



# UN Millennium Campaign

EXTERNAL EVALUATION 2009



**UN Millennium Campaign  
External evaluation 2009  
Global report**

Prepared for the  
UN Millennium Campaign

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This is the report of independent evaluators commissioned by the UN Millennium Campaign. The views expressed in this report should not be taken as being those of the UN Millennium Campaign. They reflect evidence collected and expressed by the evaluation team. Any comments regarding this report can be sent to the evaluation team at [info@leitmotivsocial.com](mailto:info@leitmotivsocial.com)



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### Acronyms and terms

AP	Associated press
B2B	Business-to-Business
B2C	Business-to-Customer
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CS	Civil Society
CIVICUS	World Alliance for Citizen Participation
DIIS	Danish Institute for International Studies
DFID	Department for International Development UK
DPI	Department of Public Information of the United Nations
ECRU	Evaluation and Communications Research Unit (of the DPI)
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization
GCAP	Global Call against Poverty
GEF	Global Environment Facility
FBO	Faith-Based Organization
IPS	International Press Service
MC	Millennium Campaign
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MP	Millennium Project
MTF	Millennium Trust Fund
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECD DAC	OECD Development Assistance Committee
ODA	Official Development Aid
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PSA	Public Service Announcement
RC	Resident Coordinator
TOR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN HQ	United Nations Headquarters
UNCT	United Nations Country Team
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UCLG	United Cities and Local Governments
WB	World Bank
WFUNA	World Federation of United Nations Associations
WTO	World Trade Organization

## 1. Executive summary

In 2002, the UNDP established the Millennium Trust Fund to support the implementation of the UN strategy for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The UN Millennium Campaign was formally launched on October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002, by SG Kofi Annan as an inter-agency initiative of the UN and hosted by UNDP. Former Dutch Minister Eveline Herfkens was appointed as its Executive Coordinator.

The campaign aims to create political will in a set of priority countries, in order ultimately to produce political changes related to development issues. In this sense, the campaign treats the MDGs as an entry point for broader development issues, as outlined in the Millennium Declaration. In doing so the campaign relies heavily on local partners as the legitimate actors to put pressure on national governments and with more chance of success than global actors.

The campaign has worked on an average budget of 9 million dollars per year and about 20 regular staff. It has a small global office with 5 professionals hosted by UNDP in New York, regional offices in Rome, Bangkok and Nairobi and 3-4 member national teams in 4 priority countries in Europe, and have recently recruited one staff in the priority countries in Asia.

### 1.1. Findings

#### 1.1.1 Policy<sup>1</sup> domain: Influencing national governments

Analysis of the few reports on the influence of the MDG framework on national processes showed that most donor policy statements use the MDGs as consensus objectives. The strongest influence is found in Europe. The Millennium Campaigns in Europe have contributed to mainstreaming the MDGs as consensus objectives, though their influence on translating them into monitoring benchmarks and planning targets is more limited and uneven.

In the South, most Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and other national development strategies use the MDGs both as consensus objectives and as planning targets. Many actors have contributed to this, including the MC. A significant question, especially in the South, would be how the MDGs have translated into concrete policy practices that are the basis for budgetary decisions. In this regard, although the evidence is not strong, we can name a few actions where the MC seems to have made a significant contribution at this level.

In general, the external perception of the campaign's effectiveness at influencing national policies is mixed. A consistent question that came up during the evaluation was the connection between mobilization efforts, specifically the *Stand Up* events, and impact on government policy.

Policy influence requires a sharp focus, yet the small size and the strong organic<sup>2</sup> culture of the campaign makes their objectives loosely defined, and possibly too flexible. While this allows them to adapt to a constant changing environment it also weakens the clarity of purpose. The key to "joining the dots" between mobilization and policy action starts with

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<sup>1</sup> By "policy" we mean both policies and practice of governments

<sup>2</sup> An organic organization is a fluid and flexible network of multi-talented individuals who perform a variety of tasks, as per the definition of D. A. Morand.

solid planning of SMART<sup>3</sup> policy objectives, focused on very specific issues, dealt with consistently.

### **1.1.2 Public domain: increasing public awareness of the MDGs**

Given the resources available, it would be fair to conclude that the UN Millennium Campaign has been successful at increasing awareness of the MDGs.

An overwhelming 78% of partners responding to the survey agreed that the campaign has been effective at raising awareness, and only 7% thought this was not the case. This matches the views of the interviewees and of some of the documents reviewed. On the other hand, even if the MC has shown the necessary commitment, imagination and know-how to undertake successful awareness-raising campaigns, it does not have the resources or infrastructure to target an unsegmented “general public” effectively.

A critical step for the MC to take is to segment the “general public” into manageable and focused target audiences whose awareness of the MDGs can help to reach concrete policy objectives. General categories like “youth” or “local government” are not sufficient to serve this purpose.

#### **The *Stand Up* events**

Overall *Stand Up* has strengthened the UN Millennium Campaign. The massive numbers that *Stand Up* has mobilized not only give legitimacy to the campaign but also provide a convincing argument to present to the governments. *Stand Up* has also become a recognizable global trademark.

*Stand Up* is the main driver of media attention, as is well documented by data sources and informants at global and national levels. At the time of *Stand Up*, there are huge jumps in the numbers of MC spokesperson interviews in print media and online traffic peaks.

On the other hand, as a strategy it is very exhausting, and more significantly a question mark was consistently raised around whether the event was an efficient way to influence national policies.

### **1.1.3 Media engagement**

The majority of MDG print coverage appears to be driven by multilateral policy events and UN summits. The MC’s contribution to overall MDG media attention appears to be driven largely by *Stand Up*, with minor contributions around global policy events.

*Stand Up* generates huge levels of media attention, but only lasts a few days. One journalist estimated that *Stand Up* becomes old news after 24 hours, after which its media value expires. *Stand Up* appears to have a larger impact on local, rather than global media. Campaigning around global policy events appears to produce mixed results, with some initiatives producing larger impacts than others, and many informants unaware that the MC conducted media outreach beyond *Stand Up*.

#### **Effective communication**

The review found indicators that suggests target audiences may not be fully defined, and this appears to be manifest across a range of MC activities. For example, the gap between audiences targeted and those engaged may be wide, with roughly 40% of respondents to the 2008 *Stand Up* survey rejecting the MC’s audience categories. Moreover, efforts targeting the general public are likely to be conducted at the expense of more targeted efforts, such as

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<sup>3</sup> Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound

focusing on opinion leaders, or audiences that could potentially offer greater social impact per dollar.

Amongst several views expressed on messaging, the MC's clearest messaging criteria is that communication needs to contribute to policy change. In the case of press releases, the link between communication and policy appears to be strengthening. In other cases, these links are not always clear.

The MC has produced a large volume of communication products, which have received wide-scale admiration not least for their originality and creativity. The only major issue was the tension between the desire to produce centralized products and the need for products that are tailored to local needs.

### **Online effectiveness**

The StandAgainstPoverty.org website serves a simple function, relating directly to *Stand Up*, and appears to be well regarded and fit for purpose. Responses towards the central website, EndPoverty2015.org were mixed. On the positive side, online outreach appears to be successful (in terms of volume of visits), part of which is directly associated with links from high-ranking UN websites. On the negative side, the site's broad scope raised concerns about clarity of purpose, uncertainty about how the site meets users' needs and staff frustrations over the capacity of the site to support national MC campaigns.

#### **1.1.4 Strengthening citizen and organizations' advocacy**

The MC has definitely helped to strengthen citizens and organizations working on poverty and justice. Most significantly, the campaign has been instrumental in facilitating the Global Call Against Poverty (GCAP), arguably one of the widest global networks working on anti-poverty issues.

The relationship between the MC and GCAP has been close from the beginning, but is also complex. This is due to different views on how civil society should engage with multilateral organizations, the complexity of the GCAP movement and the "hybrid" (UN/civil society) nature of the MC. The high credibility of senior campaign staff among civil society has helped the partnership greatly.

#### **1.1.5 Bringing new constituencies into MDG campaigning**

The MC has made a deliberate effort to reach beyond the 'converted', with considerable success. Among these new constituencies two stood out as good practice. Firstly, the partnership with local government in both the North and the South has been important, especially to create space for citizens to engage with governmental actors. Secondly, the work with faith-based organizations (FBOs) has allowed the MC to capitalize on their great credibility among their networks and communities.

#### **1.1.6 Leveraging the UN identity**

The MC has leveraged its UN identity well given the very complex web of different partners, expectations and agendas they had to navigate. In this context, adequately leveraging the UN identity requires a considerable amount of strategic and diplomatic skill, which the campaign has managed well.

#### **1.1.7. Working with the right partners**

The campaign has made a deliberate effort to cover a wide range of actors and to go well beyond the "usual suspects", with great success. However, the selection of partners seems to have been too demand-driven and opportunistic. The campaign would have benefited from a stronger strategic approach to partner selection, tightly linked to concrete policy objectives.

The value of the MC partnership strategy varies greatly from country to country, and an examination at national level would be more appropriate. During the evaluation, we were able to establish that the majority of organizations considered as partners by the MC (68%) were categorized as “Civil Society Organizations” (CSOs). A significant weakness in the MC’s partnership portfolio is the lack of organizations with the capacity for effective policy engagement at the national level. This is most critical in Africa and less so in Europe.

## 1.2. Main Recommendations

### Setting clear policy objectives and strategies

- ✓ When setting policy objectives and strategies consider the following sequential steps:
  1. Identify general policy focus areas;
  2. Decide on partners who can help attain those objectives;
  3. With those partners, identify SMART policy objectives that include a realistic selection of the geographical areas where these are to be pursued;
  4. Identify campaigning, advocacy and communication activities that can help achieve the common objectives.
- ✓ Build local capacity or identify partners who can bring a profound level of government insight and expertise related these particular policy objectives.
- ✓ Communication should always be secondary to policy objectives. The campaign should avoid campaigning actions that become an end in itself, without a clear link<sup>4</sup> to the policy objectives to be achieved.

### Global/National Proportion

- ✓ Without losing the primary focus on national governments, the campaign needs to consider deepening its approach to international policy events and institutions, especially when campaigning for Goals 7 & 8.

### Segmenting target audiences

- ✓ Target audiences need to be better selected and defined on the basis of how they can advance the campaign’s objectives.
- ✓ A strong distinction should be made between efforts to engage partner organizations and efforts to engage the public.
- ✓ When public audiences are targeted, messages should be packaged so that the maximum number of target audiences can relate to the issues. This may require research and testing of messaging.
- ✓ Website staff should conduct annual website user surveys to deepen their understanding of users’ needs.

### Rethinking Stand Up

- ✓ Consider using the *Stand Up* trademark to support smaller *Stand Up* events throughout the year targeting policy spaces the campaign wants to influence.
- ✓ The MC needs to take a closer look, than was possible for this evaluation, at the cost effectiveness of the *Stand Up* events. This means trying to place a realistic price-tag on *Stand Up*.
- ✓ Encourage partners to maintain long-term campaigning relationships with citizens who participate in *Stand Up* events. Where partners do not have the capacity to do this, provide support in constituency management.

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<sup>4</sup>Please notice that by “clear link” we do not necessarily mean a direct and immediate policy effect

- ✓ When using *Stand Up* statistics to hold governments to account, consider breaking them down nationally.
- ✓ The MC should consider the following activities to increase the potential impact of the lead-in and follow-up phases of *Stand Up*:
  1. Increase the **lead-in** by starting early, engaging partners and igniting passions.
  2. Reinforce the **follow-up** with increased reporting and monitoring of local *Stand Up* events to better capture the impact at the local level.

#### **Citizens taking action**

- ✓ As the campaign team have noted, instead of communicating at people it is better to offer them something to do.

#### **Two tack approach with the media**

- ✓ The divide between media driven by events and those driven by policy positions appears to be a good practice. This approach should be continued and further linked to deepening policy-change objectives.

#### **Maximum decentralization of communication products**

- ✓ Whenever possible, continue encouraging partners and citizens to make the MDG message their own. However, to avoid potential conflicts, clearly express the MC's minimum "dos and don'ts" in terms of messaging from the outset.
- ✓ To strike the right balance between cost-effectiveness and local needs, and decentralize campaigns while maintaining a clearly recognized trademark, consider:
  - providing minimum guidelines on the campaign's core message and branding;
  - giving as much creative space as possible to national communications.
- ✓ The MC should consider rebalancing their communication resources to focus more on the capacity of national campaigns rather than on the global office.
- ✓ Where appropriate, empower national campaigns to operate effective online campaigns.

#### **Leverage the UN identity further**

- ✓ Increase efforts to use the campaign's UN identity to open up policy spaces for civil society partners.

The MC needs to increase collaboration with UN bodies in order to capitalize on policy opportunities and networking. This can be achieved by dedicating a UN liaison focal point at the global offices.

#### **Partnerships: Engaging organizations, not individuals**

- ✓ Prioritize engaging umbrella organizations and other strategic partners who are positioned to exert the desired influence, rather than directly engaging citizens.
- ✓ The MC's central website would benefit from shifting emphasis from serving individuals to providing support for organizations better equipped to engage public audiences.
- ✓ The MC needs to continue to re-examine national GCAP partnerships on a case-by-case basis, investing only in GCAP coalitions with the capacity to draw in effective partners.
- ✓ We recommend continuing the efforts to work with local government, parliamentarians and faith based organizations. Youth groups and the private sector are constituencies worth exploring further.

## **2. Introduction**

### **2.1. Rationale and scope of the evaluation:**

The MC made the decision two years ago at a global retreat to conduct this external evaluation at the mid-point of the Campaign which is 2009<sup>5</sup>. To this end the MC commissioned a global report and four sub-reports covering their work in Europe, Asia, Africa and the USA.

A team leader was appointed to define the methodology, develop the data gathering tools, recruit and coordinate the team, undertake the desk review and the field work for the global report and write the global report. 35 days were allowed for this role. A separate consultant was employed for 20 days to look into the communication and media strategy of the campaign, which has meant that this strand has significant weight in this global report. This consultant, and associated research group from the University of Wolverhampton, further had a key role in the definition of the methodology.

Particular attention was paid to analyzing priority regions and producing national case studies which could give insight into some of the campaign's priority countries. The criteria for selecting the focus countries was based on the weight given them in the documentation provided by the campaign, the regional projection of the country within the framework of the MC and the particular expertise of the consultants appointed to cover the regions. Two consultants were appointed for 30 working days each, one to cover the Africa region with particular emphasis on Nigeria and Kenya and the other to produce an Asian overview and case studies of India and the Philippines. A further 10 working days were commissioned to cover the European campaigns with a closer look to the Spanish campaign. Finally, 5 working days were spent on a light review of the campaign's work in the USA.

### **2.2. Millennium Campaign description**

In 2002, the UNDP established the Millennium Trust Fund to support the implementation of the UN strategy for achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The strategy had three core elements: (1) Research and analysis; (2) Monitoring of Progress towards the MDGs and (3) Campaigning. These three pillars were intended to be complementary, although this collaboration never fully crystallized. A fourth element in the document "*The UN and the MDGs: A core strategy*", was referred to as "operational activities".

The UN Millennium Campaign (MC) was formally launched by SG Kofi Annan in the second half of 2002 to operationalise the third core element of the strategy. Former Dutch Minister Evelin Herfkens was appointed as Executive Coordinator. The mandate of the campaign is to help increase state accountability to citizens, starting from the premise that without bottom up pressure, there may not be enough political will to achieve the MDGs. The MC was designed by the UN as a small unit that would facilitate a global campaign; an unique UN initiative that was to operate at arm's length.

### **2.3. Intended effects**

The intended effect of the campaign, as stated in their strategy documents and by the MC management during preliminary interviews, is to create political will in a set of priority countries which will ultimately produce political changes related to development issues. In this sense, the campaign treats the MDGs as an entry point for broader development issues

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<sup>5</sup> A previous external assessment was conducted by DFID in 2007.

as outlined in the Millennium Declaration. In doing so the campaign relies heavily on local partners as the actors with most legitimacy to place pressure on national governments and greater likelihood of success than global actors. The MC encourages local partners to design their own strategies and tries not to interfere in national approaches, rather advocating a generic framework for change.

The campaign works through a range of constituencies divided into civil society (including faith-based) organizations; media (including print, electronic and online); government (including bilateral development agencies, local government and elected representatives); youth groups; the United Nations (UN) and to a lesser extent non-media private sector and corporate entities.

The MC has not therefore been operating in a vacuum but has had to deal with a very complex network of partners with different interests and agendas. The global political context in which the campaign operates is also full of challenges, including numerous global crises that have repeatedly diverted attention from development issues.

The campaign has worked on an average budget of US\$9 million a year, which has currently grown to approximately US\$14 million in 2009. It has a small global office with 5 professional staff (housed in UNDP) in New York, regional offices in Rome (hosted by FAO), Bangkok (housed in ESCAP) and Nairobi (housed in the All Africa Conference of Churches) and a number of national teams (most of them just with one person) in some of the priority countries. In total, 48 people report to the campaign (consultants and regular staff).

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1. Logic model for change**

There are many competing theories, views and beliefs about how social and political change occurs. Thus for practical reasons, one of the first tasks of this evaluation was to identify a model of change that fits the thinking of the majority of MC staff. To this end, during the initial needs assessment, various campaign staff were asked how they believed the campaign achieved its intended impact, and their theories of change.

From the outset, agenda-setting theory, which asserts that there is a constant flux between public, media and policy agendas, appeared to offer a close conceptual fit with the evaluation objectives. The initial assessment further confirmed that it is closely aligned with the thinking of MC staff. Most staff and interviewees agreed with the spheres of influence identified (public, media, policy), though there was a wide variety of views on how these domains influenced each other. For example, during this evaluation, many people argued that policy change came about through civil society pressure, while others argued that the influence of the media was stronger. Others suggested the media agenda influenced the public, which finally influences the policy agenda. The variety of views appeared to reflect the fact that influence between domains changes from country to country, given the different social and political contexts.

**Figure 1: Agenda Setting Theory Logic Model**

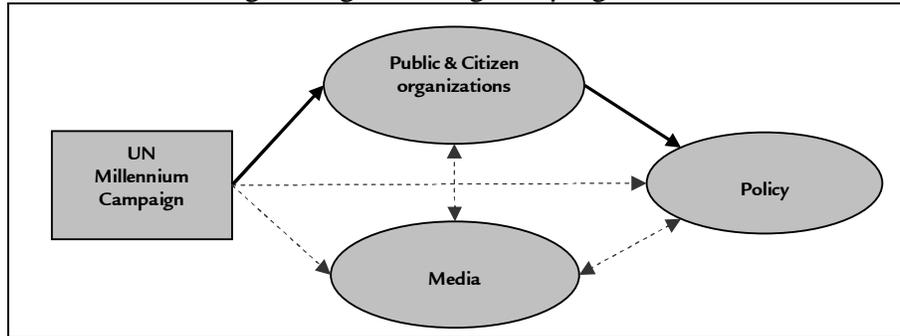


Figure 1 presents the logic model this evaluation has used to describe how the MC brings about change.

- The **solid lines** represent the MC's most widely expressed change principle, that the MC helps citizens hold their governments accountable; or that the MC works with citizens organizations increase political will towards the MDGs. In the language of agenda setting theory, one would say that public agendas influence policy agendas.
- The **dashed lines** represent areas where change happens, but where staff and informants presented such diverse opinions that we hold these relations to operate differently in different national contexts.

Having used this framework to structure the evaluation and this report, a few cross cutting issues have been distributed across the various domains. Firstly, partners and networks is a strong cross cutting theme and as such has been given its own chapter. Another cross cutting theme is communication and advocacy which has been split across domains. Communication partnerships have been placed in partners and networks; and analysis of the MC's communications was placed in the media section.

### 3.2. Evaluation purpose and end use

The primary goal of this report is to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of the UN Millennium Campaign. By impact, we mean measuring achievements, such as increased political will, public awareness or media coverage. By effectiveness, we mean assessing the MC's ability to bring about that change given their resources. The secondary goal is to evaluate how well the campaign is doing, what works and what needs to be improved. Furthermore, parts of the evaluation do not answer impact questions, but rather offer insights into critical issues.

The particular requirements for this evaluation were expressed in the initial terms of reference (TOR) provided as an annex. In addition, during preliminary needs assessments campaign staff contributed to the evaluation purpose and design. Staff felt strongly that it should serve a practical purpose, with 88% stating that they would use the evaluation results to improve future strategy and enhance their work. As only 9% suggested that they would share the evaluation results with partners and donors it should primarily be considered an internal evaluation to meet the operational and strategic needs of MC staff.

### 3.3. Conceptual framework and questions

For methodological and practical purposes, the original questions were reduced to a set of five domains of influence and six units of analysis. Any particular questions that were not explicitly addressed were treated independently. The questions and units of analysis are as follows:

#### Five questions for five domains

1. **Public domain:** To what extent has the campaign increased awareness of the MDGs amongst the general public?
2. **Media domain:** Has the campaign been effective in its media and communications engagement (including online channels)?
3. **Policy domain:** Has the campaign contributed to positively influencing the MDG-policy and/or practice of national governments?
4. **Partnership:** Has the campaign helped build and strengthen citizens and/or organizations working on poverty and justice advocacy through the MDG campaigns?
5. **Internal fitness:** Does the campaign have the appropriate structure and staffing needed to achieve its mandate?

#### Six units of analysis

1. **Process:** What happened?
2. **Impact:** What was achieved?
3. **Attribution:** Which actors are responsible for the activities/impacts?
4. **Best practice:** What worked best?
5. **Future strategy:** What are the future threats and opportunities?
6. **Domain specific issues:** What other issues are relevant to this domain?

The remaining questions from the TOR were re-grouped into the above domains:

1. Has the campaign succeeded in bringing new constituencies into campaigning for the MDGs e.g. governments, youth?
2. Has the campaign leveraged its UN identity adequately?
3. Has the Stand Up initiative strengthened the overall campaign?
4. Has the campaign chosen the right partners to work with?
5. Has the campaign had the right level and quality of financial resources?
6. Has the campaign had the suitable leadership and culture for the achievement of its goals?

A separate sub-report following a slightly different methodology was produced to give answers to three questions looking at internal fitness:

- Has the campaign had the appropriate structure and staffing needed to achieve its mandate?
- Has the campaign had the right level and quality of financial resources?
- Has the campaign had the suitable leadership and culture for the achievement of its goals?

### 3.4. Evaluation approach and methods

This evaluation used a research project management framework developed by the United States Centre for Disease Control (CDC). This framework provides a simple approach, using non-technical language, which is easily extended and has a track record of application to large-scale communication campaigns. The framework emphasizes six interconnected steps, which are:

1. Engaging stakeholders (mainly the primary users of the evaluation);
2. Describing the program;
3. Focusing on the evaluation;
4. Gathering credible evidence;
5. Justifying the conclusions; and
6. Ensuring use and sharing lessons learned.

The evaluation was divided into two stages. The first step was to paint a picture of the global context and MC activities: the process evaluation. The second was to assess what was achieved: the impact evaluation. The process evaluation was more descriptive and quantitative in nature, while the impact evaluation was more qualitative, drawing on evidence from numerous sources.

Faced with scarce baseline data, a complex evaluation context, piecemeal evidence and limited time and resources, we adopted a mixed method approach. By this we mean that the best available evidence was used, whether quantitative or qualitative. Moreover, much effort was placed on conducting a time-series analysis, whereby we looked for associations between MC activities and impacts; however, great care was taken to ensure any causal claims were justified.

For the process evaluation, timelines were used to chronicle the broad context of global MDG activities (the full chronology is provided as an annex). Within this broad MDG context, it was possible to begin to place the MC into perspective, and assess campaign impacts relative to other pro-MDG actors. The timelines showed the dates of all major events related to the campaign globally, and in Africa, Asia, Europe and the USA. The timelines divided the key events into six categories:

1. “Global and regional policy events”, including those organized by the UN system;
2. “Relevant advocacy”, related, but not attributed to the MC;
3. “Public domain MC-relevant events”;
4. “Policy domain MC-relevant events”; and
5. “Media domain MC-relevant events” and
6. “Internal MC-relevant events”.

As part of the process evaluation we also used partnership maps to identify and classify MC partners. The partnership maps helped to see the scope and range of MC partnerships, and were also helpful for the sample selection to include informants relating to different domains of influence. Partnership maps were developed for Global, Africa, Asia, Europe and the USA, including all the focus countries. Partners were categorized as “key partners”, “relevant partners” and “occasional partners”, as well as by domain. All the partnership maps and timelines were created by the evaluation team and completed and validated by the campaign.

### **3.5. Evidence (data sources)**

The number of documents reviewed was large, and the bibliography gives a full account. During the process, we designed a number of data collection tools, which are described as follows:

#### **3.7.1 Preliminary needs assessment with management and staff:**

One critical element of the evaluation process was ensuring that the final report was relevant to the end users. It was also important that we started with an accurate description of the campaign’s purpose and modus operandi. To this end, all MC staff were invited to help shape the direction of the evaluation through an on-line needs-assessment survey, while telephone consultations were held with a number of managers and key staff. During the process, 40 MC staff members completed the online needs assessment while nine staff members were interviewed.

### **3.7.2 In-depth informant interviews:**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 130 informants. The partnership maps described above were the basis for developing the list of key informants, classifying MC partners according to:

- Domain (policy, media, public and internal),
- Importance (key, relevant, occasional), and
- Geographical scope.

Efforts were made to ensure a range of voices were represented, including those of known skeptics. For a full account of all people interviewed please refer to the list of informants (Annex 4). Potential informants were then divided into the following groups to allow for interview questions to be tailored:

1. MC management;
2. MC advocacy/campaign staff;
3. MC communication staff ;
4. Government “allies”;
5. Government “targets”;
6. CSO partners, including grantees;
7. Media/communication partners;
8. UN focal points;
9. Bird ’s eye viewers (high level informants with proven knowledge of the campaign environment, including donors and UN Resident Coordinators).

To ensure a systematic approach, the six units of analysis were applied to the five domains (public, political, media, partnerships and internal). Then, for each of the potential interview groups, questions were drawn up that addressed some of the core evaluation questions and which also intersected with their background. A number of interview guidelines were developed for the different participant groups. Based on these sheets, each evaluator was able to quickly build customized interview sheets adapted to different contexts.

### **3.7.3 Partners’ web survey:**

To ensure that MC partner views were represented, and to collect more quantitative responses, a web survey was conducted. Partners were asked to give their perception of the work of the MC and give feedback on their working relationship with the campaign. The questionnaire was designed by the evaluation team and tested on five partners to ensure the questions were clear, relevant and useful.

The evaluation team asked the campaign to compile a list of emails of the partners listed in the partnership maps, and additional suggestions were made by some of the interviewees. Overall 49 partners replied, nearly 25% of the estimated 200 invited partners. The responses came from a wide range of partners. We recognize that web surveys suffer methodologically as convenience samples, meaning that those who opt-in may not fully represent the full population. However, 25% is a sizable proportion of partners.

### **3.7.4 Internal fitness survey:**

We also conducted an on-line survey among all MC staff to inform the internal fitness sub-report. Methodological details are given in the sub-report.

### **3.7.5 Pooling public awareness studies:**

To paint a global, regional and national picture of MDG public awareness, we pooled data from three international public opinion surveys on the MDGs (more details in the methodology annex). The pooled data allowed us to estimate regional awareness, while using

regression analysis to estimate the growth of public awareness of the MDGs since 2001. To complete the picture, especially in the South, we have used separate national and global surveys specified in the regional reports.

### 3.7.6 Measuring print media trends:

MC media reports did not provide enough information to meet the needs of this evaluation. Further, we did not receive any systematic documentation on MC broadcast media products or impacts, despite the fact that the MC carries out a lot of work in this area. What was available included MC annual and quarterly reports, and a few media monitoring reports around key events.

To compensate for the lack of MDG media analysis, we drew from existing MC and broader MDG media analyses while conducting our own time-series news media analysis. First, three MDG media analyses<sup>6</sup> were used to paint a picture of the global distribution of MDG press coverage. They were further used to assess MC media impacts by comparing MC media work with these third party studies.

Then, to better understand global MDG media trends over time, we carried out a time-series analysis. To reveal trends, this press time-series data was cross-referenced with key events in the MC’s history and web data. Impressively, the data showed a strong correlation with the MC’s website data and clear linkages to historical events. We used the Lexis-Nexis media database to extract time-series data series that could represent trends in MDG media coverage, covering the years 2000-2009. A full pilot study was conducted ahead of time to evaluate key words and search strategies.

This paragraph provides a basic description of the print time-series presented in the Media Domain and Communication chapter. Table 2 presents the keywords and the media sources used. To ensure that the keywords actually represent what we suggest, we randomly selected 100 articles from each of the three groups and assessed each article to judge if it was truly about the MDGs or the MC. From this, we made accuracy assessments. Based on the number of sampled articles, we are 95% confident that our accuracy assessments are within a +/-10% margin of error. For example, in the MC index, we are highly confident that article accuracy ranges from 83-100%, with an average of 6% redundancy. The other two MDG indexes were 100% accurate +/- 10%. Out of the thousands of records behind these charts, there are some mistakes, but overall, the trends are reliable.

**Table 2: Media time-series search terms and accuracy**

Source name	Search details	Articles	Accuracy
MDG in Newspapers	The search term "millennium development goal" in an index of 60 major world newspapers.	3,333	Accuracy: 100% +/- 10%
MDG in AP	The search term "millennium development goal" searched across 5 Associated Press sources.	750	Relevance: 100% +/- 10% Repeat error: 3% +/- 10%
UN & MC in Newspapers & Wire	The search terms "millennium campaign" AND "United Nations" searched across all English newspapers (131) and wire services.	747	Relevance: 93% +/- 10% Repeat error: 6% +/- 10%

<sup>6</sup> GIFFARD, A. & VAN LEUVEN, N. (2005) Five Views on Development: How News Agencies Cover the UN Millennium Development Goals. Department of Communication, University of Washington.; EVALUATION AND COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH UNIT (2007) Media Monitoring Analysis of the launch of the Millennium Development Goals Report 2007. UN Department of Public Information.; EVALUATION AND COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH UNIT (2008) Millennium Development Goals and Development in Africa. UN Department of Public Information.

The media indexes are provided in the annex; in short, they contain a range of English language news sources from a number of countries. Further details on the methodological and statistical approach are available in the methodology annex (annex 2).

### 3.6. Agreements

A number of groups and teams were set up to support this evaluation process, including the evaluation team. The evaluation support board, composed of all the managers of the campaign, were consulted for feedback on the methodology design, to gather evidence and help engage with informants. Further, one dedicated staff member provided support for the team to liaise with MC staff.

To ensure professional conduct, terms of reference were drawn up for the project support board, and from the onset, the researchers agreed to follow these ethical principles. This meant that all participants had to provide informed consent, meaning that they understood the aims of the evaluation and how their input could be used. Furthermore, all participants were offered the option of confidentiality and the researchers made a commitment to protect participants' identities. To this end, all research recordings, notes, survey results and other participant are held in confidence and have been disassociated from informants. All documentation provided by the MC was also treated as confidential.

### 3.7. Limitations

#### **Lack of baseline data:**

A primary challenge we encountered was starting the evaluation without known baselines. It is difficult to categorically answer the question, "Has this campaign contributed to positive change?" when it is not known what the situation was prior to, or during the campaign. In the case of this evaluation, it is not possible to assess the impact of the MC on public opinion without first establishing what public opinion is, how it has changed over time, and which factors may be the key drivers of public opinion.

Where possible, we have used a time-series approach to compensate for missing baselines. Using this approach, we compared trends to key MC activities and events and looked for evidence that MC activities had contributed to these trends. For example, there is a large association between the *Stand Up* event and print news coverage that mentions the MC. We also know that public awareness and media coverage were already rising quickly before the MC started. However, for much of the evaluation, the lack of baselines led to challenges and limitations for each domain described in the relevant sections. In these cases, we have had to rely on softer evidence.

#### **Reliability of evidence:**

The conclusions from this evaluation, and the assessment of impact, have been developed based on evidence from numerous sources, with various degrees of reliability. Independent research offers some of the most credible evidence, while in other cases evidence was based on informants' perceptions.

#### **Attribution of impact:**

This evaluation has tried to assess the sum impact of MDG campaigning, and to understand the MC's share of that impact. Given the numerous stakeholders of the MC, along with outside actors pursuing development agendas unrelated to the MC, this is a complicated task. This is further confounded as the MC primarily operates in partnership with other actors, making attribution unclear in many circumstances. In some cases, we found strong

evidence that could be used to make the case for attribution of impact to the MC but for most questions, claims of impact attribution are at best indicative.

**Time and resources:**

It was not possible to paint a historical picture of the campaign with the available documentation alone. Consequently, considerable effort (between the evaluation team and MC staff) was exerted on the process evaluation, where the history, scope and context of the campaign were described. The capacity to review these documents by key persons in the UN system and development community was limited, and consequently there may be some factual errors in the history sections.

**Limitations of media analysis:**

There are a few quality reports that describe MDG media coverage during key moments, but all of them are primarily focused on print news coverage. Consequently, we conducted analysis to build a historical view of MDG news coverage in English-language newspapers from all continents. These trends should not be mistaken for other media, such as radio or television, and do not represent the full scope of media coverage of the MDGs nor MC. Rather, they represent general trends within an acceptable level of accuracy.

## 4. Policy Domain

### 4.1. Context

There are a series of challenges related to policy advocacy around the MDGs, which form the context for the campaign's work. Firstly, when assessing the policy impact of the Millennium Campaign it is important to bear in mind the global policy context. This includes situations like the "war on terror" and the resulting shrinkage of democratic space; the financial crisis, preceded by the food crisis; the fuel crisis and the long period, including the early years of the campaign, when the USA administration was not very committed to the MDGs.

The second important difficulty is intrinsic to the MDGs. Goals 1 to 6 are the responsibility of Southern governments and have clear deliverables, timelines, targets and objectives. However, for Goal 7, which is a shared goal, and Goal 8, which is the responsibility of the North, the benchmarks are not that apparent. This is an extra campaigning difficulty, especially for the Northern campaigns.

A third challenge is that it is very difficult to get the MDGs incorporated into national policy. Several reasons were given for this in the interviews and some key documents. For instance, as Richard Manning states, in developing countries, highly dependent on development assistance, there is a significant danger of "donor contamination" <sup>7</sup>. If MDGs are not a priority for donors they will not get mainstreamed, however strong the national political will. In other cases the process is the opposite, where MDGs become the "donor's mantra" and governments feel they have to include them in the bilateral agreements to secure funding. When a government includes them because of obligation rather than political imperative, the commitment of the policy makers might not be sincere, which creates bottlenecks for implementation.

On the other hand, in countries like India where the goals are already integrated (although not using the same MDG terms) it is important to identify whether they add value. Even in countries where MDGs are incorporated into national plans, it remains to be seen how they translate into concrete policy practices and strategies.

Moreover, even in the countries where MDG reports indicate that they are on track to achieve the majority of MDG indicators, averages can mask variance. This means that targets can be met even though some regions or communities are still living with poverty or poor standards. The global MDG targets may be achieved if China and India together surpass their targets by a small margin, even if Sub-Saharan Africa falls short. This means that the MDGs need to be localized, which further complicates and diversifies the context for the campaign.

We also identified a structural issue of policy capacity relating to the conception of the Millennium Campaign. The MC was not set up to define and assess the policy dimensions of achieving the MDGs. Under the MDG Core Strategy, the Millennium Project was entrusted with this task.

**"Definition and assessment of the policy dimensions of achieving the MDGs based on a consensus among partners on necessary policy and institutional reforms and investments, financing options and strategies for scaling-up their efforts. Such analysis will shift the policy dialogue between partners from the aspirational to the practical measures required to make**

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<sup>7</sup> Richard, Manning, *Using indicators to encourage development – Lessons from the Millennium Development Goals*, 2009

**headway towards the MDGs. The facts and findings resulting from analysis will also form the basis for focused campaign messages". (MDG Core strategy)**

The way this was set up meant that the campaign was to act as a sort of communication department of the Millennium Project and the Millennium Project as the policy department of the campaign. Coordination between the two bodies was intended to provide practical political solutions along with tailored advocacy to carry those solutions forward. The third element of the MTF was the national MDG reporting system to track progress in relation to those policy solutions. However, serious conceptual differences and possibly lack of assertiveness on the part of sections of UN prevented the partnership between MC and MT from happening. Thus the Millennium Campaign had to face huge policy challenges without a full-time structured policy department to back their campaign actions and increase and coordinate their policy capacity at national level.

Methodologically, we have encountered a significant limitation as briefly stated in the introduction when analyzing the impact of the MC on national policies and policy practices in their priority countries. Ideally, we should have had a baseline telling us which of the priority countries could be considered as "having incorporated MDGs into their national plans". All these countries have national development plans, PRSPs and/ or CCA/ UNDAF that could have shed light on this question. To do a primary analysis of this in all MC priority countries goes well beyond the scope of this evaluation. We found very few reports dealing with the subject although these do provide interesting hints which help contextualize the domain further.

A DIIS study<sup>8</sup> suggested that the impact of the MDG framework on government action in donor countries has been significant but variable. This is most evident among European donors where the increase of ODA in social sectors could be associated to the presence of the MDG framework. The same publication also suggests that in developing countries the impact of the MDG framework on national policies has been modest although generally more significant in more aid-dependent countries.

A recent UNDP study<sup>9</sup> also makes an interesting analysis of 22 PRSPs where the author found that most had statements on commitment to the MDGs. However in most countries the focus was quite selective, and geared towards economic growth and social spending. The study showed that a few countries, like Cambodia, systematically adapted the MDGs to their national realities demonstrating a good level of ownership. Others used the MDGs in combination with other frameworks, like "Vision 2020" in Rwanda. However, many of them appear to have adopted the MDG targets rather than to have adapted them thoroughly to their national context.

Even if we could have assessed the presence of the MDG framework in national policy papers, the main question would be how they have translated into concrete national, regional and sectoral strategies that are the main basis for policy and resourcing decisions. This requires further study. Given the scarce baselines, we opted to gather perceptions from key opinion-formers and decision makers from both inside and outside the campaign about the level of the political will and policy implementation, and the role of the MC in it. Therefore the assessment is based not on hard evidence but on perceptions, and the conclusions should be taken in this light.

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<sup>8</sup> Richard, Manning, *Using indicators to encourage development – Lessons from the Millennium Development Goals*, 2009

<sup>9</sup> Sakiko Fukuda-Parr, "Are the MDGs Priority in Development Strategies and Aid programmes? Only Few Are!" International Poverty Centre, UNDP, 2008

## 4.2. Activities

The UN Millennium Campaign believes in creating political will within democratic contexts through bottom-up, citizen-led campaigns. In an attempt to focus their work, the MC selected a list of 39 priority countries, 10 of them in the North and 29 in the South (see Table 3). The list has stayed fairly constant, although the campaign has never been completely tied by it and it has changed a little, especially in Africa.

The criteria they used to work in these countries were reported as follows:

- a. Countries that have some global strategic importance (i.e. important on the global development map);
- b. Countries that have significant numbers of poor people (in the South) or have large economies and aid/ trade portfolios (in the North);
- c. Countries that are not in conflict; and
- d. Countries where there is some democratic space.

**Table 3: Priority countries for the Millennium Campaign**

Tier	East Africa	West Africa	Southern Africa	Asia	North
1	Ethiopia	Burkina Faso	Mozambique	Bangladesh	Germany
	Kenya	Ghana	Zambia	India	Spain
	Tanzania	Nigeria	Malawi	Indonesia	Portugal
	Uganda	Senegal		Nepal	France
				Pakistan	USA
			Philippines	Italy	
2	Rwanda	Sierra Leone	South Africa	Cambodia	Japan
	DRC	Liberia	Namibia	China	Canada
			Zimbabwe	Suva	Australia
			Swaziland	PNG	Austria

The Millennium Campaign made the strategic decision to advocate for the MDGs primarily in the national processes of the above mentioned priority countries, with limited engagement in regional and international events. This tendency has changed slightly, as the campaign carves out a niche at global level which it is exploiting more deliberately. We identified more emphasis on global events in the campaign's more recent reports and strategy papers. These include advocacy activities at financing for development meetings, G8 and G20 meetings and more significantly at UN Summits.

However, the main focus remains the national level, where the campaign uses a variety of advocacy tools. These include direct influencing of legislators or other public officials (lobbying), to instigating citizen's mobilization for a number of policy demands. For instance, *Stand Up* events contained specific policy claims that were made relevant to each national context.

Direct lobbying of public officials by MC staff has been more frequently reported by the European campaigns. The founder of the MC is a former European Minister and has played a prominent role in this regard. In Southern countries direct influence on policy makers is done less often and mainly through partners strategically leveraging the UN identity to gain access. A good example of using the UN credentials as well as the credibility and connections of the Campaign's leadership in the South was supporting a process of discussion with leaders at the highest level in Ethiopia to secure the release of two civic leaders who were also associated with the national MDG Campaign.

In most cases the campaign advocates for issues that are directly linked with getting the MDGs into national processes. For instance, several actions have been reported to influence official budgetary processes to secure resources to finance the achievement of the MDGs. Such activities have been reported by campaigns in both the North and the South and are covered in the regional reports. We will mention here the People's Budget in Kenya, the "9 is mine campaign" in India; the 2009 federal budget in the USA and the work to increase ODA in Germany, Spain and Portugal.

Another line of policy work highlighted in the regional reports is the support of MDG shadow reports in a number of countries, both Northern and Southern. It is interesting to note that when the campaign was set up, the third leg of the MTF was MDG reporting. These reports are commissioned by UN country teams in partnership with national governments. The original idea was that the campaign would use these reports domestically as mobilizing tools. Although the campaign has frequently used reports, it has opted to support civil society to develop their own shadow MDG reports and citizen's scorecards.

Other policy work has been based on strategic partnership. Particularly relevant is the partnership with United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), covered in the European report. This partnership has been mentioned in several interviews as one of the key successes of the campaign and is another example of successful leveraging of their UN identity. One informant said:

*"I don't think anyone could have done that (the UCLG partnership) but the UN brings that legitimacy"*

Most of the work with the UCLG and local authorities seems to have been driven from Europe. However, the Southern campaigns also reported activities in conjunction with local authorities, which are covered in the regional reports. For instance,

### **4.3. Assessment**

Impact on policy is the most difficult to assess, largely due to the fact that numerous actors may be working towards, and claim credit for, policy change. Within complex political environments it is difficult to assess sources of influence, and on top of that, the MC has always taken the strategic position not to step forward and take the credit.

It is likely that through citizen mobilization activities like the *Stand Up* events, and media and influencing work done by the campaign and partners, a positive contribution has been made to a range of policy changes both at global and national level in the priority countries. However, during the evaluation we could find little evidence that demonstrates the campaign's contribution to concrete policy changes, although we can highlight some positive achievements.

#### **Positive achievements**

The Millennium Campaigns, most significantly in Europe, have contributed positively to the mainstreaming of the MDGs as consensus objectives in national governments. However, their influence on translating them into monitoring benchmarks and planning targets is more limited and uneven.

The more significant question, especially in the South, would be how the goals have translated into concrete policy practice which establishes the basis for resourcing decisions. In this regard, although the evidence is not strong, we can name a few actions from the regional reports where the MC seems to have made a significant contribution at this level.

- In **Kenya**, the People’s Budget done in association with the Social Economic Foundation engaged Parliament on a report which was referred to by a Parliamentarian in their debate of the national budget.
- A poverty hearing was held in Jigawa State, northern **Nigeria**, in conjunction with state government. At the end, the state government committed to specific actions in response to the issues raised.
- In the **Philippines**, there is a consensus that the campaign partnership with the UN Coordination Team (UNCT) has influenced MDG policy, particularly through the Development Budget Coordination Committee. The “36 pesos” campaign has also had reported influence on the raising of the country’s poverty line.

**Room to grow**

There was broad consensus among informants that the campaign is more communication than policy oriented and has a tendency to focus on events like the *Stand Up* and the MDG shadow reports, which could become ends in themselves rather than a means to achieve specific policy change. While there is merit in mobilization and awareness-raising, if campaigning actions do not lead to policy change, they are not worth doing.

**Figure 2: Partners’ perceptions of MC strengths**

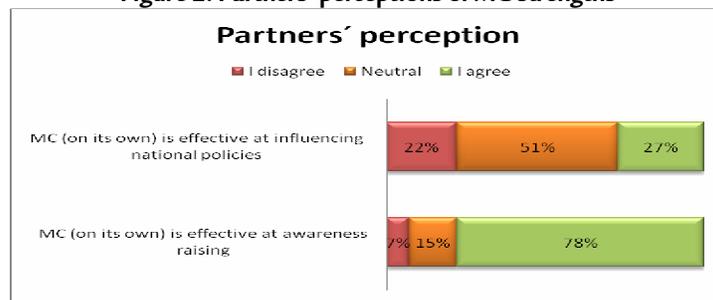


Figure 2 shows that partners perceive the campaign to be more effective at awareness raising than policy influence. While 27% of partners acknowledged that the MC directly influences national policy, another 22% disagreed, and more than half were unsure. This matches the views collected at interviews. On the other hand, 78% of these respondents agree that the “MC is affective at awareness-raising”.

During the evaluation, we asked people from inside and outside the campaign what the MC was not doing well. Though responses varied, a clear area for improvement is the translation of mobilization efforts into impact on government policy. We also got several possible explanations about why the campaign was not doing well in this regard.

**Why the UN Millennium Campaign is not perceived to be effective at policy influencing**

1. Some informants, from inside and outside the UN, believe that the campaign had a rocky start in terms of purpose. That translated into a continuous identity struggle that has prevented them from being more focused. As noted above, the intended symbiosis between the MC, the Millennium Project (MP) and the MDG reports didn’t happen fully. While the MP and the MDG reports were well defined from the outset, the campaign was purposely more general and this ambiguity has remained. This complex beginning, among other factors, has left uncertainty at the heart of the campaign about its ultimate goal. Is it global mobilization or awareness or national policy action? If the answer is policy action, the concrete national policy changes being sought need to be spelt out before mobilization and communication are planned. Regarding articulation with a sharp policy focus, the organic culture of the campaign means their objectives are loosely defined and flexible. While this allows them to adapt to a constantly changing environment it also

weakens the clarity of purpose. Many think that the key to “joining the dots” between mobilization and policy action is solid planning, focused on more specific issues and consistently carried out.

2. Another explanation provided by informants referred to their theory of change. It is very obvious that the MC places enormous emphasis on mobilizing citizen-led campaigns as the means to influence political will. While this strategy can be useful in many situations, some consider that it does not fit every policy scenario and that the campaign doesn't give enough attention to other ways to access policy spaces.
3. Another important issue that we cover briefly in the partnership chapter is the lack of policy capacity of the campaign's partners, especially in Africa. The Africa report covers this issue widely and wisely.

## 5. Public Domain

### 5.1. Context

Recognizing the lack of reporting of public opinion towards the MDGs, in 2004 the OECD published a working paper called “Public Opinion Polling and the Millennium Development Goals”. Since then, three major global public opinion polls have been conducted<sup>10</sup>, as well as a number of smaller national studies. Before assessing the MC’s contribution to public awareness, it was necessary to understand the level of public awareness, and estimate how awareness has changed over time. Further, to place the MC into perspective, we consolidated information from a number of sources to demonstrate the costs of raising MDG awareness in small European countries and the costs of creating a brand in America.

**Figure 3: Regional and Global MDG Awareness 2000 - 2007**

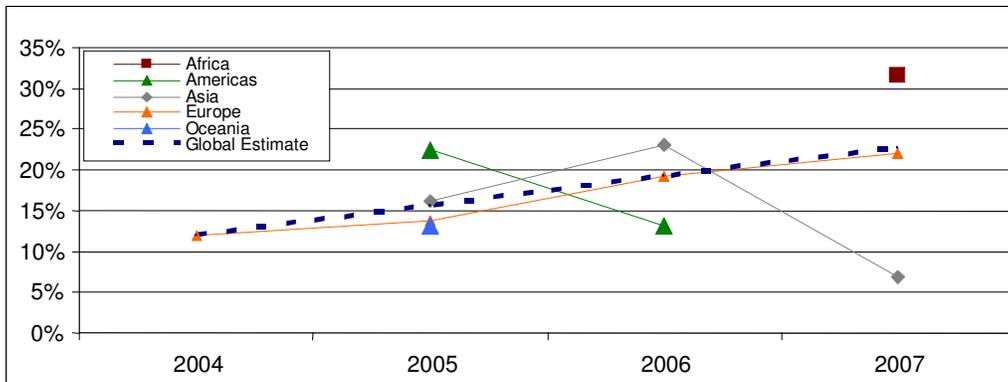


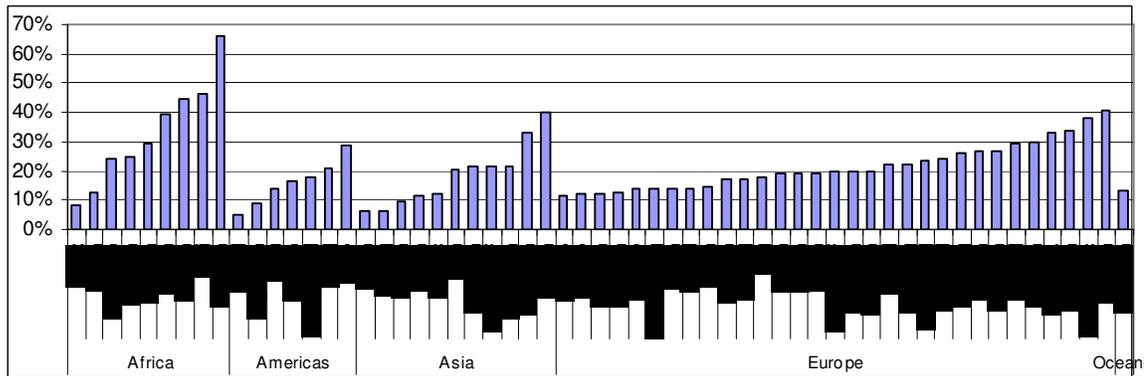
Figure 3 above shows average estimates of MDG public awareness, grouped by continents. The dashed line shows an estimated trend of global awareness and shows that in 2004 the average awareness of MDGs was above 10%, while it had surpassed 20% by 2006. The first multinational MDG study of African public awareness showed that many African nations had held the highest levels of public awareness. Figure 4 below, showing the latest estimates we have for each country, reinforces the predominance of African awareness.

The 2007 EuroBarometer study showed that, on average, while 18% of Europeans had heard of the MDGs, only 4% of them actually knew what they were. If we take the proportion of knowledge to awareness (22.2%), and generalize it to the global trend line, the results suggest that basic knowledge of the MDGs was 2.2% by 2004, 3.3% by 2005, and 4.4% by 2006.

An OECD report called “Public campaigns about the MDGs since 2003” shows that the countries which started campaigning earliest achieved some of the highest levels of public awareness. The document also argues that the numerous activities in 2005 explained the large jump in MDG public awareness at that time.

<sup>10</sup> TNS OPINION & SOCIAL (2005) Attitudes towards Development Aid, 2005. Special Eurobarometer. European Commission.; TNS OPINION & SOCIAL (2007) Europeans and Development Aid. Special Eurobarometer. European Commission.; (2008) Data extracted from the World Values Survey: 2005-2008 wave.

**Figure 4: Public Awareness of MDGs by country/ continent**



(See annex 3 for larger graph)

**The costs of raising public awareness**

It is not possible to discuss the MC’s contribution to public awareness-raising without comparison to similar campaigns. To provide this perspective, we have pooled data from an OECD report<sup>11</sup> and public opinion polls, as described in the methodology.

**Table 4: Costs and effectiveness of public MDG campaigns**

Country	Years	Campaign Years	Total Cost (EUR)	Cost/Year (EUR)	Public Awareness 2004	Public Awareness 2007
Sweden	2002-2005	4	3,200,000	800,000	31.5%	41%
Netherlands	2003-2008	6	2,650,000	441,667	28.5%	38%
Belgium	2005-2008	4	700,000	175,000	20.5%	30%

We also gleaned a second perspective from private and public sectors in the US. During interviews, it was put forward that the costs of building public awareness of a brand within the US can range from \$50-200 million. One US-based social marketing campaign called Verb promoted active living among 9-13 year olds over a five year period. This national public health campaign cost \$125 million plus another \$75 million in-kind, and at that price was able to achieve up to 80 percent awareness and influence.

To place the MC into perspective, with its global budget now approaching \$14 million per year it is large in comparison with a small European country’s MDG campaign. However, it is possible that the entire global budget of the MC, over its entire lifespan would only begin to approach the cost of an effective five-year social marketing campaign in the US.

According to the financial information received from the campaign the total amount of income raised by the campaign to early 2009 was \$63,568,756. Even if we add in-kind contributions and the influence of “strategic partnerships”, we can conclude that the campaign does not have the funds required to make a large global impact.

**5.2. Activities**

It should be noted that the Millennium Campaign was not conceived to raise awareness but to build political support for the MDGs and make governments accountable to their citizens

<sup>11</sup> MC DONNELL, I. (2009) Public campaigns about the MDGs since 2003. OECD, DevCom Network: the Informal Network of DAC Development Communicators.

for certain promises. For that to happen, it is essential that those citizens are informed. However, it was never clear who should be leading on this effort.

The MTF foundation document stated that the MC should be “consistent with the call in the Monterrey Consensus for a global information campaign” but does not make specific reference to whether the MC should lead that information campaign. It is clear that the campaign was never equipped or resourced to run an effective global awareness campaign, even through the much touted ‘strategic partnerships’. This implies that other parts of the UN system with wider global infrastructure and significantly more resources should have paved the way for the campaign’s advocacy work.

Even though it is beyond its mandate, the campaign has made considerable effort to meet this prerequisite, especially in their priority countries, with considerable results given their limited resources. Among those efforts, *Stand Up* events deserve a separate section as they have become the flagship of the campaign and cut across several of the domains we are looking at for this evaluation.

The Millennium Campaign has also undertaken many smaller activities directly or through their partners that have contributed to public engagement. Too many to be listed here, these are covered in the regional reports. However, we would like to highlight the work with faith based organizations in the USA; partnerships with the music channel MTV and Futurshow in Italy to raise awareness among young people; the MDG arches exhibition travelling to world cup host cities in Germany 2006; the events held in Africa on key dates such as Africa Day, Women’s Day and World Aids Day; the concert of Mission USTAAD targeting youth in India; and the South Asia Youth Consultation program at the end of 2006, which led to several National youth consultations on “How to promote the MDGs”. Special mention should also be made of the role of the campaign at events for the three 2005 White Band Days and the 2008 UN High level event on MDGs.

### 5.3. Stand Up

There is no question that the Millennium Campaign has been hugely successful at mobilizing massive numbers of people across the world. Significantly through the October *Stand Up* events in 2006, 2007 and 2008. In 2006, under the slogan “*Stand Up against poverty*”, more than 23 million people were registered as taking part. The 2007, “*Stand Up and Speak out*” and 2008 “*Stand Up and Take action*” events surpassed all expectations as Table 5 shows.

**Table 5: participation in Stand Up events<sup>12</sup>**

Continent	2007		2008	
	Countries	Total	Countries	Total
Africa	36	8,640,638	36	40,300,437
Americas	25	859,643	23	335,170
Asia	33	33,894,666	36	75,202,365
Europe	30	206,466	33	944,854
Oceania	3	117,721	3	210,803
<i>Grand Total</i>	<i>127</i>	<i>43,719,134</i>	<i>131</i>	<i>116,993,629</i>

<sup>12</sup> There were calculation errors in the 2006 numbers. A request was made to have the 2006 Stand Up figures fact checked which this was not done in time for the report. Consequently, this analysis only includes 2007 and 2008 figures.

There is overwhelming evidence that the force behind the success of the *Stand Up* events is the UN Millennium Campaign. For instance, in Asia, where the biggest mobilization of people was seen, 93% and 97% of the people who stood up in 2007 and 2008 respectively came from the six MC priority countries, (Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan and the Philippines).

The event is enormously prominent to the image of the campaign from the outside. The vast majority of interviewees talked spontaneously about *Stand Up* when asked about the campaign's activities. 74% of respondents in the partners' survey agreed that "*Stand Up* is instrumental to the campaign". Furthermore, 55.8% responded that the most relevant added value to their work by the campaign would be their "Coordinating the *Stand Up*". In Asia and Africa the proportion is even greater at 64.3%.

It is important to clarify that *Stand Up* was never conceived to be a policy event or to raise public awareness around the MDGs. It was created with the primary objective of creating citizen action to hold governments accountable. However, as the 2008 *Stand Up* survey demonstrated, when asked to rate the purpose of *Stand Up* activities, participants ranked raising public awareness/ education most important.

#### **Reflections on *Stand Up*:**

What follows are the points we concluded to be the key elements of *Stand Up*:

- Legitimacy: The massive numbers that *Stand Up* mobilized not only gave legitimacy to the campaign but also provided a powerful argument to present to the governments.
- Raising awareness: It is difficult to quantify *Stand Up*'s contribution to the awareness of the people who participated in the events. Participation is not synonymous to awareness and many have criticized the lack of a consistent and appropriate education or information component to *Stand Up*. However, *Stand Up* is clearly the driving force behind the majority of the MC's media attention, which is arguably the most effective means to raise public awareness.
- Focus on the South: One of the main achievements of *Stand Up* was that it provided the platform for the Southern campaigns to be heard. Around 90% of people taking part are in the South. Moreover, as both the Asia and Africa reports underline, *Stand Up* provided the opportunity for people on the margins to act.
- Linking international issues to national realities: An overwhelming 76% of respondents to the partners' survey from Southern countries stated that what they value the most about the MC is that it brings international agendas into their national context. *Stand Up* has been a powerful vehicle for this.
- A creative inspiration: The creativity and the energy behind the events have also been especially noted during this evaluation. One evaluation informant noted that:

***"In terms of activating and energizing civil society, Stand Up was a very ingenious concept, the fact that more people are coming every year and the creativity around it is outstanding"***

- A trademark: It has created a recognized global brand.
- Building capacity among national partners: Although *Stand Up* engaged a wide range of constituencies in the different countries it is not clear to what extent it helped strengthen the capacity of national citizen's groups. It is they who ultimately should capitalize on the

large constituencies *Stand Up* provides to hold their government to account. As one evaluation informant asked:

*“They have shaken the tree... now, who is picking up the coconuts?”*

- Policy change: Possibly the loudest criticism we encountered of *Stand Up* is that the link to policy change is not clear.

#### 5.4. Assessment

Given their resources, it would be fair to conclude that the UN Millennium Campaign has been very successful at increasing awareness of the MDGs.

An overwhelming 78% of respondents to the partners’ survey agreed that the campaign has been effective at raising awareness, and only 7% disagreed, echoing the views from interviews and documents reviewed. For example:

- The fact that in 2004 Italy had the second highest level of awareness of the MDGs in Europe is perceived as “probably a result of early targeting by the UN Millennium Campaign”<sup>13</sup>.
- In India the majority of interviewees acknowledged that whatever awareness on the MDGs had been raised should largely be attributed to the campaign's activities.
- An MDG campaign report by the OECD published in 2009 called “Public campaigns about the MDGs since 2003” stated that “*the MC supported a very successful MDG campaign in Italy which traveled to Spain, Germany and Portugal.*” This is good evidence that the MC has contributed to raising MDG public awareness in Europe.

Many campaign partners, especially those from the South, would single out the campaign’s work to raise public awareness as its most important legacy. In the words of one survey respondent:

*“The campaign, the voices, the faces and the experiences collected should leave in the minds of the decision-makers and in the hearts of the people a warning not to forget the plight of poverty and hunger”*

On the other hand, even if the MC has proven that it has the commitment, imagination and know-how to undertake successful awareness-raising campaigns, it does not have the resources or infrastructure to target an unsegmented general public effectively, even through the most strategic of partnerships. It is important to highlight that the increase in global awareness has been very small, rising from an estimated 2.2% of basic global knowledge in 2004 to 4.4% in 2006, as shown in the background of this chapter.

It is not clear that an untargeted awareness-raising campaign is what the MC has strategically decided to do to reach the intended purpose. Rather it seems that a critical step was missed – that of segmenting the general public into manageable and focused target audiences whose awareness of the MDGs can help to reach concrete policy objectives. General categories like “youth” or “local government” are not sufficiently concrete to serve this purpose.

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<sup>13</sup> Richard, Manning, *Using indicators to encourage development – Lessons from the Millennium Development Goals*, 2009

## 6. Media Domain and Communication

Although numerous actors have compiled statistics on progress towards meeting the MDGs, little effort has been put into tracking media interest. In 2007, a UK professor, who wrote a comprehensive history of the MDGs, stated that there was virtually no information on the media impact of the campaign, nor was there any civil society monitoring<sup>14</sup>. One explanation is that media monitoring is expensive. For instance, one DPI MDG media analysis enlisted 50 staff members.

Given the high cost of media monitoring, some organizations prefer to focus resources on media outreach, and only monitor media impacts at critical moments. In this spirit, the MC has conducted a number of small media analyses, which offer snapshots of media impact. Collected together, they provide little insight into long-term trends or comparability between studies, as the methods are not systematic. To compensate for this monitoring gap, the media evaluation draws from a range of sources: third party reports, our own primary media research, participant interviews and numerous MC sources.

Although this chapter is focused on the media, it also addresses the MC's communication and online activities, which are cross-cutting issues relevant to all domains.

### 6.1. Context

In this section, we present two global views of MDG print media coverage: a global cross-sectional view (figure 5) and a time-series view (figure 6). To understand the MDG media context, we conducted an exhaustive search for MDG media reports. The majority of systematic MDG media analyses focus on print media, with scant references to broadcast. These studies look into MDG media coverage at critical moments, but do not provide a longitudinal view to help understand media trends and potential drivers of MDG media coverage over time.

**Figure 5: Regional Distribution of MDG Media Coverage, 2004-2008**

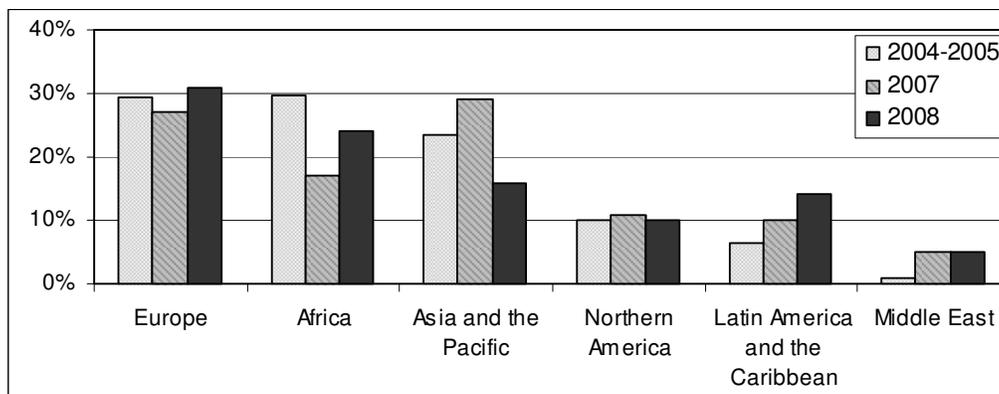


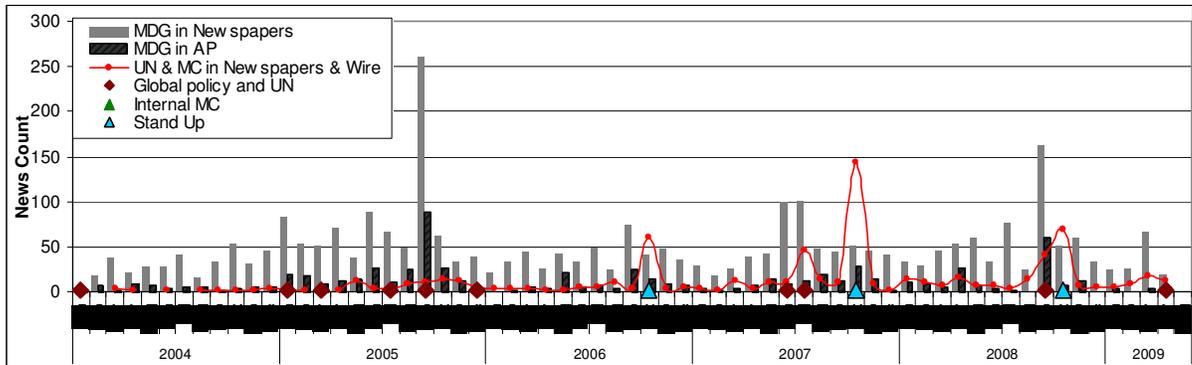
Figure 5 above presents the cross-sectional view of global MDG print media interest, taken from three global media monitoring reports between 2004-2008.<sup>15</sup> Across the three years we

<sup>14</sup> HULME, D. (2007) Global public policy and the Millennium Development Goals: A short history of the world's biggest promise. Manchester, University of Manchester.

<sup>15</sup> GIFFARD, A. & VAN LEUVEN, N. (2005) Five Views on Development: How News Agencies Cover the UN Millennium Development Goals. Department of Communication, University of Washington.; EVALUATION AND COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH UNIT (2007) Media Monitoring Analysis of the launch of the Millennium Development Goals Report 2007. UN Department of Public Information.; EVALUATION AND COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH UNIT (2008) Millennium Development Goals and Development in Africa. UN Department of Public Information.

see a similar pattern, with print coverage of the MDGs strongest in Europe (average 29%), Africa (24%) and Asia and the Pacific (23%). North America and Latin America and the Caribbean both average at 10% and the Middle East at 4%. In many ways, the global distribution of news stories on the MDGs shows a relationship with MDG public awareness, where compared to other continents, Europe and Africa have higher levels of both MDG media coverage and public awareness. For details on how we pooled these three studies, refer to annex 2.

**Figure 6: Newspaper and Wire Service Coverage 2004-2009**



(See annex 3 for a larger view)

Before assessing the MC’s media impact, we needed to better understand the trends in MDG news coverage. Figure 6 above, presents the time-series view of MDG media coverage from 2004-2009. The purpose of this chart is to compare print news coverage of the MDGs and MC to major events in the MC’s history and the global drive to achieve the MDGs.

In general, the majority of MDG print coverage, not necessarily linked to the MC, appears to be driven by multilateral policy events and UN summits. As will be shown later, the MC’s contribution to overall MDG media attention appears to be driven largely by *Stand Up*, with minor contributions at global policy events. Furthermore, the midway point towards 2015, on 07/07/07 marked another significant point for MC print coverage.

This chart presents the results of a comprehensive search for MDG terms in international newspaper stories, with 4,830 results. It also contains reference to key historical events in the larger MDG campaign history. This is far too much information to fit into a single chart of this size. Readers who wish to fully appreciate this chart should refer to the methods section at the beginning of this evaluation, and annex 2 for a deeper description. Moreover, the chart in the annex also includes our estimates for growth in MDG public awareness. Interpretation of these charts will be discussed in subsequent sections.

## 6.2. Activities (2005-2009)

This section provides a historical overview of major communication and media activities and presents any media impacts which are validated by evidence.

### 2005

During the MC’s start-up period, in what could have been the peak year for MDG media coverage, there were some large broadcast media achievements. Direct print media impacts were quite low, while news attributed to the MC’s partner GCAP was also modest.

A report from the Communication Initiative network shows one of the earliest third party accounts of MC media activity. Dated 12 April 2005, the report describes the “Only With

Your Voice” media campaign which included a public-service announcement (PSA) series featuring eminent persons advocating for the MDGs. It discussed the campaign website, and listed media that broadcast the PSA, including MTV Italy, Nickelodeon, BBC, TV5, and Television Espanola.

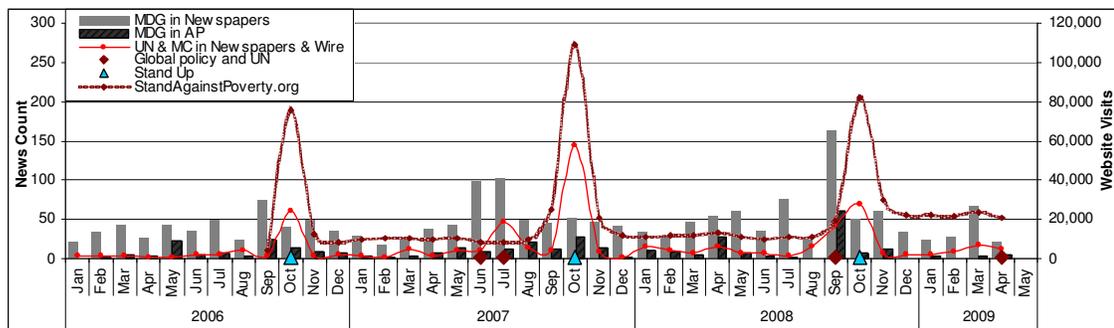
Although the MC had not yet began systematic global communications, which started in 2006, a few sources suggest the MC and their partner GCAP has began to make modest impacts. One MDG print media analysis<sup>16</sup>, covering the period 1 January 2004 to 15 September 2005, offers evidence of early MC print media impact. The name Herfkens was cited in one out of five cited news source. Also, the MC’s partner GCAP was reported in three out of five sources; though ranked lowest in all but the IPS. Compared to other pro-MDG advocates, these citations ranked much lower. Also, examining the time-series media chart, we can see a modest peak in print coverage of the MC at the end of 2005, perhaps in association with white band day.

## 2006

The MC saw its first peak in media coverage in 2006, in relation to its first Stand Up event. A presentation by MediaEdge showed global media activity around the 2006 *Stand Up* event. Some highlights include donations of \$10 million in pro-bono advertising and \$30,000 for creative and production work. *Stand Up* included a large-scale online campaign and generated significant global coverage on news wire services, radio, television and print media.

The MC’s 2006 annual report cited thousands of print articles covering *Stand Up* initiatives from around the world. This is reflected in the time-series chart, which shows that during *Stand Up* 2006, print coverage specifically mentioning the MC peaked for the first time. These achievements are also demonstrated by the peak in visits to the Stand Up website. Figure 7 below presents a close up of the time-series chart covering for 2006-2009, and overlays visits to the StandAgainstPoverty.org website:

**Figure 7: Newspaper and Wire with website visits 2006-09**



## 2007

2007 was a symbolic year marking the midway point towards 2015, on 07/07/07. During 2007, the MC was cited in more print publications than the prior or successive years. As could be expected, the time-series chart indicates that the biggest media moments were around the mid-point in July and during *Stand Up* in October.

With the global policy event, “Financing Development to achieve the MDGs”, in June and the MDG midway point in July, these were peak moments for MDG print news coverage. The MC

<sup>16</sup> GIFFARD, A. & VAN LEUVEN, N. (2005) Five Views on Development: How News Agencies Cover the UN Millennium Development Goals. Department of Communication, University of Washington.

appears to have capitalized on the midway point by attaining a high level of media coverage. However, the majority of media activity happened during the build up towards *Stand Up*, with BBC and Reuters running stories during the lead up, and the Associated Press covering a number of *Stand Up* events. Like the previous year, the volume of *Stand Up* print coverage showed a close correlation with *Stand Up* website visits.

## 2008

Again, print media and *Stand Up* website visits peaked in consort at the time of *Stand Up* 2008. Different sources provide conflicting pictures of the media impact of the campaign around the UN High level event in September in this year. The UN DPI's MDG media report suggests insignificant print media impacts; the time-series graph suggests modest print impacts; while the MC's self reporting suggests significant broadcast media coverage was achieved.

According to MC's media reports, during this year, some of the MC's largest media achievements happened in broadcast media. For example, participation in BBC World Debates, and BBC Radio among others.

The most comprehensive media analysis of the MDGs was conducted by UN DPI's Evaluation and Communications Research Unit (ECRU) and covered September 2008<sup>17</sup>. 50 staff members monitored 140 pre-selected global media sources and individually analyzed 767 articles. In this study, no references to the MC were found, although this may have been because the coding manual did not explicitly search for MC references. A manual search for MC references (generously conducted by ECRU) brought up one article mentioning the MC, and two articles which made reference to MC side events. This low level of impact was not expected, as this was a period of intense media outreach during which the MC sent out four press releases prominently mentioning the MDGs and Millennium Campaign<sup>18</sup>.

However, the time-series analysis presents a different picture. It indicates that the campaign achieved a slow build up of print media impacts towards *Stand Up*, starting in August, increasing in September, coinciding with the High Level Event organized by UN in New York where the MC played a relevant role, and peaking in October.

## 2009

The year began with Salil Shetty, being interviewed on BBC's *Hard Talk*. Two MC media reports from 2009 describe the approaches, results and lessons learned from the February G7 Finance Ministers' meeting in Rome and the April G20 Summit in London. Both reports show a similar approach beginning with pre-event policy analysis, articulation of a strong policy position, then following up with media outreach. The MC-reported media attention appears to be significant in proportion to the efforts put in. Moreover, both reports end with a frank discussion of lessons learned, demonstrating a culture of adapting and learning. Of the two events, more noteworthy was the G20 meeting report which showed national-global coordination, and seemed to generate broader media attention.

### 6.3. Online Activities

From the Internet Archive ([www.internetarchive.org](http://www.internetarchive.org)), the earliest record of the MC's online presence is [www.millenniumcampaign.org](http://www.millenniumcampaign.org) which was launched around October 2004. This site was successively changed to [www.endpoverty2015.org](http://www.endpoverty2015.org) and over the years, the online

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<sup>17</sup> EVALUATION AND COMMUNICATIONS RESEARCH UNIT (2008) Millennium Development Goals and Development in Africa. UN Department of Public Information.

<sup>18</sup> Four press releases: 11 September on oil producers and another on the G-Star fashion week; 22 September on a diverse group challenging world leaders; and 25 September on civil society pledges for more vigilant monitoring of commitments.

holdings have grown to encompass a number of websites, including profiles in various social media, such as FaceBook, Flicker, Twitter and YouTube.

Table 5 presents the MC’s websites, from the point of view of internet measures. The footnotes give an explanation of the metrics. Stand Up (standagainstopoverty.org) is the leading website, in terms of unique domain in-links, and this is consistent with the fact that Stand Up seems to be the MC’s leading campaign instrument. The campaigns’ central website (endpoverty2015.org), is the second most popular in terms of unique in-links, but the most popular in terms of Google PageRank, probably reflecting the numerous links in from high ranking UN websites. These numbers are impressive, and an indication that the leading two websites are well established. The regional and national websites also have a decent level of ranking for their scope.

When looking at these figures, keep in mind that at least three of these websites changed their URLs which means their current ranking by these measures will be underestimated to some degree. These include asiapacific.endpoverty2015.org, campagnadelmillennio.it and endpoverty2015.org. To build this chart, we retrieved link data using the LexiURL Searcher (lexiurl.wlv.ac.uk) and obtained data from the Yahoo API.

**Table 5: Millennium Campaign website rankings**

Website	In-Links by Unique Domains <sup>19</sup>	In-Links by URLs <sup>20</sup>	Google PageRank <sup>21</sup>	UN Logo
standagainstopoverty.org	2,218	5,251	7	NO
endpoverty2015.org	1,300	3,178	8	NO
sinexcusas2015.org	469	788	6	NO
millenniumcampaign.de	441	857	6	Yes
campagnadelmillennio.it	148	291	6	Yes
objetivo2015.org	97	161	5	Yes
noexcuse.endpoverty2015.org	19	44	6	Yes
asiapacific.endpoverty2015.org	6	8	4	NO

Web traffic data is available from java script tags in Google Analytics which cover the periods of EndPoverty2015.org from January 2008, and StandAgainstPoverty.org from 30 Aug 2008. Figure 8 presents a time series of the two central websites: EndPoverty2015.org and StandAgainstPoverty.org. This chart also includes data from Google Trends, which show the relative volumes of Google searches of the terms “poverty” and “climate change”.

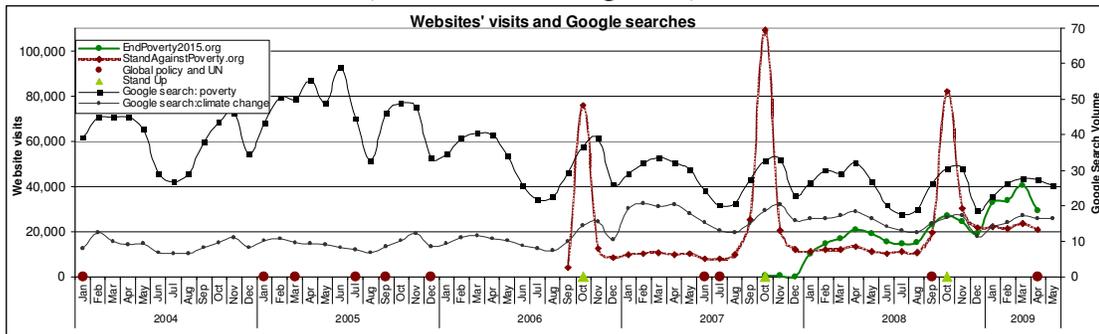
Figure 8 shows that StandAgainstPoverty.org generates huge levels of traffic at the time of *Stand Up*, and also appears to coincide with increases in Google searches for the term poverty, although we have not verified any causal associations. As previously discussed, Figure 7 (above), demonstrates how closely StandAgainstPoverty.org coincides with print media coverage.

<sup>19</sup> **In-links by unique domains:** the number of domain names pointing to each website. E.g. if a website gave out 10 links to a MC website, only one link would be counted.

<sup>20</sup> **In-Links by URLs:** the number of unique URLs pointing to the websites. E.g. a website giving out 10 links would count as 10.

<sup>21</sup> **Google PageRank:** Google’s secret formula for how they rate websites. The closer to 10 the better.

**Figure 8: Website visit and Google searches**  
(See the annex for a larger view)



EndPoverty2015.org also appears to peak and level out, having reached three plateaus. There also appears to be a correlation between Google searches for poverty and EndPoverty2015.org website visits, although again without any causal associations verified. One obvious explanation is the fact that EndPoverty2015.org is one of the top search results for the term poverty. This is likely to be the result of strong online marketing, combined with the high ranking that any website would receive if linked to several high ranking UN websites. The UNDP and UN websites rank as the top two sources of referred traffic.

Figure 8 shows that poverty searches peaked in 2005, around the same time that global news coverage of the MDGs peaked. The same trend can be discerned across a number of other web metrics<sup>22</sup> from an examination of the 2006 GCAP website report or the Make Poverty History new media report<sup>23</sup>. In terms of the popularity of different agendas, Figure 8 shows that the volume of Google searches for the term poverty has been declining since 2005, while online searches for climate change have been gradually rising. Whether or not this is reflective of actual changing agendas is beyond the scope of this evaluation, but certainly the change in public search trends is noteworthy.

### Views on packaging the MDGs

One of the most challenging communication issues is the debate on how to best package the MDGs. There are no simple answers, but a multitude of opinions and considerations, and pros and cons. This section reviews the range of views on this issue, including some of the tensions around packaging, issue selection and time-bound messaging, and provides examples of solutions to common problems.

#### 1. Packaging tensions

The main tension revolves around whether to campaign on the entire MDG package (broad framework) or on individual goals (narrow framework). One US MDG survey, commissioned by the UN Millennium Campaign and InterAction<sup>24</sup> showed that of the organizations who promote the MDGs, only 28% frequently or always mention the goals and only 24% use the term when framing campaigns.

- Some argue that a broad framework is important because the goals are interdependent and should be addressed together in a unified approach. In other cases, the full MDG package may be promoted by UN actors or government staff who are expected to do this.
- Others argue that working on the whole package of MDGs at once presents communication challenges, as it is quite abstract, whereas a focus on a few specific issues of relevance to individuals or national contexts is more achievable. Some goals, such as reducing poverty, are universal human values and easily linked to different cultures or religions. Other goals do not have the same universal appeal, and may be of less interest

<sup>22</sup> CUGELMAN, B. & KUMAR, K. (2006) Global Call to Action against Poverty: Review of Campaign Websites. Beirut, Lebanon, CIVICUS.

<sup>23</sup> RAYMOND, D. (2006) Make Poverty History - New Media Review. FairSay Limited.

<sup>24</sup> UNKNOWN (2009) US Action Around the Millennium Development Goals. InterAction, UN Millennium Campaign.

to campaigns based on public opinion such as the ONE Campaign in the US; or the Swedish government and DFID who used focus groups and opinion polls to develop campaign messages.

- Other campaigners note that it is easier to motivate people to act on single tangible issues close to their hearts, rather than abstract development principles. The link between issue, citizen action and outcome requires sharp focused communication. One informant felt the best way to channel citizen's actions into concrete MDG outcomes was to engage them in a specific activity, linked to a specific MDG issue, that ultimately lead to a specific outcome.

### **2. Packaging solutions**

Given a diversity of national social and political contexts, there is no one best way to package the MDGs. Depending on local conditions, it may make more sense to adopt a wider, narrower or mixed approach. The following bullets list different packaging solutions:

- Communicating the whole package
- Selecting a few priority goals and only campaigning around them
- Focusing on just a few priority goals, but using the MDG packaging in the background
- Spreading the full MDG package out over a few years, focusing on one MDG at a time
- Starting with the full MDG package, then going deeper into each goal
- Taking the most widely valued MDG (poverty), and linking it to all the other goals. For example, poverty and women, poverty and education, poverty and HIV/AIDS
- When speaking in public, starting with issues relevant to the audience, then bring in the MDG package later

### **3. Selecting priority issues**

Different actors use different ways to select their MDG priorities, including:

- Based on public opinion polls, focus on the goals which are most closely aligned with national values
- Based on policy analysis, link the MDGs to an issue of national priority
- Build a number of separate communication campaigns targeting specific audiences, and select the MDGs which are key to those audiences, retaining the MDG packaging as a background for all products
- For regional and global campaigns, tailor MDG communication to the regional MDG priorities based on social and environmental factors.

### **MDGs and time-bound messaging**

Across the board, people agree that the time-bound nature of the MDGs, along with progress monitoring, make the MDGs motivating and easy to promote. After 2010, the global drive to achieve the MDGs will enter its final five-year chapter. Like in a marathon, the last mile requires the greatest effort. It also provides an opportunity to intensify campaigning and public interest. Some respondents thought MDG messaging should take greater advantage of the approach towards the finish line, using it as a pressure mechanism.

If the goals are not on track in the final years, the skeptics could gain the upper hand in the media and this could have a negative impact on public and political will towards achieving the MDGs. On the other hand, if MDG advocates make unrealistic claims they could undermine their credibility, which could be devastating should skeptics start driving the MDG media debate. Some informants felt that the MC needs to remain optimistic and realistic to ensure they continue building credibility should the skeptics gain a media advantage.

For post 2015 communications, a political consensus must be reached before campaign messaging can follow. In the meantime, communications should push full steam ahead, taking advantage of the tight deadline as a way of building momentum.

## 6.4. Assessment

This section reviews the evidence for impact, opinions on effectiveness, and interviewee perspectives on the MC's communication and media work. It draws on a wide range of views and evidence, often at odds with one another. For example, although 55.6% of MC partners agreed that the MC was effective in its media and communications engagement, a full 37.8% were neutral, with 6.7% disagreeing. This section presents an overview of issues that emerged, and explanations that may help clarify this lack of consensus, and diversity of views.

### 6.4.1 Stand Up

*Stand Up* is the top driver of media attention and this is well documented across all national evaluations, media analyses and the time-series charts. It generates a huge level of media attention, but only lasts a few days. One journalist estimated *Stand Up*'s media value expired after 24 hours, after which it becomes old news. *Stand Up*'s central role as a media platform has been expressed repeatedly by numerous informants at the global and national levels.

For global print media, *Stand Up* does not appear to be a strong driver of MDG coverage, though MC spokespersons have progressively gained recognition at the global level. One news article stated, "When 116 million people stood up against worldwide poverty, their cry failed to make big headlines..."<sup>25</sup>. One reason may be that the event comes one month after the large UN summits in September, where journalists write about the MDGs on a daily basis. Although journalists may consider *Stand Up* a fresh way to approach the MDGs, some claim that they are exhausted covering the MDGs by the time *Stand Up* comes around.

Numerous sources indicate that *Stand Up* may make a larger impact on local media. *Stand Up* coordinators often use the local media to engage citizens in the event. The 2008 *Stand Up* survey showed that 26.4% of the campaign teams' efforts were focused on media work and 7.8% on paid advertising. Journalists also felt that *Stand Up* was a local story, and less appropriate for global news coverage.

### 6.4.2 Global policy events

Campaigning around global policy events appears to produce mixed results, with some initiatives producing larger impacts than others. Some outreach around major UN events has generated significant print and broadcast media coverage. However, the impact at some global policy events appears small, with a number of partners unaware that the MC is engaged in these activities. However, the time-series chart suggests that these approaches are producing some impacts and the MC's own reports describe small, but significant achievements during these media opportunities.

The MC's media reports make the point that when competing for media attention at global policy events, the MC is more likely to attain coverage at smaller events where competition is smaller. Communications around policy events appears to have produced progressively greater media attention, perhaps as a sign that the MC is increasing their reputation, or alternatively, it may be that their progress--in terms of linking media outreach to policy analysis--is contributing a positive impact. Still further, this may reflect a concerted effort to pursue international media.

Compared to *Stand Up*, media impacts attained from global policy events appear much smaller. Although the cost of policy related communications is unclear, the reports indicate these activities are carried out by a small number of staff. Consequently, given small outlay and variety of impacts, the outcomes could be in excess of the resources put in.

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<sup>25</sup> WROUGHTON, L. (2008) INTERVIEW: Poverty campaign inspires new U2 song, says Bono. Reuters.

#### **6.4.3 Press releases (2006-2009)**

We received 21 press releases covering the period from 2006-2009. By arranging them sequentially, it was possible to form a broad view of the MC's evolving media outreach approaches. A number of trends appeared:

First, the releases could be grouped into two categories: those linked to exciting events such as *Stand Up* and the G-Star fashion show; and releases where the MC expresses a policy position. One media informant stated that it is a common strategy for large NGOs to divide media outreach into intellectual and human interest, and this approach is considered effective.

Second, the policy focused press releases appear have sharpened over time, indicating growing coordination between internal policy and communication staff. At present, the releases appear to follow a messaging recipe: articulating threats to the worlds' poor that can be avoided if the leaders of rich countries follow the MC's prescribed course of action.

Third, the use of UN identity in press releases has intensified over time, with earlier releases referring to the "Millennium Campaign" and later releases using "United Nations Millennium Campaign" or "UN Millennium Campaign". In a 2009 media analysis of the G7 Finance Ministers Meeting in Rome, MC staff expressed the desire to be designated as, "anti-poverty campaigners" as opposed to "UN officials". This is at odds with the majority of releases from 2008 which use UN in the title, often as the very first word. However, in *Stand Up* press releases the MC clearly plays down their UN identity, and may give their partners, such as GCAP, media prominence. Nonetheless, they are still unquestionably UN-backed press releases.

#### **6.4.4 National communication and media**

Media and communication were prominently featured in each regional and national evaluation. To avoid overlap, readers should refer to national reports for details. This section only presents a summary of the key issues that emerged across national evaluation reports.

Partnerships with the media were considered critical to successful media engagement. For example, the MC has attained significant levels of global and national media coverage resulting from partnerships with MTV, BBC, African media houses and various others. The MC's strongest media partnership experience appears to have come from Africa, with a wide diversity of experiences across African nations. The African campaign also had produced the most comprehensive communication strategy document. Across all national reports, there were frequent calls to improve media partnerships.

A less frequently discussed issue was the capacity of MC partner organizations to influence the media. They were regarded in a mixed way, with some reports suggesting that MC partners helped to generate media, while in other cases, it was expressed that the MC should engage the media directly, and not rely on their partners.

Across the board, *Stand Up* was regarded as a critical platform for achieving media attention. It generates the MC's highest levels of media attention during a short period of time, covering the build up, celebration and short post-event follow-up. However, national actors considered that the large-scale media attention generated by *Stand Up* also had a downside. The campaign's capacity to engage the media is frequently called, "event driven", suggesting that they lack other ways to engage the media. There were frequent calls for the MC to conduct sustained media relations throughout the year, through finding new activities and building partnerships.

#### 6.4.5 Online

When talking about the future, a few informants stressed the importance of the internet as a means to engage people and bypass the mainstream media. They cited the major shifts from print to online media, as indicated by the large number of newspapers going out of business due to online media undercutting their profitability. Overall, partners had mixed views on the MC's online activities, with a fifth claiming the campaign had not used online media effectively, and twice as many claiming that they had. To try and understand these mixed views, we will discuss [StandAgainstPoverty.org](http://StandAgainstPoverty.org) and [EndPoverty2015.org](http://EndPoverty2015.org).

##### **StandAgainstPoverty.org**

The [StandAgainstPoverty.org](http://StandAgainstPoverty.org) website appears to function well on many fronts. It is a simple site, focused on doing one thing well: building up to *Stand Up*, capturing results, and post-event reporting. The site follows a traffic cycle in relation to *Stand Up*, but also manages to retain impressive volumes of visitors throughout the year, increasing yearly.

During the interviews, it was noted that the open source community admires the MC's online infrastructure and design. Moreover, the MC's annual reports note improvements in engaging website users, based on design enhancements. Perhaps on the basis of a clear purpose and development that reflects users' input, [StandAgainstPoverty.org](http://StandAgainstPoverty.org) appears to be an effective online tool.

##### **EndPoverty2015.org**

The situation with [EndPoverty2015.org](http://EndPoverty2015.org) is more complex, with impressive achievements, some frustrations and a constant effort to improve. On the positive side, the open source community has expressed great admiration for the MC's online work, with one of the MC's contractors frequently asked about their work with MC. Two reports of GCAP's online communications show that many GCAP websites borrowed design motifs from the MC's central website, while this website became one of the central websites within the GCAP online network. The volumes of traffic are impressive, the number of hyperlinks to the site is huge and the Google PageRank is also impressive.

However, during this assessment, three major challenges emerged. First, staff are the first to admit the site's focus on the "general public" is far too broad. This is clearly stated in MC's 2009 Web Report. Interviewees expressed concerns that web users may be unclear about what the MC is doing, and the audience for the website is not well understood. The 2007 and 2008 annual reports describe growing outreach and traffic as a sign of success; however, there is no mention of who the users are, what they are interested in or how the MC is meeting their needs. Further, we signed up for the website e-newsletter and were not able to clearly identify the intended target audiences of the various communications we received. From one e-newsletter to another, the audience appeared to shift. For example, in some cases, the e-newsletter would provide basic statistics and mobilization calls, suitable for novice public engagement. In other cases, the e-newsletter offered details suitable for community organizers or NGO staff, such as details on strategic planning for *Stand Up*.

Finally, a 2008 survey conducted on [StandAgainstPoverty.org](http://StandAgainstPoverty.org)<sup>26</sup> received responses from 375 *Stand Up* event coordinators. As an indication of audience targeting, approximately 40% of respondents rejected the MC's organizational classifications taxonomy<sup>27</sup>. This indicates a potentially large misfit between the types of organizations targeted versus those engaged.

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<sup>26</sup> (2008) *Stand Up* web survey report and raw tables. UN Millennium Campaign.

<sup>27</sup> Faith-based organizations, youth, women's groups, trade unions, and GCAP.

Second, though a lot of the web documentation focuses on outreach, the site does not appear to have enough dedicated staff to conduct significant online outreach, which is time consuming and requires staff to plan and undertake campaigns. This may be confounded by a policy of centralizing content management. With few centralized staff, the content processing chain appears to be focused on high quality editorial output that requires considerable time. A web article may be written by one staff member, sent to another for editorial revision, and posted by another. Although the editorial quality is high, with few staff this system creates bottlenecks that may explain some of the tensions discussed below.

Third, unlike media relations and general communications which national MC staff can carry out independently, national campaigns without online capacity are sometimes dependent on the central website. National campaigns with sufficient resources have developed their own online presence, and those national staff dependent on the central website appeared to feel disadvantaged. Staff interviews suggest that the site is not organized in a way that they could use to conduct national outreach. Some staff expressed the need to develop a web presence in each region. Others expressed the need for global online strategies that could also be integrated with national online campaigns. Others recognized the need for central services, such as managing email lists. With all these views, it is not surprising that the website strategy documents reviewed did not explicitly address the issue of central/national online coordination and interaction, but this needs to be addressed.

#### **Social media**

The MC was doing significant Web 2.0 outreach before it became mainstream, and since Stand Up 2006 new media outreach has been considered cutting edge. For this evaluation we examined the social media websites where the MC has a presence: FaceBook, Flicker, Twitter and YouTube.

The MC has placed an impressive volume of content on these websites, but may not have invested the staff time to stir up interest in their online profiles (though it is unclear if this was ever an objective). For example, the MC YouTube profile contains a huge volume of original content, but has 218 channel subscribers compared to Greenpeace's 11,663. The social media profiles appear to be well managed and very well integrated into the MC's online presence.

#### **6.4.6 Communication products**

A full list of the MC's communication tools would be beyond the scope of this evaluation. MC staff and partners have expressed the MDGs message through a wide diversity of media, including broadcast and print, outdoor advertising and banners, audio and video, kiosks and displays, various artistic expressions, public stunts, handouts, video games and mobile applications, CD ROMs, SMS, internet, clothing, handouts, posters, face-to-face engagement, songs, stand up, fashion shop windows, search engines, and even in ice cream.

Informants generally seemed to admire the MC's communication approaches and tools. In some cases, they were impressed by the MC's branding and design work, particularly the innovative and creative spirit that can be found across the campaign's communication approaches and products.

However, if there was one key point of disagreement, it was the tension that revolved around communication products designed for broad distribution, but which were not always suitable to local contexts. For example, at the national level, there were frequent claims that globally designed communication products did not always fit regional or national contexts. Moreover, there were also complaints that even regionally produced products did not always fit national contexts.

#### **6.4.7 Mixed perceptions of MC media and communications**

During this evaluation, people expressed radically mixed views on the MC's media and communication work. For example, many informants criticized Stand Up for being too superficial, while others praised Stand Up for driving significant media attention. Further, while the MC could be praised for its efforts to influence global policy debates, these efforts produce such low levels of print media attention, that many informants are unaware the MC was even doing this work. The common suggestion that the MC needed to focus on sustained media coverage throughout the year was surprising, as the MC has been conducting media outreach much beyond Stand Up. The following points present some possible explanations for these mixed views emerging from the evaluation research.

First, the scope of Stand Up is so large, that other MC activities seem small in comparison. With the MC placing most of its capacity behind Stand Up, it is not surprising that Stand Up is the MC's primary media driver. During Stand Up, the entire MC and numerous actors around the world engage the media at the same time. Conversely, media outreach around other events are conducted on a much smaller scale, with fewer staff and resources.

Second, local Stand up events may be more relevant to national readers than global policy debates. International policy events are global in scope and do not necessarily inspire national media attention without strong links to national priorities. The MC's global communication efforts are not necessarily designed to make big national headlines, which are better generated by national MC communication staff.

Third, the psychological appeal of Stand up, versus global policy events, may be radically different. Stand up offers an exciting, emotionally-charged, event-driven story. Conversely, global policy events offer a complex intellectual, policy-driven debate. This can render Stand Up an easier story to sell to journalists, while views on global policy events can be a hard sell.

Fourth, source credibility is considered an important factor in winning media attention. During the evaluation, a few informants believed the MC lacked political credibility, but had strong civil society credibility. However, a full 38.6% of partners considered the value of the MC was that they lent credibility to their organization.

Fifth, the MC's participation in global policy events is limited, and this may have impacts on MC credibility perceptions. At global policy events, the MC may find itself expressing views from the sidelines, in contrast to other actors who are actively engaged in political processes, and thus better positioned to comment on negotiations, related policy and possible implications. Consequently, at these events, the MC may be easily outranked by actors with higher political credibility (in terms of holding a reputation for expertise in these processes), though the MC's highly regarded civil society and UN credibility may explain their increasing media success in advocating policy positions on processes they are not involved with.

## **7. Partners and Networks**

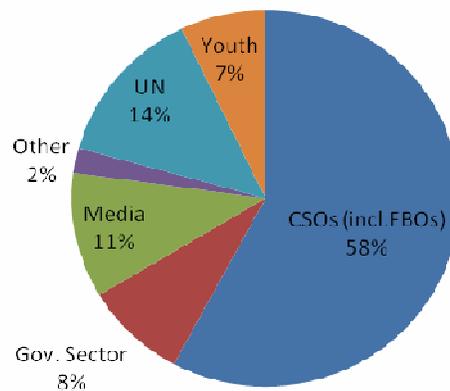
### **7.1. A partnership map of the campaign**

Despite its buzzword status, partnership remains a highly contentious concept. Currently, the MC use the term in reference to almost any form of interaction between the campaign and external actors including, for example: financing through the grants programme, inter-UN agency coordination at the country level and information-sharing with the media.

MC partnerships vary enormously in terms of their purpose, scope, complexity, level of engagement (local to global), size and diversity. In an attempt to generalize we can say that the campaign relates with six main constituencies: CSOs (including FBOs); Media (Print, electronic, online); Government sector (including bilateral development agencies, local governments and elected representatives); Youth groups; and the United Nations. Other civil society groups like women’s organizations and trade unions have also been particularly relevant at the national level.

During the descriptive part of this evaluation, a process was undertaken to identify the full scope of MC partners. The vast majority of partners, especially in Africa and in Asia, were categorized as “Civil Society Organizations” encompassing international and national NGOs, community based organizations, international networks and faith-based organizations (see Figure 9)

**Figure 9: Map of key partners**



We have covered all these constituencies where relevant in the regional reports. Here we will give special emphasis to the partnership with CSOs and particularly with the GCAP and the US system. These two partners have very much shaped the dual identity of the campaign that could be described as a (quasi) United Nations body with a (quasi) civil society soul.

### **7.2. CSO partnerships**

The relationship established with the Global Call against Poverty, arguably one of the widest anti-poverty networks ever set up, is especially relevant. The MC has remained closely involved with the network since its inception, and it has undoubtedly become its most important civil society partner, especially in Southern countries. It is widely accepted that GCAP would not have evolved as it has without the MC, who shares the responsibility for both its successes and failures.

### 7.2.1 GCAP and the UN Millennium Campaign

The history of GCAP began in December 2003 when CIVICUS and the MC coordinated a meeting in Maputo of Southern campaigners to explore the possibility of using the MDGs as a framework for antipoverty campaigning. Although there was some skepticism from the CSO groups, it was felt that in the context of the “war on terror” and the general global shift to the right, the MDGs offered a space for campaigning because governments had signed up to the Millennium Declaration from which they originated. In this sense the MDGs were a legitimate instrument by which to hold governments to account.

However, GCAP has never been ready to unanimously adopt the MDG agenda. MDGs were supported by the majority of GCAP members (especially in Africa) but for few others, including some northern and Latin American groups, GCAP had a deeper and more radical agenda. They felt that the MDGs in many aspects betrayed previous commitments and therefore should not be incorporated in the GCAP agenda at all. The links between GCAP and the MDGs were weak especially in the U.K., the U.S. and among the more internationally-oriented groups more focused on goal 8.

The relationship between the MC and GCAP remains quite close and unique at different levels. MC has supported many of the national coalitions in their priority countries and the global and regional secretariats. In 2004, about 15 national MDG campaigns were initiated in Africa, Asia and Latin America under GCAP, and by 2008, there were more than 100. Many of them had the financial and technical support of the MC, which became the fourth biggest donor to GCAP since its formation (according to a recent GCAP evaluation). The MC Director serves on the Global Council (in practice the Deputy Director for Asia attends most of these meetings) and on the recently established Global Foundation Board.

However tensions have been arising between certain parts of GCAP and the MC over the years. First, on the conceptual level there has always been that undercurrent discussion about whether the MDGs are a helpful and legitimate framework. In the web survey conducted for this evaluation, 47% of GCAP MC partners stated that one of the top disadvantages of working with MC is that “they are too fixated on campaigning only for MDGs”. Secondly, some differences have been perceived around campaign actions and methodology, significantly around *Stand Up* events, although *Stand Up* is systematically reported in GCAP documents as one of their main achievements.

At the country level, as stated in the regional reports, the value of the partnerships with GCAP has varied depending on the capacity of the national coalitions. Capacity limitations on the part of some national coalitions have affected their performance severely, most significantly on the lobbying and advocacy front. However, many of the tensions seem to revolve around power structures and decision making mechanisms. The fact that the MC is not in itself a civil society organization concerned some GCAP members who felt that the network should remain independent from any interference from multilateral organizations.

This is complicated by ambiguity about the role of the MC within GCAP, which has left some parts of GCAP feeling that the MC was illegitimately interfering in their internal processes. In a way, these tensions are to be expected due to the diversity of opinions that exist about how civil society should engage with multilateral organizations, the complexity of the GCAP movement and the “hybrid” nature of the MC. However, the complex and multifaceted relationship has mostly been manageable and produced positive results, in large part because of the leadership of MC. One informant noted that:

***“These people came with a very high level of credibility within civil society, with considerable networks and also with access to governments, access to media and other***

*constituencies. You cannot underestimate the human capital of the Millennium Campaign. We would not have got to the point where we are if it would not have been for the caliber of some of the staff and its leadership”.*

Overall, the relationship between GCAP and MC has been a positive one despite some disagreements. Concrete steps have been taken to clarify the relationship and to tailor it to particular national scenarios. The GCAP remains an valuable partner among CSOs for the campaign.

### **7.2.2 Faith Based Organizations**

One of the main achievements of the MC has been to engage diverse constituencies from civil society. Especially relevant has been its relationship with faith-based organizations in many of their priority countries.

Conceptually there is a strong alignment of FBOs with development issues and goals: issues of equity, addressing deprivation and suffering are at the heart of all faiths. Still, sometimes their complex structures and the fact that they tend to use a different “development language” mean they are difficult to interact with.

In this regard, the successful partnerships that the MC has established with faith-based organization of all denominations should be highlighted here. These partnerships have been widely regarded as having made a strong contribution to public awareness of the MDGs. As examples it is worth mentioning here the work with Micah Challenge, World Conference on Religions and Peace, Africa Monitor, Art of Living Foundation and Islamic faith leaders in several African countries.

### **7.3. The relationship with the UN**

The UN Millennium Campaign was set up by former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to operationalise one of the four core elements of the UN MDG strategy under the UN Strategy for the MDGs. This campaigning/ mobilization element was described as a:

*“Strategic collaboration with a wide range of partners to foster a self-sustaining movement which mobilizes the commitments and capabilities of a broad segment of society to build awareness and mobilize action on policies, programmes and resources allocations”*

(The UN and the MDGs: a core strategy)

The relationship was described as “at arm’s length” on strategy and messaging while following UNDP procedures and systems for accountability on financial and administrative matters. This particular “satellite” setup was intended to allow advocacy for the MDGs in a way that would be difficult for a regular UN body. Reaching out to civil society, advocating for peer pressure and being critical are very natural activities in some countries and more controversial in others. It was important therefore to distinguish between the operational work of UNDP at the country level and the MC, where a certain level of freedom of movement from the UN should help the campaign’s dynamics.

During the course of the evaluation we determined that while very senior UN officials understand and value the benefits of this unusual setup, others in the UN family regard the MC as not integrated into the institution. Consequently, we encountered reactions, a few of them quite harsh, suggesting that the MC does not have appropriate accountability within the system and enjoys a special status. Particularly during the first few years, UN colleagues

felt that the campaign was not sharing enough information with UN departments. This perception has caused a certain detachment from the campaign, sometimes undermining collaboration.

Despite these strains, the relationship with the UN, and especially the UNDP, has intensified during the last few years, particularly through their participation in the UNDP-chaired MDG steering committee, which brings together all relevant bureaus and units including the MC. One member commented that “*The Committee has contributed to a more natural interaction*” with the MC. Apart from UNDP, the MC has also had relevant working links with the DPI, the Deputy Secretary General’s and the Secretary General’s offices and to a lesser extent with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the UN Office of Partnerships.

At country level, the relationship between the UN and the MC varies greatly and ideally MC would need to analyse how the campaign is backed up by the UN in each national context. Some UN country teams see the campaign as something quite alien while others collaborate closely. The UN headquarters does not prescribe how that relationship should be and it is mostly left to the Resident Coordinators to decide the kind of approach the country team should take towards the campaign.

In the case studies in Africa, the regional report found that on the whole there has been a high level of collaboration, primarily with UNDP during *Stand Up*. In Asia the partnership is even closer. The MC now has staff in all the regional coordinator offices for their priority countries. In fact, in the Philippines, the UN team has such a degree of ownership of the campaign that, in the eyes of some partners, it has sometimes jeopardized that “freedom of movement” the MC need to do their advocacy work with the government.

#### **7.4. Private sector communication partnerships**

The MC took the strategic decision not to have many private sector partnerships, but the few they have developed do seem to have benefited their communications. The partnership with Young and Rubicam gave support to *Stand Up* 2006 and 2007, as well as support for rebranding and web development. In 2006, the company worked on both the MC’s central websites, conducted major online outreach for *Stand Up*: handing out creative briefs to web celebrities on YouTube; generating high levels of user-generated content; and coming up with “Event in a Box” as a one-stop campaign solution. Using internal contacts they were able to arrange millions in pro-bono advertising while also developing content to fill the space.

Another creative company, Grey Worldwide, also developed a pro-bono global advertising campaign. This campaign was adapted locally by MC campaigns around the world. The relationship was founded on a personal approach by the MC to Grey Worldwide. Reviewing the Grey Worldwide website, one can form an opinion as to the value they placed on their support. Their website portrays the MC in a way the MC would never portray themselves: as UN plain and simple. This is featured prominently. They appear proud of their work for the UN.

The fashion company G-Star brought the MDGs to the media and new constituencies through a fashion show in NY and fashion week in Japan. They promoted the MDGs online, in stores, on the catwalk and in the form of artwork. G-Star expressed strong appreciation of their relationship, and this appears to have been a mutually beneficial partnership.

## 7.5. Assessment

Especially noteworthy is the role of the campaign in activating and energizing civil society, especially in the South. The vast majority of evaluation informants and several documents reviewed showed that the MC has helped to strengthen citizens and organizations working on poverty and justice. Particularly significant is their contribution towards developing GCAP.

However, the effectiveness of the partnership with GCAP has varied greatly from country to country depending on the capacity of national coalitions to bring a wide range of relevant actors to the network. The investment on GCAP in terms of staff time and resources has been very significant. Recently, the campaign has recognized that this partnership should be examined on a case by case basis. In fact in the last couple of years the campaign has been deliberately expanding CSO partnerships to other organizations.

The UN Millennium Campaign has been very successful at bringing on board new partners for anti-poverty campaigning. An overwhelming majority of the evaluation informants, including 76% of respondents to the partners' survey, agreed that the campaign has succeeded in bringing new constituencies into campaigning for the MDGs.

In doing so, FBOs are considered to be particularly important given their capacity to instigate citizen lead campaigning. The MC has been able to capitalize on the great credibility they carry among their networks and communities. Good examples of these successful partnerships are the launch of the Micah Challenge (a global coalition of Christians holding governments to account for their promise to halve extreme poverty by 2015) and the work with the Art of Living Foundation.

Partnership with local government and parliamentarians is also seen to have excellent potential to influence policy practices and budgets. These partnerships in both the North and South have been especially significant in creating spaces for citizens to engage with government actors.

Partnerships with private media partners have also appeared to have been mutually beneficial. We would speculate that the MC's UN identity, combined with the wide creative freedom they are willing to extend to partners, renders the MC a highly attractive prize from the creative sector or trendy companies.

On the other hand, a significant weakness in the MC's partnership portfolio is the lack of organizations with the capacity for effective policy engagement at the national level. This is most critical in Africa and less so in Europe.

In general the MC has made a deliberate effort with great success to cover a wide range of actors and to go well beyond the "usual suspects". However the selection of partners would have benefited from a stronger strategic approach tightly linked to concrete policy objectives. The selection of partners seems to have been too demand driven and opportunistic, especially in the first few years of the campaign.

### **The UN identity of the campaign**

The MC has leveraged its UN identity well given the very complex web of different partners, expectations and agendas they had to navigate. In this context, leveraging the UN identity adequately requires a considerable amount of strategic and diplomatic skill that the campaign has managed successfully.

The unusual set-up of the MC made it more difficult to pull the full weight of its UN identity. While very senior officials understood the benefits of this unusual setup, other parts of the UN family regarded the campaign with suspicion, sometimes undermining collaboration. In a few cases the relationship with certain sectors of UN has become too antagonistic for the MC to be able to benefit from their policy inputs and networks.

On the part of civil society, but especially within GCAP, the MC has had to find their way through the complex and diverse positions that exist about how civil society should engage with the United Nations.

Despite this difficult context the MC has managed to successfully use their UN identity to play a prominent broker role that has been appreciated by their civil society partners. 61% of the civil society partners responding to the survey stated that one of the main advantages of working with the MC was that “*They serve as a bridge between government, UN and civil society*”.

However, the regional reviews noted that the MC may not be leveraging its UN identity enough on the lobby front to gain access to policy spaces with, or on behalf of, their partners.

## 8. Conclusions

### 8.1. Policy domain

#### **Has the campaign contributed to positively influencing MDG-policy and/or practice of national governments?**

The Millennium Campaigns, most significantly in Europe, have contributed positively to the mainstreaming of the MDGs as consensus objectives in national policies, though their influence on translating them into monitoring benchmarks and planning targets is more limited and uneven.

A more significant question, especially in the South, is how the MDGs have translated into concrete policy practices that are often the main basis for budgeting decisions. In this regard, although the evidence is not strong, the regional reports identified a few areas where the MC seems to have made a significant contribution at this level.

In general the external perception of the effectiveness of the campaign's national policy influence is mixed. A question mark that came up consistently during the evaluation was the connection between mobilization efforts, specifically the *Stand Up* events, and impact on government policy.

Influencing policies requires a sharp focus, and yet the small size and strong organic culture of the campaign makes their objectives a bit loosely defined, and potentially too flexible. While this allows them to adapt to a constant changing environment it also weakens the clarity of purpose. The key to "joining the dots" between mobilization and policy action starts with solid planning of SMART<sup>28</sup> policy objectives, focused on very specific issues consistently carried out.

### 8.2. Public Domain

#### **To what extent has the campaign increased awareness of the MDGs amongst the general public?**

Given their resources, it would be fair to conclude that the UN Millennium Campaign has been successful at increasing awareness of the MDGs. However, though the MC has proven commitment, imagination and know-how to undertake successful awareness raising campaigns, it does not have the resources and infrastructure to target the "general public" effectively, even through the most strategic of partnerships.

A critical step that needs to be taken is to segment the "general public" into manageable and focused target audiences whose awareness of the MDGs can help to reach concrete policy objectives. General categories like "youth" or "local government" are not sufficiently concrete to serve this purpose.

#### **Has the Stand Up initiative strengthened the overall campaign?**

Overall *Stand Up* has strengthened the UN Millennium Campaign. The massive numbers mobilized not only add legitimacy to the campaign but also provide a powerful argument to present to governments. Stand Up also built a globally recognized trade mark.

On the other hand, the main question raised around *Stand Up* was that there is no evidence that it is an effective way to influence national policies. We do not mean to imply that *Stand*

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<sup>28</sup> Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-bound

*Up* should have made immediate and direct policy results, simply that the majority of stakeholders of the campaign find it difficult to “join the dots” between the events and their policy objectives.

### 8.3. Media Domain

#### **Has the campaign been effective in its media engagement?**

The majority of MDG print coverage appears to be driven by multilateral policy events and UN summits. The MC’s contribution to this MDG media attention appears to be driven largely by *Stand Up*, with minor contributions at global policy events.

The contribution of *Stand Up* is well documented across all national evaluations, media analyses and the time-series charts. It generates a huge level of media attention, but only lasts a few days. One journalist estimated *Stand Up*’s media value expired after 24 hours, after which it becomes old news. *Stand Up* appears to have a larger impact on local media than global.

Campaigning around global policy events appears to produce mixed results, with some initiatives producing larger impacts than others. Some outreach around major UN events has generated significant print and broadcast media coverage. However, the impact at other global policy events appears lower, with numerous partners unaware that the MC is engaged in these activities. Given the smaller resources expended on these policy events, these achievements are likely to be much greater than the inputs.

#### **Has the campaign been effective in its communications?**

There are indications that target audiences may not be fully defined, and this appears to manifest across a range of MC activities. For example, there were uncertainties about the audiences of the central website and e-newsletters. This was further underlined by the *Stand Up* survey which showed a gap between those audiences targeted and those engaged, with roughly 40% of respondents rejecting the MC’s audience categories. Targeting the general public is likely to be conducted at the expense of more efficient practices, such as focusing on opinion leaders, or other audiences that can potentially offer greater social impact per communication dollar.

There was no consensus on communication messaging approaches, but various views on how to formulate MDG messages given different circumstances. However, the MC’s clearest messaging criteria, as stated in numerous reports, is that communication needs to contribute to policy change. In the case of press releases, the link between communication and policy appears to be strengthening. In other cases, these links are not always clear.

The MC has produced a great number of communication products, and has received credit for its originality and creativity. Overall, partners expressed admiration for the MC’s communication products. The only major issue was the tension between the desire to produce centralized products and the need for products tailored to local needs.

#### **Has the campaign been effective in online channels?**

The *StandAgainstPoverty.org* website serves a simple function, in regards to *Stand Up*. With a simple niche, and a clear purpose, it appears to be well regarded and fit for purpose. Responses towards the central website, *EndPoverty2015.org* were mixed. On the positive side the volume of visits is impressive, though in part this is associated with links from high-ranking UN websites. Further, the branding is well regarded along with their willingness to experiment with social media and the latest trends. On the negative side, the site’s broad

scope raised concerns about clarity of purpose, uncertainty about how the site meets users' needs and staff frustrations over the capacity of site to support national MC campaigns.

#### **8.4. Partnerships domain**

##### **Has the campaign helped build and strengthen citizens and/ or organizations working on poverty and justice advocacy through the MDG campaigns?**

The MC has helped and strengthened citizens and organizations working on poverty and justice. Most significantly the campaign has been instrumental at facilitating the Global Call Against Poverty (GCAP), arguably one of the widest global networks working on anti-poverty issues.

The relationship between the MC and GCAP has been a complex one due to the diversity of opinions that exist about how civil society should engage with multilateral organizations, the diversity of the GCAP movement and the “hybrid” nature of the MC. However, the partnership has remained close since its inception. The high credibility of senior campaign staff among civil society has helped the partnership greatly.

The effectiveness of the partnership with GCAP has varied greatly from country to country depending on the capacity of national coalitions to bring a wide range of relevant actors to the network. The investment in GCAP in terms of staff time and resources has been very significant. Recently, the campaign has rightly recognized that this partnership should be examined on case by case basis.

##### **Has the campaign succeeded in bringing new constituencies into campaigning for the MDGs e.g. governments, youth?**

The MC has made a deliberate effort to reach beyond the “converted” with considerable success. Among these new constituencies two stood out as particularly important and relevant. First is the partnership with local governments in both the North and South, especially as a means to create spaces for citizens to engage with government actors. Second, the partnerships with FBOs which have enabled the MC to capitalize on the great credibility they have among their networks and communities.

##### **Has the campaign leveraged its UN identity adequately?**

The MC has leveraged its UN identity well given the very complex web of different partners, expectations and agendas they had to navigate. In this context, leveraging the UN identity adequately requires a considerable amount of strategic and diplomatic skill that the campaign has managed successfully.

However, during the regional reviews it was perceived that the MC may not be leveraging its UN identity enough on the lobbying front to gain access to policy spaces with, or on behalf of, their partners. On the other hand, we found a particular national scenario where the MC was too close to their UN identity to operate freely from the national government.

##### **Has the campaign chosen the right partners to work with?**

The value of the partnership strategy of the MC varies greatly from country to country and would be better examined at national level. In general, the campaign has made a deliberate effort, with great success, to cover a wide range of actors beyond the “usual suspects”. However the selection of partners would have benefited from a stronger strategic approach tightly linked to concrete policy objectives. The selection of partners seems to have been too demand-driven and opportunistic, especially in the first few years of the campaign.

The role of the campaign in activating and energizing civil society, especially in the South, is particularly worthy of note. Especially significant is their contribution to developing GCAP.

FBOs are considered significant given their capacity to instigate citizen-led campaigning. The partnership with local government and parliamentarians is also seen to have an excellent potential to influence policy practices and budgets.

The second most important partner for the MC has been the UN family and especially the UNDP. This was a “given” rather than “chosen” partner with whom they have mostly established a high level of collaboration.

A significant weakness in the portfolio of CSOs is the lack of organizations with the capacity to do effective policy engagement at the national level. This is most critical in Africa and less so in Europe.

## **9. Recommendations**

One of the goals of this evaluation was to develop relevant and realistic recommendations. Instead of seeking recommendations that may be theoretically perfect, we have placed emphasis on recommendations that build on current initiatives and parameters.

### **9.1. Setting clear policy objectives and strategies**

- ✓ When setting policy objectives and strategies consider the following sequential steps:
  - Identify general policy focus areas;
  - Decide on partners who can help attain those objectives;
  - With those partners, identify SMART policy objectives that include a realistic selection of the geographical areas where these are to be pursued;
  - Identify campaigning, advocacy and communication activities that can help achieve the common objectives.
- ✓ In the priority countries: We fully endorse the campaign's founding principle that different approaches are required for each national context. We believe the campaign can go further in this regard, and recommend that SMART policy objectives are set for each national context. Where possible consider consensus building among key partners around these policy objectives. Build local capacity or identify partners, who can bring a profound level of governmental insight and expertise related these particular policy objectives.
- ✓ Communication and campaigning activities should never be treated as independent functions but as an instrument of advocacy that helps advance national MDG objectives. Communication should always be secondary to policy objectives. The campaign should avoid actions that become and end in themselves without a clear link with the policy objectives they aim to achieve.
- ✓ The campaign could benefit by producing annual plans with the following sections: policy change objectives, focus on audiences, partners, then the advocacy strategies and communication approaches. And evaluate them at the end of the year.

### **9.2. Global/National Proportion**

- ✓ Without losing the primary focus on national governments, the campaign needs to consider deepening its approach to international policy events and institutions, especially when campaigning for goals 7 & 8. Some approaches could include increasing mobilization around international/regional events; strengthening policy capacity through key partnerships to influence the outcome of relevant international/regional policies; and continuing to feed political expertise into media strategies.
- ✓ We did not have access to the financial information required to assess the amount of resources devoted to national and global communication activities. However, there are indications that there may be greater resources and decision-making in the communications front at the global level. This appears to be at odds with the campaign strategy to work primarily at national level. The MC should consider rebalancing their communication resources to better equip national campaigns.

- ✓ Where appropriate, empower national campaigns to operate effective online campaigns. This needs further internal discussion, but ideas include decentralizing content management to national actors and changing the national pages on the central website to a compressive national profile page with contact info, partner lists, or any other content national actors deem important.

### 9.3. Segmenting target audiences

- ✓ Target audiences need to be better selected and defined on the basis of how they can advance the campaign's objectives.
- ✓ A strong distinction should be made between efforts to engage partner organizations and efforts to engage the public.
- ✓ Where possible, instead of focusing on broad audiences, focus on the smallest audiences with the most influence, such as opinion leaders or umbrella organizations.
- ✓ When public audiences are targeted, package messages so the maximum number of target audiences can relate to the issues. This may require research and message testing.
- ✓ Website staff should conduct annual website user surveys to deepen their understanding of users' needs. To save time, a standard survey can be developed for use on all sites, which can be easily adapted to the particular needs of each campaign website, and where appropriate, easily translated.

### 9.4. Rethinking *Stand Up*

- ✓ *Stand Up* in its current format is a very exhausting strategy with no clear link to the objectives of the campaign but with a powerful trademark. In future consider using the *Stand Up* trademark to support smaller *Stand Up* events throughout the year targeting policy spaces the campaign wants to influence. These spaces could vary from G8 summits to national or regional budgeting meetings, depending on concrete and clear objectives set by the campaign. The "counting" of the people who stood up globally can still be done at the end of the year, i.e. in 2011 X number of people stood up in support of the MDGs in X number of events throughout the year.
- ✓ Regardless of the format *Stand Up* might take, the MC needs to take a closer look (than was possible in this evaluation) at the cost effectiveness of the events. This means trying to place a realistic price tag on *Stand Up* so that its true value can be considered in future strategic planning.
- ✓ Encourage partners to maintain long-term campaigning relationships with citizens who participate in *Stand Up* events. Where partners do not have the capacity to do this, provide support in constituency management.
- ✓ When using *Stand Up* statistics as an argument to hold government to account, consider breaking them down nationally, for instance "35% of the population of the Philippines stood up in 2008".

- ✓ As *Stand Up* events have a huge impact over a short period, the MC should consider the following activities to increase the potential impact during the lead-in and follow-up phases.
  1. Increase the **lead-in** by starting early; identifying partner needs and policy objectives and testing related public messaging strategies (that reinforce political objectives). Focus on well timed and exciting campaigning actions in the build-up as a way to engage partners, citizens and the media.
  2. Reinforce the **follow-up** by increase reporting and monitoring of local *Stand Up* events to better capture the impact at the local level (focus on human interest materials such as images and stories, as well as research and impact studies); use these resources for follow-up communication products designed to place pressure on national governments and keep the momentum.

### 9.5. Citizens taking action

- ✓ As the campaign noted at their last retreat, instead of communicating at people it is better to offer them something to do. Whenever there are plans to engage citizens, do not just supply information. Offer people concrete opportunities for involvement, so they can actually take action and contribute to the MDGs.

### 9.6. Two tack approach with the media

- ✓ The division between event driven media and policy position-driven media appears to be a good practice, which has been eclipsed by the massive scope of *Stand Up*. This approach appears to work and should be continued and further linked to deepening policy-change objectives.

### 9.7. Maximum decentralization of communication products

- ✓ Whenever possible, continue encouraging partners and citizens to make the MDG message their own. However, to avoid potential conflicts, clearly express the MC's minimum "dos and don'ts" in terms of messaging, and brief staff on what sort of communication risks the MC is not willing to take. This should be kept to a minimum and only address areas of critical sensitivity.
- ✓ By developing global communication products designed for adaptation at the national level, the MC can save a lot of time and money. However, it is important to strike the right balance between cost effectiveness and local needs. Consider the following options to decentralize campaigns while maintaining a clearly recognized trademark:
  - provide minimum guidelines on the campaign's core message and branding;
  - give as much creative space as possible to national communications;
  - When developing campaign messaging, think about generic frameworks that are easily and fully adaptable to national contexts. The Asia report suggests "out of the box" communication products to reach to the intended audiences such as street theatre or community radio talk shows developed (rather than translated) in local languages.

### 9.8. Leverage the UN identity more

- ✓ Increase efforts to use UN identity to open up policy spaces for civil society partners, including with multilaterals at national and global level, particularly the UN.

- ✓ The MC needs to increase collaboration with UN bodies in order to capitalize on policy opportunities and networking. This can be achieved by dedicating a UN liaison focal point at the global office.

### **9.9. Partnerships: Engaging organizations, not individuals**

- ✓ The MC should focus on ensuring that there are national campaigns, rather than trying to run them itself. In other words, always focus on engaging umbrella organizations and other strategic partners who are positioned to exert the desired influence, rather than directly engaging citizens.
- ✓ Related to this, the MC's central website would benefit from shifting from servicing individuals to providing support for organizations better equipped to engage public audiences. To support building a global network of organizations promoting the MDGs, the central website and newsletter can shift from being an online frontrunner, to a back-stage facilitator of a global network of partners promoting the MDGs.
- ✓ The relationship with GCAP has produced mixed results in different countries under different conditions. As the MC is currently expanding its partnerships, it needs to continue to re-examine national GCAP partnerships on a case by case basis, investing in GCAP coalitions who have the capacity to draw in effective partners.
- ✓ The campaign has had success engaging new constituencies. We recommend continuing the efforts to work with local governments, parliamentarians and faith based organizations. Youth groups and the private sector are constituencies worth exploring further.
- ✓ Some best practices have emerged around media partnerships. In the next phase, the campaign should further expand on these successes by deepening media partnerships that are result-oriented, deepening capacity and aiming towards in-depth coverage of MDGs issues. To this end, media monitoring can be used to track progress.