

FAO SUMMIT

On the occasion of the FAO summit on **food security, climate change and biofuels** held in Rome from the 3rd to the 5th of June, ActionAid denounced the role that food business has in the current food prices crisis, both taking part in the conference and through a stunt right beside the FAO premises. While an ActionAid delegation attended the works (we were the only NGO participating except for Oxfam/Ucodep), early in the morning a



group of Italian colleagues rolled out a 200m HungerFREE banner – one meter for every million people that will add to 850million ones suffering from hunger in the world – at the Circo Massimo arena asking to “stop profiting from hunger” and claiming the “right to food for all”. Besides, during the day, a series of HungerFREE silhouettes were positioned in some of the key institutional locations of the city such as Ministries and Parliament. ActionAid circulated a press folder with a dossier listing the multinational corporations profiting from hunger, analysing the root causes of the problem and proposing possible solutions: national agrarian reforms, stop to subsidies for biofuel production, women’s



access to land and resources and promotion of biodiversity instead of GMOs. Our action and positions were very well covered by the media, both at national and international levels. Unfortunately the summit outcomes were not those expected, with enough progressive language to refer back once calling on governments to action, but a lack of commitment to any biofuel regulation or international standards on biofuel production. As ActionAid Italy, we learned a lot on how to face an international event in our country and we are aware this one was almost a rehearsal for other happenings, so we’re quite satisfied even if there’s still space for improvement. For further info please contact our press officer Chiara Palombella (chiara.palombella@actionaid.org).

ALL STAFF CONFERENCE

The 4th ActionAid Italy Staff Conference took place in Milan on the 26th of June. The first one dates back to 2005, when we got familiar with our national strategy and each department presented itself to the others. Then in 2006 we widened our reflection to the integration amongst departments on crosscutting issues and tried to analyse our actions under the perspective of our stakeholders. In 2007 it was time for the GMF roll out – the “flower” as everyone knows it here – and for a deeper focus on North/South connections. This year, contrarily to the past, we decided to add a **pre-planning all Staff Conference** to our usual meeting at the end of the year. The aim of this mid-year meeting was that of developing useful ideas and suggestions for the 2009 planning, starting from what we planned and have already done in 2008. This was done always referring back to our

strategy as reflected in the “flower”. The morning was dedicated to the presentation of our 2007 statutory accounts and to the collection of questions from the staff, followed by the presentation of the FAO event to the rest of the staff. The afternoon was structured around possible macroareas of work for 2009, that is areas involving more than two departments and covering as many areas of the “flower” as possible: Italian G8, HungerFREE, innovation&new media, countries, our 20 year anniversary, supporters&activists, staff and CSR. All the outputs were collected and shared as inputs for planning, while the questions on the statutory accounts that couldn’t be answered in the morning were kept for our monthly question-time (as well as inputs to improve next years’ narratives and formats). A summary presentation with pictures from the day is available on request. For further info feel free to contact me.

INTERNAL GOVERNANCE

The **Italy Board** met on the 6th of June mainly to discuss and approve the Italian recommendations to the GBDC proposal for the development of the international governance structure. The **General Assembly** instead approved the 2007 statutory accounts on the 7th. It also discussed the issue of vacancies in the Board and the possible election of new trustees. During the meeting updates were provided on international governance and on the work of our Board Committees. All the members were then invited to suggest possible candidates to join the Assembly in the next future. For further information please contact our Governance & Public Affairs Officer, Annalisa Napoleoni (annalisa.napoleoni@actionaid.org)

ACTIVISTS TRAINING

The annual training organised for our activists this year was focused on the **understanding, communication and implementation of campaigns on the territory**. The works opened on the 21st of June with an analysis of the HungerFREE campaign highlighting the responsibility of corporations in the current food prices crisis. The rest of the day was dedicated to how campaigns can be communicated to the local media, in particular. This also included two working groups on how to communicate in public and on how to structure and issue a press release and the sharing of some experiences from our Local Groups of activists. The 22nd was instead designed to focus on specific communication tools: one group worked on the management of the Local Group websites based on the ActionAid web platform, while the other dealt with the practical implications of carrying out local public initiatives. For further info please contact Chiara Sempio, Activism Officer (chiara.sempio@actionaid.org).

G8 BLOG

A dedicated blog on the G8 related events (<http://actiong8.blogspot.com>) was launched in sight of the Japan G8 summit. This tool will allow us to provide updates in real time and will stay on line until the 2009 G8 that will be held in Italy, in order to sensitize civil society on poverty related issues and inform citizens on the decisions taken by the G8.

5 x 1000 TAX CAMPAIGN

In 2006 the Italian Government launched the “5 for 1000 tax campaign” to destine taxpayers contributions derived from 2005 taxation for social utility purposes. After a series of delays, the amount destined to us was officially accredited on our accounts for a total of **867.828 euros**. This revenue will be considered as general fund to be used for institutional activities, since at present there are no bindings for its destination. However, in the new Document for Financial and Economic Planning, the Italian Parliament confirmed the *5 for 1000 tax initiative*, including specific requirements for the reporting on these funds usage. For further info please contact Sara Bertolai, Head of Finance (sara.bertolai@actionaid.org).

EXPO 2015

On the 12th of June the Cariplo Bank Foundation organised a meeting that we attended **among the representatives of the third sector and the heads of the Expo 2015 Committee**. As you probably know, Milan has won the competition for the 2015 event – which will be dedicated to the food issue – and started organising the works: 42 projects of decentralised cooperation were already approved and new grants will be offered both by the Milan municipality and province, according to the words of our Ministry of Foreign Affairs who underlined that “the Expo must become the model for decentralised cooperation”. The same MoFA has already planned that a large percentage of the cooperation funds of the next seven years will support projects related to the Expo themes and countries. The Cariplo Bank Foundation will be the focal point of a foundations network that will support third sector projects and ad hoc grants will be offered in July. What was repeatedly underlined is that communication will be the core of the initiative rather than projects implementation and several spaces have already been designed to host the contents proposed by the third sector, which is what the Expo Committee is mostly looking for. In their words “do not ask what the Expo can do for you but what YOU can do for the Expo”: if there are interesting contents, then the Committee will provide you with spaces and visibility. That’s why, the ToRs for a feasibility study on the opportunities for ActionAid to engage in the Expo initiatives were drafted in order to assess whether it’s possible and worthy for us to participate. For further info, please contact Carolina Lami, Marketing Project Manager (carolina.lami@actionaid.org).

Welcome to...

Francesco Martone – G8 Mobilization Organiser

Goodbye to...

Mauro Valentini – Office Management Assistant

NEWS FROM ITALY

CLIMATE MANIFESTATION

On the 7th of June a wide alliance of Italian associations promoted a national manifestation in Milan urging for effective policies addressing the effects of the climate change and for more sustainable behaviours.

ITALIAN SCENARIO

According to the “2008 Report on Global Rights” Italy is becoming an insecure and frightened country. The worst problem is that of an increasing poverty level, with 7million people earning less than 1000euros per month and families getting more and more into debt to sustain consumptions, for a total amount of 490billion euros. The report was presented through a theatre play on the deaths on the workplace that in Italy reach 1000 a year with more than 900.000 casualties reported.

STALKING and SEXUAL VIOLENCE

The Italian Council of Ministries approved two decree laws against stalking and sexual violence, providing for severe punishments up to four years of detention and life sentence in case of murder of the victim. Aggravations will be added if the persecutor is a relative or acquaintance of the victim or if the crime is committed in group or with weapons or against minors.

FINANCIAL and ECONOMIC PLANNING

In the document of Financial and Economic Planning approved by the Government there are no sound references to the Italian pledges for the fight against poverty, which represents a step backward not only compared to the 2007 one but also to 2003-2006 one of the previous Berlusconi legislature.