

### HUNGERFREE CHESSBOARD



Four months after the World Food Day, we presented again our one day marathon “**Checkmate hunger**”, this time in Milan. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of February a huge chessboard was installed in one of the main railway stations of the city for commuters and bystanders to play a symbolic match against hunger and join our HungerFREE initiatives, starting with the Rome City Marathon on the 16<sup>th</sup> of March ([www.marcocorre.it](http://www.marcocorre.it)). Beside

ActionAid staff promoting the campaign and collecting contacts to be e-mailed with our updates, the *National Chess Players Association* was also there with some of their masters available for matches and lessons. The initiative was also accompanied by the rhythm of the *Bomb the Bass Association* who played their reggae music selection in the evening. After the Rome City Marathon, the next appointment is with the regional final of the ItaliaWave Band 2008 contest that this year is supporting HungerFREE – just like they did in 2007 with the *No poverty No Aids* campaign. For further info, please contact our campaigns officer Nina Belluomo ([nina.belluomo@actionaid.org](mailto:nina.belluomo@actionaid.org)).



### IS DBS THE BEST AID?

In the recent years the consensus around **Direct Budget Support** as a preferred means to canalise aid into the beneficiary countries’ budget to supplement public expenditure has grown. The immediate objective is that of increasing the countries’ responsibility and democracy and indirectly reducing poverty, conceiving the relation between beneficiary and donor more and more as a partnership. In 2004 DAC (Development Aid Committee) members disbursed 5 billion dollars through budget support, with UK, Sweden, The Netherlands and Norway destining the highest share of their bilateral aid to this tool. In order to discuss the critical elements and perspective of these experiences, we organized a **seminar in Rome**, addressing critical issues such as governance and corruption, fragility of State institutions, marginalisation of local authorities and women’s rights. Representatives from donor countries and civil society of the beneficiary countries were invited in Rome on the 26<sup>th</sup> of February. ActionAid Tanzania and ActionAid Uganda gave their perspective through the interventions of Sophye Kyagulanyi and Rose Mushi. Always related to our aid research was the participation of our Policy Officer, Iacopo Viciani, to the ELBAG training held in India last January. For further info, please contact Iacopo ([iacopo.viciani@actionaid.org](mailto:iacopo.viciani@actionaid.org)).

### ANNUAL REPORT TO MFO

As required by the law on cooperation to development, we’ve just submitted our **report on 2007 activities** to the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This year we took the occasion to underline the need for a deeper impact assessment evaluation in the public administration reporting standards. The need is in fact for a stronger focus on outcomes rather than mere listing of activities done, which could turn out to be quite useless if not linked to clear and shared goals. All over the year we expressed our concerns through several proposal to legislative and governmental institutions, which should be investigated also with the operative side of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in order to agree a more significant reporting standard both for NGOs and those who are informed. For further info, please contact our Programmes & Reporting Officer, Patricia Bozzetti ([patricia.bozzetti@actionaid.org](mailto:patricia.bozzetti@actionaid.org)).

### ELECTIONS

A **counter-poll on the future of the Italian international cooperation** will be launched by CINI (the Italian Coordination of International Networks) in sight of the April political elections. CINI will ask ten questions to the main running candidates on key issues for the Italian aid: increase of the ODA/GNP percentage (0.51% by 2010), general reform of the cooperation system, joint management of funds and immediate untying of aid. Politicians’ response will be presented during a press conference in Rome on the 19<sup>th</sup> of March. “For the first time it’s citizens making a poll to test candidates’ intentions and not vice versa” declared Raffaele Salinari, CINI spokesperson. For NGOs the fight against poverty and human development could become “distinctive elements” of political parties’ identity and, as such, determine electors’ choices. The Italian commitment in this battle is in fact still very distant - both for quantity and quality of aid from – from the other European countries and from the Italians’ wishes.



### UGANDA IMMERSION

From the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> of February, Paola Giuliani and Edoardo Maturo from the Campaign and Activism Unit had the chance to join AA immersion programme in Uganda. The occasion was offered by the International **HIV/AIDS theme PRRP**, held from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 11<sup>th</sup>. Paola and Edoardo were also trained on the STAR methodology, which – combined with the immersion – allowed them to get a deeper understanding of the approach and to evaluate concrete ways for STAR to generate useful inputs for our policy, advocacy and campaigns efforts in the North.

### ALTRE OLIMPIADI

In sight of the 2008 Olympic games we decided to start a joint project with AA China called “**The other Olympics**”. The idea is to organize a one month 2D animation workshop in a primary school in Jinlong - Guangxi region. The training (differentiated for students and teachers) will allow them to produce a 5 minutes cartoon describing traditional Chinese games. The experience will be documented in a video to be presented with the cartoon at movie festivals and distributed on TV channels. Thanks to this initiative children and teachers will be able to use this technique to make their voices heard, even after the Olympic games. Our Communication staff together with a professional animator and a film-maker left to Jinlong on the 18<sup>th</sup> of February. For further info please contact Arianna Banfi, Communications Officer ([arianna.banfi@actionaid.org](mailto:arianna.banfi@actionaid.org)).

### ROSE MUSHI'S VISIT

Profiting of her participation to the DBS seminar in Rome, Mama Rose visited our Milan offices on the 27<sup>th</sup> of February. The **Tanzania Country Director** took the chance to present ActionAid work and answer to the questions of the staff on our work on the field and on campaigning in particular. She also had the chance to meet our Programmes & Reporting Officer (on official funding and information sharing between Italy and Tanzania, focusing on the importance of the use of the Contract Management System. On the same day she also met a couple of colleagues from the Fundraising staff to discuss on corporate and major donors issues (focusing on a education project in Tanzania to be financed by Veratour, an Italian tour operator already supporting us) and on sponsorship issues (focusing in particular on 2 phasing out DAs in the country).

### PAYROLL GIVING



Five of the most important NGOs working in Italy (both national and international) joined us in a payroll giving programme to sensitize corporate employees on poverty related issues, through the foundation of the **Unora Committee**. A secretariat was established for management and administrative support and a survey will soon be made, involving an employment consultant, to test the possibility of starting a pilot project with a big company first and then spread it in the corporate sector. For further info please contact Letizia Rossi, Face to Face Officer ([letizia.rossi@actionaid.org](mailto:letizia.rossi@actionaid.org)).

### Welcome to...

**Annalisa Napoleoni**, Governance and Public Affairs Officer in our Directorate  
**Emanuela Croce**, Face to Face Officer in our Marketing and Fundraising Department.

### Goodbye to...

**Michela Manghi**, IT Officer

### NEWS FROM ITALY

#### ROME and the MILLENNIUM CAMPAIGN

The UN chose Rome as the European capital for the fight against poverty. On the 6<sup>th</sup> of February the Millennium Campaign opened its European seat in the FAO premises under the direction of Marina Ponti (Eveline Herkens' collaborator. Her first tasks will be the OCSE report on aid quality to be launched in spring and the Stand Up initiative in autumn.

#### HUMAN RIGHTS

On the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UNDHR, of the Italian Constitution and of the European Year for Intercultural Dialogue, the Peace Table organised the XXIV edition of the seminar “The Political Agenda for Human Rights” held in Assisi.

#### WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME

The WFP chose Milan to launch the “Fill the cup” campaign supported by the A.C. Milan football player Ricardo Kakà. Milan is in fact competing for the 2015 expo focusing exactly on the food theme.

#### KYOTO PROTOCOL

Italy is expected to reduce its emissions by 6.5% compared to 1990 figures, for a total CO2 amount of 486 million tons. However, the trend is that of 580 million tons produced by 2010 which will require Italian firms to invest in eco-sustainable projects in developing countries to fill the gap, as allowed by the Clean Development Mechanism.

#### AFRICA WORKS

Africa Works is a special initiative to promote the microcredit project launched in Senegal by Birma, the credit union of the Senegalese singer Youssou N'Dour. The initiative is supported and financed by Benetton.