



Annual Report '09

About ActionAid

Our vision is a world without poverty and injustice in which every person enjoys the right to a life with dignity.

Our mission is to work with poor and excluded people to eradicate poverty and injustice.

Our goals 2005-2011 drive and underpin everything we do:

Goal one: poor and excluded people and communities will exercise power to secure their rights

Goal two: women and girls will gain power to secure their rights

Goal three: citizens and civil society across the world will fight for rights and justice

Goal four: states and their institutions will be accountable and democratic and will promote, protect and fulfil human rights for all.

Our approach We work in partnership with people and their organisations because we believe that poor and excluded people have the right and ability to shape their own lives.

Our role includes empowerment, solidarity and advocacy. We help people analyse the root causes of their problems. We help them establish projects and organisations that can meet their immediate needs while also mobilising to demand their rights from government and society.

We link groups of people together to negotiate common demands, helping them speak with a more powerful voice in local, national, regional and international platforms, movements and networks.

We carry out policy advocacy with our partners and in our own right, and mobilise supporters, partners and allies in campaigns for change.

We organise our work around six themes: women's rights, the right to education, to food, to human security, to just and democratic governance and the right to life and dignity in the face of HIV and AIDS.

Our work is supported through the generous solidarity of some 399,205 individuals, who give money and take action in our campaigns. We also partner with institutional donors.

We are an international organisation with a federal structure. Our staff, board and assembly members are drawn from around the world; some work in our main office in Johannesburg, but we also have international offices and staff in Bangkok, London, Nairobi and Rio de Janeiro.

Cover image

Thoko Mpulo on her small-scale farm in the Emmaus District near Bergville in KwaZulu-Natal province, South Africa.

Photo: James Oatway/Panos/ActionAid

Contents 2009

[p4](#) Letter from the Chief Executive Officer and the Chair of the Board / [p5](#) This report / [p6](#) Overview / [p8](#) Women's rights / [p13](#) The right to life and dignity in the face of HIV and AIDS / [p18](#) The right to education / [p24](#) The right to just and democratic governance / [p28](#) The right to human security in conflict and emergencies / [p34](#) The right to food / [p39](#) Influencing the global response to the financial and climate crisis through our policy and campaigns work / [p43](#) Strengthening ActionAid / [p51](#) Summarised 2009 financial statements / [p60](#) Members of the Board, Associates and Affiliates / [p62](#) Our values

Click on the page number to go directly to the relevant section

Letter from the Chief Executive Officer and the Chair of the Board

For ActionAid, 2009 was a challenging year. Internally, it was full of transition and ambitious projects, while externally the global food, climate and financial crises increased the need for our work, but also reduced our spending income. At the same time, the multiple crises made life that much more difficult for the poor and excluded people with whom we work around the world.

Despite these difficulties, 2009 was also an important year. We were able to seize the opportunities that change always brings. The need to stretch our resources – particularly staff time – meant we achieved greater focus in our policy and campaigns work. The need to be more efficient, cost-effective and transparent with our limited resources also encouraged us to develop more sophisticated policies and systems in line with our growth as an organisation. We therefore put significant effort into initiating new policies and systems in: information management; resource allocation; monitoring and evaluation; performance management; contract management; finance; and organisational governance. We have included a special accountability feature in this report to describe these efforts.

Above all, 2009 was an exciting and transformative year. It was the year in which we held our first-ever General Assembly, where we democratically elected our board, and brought four new organisations into our structure, expanding our influence and supporter base. The assembly provides direct representation for all our affiliates and associates.

For the first time this year, we involved country directors from all our country programmes in a country director forum to discuss issues of central importance to our development as an organisation. To date, five of our country programmes in developing countries have become affiliates and all will eventually do so. These are important milestones towards our ambition of having a governance structure that shares power between all countries, and bringing decision-making closer to the poor and excluded people with whom we work. Meanwhile, our growth in developed countries has diversified our supporter base, increased our income and strengthened our influence with powerful governments.

2009 was the last full year for our Chief Executive Officer Ramesh, who leaves us after more than 20 years at ActionAid, and the first year for Irene as chair. We are both proud and thankful to be part of ActionAid. We are grateful for the dedication and hard work of all our staff and partners. We are thankful to the supporters who have continued to take action and support us financially. We are inspired and humbled by the continuing mobilisation of rights holders in the face of ever-increasing challenges. We recognise that it has also been a difficult year and for some a painful one; the impressive progress we have made has not been easy. We would therefore like to congratulate and thank you all for the contribution you have made.

Sincerely,



Ramesh Singh
Chief Executive Officer



Irene Ovonji-Odida
Chair of the Board

This report

This report provides an overview of ActionAid International's work in more than 45 countries, measured against our international strategy, 'Rights to end poverty'. Each section begins with an extract from our strategy, and a summary of priority objectives from the five-year strategic plan.

These are followed by a few illustrative examples of our work chosen from the reports submitted by each country and international unit. We have indicated, for each theme, which countries had the highest proportion of spend, or the highest absolute spend in relation to other countries, and tried to ensure some examples from those countries of the work we do. We have indicated the areas where we believe we made the most progress, those where we have identified gaps or challenges, and the way forward. Our analysis is based on the annual review and reflection process, which includes input from stakeholders outside and within each theme and country. Although our primary audience for this report is ActionAid staff, partners and trustees, we hope it will also allow people who are less familiar with our work to gain insights into our impact and learning over the last year. Full reports from each country are available upon request.

Acronyms

- AAI:** ActionAid International
- CPs:** Country Programmes
- DANIDA:** Danish International Development Agency
- DFID:** UK Department for International Development
- DRC:** Democratic Republic of the Congo
- DRR:** Disaster Risk Reduction
- ELBAG:** Economic Literacy and Budget Accountability for Governance
- FAO:** Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
- GCE:** Global Campaign for Education
- IMF:** International Monetary Fund
- MS:** Mellemlfolkeligt Samvirke
- NGO:** Non-governmental organisation
- OECD:** Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
- PRRP:** Participatory review and reflection process
- STI:** Sexually transmitted infection
- UNAIDS:** United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDs

Overview

This section provides a very brief overview of the internal and external context for our work. It also summarises the conclusions of our annual review and reflection exercise regarding the main achievements and failures in relation to our plan and strategy.

The combined impact of the global food, climate and financial crises continued to devastate poor people across the world. More than a billion people did not have enough food this year. Although some governments and donors increased their spending on agriculture and social protection, and ActionAid helped to secure a US\$22 billion (€15 billion) commitment to agriculture from G8 governments, investment remained far below the levels needed.

There is evidence that budgetary constraints led some governments to cap the number of people receiving services – this meant, for example, that some HIV patients could not access the drugs they needed to stay alive. On the human rights and governance front, there is evidence that governments have closed the space for democratic dissent, and some have become more repressive, in their response to strikes and protests from rights holders.

Women are bearing the brunt of the crisis, with evidence of increased domestic violence. Female-dominated sectors (such as exports) are more heavily impacted, with women having to carry the burden of caring for more people with fewer resources. The financial crisis is having an impact on all areas of people's lives. On top of this, poor people seemed to suffer even more than usual from natural disasters such as floods, droughts, cyclones and typhoons, which ravaged countries across Asia, Africa and the Americas.

And despite the much-heralded Copenhagen conference on climate change, world leaders failed to reach any meaningful agreement, choosing instead to protect their short-term interests. Meanwhile, European economies continued to weaken, affecting our ability to raise income, while middle-income countries such as Brazil, India and China recovered much more rapidly, heralding a further shift of economic and geopolitical power to emerging middle-income countries.

Internally, it was a year of major transition at ActionAid. We have a newly constituted board and General Assembly, and we announced the recruitment of a new chief executive. We integrated MS Denmark programmes into our structures and saw a high level of natural turnover of senior international staff. At the same time, we pursued a major accountability drive that included many ambitious projects. All of this occurred against the backdrop of the global financial crisis, which increased our work while reducing the resources available to us. Through the hard work of our staff and the loyalty of our supporters, we were able to maintain our income. However, unfavourable exchange rates and rising costs meant the spending value of this income dropped.

Reflection on the year

Our greatest achievement and area of progress was in response to the food crisis. This was achieved through both working with poor farmers and influencing nationally and internationally. Our HungerFREE campaign, launched in 2007, provided an avenue for citizens across the world to demand that governments act to reverse growing hunger in the wake of the food, climate and financial crises. We influenced the G8 commitment to agriculture and food security to ensure it prioritised small-holder farmers. We also influenced national policy and practice in several countries – most significantly helping to achieve the constitutional right to food in Brazil and helping millions of people in India to claim income from the Rural Employment Guarantee Act. Together with partners, we achieved substantive gains on women's rights to land.

The recession meant that our income growth was slower than planned, leading to the need to make cuts. We stayed united despite this, while making very difficult decisions about where to change plans. We reduced our overall staffing by 12%, and our international staff complement by 17%, primarily by not filling new or vacated positions. We were forced to drop some areas of work, but were able to bring more focus and prioritisation as a result. In particular, we really brought all parts of the organisation together around our HungerFREE campaign.

Thanks to our supporters and efforts of staff, it was possible to maintain our income in a year when other international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) saw theirs drop. However, all of this led to serious overload, with staff and partners carrying unsustainable workloads. As a result, the directors agreed to cancel and postpone some meetings for 2010 and to further phase and prioritise projects to reduce the overload.

Our review of the year highlighted that we now need a more explicit programming methodology and campaigning model. Recognising that we must continue to allow for diverse responses in the widely different contexts in which we work, staff and partners asked for more clarity about what is expected, and for tools to help them bring about change. Last year we developed a new programming framework and agreed a set of minimum standards for rights-based work. We now need to develop guidelines, tools and capacity. We decided to create an international post to address this gap and to provide support to countries that are facing particularly challenging circumstances for rights-based work.

Organising people to put pressure for change on the powerful is essential to rights-based work. In some countries, we have been very effective, with our partners, at mobilising poor and excluded people in a substantial and sustained

manner – for example, through the Alliance of the Marginalised in India or the Uganda slum dwellers campaign, which are both highlighted in the governance section of this report.

In other countries we do not yet have the experience, confidence or skills to build micro-level organisations (such as Reflect circles) into something bigger and more powerful at a national level. In richer countries, we are advancing in our goal of encouraging our financial supporters to join our campaigns – for example, in ActionAid Italy 18,000 supporters have indicated that they are 'ready to take action on any ActionAid campaigns'. We encourage diverse models of mobilisation and campaigning in the very different social and political contexts where we work, but we need to invest in better systems and skills for integrating these diverse approaches across countries so that, when needed, we can apply pressure internationally as well as nationally and locally.

In conclusion, it was a tumultuous, challenging and very exciting year, full of new developments and opportunities. We have made good progress against our strategy and plan, while also responding to new challenges. It is vital that we and others continue to help poor and excluded people to stand up for their rights and to improve their well-being in these difficult times.



Coalition of Women Farmers member **Jane Hawara**, 57, is a small-holder farmer in Rumphi District, Malawi.

Photo: Graeme Williams/Panos/ActionAid

Women's rights

‘Rights to end poverty’ requires us to place women and girls at the heart of all our work.

The three internationally agreed priority areas within this theme are: violence against girls in schools; women’s rights to land; and the intersection of violence against women and HIV and AIDS. Our total programme expenditure on women’s rights for 2009 was €14.9 million, representing 11% of total programme spend. The leading countries on women’s rights, where it represented a significant proportion of expenditure, were **Liberia** (83% of expenditure), **Malawi** (45%) and **Mozambique** (27%). The area in which we made the most progress was women’s land rights. An organisation-wide external evaluation of our work on women’s rights validated our approach and confirmed our impact: ‘While most INGOs have chosen to go the mainstreaming route, AAI has rightly chosen to have a specific, stand-alone women’s rights theme, plus mainstreaming women’s rights into all other [work]. This approach has contributed in large measure to the achievements and changes identified during this evaluation. The Women Won’t Wait campaign, focusing on the intersection of [violence against women] and HIV, is innovative and shows cutting edge thinking. Land rights have risen to the top of the international policy agenda given global trends such as land grabs and the food crisis. [The theme has made good] strategic choices on what to work on in the very wide basket of women’s rights.’

Penny Plowman, external evaluator

Violence against women and girls

In **Ethiopia**, ActionAid partners organised 78 women's watch groups around ending patriarchal practices such as rape, child marriage, isolating women after giving birth and the exclusion of women from sleeping in a bed or using inside toilets. The groups supported 57 girls to resist forced marriage, and another 93 girls to say no to female genital mutilation (FGM). They persuaded 37 circumcisers to stop practising FGM, and prosecuted eight parents who tried to force girls to marry against their will. A man who raped his wife's 10-year old cousin was sentenced to 22 years in prison. One of our partners provided legal aid in over 2,000 cases of violence against women.

In **Brazil**, our public policy monitoring programme funded by the Ford Foundation united women in forums to fight for full implementation of the Maria da Penha Law on domestic violence. One result was the establishment of a special police station for women in São João de Meriti. In **Malawi**, we organised committees on violence against girls and women in all the 13 areas where we work. The number of cases reported increased to 811 from 561 in 2008, exceeding our target by 16%. Thirty-five women won court cases with our support. One of these women was Eluby Mwale of Mtembenge village, who said: **'My husband abandoned me with our three children after six years of marriage for another wife. He took most of the items from the store we used to run together. Despite marrying the new wife, he**

continued to visit me, disturbing me and sometimes even beating me and collecting more items. I reported my case to the women's forum and it was referred to court. The court provided a protection order and ordered him to give back the fertiliser and maize [he took] and [repay me] for grocery items. I now happily grow my tobacco and maize and am now free.'

In **Rwanda**, we established 158 women's clubs. Bernadette Mukandekazi, who got legal help, said: **'With this project, ActionAid has enabled us to break our silence. We are now able to report cases [of violence against women] to our local leaders and police. Many women have received help. More families, including mine, are now living in peace.'**

In **Lesotho**, we provided paralegal training and support to women's groups such as Lentsoe la Basali (LLB – Women's Voice). Lisebo Ntlale, who has seven children, is one of 13 women who benefited: **'My problems started in 1988 when my husband started beating me, prohibited me from working, and stopped taking responsibility for me and the children. I thought my life was in danger before meeting the LLB women. They encouraged me to earn some money so that I am not fully dependent [on him]. They encouraged me to speak up. After several talks between the group, my husband and me, he has begun to treat me with more respect. The situation at home has become a lot better.'**

In **Ghana**, we built awareness of rights and relevant laws among women and girls, the police, traditional authorities and the wider community. In 2009 we initiated and trained 20 community-based anti-violence teams across the Upper West region to support and encourage women and girls to report instances of violence to the police and the Commission on Human Rights and Administrative Justice. We also trained 50 members of the police in relevant laws and how to respond appropriately. We organised forums where 1,600 women and 960 men discussed violations with government representatives and traditional and religious leaders. In one such forum, the chiefs agreed to get the Upper East Regional House of Chiefs, whose pronouncements are binding on all traditional leaders in the region, to ban harmful traditional widowhood rites such as sexual assault, wife inheritance and the removal of land and property. Forty-five imams and pastors agreed to campaign for women's rights within their congregations.

In **Pakistan**, we identified the need for better legal and medical procedures to prosecute perpetrators of violence against women. Research carried out in five districts and shared through a seminar resulted in the Minister for Human Rights agreeing to set up a centre to monitor rights, including women's rights. Our partners also supported survivors of violence to organise. One of these women was Fouzia Khanum, who told us:

'I faced domestic violence for many years before deciding to leave my husband's house. I blamed myself. When I learned about [the women's group] Tareemat Sanjhy, I started to attend their meetings. Learning about my equal rights made me realise that I had taken the right decision. I felt confident and my emotional and physical health improved. Now, I have the courage to speak up for myself and for other women like me. I thank ActionAid and Swam Dost Foundation for this remarkable change in my life.'

Women Won't Wait, which featured in our report last year, is a coalition that we initiated in 2007 in eight countries and internationally to ensure that the global response to the HIV and AIDS epidemic addresses the problem of violence against women and its link to HIV. This year the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) – one of the campaign's primary targets – announced that ending violence is one of its eight priority actions. The coalition was asked to provide input into the UNAIDS Action Framework on Women, Girls,

Gender Equality and HIV, and to serve on the related global task force. *Women Won't Wait* is also part of AIDS Accountability International's expert panel, where we have contributed to the development of a gender index scorecard on national governments' progress against gender equality commitments. The scorecard exposed the lack of progress in most countries. On a country level, campaign successes included:

In **Uganda**, Pallisa district passed an ordinance against bride price, and ActionAid contributed to the long-awaited passing of the Domestic Relations Act.

In **Liberia**, we worked with rural women, traditional leaders, two radio stations and parliament to raise awareness of the rape and inheritance laws.

'I have always thought that the call for women and girls' rights was yet another ploy by the West to infiltrate our religion and so swore never to support it. But after the discussions today I am clear that the provisions have their sources from the Holy Qur'an and I am all for it. There is no better way to influence attitude change than knowledge sharing through occasions such as this.'

**Imam Alhaji Yussif Yakubu,
Central mosque, Tamale, Ghana**

Women's right to land and natural resources

Even though it has been recognised for decades that rural women produce 60–80% of food in developing countries, research by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) shows that women still own less than 2% of land. Baseline research we carried out in five countries confirmed that discriminatory laws and practices are still the norm. In **Uganda**, the research was done through a participatory process that raised awareness of participants, and was documented and shared through video, radio and print media. National NGOs created an alliance and women have now started to bring individual cases forward. At least five cases have already been won. Esther Adero, a single mother of four, tells her story: **'In early 2009, our land was grabbed by the vice chairman of our sub-county. Our houses were burnt down and we sheltered at a village church. I joined a Reflect circle, where I learnt how to seek justice. The Reflect facilitator communicated my case to the local council. The village court judged in my favour [but] the land grabber lodged an appeal with the district magistrate court. I did not have money to go to court in Lira. Funds from ActionAid enable[d] me and my mother to attend the court session [and] we got legal support. The court upheld the local council court ruling. I am happy that after six months, we regained ownership rights over the 18 acres of land. We now grow crops for food and family income.'**

On International Women's Day in March, we mobilised with women around the world to demand women's right to land: 80,000 women farmers participated in what for us was the culmination of our HungerFREE Women Speak Out, an exhibition of photos, videos and stories from 10 countries, which is still used for advocacy on women's land rights.

In June, after years of advocacy by us and others, the **African Union** adopted a land policy framework that includes very good guidelines on the promotion and protection of women's rights. This framework can now be used to improve national policy and practice.

In the **Gambia**, we continued our campaign with the National Women's Farmers' Association and the National Alliance for Food Security to gain access to and control of 12,000 hectares of land for 48,000 women. In just four years we have helped women gain access to 3,500 hectares of land. A challenge is that once they have land, women do not always have the necessary capital for inputs, and the land is often of poor quality.

Our partners in **Mozambique** trained paralegals to help land and marital conflict cases. In 2009, we helped 10 women win their right to land in areas where the Dutch government-funded women's right to land project is being implemented.

Our work in partnership with the **Kenya** Land Alliance influenced the national land policy that, among other things, seeks to eliminate gender imbalances in land ownership, access and control. Our 'land clinics' helped women prepare their claim cases for hearings scheduled in 2010. Scoda, our partner in Usigu, trained 126 people in paralegal skills on land rights, which took up, among others, three cases of widows losing their land. **'That meeting saved me and my children,'** said Carren, a mother of six, after Scoda helped prevent her brother-in-law from evicting her.

In **India**, our partner Women Dalit Samakya ran a campaign demanding 7.5 acres of land for each Dalit family in Andhra Pradesh, resulting in 380 acres of land being allocated in women's names. This is just one of many victories across the country.

Mainstreaming women's rights work

The above activities are all examples of programmes that are managed and funded through our women's rights theme. We also address women's rights in other themes – with specific programmes such as the violence against girls in schools – or by ensuring that both men and women participate equally in many initiatives including seed banks and emergency responses. In 2007, we introduced a gender budget analysis system to get a better sense of how much of our overall programme and total budget is being spent on women's rights. This system, which involves programme staff scoring the degree of women's rights work against four different levels, allows us to estimate that, for 2009, an additional 25% of country programme expenditure (€15.7 million) outside the women's rights theme directly addressed the power, position and rights of women. A further 48% (€30 million) assisted them to gain resources and confidence. Combined with the 11% of total expenditure (€14.9 million) spent on stand-alone women's rights work, this means that more than three-quarters of our budget was invested in advancing women's rights. A further 19% of our work scored 1, meaning that, while it did not directly focus on women's rights, it enabled women to gain power through training and other activities; 7% did not address women's rights. Examples of the impact of this mainstreamed work can be found under other sections.



In her cotton field small-holder farmer **Livinesi Sandalamu** in Mwakundi village near Salima, Malawi.

Photo: Graeme Williams/Panos/ActionAid

Gaps, challenges and way forward in 2010

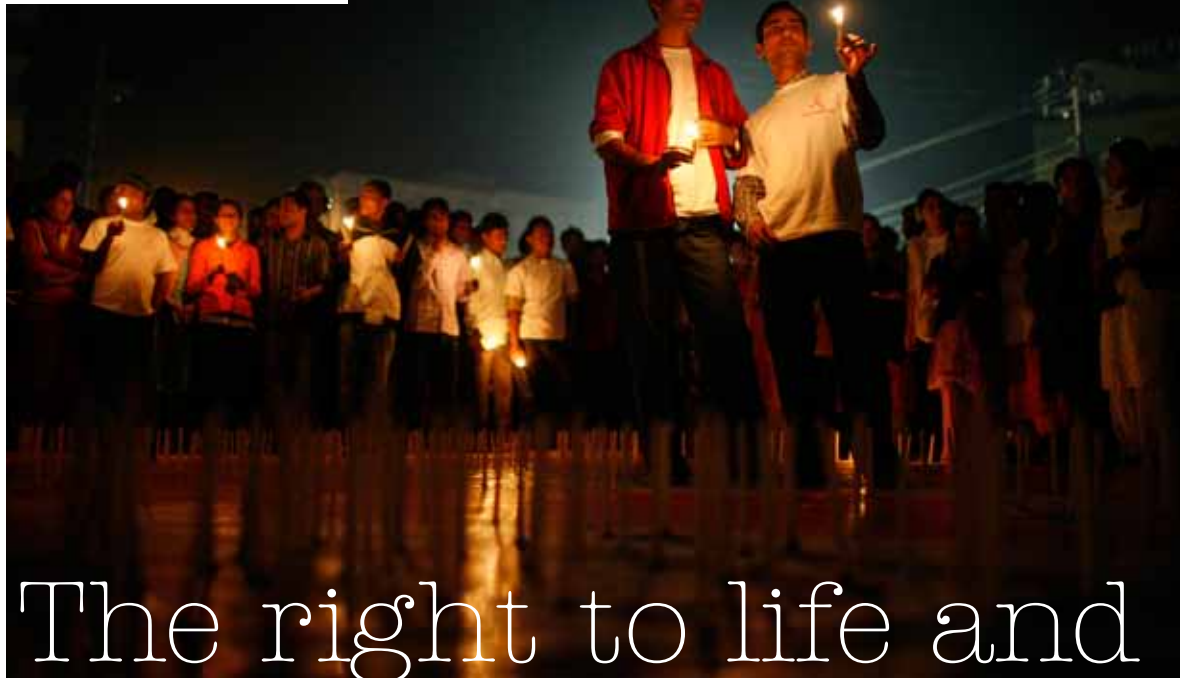
Overall our greatest achievements were to help thousands of women to secure land, and our work on violence against women and girls both at the policy and the practical level.

Our weakest area of work was with regional partnerships, where a restructuring of our women's rights staffing led to gaps at regional level. We chose to de-prioritise women and politics in light of limited resources and in favour of increasing our focus on the food crisis and women and land – the organisational priority of HungerFREE.

In 2010 we will continue our focus on women's rights to land, working on the rights of women as small-holder farmers. As part of the organisation-wide strategy evaluation and development process, we will explore future areas of work including: women's rights within national development strategies; women's rights and climate change; and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

A candlelit vigil to commemorate World AIDS Day in Birganj, Nepal.

Photo: Brian Sokol/ActionAid



The right to life and dignity in the face of HIV and AIDS

‘Rights to end poverty’ requires us to work with HIV-positive people to develop their skills to live positively and claim their rights, and to put people living with HIV and AIDS – especially women and girls – at the centre of our planning and implementation.

ActionAid has now been helping people living with HIV to respond to the complex issues of the HIV and AIDS epidemic for 20 years. Our three priority goals for 2009 were: supporting community action on HIV and AIDS; building a movement of people living with HIV and AIDS; and influencing the global reponse. We made excellent progress in our local and national work, but much less at international level due to changes in the team. Our programme expenditure on HIV and AIDS in 2009 was €10.6 million (8% of total spend). Two countries stand out – **Zimbabwe** with €1.4 million spend (34% of their budget) and **Nigeria** with €2 million (53% of their budget).

Empowerment: supporting local communities to take action

Societies Tackling AIDS through Rights (STAR) is a social change communication tool developed by ActionAid in 2006 to ensure the centrality of rights, social justice, gender and women's rights in our response to the HIV epidemic. In 2009 we supported over 1,500 STAR circles in 20 countries, an increase from 650 circles in 19 countries last year. This led to transformations in the lives of thousands of people living with HIV and AIDS. STAR is being used to address: teenage pregnancy, polygamy and weaknesses in health systems in Nigeria; issues of sex before marriage in Vietnam; and stigma and discrimination in Uganda. It is also being used to claim accountability for services from the government in India. Children were a particular focus of our programmes in Kenya, India and Zimbabwe. In these countries we addressed issues of child abuse, paediatric treatment and gaps in services. The use of STAR is also spreading beyond ActionAid: in China, we undertook a joint programme with the US Centre for Disease Control, while the UNAIDS guide features it as a cutting-edge social communication tool.

In **Bangladesh**, eight of our partners – six STAR circle facilitators and two people living with HIV – received UNAIDS community volunteer awards for their work. As a result of our lobbying, the government has reserved seats for people living with HIV on district hospital management boards.

In the **Gambia**, members of STAR circles successfully claimed resources from the

government, including 10 hectares of land for a vegetable garden and centre, a milling machine to reduce labour, and a marketing board. The work was supported by the *Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria*, which gave us an 'A' rating in an audit of our programme.

In **Liberia**, STAR circles are one avenue through which we address violence against women. Mother-of-four Agnes Wesseh, 24, has a partner who beats and insults her. She says: **'It is only now that I am trying to overcome things because of my involvement in this project. My training as a STAR facilitator has helped me understand the rights I have as a woman... I am no longer afraid to speak out and I can now discuss issues and lead discussions.'**

We were able to bring the needs of the most at-risk populations – sex workers, transgendered people, men who have sex with men and intravenous drug users – to the fore through our work in Cambodia, Pakistan and India.

Nigeria runs five HIV projects with funds from the UK and Canadian governments, the EU, The Global Fund and the MacArthur Foundation. The projects aim to strengthen health systems including sexual and reproductive health, track government budgets and engage in advocacy around the national budget. In 2009 our training reached 3,000 people. We also helped establish 54 ward committees, building links between citizens and government programmes.

'I joined the self-help group and received US\$250 (€174) from the Women Living with HIV/AIDS Support Fund. Now, my family earns a better income than before from selling cabbages, chicken and eggs. We have enough food and my children can lead a good quality life.'

Sim Mao, who is one of 400 people living with HIV to have benefited from our Cambodia programme

Solidarity: supporting networks of positive people

STAR circles are the foundation of the larger networks of HIV-positive people we support at district, state and national levels to provide mutual solidarity and to put pressure on duty bearers.

In **Nepal**, constant pressure by ActionAid-supported networks led to direct representation of people affected by HIV in the government response in four districts.

In **Ethiopia**, we supported the National Network of Positive People to develop a successful US \$25 million (€17.4 million) proposal to The Global Fund for a five-year project to build the capacity of people living with HIV.

In **Malawi**, membership of the Coalition of Women Living with HIV increased to 60,000, marking a six fold increase in 12 years. The group's local advocacy led to improvements in the administration of several health facilities and the construction of new mobile clinics in two areas. The coalition secretariat met with the vice president and convinced her to support the amendment of proposed criminalisation clauses in the HIV bill soon to be tabled in parliament.

In **Afghanistan**, our partners formed the first-ever group of people living with HIV with 26 members. We produced the country's first film on HIV-positive people, which was used to train mullahs, doctors and other officials, and continued our work with truckers, opening three new centres

with the government health department to reach this high-risk population. Sha-Mohammad, a mechanic who was recruited to raise awareness among truck drivers, said: **'People now respect me as I know lots of information about health, STIs [sexually transmitted infections] and HIV and AIDS. I feel proud that I can help others.'**

In **India**, we gave fellowships to 21 HIV-positive people, building their knowledge and leadership skills and achieving gains for other people living with HIV. Jagruti Patel works with the Gujarat State Women's Forum, which has helped more than 500 women to gain social security entitlements and successfully lobbied the state AIDS Control Society to establish community care centres in two districts. She says of her work: **'The more I share my status, the more I cope. I am trying my level best to lead the way for the community. Women living with HIV should be treated with respect and dignity.'**

The Asian People's Alliance to Combat HIV and AIDS now has chapters in six countries. The alliance's reports on HIV policy in Cambodia and HIV treatment in Pakistan have challenged both countries' governments on their role. In Pakistan, the network helped the first transgender organisation to achieve formal recognition. ActionAid helped to initiate this alliance in 2004 and continues to support it by strengthening operational and governance capacity, such as board and staff selection.

The Global Citizen's Summit in Kenya, which was co-funded and organised by ActionAid, other civil society organisations and UNAIDS, provided a forum for 300 people living with HIV and other activists from around the world to come together to formulate and voice their demands. UNAIDS representative Dr Asai Elhaj commended ActionAid's ability to mobilise communities and the voices of the poor.



Commemorating World AIDS Day in Birganj, Nepal.

Photo: Brian Sokol/ActionAid

Advocacy: influencing governments and society

In **Asia**, we lead a consortium of four partners who manage the Technical Support Facility established by UNAIDS in March 2009. This €1.6 million, two-year programme aims to strengthen national AIDS commissions in eight countries. The facility has so far provided support to three countries. We ensured 'most at risk' populations were given due attention.

Our **Italy** team hosted delegations from Tanzania and Uganda and published research as part of a campaign for their government to honour a €130 million pledge to the international response. As a result, several members of parliament wrote to the government supporting our call.

Our *Action For Global Health* network continued to advocate for Europe to play a more proactive role in enabling developing countries to meet the health-related Millennium Development Goals. This network, founded by ActionAid in 2006 with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, now has over 30 members in six countries. Our advocacy helped to influence a draft EU policy on global health that calls for universal access to health services. If agreed to by member states, the policy will mean more resources for some of the poorest countries to abolish user fees for health.

In **east and southern Africa**, we worked closely with the East Africa Legislative Assembly and with the Southern Africa Development Community to establish mechanisms that compel member states to review laws that might violate human rights, particularly clauses criminalising HIV infection. We participated in reviewing laws, developing policy briefs and proposing mandates.

In **Lesotho**, we gave training and materials to 1,500 individuals in 100 HIV support groups. We also mobilised people to demand home-based care kits and monitor government budgets. Our advocacy helped to influence parliament to commit to a review of the government's HIV and AIDS policy and plans. The government has indicated that it will seek our further input in this process.

In **Uganda**, we were instrumental in formulating the 2009 AIDS Bill and getting it tabled in parliament. We are now working with other civil society organisations to build pressure for the bill to be passed. We received funding of €14,896 from the Open Society Institute for this work.

In **Zimbabwe**, we convene the National Child Protection Committee and sit on the National AIDS Spending Assessment Steering Committee. Our advocacy is informed by our social protection programming through STAR circles, which involves 2,000 people living with HIV. George and Gertrude Manuhwa introduced a new form of advocacy when they decided to use their wedding as part of a positive living campaign: **'We needed to show that positive people are able people.'** Their son added: **'This wedding has been a good advocacy tool and the large crowd is a measure of the extent to which fellow villagers value my parents' work.'** Two other members of George and Gertrude's STAR circle said: **'They taught us about the importance of undergoing testing, being on [anti-retroviral treatment] and how to manage one's diet. This has helped a lot.'**

Gaps, challenges and way forward in 2010

Our local work continued to strengthen, with our STAR methodology spreading within and outside ActionAid. This, combined with our support to activists and networks, provided more people living with HIV and AIDS with the opportunity to analyse and act on their situation in diverse, locally appropriate ways.

Our biggest gap was at the international level, where we did not have a team for most of the year. At least one major programme suffered from the late disbursements of funds: the Mutapola framework for women and HIV, which we originally developed in Africa, was adapted for use in Asia in a participatory process that raised awareness in four countries, but has not yet reached the level of implementation we expected.

By the end of the year, however, the newly re-established international HIV and AIDS team had brought new momentum to our work. In 2010 we will focus our work on mobilising people living with HIV around their rights to primary healthcare, universal access and protection against discrimination. We will further refine this focus through an external review of our HIV work in 2010.

In focus: STAR in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, the government applies a strict policy that prevents community-based organisations from engaging in advocating rights. We used a modified STAR intervention model known as the community-based AIDS programme (CBAP) to address this challenge. One CBAP circle is in Zata, a very poor area where most people we work with own no land and earn just over US\$1 a day through share-cropping. The circle has started a savings and credit fund that helps members rent land or start small businesses.

The major change we achieved was in attitudes towards HIV testing. Of the 30 group members, three tested positive. **'We all agreed to go for voluntary counselling and testing every three months because real change must start with us before we can change our families and our community,'** said Kebedu Tiimay, one of the group facilitators. **'This initiative has played a big role in... reducing stigma and discrimination. We now know that HIV does not transmit through kissing, shaking hands and eating together, so the group has decided to help people living with HIV, including helping them with their household and farming,'** she added.

The CBAP circle also helps to link people to government-run primary healthcare services. **'We appreciate the role the CBAP plays in improving health coverage in this community... In most cases they are our entry points to the community. We also seek their ideas and suggestions in our health priorities,'** observed Aberu Ayenew, the local health post extension agent.

Mary Goret, 12, (right at front), with friends at Kitemba primary school in Madudu sub-county of Mubende, Uganda.

Photo: Georgie Scott/ActionAid



The right to education

‘Rights to end poverty’ requires us to ensure that all children have free access to quality education within an equitable system where children’s rights – especially those of girls – are respected, injustices are challenged and children’s lives can be transformed. We want to see early childhood education and adult learning that lead to social change.

Our three priority intervention areas are: addressing violence against girls in schools; building alliances for education rights; and securing international financing for education. We also continue adult education and social awareness through *Reflect*. In 2009, an external evaluation confirmed that our education work is having significant impact both locally and internationally. We work on education in almost all countries: in **Rwanda** and **Sierra Leone** it is the highest priority. In these countries, they have allocated 62% and 34% of their budgets to education respectively.

Empowerment: linking service delivery to rights locally

Our 2008 review and reflection led us to improve our rights-based approach to education by making more explicit links between service delivery and rights.

In **Lesotho**, we introduced teachers to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, emphasising issues of child protection. The teachers now use this knowledge to support the girls' forums that we established in schools. We also worked to empower parents to take an active role in school governance. Cecilia Motlomeolo, a school board member with four children, told us: **'Before the arrival of ActionAid, we were not even fully aware of our roles, but now we are able to talk to principals and to guide [teachers]. We are fully aware of our rights. We grow vegetables [to give to] vulnerable children to take home and we sell some to buy school shoes and uniforms. All this could have remained a dream had it not been for the teachings of ActionAid.'**

In **Pakistan**, militants opposed to women's rights have been physically destroying girls' schools. We mobilised communities to: protect schools in Malakand; get the government to stop security forces from occupying schools in Buner; get the provincial minister to improve the facilities of a girls' high school in Nawgai; and get the ministry to build and equip a college building in Chamla. We also provided financial support to 57 internally displaced girls to access distance learning from the [Allama Iqbal] Open University, and provided education kits for 300 girls and 400 boys.

In **Sierra Leone**, we organised mother's clubs in 16 communities. The clubs, which each have more than 50 members, encourage mothers to become more involved in their children's education and promote girls' education. They also provide women with a forum to discuss their own welfare.

'I used to feel that advocacy was a difficult thing to do, but when you persist, it pays off. We were able to secure collaboration with Gombe state... to build two classrooms. ActionAid's partnership against poverty programme supported us to pay the 10% contribution. We [also] secured two classrooms from our local government and another three from the state government. We are indeed very happy that our community was one of those chosen for the implementation of the partnership against poverty programme.'

Abel Baba Yila, local activist, Nigeria

Stop Violence Against Girls in Schools Campaign

In **Ghana**, our 8th annual national girls' camp brought together 243 girls from eight regions to highlight the value of education and increase awareness of girls' rights. In 2009 we also held two regional camps. In Upper West region we reached an additional 215 girls and 22 teachers. Before the camp, 75% of participants were planning to migrate for domestic work and then get married; following group discussions, workplace visits and interaction with role models at the camp, the majority hoped to continue their education to become teachers, nurses or engineers. Our camp in Upper East region involved 120 girls from 26 schools, and included participation from high-level female directors and government ministers to inspire the girls. Each of the 26 schools taking part agreed to take on a project to promote girls' education.

In **Kenya**, our girls' clubs involved almost 10,000 girls: **'So far no girl from my group has dropped out from school since I joined the club in Standard 3 in 2004,'** said Loise, 15. **'Through the girls' forum, we have been able to express and share our problems. Boys respect us and fear to infringe on our rights due to continued sensitisation on violence against girls by our teachers. We are being accorded due respect in the community and we are empowered to demand our rights.'**

Cynthia Mogesi, a successful graduate of the programme who refused early marriage and female genital mutilation, is now a medical student: **'I will forever be grateful to ActionAid. I am who I am because of the training and support that I received from their staff. Many of my classmates never got the opportunity. I will remain an ambassador for the war against female genital mutilation in this district and beyond.'**



Teachers Naomi Mchenga and Edna Ajiru at Ufulu Learning Centre, Beheria village in Malawi.

Photo: James Oatway/Panos/ActionAid

Education financing

The *Education Financing Toolkit*, which we co-published in 2009 with the teachers' union federation Education International, helps civil society organisations to understand and act on the barriers to adequate funding of quality public education. We promote the toolkit with the teachers' unions and Global Campaign for Education (GCE) through a series of sub-regional training courses. Our work on macro-economic constraints to public education continued with *Education on the Brink*, which we co-published with the GCE. This study of recent International Monetary Fund (IMF) agreements with low-income countries exposes the IMF for continuing to pursue many of the same harmful policies as before, despite its much publicised new-found 'flexibility'.

In **Nigeria**, the deputy speaker of the Zamfara state House of Assembly confirmed our influence on education financing at state level: **'After the policy dialogue, facilitated by ActionAid, we committed to ensuring that girls' education is given the attention it deserves. We therefore approved an extra budget allocation of 500 million Naira (€2.6 million) for girls' boarding schools.'** The national education budget, in contrast, has declined, so we have embarked on an education financing campaign.

In **Malawi**, we provided training in economic literacy to partners including the teachers' union, an association of religious leaders, and three NGO networks focused on women's rights, health and economic justice respectively. They then applied this training to develop and present their arguments on education financing to the IMF mission, whose chief later promised to discuss expenditure and financing of these sectors with the government.

Internationally, we played a key role in securing US\$17.5 million (€12.2 million) from a pooled fund of 11 bilateral donors for the GCE to support civil society education funds in 50 countries. These funds will enable the work of the national coalitions supported by the Commonwealth Education Fund over the past six years to continue. This was a real breakthrough as it involved getting support, during a financially difficult period, from donors who historically have not offered this type of funding. We also influenced the re-design of the US\$1.5 billion (€1 billion) Education Fast Track Initiative, ensuring support beyond primary school and securing greater independence from the World Bank.



Grace, 8, receives a card from ActionAid UK at Kawaza school in Malawi.

Photo: Georgie Scott/ActionAid

Reflect and adult literacy

Reflect is a methodology that we developed in 2004. It combines literacy training with participatory organising techniques to enable adults to deepen their understanding of, and take action on, the problems they face in their lives. In **Vietnam**, we supported *Reflect* circles for 5,000 people, 90% of whom are from ethnic minorities and 70% of whom are women. Results include: members applying their literacy and numeracy skills in situations such as market negotiations; improved awareness and confidence; improved community spirit; and better interaction. During a focus group interview, one *Reflect* facilitator said of the members: **'Before, they were very afraid of investment. They did not dare to borrow money for husbandry or large-scale farming. Now, they borrow money to buy fertilisers and food for their farms and animals.'** Another said: **'Before, they walked without looking at anyone. Now they say "hi" to everyone. Even a head of village said she [a village woman] became totally different since taking part in Reflect.'**

Our work on adult education also includes advocacy. In **Tanzania**, the Minister of Education re-established an adult literacy unit and a special desk for adult education in response to demands from us and our partners. After collaborating with us on research, Ethiopia's Federal Ministry of Education increased their attention on expanding basic education opportunities for adults. The ministry also established a mechanism to track progress on adult literacy.

Internationally, we played a central role in mobilising civil society to influence the UN Conference on Adult Education in Brazil in December. We helped to achieve agreement among some 500 civil society groups on a 10-point action plan, which subsequently received full or partial endorsement from 36 governments.

Gaps, challenges and way forward in 2010

One major achievement included increasing the impact of our local work by leveraging resources from the state to forge closer links between service delivery and advocacy. We were also very successful in maximising our impact by securing substantial donor funds for national coalition work.

The need to focus our work in the face of limited finances meant we could not, as hoped, increase our work on free school meals or on HIV and education. Nor did we succeed in linking up with feminist groups to improve the gender analysis of our violence against girls in school work. Our reflection from the year is that we are overly caught up in the deliverables and deadlines of donor-funded projects and are not thinking strategically enough.

In 2010 and beyond we will work to connect programmes more from local to national and international levels. We are also committed to using baseline data and core indicator tracking to better understand our impact and provide an evidence base for our policy work at national and international levels. The 'One Goal' campaign, which brought education into the World Cup spotlight, was an important focus for 2010.

In focus: increased involvement of children and youth

In 2009 we placed particular attention on ensuring the active participation of children in our work, not only in education, but also beyond. We recognise that children are an important constituency due to their vulnerability, their potential as agents of change and their role in our fundraising.

In **Mozambique**, we supported children to organise and take up rights issues. Torres Narcisco, 17, president of the children's parliament in Maganja da Costa, shared the following with us: **'Previously, violations [of children's rights] included: the sexual abuse of girls; being forced to carry boxes of school books on their heads for long distances; [and being forced] to cut and carry grass at teachers' houses and farm at the school without getting [any share of] the harvest. We [secured] a meeting with district education officers, school council members, the permanent secretary responsible for the department, members of parliament and the school director to discuss [the issues] openly. The school heads wanted proof. We did not fear: we gave them the names of the schools and the teachers involved. With these facts, the District Department of Education decided to act immediately: they would not allow any more students to build schools or teachers' houses and ensured that [students] benefited from the school farm productions. The teachers implicated in raping girls were disciplined. Today, thanks to these**

talks, the situation has changed and I am very pleased with the [authorities'] openness. I [thank] ActionAid for showing us our rights and the power we have. Due to this support we felt strong enough to advocate for children's rights.'

In **Malawi**, we involved young women and girls in our successful campaign to have the Marriage Act passed, making it illegal for girls under 16 to get married.

In **India**, we supported 16 children affected by HIV and AIDS to speak at a public hearing in Hyderabad called by the National Commission for the Protection of Child Rights. We also secured a commitment from the commissioners to hold regional hearings to improve policies and legislation.

To help children traumatised by the war in Palestine to normalise their lives, our Australia team organised creative writing, traditional dance and drama activities to give children a vehicle to express themselves. Our partner, Sharek Youth Forum, helped young people tell their stories of the problems they face living in Gaza through three short documentary films screened in November.

The Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) was one of several West African countries that helped to develop and pilot a new methodology, Children's Reflection and Empowerment for Social Transformation (CREST). A total of 640 primary school children participated in a nine-

month programme that explored issues around HIV and AIDS, education, environmental sanitation and girls' rights. The consequent evaluation showed attitudinal change, when children spontaneously composed poems related to the issues discussed. For example, boys confidently said that, like them, girls have the right to go to school; one girl demonstrated in her poem how sexual violence can lead to HIV infection; while in Bugobe, a child said: **'The government should open a school very close to us so that we can attend school. If the government does not accept, we will call them and we will tell them our need. If they do not respond then we will all cry to attract their attention so that when they see that we are crying for school, they will feel compassionate and offer us a school.'**

The right to just and democratic governance



Now standing for parliament in Malawi, **Kadhija Hamdani**, took a training course run by Salima Women's Network on Gender and learned about human rights, campaigning and the judiciary.

Photo: Cameron McNee/Mission Malawi/ActionAid

‘Rights to end poverty’ requires us to make local, national and international institutions and governments fully accountable for their actions and responsive to the needs of poor countries and people to help to restore just and democratic governance.

The priorities of our governance work internationally are: helping citizens to hold governments to account through budget and policy monitoring and advocacy; building solidarity between social movements; and supporting people to claim and enjoy their economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights. Overall, we spent €27 million on governance, or 21% of our overall programme budget. This substantial increase from prior years is due to the integration of MS Denmark’s governance budget into our accounts. **Burundi** and **Ghana** also placed a high priority on governance, each spending 30% of their budgets on this theme.

Monitoring and accessing local budgets

ELBAG (economic literacy and budget accountability) is a framework and set of tools that we have developed with our partners to promote citizen action on economic policies and government budgets. ELBAG programmes now exist in 15 countries on three continents.

In **Nigeria**, we used the ELBAG framework to train over 500 people in budget tracking and analysis, gender analysis, government and policy formulation. As a result, a coalition has been formed in Benue state to follow the state budget process, while in Lagos, Ejigbo local council now holds a monthly public accounting meeting on expenditure.

In **Pakistan**, we used ELBAG to influence district, provincial and federal budgets. ELBAG groups in six local areas mobilised around district budgets; groups in 11 other areas mobilised around the national drinking water policy; and conferences on people's budgets analysed three provincial budgets. With partners we analysed the federal budget and our analysis was sent to the media and parliamentarians. As a result of this mobilisation, budget allocations were approved for public water in various areas, worth more than £300,000 (€338,000). The tax justice campaign featured in our 2008 report continued to advocate for fair and transparent levying of land tax. The ELBAG groups that were involved are currently drafting a constitutional petition to be submitted to the High Court against illegal tax collection.

Building youth into active citizens

In **Greece**, one of the major successes of the year was the creation of the development education centre *One World Upside Down* on the ground floor of our premises. Funded by the National Lottery, it hosts groups of children who want to learn about global poverty, human rights and development. The centre is a simulation of a Kenyan community, Bama, which is striving to tackle hunger and poverty through different projects for sustainable development. While pupils are 'flying' to Kenya, they are informed about the country and the situation in Bama. Then they enter into the community and research the living conditions, the problems and the actions taken to fight poverty. *One World* is included in the Ministry of Education's list of suggested school visits. In its first two months (November and December), it hosted 106 children in 10 visits. Comments from pupils from Zografou Primary School include: **'Let us not be unfair, I wish there was justice everywhere'...** **'Although these children have many problems, they don't give up'...** **'We can all make it!'**

In **Myanmar**, we took a thorough approach to building citizenship from the bottom up, by training and supporting *change makers*, also known as *fellows*, to live and work in villages where they help residents to analyse and solve their problems. The fellows were organised into clusters that allowed regular intensive training as well as peer support. Khin Lin, 28, is one of 390 fellows. When Khin first went to her placement, she faced resistance from the village leader, who mocked her, saying that a woman cannot bring about change. Khin first helped children with school work, thus gaining the trust of the mothers, whom she then helped organise into a savings and loan club. The men soon followed with their own club, and eventually a village development committee was established. The committee went on to build a pond providing fresh water for the community with land they were able to secure from the government through advocacy. Khin is an example of how, by empowering one person, you can empower a whole community. In Khin's own words: **'The pride and joy of my whole life is working for the people as a fellow. It is not an exaggeration if I say that I saw the world differently after my fellowship training. I felt valuable as a person and understood the importance of bringing change to my community. One of the most important things I learned was about gender and this has changed me in terms of the way I think about myself as a woman.'**

Civil and political rights

In **China**, we also run a fellowship programme in partnership with the Leaders' Quest Foundation. The programme involves 39 young people from universities and 41 fellows from rural areas. The fellows are given a year of training and then go to villages to help with community development projects. We also support villagers to understand their rights through the 'barefoot lawyer' project, which in 2009 developed a guide to farmer's rights with input from poor farmers. The government agreed to distribute the guide through rural libraries.

Internationally, we brought together young activists from 14 countries to discuss social protection in light of the financial and food crises. The young people have committed to carrying out participatory research and advocate with their governments for better policies as a result.

In **Nepal**, people currently have the opportunity to build their own constitution through an inclusive Constituent Assembly. We established a special initiative including radio broadcasts and local consultations to mobilise communities to influence this process. A national conference consolidated all the local recommendations into a policy document, *Upcoming constitution: human rights benchmarks*, which was submitted to the constitution-making process. Based on this work, the government asked us to make submissions related to the rights to food, health and education. We also made recommendations on local government. Fifty law students helped mobilise over 4,000 local people on this issue. Many of our recommendations appear in the draft constitution.

In **Kenya**, we partnered with the Kenya Women Parliamentary Association and other women's rights groups to hold a conference of 300 women on the constitution. We supported women from grassroots organisations to attend to ensure their needs were included in the list of minimum standards. We mobilised citizens in all the 23 areas where we work, after training more than 600 facilitators who distributed 25,000 copies of the draft constitution. Through this and other mobilisation efforts, a total of 11,000 submissions were received from the communities where we work.

Public policy monitoring

In **Kenya**, the people's participation for equality project employed community advocacy facilitators to help influence policies more strongly at the local level. One of these facilitators, Renson Psinon, was given an award by the president during Independence Day celebrations. He said: **'As a result of my advocacy work, the local council put up police houses at the border to mitigate attacks from cattle rustlers. I was active in insisting on equitable allocation of funds to benefit those living with disabilities. I influenced the bursary fund in favour of students from poor families. I am grateful that ActionAid offered me the opportunity to serve my community.'**

Also in **Kenya**, we helped revive the Social and Public Accountability Network, which aims to expose corruption and poor management of devolved funds. In total 10 cases were taken up, leading to, among others, the recovery of bags of cement in Bondo that were meant for the school but were taken by a teacher; and an arrest for the misappropriation of 2 million shillings (€18,300) and the theft of an ambulance motor in Magarini. **'Due to this, the school was saved [and will now] serve the local community well,'** said Julius Fondo, a member of the social audit team.

Gaps, challenges and way forward in 2010

In **Kenya**, in Kilifi we continued pushing government to use local transparency boards for budget information. Five development funds and town councils eventually agreed. **'We are now keen to ensure that all projects get done since we can easily access this information from the boards and relate it to projects on the ground,'** said a concerned resident, Regina Chishenga. Citsuna, a public works offer from Malindi, added: **'Initially we thought that these [social auditors] were just a bunch of trouble makers... Now we work together very well and appreciate every bit of their work. In fact they have made our work easier since they also play a supervisory and monitoring role on all our projects.'**

In **Uganda**, the urban poor of Kampala used the 20-point agenda for change that they developed with us in 2008 to mobilise citizens and civil society groups to support their demands for quality social services and public accountability. Social watch groups, which were an outcome of the Rights to the City campaigns of 2008, played an important role in the mobilisation, holding public debates with policy-makers at local and national levels. Among the demands was a rejection of the private garbage collection firms, which were extorting money from people and providing poor services: the city council was forced to cancel the contracts and provide city trucks to serve the areas. The local authority also increased the 2010/11 budget allocation for social services by 20%. The slum dwellers in

Kawempe Division committed to monitoring the spending of this money, and to further mobilisation to develop a charter and hold a mass convention to channel civic anger about poor services.

In **India** participants took to the streets to demand immediate action and vowed to return in larger numbers, if the need arises, to voice their demands and remind the politicians of unfulfilled promises and people's power. **'We are not here to plead, but to demand!'** was the clear message coming from the 20,000 people who gathered for the Bhopal public hearing in India. A jury of eminent personalities heard 17 testimonies, and was unanimous in its verdict that all the demands were in line with the Constitution and must be met.

Our work on local authority budgets and national policy monitoring has helped thousands of people to claim services and entitlements from the state, increasing the accountability of government and the strength of citizens.

The State of the State report, which we reported as delayed last year, remains incomplete. Nor did we achieve our ambition to improve documentation of local governance work.

However, by the end of the year, we had agreed on a sharper focus to our work and entered into a memorandum with one of our newest members, MS Denmark, to take over leadership of our governance work, based on their strong experience in local governance and citizen empowerment work. Our future focus will be on building local democracy and governance, as well as promoting national governance accountability through our work on national development strategies.

Raped by rebel soldiers, **Marceline Semivumbi**, 41, with her children in Kibati refugee camp near Goma in DRC – she is worried her children are not attending school.

Photo: Lionel Healing/ActionAid



The right to human security in conflict and emergencies

‘Rights to end poverty’ requires us to work both before potential crises erupt to reduce the risks and mitigate impacts, and afterwards, to assist recovery and explore the opportunities for change that occur at times of flux.

Our strategic plan on human security sets out three priority programmes: emergency preparedness and response; disaster risk reduction; and conflict sensitivity. The major focus for 2009 was increasing the speed and efficiency of our response, and we successfully responded to more than 20 medium and major emergencies, and numerous small-scale disasters. In all of these, we took a rights-based approach whereby we actively involved people affected by the disasters, and ensured that the responses incorporated any issues of rights, for example, in relation to land, or protection. We also prioritised work on climate change adaptation and protection. Our overall spend on this theme was €21.5 million, or 17% of total spend. The largest programmes were in Kenya, where drought response brought our expenditure up to €9.4 million or 63% of national spending. **DRC** categorised 62% of its work under this theme, while **Haiti** earmarked 34% of its budget to emergency responses.

Emergency preparedness and response

Our major emergency responses this year were to: drought in East Africa; the food crisis in Guatemala; a cholera epidemic in Zimbabwe; and cyclones and floods in Asia. We also continued our longer-term rehabilitation work to overcome conflict in the DRC, and in the aftermath of the 2007 and 2008 cyclones in Myanmar and Bangladesh. The European Commission Humanitarian Aid Office was our major partner and donor for this work, providing almost €4 million for projects in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Vietnam.

In **Zimbabwe**, a serious outbreak of more than 100,000 cases of cholera resulted in over 4,300 deaths between August 2008 and July 2009. We provided essential items, awareness-raising and emergency medical supplies, using resources from the UK government, the UN and other supporters, including ActionAid Greece supporters, who donated almost £200,000 (€225,000). With the outbreak under control, we continue to work to rehabilitate water and sanitation infrastructure to minimise the risk of future epidemics.

In **Gaza**, we provided cooking utensils and hygiene and first aid kits to more than 1,800 people affected by fighting that broke out between Hamas militants and the Israeli army in January, killing over 1,000 people. We also partnered with the Palestinian Business Women's Association to provide micro-enterprise support to 97 women, and trained three community groups on how to undertake a rights-based approach to protection issues.

In **Bangladesh**, we provided people with food, water and other items such as cooking utensils and tarpaulins in the immediate wake of Cyclone Aila. We also set up health camps to treat injuries and reduce the risk of disease spreading. Meanwhile, more than 112 landless families gained legal entitlement to their land through our ongoing work with survivors of Cyclone Sidr.

In **Guatemala**, we responded swiftly to the hunger crisis brought about by a combination of drought, crop failure and a drop in remittances as a result of the global financial crisis. Through our local partner Comscal we provided food packages to 1,200 families and nutritious drinks to more than 4,000 children aged 6–17 who were identified as malnourished by local health authorities. We helped eight communities to establish gardens and provided seeds and farming expertise to more than 300 people. We also campaigned for a rural development law that will provide longer-term solutions through increased public support to peasant farmers.

The long-running food crisis in eastern Africa intensified, affecting millions of people across Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Somaliland. While stepping up our advocacy for long-term solutions through the HungerFREE campaign, we also provided and demanded immediate humanitarian responses.

Leroy, one of over 725,000 cholera victims who benefited from our services and education work, and his grandmother Rufario Tokoyo, learned how to prevent the disease through community theatre. Rufario said: 'The drama made me a new person because I gained so much knowledge about cholera. I want this social mobilisation to carry on – campaigns like this one should be continued to keep our communities alert to the issues.'

In **Uganda**, prolonged drought led to crop failures and loss of livestock, leaving approximately 1.3 million people food insecure. We provided 150 metric tonnes of food as emergency relief to almost 16,000 people over 14 days as we mobilised those who had been affected to demand food from the government. The debate on the food rights of people in north-eastern Uganda escalated to the national level. This led to increasing public pressure, and the government eventually organised a delivery of 43 metric tonnes of food and committed itself to providing €7.3 million to support hunger-affected families in the east and north.

In **Kenya**, we responded to the devastating effects of the prolonged drought with both immediate relief and longer-term interventions. We took a lead role in responding to the drought in two districts, where we partnered with the World Food Programme and the national government to provide food to over 250,000 people. We also supported about 2,000 schoolchildren with a supplementary feeding scheme to meet their hunger needs and enable them to stay in school. Our participatory approach ensured that those receiving aid were actively involved in choosing who received the assistance.

Regional trainings, supported by our specialised international emergencies and conflict team, were held in Nairobi and Bangalore, providing training to over 40 ActionAid staff from 25 countries in four critical areas of emergency response: women's rights in emergencies; livelihoods; psychosocial care and support; and protection. We also developed a range of guidance manuals on emergency response, women's rights, livelihoods and psychosocial support for use at local level. Australia, supported by the international team, also developed a detailed protection manual. During the year we supported a total of 16 countries across Asia, Africa and the Americas to develop hazard analysis and contingency planning mechanisms for predictable disasters.



ActionAid Kenya distributes food at Tangulbei, Rift Valley, Kenya.

Photo: Des Willie/ActionAid

Disaster risk reduction

In 2009 we secured funding from the European Commission for disaster preparedness programmes in four countries in Asia. We also continued to implement the UK and Greek government-funded disaster risk reduction through schools (DRRS) project across Africa, Asia and the Americas. This project combines programme activities at local level with policy and advocacy at local and national level. This, in turn, feeds into international lobbying on the Hyogo Framework for Action, an action plan signed by 168 states to build the resilience of nations and communities to disasters.

Kenya was one of five countries that hosted a peer review of the DRRS project. All five reviews showed good progress overall. Impacts in Kenya included: increased awareness of climate change and disaster prevention among pupils, parents and teachers; integration of disaster risk reduction issues in the secondary school and university curricula; and the implementation of practical mitigation measures such as planting wind-breaking trees and installing rainwater harvesting structures. Rhea Katsanakis of the UN testified: **'ActionAid has been very active in taking the Hyogo Framework of Action on board and putting it into practice. By promoting children to speak about natural disasters and the challenges they face they have achieved increased awareness among communities... [and] among the international community about the challenges disasters pose at community level to the most vulnerable parts of society.'**

In **Cambodia**, public awareness on disaster risk reduction was raised through puppet and street theatre shows, and by supporting communities to form self-help groups to work at community level on disaster preparedness issues. Keal Sabang, deputy secretary of one of our partners, said: **'People have now realised the role of a commune and its power to bring about a change in people's quality of life... Nearly 80% of the community actively participate in [self-help group] meetings. Those who are not able to attend get the information from others. Now people can identify local issues on their own, develop a plan of action and seek the support of government and NGOs for action. The presence of water pumping machines, canals and rice banks owned and maintained by local communities is a visible example. The community members have learnt how to work, grow and learn together, to plan and join hands with government and NGOs. They have also learnt how to meticulously implement the decision of the community with a deep sense of responsibility and commitment.'**



Father of five **Muslim Ghani**, 45, cannot find work after being displaced by a government offensive against militants in Pakistan – he received food and support from ActionAid in Swabi District.

Photo: Adam Ferguson/ActionAid

Conflict sensitivity and protection

The success of our Danish International Development Agency (DANIDA)-funded two-year reducing violence against women project in Burundi, DRC and Sierra Leone has led to a new, two-year collaboration on access to justice for women. We raised another £1 million (€1.1 million) from the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) to extend the programme to three more West African countries. Through the project, women's groups in the DRC have brought the voices of women at local level into campaigns at the national level. The project also facilitated the entry of women into key leadership positions from which they can influence policy relating to women's rights. Local partner organisation Sauti Women's Group lobbied negotiators for the inclusion of violations against women and girls in the peace agreements. The project also provided skills and business training to 144 female survivors of violence – including 54 HIV-positive women from Bukavu and Goma (who became positive through rape) – to enable them to become financially independent. On the basis of the emotional support they provide each other, their new-found confidence and financial stability have reduced their stigma in the eyes of fellow community members. Chukuru, 17, said: **'It has been very useful for me to learn how to manage funds and business, and now I generate benefits from it. With my charcoal business, I can now feed myself and my children, and have medical care... I even have the impression that people are no longer looking down on us.'**

Burundi and Sierra Leone worked to reform and train the police to respect and protect women's rights. We invested in the government's Family Support Unit, providing human rights training and resources such as computers, to ensure that the service provides better care, support and advice to women survivors of violence. We also continued to support civil society groups focused on violence against women. Lucie Ntamuzuro from Burundi tells us how she became involved in the programme: **'When the crisis broke out in 1993, I sought refuge in Tanzania. Never a day went by there without hearing about a new case of rape in the refugee camps. When I returned to Burundi, I realised this problem existed in my commune. Polygamy, rape, domestic violence and children being abandoned were everyday events. With a few friends we decided to set up a campaign group to combat violence. As well as giving financial support to victims, we provide accommodation for those who have been rejected by their families, and offer a mediation service to help their families take them back. We go with the women to the police so they can put together a case. We put them in touch with other women's support organisations at province level. We feel that we have made a big step forward with ActionAid's support. We've already dealt with 12 rape cases and several cases of domestic violence.'**



ActionAid responds to the **cholera** epidemic in Zimbabwe by providing information at Mukamba clinic in Hwedza.

Photo: James Oatway/Panos/ActionAid

Humanitarian reform

Internationally our primary advocacy aim is to increase the effectiveness of the international humanitarian sector and its accountability to disaster-affected communities. One vehicle for this is the DFID-funded NGOs and Humanitarian Reform Project, a consortium initiative in which we are the lead agency. The consortium carried out research in Afghanistan, DRC, Ethiopia, Sudan and Zimbabwe on the successes and failures of humanitarian reform. The synthesis report based on the research findings provided specific recommendations for strengthening partnerships and accountability within the humanitarian system.

Gaps, challenges and way forward in 2010

We were able to help hundreds of thousands of people in our emergency response, and succeeded in increasing the speed of this response. An untold number of others were spared the worst effects of disasters through our risk reduction programmes, which although difficult to evaluate were acknowledged by peers as successful, and which provided a practical way for us to help poor and excluded people deal with climate change.

This year we were not as effective as we would have liked to be in documenting and communicating our work. We failed to develop our planned strategy for work on conflict, despite 25 country programmes operating in conflict or post-conflict situations. And while we had some good achievements, we want to raise more funds and further improve our emergency responses. We have identified three areas for increased focus, and in 2010 we will: map our work on conflict; develop a discussion paper to clarify our approach; and form a working group across the organisation. We will develop a series of communications products, tailored to individual audiences internally and externally, to share lessons from our work and increase its visibility. We will review all our emergency preparedness tools and training to increase relevance to specific contexts, and to ensure stronger emphasis on follow-up and refresher elements.

Susmita Pariyar demands her right to food at Shree Buddha Jwoti Lower Secondary School, in Balaju, Kathmandu in Nepal.

Photo: Tom Van Cakenberghe/OnAsia/ActionAid



The right to food

‘Rights to end poverty’ requires us to go beyond alleviating hunger to address its root causes, which we understand to be unequal access to and control over resources such as land.

This year, our work on food rights became even more relevant due to the higher numbers of people facing hunger. Our three international priorities remained: local sustainable agriculture and livelihoods; strengthening farmers’ movements and food security networks; and monitoring and influencing food and agriculture policy nationally and internationally, particularly through our HungerFree campaign. In 2009, we spent 14% – or €17.8 million of our overall programme budget – on food rights. The biggest contributors were [India](#) (€2.5 million, or 27% of their national budget) and [Afghanistan](#) (€1.6 million, or 55%). Food rights were also the first priority for [South Africa](#) and [Senegal](#), with each devoting 30% of their budget to the issue. The greatest success of the year was building an effective, united response to the food crisis, despite the leadership transitions in both our food rights and international campaigns teams.

Empowering farmers through agriculture and livelihoods programmes

In **India**, women who fish for their livelihood won a major victory when the government of West Bengal issued them with identity cards that acknowledge them as fishers. This is a first in the history of West Bengal, and gives these women the right to compensation in the event of accidents or natural calamities. This victory is the result of mobilisation since 2008 by our partner Digambarpur Angikar, which helped the women to organise a series of protests and rallies. Another inspiration from India is the seed movement in Budelkhand. Members of this movement have sown an estimated 10,000 acres of land belonging to over 700 small farmers with drought-resistant seed worth over 5 million rupees (€74,000), thus helping insulate them from hunger. In Jharhand, our partner Gene Campaign has successfully demonstrated the system of rice intensification in three villages, giving farmers a powerful means to adapt to climate change and mitigate its adverse impacts.

In **Ethiopia**, a new act criminalised human rights work, and poverty is extreme. We therefore support people primarily through service delivery. In 2009 we supported close to 4,800 farmers in crop development groups with seeds, tools and irrigation. We also supported nearly 9,000 rural people with livestock rearing support, including veterinary services. Another 7,000 people were supported in small business development, including training and credit.

ActionAid **Brazil** is building a future generation of farmers by supporting education alternatives and engaging with the government on their youth policy. Nearly 500 boys and girls aged 9–16 have graduated from family agriculture schools run by our partner Assema. **'I use the technical knowledge I learn in school... The other day I was with a group of women who plant pineapple in a community nearby. I made a lot of suggestions for them,'** says Linalva Silva, a technician who graduated from a family agriculture school. Assema and another partner Comsef also supported young people to discuss and analyse public policies. This support included sending youth delegates from poor communities to participate in the national conference for youth, and creating a youth and young leaders' commission. **'The main issues for the youth are education, jobs and income. The dialogue between civil society and decision makers still needs to progress'**, said Rafael de Azevedo, a 29-year-old member of Pernambuco state's Young People of the Northeast Network, following debates at the World Social Forum in Belém in 2009.

Farmer-to-farmer exchanges were held between Senegal and the Gambia to share learning on the territorial development initiative methodology, and between Kenya and Tanzania on cashew nut production and marketing. On their return, the Kenyan farmers who took part in the exchange demanded space on the government body responsible for fixing prices and providing

technical support to the cashew nut sub-sector. Two farmers now have a seat in this committee, and successfully pushed through their demand for a ban on the export of raw cashew nuts, which various committees have recommended as a means of reducing exploitation and increasing income.

In **Bangladesh**, 1,000 small-holder and landless families have formed 34 farmer organisations, which together make a farmers' federation. With our support, these groups increased their rice production by 9–15% with integrated crop and pest management methods and using seeds procured from the Rice Research Institute. Pesticide and fertiliser use has decreased by 75%; they are using local organic manures instead. Communities have also established rice banks and are now saving one handful of rice each week. Food consumption has also increased, through vegetable gardening.

Noor Jahan is one of many success stories from Bangladesh. She used to live hand-to-mouth before she received veterinary training. She is now in charge of a community-managed local veterinary centre and a member of the local government committee. People call her 'Doctor'.

Building solidarity through movements and networks

Because our campaigning model is built on strengthening local organisations, we supported numerous groups of farmers, fisherfolk, workers and labourers to come together in movements and networks in many countries. For example, in **Nepal** our partner – Community Self Reliance Centre – brought together 130 land rights activists from 26 districts in a national gathering to build solidarity and knowledge among local land movements. In **Tanzania**, membership in the 13 district-level farmers’ organisations we support increased by 27% between 2008 and 2009. Together, these farmers achieved more representation in five district marketing systems, and rebuilt cooperatives in three districts.

We continued our support to the International Food Security Network, which now has member networks in 26 countries. These networks, together with our national HungerFREE campaigns, play a pivotal role in civil society mobilisation around the food crisis. We achieved a major success by securing three more years of funding from the EU for the network. We supported national farmers’ movements in many countries, helping them to participate in regional federations and platforms such as Via Campesina, the Pan African Farmers’ Platform (which brings together four sub-regional farmers’ platforms), and the American network Coprofam. Joint activities with these networks helped influence processes such as regional integration in the Americas, the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Programme and the Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa.

Advocacy and campaigning: influencing national and international food policy

At the time of our collective review in mid-October, three-quarters of ActionAid countries reported at least partial policy change progress on their national HungerFREE campaign goals, and two thirds reported good or excellent progress towards overall goals.

On World Food Day (16 October), a month before a big world summit on hunger in Rome, we made a big noise about ending hunger nationally and globally. Under the slogan *Free the hungry billion*, we mobilised people across the countries where we work and achieved national and international media exposure for the campaign. Some countries also mobilised on 15 October – Rural Women’s Day – to draw attention to the issues of women and land.

Activista, ActionAid’s global youth network, hit the streets in 13 countries, beating kitchen tools, drums and pans to wake up the world’s leaders and decision-makers and to demand immediate action on hunger. Fatima Madaki from Activista Nigeria said: **‘Hunger is manmade and can be stopped. As a young person I believe that Activista is the platform for me to campaign against hunger both in Nigeria and internationally.’**

In **Sierra Leone**, determined to put words into action, Activista members established a model farm that produced a bumper harvest. Youth also mobilised in Greece: in July, Activista member Elena Xronopoulou reported: **‘We have already collected 19,000 petitions for “say no to hunger” and we hope that by 16 October we will exceed the 20,000. This is how we can push the governments to keep their promises and respond to our call for supporting the South!’**

In the **Gambia**, a caravan of 25 people toured the country raising awareness on land issues as part of the HungerFREE campaign. The initiative reached 5,000 people and culminated on World Food Day. The caravan gave increased impetus to other campaign work. Plans were sharpened, and case studies were gathered and widely disseminated. Senior government officials, the FAO and the national assembly were involved: the Secretary of State for Agriculture acknowledged on TV that the land tenure system needed to be reviewed in relation to women’s access, control and ownership, and that women are severely overburdened and need labour-saving devices. The caravan launched the HungerFREE scorecard in each region. **‘This is the most effective campaign that has ever been done – not just by ActionAid but by any organisation in the Gambia,’** said Demba, a journalist for Foroyoa.

In **Guatemala**, we helped develop the proposal for an Integral Rural Development Law and Policy, the culmination of our work with the national university and our partner CUC, the committee for peasant unity. Although the CUC and ActionAid have engaged with many government and parliament bodies, the law has yet to be approved.

In **India**, we influenced the government to end the practice of regulating and managing coastal land areas and to give people with disabilities 100 days' work under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act.

ActionAid in the **United States** continued lobbying the congress on biofuels, land rights and food prices, and carried out action research with Guatemala, Brazil, Ghana, Senegal and Mozambique on these issues with funding from the Hewlett, Moriah and Wallace Genetic Foundations. This led to the report *Rethinking the rush to agrofuel*. This, in turn, was the basis of a congressional briefing and later a Senate hearing, with presentations from ActionAid staff and partners from Senegal, Brazil and Guatemala. Although we have yet to succeed in matching the influence of the powerful US ethanol lobby, our team has been recognised among the leading development NGOs working on this issue, evidenced by an invitation from the Ford Foundation to partner them on this work in the US, Brazil and Guatemala through to 2012.

In **Brazil**, the right to food was finally enshrined in the constitution, the culmination of a major campaign that ActionAid participated in with many organisations that mobilised 55,100 people in 14 public events. This included public hearings, the 'one minute's noise against hunger' mobilisation and an online petition. We received significant media coverage around the world.

In addition, we collectively mobilised to influence decision-makers at two key global events – the G8 Summit in July and the World Food Summit in November – where approximately 30 countries carried out 130,000 actions. What's more, 180,000 citizens from 191 countries signed an online petition jointly sponsored by ActionAid and Avaaz, calling on the G8 to deliver the full US\$20 billion (€13.9 billion) developing country agriculture and food security package. We presented the petition to the French Minister of Food, and held a candlelit vigil at the Coliseum in Rome. The event received excellent media coverage, as evidenced by the 850 online hits, 30 print articles and 25 broadcast mentions. At the same time, our HungerFREE scorecard report generated almost 1,000 online clips, over 100 broadcast inserts and 124 printed articles. Peter Beiler, a senior policy advisor at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), said that our report **'is a rather powerful instrument and really a good example of how to translate promises in political coherence. It is an inspiring piece of work.'**

These actions, combined with our scorecard report, which analysed the responses of 27 governments to the food crisis, played an important role in maintaining international pressure for action on hunger and led to a number of national commitments from governments, including one of US\$22 billion (€15 billion) from world leaders at the G8 Summit. Although this was less than required, it was a huge step forward in a sector where aid had fallen sharply over two decades. Internationally, we were one of the leading NGOs influencing the reform of the FAO's Committee on Food Security. We helped ensure that the reform process put the governance of the international food crisis response under a multilateral body, rather than a small group of countries, with the participation of civil society.

Gaps, challenges and way forward in 2010



President of Brazil Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva receiving an ActionAid Award (boxing gloves), for making efforts to knock out hunger in Brazil, during the World Summit on Food Security. Brazil received the award after ActionAid's research found that Brazil ranked top above 29 other developing countries. Over the past seven years, President Lula has reduced child malnutrition by 73% and child deaths by 45%. Adriano Campolina, regional director for Latin America, said: 'President Lula has shown the world that it is possible to take dramatic steps to fight hunger by supporting small-holder farmers and implementing welfare programmes directly benefiting the poorest.'

Photo: ActionAid

We achieved impact both directly in people's lives, particularly through our close work with men and women farmers to gain land and improve agriculture, and indirectly at the policy level nationally and internationally.

We developed pilots to test our food programming approach and tools, but have yet to consolidate our learning in a coherent programme manual. The future of our lobbying work with the FAO is unclear and we had to drop some activities, largely due to changes in our international team.

Our work on the food crisis will continue in 2010; a priority will be to strengthen programme quality through training, technical advice and guidance to country staff on issues such as sustainable agriculture and linking local programme, policy and campaigns work. We are developing a funding proposal to implement a multi-country project in some of the most food-insecure countries to demonstrate the effectiveness of our approach on sustainable agriculture and small-holders. We also need to deepen our understanding of how to better integrate popular mobilisation and campaigning into our programme work and vice versa, and develop better systems to join up our campaigning and advocacy efforts across countries.



Influencing the global response to the financial and climate crisis through our policy and campaigns work

The food crisis was not the only factor that contributed to pushing the number of chronically malnourished above one billion for the first time last year. Climate change and the global recession that followed the 2008 financial crisis also took a big toll. Our response focused on changing the global 'rules of the game' that made the impact of both crises fall so heavily on the countries that did least to cause them. We also advocated for mitigating measures such as climate adaptation programmes and expanded social security programmes in developing countries.

Raising more resources for development

Through our HungerFREE campaign, the Global Call to Action against Poverty and national mobilisations such as ‘Put People First’ in the UK (which brought 35,000 people onto the streets ahead of the G20 meeting in April), we demanded bailouts for the poor and not just for bankers. We demanded that governments should: fulfil their existing promises to increase aid; abolish the international tax loopholes that cost developing countries hundreds of billions of dollars every year; and establish innovative new forms of financing, such as redistributing the IMF’s special drawing rights from rich to poor countries, and the Robin Hood tax on financial transactions.

Our advocacy on the use of special drawing rights for development succeeded in influencing the inter-governmental group of 24 countries on the **IMF**, which adopted some of our recommendations. **‘Your work on [special drawing rights] and the global reserve system is indeed useful, constructive and pivotal to real political processes in the UN fora. Venezuelan and Ecuadorian delegates mentioned, just yesterday, that they have been using our joint paper in their discussions,’** commented Bhumika Muchhala of the Third World Network.

We also made gains on protecting tax revenue in developing countries. The **UK** mobilised over 5,000 supporters with its *Outrageous revenue service* campaign and, as part of a bigger civil society coalition, achieved UK government support for our positions in Europe. **‘It’s been a very imaginative campaign, with a touch of humour, which always helps. The issues are absolutely the right ones,’** said Stephen Timms, who was Treasury minister at that time. Thanks to combined pressure from many NGOs including ActionAid, the OECD agreed to implement automatic information exchange on tax payments in different jurisdictions, and country-by-country reporting for corporations. In 2010, we will build on our successes in Europe, focusing on Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania.

Better management of the extractives sector is also key to reducing poverty and promoting development in the many low-income countries whose economies depend on primary commodities. Our report *Breaking the curse*, jointly published with four other leading advocacy groups, exposed how concessions negotiated in secret allow foreign mining companies to pay very low tax in seven African countries. The resulting publicity helped give impetus to the Publish What You Earn campaign, of which ActionAid is a member. The campaign influenced parliaments in Ghana and Tanzania to call for a review of mining revenue agreements, and helped push the African Union to move ahead with long-awaited plans for a continent-wide mining code that aims to ensure equitable revenue and strengthen linkages between mining and the development of the rest of the economy.

In **Mozambique**, the government cancelled a UK-based mining company’s licence as a result of our advocacy and campaigning work. Our team in Tanzania, with colleagues in Australia, commissioned a study on Australian mining companies in Tanzania to inform our advocacy over the next two years.

Expanding social security

In **South Africa**, we won a significant victory in the form of a public apology from mining giant Anglo Platinum to poor communities for exhuming graves without proper consultation and in violation of the South African Heritage Resources Act. Anglo Platinum also committed to paying to re-exhume the graves, which will allow community members to bury loved ones according to their customs. Meanwhile, the two-year campaign we have waged with the 17,000 poor people who were relocated to give the company access to minerals finally bore results as the government provided them with water and two schools. These efforts are part of a larger campaign with Jubilee South Africa to stop mining corporations from destroying community livelihoods and the environment.

In **India**, we continued to support tribal communities who are resisting the loss of their land to the Vedanta mining corporation with mobilisation around a hearing in March, to prevent further expansion of the refinery. In September a community representative, Sitaram Kulesik, attended Vedanta's Annual General Meeting in London. Supporters mobilised in a demonstration outside, drawing shareholders' attention to the company's false promises to the community. As a result, some of the shareholders committed to withdrawing their shares from Vedanta.

India recently enacted laws offering generous social protection, including guaranteed employment of 100 days for rural people. Although social programmes like this made a critical difference for the poor during the 2008/09 global recession, massive discrimination and corruption means that millions are still excluded from social benefits. Our India programme takes a three-pronged approach to this problem by raising awareness, helping poor people claim their government entitlements and building a massive alliance of marginalised people to challenge existing inequity and demand just laws and policies. We focus on the poorest and most excluded communities – such as Dalits, indigenous people, fisherfolk communities and Muslims. Within these communities we focus on single women, widows, street children, child labourers, homeless people, people with disabilities and people living with HIV.

In the past two years, we introduced community registers that monitor what people are entitled to by law, and what they actually claim. We have used the information produced to support mobilisation to address any gaps, resulting in tens of thousands of people gaining more social protection. In 2009, more than 15,000 people received previously unclaimed pension monies; over 182,000 successfully claimed the right to subsidised food; more than 71,000 urban poor were registered to vote; 1,115 childhood development centres and 685 schools were

opened; and nearly 5,000 women obtained maternity benefits. In the last two years, claims under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act generated £7.8 million (€8.7 million). Ongoing advocacy from our partner in Bihar also resulted in the state government's announcement of an additional rehabilitation package for manual scavenger families: 4,500 families received Rs 30,000 (€450) each as a result.

In 2009, an election year, ActionAid India organised 'people's conclaves' in six regions. Thousands of women and men from hundreds of villages across the 24 states and the Union Territory where we work came together to make political parties aware of their issues, speaking out on issues such as their right to land, the poor quality of services and the lack of attention that party manifestos usually display towards the poor. As a result, different parties promised to look into many of the demands that were raised by people. We continued to organise conclaves, public hearings and people's tribunals after the elections to keep up the pressure.

Demanding climate justice

Although the impact of climate change on poor people has not yet reached the scale and visibility of the food and financial crises, the world is close to reaching a 'tipping point' beyond which devastating temperature changes will become inevitable in the near future. As with the other crises, the overwhelming share of the damage from climate change will fall on poor people in poor countries. This is why we became involved in civil society efforts to push for a positive conclusion to the international climate change negotiations, and increased our efforts to strengthen our own and our partners' capacity around these issues: so we can increase our influence on such matters in the future.

We lobbied international negotiations in Bonn, Bangkok and Copenhagen to ask rich countries to reduce their emissions by 40% and provide US\$200 billion a year (€139.5 billion) to help developing countries (which created only 2% of global emissions in the last century) to address climate change. Unfortunately, only Norway agreed to this level of reduction, and negotiations ended in chaos due to attempts by powerful countries to push through their interests. Our efforts helped to ensure that the media correctly portrayed the negotiations as a failure, rather than the breakthrough that powerful leaders claimed. Media coverage of our position included 80 print articles, 37 broadcast inserts and 1,031 online clips. Our representatives at the negotiations included two women farmers from Vietnam, who

described the impact of flooding and drought to media and negotiators. **'ActionAid has been working in my area for about 10 years and living conditions have improved. There have been income-generation projects, microfinance, gender equality programmes and public administration reform. But every time there's a typhoon people fall back into poverty again. The crops get washed away,'** said Nguyen Thi Huong, 45, from Ha-tihn Province.

Our work on international mechanisms for equitable climate finance gained recognition and helped influence legislation in the US Senate following an invitation to our US director, Peter O'Driscoll, to testify before the powerful Senate Foreign Relations Committee. ActionAid also helped to secure a US\$50 million (€34.8 million) US contribution to UN climate funds. With Friends of the Earth, we wrote a formal Congressional memorandum to the Chair of the Appropriations Committee and met with nearly every Democrat on the relevant committees to call for these funds.

Our self-assessment of our emerging climate change work is positive. We believe that outcomes well exceeded investment. Going forward, we need to increase our influence with governments by sharing more information with them in advance and getting people onto their delegations. We also need to deepen our programme knowledge of how poor communities can fight global warming through low-carbon and

climate-resilient techniques such as sustainable agriculture. In 2010, we will increase our investment from one full-time international member of staff to a core team of 12 people who spend 20% or more of their time on climate change issues.



Getting their voices heard
– campaigners at London's Put People First March on the eve of the G20 summit.

Photo: Kristian Buus/ActionAid



A warm welcome for ActionAid's peer review team in the Ziseiri Community, Ghana, where the **Disaster Risk Reduction through Schools Project** is working to reduce people's vulnerability to natural disasters.

Photo: ActionAid

This year, we report in some depth on our organisation-wide priority on deepening accountability. This is only a brief summary of progress on other organisational objectives; reports from each of the functions and a director's review of progress against annual plan priorities are both available on request from the International Secretariat in Johannesburg.

Strengthening ActionAid

'Rights to end poverty' sets out six organisational objectives to enable us to achieve our mission by being more accountable, effective, dynamic and international.

Developing our people, systems and structures

We now have 2,328 staff globally – that's 305 (12%) fewer people than in 2008. International staffing levels fell 17% to 175. This deliberate down-sizing, in response to the global recession, was achieved primarily through not filling vacated or new posts. We also significantly reduced costs by appointing most new international staff to work from their home countries. Only 55 staff (down from 73) receive expatriate benefits.

Staff development efforts included a new online induction module, which received an eight-out-of-ten average rating by staff. In July, we had our first-ever full country director forum involving 41 country directors, 12 international directors and 11 other international staff.

This event, hosted by MS Denmark in Copenhagen, included two days' discussing major organisational business decisions and 10 days of shared learning and training. The latter was co-designed and facilitated by country directors and international staff. The Kenya director, Jean Kamau, testified: **'The country directors' forum in Copenhagen was an excellent learning opportunity that brought all the concepts and policies of ActionAid home. It was invaluable for creating a better understanding of the organisation's priorities and challenges in a dynamic, changing world.'**

We signed up to People in Aid, a global network of international NGOs that provides a code of

practice in people management, and rolled out a revised set of human resource standards and an accompanying toolkit. We also developed a number of other significant policies, including: a framework to determine the strategic and transparent allocation of discretionary financial resources; a policy to clarify the fundraising we can do from companies without compromising our mission or reputation; and a system of key performance indicators that allows us to quickly identify the location, nature and scale of problems and take action to correct them. The information on the first reporting period was greatly appreciated by the board and the system will continue with some amendments.

In the area of communications, the new story hub – an online database of videos, photographs, cases studies and testimonies from our programmatic work – greatly enhanced our external communications. This story hub is available to all staff and to external journalists. We have had up to 150 users per day from 67 countries. Meanwhile, our new global intranet – the Hive – greatly enhanced our internal communications, with more than 45% of staff regularly accessing the site.

One area in which we failed to make sufficient progress is women's leadership. Despite it being an organisation-wide priority, the percentage of women among the senior leadership positions remained at 44%. Among country directors there are still twice as many men as women.



A women's group at Lifidzi, Malawi with its 10 members – each from a different village. ActionAid's child sponsorship programme in the area has formed a mothers' group, girls' group and a PTA.

Photo: George Scott/ActionAid

Growing and diversifying our income

Our overall performance on fundraising was remarkably robust in 2009, despite the difficult economic backdrop.

One reason was the success of our new country strategy, which sought to diversify our income and extend our influence base by expanding into five new countries and initiating fundraising in two more over the past five years. An external evaluation of this strategy, carried out in 2009, showed that our five-year investment of €4.5 million had produced more than a ten to one return.

This year, for the first time, our accounts included the new associates and affiliates in Australia, the Netherlands, Denmark and France. Brazil and India, where we recently started raising funds, still cost us more than they contribute, but India attracted 1,000 in-country sponsors, while Brazil has over 2,000 – a 300% increase from 2008. One of the Indian fundraisers is a poor woman who speaks from direct experience of poverty in her fundraising, showing one of the possibilities of this new form of fundraising. Greece performed very well in a challenging market, with 11% growth from the previous year; the US grew by almost 30%; Ireland maintained income; and Sweden grew by almost 50%. Our two biggest earners, the UK and Italy, maintained income at over €40 million each.

Our individual supporters stayed with us despite the crisis. In Brazil, attrition rates fell by 9% due to a consolidated effort to improve retention. The

recession impacted most heavily on our efforts to recruit new sponsors, and new links were nearly 15,000 below plan. Recruitment costs have risen significantly in our biggest fundraising programmes as traditional channels become less effective. However, costs have fallen in Brazil, India and Sweden.

In Ireland, supporters organised events to have fun and raise money at the same time, including a pub quiz, mountain walk, art exhibition and women's mini-marathon. Greece developed the sponsor-get-a-sponsor programme to recruit via word of mouth, and had success with a new major donor recruitment campaign. The UK started a community challenge initiative in which supporters travelled to South Africa and Nepal to help with building projects and to raise funds. Andy Yates, who visited ex-bonded labourers in Nepal, said: **'When the everyday realities of London consume me, I just think of the people I met in Nepal and it brings a broad smile to my lips – and I know that precious feeling will stay with me for a long time.'**

Collectively our high value programme, which includes major donors, foundations, companies and trusts, raised €13.5 million, a 13.5% increase from 2008, although it missed the target of €13.7 million. The growth in our institutional income demonstrates solid progress over previous years: we won 58 contracts worth a total of €39 million – a 24% increase over 2008. An area in which we did not make progress as planned was online fundraising.

In focus: deepening our accountability

'Rights to end poverty' requires us to be open and transparent in our work and within our organisation and hold ourselves accountable to poor and excluded people, to our partners and to the supporters who give us their time, money and solidarity. Our legitimacy, and ultimately our influence, depends on us being accountable for all that we do. This year, in addition to transforming our governance structure, we had a number of initiatives to strengthen our accountability in internal management, to donors and to rights holders.

Accountability to rights holders

Our participatory review and reflection processes (PRRP) are an accountability mechanism in which communities, ActionAid and our partners put the achievements of each year under the scrutiny of community members. In 2009, we undertook a concerted campaign to ensure the high quality of our PRRP processes. International directors and staff were asked to take part in national and local PRRPs, and to follow up with countries to ensure quality processes. As a result, we saw more innovation and investment in this critical process.

For example, staff and board members from **Greece** took part in a local review and reflection process in an area funded by Greek supporters in **Nepal**. They reported back on the amount of money raised for the community and why some of it is spent outside the community. What most interested community members, however, was seeing the reports sent to Greek supporters – they were very proud of how their work was represented, and it was evident that this was the first time they had fully understood how the child sponsorship mechanism works. The process was enriching for both the local and international participants. Antogoni Lymberaki, a member of the Greek board, said: **‘I have to say I’m a bit lost for words. It was a very intense and moving experience. We all feel much richer, much wiser.’** A local participant said: **‘I could have earned 120 rupees for that day’s work, but I feel I have learnt much more being here.’**

In **Pakistan**, we introduced peer reviews in which all partners and community representatives gathered at sub-national level to consolidate and share community feedback for planning and transparency. This was in addition to the regular practice of transparency boards and quarterly coordination meetings with partners. Local partner Siaban Development Foundation organised an ‘open accountability forum’ in which they encouraged local men, women and representatives of local government and other civil society organisations to reflect, analyse and critique organisational practices. **‘We are proud to be the first organisation in the area to have taken this initiative. We believe it will add value to our work and earn us more credibility, trust and confidence among communities and partners. The experience also proved to be a learning experience in analytical and critical questioning,’** said Sahibzada Khurshid Zafar, general secretary of the forum.

In **Mozambique**, the process of collective review and planning led to a greater understanding of why ActionAid encourages communities to claim from the government rather than providing services directly. After the PRRP, 10-year-old Maura Cossa said: **‘I always wondered why ActionAid did not give us goods and school materials. I used to hear people saying that they don’t know what ActionAid is doing with their money, but now I understand that to participate**

in this very important meeting and to listen to these “mamas” talking about a lot of things that were done in 2009 is wonderful... I wish my mom was here too to share what is being said here.’

The **Gambia** was one of many countries that made an effort to involve children in PRRPs. The children consulted were aware of our programmes, but indicated that they would prefer dancing and football to drawing. The children were not aware of where the money came from and why drawing is so critical, so the Gambia is making plans to address this.

In **Nigeria**, this year, as a result of our accountability, learning and planning system’s requirement for poor and excluded people to be involved in research as well as programmes, the community of Ayibabiri in Bayelsa State used research findings to pressure the government to complete and staff an unused health centre.

In **Malawi**, we distributed big mock cheques to communities, showing the amount of funding provided, so as to enhance transparency. In response to feedback from communities during the review process, we merged several separate projects.

Since it is our partners, rather than ActionAid staff, who normally work directly with communities, we provide training on accountability and transparency to our partners and community leaders. In the Gambia, we supported apex structures to represent multiple villages, which the government and other NGOs use as a conduit for development activities. These structures allowed us to provide management training to 78 people from 26 villages in 2009 and to 300 participants in seed bank collectives. We also provided training in participatory techniques to facilitators who support the apex groups. Apex president Abdoulah Bah said: **'The training brought unity and cooperation among the membership. The executive committees are aware of their roles and responsibilities. It has helped us to become more accountable and transparent in our activities.'** Another apex president, Maram Ceesay, said: **'Using participatory tools enhanced everyone's effective participation, leaving no stone unturned in terms of our problems and possible solutions. Everyone understands how and why certain decisions are taken.'**

ActionAid Australia (formerly Austcare), in seeking to publicise its joining of ActionAid, eschewed the usual public relations approach of defining and promoting key messages about the value of their work. Instead, they sought to use the power of new media to enhance transparency and strengthen the voice of rights holders. Project

Toto began by sending a well-known Australian blogger to Tanzania to blog about what he found, while also building the capacity of communities to tell their own stories. This generated less publicity than a traditional public relations exercise would have done, and the women he worked with will need more support before they can realistically tell their own stories. However, the Australian team remains committed to their original goal to 'help give poverty a voice... by using blogs, Twitter, Facebook... to help local people harness the power of social media to secure their human rights'. Project Toto was featured in the book *Promoting choice and voice: Exploring innovations in Australian NGO accountability for development effectiveness*. Chris Roche, the author, notes that enabling communities to tell their own stories has great potential to improve transparency, as it gives unfiltered feedback on our work.

In **Myanmar**, like many other ActionAid programmes, transparency boards are erected in all project sites, clearly displaying what funds are being used for, while social audits allow the community to review and discuss all aspects of the programme, including finances.



Stilgherrian, a well-known Australian blogger, was invited to blog on our work during a visit to Tanzania. He also worked with women to help them document and share their opinions about ActionAid's programme. This was part of our attempts to increase accountability and transparency in our work.

Photo: Sven Torfinn/Panos/ActionAid

Management and governance accountability

The inauguration of our new General Assembly and the ongoing progression of country programmes to Affiliate status enhanced our accountability by giving more power to those working closest to poor and excluded people, and by diversifying our presence in developed countries. This year, Kenya and Uganda became fully governed by national boards and joined the General Assembly, following the path blazed by Ghana in 2008. Australia also became a full affiliate member. MS Denmark, Guatemala and India are set to become affiliates in 2010, after successfully passing affiliation reviews in 2009. Meanwhile, the board approved closing the Venezuela programme that we initiated two years ago, as our main partnership was not successful due to differences in priorities and approach and the deteriorating political environment for civil society.

During 2009, we gained a new board member from India, Poguri Chennaiah, to replace Rajesh Tandon, who resigned due to work commitments. Chennaiah is an activist, lawyer and trade union leader who currently heads up a union federation representing over half a million rural workers. The board has agreed that the next appointment should also be from a social movement, as this is part of our commitment to accountability to rights holders.

The nine-member board met five times as a full board, in addition to working in four sub-committees. Besides recruiting a new chief executive, Joanna Kerr, and managing the transition to a new governance structure, the board also agreed several organisational policies developed by the secretariat during 2009. These policies will now go to the assembly for ratification. These include an assurance policy aimed at strengthening mutual accountability, the company fundraising policy and resource allocation framework policies, which are all part of our 2009–2010 accountability drive.

As part of our accountability, learning and planning system, each of our boards carries out an annual review. In their reflection for this year, the international board agreed that our new governance structure was the major success of 2009. The smaller size and diversity of the board have both allowed for more in-depth discussions, while the assembly devolves power to the membership. Overall accountability within ActionAid is making great strides towards the desired improvements. The greatest challenges the board identified include putting the federal principles of the constitution into practice and managing relationships and boundaries within and between the board, assembly, members and the secretariat. This challenge has intensified with the shift in power relationships brought about by the new structure that gives members more power to shape the organisation.

Audit is another key component of our accountability system. Our external audit, by Buzzacott LLP, was unqualified. Internal audits produced 13 reports on different parts of the organisation, which confirmed adequate accountability in nine cases, but raised concern about four of our small country programmes where systems are less well developed. External audits highlighted problems in two countries – Burundi and Rwanda – but they related to 2007 and action has been taken in both these cases.

Accountability to our peers

We are a founding member of the INGO Accountability Charter, which is intended to promote NGO accountability by having all signatories report publicly against agreed standards and commitments. In 2009 we went a step further than required by not only reporting internationally, but also asking every country programme to submit a report. Although only 16 countries completed the (quite lengthy) report, the process was of value in bringing accountability higher up the agenda of senior management teams. Having country-based reports also brought more depth to our overall report.

We continued to engage with peers in different forums on how to enhance accountability – for example, by attending a CIVICUS workshop on legitimacy, accountability and transparency, and two conferences hosted by the Berlin Civil Society Centre on accountability. We also engaged with the UK-based INGO network BOND on development effectiveness and with the Australian Council for International Development on a study of accountability mechanisms. Our participation in the new UK Disasters Emergency Committee accountability process has highlighted the need for us to improve our documentation process for evidence of accountability.

Accountability to supporters

One of the ways we enhance our accountability to our supporters is by hosting them on visits to the communities they sponsor. In 2009 we supported more than 20 supporter visits from Ireland, Italy, UK, Greece and Brazil to communities in Haiti, Guatemala, Brazil, Senegal, Nepal, Tanzania, Uganda, India, Cambodia and Kenya. Brazilian sponsor Waldir de Souza, who visited São Paulo neighbourhood Heliópolis, said: **'After that day, I came home a different person. Being part of ActionAid is not something that I do for you but something that I receive from you... On that Saturday, I really understood the meaning of the word community: it means all for one and one for all.'**

A new way that we ensure accountability is through our complaints mechanism, which we introduced in 2008 following a recommendation made in a review by One World Trust. The following example of the use of the complaints mechanism in the UK offers reflections on our experiences of using this mechanism to strengthen accountability to supporters.

In focus: changes as a result of the UK's new complaints mechanism

Some 161,200 people in the UK support our work through donations, fundraising, campaigning or volunteering each year. In 2009, the first full year of our complaints mechanism, we received 697 complaints, 87% from these supporters. More than half (58%) of these were in relation to our fundraising activities. Other complaints related to our campaigning work (3%), our policies (26%) and programme administration (13%). We responded to all these complaints, trying our best to resolve each complaint within six weeks.

There were 93 complaints about our international work, the majority of which related to the timeliness and quality of the feedback we provide to sponsors on a child's progress. Such complaints require response from countries, which in some cases proved difficult to secure in a timely fashion, risking funding as well as our good reputation. Two things that have changed following these complaints are as follows:

- _ We received complaints from supporters who thought the use of a folder to hold all the material together in a donor appeal was wasteful. We have since stopped this practice.
- _ Following complaints about the use of a plastic card within the 'Who Pays' supermarket campaign pack, we have used recycled materials only in subsequent mailings.

Accountability to donors

This was the first full year of a seven-country pilot study using defined indicators to aggregate local progress information into a format to report internationally to donors (in this case DFID). This pilot is designed to inform how we improve monitoring and evaluation in our next strategy. One country found that the new system helped to strengthen advocacy, while several others found the new requirements to be extractive information demands that distracted from programme goals.

In 2009, we put more emphasis on establishing systems and structures and providing training to make us more accountable to donors. We also reached out to donors, asking them for feedback on their experience of working with us: **'ActionAid served as the key implementing partner for the UN... in the recent past, with very satisfactory results. UNDP would wish to associate itself with ActionAid bearing in mind the level of professionalism displayed in terms of project management as well as its achievement in registering significant impact in the development agenda at grassroots level.'** UNDP, The Gambia

'It is always reassuring to work with an NGO that has well implemented an EU-[European Union] funded project. The EU procedures are many and could be challenging and ActionAid had the good reflex of inquiring every time that the procedures were not clear to them and we do appreciate that assertiveness and proactive behaviour that ended up consolidating furthermore the partnership.'

European Commission, Rwanda

Gaps, challenges and way forward in 2010

Overall, 2010 will be a major year of transition for ActionAid. Our new chief executive, Joanna Kerr, started in June, so did a review of *Rights to end poverty*, which will lead to a new strategy. The ongoing financial crisis is likely to require further prioritisation, so we will have little time to catch up on areas we had to de-prioritise in 2009.

One major focus for 2010 will continue to be our accountability. Six country programmes are collaborating with the Institute of Development Studies on 're-imagining accountability' that seeks to document our best accountability practices and advance a new-generation concept of accountability. Several other countries are part of an initiative within the human security theme to integrate accountability requirements. The newly established internal Child and Youth Support Group is examining ways of improving our accountability to children. A monitoring and evaluation task force established at the end of 2009 is developing recommendations to strengthen our monitoring and evaluation system to improve our accountability to all stakeholders. We will also continue to develop our management information system, which will give managers a 'dashboard' of information that should enhance management accountability. Finally, we will launch our end of strategy evaluation to be accountable to the promises we made in *Rights to end poverty*.

Summarised 2009 financial statements

This section includes brief comments on the summarised financial statements that follow. These are drawn from the published Annual Report of ActionAid International, which can be found at www.actionaid.org. The site contains the full audited aggregated non-statutory financial statements, together with a more detailed commentary on financial performance. It also gives information on the governance structure of the organisation and the responsibilities of its Board Members, whose brief biographies are also included.

New Affiliate and Associate Members

During 2009, four new Affiliate and Associate Members from developed countries joined ActionAid. Their results for the whole of 2009 and their balance sheets at 31 December 2009 are included in these summary financial statements. The impact is to show significant increases in total income, expenditure and balance sheet amounts for 2009.

Aggregated statement of comprehensive income and statement of movement in funds

Total income in 2009 was €211 million, an overall increase of 15%. This was made up of €40 million from the New Affiliate and Associate Members and a reduction of 6.5% (€12 million) in the income of the rest of ActionAid. Over €8 million of this is due to the weakening of sterling against the Euro which had the effect of ActionAid UK income being worth less when expressed in Euros than it would have been at 2008 exchange rates. Official income has grown significantly, reflecting the funding strength in this area of our new Affiliate and Associate Members.

The overall surplus for the year amounted to €13 million, of which €11 million related to restricted funds. This is largely due to an increased number of officially funded contracts where income was received during the year but where significant expenditure is only planned to start in 2010. These contracts will show an excess of expenditure over income in 2010 (i.e. a deficit), which will be reflected in the overall restricted results for ActionAid International in that year.

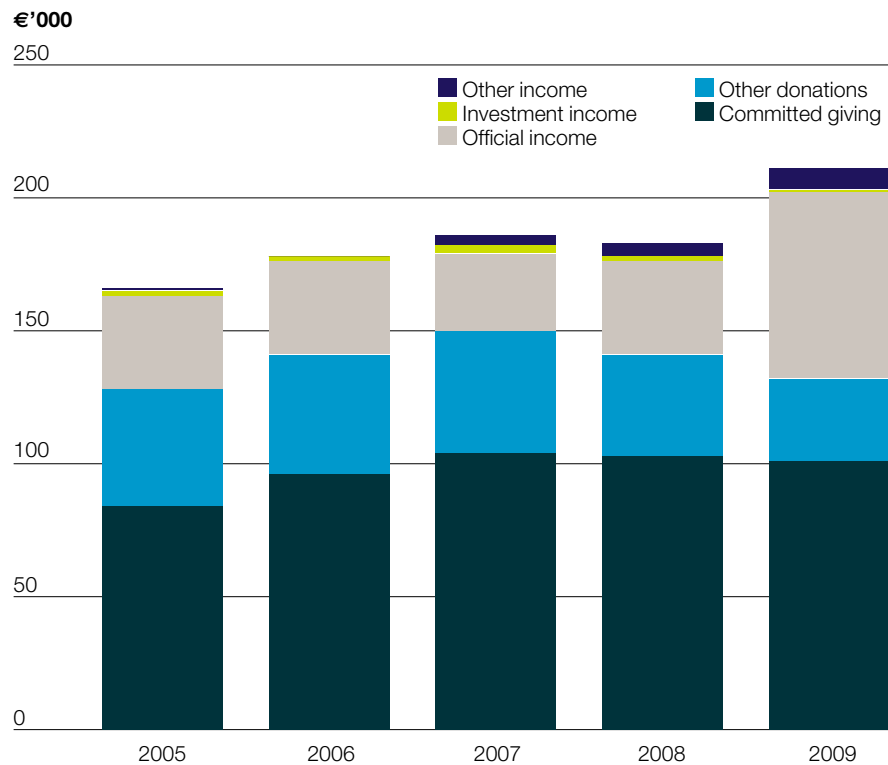
Aggregated statement of financial position

Our total net assets rose from €55 million to €78 million, reflecting the assets brought in by the new Affiliate and Associate Members and the benefit of the surplus for the year. Over 70% of our funds are subject to donor restrictions. The level of unrestricted funds represents a surplus of €4.2 million over the minimum amount we aim to keep in reserve. This gives us some protection against current economic difficulties.

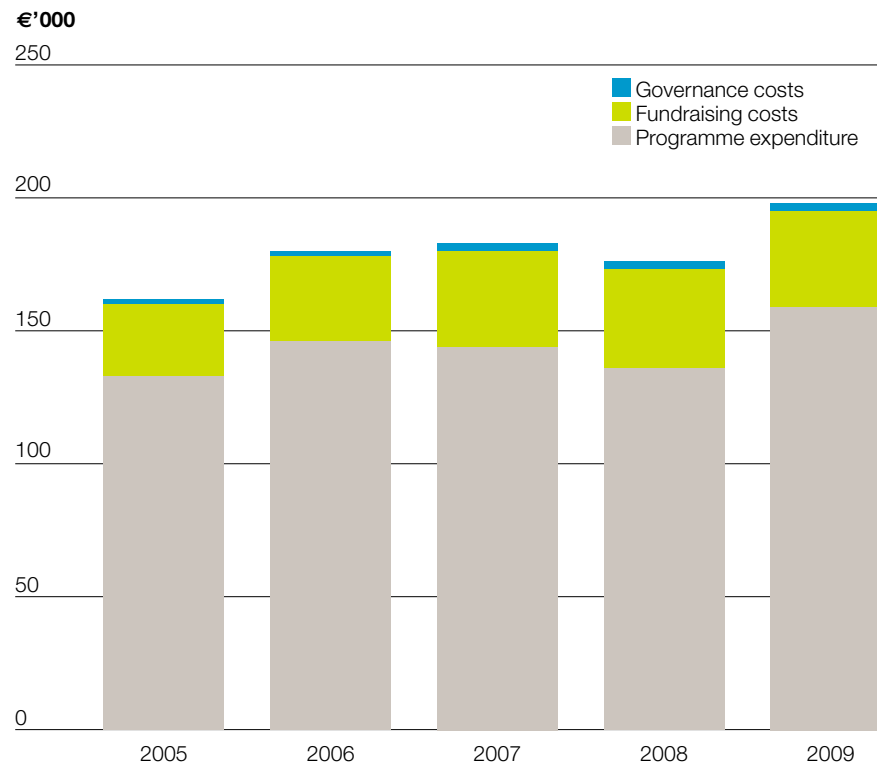
Five-year history

Our income and expenditure had grown in line with each other until the currency-induced downturn in 2008, followed by the inclusion of the new Affiliate and Associate Members in 2009. This has resulted in a flattening out of committed income, a significant increase in official income and a rise in the proportion of expenditure spent on programme work.

Income



Expenditure

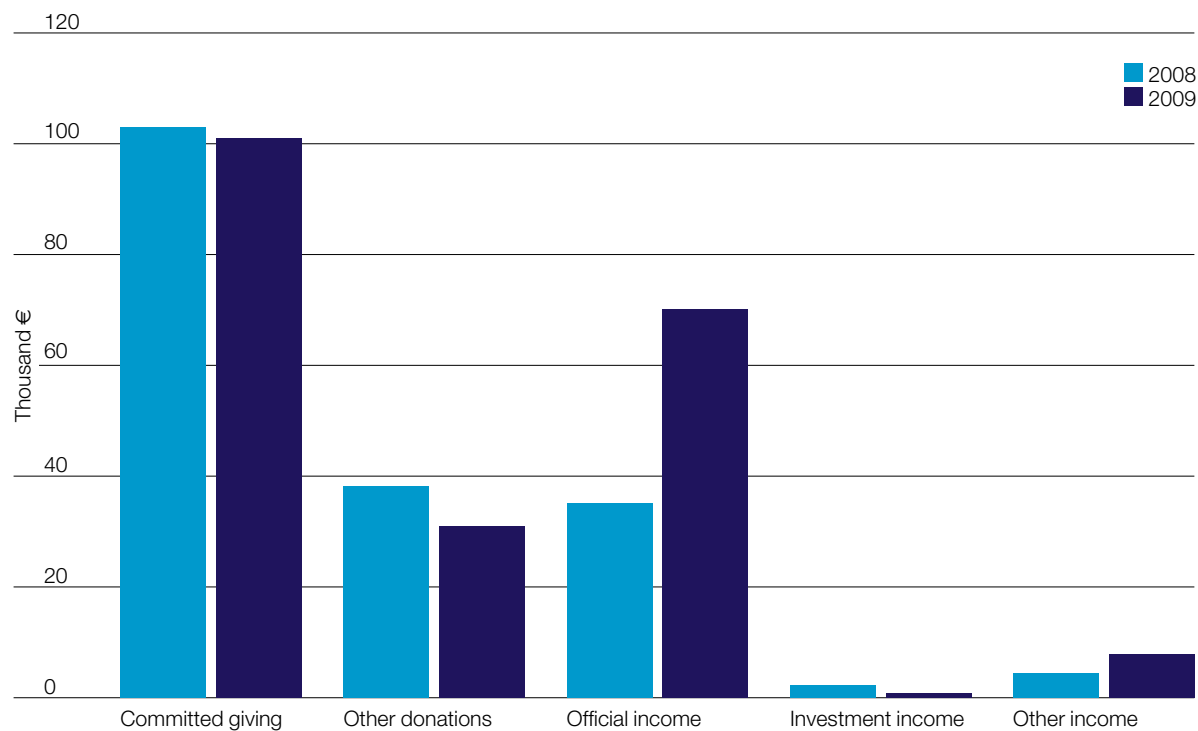


How our income is raised

Just under half of our total income comes from individual supporters in Europe, who typically contribute monthly donations either as sponsors of children or through other forms of committed giving. 2009 saw an overall reduction in voluntary income as income from these committed givers fell by 6.5%. This was primarily the result of reductions in rates of new supporters joining as the impact of the economic crisis took effect.

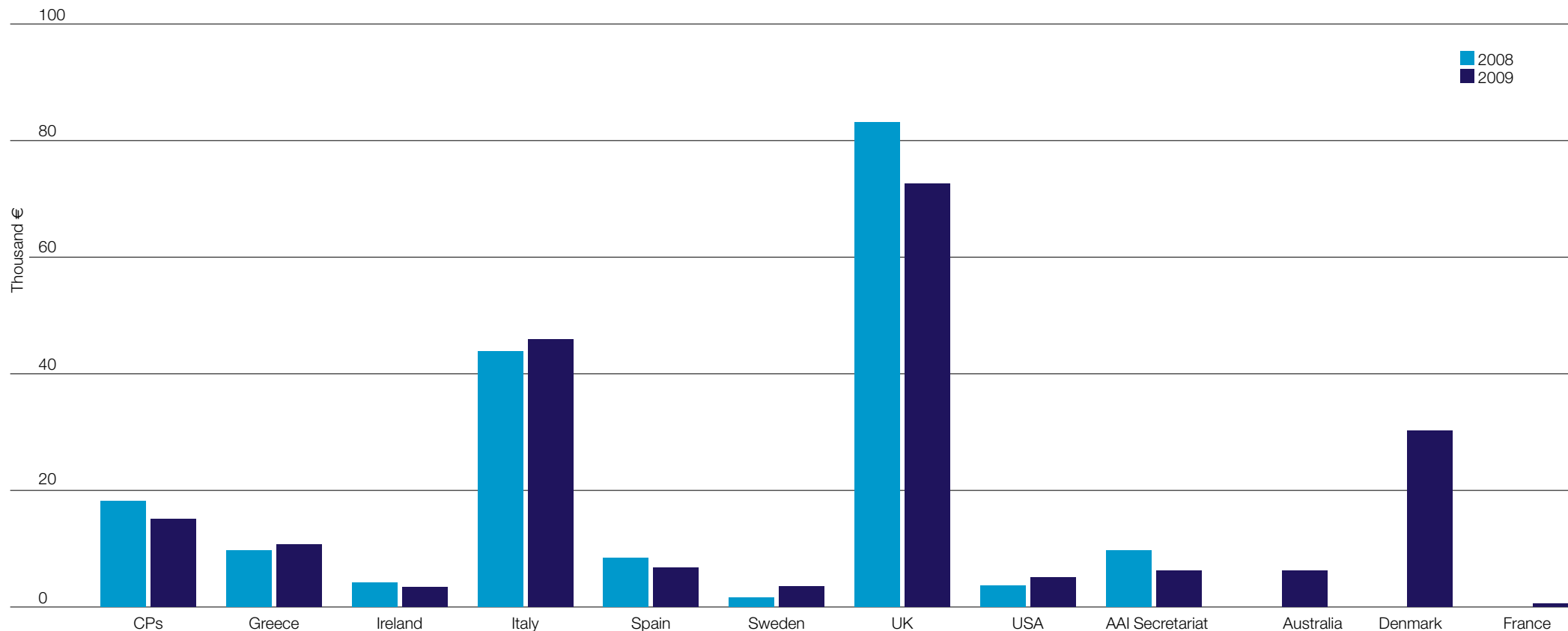
Other voluntary income also fell by 19%. Other donations includes income from trusts and foundations, our sister organisation in Spain, Ayuda en Acción, and major donors.

Official income grew in 2009 and now accounts for one-third of all our income, with the Government of Denmark, through MS, now being our largest official funder (€26 million).



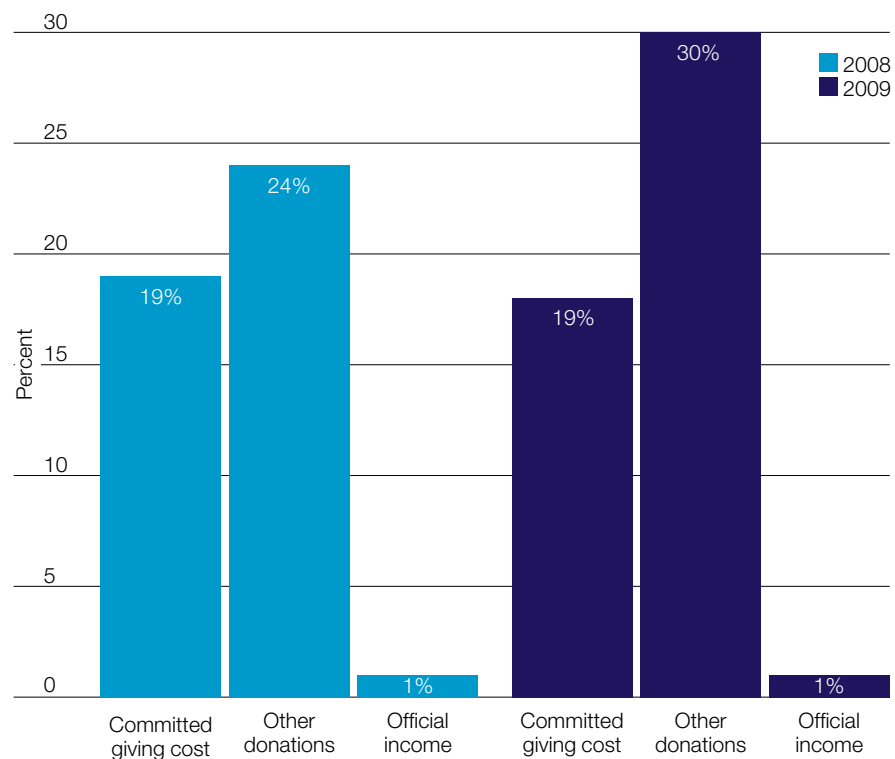
Where our income is raised

ActionAid in the UK and in Italy raised 56% of our income (2008: 63%) and the four new Affiliate and Associate Members raised a further 19%.



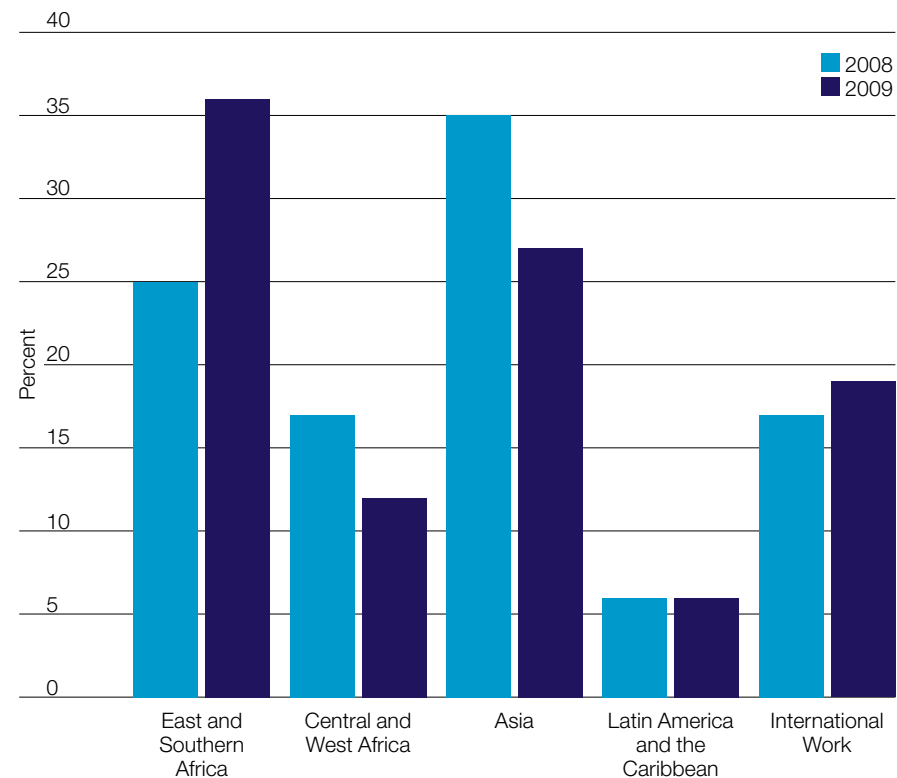
Our fundraising costs

The cost of raising our core committed giving income fell slightly last year to 18%. The costs of 'other donations', while staying steady in monetary terms, rose to 30% with the reduction of this source of income in 2009.



Our programme costs

There has been a significant increase of €19 million in programme spend in East and Southern Africa during 2009, coupled with an increase in spend in developed countries reflecting the activities of the new Affiliate and Associate Members. Levels of spend in individual countries are affected by the incidence of official donor contracts and emergency interventions.

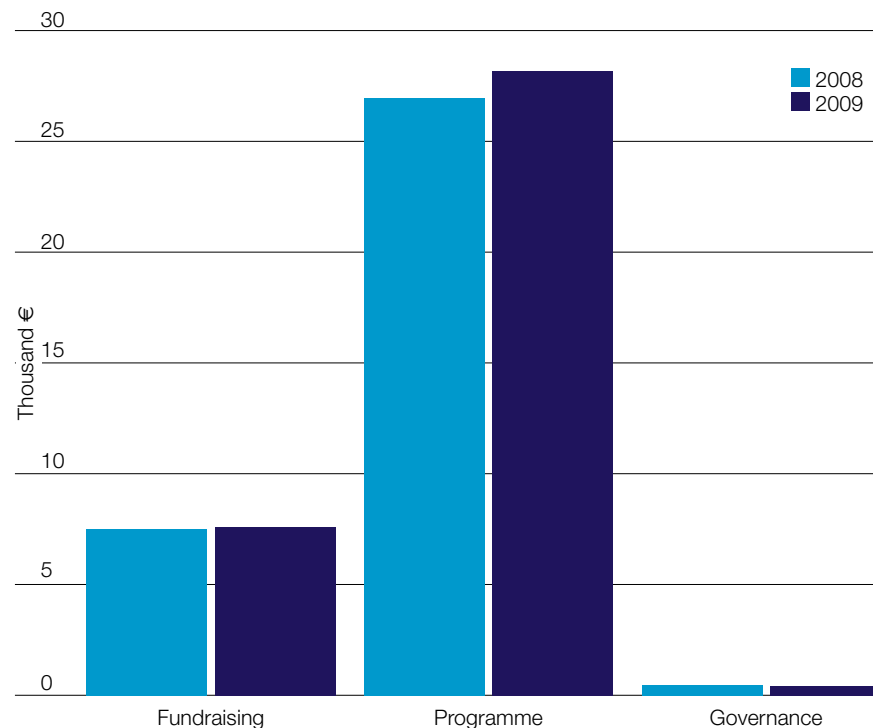


Programme costs by theme

There has been a dramatic increase in our programme spend on the governance theme, reflecting the strength of MS in this area, whose results are included for the first time in 2009. Expenditure on women's rights has continued to increase, while the share of spend on HIV and AIDS and food rights has been reducing. The lower level of income from the UK Disasters Emergency Committee is reflected in the decrease in spend on human security.

Support costs

We allocate our expenditure on support functions and activities to fundraising, programme and governance as shown in the statement of comprehensive income. These cost €36 million in 2009, compared with €35 million in 2008, even though the scale of our activities has increased significantly. However, we remain conscious of the need to control these costs.



Current performance

The plan for 2010 was developed in 2009 in a suppressed economic environment. There continues to be instability in the economies of most of our fundraising countries. All our major markets – Greece, Ireland, Italy, Spain and the UK – face enormous pressure in the near future as governments reduce spending to respond to the ongoing impacts of the financial crisis.

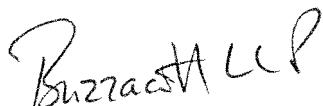
In 2009, there was some slowing down of investment in fundraising to maintain returns in the medium term. Fundraising results for this year so far have been satisfactory, although of note is the excellent response to the Haiti disaster from our supporters and donors, enabling us to undertake important relief work. Overall it is not clear yet what impact the challenges of 2010 will have on our income, but it is likely that – despite a very loyal base of support – some supporters will have no choice but to reduce their support. This means that continued growth will be slow.

There is also continuing uncertainty as to when sterling exchange rates will recover.

Auditor's report

In our opinion, the summarised financial statements on pages 58 and 59 have been correctly extracted from the full aggregated non-statutory financial statements of ActionAid International for the year ended 31 December 2009, on which we have conducted an audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (UK and Ireland) and issued an unqualified opinion.

In our opinion the graphical information on pages 53 to 56 is consistent with the underlying data in the full aggregated non-statutory financial statements of ActionAid International for the year ended 31 December 2009.



Buzzacott LLP, Chartered Accountants
31 August 2010

Aggregated statement of comprehensive income

Year ended 31 December 2009

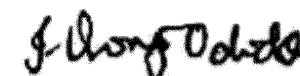
	Restricted €'000	Unrestricted €'000	2009 Total €'000	2008 Total €'000
INCOME				
Voluntary income				
Committed giving	62,364	38,637	101,001	102,894
Other donations	24,727	6,174	30,901	38,170
	87,091	44,811	131,902	141,064
Official income	62,331	7,789	70,120	35,095
	149,422	52,600	202,022	176,159
Investment income	119	688	807	2,214
	149,541	53,288	202,829	178,373
Other income	1,488	6,400	7,888	4,511
Total income	151,029	59,688	210,717	182,884
EXPENDITURE				
Fundraising costs	(5,482)	(30,508)	(35,990)	(37,263)
Programme expenditure	(134,959)	(24,212)	(159,171)	(136,504)
Governance costs	(1,234)	(1,666)	(2,900)	(2,535)
Total expenditure	(141,675)	(56,386)	(198,061)	(176,302)
Net surplus before transfers and investment gains / (losses)	9,354	3,302	12,656	6,582
Gross transfers between funds	963	(963)	-	-
Gains / (Losses) on investments	560	-	560	(1,565)
Net surplus	10,877	2,339	13,216	5,017
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME				
Net surplus	10,877	2,339	13,216	5,017
Unrealised foreign exchange gains / (losses) on translation	3,790	509	4,299	(14,525)
Net movement in funds	14,667	2,848	17,515	(9,508)
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2009	37,291	17,820	55,111	64,619
New Associates introduced on 1 January 2009	3,989	1,348	5,337	-
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2009	55,947	22,016	77,963	55,111

All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

Aggregated statement of financial position as at 31 December 2009

	2009 €'000	2008 €'000
ASSETS		
Non-current assets		
Property, plant and equipment	3,656	1,620
Investments	9,912	5,257
	13,568	6,877
Current assets		
Receivables	14,648	9,056
Cash and cash equivalents		
Short-term bank deposits	20,968	28,765
Cash at bank	51,438	25,335
	87,054	63,156
Current liabilities		
Payables	(22,659)	(14,922)
Net current assets	64,395	48,234
Total net assets	77,963	55,111
FUNDS		
Restricted funds		
Liquid funds and treasury reserves	53,323	36,181
Property, plant and equipment reserve	2,624	1,110
	55,947	37,291
Unrestricted funds		
Liquid funds and treasury reserves	20,984	17,310
Property, plant and equipment reserve	1,032	510
	22,016	17,820
Total funds	77,963	55,111

Approved by the Assembly of ActionAid International on 9 June 2010 and signed on its behalf by:



Irene Ovonji-Odida
Chair of the Board of ActionAid International



Patrick Dowling
Treasurer of the Board of ActionAid International

The summarised financial statements on pages 58 and page 59 are extracts only and do not constitute the full aggregated non-statutory financial statements of ActionAid International prepared under International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) as adopted by the European Union. The full financial statements are available on ActionAid International's website.

AAI Board Members

Karen Brown
(Vice Chair), UK

Poguri Chennaiah
India

Patrick Dowling
(Treasurer), Ireland

Cândido Grzybowski
Brazil

Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda
Zimbabwe

Alexandra Mitsotaki
Greece

Irene Ovonji-Odida
(Chair), Uganda

Matteo Passini
Italy

Sriprapha Petcharamesree
Thailand

Members of the Board, Associates and Affiliates



Irene Ovonji-Odida, (AAI Board Chair), Former Member of Parliament, East African Legislative Assembly (EALA), Advocate. As a member of EALA, Hon. Ovonji has been key in developing linkages between EALA and the civil society on trade and

development agenda, leading to the first 1st EALA/CSO workshop on trade and development (April 2003). She organised participation of EALA in the WTO negotiations and chaired daily the African Government Parliament/ CSO forum in Cancun, 5th WTO Ministerial meeting. The strength she brings to ActionAid is the linkage with the sub-regional, regional and international bodies. Irene is also a human rights lawyer, with several years of experience in civil society, academia and government in the field of law and policy formulation, advocacy, negotiations and training. She coordinated and managed two-year national research on domestic relations law, one of the key areas affecting women's rights in Uganda. Irene has published various papers and reports including: *Land, Gender and Poverty: an assessment of the Land Co-Ownership proposal*, 2000 UNFA Country Population Assessment, 1999; *Law Reform Commission, 1998. Report on reform of the law of Domestic Relations ISIS-WICCE*, 1998; *Documentation of Violations of Women's Human Rights During Conflict* (Rapporteur), UNFPA, 1996; *Bride-wealth, Marriage and the Status of Women*, Ministry of Planning/ Population Secretariat, 1996; *Gender and Reproductive Rights in National Population Strategy*, Ministry of Gender and Development/DAINDA, 1995. *Women and Inheritance*, Volume 5.



Alexandra Mitsotaki studied Political Sciences at the Institute of Political Sciences in Paris, and went on to study Development Law before working for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). She is a founder of

ActionAid Hellas, established in 1998, and joined the Board of ActionAid International in 2003



Cândido Grzybowski is General Director of the Brazilian Institute of Social and Economical Analysis (IBASE), an internationally active non-governmental organisation in Brazil. He was involved in the creation of the Inter-American Agriculture and Democracy Network (RIAD) and the World Social Forum (WSF) in 2000, and civil society organisations' response to the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO). He joined the ActionAid UK Board in 2001 and moved to the Board of ActionAid International in 2003.



Karen Brown (Vice Chair) has had a long career as a practitioner in the UK's creative industries – as television producer, programme commissioner, Deputy Director Programmes at Channel Four Television, Learning Champion at Royal Botanic Gardens Kew, and as a non-executive director of a public independent television production company. She also studies at Camberwell College, University of the Arts London. From 2004-2009 she was Chair of ActionAidUK. She joined the board of ActionAid International in 2004 and convenes its Audit and Risk Committee.



Matteo Passini is Chief Executive Officer of BIT spa which specialises in local financing of cooperative credit and food farming banks. He is also a lecturer in Ethical Finance at the University of Bologna. Matteo obtained an economics degree from Ca' Foscari University of Venice and went on to work for the Banca Commerciale Italiana. He then moved to

Banca Etica, taking up successive posts in the organisation as General Director, Banca Popolare Etica – Padova, Director – Milan, CEO and then Manager of Alliances & Strategic Partnerships. Since 2000 he has been a Board member of AICCON. Matteo was elected as Chair of the ActionAid Italy Board in January 2007, and joined the Board of ActionAid International in January of the same year.



Patrick Dowling, (Treasurer) has had a career mainly in banking and finance and has been Finance Director of a number of public limited companies. Patrick was formerly Chair of the ActionAid Ireland Board from October 2002 and first joined the International Board in 2003. In December 2006, he resigned as Chair of the Board of ActionAid Ireland, but continued in his capacity as Treasurer on the ActionAid International Board until April 2007. Patrick rejoined the International Board as Treasurer in August 2008.



Sriprapha Petcharamesree has been a lecturer on the Human Rights Studies Programme at Mahidol University, Thailand since 1996, teaching Human Rights in Asia and Human Rights in International Relations. She is also a visiting lecturer at the Southeast Asian Studies Programme at Thammasat University. Sriprapha has also worked with the Department of Technical and Economic Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Bangkok and with UNICEF in development and humanitarian areas. She has been a member and advisor on public hearings relating to Thailand's draft National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) Bill, and sits on various of the commission's committees. She joined the Board of ActionAid International in 2005 as an independent trustee.



Poguri Chennaiah, is a social activist, engaged with the rural poor, especially Dalits and agricultural workers, for nearly three decades. He has been instrumental in taking up the cause of agricultural labour through various campaigns for land rights. He has been instrumental in giving shape to a strong agricultural workers' union in Andhra Pradesh, Vyarusaya Vruthidarula Union, bringing together many activist groups and giving them the vision and direction to become social movements.



Nyaradzayi Gumbonzvanda, from Zimbabwe, joined the World YWCA in 2007. She has over 10 years of experience with the United Nations, where she served as Regional Director for the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) in Eastern and Horn Africa covering 13 countries. She had previously worked as a human rights officer with UNICEF in Liberia and Zimbabwe. Gumbonzvanda also served as interim coordinator for the Zimbabwe Women Lawyers Association during its formative stage and in the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs in Zimbabwe as a law officer. For the last 20 year, She has been working on issues of women and children's human rights, with a special focus on crisis countries. Active in the women's movement, Gumbonzvanda has focused on issues of violence against women, peace with justice, property rights and HIV and AIDS. She is a trained human rights lawyer with extensive experience in conflict resolution and mediation.

Associates and Affiliates

Affiliates

Australia
Brazil
Ghana
Greece
Guatemala
India
Ireland
Italy
Kenya
MS
Sweden
Uganda
UK
USA

Associates

France (PSO)
Malawi
Nepal
The Netherlands (Niza)
Nigeria
Sierra Leone

Approved by the Board

Thailand,
Bangladesh
Tanzania
(not registered by 9 June 2010)

Our values

Mutual respect, requiring us to recognise the innate worth of all people and the value of diversity.

Equity and justice, requiring us to work to ensure equal opportunity to everyone, irrespective of race, age, gender, sexual orientation, HIV status, colour, class, ethnicity, disability, location and religion.

Honesty and transparency: being accountable at all levels for the effectiveness of our actions and open in our judgements and communications with others.

Solidarity with poor, powerless and excluded people will be the only bias in our commitment to the fight against poverty and injustice.

Courage of conviction, requiring us to be creative and radical, bold and innovative, without fear of failure – in pursuit of making the greatest possible impact on the causes of poverty.

Independence from any religious or party-political affiliation.

Humility in our presentation and behaviour, recognising that we are part of a wider alliance against poverty and injustice.

ActionAid

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ActionAid is an international anti-poverty agency working in over 40 countries, taking sides with poor people to end poverty and injustice together.

ActionAid International is incorporated in The Hague, The Netherlands. Registration number 27264198
ActionAid International is incorporated in South Africa under section 21A of the Companies Act 1973

Registration number 2004/007117/10
August 2010