Policy Researcher, *Iacopo Viciani* (i.viciani@actionaidinternational.it).

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Internal Governance

Our trustees had a teleconference last 12th of February to discuss the **appointment of three new members**. A **further enlargement** in our membership is in plan by this autumn, when we should be appointing 5 new people selected from a list of potential candidates drafted by the Board by their next meeting. Another point on the agenda was the **training day** organised for the new members on the 24th of March. The draft program will include a first session introducing AAI, ALPS and our Right Based Approach. We will then present our national and international structure and our fund management at both levels. The training will close with a session focused on internal governance and its contribution to the development of our organization. We are also investigating the possibility to have an external guest from the wider network, in order to provide a broader perspective on our activities and approach. On the 27th of February, our new Chair, **Matteo Passini** expressly asked to meet all staff to introduce himself and share with us his vision, both on the role of the president and on the future of our organisation, which was very much appreciated by the staff who wasn't used to such an open and outgoing attitude by the Chair. Matteo, who comes from the ethical banking sector and is now the director of a cooperative credit institution, underlined the importance of turning AAI's values into practice and the need to put effectiveness and commitment at the centre of our daily work. He also highlighted the will to promote a collegial work at Board level and their stronger participation in the development of the international governance. Being one of the most innovative members of the wider organisation, AA Italy's contribution can actually represent an added value for the growth of the international network. He also underlined the importance of motivating the staff, not only at individual level but also as members of an organisation that can make the difference and whose results belong to everyone of us. Critical reflections and debate, too, are essential in our work, since - quoting a famous sentence - an organisation where everyone thinks the same way it's just not thinking seriously. He concluded his intervention reminding the importance of being consistent with our values, preferring the ethics of responsibility to that of good intentions. For further info, please contact Beatrice Costa, Governance Support (b.costa@actionaidinternational.it).

Ayuda en Acciòn

From the 19th to the 21st of February our **Marketing & Fundraising** had the pleasure to meet some colleagues from Ayuda en Acciòn here in Milan, for a fruitful exchange of ideas and practices. *Arantxa Solana* - Individual Fundraising, *Victoria Rodriguez Inse* - Marketing Coordinator, *Monica Rodriguez* - Supporter Retention - and *Fernando Lopez de Prado* - Cooperation Department. After a general presentation of their work, the Ayuda colleagues met some staff from our Individuals, Supporter Retention and Face to Face Unit to share their work and learn from each other's practices. For further information, please contact Roberta Capella, Head of Marketing and Fundraising (r.capella@actionaidinternational.it).

Arezzo Wave Band

The **Arezzo Wave Band** is an historic contest for emerging Italian rock bands. This year the contest is linked with our campaign **No Poverty No Aids**, through which we're asking more resources and political commitment to secure prevention and universal access to treatment. Our collaboration with the Arezzo Wave Foundation dates back to last year when, on the occasion of the Elettrowave Festival, we promoted our *Che State a FAO?* Campaign on the right to food. Our Activism and Campaign is taking part with stands and special settings to some of the regional finals of the contest, while in the next months joint press and web initiatives are planned to promote the campaign all over Italy. For further info, please contact Paolo Chiovino, Activism Officer (p.chiovino@actionaidinternational.it).

Women's Rights work

Last 23rd of February, Beatrice Costa, the Italian focal point for this theme, met for the third time the Gender Working Group promoted in November by the Italian States General of Cooperation to Development. The group discussed how to enrich and finalise their contribution paper to the consultation process between the Foreign Affairs Ministry and the Italian civil society engaged with gender issues. Besides, the group start considering the possibility of defining a strategic plan for their 2007 work. Another meeting is scheduled by the end of March.

Goodbye to..

Federica Rossi who left our organisation after two years of strong commitment in the Activism Unit.

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