



UN Millennium Campaign

EXTERNAL EVALUATION 2009

Annex 1: UN Millennium Campaign History

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To understand the history of the UN Millennium Campaign it is essential to also have a look at the history of the Millennium Development Goals.

During the early **1990s** a series of UN World Summits set the agenda for the issues that eventually formed the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). At the end of this period, conference fatigue quickly set in while development aid (ODA) from the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) countries was steadily declining.

In **1995**, the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) set up the *Groupe de reflexion*. Over the next few years the group built a more coherent list of goals from the previous world summits, which resulted in the 1996 document 'Shaping the 21st Century'. This document contained 7 goals called the International Development Goals (IDGs). These were received with mixed reactions by different stakeholders, though they were adopted by various multilateral actors with OECD ownership.

In **1999**, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan laid out a four themed framework for the Millennium Summit: peace and security, development and poverty eradication, human rights and strengthening of the UN¹.

In the build-up to the Millennium Summit, considerable effort went into drawing up a list of development goals that reflected consensus from prior commitments. These goals were politically viable and they were prioritized. However, the IDGs and MDGs (to come) continued to follow two separate political tracks, with various multilateral actors aiming to harmonize them².

In April **2000**, a document by Kofi Annan titled 'We the people: the Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century' was distributed to set the agenda for the Millennium Summit, which took place in September at the UN HQ in New York and resulted in the Millennium Declaration.

In September, the Millennium Declaration came out of the largest-ever gathering of world leaders, which began on 6 September in New York, the Millennium Summit. The Declaration contained a statement of values, principles and objectives for the international agenda for the twenty-first century. It also set deadlines for many collective actions.

In October 2000, the launch of 'A Better World for All' at Geneva marked a new stage in the development of closer bonds between the UN, the OECD and the international financial institutions; the World Bank and the IMF. It received both praise and criticism. CSOs were encouraged that the International Development Goals were receiving some much-needed renewed impetus, but very loud voices from International NGOs also pointed out that it all had a faintly hollow ring.

In April **2001**, the Forum Consensus to Action, a Seminar on the IDGs, produced a consensus on merging the IDGs and MDGs. UNDP played a key role in diplomatically engaging multilateral stakeholders in the Forum Consensus to Action and achieving consensus.³

¹ Hulme, D., *Global Public Policy and the Millennium Development Goals: A Short History of the World's Biggest Promise*. Brooks World Poverty Institute Working Paper, 2008.

² IBID

³ IBID

The momentum achieved by the Millennium Declaration was reinforced in March **2002** during the International Conference on Financing for Development in Monterrey, Mexico. Here they established the global framework for development partnership, and the developed and developing countries agreed to take joint actions to reduce poverty.

MDGs were born with some concerns and limitations both about the process and the contents. The UN Millennium Campaign would acknowledge that *‘they do not capture other commitments in the Millennium Declaration on Governance, Transparency, Participation and Human Rights. These are not easy to measure, but they are essential for the achievement of the Goals. Furthermore, while the first 7 Goals reflect international consensus derived from earlier UN conferences, the content of Goal 8 involved rich countries commitments. This was only discussed and agreed internationally in the years after the Millennium Summit, in other forums such as in the Monterrey Consensus and the Paris Declaration’*⁴

Emerging voices from civil society started arguing that the goals had a persistent top down approach that would reduce local actors’ ownership and participation. The MDGs were believed to be owned by leaders and very particularly by the UN. However, the MDGs also had the potential to be an excellent framework for citizen mobilization.

Powerful global civil society movements emerged at the end of the 1990s and at the beginning of 2000, in the pre 9/11 world. Although driven mainly from the North, they represented a diverse plethora of agendas. The Jubilee 2000 campaign raised considerable public pressure to drop debts of heavily indebted nations by the year 2000. The Anti-Globalization Movement targeted multilateral institutions and meetings and large-scale demonstrations took place. Examples include the WTO meetings in Seattle/ Washington in 1999, the WB meetings in Prague in 2000 and the G8 summit in 2001 in Genoa.

In 2002 UNDP established the Millennium Trust Fund to support the implementation of the UN strategy for achieving the MDGs. The programme had three core elements: (1) Research and analysis; (2) Monitoring of Progress towards the MDGs and (3) Campaigning. The three pillars were intended to be complementary activities, although this collaboration never fully crystallized. In the document called “The UN and the MDGs: A core strategy”, there is a fourth element stated “operational activities”.

2003

The MC was formally launched by the UNSG on October 1st, 2002, with the appointment of former Dutch Development Minister Eveline Herfkens as the Executive Coordinator. UNdesigned the MC as a “small unit” that would facilitate the global campaign; it was operationalized as a UN interagency initiative that operated at arm-lengths from regular UN bodies. The establishment document of the Millennium Trust Fund laid out the basis for the Campaign’s ambiguous identity, that would later become both a strength and a weakness.

In early 2003, a well respected figure within the progressive social movement in Italy was recruited who now serves as the Deputy Director in charge of Europe.

The first phase of the UN Millennium Campaign’s work targeted countries in the North, especially those where developmental education was not traditionally a priority and were likely to underperform in Goal 8. It was a conscious strategic decision to put the emphasis on Goal 8, the only goal concretely referring to promises made by Northern Governments in issues such as debt relief, quantity and quality of ODA and trade.

⁴ MC Milan retreat, 2007

The MC's first priority country was Italy, far behind the EU average in ODA, both on quantity and quality and in general development awareness. A MC delegation went on mission to Italy; there, they successfully partnered with the peace movement which invited them to participate in the September Peace March, an event that mobilizes hundreds of thousands each year. The MC took the opportunity to build the 'arches'; a simple and efficient visual solution to convey the MDG message that was later to travel around major European cities. At the end of the year the Italian Campaign was officially launched and conversations had already started with potential Spanish partners to go there next.

At the same time the MC took this year to build partnerships with civil society organizations both in the South and in the North using forums such as the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre. A special focus was given to established international networks: Third World Network, Social Watch, Civicus, Oxfam, etc.

In October Salil Shetty, a recognized civil society leader, was appointed as Director of the campaign. In December 2003, a meeting held in Maputo (Mozambique), brought together activists from Africa, Asia and Latin America to discuss how to move ahead with the MDGs. The meeting was conceived by the Millennium Campaign and co-convened with Mwengo and with CIVICUS. The focus was to create an Africa and southern-led global MDG/anti-poverty movement. In order to support the national campaigns, what was launched were regional nodal support organizations i.e. Ancefa for West Africa, Awepon for East Africa and Mwengo for Southern Africa. It was here where the idea of a Global Call to Action against Poverty was first aired.

As early as 2003 Erna Witoelar was appointed Special Ambassador to the MDGs for Asia and the Pacific. She stayed in this position until 2007.

2004

The arrival of Shetty to the Millennium Campaign put a stronger emphasis on the campaigns in the South.

It was agreed that pressure needed to be placed on rich countries, to increase their willingness to comply with Goal 8 promises. However, it was also agreed that there was no developing country government which could not perform significantly better in improving the lives of the poor in their own countries from their own domestic resources and better use of external resources that they were already receiving.

It was felt that the necessary political will, both in the South and in the North, would not be achieved if externally imposed by foreign agendas and campaigns. MC staff decided to focus their efforts at the national level, believing that national campaigns had to be led by the people from the countries, which was an important premise of the campaign from the very outset.

This year the Spanish Campaign was officially launched. The first US Coordinator was recruited with co-funding from the Better World Fund/UN Foundation. The first Africa Coordinator was appointed in November working out of the AACC offices in Nairobi, a well-known gender activist from a church-linked organisation. Also, the Millennium Campaign's first global website was launched.

On the international front, the December 2003 Maputo meeting was followed by similar meetings in Bangkok, in February 2004, and in Quito in April 2004. A regional meeting for the Arab region was held in May 2004. ActionAid Asia was nominated to act as the regional

node, similarly Social Watch for Latin America and ANND for the Arab region. The first meetings were succeeded by over 20 national consultations with CSOs in Africa, Asia and Latin America. At the same, the Millennium Campaign started emerging as a key player, holding discussions and consultations with major CSOs and networks.

A major meeting with CSOs and platforms was jointly organized by Oxfam GB and the Millennium Campaign, in Reading, UK, in April 2004, a precursor to the campaign “Make Poverty History”. It brought together campaigners from many European and Northern CSOs and networks, leading to a meeting co-hosted by Mwengo, Oxfam, UN Millennium Campaign and Civicus in Johannesburg in September where GCAP was officially born.

One global process worth mentioning is the meeting that the MC co-convened with UNIFEM in 2004, inviting key women’s organisations like Awid, Dawn, Swea, etc to think through the links between the MDGs, and previous commitments in Beijing and Cairo. This led to the publication of an important document on this issue and it was followed by a similar process and publications in Africa.

In October 2004, OECD introduced guidelines on public polling for the MDGs (Working Paper No. 238).

2005

2005 was a key year for the UN Millennium Campaign. On the Civil Society front, GCAP was launched in January 26 at the World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, calling for collective action around three important global events that year: the G8 in Scotland, the UN Assembly in New York, and the WTO ministerial meeting in Hong Kong. The three “White Band Days”.

During the first ‘White Band Day’, coinciding with the G8 in Edinburgh a number of concerts were organised in G8 countries and in some African countries under the name ‘Live 8’. The UN Millennium Campaign co-organized a landmark event on the evening of the G8 at St. Paul’s Cathedral. Kofi Annan, Chancellor Gordon Brown, and Wahu Kara urged world leaders to deliver on the MDGs.

In September, the 60th UN General Assembly in New York also called the 2005 World Summit and UN Millennium Summit +5 brought together more than 170 Heads of State and Government. The meeting reviewed and reenergized MDG action while focusing on donor nation aid and developing country plans to achieve the MDGs. White Band Day 2 coincided with this UN event.

Finally in December, civil society actions took place in Hong Kong during the WTO ministerial meeting with less direct participation from the MC. At this moment, the UN Millennium Campaign clearly gave preference to campaigning at National levels, where they believed the political changes could be achieved with limited involvement in global policy event. However, the MC has always had a very relevant facilitator role in the shaping of some global civil society movements; most significantly (although not exclusively) the GCAP.

Closer to ‘home’, the Millennium Project launched their final report ‘Investing in Development’. The report laid out a practical plan to achieving the MDGs.

On the policy front, a High Level Forum hosted by the French Government in March produced the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. This was an international agreement to which over one hundred Ministers, Heads of Agencies, and other Senior Officials adhered and committed their countries and organizations. They agreed to continue to increase efforts in

harmonization, alignment, and managing of aid for results with a set of 12 monitoring indicators.⁵

During 2005, the Campaign also identified the need to create a global communication strategy that would allow it to exercise better control and coordination over their work, and to frame the MDGs in a perspective that would better suit the different target audiences. For this purpose, an experienced CNN journalist was recruited as Deputy Director for communications in April 2005.

In July, an important partnership was signed with the Nickelodeon Nick 2015 Website. It garnered thousands of young supporters who have signed on as Friends of the MC. In August, the Campaign launched an MDG Interactive Youth site in collaboration with the UN Department of Public Information. The site received over half a million hits per month and is the most popular youth site from the United Nations homepage.

An important achievement of the campaign this year was the adoption of the Local Government Millennium Declaration at the UCLG World Council in Beijing, where an MDG Working Group was created.

Finally, in 2005 the campaign formalized a small grant mechanism to support key partners in their campaigning activities, granting to Southern partners almost 2 million dollars that year.

2006

2006 marks the year the campaign opened regional offices in Africa and Asia and organized the first *Stand Up*.

Two regional teams were set up in Africa and in Asia to support the National Campaigns and increase its visibility and impact in the South. Two Deputy Directors for Asia and Africa were recruited. Both of them highly respected civil society leaders. The Regional Offices in Bangkok for Asia and the Pacific and in Nairobi for Africa were set up under the leadership of respective Deputy Directors.

On the communications front, the campaign focused on building communications capacity and infrastructure. It recruited 3 communications coordinators in Spain, Nairobi and Delhi.

In June the Campaign participated in the World Urban Forum in Vancouver, where it launched its set of the "8 Ways" brochure, one for the North, one for the South, which suggest actions by local governments to help achieve the Millennium Goals.

The German Campaign effectively leveraged the World Cup games in multiple ways to raise awareness of the MDG's. The European Campaign partnered with the European Commission during its first "Development Days" in Brussels, including through the Campaigns Voice Boxes.

In August, the launch of the 'Faith in Action' toolkit took place at the VIII World Assembly of Religions for Peace in Kyoto Japan. The event was attended by 800 senior religious leaders, 2,000 observers and 200 members of the press.

However, if there was a central inflection point in the history of the campaign, that was the first *Stand Up*. *Stand Up* was a simple and powerful communication idea; it was meant to

⁵ OECD. *The Paris Declaration: Joint progress toward enhanced Aid Effectiveness*. 2005 [29 Mar 2009]; Available from: http://www.oecd.org/document/18/0,2340,en_2649_3236398_35401554_1_1_1_1,00.html.

produce momentum that the Campaign could use to create debate around the MDGs. The idea grabbed people's imagination and quickly spread across the world with the help of numerous partners. In October 2006, 23,542,614 people took part in a *Stand Up* event.

2007

By 2007, several agencies were tracking progress on MDG 1-7. However, there has been difficulty collecting data and tracking MDG 8. In 2007, Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon set up a MDG Gap Task Force to research and report exclusively on MDG 8.

July 2007 was an important date for the Millennium Campaign, with 7/7/7 marking the midway point towards 2015. Midpoint events were organized in several places across Africa including rallies and music concerts, which generated significant media coverage.

Significantly, the Midpoint Alicante Declaration on aid effectiveness was launched by the Italian vice Minister, the Spanish and Portuguese State Secretaries for Development, and the Millennium Campaign's Founder, Eveline Herfkens. The event was accompanied by a Dive Against Poverty, held in all 3 countries, with over 5000 people participating.

In October the MC, under a renewed branding, organized the second *Stand Up, under the banner, 'Stand Up and speak out'*. In this year, 43,716,440 people took part, almost doubling the numbers from 2006 and winning an entry in the Guinness Book of Records. The partnership strategy improved over the previous year, especially with the UN Department of Public Information. There was considerable media coverage, especially nationally and locally.

**‘On the downside, we were once again confronted with the difficulty of combining on the one hand the twin objectives of mass awareness raising and mobilization, and on the other a sharp policy advocacy’
MC retreat 2007**

The UN Millennium Campaign continued nurturing partnership with other constituencies. In November, UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon addressed a gathering of the U.S. National Evangelical Alliance and Micah Challenge (the global evangelical MDGs campaign that was “midwife” by the MC) in Washington DC on the MDGs. During the course of the evaluation a UN high official praised this meeting as ‘magnificently organized’ in a strategic sense.

The Millennium Campaign worked with the government of Indonesia to organize a supplementary event on climate change and the MDGs at the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) meeting in Bali.

2008

In February 2008 the campaign set up a Regional Office for Europe in Rome, housed in the FAO. Previously the European Coordination sat in NY. Unlike the campaigns in Africa and Asia, in Europe there were already robust national campaigns working since 2003. The European office came to coordinate their efforts.

The institutional linkages with UN and especially with UNDP became stronger. MDG Steering Committee was created within the UNDP and MC was part of it.

In July, a new staff member was recruited as the North America Campaign Coordinator.

One of the landmarks of the campaign for this year was the High Level Event on the MDGs that was organized by the UN in New York. The MC organized and supported more than 10 side events during the meeting and supported the participation of a wide range of CSO and

local government leaders from across the world including Sub Saharan Africa, and South Asia, like the Poverty Tribunal and Religious Leaders Consultation. Major media coverage was attained, including the noteworthy GSTAR Raw fashion show and the high level BBC World Debate panel in which the MC was already present in previous editions. The campaign also supported the launch of the Global Poverty Project at the event.

On the policy front, Senator Obama declared in Chicago on 2 October: *'The United Nations has embraced the Millennium Development Goals, which aim to cut extreme poverty in half by 2015. When I'm president, they will be America's goals'*.

In 17-19 Oct 2008, a new Guinness world record was broken during the "Stand Up; Take Action" event. 16,993,629 people, a 2% of the world population, took part from all over the world.

Although the MC as been engaged in some way of another in all major events that were MDG linked from 2004, in 2008 seemed to give them more of a strategic weight in their reports. In November, at the Doha Conference on Financing for Development, MC was present in the Conference and reported significant media coverage.

MC also supported citizen voices during G8 Hokkaido Tokyo Summit the same year. Some key commitments to promote universal access to primary education and health-related MDGs remained prominent in the official document of G8 communiqué in 2008.

In addition the G20 Summit in Washington DC served as an opportunity for the Campaign to position itself prominently in the debate about the global economic crisis and its effect on achievement of the MDGs.