



# UN Millennium Campaign

EXTERNAL EVALUATION 2009

Europe subreport



**UN Millennium Campaign  
External evaluation 2009  
Europe subreport**

**Prepared for the  
UN Millennium Campaign**


**By**

**Maria Delgado**



**Leitmotiv  
Social Consultants  
12 Imaginero Castillo Lastrucci, 4º  
41002 Seville  
SPAIN  
[www.leitmotivsocial.com](http://www.leitmotivsocial.com)  
Tel: +34 954 909690**

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 by email at [info@leitmotivsocial.com](mailto:info@leitmotivsocial.com)



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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides an overview of the work of the Millennium Campaign in Europe<sup>1</sup>, and a more in depth evaluation of the Spanish Campaign. The full study has taken 10 days. We have relied on the internal documents provided by the Campaign and more than 30 interviews held with the Campaign staff and stakeholders. Other secondary sources have also been used.

### **Strategy and approach:**

The Millennium Campaign landed in Europe in 2003<sup>2</sup> to build public support for the MDGs. After some preliminary contacts at national and regional level four priority countries were targeted: Germany, Italy, Spain and Portugal. The objective was to increase public awareness of the Goals as a precondition for social support while supporting citizen's initiatives to hold governments to account for their promises relating to the MDGs. It was deliberately decided to focus on national contexts as opposed to taking a regional (supranational) approach. It was acknowledged that effective political action required a national approach and local ownership and that increasing the political will of lagging countries would substantially contribute to improve "European development policies" as a whole.

The four national teams have centered their action on the complex set of Goal 8 issues. Particular attention has been paid to aid (issues including the amount of programmable aid, the division of labor among donors or the tying of aid, among others) and trade (mostly focusing on agricultural subsidy policies and import barriers). Trade and agriculture are central advocacy targets for 2009.

### **Action:**

Many different activities have been carried out across the region, in synergy with the vast network of partners, to raise citizen's awareness on Goal 8 issues and the MDGs. Local governments have been particularly effective allies for awareness-raising initiatives, unanimously praised by campaign staff and stakeholders. *Stand Up* has been the common event for engaging the media, encompassing different initiatives aimed at increasing awareness but also at promoting active participation and engagement. The event has been effective in attracting media interest but has not mobilized many if compared to other regions. There was wide concern about the impact and sustainability of the initiative in the future which confirms the need to rethink the mobilization strategy already acknowledged by the campaign.

The media has been instrumental to gain visibility and coverage of the main activities promoted or inspired by the European Campaigns. However, most impact has been reported around *Stand Up* activities, suggesting a lower level of media engagement in other campaign activities. A general perception of both staff and partners suggests that, given the low interest that European media generally shows in development issues, a reasonable level of coverage and visibility has nevertheless been achieved across the priority countries. This is in line with the findings of the media analysis in the global report. The challenge now is how to engage with the media in a more substantial way, a strategy that is already taking form and is highly encouraged in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> This report does not cover efforts in other countries such as Belgium, Switzerland or Austria where the Campaign claims to have contributed to convince already existing development constituencies to adopt the MDGs framework and to create self-sustaining movements to hold governments to account.

<sup>2</sup> National campaigns were progressively launched: Italy started in October 2003, Spain and Germany in 2004 and Portugal in 2005

The European campaign has focused on delivering substantial policy changes around Goal 8 issues (aid and trade in particular) at national level. Strategically little effort has been devoted to direct lobbying at EU level and that was mostly considered the right choice by the partners interviewed, although there were voices that suggested the need to increase visibility and action at European level. A range of tools and activities have encouraged public debate and political dialogue around pro-poor development policies across the four countries. Although the Campaign has mostly engaged in advocacy action through joint ventures with their partners, some direct lobbying has also been reported, with the Campaign maintaining regular direct contact with government officials. This raised some concern among some of the partners interviewed who considered that the Campaign was acting as another social or political actor, moving beyond the scope of its mandate somewhat.

**Impact:**

Partnerships have been instrumental to the European campaigns. They are crucial for the legitimacy of political action and for the sustainability of the efforts into the future. The campaign has been successful in engaging a wide range of partners and allies across Europe, contributing to the articulation of strong development constituencies in the priority countries. Those range from traditional NGOs, youth and faith-based organizations to local governments and parliamentarians. The strategy has been particularly effective in opening up and multiplying the range of awareness-raising initiatives and advocacy actions in all four countries and was highly appreciated by all stakeholders interviewed.

Policy change is difficult to measure and almost impossible to attribute. Political processes are complex and many actors are involved. In general, we can conclude that the European campaigns have positively contributed to the mainstreaming of the MDGs in national political discourse, though their influence on translating discourses into practice has been more limited and uneven. In Spain, the campaign was unanimously perceived as a contributor to political achievements. On the other hand the European Campaigns' definition of political indicators and expected outcomes, although improving, has so far been too vague to allow sound conclusions to be reached.

There is evidence to show that public awareness has increased in all four countries since the arrival of the Millennium Campaign and grounds to believe that a significant part of those increases can be traced back to the campaign's work. All four countries have experienced some increase in the level of awareness of the MDGs, and all of them rank above the EU average. This was significantly associated to the MC's work. However, a stronger strategic effort to segment target audiences that serve precisely defined policy objectives is crucial at this point in time.

**Recommendations:**

- The campaign needs to be clearer about what it is trying to achieve. For the next phase a narrower definition of the Campaign's own goals, expected outcomes and indicators of policy change is recommended.
- The European Campaigns have done a good job in engaging many advocates for the MDGs. Partners are crucial for both legitimacy of action and sustainability of the Campaign's mandate in the future. However, in order to maximize efforts some of these partnerships need to be further consolidated before going into new joint ventures. Strengthening synergies and existing partnerships with regional development advocacy platforms and multilateral organizations are encouraged.
- A narrow segmentation and definition of strategic target audiences on a case-by-case basis is strongly recommended. This exercise will then help to identify the most effective partners to reach those audiences.
- Strategic partnering with the media should be continued, in a more substantial manner. Greater investment on online tools and strategies is also recommended

## REGIONAL OVERVIEW

### INTRODUCTION

This section highlights some of the activities and achievements of the four European Campaigns, with a more thorough analysis of the Millennium Campaign's outcomes and challenges in Spain. The evaluation took 10 days, during which 31 people, including staff and people from the development and media communities and other relevant constituencies, were interviewed. The analysis also draws on documentation provided by the Campaign, a survey conducted with the Campaign's partners and secondary sources of information. Given the 10 day time frame, and the extensive scope of the evaluation, the findings and analysis are more broad and impressionistic than deep and thorough. However, we have been able to identify several areas of interest and improvement which can be followed up by the Campaign teams and partners. Germany was deliberately left out of this study since the German Campaign was going under an evaluation process itself.

Following the structure and methodology defined in the global report, this overview covers some background to the Campaign in Europe, their fundraising achievements and four areas of analysis: public awareness, media and communications, partnerships and policy. Following this is the detailed Spanish case study and some common conclusions and recommendations.

#### **Background to the Campaign:**

The Millennium Campaign (MC) was created to build political support for the MDGs, by increasing public awareness of the goals and supporting citizen's initiatives to hold their governments to account for their promises. The underlying assumption is that raising public awareness of the MDGs and engaging grassroots organizations in advocating for them will lead to policy change. In the Campaign's own words, the degree to which the "goals set" become "goals met" depends on the extent to which they are publicly supported, recognized and "owned"<sup>3</sup>.

The global report of this evaluation describes in detail how the Millennium Development Goals were uneasily received by many within the international development community. Many criticized the low ambition of the targets, while others believed that full achievement was unlikely to happen.

It was in this context that the European Millennium Campaign was launched in 2003, aiming to overcome such resistance and engage a wide range of social actors in advocating for the MDGs as a valid minimum framework for the eradication of poverty. The European national Campaigns would be the first step in the run for a global Campaign<sup>4</sup>.

Behind this early strategic choice was a concern that Goal 8, to develop a global partnership for development, lacked precise indicators and deadlines, thus compromising the credibility of the global deal. Following the "think global, act local" paradigm, it was acknowledged that effective political action needed a national approach and local ownership. Under the guidance and leadership of Eveline Herfkens, appointed by the UN Secretary General to push this process ahead, the national Campaigns were launched in European countries that were

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<sup>3</sup> Eveline Herfkens, "The Millennium Campaign: Successes and Challenges". UN Chronicle n° 4, 2007

<sup>4</sup> It should be noted that from the outset the Millennium Campaign made an effort to reach out in other smaller lagging EU countries (eg Belgium and Austria) and established contacts with existing regional CSO's networks that served to further identify the selection of priority countries. Some of those countries, like it was the case of Belgium launched its own MDGs campaigns (see the report "Public Campaigns about the MDGs since 2003", by Ida Mc Donnell, OECD Development Centre). This report will therefore focus on the four ongoing campaigns: Italy, Germany, Spain and Portugal. No evaluation of the link about the Campaign and other European initiatives has been attempted.

believed to have sufficient political and economic weight in the European Union, but who were likely to underperform in Goal 8 and either lacked strong development constituencies or the existing actors were reluctant to accept the MDGs as a framework<sup>5</sup>. The first Campaign was launched in Italy in 2003, followed by Spain, Germany and Portugal. A French Campaign was being set up during the drafting of this report.

There are now four small teams in Europe, and a regional coordination office set up in 2008, with around 20 enthusiastic and highly professional members of staff across the region<sup>6</sup>. According to both MC staff and partners interviewed, the establishment of the regional office has strengthened the coordination within and between the European Campaigns and has multiplied synergies with European partners and national Campaigns. Budget estimates for the European Campaigns for 2009 amount to about 2 million dollars<sup>7</sup>.

## FUNDRAISING

Fundraising is conducted mostly in Europe. 81% of Global Campaign funding from 2002 to 2008, amounting to more than 50 million Euros, was granted by European donors. Fundraising can therefore be seen as one of the European Campaign's areas of success. But this is coupled with the challenge of striking a difficult balance, and fearlessly lobbying the same governments that are approached for funding.

Figures for contributions raised from the four European countries with active MCs show that in general the Campaign has succeeded in striking the right political balance when facing this challenge. So, whereas contributions from Italy, Spain, Germany and Portugal made up only 0.2% of the total funding raised by the global Campaign between 2002 and 2004, this figure rose to 41% for the period 2005-2008. This strongly suggests a direct link with the work of the Campaign.

### Conclusions:

The limited scope of this report does not allow us to fully analyze the different motivations for a government to donate funds. MC staff suggested that, for one part, governments are usually happy to pay insofar as they perceive that the Campaign helps to build the public support that they need to push their development policies ahead. The Spanish case study certainly bears this out.

## PUBLIC AWARENESS

Raising awareness is not the final goal of the MC. The Campaign was not created, or resourced, to fulfill a communication function. However, it was soon acknowledged that building political support for the MDGs required both awareness of the goals and citizen's advocacy to remind governments of their promises. A constructive tension between the awareness and policy focus has been present in the team discussions and the Campaign's strategy ever since.

In Europe, the awareness raising component has successfully engaged a wide range of stakeholders (from civil society organizations to local authorities) in making Goal 8 promises and challenges on trade, aid and debt more familiar to all in the priority countries. This has positively contributed to increase local ownership of the Millennium Campaign's policy demands, especially among civil society organizations but also among unusual partners such as local governments. At the regional level the Campaign partnered with the EC Directorate

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<sup>6</sup> Although this report does not cover internal organizational issues, the high level of respect unanimously expressed by our informants for the professionalism and enthusiasm of the MC staff must be acknowledged.

<sup>7</sup> This includes both the operational costs of the European campaigns and the regional office.



for Development and Humanitarian Aid to develop specific outreach activities. These included the *Voices Against Poverty Box*, a portable TV studio where political leaders and

**Examples of national level awareness-raising activities:**

Many national activities have been instrumental to make European citizens more familiar with the issues. Examples of good practices were:

- In Italy the MDGs were the central theme of an MTV concert and of Futurshow, an IT Fair.
- The German Campaign used the occasion of 2006 World Cup and high-level events such as the G8 Summit to display the MDG Arches exhibition.
- In Portugal, more than 6,000 schoolchildren were brought together by the Millennium Campaign and the Global Campaign on Education during the 2008 Global Action Week.

ordinary citizens can leave messages, and the display of the *MDG Arches* exhibition on relevant dates, including European Development Days<sup>8</sup>. The Campaign reported that both activities attracted a high level of interest and participation from both local officials and people on the streets. Both tools have also been widely used by the national Campaigns.

**Mass mobilization:**

European Campaigns and partners have also promoted *Stand Up*, a common event to mobilize citizens and raise awareness of MDGs. The initiative includes a wide range of activities, from concerts or exhibitions to sports competitions and school activities, developed and carried out throughout the priority countries. Most partners identified *Stand Up* as a relevant communication tool to create public debate and media activity on the MDGs.

In the 2008 event the European Campaign mobilized almost a million people against poverty, through its synergies and alliances with faith-based organizations, trade unions, civil society organizations, local governments and many others. This is the largest mobilization so far. However, while the European events are widely considered to be a strong initiative in the region<sup>9</sup>, contributing to MDG awareness and giving world citizens a unique voice against poverty, *Stand Up* mobilizations tend to be much larger in Southern countries.

Many within the Campaign staff interviewed shared concerns about the capacity of the European Campaign and their partners to engage a higher number of people in *Stand Up* in the future.

External interviewees agreed that the initiative is a useful tool to drive media attention and provoke public debates but considered that the mobilization format does not engage too many and expressed doubts about the real impact of the initiative in the future, where the novelty effect will progressively faint. Although this is probably common in all four countries it could not be contrasted for all of them. As a result, European mobilizing strategies are partly shifting towards working on more segmented public audiences and social groups such as youth and the student community, while strengthening partnerships that are believed to expand outreach in a cost-effective way, such as with local government.

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<sup>8</sup> European Development Day was first organized by the European Commission in 2006.

<sup>9</sup> More than 80% of European respondents to our survey considered that the initiative has been instrumental to the European Campaigns.

### **Impact on awareness of MDGs:**

Despite the many efforts, major achievements in public awareness are yet to come to fruition. It is normal for permeability of the public to messages to be slow and require a long-term strategy. But a comparison of 2005 and 2007 Eurobarometer<sup>10</sup> results shows a slight increase in the level of awareness of the MDGs in Europe over this period, and the MC priority countries rank above the EU average indicating that this increase can be associated to the presence of the Campaign in certain countries. Of particular note is the rise in people who have heard of the MDGs in Portugal, from 13% in 2004 to 24% in 2007<sup>11</sup>.

These statistics can cautiously be taken as an encouraging sign for the European Campaigns. To what extent they can be attributed to the work of national campaigns is difficult to measure, and beyond the scope of just an overview. However, some studies suggest a relatively direct relationship between campaigning efforts for the MDGs and increased awareness<sup>12</sup>. Others go further to affirm that cases like Italy, which had one of the highest awareness levels in 2004, probably were the result of early targeting by the UN Millennium Campaign<sup>13</sup>. Certainly the interviews held for this evaluation showed a wide consensus among both Campaign staff and stakeholders that the Campaign's role of promoting and inspiring public awareness activities in Europe has indeed contributed to overall results.

### **Conclusions:**

Public awareness is a pre-condition for engagement. In the words of a political campaigner, the real challenge is "*how to convert a crowd into an audience and an audience into a partner*". Generally the level of civic engagement in Europe is low. Educating and mobilizing citizens around complex and distant issues may be a titanic task for a small campaign with few resources. Still this study suggests that the Campaign's efforts have delivered significant outcomes in this regard and a proportionate level of impact been achieved in the priority countries.

## **MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS**

The European Campaigns have followed a mixed strategy of engaging the media in public events and intellectual policy work. All European teams have a Communications Coordinator directly reporting to the national coordinator with the Deputy Director Communication playing a coordinating and supporting role globally. A result of the decision to focus on national strategies there is no regional communications strategy as yet, although common objectives and strategies are progressively being incorporated into operational plans.

### **Partnerships with the media:**

The Campaign teams have both impacted on media directly, through the production of op-eds and interviews with the Campaign team leaders, press releases, regular contacts... etc, and through their partners. The MC has also targeted the media as a strategic partner and is increasingly successful in this objective. Institutional partnerships have already been developed with GREY, MSN, Young & Rubicam, MTV and the Journalist School of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation among others. At the national level, relationships have been developed with relevant local media around main events.

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<sup>10</sup> Eurobarometer is the main source of public opinion analysis data in the EU.

<sup>11</sup> "Europeans and Development Aid" Special Eurobarometer. June, 2007.

<sup>12</sup> Public Campaigns about the MDGs since 2003, by Ida Mc Donnell, OECD Development Centre. Available at [http://www.oecd.org/document/47/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_34101\\_39869615\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/47/0,3343,en_2649_34101_39869615_1_1_1_1,00.html).

<sup>13</sup> "Using indicators to encourage development: lessons from the Millennium Development Goals". Richard Manning. DIIS REPORT 2009:01

**Example of a national media partnership:**

Some of the work with media at national level was reported to be particularly effective. MTV in Italy, for instance, attracted youngsters' attention over a full month of debates and broadcast dedicated to the MDGs, concluding with a concert. The format deliberately avoided a passive informative approach and engaged young citizens into actively participating in the broadcasts. The Italian Campaign reported that this initiative had a direct impact on the awareness of young people in the country.

High competition for media space makes it more difficult to gain visibility and coverage in European countries. The Campaigns' resources are scarce and imaginative approaches and tools are required to meet this challenge. However, as noted in the global media analysis, the Campaign has achieved reasonable coverage of MDG issues and activities in Europe, ranking first in the average distribution of regional coverage for the MDGs (29%).

A more detailed analysis of the challenges and achievements of the media strategy can be found in the global report. According to findings therein, the *Stand Up* event creates the strongest media impact also in Europe, and this is backed up by our interviews. However, more sustained coverage is slowly being secured across the region, partly because of stronger media partnerships in the region and partly because the Campaign has increased its activities and networks over the years. There was a wide consensus among all those interviewed that strategic partnerships with the media are key to gain visibility and strength in the future but they inevitably require a huge investment of efforts and follow up that may be immense for a small Campaign.

**ONLINE TOOLS**

Most agree that online tools are crucial to multiply the use and impact of information, particularly in the North. They are also seen as particularly effective in promoting proactive engagement. All of the European Campaigns have a webpage and a European site is under construction, but most members of staff interviewed agreed that there is room for improvement regarding the online strategy. This was mostly put down to a lack of resources and expertise. Other issues emerge in the findings and analysis of the global report. Further investment in internet and online strategies is highly encouraged.

**PARTNERSHIPS**

The main aim of the Campaign is to provoke policy change by empowering citizens to hold their governments accountable, strategically highlighting local ownership of the process. Since the establishment of the first Campaign in Italy in 2003, the European Campaigns have engaged a considerable and varied number of constituencies, including faith-based organizations (FBOs), civil society organizations, trade unions and local authorities among others, with reasonable success<sup>14</sup>.

**Civil society partners:**

NGOs and other civil society organizations who have been the main drivers of policy change in the areas relating to Goal 8 have been primary partners. In Europe key strategic partnerships include the Global Call Against Poverty platform (GCAP)<sup>15</sup>, and other broad social movements like the Italian Peace Movement or the German umbrella organization, VENRO, among others.

Civil society partners and allies have been involved in a wide variety of activities, but have been particularly strategic around Stand Up. National partners receive some financial support for

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<sup>14</sup> Please see the global report for a map of key partners, under the partnerships section.

<sup>15</sup> For the full narrative of the GCAP-MC relationship please refer to the global report.

“October mobilizations”. However, most of the support is provided in kind: materials, publicity campaigns, etc. Grants are not significant at the European level where financial resources are usually available.

#### **Multilateral partners:**

Relationships with the UN have revolved mostly around the UNDP, who collaborate in the production of visual tools and other communication material around the MDGs. Another key partner has been the OECD. During this evaluation both institutions highly acknowledged the role of the Campaign as instrumental and complementary to their own work and mandate. Synergies seem to have escalated with the establishment of the MC regional office in Rome in 2008 and suggest strong potential for the future.

#### **Other partners:**

Parliamentarians were unanimously considered key partners for policy change. From the outset the UN Millennium Campaign Founder addressed most EU 15 Parliaments and engaged in many international Parliamentary networks, by delivering keynote speeches and disseminating “Goal 8 Alerts” to their members. Regular exchanges also took place with the Chair of the Development Committee of the European Parliament on the substance of the Resolutions with MDG’s relevance. Recently, a collaboration agreement was signed with the association of regional Parliaments -CALRE<sup>16</sup>- in 2008. At national level, regular contact with members of Parliament is maintained by MC teams

Local governments have been one of the most effective partners in Europe. Engaging them in the MDG cause has strong potential for political impact, both as advocates of the cause and as advocacy targets themselves, as managers of decentralized aid budgets. MC relationships with local governments are maintained through United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) and the Council of European Municipalities and Regions (CEMR) at regional level and through national federations of local authorities, but the Campaign is also successfully working to escalate the engagement of local governments on a more individual basis.

#### **Campaigning with local government partners:**

In most countries local governments were important strategic allies in awareness raising initiatives such as the *Voice Box* or the *MDGs Arches* exhibition. Other joint activities include the “*8 ways to change the world*” brochure and the MDG weeks.

An initiative to involve European mayors as MDG advocates was recently presented to the CEMR General Assembly, and MC staff report positive reactions. Local government respondents agreed that this type of leading action by town mayors will be particularly effective in terms of expanding both engagement and outreach, and therefore a good practice that should continue in the future. They suggested that: “*The competition element works extremely well among local authorities*”.

#### **Conclusions:**

The European Campaigns have developed a wide network of partnerships around the fight against poverty agenda. Whilst anti-poverty movements have focused on the engagement of European social organizations in poverty issues, the Millennium Campaign has succeeded in

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<sup>16</sup> CALRE unites the regional parliaments in the EU with legislative power. In total there are 74 from 8 countries: the parliaments of the Spanish autonomous communities; the Italian regional councils; the assemblies of the Belgian regions and communities; the parliaments of both the Austrian and the German Länder; the autonomous parliament of Åland (Finland); the regional assemblies of the Azores and Madeira (Portugal); and those of Scotland, Wales and Northern-Ireland (the United Kingdom).

bringing in new and diverse constituencies, including faith-based and youth organizations, local governments and parliamentarians, among others.

Almost 90% of the few European partners responding to our survey agree that the Campaign has been effective in this, and all those interviewed agreed that this is a positive development. It has allowed the Campaign to reach beyond the usual actors in the development world and to increase awareness and policy action. However, although a clearer strategy was becoming progressively more visible, a number of people remarked that the Campaign had not always been clear on its partnership approach.

*“The Campaign has successfully come to fit in when they have opened new partnerships. They should have done it a bit earlier and more strategically. To me, they opened up to others after an unhappy love affair with CSOs” (CSO partner)*

Whereas the Campaign has indeed engaged new constituencies in campaigning for the MDGs, the selection of partners could probably have benefited from a stronger strategic approach. More recent operational plans increasingly tailor action and strategies to partners’ capacities and potential, an exercise which should be encouraged to continue and improve upon in the future.

## **POLICY ENGAGEMENT**

Advocacy was a strong component of the European Campaign from the onset. The fact that the Founder of the UN Millennium Campaign is a former Development Minister provided a strong advantage for political campaigning in the region.

The Campaign focuses on influencing government action in four European countries. Strategically, although the Campaign has secured a presence at most important EU venues and events, not much has been invested in influencing regional policy processes, as these are considered too complex and ineffective in relation to the Campaign’s goals and mandate.

*“If you want to improve “European” MDG policies, you have to change the policies made in Rome, Paris, Berlin, Vienna, Madrid...”*

Recognizing the importance of context, policy advocacy strategies and messages were adapted to the different country cultures, and performance on different issues.

This strategy was considered adequate and effective by all interviewees. However a number of them suggested that the Campaign should attempt the “EU game” and scale up regional visibility, while maintaining the national focus. This could be done by tapping into the Campaign’s achievements in the priority countries. For example many consider the 2010 Spanish presidency of the EU as an opportunity to influence other countries in the EU particularly regarding the UN MDG Review Summit in the same year. The European elections were defined by another partner as a “missed opportunity” for stronger MC collaboration with regional partners. The UN Millennium Campaign pointed out that not focusing on the European elections was a strategic decision based on the national focus of the Campaign and on the fact that the European Parliament, allegedly, lacks sufficient decision making power (if compared to national parliaments) as to become a priority area of work.

### **Policy strategy:**

Influencing political processes is a difficult job. The main objective is to foster change, but changes need to be resistant to political circumstances and upheaval. At a time when the economy is in the headlines, securing sustainable policy change and budget commitments on development issues may become even more difficult. Experience shows that policy change will not endure if a strong social base of support is not created. As the Campaign itself notes, only

citizens and parliaments can hold governments accountable<sup>17</sup>. They are the best guarantee that achievements will not be reversed.

The Campaign's political strategy has therefore been a mix of strengthening partners' political capacity and direct lobbying of national institutions. Nationally, most political advocacy has adequately been led through the vast network of partners. This strategy has progressively made European social actors the real "owners" of the Campaign's demands, paving the way for the sustainability of today's efforts in the future. The European Campaign has also reported direct lobby in a number of instances. For example regular contacts between the Campaign's leaders and national governments were reported in all four countries. In some cases, like Italy, those contacts were considered determinant of significant political changes<sup>18</sup>.

**Examples of regional policy advocacy activities:**

The campaign has produced a selection of advocacy tools, adapted nationally, to influence debates on the quantity and quality of aid and trade issues such as agricultural subsidies and import barriers. These include:

- The Aid Effectiveness brochure, produced with the OECD, presented to national political fora.
- MDG toolkits for parliamentarians, reported as best practice in Germany
- A brochure is planned for 2009 with the EU on the division of labor of donors

Direct advocacy action was also reported in 2007 when the Midpoint Alicante Declaration on Aid Effectiveness was jointly launched by the Italian, Spanish and Portuguese Government. The joint signature was promoted and inspired by the European Campaign and it was accompanied by a Dive Against Poverty event, held in all 3 countries, with over 5000 people participating. This kind of direct action raised some concern among several partners interviewed that considered that when doing so the Campaign goes beyond its mandate.

**Evidence of impact:**

While this evaluation does not permit thorough analysis of outcomes, there are grounds to associate the presence of the MC in Europe with encouraging results reported by the OECD. Latest report shows that, Germany and Spain were among the six OECD countries with the largest increases in overseas development aid in 2008. The paper also notes a significant increase in Portugal's aid delivery (up to 0.27% in 2008 from 0.22% in 2007<sup>19</sup>).

Other studies also conclude that there is evidence that the MDG framework has been more influential on European aid policies than on non-European donors, although impact has been highly variable<sup>20</sup>. For the countries where MC is operative the documentation reviewed and interviews held suggest that all of them have mainstreamed the MDG into political discourse whereas regarding the implementation of Goal 8 issues results differ from country to country, with some European countries performing reasonably and others falling behind schedule. We can therefore conclude that there is enough evidence to affirm that the European Millennium Campaign, generally, has made a significant contribution to the mainstreaming of MDGs into general political discourse in the priority countries. Given that the chain of factors leading to policy change differs from country to country, we have not attempted here to unpack the role and full impact of the MC in all four political processes regarding implementation.

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17 E.Herkens "The Millennium Campaign: Successes and Challenges". UN Chronicle 4, 2007

18 According to MC, the appointment of a Viceminister for Development Cooperation in 2006 was directly linked to action by the Italian Campaign

19 "Development aid at its highest level ever in 2008":

[www.oecd.org/document/35/0,3343,en\\_2649\\_34447\\_42458595\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/35/0,3343,en_2649_34447_42458595_1_1_1_1,00.html)

20 "Using indicators to encourage development: lessons from the Millennium Development Goals". Richard Manning. DIIS REPORT 2009:01

## CASE STUDY: SPAIN

### INTRODUCTION

The Spanish Millennium Campaign (SMC) shares the overall aims and objectives of creating political will and citizen support for the MDGs, and enhancing state accountability to their promises relating to meeting the MDGs. The focus, shared with the other European Campaigns, is on increasing the aid envelope and advancing progress on Goal 8: developing a global partnership for development.

#### **Strategy and approach:**

The Spanish Campaign's strategy has been deliberately tailored to the particular social and political context and has been growing and adapting to new political circumstances and opportunities.

Initial efforts focused on:

- increasing general knowledge and awareness of the MDGs in Spanish society; and
- advocating for the MDGs, and Goal 8 issues in particular, to be mainstreamed into Spanish policy.

Progress achieved on these objectives allowed the Campaign to begin work to translate the MDG discourse into coherent and effective aid policies for the country. Today the MDGs are effectively mainstreamed in Spanish policy, and significant improvements have taken place on the implementation of aid policies that respond to Goal 8 promises. Accordingly the Spanish Campaign now primarily focuses on consolidating those political achievements and impacts.

#### **Internal organization:**

A small office was opened in 2004 and today four professionals form a highly committed team. With limited human and financial resources the Spanish Campaign has worked on securing a solid base of social support for the cause of the MDGs in general and Goal 8 issues in particular. Strong alliances have been developed with a variety of social bodies such as civil society organizations, faith-based or youth organizations, trade unions, parliamentarians, regional and local governments.

With a small annual budget of, on average, around 300,000 USD<sup>21</sup>, the Campaign has been able to carry out different types of activities relating to mobilization, public awareness and advocacy. A more detailed chronology of the Campaign history and description of activities in the country are provided in an annex to this report.

This evaluation has focused on assessing the impacts of the Campaign's work, particularly in raising public awareness and producing political change. An analysis of the partnerships developed and of the effectiveness of the use of media and communications as instrumental elements of this strategy has also been attempted.

### PUBLIC AWARENESS

As the Campaign's operational plans acknowledge, the objective of building a strong political constituency of support for pro-poor development policies requires initial effort both to diversify the number of actors talking about MDGs and to increase the percentage of the

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<sup>21</sup> No financial audit has been conducted during this evaluation. Little financial documentation has been reviewed. This figure is only an approximation to contextualize the campaign's efforts. It does not include the important amounts that have been raised by the MC to fund partners' activities or the pro bono contributions (pro bono advertising campaigns and facilitation of free media spaces) by some of the communications partners. According to the MC this figures roughly amounted to an extra 430,000 USD in 2008 and 500,000 USD in 2009.

Spanish population who are familiar with the goals. In this sense the Spanish Campaign mirrors other European Campaigns and has invested considerable efforts in raising public awareness on the MDGs through its partners.

#### **Partners for this work:**

The *Alianza contra la Pobreza*<sup>22</sup> is a broad alliance of Spanish NGOs and civil society groups has provided the Campaign with a strong, credible platform for its mobilisation and public awareness work. Other many partners have also been instrumental in this work. That is the case for example of the activities developed with *Fundación "la Caixa"*, the presence of the Campaign in the UN Pavilion of Expo Zaragoza or the partnership with *Aula*, a weekly supplement of *El Mundo*, one of the main national newspapers, targeting the students community, among many others. Other strategic partnerships for this purpose include the Federation of Scouts, the Spanish Youth Council, the Global Education Campaign, faith-based organisation, trade unions or NGOs among many others.

Recently, the Campaign has focused much of its awareness-raising strategy on tapping into existing relationships with local authorities. There was widespread agreement among the stakeholders interviewed that this partnership has the potential to reach wide audiences over the long term. Examples of the types of awareness raising activities that have taken place with the support of contacts in local authorities include:

Millennium Campaign tools such as the *MDG Arches* exhibition and the *Voices against Poverty Box*<sup>23</sup> deployed in many different cities. However, although the latter is very attractive and visual, some interviewees considered it too expensive to be easily used, limiting its impact, especially when local governments are facing budget cutbacks. This should be considered carefully in future awareness raising plans.

*MDG Weeks*, where local authorities actively engage in a wide range of MDG-related activities over a full week. This initiative was considered an interesting experience of articulation and collaboration among different local actors who are invited to participate in the organization of those activities.

A publicity campaign designed *pro bono* by GREY and offered to the Federation of Local Governments (FEMP), which will be taking the MDGs message across the cities and municipalities of Spain in 2009 and 2010.

#### **Mass mobilization:**

*Stand Up* and the Spanish mobilizing equivalent, *Rebélate*, have also attracted media attention, encompassing both policy and awareness-raising actions during a full week of activities and mobilizations. In Spain *Stand Up* was only held as a separate mobilization during the 2006 *Rebélate* framework, with the participation of 360,000 people. However, the

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<sup>22</sup> The Alianza includes: ATTAC España - ASDE Federación de Asociaciones de Scout de España - Campaña Pobreza Cero - Coordinadora ONG Desarrollo España (CONGDE) - Campaña Quién Debe a Quién (QDQ) - Campaña del Milenio de NNUU - Comisiones Obreras (CCOO) - Confederación española de Asociaciones de Padres de Alumnos (CEAPA) - Consejo de la Juventud de España (CJE) - Consejo General de Colegios Oficiales de Diplomados en Trabajo Social y Asistentes Sociales - Coordinadora Española del Lobby Europeo de Mujeres (CELEM) - Ecologistas en acción - Escritores por la Paz - Foro social de Madrid - Federación de Asociaciones de Defensa y Promoción de los Derechos Humanos - Federación de Asociaciones para Defensa de la Sanidad Pública - Federación de Entidades Evangélicas de España (FEREDE) - Federación de Organizaciones Sindicales Unión Sindical (US) - Grupo de Interés Español en población, desarrollo y salud reproductiva (GIE) - Iglesia Evangélica Española - Plataforma 0,7 - Plataforma 2015 y más - Plataforma de ONG de Acción social (POAS) - Plataforma por la defensa de los servicios públicos - Plataforma Rural española - Red Española de lucha contra la pobreza (EAPN-es) - Sindicatos de trabajadores y trabajadoras de la enseñanza (STEs-i) - Stop exclusión - Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT) - Unión Sindical Obrera (USO)

<sup>23</sup> A mobile studio designed by the Millennium Campaign to record citizens and political leader's messages and views about global poverty. Firstly displayed on June 2006, the Voice box has visited several Spanish cities.



fact that there were two mobilizations on the same week generated some competition. It was then decided to merge the two initiatives under the *Rebélate* brand and framework and it has so happened from 2007. The Spanish Campaign has always backed *Rebélate* and, together with CONGDE, the umbrella organization for development NGOs in Spain, is the main sponsor. However, a significant number of the CSO partners interviewed for this evaluation expressed a certain feeling of discomfort about the *Stand Up* initiative.

No data is available for participation in *Rebélate* 2007, when organizers decided not to count, but *Rebélate* 2008 inspired over 100,000 people to take to the streets in 70 cities across the country<sup>24</sup>, with more than 449 different activities<sup>25</sup> organized during a whole “week against poverty”.

Despite this success, this mobilization is modest compared with achievements in other regions of the world. Most people interviewed agreed that it would be difficult to increase the numbers by much, as in Spain demonstrations still have a political tag, preventing many from participating. This limitation has been already acknowledged by the European Campaigns and in 2009 a multi-pronged approach has been designed to make *Stand Up* more visible and attractive in all priority countries.

Other concerns were shared about the real impact of mobilizations on either policy makers or the general public. Especially regarding the former, we were not able to find clear evidence of mobilizations having significant impact on policy change. However, most stakeholders interviewed agreed that to a certain extent mobilizations do help to facilitate interaction with policy makers and therefore generate some impact. For example, respondents stated that:

*“Mobilizations enabled us, NGOs, to sit with the political parties and sign the National Agreement against Poverty”*

And

*“The Campaign sits with regional or local governments, also because of the backing provided by mobilizations”.*

### **Social marketing:**

The Spanish Campaign’s partnership with the advertising agency GREY Spain has resulted in two publicity campaigns launched in 2007 and 2008 to promote the *Rebélate* events. In 2008, three TV spots were produced *pro bono* by GREY, with participation of members of the *Alianza contra la Pobreza* in agreeing the message, format and share creative ideas. These were broadcast during the “week against poverty” in October and several organizations were happy to upload them onto their websites. According to the Campaign the initiative contributed to more actively engaging some CSOs in *Rebélate* actions. Partners interviewed widely appreciated the fact of counting on these communication tools that are out of reach for most Spanish NGOs, but perceived that the spots had limited broadcast and visibility. This may be due to insufficient monitoring of the *pro bono* efforts by the media partners and therefore poor information available to the Campaign and partners on broadcast follow up data.

There are always tensions concerning actions, messages and the level of engagement that should be sought through awareness-raising campaigns. All members from the *Alianza contra la Pobreza* interviewed saw the process of agreeing on a single and effective message, in a

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<sup>24</sup> A significant increase if compare with 2005, when only 20 cities did participate and 100 events held (Cuatro años de Campaña Pobreza Cero. Internal document. CONGDE 2008)

<sup>25</sup> Concerts, video and film projections, exhibitions, press conferences, public debates and round tables, school games and activities, books barter exchanges.....and many other (see [www.rebelatecontrapobreza.org](http://www.rebelatecontrapobreza.org))

coalition which includes such diverse interests and sensibilities, as an interesting and enriching experience. This was attributed to the facilitation role played by the Campaign<sup>26</sup>.

*“Being so diverse, the challenge of the Alianza is not to fall into the trap of simplifying the message so much that any person can take it on. It needs to incorporate a minimum element of engagement and lead the audiences to participate and commit even if very generally”*

The participation of the *Alianza* in the creative processes, promoted and facilitated by the SMC, was generally appreciated on the one hand but also considered by many *Alianza* interviewees to be too lengthy and costly and, in the words of one of them “*unnecessarily restrictive*” to traditional NGO language and tone. Accordingly some of the partners interviewed expressed concerns that this collaborative approach may not be the most effective way of developing a strong social marketing campaign and advocated for a more ambitious individual approach by the Campaign. There may be some misperception of the real financial and human resources of the Campaign by some of the partners, who suggested that the Campaign itself should produce those visual and communication tools and then share them with their civil society partners.

### **The impact on awareness of MDGs:**

Raising public awareness and fostering citizen engagement is a costly, long-term process that requires the development of strategic partnerships. The Spanish Campaign has been able to achieve reasonable impact through a wide range of partners and instruments. Results seem even more impressive if we take into account the limited human and material resources of the Spanish Campaign and we bear in mind that the mandate of the Millennium Campaign is not raising awareness but building political support for the MDGs.

#### **Evidence of impact:**

A survey commissioned by the Spanish Foundation *Fundación Carolina*, together with the Spanish Centre for Social Research (CIS)<sup>1</sup>, showed that in 2008, 29% of the Spanish population admitted having heard of the MDGs, up from 26% in 2005. However, when asked about the issues behind Goal 8, the results were more marked: in 2008, 69% of the population had heard of the 0.7% target, 67% agreed with it and 48% believed that (notwithstanding the economic crisis) Spanish development aid should be maintained.

It is important to note that the communication and mobilisation efforts of the Spanish campaign and partners have deliberately targeted Goal 8 issues. That leads us to conclude that the Millennium campaign synergies with their partners have been reasonably successful in this regard. Partners interviewed unanimously agreed that the campaign’s contribution to these results was significant.

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<sup>26</sup> The Campaign is one of the three members of the communication group of the Alianza and has participated actively in the promotion of the messages from the Alianza and in activities related to media and the production of media materials and press releases.

The challenge now is to build on the existing networks and partnerships to scale up impact towards the 2015 deadline, consolidating political support from the awareness raised. The Spanish Campaign is starting to shape up this strategy. We recommend that policy objectives are narrowed down further and that the segmentation of the target audiences serve those objectives. In the light of this partnerships for this aims should be revisited and approached. This will help to convert “general public opinion” into “strategic public opinion”.

## **MEDIA AND COMMUNICATIONS**

The use of media and communication tools is a key element in any social or political Campaign. The media amplifies citizen’s voices and enables public debate.

Up to now, the Spanish Campaign’s engagement with the media has mostly been to ensure coverage of MDG-related events and promote the regular presence of the Goals in the public debate. The strategy is now moving towards a stronger partnership with the media for more active engagement with the MDGs generally and goal 8 issues in particular.

Although the Spanish Campaign does engage directly with the media and is indeed working towards a stronger media presence, to date much of its media work has been supporting partners in their own communication efforts, providing information and communication materials and capacity building. A set of tools have been developed to convey the MDG message across different media channels. The Campaign has also invested considerable efforts in engaging and training individual journalists, developing a wide network of contacts among the mainstream media.

### **The Campaign in the media:**

Presence of MC activities and messages in the media is normally secured through the coverage of global events, press releases or the facilitation of op-eds and interviews with the Campaigns leaders among other things. But as happens in other national Campaigns, the most intense media attention is driven by the October mobilizations and related activities. As a result, little monitoring has been conducted around the media impact of other events along the year. Media monitoring is expensive, and as the global report shows, it is customary for organizations to focus resources on media outreach rather than on monitoring.

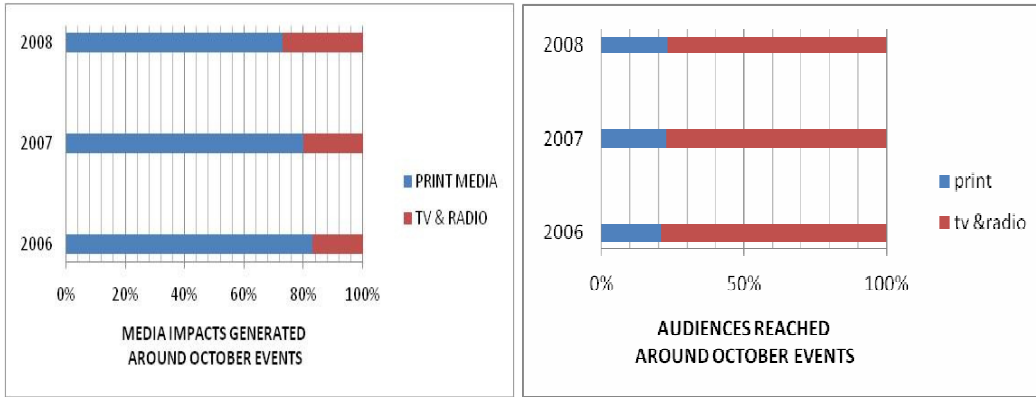
In the light of the data available we have tried to assess how effective the MC strategy has been in meeting their objectives based on the data surrounding the October events. That means that most probably the impact has been higher than the analysis will show and therefore these results must be read with caution.

### ***Charts: comparative use of media channels***

This chart compares impacts<sup>27</sup> versus audiences. The picture should be taken as an approximation since audience monitoring is not consistent enough in the reports but it already hints at a pattern of standard rates of audiences in TV and radio versus print press distribution.

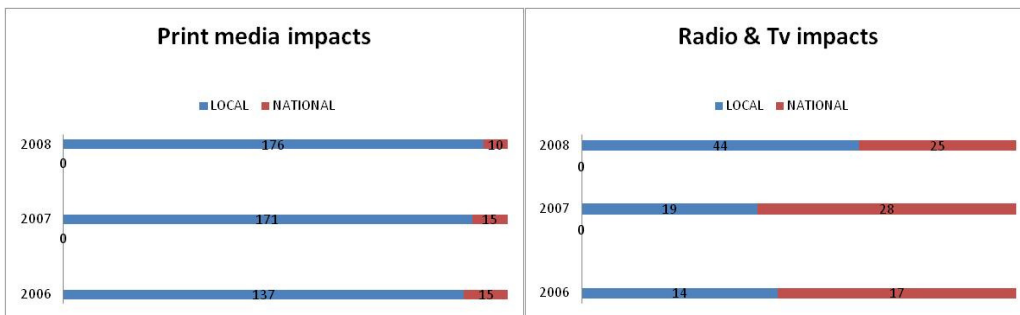
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<sup>27</sup> Impact here is understood as the number of times MC or MDG related issues are covered in the media.



Source: Millennium Campaign media reports

For the same period the coverage and reach of the impacts were:



Source: Millennium Campaign media reports

This second chart assesses the level of local penetration of the media effort and relates it to the different channels used. In the words of a Spanish journalist interviewed for this evaluation “*local media is key to reach people in this country. Most people in Spain mainly follow information on their local channel*”. In that sense the Campaign’s approach to target not only national but local and regional media seems to be a right strategy to be continued. An in-depth analysis of reports also shows a reasonable geographical distribution of impact across the country.

**The context for media work:**

A fair analysis of the Campaign’s impact on the media should be made in the light of the conclusions of a recent study commissioned by the Spanish platform of development NGOs (CONGDE)<sup>28</sup>. A survey conducted among 73 Spanish journalists concluded that attracting media interest around poverty and development issues in Spain is a difficult task. Results concluded that the fight against poverty only ranks 6th in the list of the priority social themes for Spanish media. Poverty attracts 42% of media attention. This falls behind other issues such as: humanitarian emergencies (82%), human rights (56%), women issues (53%), and children and environmental issues (48% each). Radio seems to be the channel more receptive to poverty issues when compared to TV or print media.

<sup>28</sup> “Los medios de comunicación y las ONGD. Situación actual y retos”. Coordinadora de ONG para el Desarrollo – España, 2007.

Furthermore, this and other studies<sup>29</sup> suggest that generally, the capacity of some of the Campaign's partners, in particular CSOs, to communicate development issues effectively is probably falling short and lacks specific expertise. In the light of the above, the strategic decision of the Spanish Campaign to conduct a big part of its media intervention through its civil society partners has strengthened their communication capacity and this was appreciated by many. However, the complexities of Goal 8 issues and the low level of interest of the media on development issues make it a difficult challenge for a small campaign to attain a high degree of visibility.

### **Conclusions:**

The media work by the Campaign and partners has produced a reasonable level of visibility of MDGs in Spain, but there is still room to grow. Systematic monitoring should be highly encouraged to provide useful insights in this regard.

The SMC has already identified the need to spread media attention to the Campaign issues more evenly across different events and activities throughout the year, and is developing a strategy for that. Media needs to become, as much as possible, a strategic partner that opens up debates and secures attention and visibility for the issues. This is an ongoing objective of the Spanish Campaign's strategy where there is room for improvement. Efforts in this regard must be acknowledged but are still highly encouraged. Most media partners interviewed acknowledged that the Campaign's relationships with the media are improving and maintained on a more regular basis. New partnerships with the local media are encouraged. However this may require a disproportionate effort for a small campaign, with only one person dedicated to Communications. A way to explore could be to do it through existing associations or federations of local and regional media.

### **PARTNERSHIPS**

According to the strategy, local partners must be the real owners of the action inspired or promoted by the Millennium Campaign. In Spain, as in the rest of Europe, they have been crucial for both raising MDGs awareness and fostering policy change. The Spanish Campaign has partnered with a broad range of constituencies including CSOs, their primary stakeholders at the onset to youth or faith-based organizations, parliamentarians and local governments.

### **CSO partnerships and alliances:**

*"The Campaign's strategy to engage with a variety of partners contributes to a sense of unity and coherence with the general public that benefits the final goal: the fight against poverty"(CSO respondent)*

The Campaign's partnerships with civil society organizations in Spain have revolved around *Rebélate* and many other advocacy and public awareness activities. Support has mostly been provided in the form of materials, information or training. No financial support has been reported, apart from sponsoring *Rebélate*. The Campaign staff states that because of the high level of political will of the Spanish administrations the resources are normally available. In this case, it is the Campaign's support to partners' capacity to raise funds from regional or central governments which has been instrumental, and is a practice worthy of praise.

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<sup>29</sup> See also "How reporters see the Aid world". A Development Policy Forum Background Report by Jonathan Clayton(2008) or "La comunicación: herramienta estratégica en la misión de las ONGDs" by Hildegart González Luis, Universidad de Navarra (2006)

#### **Building civil society alliances:**

The SMC partnership strategy has been particularly effective in promoting social alliances and thereby strengthening Spanish civil society. Two especially relevant achievements are worth mentioning:

- The SMC played a key role in the launch of the CONGDE-led “Pobreza Cero” campaign in 2005.
- The same year the SMC also played a key role in the constitution of the Alianza contra la Pobreza coalition.

According to CONGDE about 50 so-called *Pobreza Cero* coalitions have been spontaneously reproduced at the regional and the local level in the last three years, most of them following the *Alianza contra la Pobreza* model.

The Spanish campaign has experienced the common difficulties in building and maintaining these alliances. For example, a debate about the scope and the future of the *Alianza* emerged during this evaluation. Whereas some believed that the *Alianza* is “*the true social space to fight poverty*”, others believed that its mandate was limited to the October mobilizations. But this is no surprise considering that the coalition is built by atypical partners, many of them significantly politically distant. It was however widely agreed that the *Alianza* has become a solid platform where trade unions, faith-based groups, development or environmental NGOs and youth associations among many others, can come together to fight poverty. The campaign’s role in the whole process was unanimously acknowledged by its members and it can be considered a positive and lasting contribution by the SMC.

Outside of the *Alianza* the Campaign maintains regular contact and relationships with many other civil society organizations at both national and regional level. These include NGOs and platforms such as *Educación Sin Fronteras*, *Alianza por el Agua* and *Ubuntu* among many others. Youth organizations are considered by the Campaign key partners with significant potential to increase awareness and mobilize their members. So far the main youth partners have been the federation of Scouts, *ASDE*. Other organizations such as the Red Cross or the Youth Council are also relevant partners.

Special attention has also been paid to faith-based groups and organizations. The partnerships with *Manos Unidas* and the *CONFER*, the Spanish Confederation of members of religious orders, were particularly significant both in terms of outreach and engagement in the distribution of MDG materials and information and encouraged their active involvement in other social initiatives and coalitions such as the *Alianza*. Occasional partnerships have also been reported with catholic and evangelical organizations such as *Cáritas*, *FEREDE* or *Justicia y Paz*. Preliminary contacts with Muslim groups have also been established.

Partnerships with UN bodies have also been developed with some significant political results as will be described below. The UN as such has little presence in Spain but there are a handful of civil society organizations with a special link to the UN<sup>30</sup> that have partnered with the Campaign on a more or less regular basis.

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<sup>30</sup> UNESCO, UNICEF committees; ACNUR, ANUE. They are all NGOs with a particular relation with UN Agencies. UNESCO etxea and Unescocat are considered particularly relevant partners by the Campaign.

### **Partnerships with local authorities and parliamentarians**

Although from the onset the Campaign has been working with local authorities<sup>31</sup> and parliamentarians, recently the Campaign has openly moved to strategically reinforce these partnerships. This move has been welcomed by all stakeholders interviewed.

Both constituencies are instrumental to consolidate and scale up policy impacts. Regular meetings and information exchange between the Campaign and members of parliament take place in the context of the Parliamentary Development Cooperation Commission. At a sub-state level, the MC is also starting to engage regional parliaments more actively, with some initiatives already in place and gaining strength.

The partnership with local authorities requires a multiplicity of approaches. The Campaign is clear that local governments have strong potential to be an ally in awareness-raising, but they are also key actors in the growing field of decentralized cooperation and should therefore also be addressed as an advocacy target. Finally, local governments can also be instrumental advocates for the MDGs to the central government. The relationship with this constituency has recently been institutionalized with the signing of a 2008 framework agreement with the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP), articulating the Campaign's partnership with local authorities in a more strategic manner. The real impact and achievements that this partnership brings in terms of both awareness and policy impact will therefore have to be further evaluated in the future. They can however be claimed as strategic partners of the Spanish Campaign and were recognized as such by all other partners interviewed.

#### **The complexity of partnerships:**

Civil society partners unanimously recognize that having a UN Millennium Campaign in Spain:

*“adds legitimacy to some of our initiatives”, and*

*“helps others to engage; perceiving that somehow the UN is backing us makes us more credible”*

A clear example was given from the Basque country where, in an initiative promoted by UNESCO-etxea, the autonomous regional government decided to earmark 5% of tax on excess water consumption to MDG 7. As an informant from the organization put it, the support of the SMC for the initiative seriously helped them to gain credibility with the government and other civil society organizations, leading to the successful conclusion.

That said, concerns were raised by many interviewees about the difficult issue of legitimacy. As the Campaign team admitted during our discussions, ambiguity about the Campaign's identity was initially considered a strategic asset, enabling them to approach and engage a variety of stakeholders with diverse backgrounds. Many partners during this evaluation agreed that although a UN entity, the Campaign is widely perceived as another social actor around the MDGs agenda. Furthermore, a substantial number of partners believed that too often the Campaign tends to impose its own agenda, somehow contradicting their stated mandate to support citizens' initiatives around the MDGs<sup>32</sup>.

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<sup>31</sup> 2007 was a year of local elections in Spain. A fact that surely did slow down the dynamics of the relationship between the Spanish Federation of local authorities and the Campaign for a while.

<sup>32</sup> More than 60% of European partners responding to our survey believed that the MC tends to impose its own agenda. This figure almost doubles the results in the global analyses where 34% of partners believed so.

*“Dialogue with the Campaign usually becomes negotiation. They act just like any other actor”*

The Campaign was therefore perceived by a critical number of civil society partners as a competitor for both political space and financial resources. However, it should be pointed out that the Campaign receives multilateral funding and is not in direct competition with CSOs for economic resources.

### **Conclusions:**

On the one hand we may conclude that the Spanish Campaign has been able to progressively incorporate a sufficient network of partners to fulfill their mandate. Not only has the Campaign succeeded in engaging new constituencies but it has also played a widely appreciated facilitation role allowing the constitution and consolidation of strong alliances.

However, while the Campaign has gained a high level of respect amongst its partners, the potential for conflict exists and requires extreme tact and careful negotiation. In particular extreme caution is recommended as regards direct political action where the Campaign is perceived to have no legitimacy on its own.

Campaign partners stated that one area that they had hoped to benefit from engagement with the Campaign was in terms of their relationships with, and influence in, the wider UN system. However, the Campaign does not seem to have fully met its partners' expectations in this regard. This was a recurrent issue among local and regional government interviewees in particular. While this may in fact be due to a level of confusion or misinterpretation of the mandate of the Campaign, it is an important learning for establishing sustainable and mutually reinforcing partnerships.

As described in the global report, the use of the term partnership by the Campaign encompasses almost any form of interaction with external actors. Actually, apart from a set of key partners, the annual reports and the partnership map suggest that the bulk of partners are mostly “occasional”. We asked stakeholders to define the degree of satisfaction regarding their relationship with the Campaign. Answers unanimously showed a reasonably high level of satisfaction. However, most interviewees conveyed that they would be happy to scale up the level of collaboration. This shows a high recognition of the work of the Campaign by partners but it does also suggest the need to invest an extra effort on consolidating working relations before embarking in new partnerships.

### **POLICY CHANGE**

Spain endorsed the Millennium declaration and accepted the commitments behind it. The evaluation looked at how Spain has performed over the past five years in terms of progress towards Goal 8 and beyond, and sought to assess the role of the Campaign in this progress. However, this was a particularly complex task because of the existing strength of formal political commitment, and strong civil society action, around Goal 8 issues in the country before the launch of the Spanish Millennium Campaign. For example, both of the main political parties included references to MDGs and to the 0.7% target in their electoral program in 2004, and the Spanish 0.7% campaign had already been active for over 20 years.

Without exception, all people interviewed acknowledged the government's efforts and commitment. The general feeling was that the government had “passed the test” so far, especially regarding aid quantity and quality although many CSOs interviewees believed that policies still lacked coherence. Improvements in the implementation of policies has progressively made the SMC's advocacy action more subtle and to some extent less visible than its public awareness activities.



### Partnerships for policy change:

Civil society partners, and to a lesser extent the *Alianza contra la Pobreza* coalition, have proved to be critical partners in the Campaign's policy advocacy work. More recently local governments and parliamentarians are being approached by the Campaign as strategic allies for the consolidation of its achievements so far, and to scale up political support for the MDGs in the country.

#### Political achievements:

- The 2007 multiparty **National Agreement against Poverty**, where all political parties represented in the Spanish Parliament committed to make the fight against poverty, and MDG 8 issues, a high priority of the political agenda. The initiative led by the CONGDE has irregularly but sustainably been adapted in the regional and local arena. The MC played a behind-the-scenes role in this initiative, providing support and motivation.
- Renewed commitment of the Spanish Government to reach the **0.7% target by 2012**. The Spanish government has been consistently increasing ODA from 0.24% in 2004 when it took office to 0.5% in 2009<sup>1</sup>. Most importantly, the Spanish government has been reaffirming its commitment to continue augmenting this percentage notwithstanding the current economic crisis<sup>1</sup>.
- The Spanish **Development Cooperation Master Plan 2009-2012** refers to the MDGs and the Paris Declaration as the framework for Spanish overseas development assistance. Many SMC key partners and the SMC itself participated in the drafting process.
- References to MDGs and the 0.7% target in the 2008 general **election manifestos** of the main political parties.
- Local initiatives such as the Basque government's 2008 decision to earmark 5% of water taxes to activities concerning MDG 7. As previously mentioned, the SMC played a key role in this initiative
- Recent announcement by the secretary of state that a 'conference of regions' (a common political structure on key issues) will be established for development cooperation. Spanish autonomous regions have a development cooperation mandate, delivering around 15% to 20% of total Spanish overseas aid. This will be an opportunity for regional governments to take on a stronger advocacy role.

The Campaign's partnership with local government has previously been articulated more around public awareness-raising than policy advocacy, but the Campaign is moving to successfully engage local authorities in a more political collaboration. For example, the Federation of Local Governments (FEMP) reported to the evaluators that they had delivered a petition to the Secretary of State for European Affairs demanding that MDG issues should be brought into the Spanish 2010 EU presidency agenda, and they associated it to their collaboration with the SMC.

However, perhaps because of the strong policy context for MDG issues, the question of the legitimacy of the Millennium Campaign as an advocacy actor arose during our interviews with government and civil society partners. In particular there was concern about the SMC's involvement in direct advocacy action in Spain, outside the *Alianza contra la Pobreza* framework or other partnerships.

*"In Spain the Campaign should focus on education and public awareness. There is little room for mobilization or advocacy. There has been a distortion of the added value of the Campaign in Spain because it overlaps with already existing structures that share the same goals"*

The Campaign strongly feels that its main role is to strengthen civil society organizations by supporting their initiatives around MDGs and Goal 8 issues. However, interviews revealed that a high number of partners perceive the Campaign as another actor with its own interests, supported by the European survey finding that 62% of respondents consider that the MC tends to impose its own agenda. The Campaign may want to revise its strategy for supporting CSO advocacy initiatives, or communicating this support, in light of these findings.

**Priority issues for policy advocacy:**

Goal 8 embraces a varied set of issues, including trade, aid and debt. Over the last three years, the European Campaigns have focused on influencing policy on aid quantity and quality, and are now beginning to tackle trade issues.

**Examples of advocacy activities:**

- At regional level the campaign has produced and launched a range of advocacy tools and materials, including brochures, toolkits and policy papers, many of which have been translated and adapted to fit the Spanish context.
- Spanish campaign initiatives have included the organization of political debates like *“Tengo una pregunta sobre la pobreza para usted” (I have a question about poverty for you)*, recently held for the second time with *Alianza contra la Pobreza* partners. The initiative convenes political leaders from all parties represented in Parliament, and CSOs put a set of questions on aid to them. This helps to promote public debate and dialogue between political leaders and civil society on goal 8 issues.

Whereas most interviewed agreed that the Campaign has contributed to advance progress on aid policies some concerns were raised about the recent Campaign’s decision to push reform of the Common Agricultural Policy<sup>33</sup> onto the advocacy agenda within the economic crisis context. In the light of this it would be advisable to seek a broader consensus among Spanish partners around this issue.

**Conclusion:**

The contribution of the Campaign to political achievements around the MDGs, and MDG 8 in particular, was recognized by interviewees. It was widely acknowledged that the presence of the Campaign in the Spanish political scenario added credibility and impulse to social movements advocating for Goal 8 issues in the country. In the last 5 years important achievements have taken place in Spanish development policies with substantial increases in the volume of aid and significant improvements in its quality. On the other hand, in the present Spanish context, there is a high level of internalization of the MDGs discourse by political actors and civil society, and a reasonable level of implementation by the government. This “success” paradoxically raises doubts about how the Millennium Campaign fits into this picture, and what advocacy role, if any, is left in the future.

However, they may not have reached the “finishing line” yet. Most of the SMC work has been done under a particular government. Although experiences such as the multiparty National Agreement against Poverty send encouraging signals for sustainability of the efforts in the future, economic or political upheavals can easily reverse advances. This clearly suggests the need to keep working to secure strong public opinion that sustains these policy changes in the future whatever the government’s political colors or circumstances. This has already been

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<sup>33</sup> The Common Agricultural Policy is a system of European Union agricultural subsidies and programs

acknowledged by the SMC but requires the reconsideration of strategies and objectives in the next phase.

The analysis of the documentation reviewed and our talks with a wide range of stakeholders allows us, reconfirms three possible roles for the Campaign in the future.

Securing strong public awareness of political activities and commitments relating to the MDGs seems key to people interviewed. “When you have a high degree of commitment of government and a real ownership by civil society actors the role of the Campaign should be different. While Spanish society’s support is wide enough regarding development cooperation issues, the real level of understanding is still low. The Campaign would be best positioned to cover that gap”.

Continuing to act as a “watchdog” for the MDGs agenda and progress. Although political achievements are there, there is always the risk that other political or economic issues push them back.

Advocacy is relatively new to Spanish civil society and respondents agreed that there is not much experience in social campaigning or lobbying. The Campaign’s strategy of bringing in new politically relevant constituencies to advocate for Goal 8, such as local and regional governments, parliamentarians and political parties, was appreciated by most. Complementing civil society partner’s capacities is highly recommended to continue in the future.

## CONCLUSIONS

The time limitations of this report make it difficult to make thorough conclusions for all four Campaigns in Europe. We will therefore draw mostly on the Spanish Campaign but also on the information available to the evaluation team for the other three national Campaigns to suggest common conclusions and identified areas of improvement. With this caution, there is however room to affirm that in general terms the European Campaigns have satisfactorily met the challenges they have taken on.

### **Partnerships:**

The Campaign has been able to successfully bring on board a range of partners beyond the “usual suspects”. All four European Campaigns have engaged an impressive network of constituencies in campaigning and advocating for the MDGs and have succeeded in complementing their partners’ capacity. About 80% of partners responding to our survey agreed that the Campaign was helpful in strengthening the capacity of citizens’ organizations. That view was reinforced by most CSOs partners interviewed in-depth. On the other hand working relationships with many partners needs further consolidation and could be strengthened by a more strategic and focused approach that better serves the final political goals of the Campaign

### **Public awareness:**

There is evidence to show that public awareness has increased in all four countries since the arrival of the MC and grounds to believe that a significant part of those increases can be traced back to the Campaign’s work. The average level of awareness of the MDGs in Europe is still low, but credit is due considering that the Campaign was not designed or resourced to be a global awareness campaign. However, a stronger strategic effort to segment target audiences that serve more precisely defined policy objectives is crucial at this point of time.

### **Policy change:**

Policy change is difficult to measure and almost impossible to attribute. Political processes are complex and many actors are involved. On the other hand the European Campaign’s definition of political indicators and expected outcomes, although improving, has so far been too vague to reach sound conclusions. However, there seem to be plenty of reasons to believe that, in general, the European Campaigns have positively contributed to the mainstreaming of the MDGs in national political discourse, though its influence on translating discourses into practice is generally weaker and uneven.

### **Strategic approach:**

A dilemma between the public awareness and the policy focus was raised time and again during interviews with MC staff. We asked most of them their opinion on what was the most effective means to fulfil their mandate and got mixed answers. Whereas some were clear that the Campaign should focus primarily on raising citizens’ awareness and strengthening the base of social support, others strongly believed that it is time for policy action. The tension is also reflected in the differing views of partners interviewed about the potential and actual role of the Campaign, although most saw the MC with a stronger communication focus. The discussion suggests certain disconnect between these two areas of work that may benefit from a stronger strategic focus.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE<sup>34</sup>:

- Goal 8 issues are particularly varied and vague in terms of indicators and deadlines. To some extent the Campaign's work has contributed to a further definition of the commitments behind it, but a stronger policy strategy may still be needed. As with public awareness a narrower definition of the Campaign's own goals, expected outcomes and indicators of policy change is recommended. This will facilitate measures in the future as well as early and ongoing modifications. Operational plans detail activities, outputs and messages. However outcomes are mostly still vague and difficult to measure. A further reflection on realistic targets and expected outcomes is therefore encouraged.
- During this evaluation many believed that the Campaign should increase its political visibility at regional level, without losing the national focus. Strengthening synergies and existing partnerships with regional development advocacy platforms and multilateral organizations are therefore encouraged. Opportunities such as the 2010 Spanish presidency of the EU should be prioritised.
- Raising public awareness is a lengthy and difficult process. But creating public opinion and a base of social support is instrumental to the policy objectives of the Millennium Campaign, generally. In some cases, as is the case in Spain, strong public opinion that supports political achievements becomes crucial. The European Campaigns have accumulated rich experience of creative partnerships and a solid platform for its communication action. In the light of the policy objectives and priorities, a finer segmentation and definition of strategic target audiences on a case-by-case basis is strongly recommended. This exercise will then help to identify the most effective partners to reach those audiences.
- The European Campaigns have done a good job in engaging many advocates for the MDGs. Partners are crucial for both legitimacy of action and sustainability of the Campaign's mandate in the future. However, in order to maximize efforts some of these partnerships need to be further consolidated before going into new joint ventures.
- Strategic partnering with the media should be continued, in a more substantial manner. Big media houses are sometimes difficult to reach and to engage. Identification of local media partners can be an alternative, and associations of local radio and television channels could be interesting to partner with. As globally, we recommend that media monitoring and tracking is strengthened.
- The 2009 operational plan foresees engaging celebrities as a tool to scale up visibility and outreach. Engagement of key local and national communicators and opinion makers is also strongly recommended at this point. In Spain the new Board of Friends initiative can be a good starting point that is encouraged to continue and grow.
- Greater investment on online tools and strategies is recommended. The internet offers huge opportunities to reach young people in a more participatory manner but it requires specific expertise in the online environment that should be taken into consideration. We refer to the global report for further recommendations in this area.

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<sup>34</sup> These recommendations are mostly drawn upon the only case study for Europe: Spain. They might not be generally applicable and do not intend to be so. However we have tried to take into consideration general findings that may be of use to other campaigns in the region.

## ANNEX 1: HISTORY OF THE SPANISH MILLENNIUM CAMPAIGN

After Italy, the Spanish Campaign was next in the European strategy. Conversations between the Millennium Campaign and the Spanish authorities started in November 2003, and resulted in the recruitment of a national coordinator in January 2004.

### 2004: New beginnings

2004 was a year marked by the tragic March 11<sup>th</sup> bombing in Madrid and the arrival of a new government. Massive public protest preceded the general elections, mobilizing millions of citizens against the official support to the war in Iraq.

In general, Spanish performance on Goal 8 had been relatively poor. In November 2003, Spanish aid amounted to 0.23% of GNP and it was in decline, from 0.30% in 2001. The appointment of members of civil society organizations as senior advisors to the new administration provided a new environment of opportunity for discourse and mainstreaming of MDGs<sup>35</sup> into national politics, which would contribute to a higher level of commitment by the new government.

Throughout the year the MC coordinator established preliminary contacts with a variety of Spanish social actors. In particular a lot of work was devoted to building a strategic alliance with CONGDE, the umbrella organization of Spanish development NGOs.

MDGs started to settle into the Spanish scenario. In June 2004 the Catalan Parliament approved an institutional declaration of support for the MDGs. The first display of the MDG arches, a visual exhibition by the Millennium Campaign to convey the MDG message, took place during Barcelona Forum in September 2004. The exhibition has travelled to many more Spanish cities since.

### 2005: A year to campaign

With the many 2005 global campaign hooks in sight, the Spanish Campaign invested its efforts in building a strong constituency of support for the MDGs, primarily among civil society organizations. Contact was also made with sub-national governments and regional parliaments, and a Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Catalan Government in December 2005.

In February 2005, a CONGDE led campaign against poverty (*Pobreza Cero* campaign) was launched as part of GCAP, with the backing of the MC. Public support came from prominent Spanish figures such as former UNESCO Director General, Federico Mayor Zaragoza<sup>36</sup>, among many others.

Immediately after, the “*Alianza contra la Pobreza*” coalition was launched under the leadership of *Pobreza Cero* and the Millennium Campaign. This new alliance brought together more than 1000 organizations from civil society, including social networks, Trade Unions, youth organizations and faith-based groups.

The coalition was built around 20 policy demands covering aid, trade and debt issues<sup>37</sup>. Those were presented to President Rodríguez Zapatero on July 2005 after more than 50,000 people marched in Madrid under the Slogan “*Pobreza Cero. Sin excusas*” (Zero Poverty. No

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<sup>35</sup> First parliamentary speech by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation. Diario de Sesiones del Congreso de los Diputados, nº 24. May 19th, 2005

<sup>36</sup> Press release CONGDE, 24/02/05

<sup>37</sup> [http://www.pobrezacero.org/docs/20\\_medidas\\_para\\_luchar\\_contra\\_la\\_pobreza.pdf](http://www.pobrezacero.org/docs/20_medidas_para_luchar_contra_la_pobreza.pdf)

Excuses), demanding the government honor its commitments to the achievement of MDGs. Related mobilizations were reported in more than 20 Spanish cities<sup>38</sup>.

Other mobilizations that year, like the Rally against Hunger in May, the White March in Barcelona in September, and the rally against poverty in Bilbao in December articulated a growing social movement against poverty in the country.

### **2006: Moving on**

2006 was a year for the Spanish Campaign to consolidate and explore new partnerships and relationships. Local and regional governments, trade unions, media and youth organizations were approached and a number of agreements and Memoranda of Understanding were made.

Institutional relationships with the Spanish government were formalized with the signing of a Declaration of Intent between the Spanish Secretary of State and Eveline Herfkens from the MC. In this the Spanish Government declared cooperation with the Millennium Campaign a high priority and guaranteed the necessary financial contributions.

A significant milestone that year was the opening of a regional office for the Spanish Millennium Campaign at the UCLG Headquarters in Barcelona. Funded by the Catalan government, this unique regional office was to serve as a focal point to engage local and regional governments in campaigning for MDGs globally. A regional coordinator was recruited in February, followed by the recruitment of a communications coordinator in Madrid in June.

However, a significant event later that year had consequences for the dynamics and work of the Spanish Campaign. During the preparations for the first *Stand Up* mobilization in October that year, a viral campaign was launched. This was an individual action by the Spanish coordinator, provoking some confusion and misunderstanding between the Campaign and both the Spanish Government and some civil society organizations. The video showed two men breaking into the Parliament building to steal the chair of Prime Minister Zapatero, who would then have to stand up against poverty the next time he went to Parliament. The spot provoked some confusion<sup>39</sup> about the authors and immediate reaction by government officials and the CONGDE who issued a statement pointing out that they had no connection with the initiative. However, the episode was soon overcome and the differences cleared up with the government, especially after the political intervention of Eveline Herfkens.

2006 closed with an important milestone and a positive sign of commitment by the Spanish government. On the 18<sup>th</sup> of December 2006, a landmark agreement was signed between the Spanish Secretary of State for Development and the UNDP Administrator, programming 528 million Euros through the UN system for key Millennium Development Goals and related development goals in selected sectors and countries.

### **2007: A year to grow**

A process of recruitment of a new coordinator took place in the first quarter of the year, and the new coordinator joined in July. During the interim period the Spanish Campaign was coordinated from New York.

The main consequence of the video episode was that the Campaign prioritized the rebuilding of relationships and alliances with key Civil Society Organizations, and engagement of new

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<sup>38</sup> [http://www.pobrezacero.org/noticia\\_detalle.php?boletin=36](http://www.pobrezacero.org/noticia_detalle.php?boletin=36)

<sup>39</sup> [http://www.elpais.com/articulo/espana/Amo/Laura/Levantate/ZP/elpepuesp/20061002elpepunac\\_4/Tes](http://www.elpais.com/articulo/espana/Amo/Laura/Levantate/ZP/elpepuesp/20061002elpepunac_4/Tes)

stakeholders. To this end, the Campaign team deliberately opted to keep a low profile and visibility while concentrating on this work. Important partnerships such as with Grey and Media Com were established.

Several awareness-raising initiatives such as the T8! Workshops with La Caixa and the MDGs Education Guide developed jointly with Cruz Roja, were promoted. Many others were supported and described in the Campaigns annual reports for that and the following year.

The year ended with two important policy milestones: the signature of the Joint Midpoint Alicante Declaration on Aid Effectiveness by the Italian, Spanish and Portuguese governments and consequent 07/07/07 mobilizations; and the signature of the “National Multiparty Agreement against Poverty” promoted by the CONGDE by all political parties represented in the Spanish Parliament.

### **From 2008 to date**

The Spanish Campaign has held national retreats since late 2007 to allow them to make an internal evaluation of the work done, and decide on future strategies. As operational plans demonstrate, the consolidation of the team has allowed a better definition of priorities and planning of activities in the last two years.

The 2008 annual report provides a full list of activities and policy impacts by the MC in Spain, too lengthy to share here. Some relevant examples are:

- the Campaign presence in Expo Zaragoza;
- the publication of the Aid effectiveness brochure and its distribution among MPs, policy makers and others; and
- the collaboration agreement with the Spanish Federation of Local Authorities (FEMP) to reinforce the role of Spanish Local Governments in the promotion of the MDGs.

General elections took place in March 2009. The main political parties made reference to the MDGs in their electoral programs. During his speech for taking office, José Luis Rodríguez Zapatero reaffirmed his commitment to progressively increase overseas development resources until reaching the 0.7% target by 2012 and framed it within the MDGs discourse. On the Parliament front the parliamentary committee for development cooperation within the Congress of Deputies was upgraded to assume a legislative mandate. A brand new development cooperation parliamentary committee at the Senate was also constituted.

The operational plan for 2009 identifies new targets and challenges, including reaching new constituencies from the private sector and strengthening relationships with the media. Three main objectives are defined:

1. To continue increasing the ODA volumes;
2. To implement the Accra agenda, specifically in terms of aid harmonization and division of labor with EU countries; and
3. To bring trade into the policy coherence debate.

The major concern now is the economic crisis and this is the pivotal idea around which the Campaign is designing its strategy. 2009 is considered by the Spanish Campaign to be a crucial year for two main targets: keeping Goal 8 issues on the agenda while consolidating the social base of support, and preparing for the Spanish presidency of the EU in 2010.



## ACRONYMS

ASDE	Federación de Asociaciones de Scouts de España
CALRE	Conference of European Regional Legislative Assemblies
CEMR	Council of European Municipalities and Regions
CIS	Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas
CONFER	Conferencia Española de Religiosos
CONGDE	Coordinadora de ONG para el Desarrollo España
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
EC	European Commission
EU	European Union
FBOs	Faith-based organizations
FEMP	Federación Española de Municipios y Provincias
FEREDE	Federación de Entidades Religiosas Evangélicas de España
GCAP	Global Call to Action against Poverty
MC	Millennium Campaign
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
SMC	Spanish Millennium Campaign
UCLG	United Cities and Local Governments