

# Virtual Link

## MILESTONE 2/International Women's Day



The 8<sup>th</sup> of March was the second milestone for ActionAid Italy 2.0 mass communication plan. In the year of the G8 Summit – another milestone in plan – and of the 30<sup>th</sup> CEDAW Anniversary we decided to underline the need to face current crisis and the G8 agenda from a gender perspective. HIV/AIDS, conflicts and peace, food security, governance and education are “a women’s business” and their voice must be listened to. On the 9<sup>th</sup> of March we launched the report “**It’s not women’s business. Gender perspectives on the 2008 G8**”. A round table discussion on some of the report’s thematic focuses (violence, conflicts, climate change and economy) was organised with the researchers, an Italian MP from the Defense Committee, the Europe Parliament Vice President and a lawyer from our General Assembly. On the same occasion, we also presented the **LeD8 (lady8) initiative**: a call to gather 8 Italian women known for their role, appeal and gender sensitiveness, who will bring our

recommendations to key decision makers throughout the G8 year. At present five MPs accepted to join in: one from the Defense Committee, one from the Foreign Affairs Committee, the shadow Ministry of Education, the President of the Italian Association of Moroccan Women and the spokesperson of the Green Party. On the fundraising side, our Customer Care promoted girl sponsorship to those asking for enquiry packs and the same was done by the Web and Interactive Media Unit through thematic text messages and direct email marketing targeted on a female audience. Our Corporate and Major Donors Unit – thanks to the free collaboration with a gadget agency – proposed an ActionAid branded purse as a gift to the Johnson and Johnson 400 female staff on the occasion of the 8<sup>th</sup> March. The equivalent amount will be donated to an ActionAid microcredit project for Maya women in Guatemala. For further info please contact our Policy Officer, Beatrice Costa ([beatrice.costa@actonaid.org](mailto:beatrice.costa@actonaid.org)).



## MILESTONE 3/Agricultural G8

On the occasion of the Agricultural G8 held in **Treviso** from the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> of April, we launched **Fame (Hunger)**: the most common product in the South! The initiative was the first step of a mobilization tour to be developed around the ministerial G8 meetings in order to highlight that hunger is actually a “product” of unjust policies and practices by governments and multinational corporations. In partnership with Pace e Sviluppo, an Italian cooperative for fair trade, we organised a press conference to present the initiative (video available at <http://www.socialnetworkportal.it/i9yvcrbyvI/video-090416-Fame-prodotto-a-zero-grassi.htm>).



A Fame balloon called attention on the “shopping” stand we set in one of Treviso’s squares with trolleys packed with Fame boxes. People passing by over the weekend were asked the question “Have you ever tried Fame?” (which in Italian can be also meant as “have you ever experienced hunger?”) and handed out a shopping pack containing the Fame box, some fake flies (what’s left to the poor) and the HungerFREE brief. This way several people approached the HungerFREE campaign, leaving their contacts for further information. Some of them also expressed the will to create a Local Group of activists supporting ActionAid in a region (Veneto) where we aren’t present, yet. For further info, please contact Nina Belluomo, Head of Campaign and Activism Unit ([nina.belluomo@actonaid.org](mailto:nina.belluomo@actonaid.org)).



## Meeting with Barroso

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of March, on the occasion of the **CONCORD High Level Leadership Forum**, the President of the Europe Commission met the directors of more than 100 European NGOs. ActionAid was in the panel with Marco De Ponte, together with the directors of World Vision and Coopération Sud (the Association of French NGOs). The issues addressed by Marco were mainly related to the energy crisis (136 billion euros are needed by 2020 for a concrete response, but the Europe Council didn’t present any figures) and to the OCSE figures, being much lower than those planned by the EU for 2010 (0.56% ODA/GNP) and 2015 (0.7%) and unachievable at present, despite the growth of the aggregated ODA figure. The meeting also offered a good opportunity for media visibility and networking within the European NGO community.

## True Development Through Health advocacy tour

In the week commencing the 9<sup>th</sup> of March a North/South advocacy tour was organised under the **True Development Through Health** project with a mixed delegation of MPs and ActionAid HIV officers from Uganda and Tanzania. The three year project co-funded by the Europe Commission is building an information/sensitization campaign around sexual and reproductive rights and the health MDGS, building on research and advocacy activities. Last year a thematic report – *Policies that make the difference* – was produced, whose findings were to be discussed this year by MPs, government officers and other key stakeholders. The delegation was composed of **Laurent Wambura** (AA Tanzania HIV/AIDS Officer), **Elizabeth Nakiboneka** (AA Uganda HIV/AIDS Officer) and the Honourables **Omari Shaban Kwaangw** (Tanzania) and **Lukwago Rebecca Nalwanga** (Uganda). In Rome, the delegation attended a seminar on Women's Rights and Global Health organised by the Italian National Health Institute. In the following days several meetings with institutional representatives were arranged, starting with the MoFA Director for Sub-Saharan Africa, the Undersecretary for Health and Social Welfare and the MDGs Parliamentary Committee. Other meetings followed with MPs engaged on human rights and African political economy, with the National Institute for Foreign Trade and with Berlusconi's Advisor for Africa. In the third year of the project a second report on reproductive health, HIV/AIDS and related pandemics is scheduled, followed by a second advocacy tour, this time involving an European delegation meeting Southern civil society and decision makers. For further info please contact Marco Simonelli, HIV/AIDS project ([marco.simonelli@actionaid.org](mailto:marco.simonelli@actionaid.org)).

## Accelerate

ActionAid Italy will be the leader of the Italian GCAP organizations involved in the **first year** of the GCAP project **Accelerate: Enhancing Accountability to G8 and African Development Commitments**, approved by the Gates Foundation on March, 20<sup>th</sup>. **4.1 million dollars** will be made available in three years to put pressure on G8 and African leaders to deliver on their commitments to end poverty, by bringing together diverse groups and networks of civil society under one campaign platform and promoting coordinated advocacy. Accelerate will build on the work of GCAP International to galvanize public support in G8 countries and in five African countries to accelerate government action to meet the MDGs and end poverty. The major focuses divided per year are: Italian G8; Canadian G8 and Africa national coalitions skills-strengthening. Each annual activity will be developed by a national coalition: GCAP Italy will be working on Italian G8 issues; the Canadian "Make Poverty History" will be involved with the Canadian G8; the current GCAP African coalitions, made up of a broad and diverse set of actors, will be engaged in the enhancement of the policy influence of the African civil society. In the first year, ActionAid Italy will be coordinating three areas of activities: i) media work and activities with celebrities in the South; ii) policy and lobby; iii) mobilization around Civil G8 and G8 Summit – counting on a 1.3 million dollar budget. We're currently selecting a media buyer and planning May and June activities. In Italy the project will be delivered by **GCAP ATS - Associazione Temporanea di Scopo** (Temporary Non Profit Association) established under the laws of Italy and composed by the following organizations: ActionAid Italy (lead member), AIDOS, Associazione ONG Italiane, FOCSIV, UCODEP-Oxfam, UN Millennium Campaign. For further info, please contact the project coordinator, Annamaria Scire ([annamaria.scire@actionaid.org](mailto:annamaria.scire@actionaid.org)).

## Spring Appeal



The 2009 spring appeal has just been sent out to our supporters. The proposed project will address child and woman **malnutrition** in HIV/AIDS affected households in **Uganda**. The project will be providing 50 households in the area of Kampala and 50 households in the area of Kumi with food supplies for one year, thus reaching about 500 children. The project is also aimed at supporting small-scale systems of women, community-based complementary food production, sales and distribution. Gender and nutrition education issues will be integrated, as well as advocacy efforts for long-term support for nutritious food carried out. The appeal opens with the question: "How much do you think a 10 year old child can weigh?" to remind that – while the Europe average is between 30 and 35 kilos – in Uganda 2 children out of 5 suffer from rickets. Two slightly different versions of the appeal were designed for regular donors and middle/major ones: the difference lies in the different minimum amounts for donation proposed to each category. For further info please contact Mara Luzzini, Head of Individuals Fundraising Unit ([mara.luzzini@actionaid.org](mailto:mara.luzzini@actionaid.org)).

## Emergency response

Inspired by the agreement between DEC and BBC in UK, on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March a **Memorandum of Understanding** was signed between AGIRE – the Italian Agency for Emergency Response – and RAI, the national Italian TV. This MoU defines mutual collaboration in case of fundraising appeals for emergency response. RAI will provide media coverage of the humanitarian crisis and will collaborate to the fundraising with ad hoc spaces within its TV programmes. AGIRE will provide updated info on the emergency and on the response given, thanks to the presence of its NGOs on the field, ensuring openness and transparency in the fund management and use. For further info please visit [www.agire.it](http://www.agire.it).



## CSR

Together with Oxfam-UCODEP, Manitese and Valore Sociale we launched a 12 months project on CSR issues. The project, funded for the 70% by the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is aimed at developing an information campaign on CSR in development countries targeting Italian enterprises, youth, media operators and NGO professionals. The project can count on an overall budget of 342.500 euros and will engage us in the production of information and communication materials, in the organization of training seminars and in the publication of two case studies and of a "Social Certification Handbook". The project, in fact, not only aims at raising awareness but also at providing enterprises with self-evaluation tools and orientation on the main existing initiatives for the assessment of their social and environmental performance and the acquisition of social responsibility certifications. A national conference on reporting and supply chain controls is scheduled in October. For further info, please contact Christian Quintili, project coordinator ([c.quintili@valoresociale.it](mailto:c.quintili@valoresociale.it)).

## Hive

ActionAid Italy is now present on the Hive with **our own space** (<https://hive.actionaid.org/italy>). At present the space is mainly addressed at facilitating internal communication processes and therefore is mostly in Italian. However, a *Resources* section on internal processes and a *Virtual Link* library are available in English, as well as a box for general *Announcements* in homepage. Workspaces were also designed for cross cutting groups within Italy staff, such as the SMT, the cross-unit group, the fundraising and the supporters magazine editorial group. The idea is to first get the staff familiar with the tool and then expand its implementation. Inductions were carried out for all staff and everyone should now have their My space set, at least with the minimum information required.

## Welcome to..

**Luca Rannisi** – Marketing and Fundraising Officer  
**Marco Simonelli** – HIV/AIDS project

## Welcome back to..

**Paola Maceroni** – back to Supporter Communications from maternity leave

## Congrats to..

**Mara Luzzini** – new Head of Individual Fundraising Unit

## Moving to another Unit..

**Giorgia Zanellato** – from Individual Fundraising to Planning & Analysis

## NEWS FROM ITALY

### ITALIAN COOPERATION

ActionAid is seriously concerned by an item of a recently approved Bill, meant to simplify cooperation interventions supporting peace processes. The item prioritizes those countries that subscribed repatriation agreements or collaboration agreements aimed at containing migration flows or at executing punishments for their citizens who were sentenced in Italy. Priority will be also given to those countries that repatriate citizens officially living in Italy but now unemployed due to the recession. Such an item is contradictorily modifying the goals of international cooperation indicated in the Italian law, as well as diverting resources to other purposes. Equally worrying is the decision to cut other 2 million euros from the cooperation budget in favour of industrial, scientific and technologic research and development in the State of Israel, since the latest financial Bill cut the resources previously budgeted by the Economy Ministry for the respect of this international treaty.

### DRAGHI ON RECESSION

At the Development Committee meeting in Washington (April, 26) the Director of the Bank of Italy, Mario Draghi, confirmed that the economic crisis is now heavily affecting development countries. The impact of the crisis cannot but determine further migration flows, all the more that for the last six months several factors have been contributing to worsen the situation.

### EARTHQUAKE in ABRUZZO

17.6 million euros were raised through the SMS campaign launched by the five major Italian mobile companies in partnership with the Italian Civil Defence Department. The earthquake of the 6<sup>th</sup> of April left 297 people dead, 1600 injured and 55.000 displaced. Damages are estimated around 1.5 billion euros for constructions and 3.5 billion euros in total. The Government approved the destination of 1.152 billion euros in 2009. The rest of the funds (about 5 billion euros) will be spread over the future years until 2032, while 2.9 millions will be made available from 2033 on.

### WORLD VISION

World Vision Italy has joined the Italian Coordination of International Networks (CINI), for the first months as observer only (according to the praxis of the network).

### MICROCREDIT

Grameen Trust and Unicredit, in collaboration with the University of Bologna, agreed to start microcredit initiatives in Italy, as a possible solution to the current financial crisis. This was the announcement by Mohammed Yunus, in Milan to attend "A world without poverty", a seminar organised by the Cariplo Foundation on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March.

