



SPECIAL REPORT UN MILLENNIUM CAMPAIGN

17-19 October 2008 ACROSS THE GLOBE TO SPEARHEAD ACTION ON MDGs

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The WFWO celebrate with more than one percent of global population to Stand Up and Take Action for MDGs

Special report from MDGs Campaign:

Halfway to the deadline in 2015, the UN Millennium Campaign and Global Call to Action Against Poverty have planned diverse events on October 17-19 across the globe to spearhead action on MDGs. Mass rallies, sports events, concerts would be held urging nations to put in place pro-poor development policies.

New York: The United Nations Millennium Campaign and Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP) have announced details of some of coming week's events aimed at mobilising more than one percent of the world's population - over 67 million people - on October 17-19 to demand that world leaders deliver on their promises to eradicate extreme poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

"The global movement in support of the Millennium Development Goals is growing, and on October 17-19 more than one percent of the people on earth will send a clear message to their leaders that they will no longer stay seated while promises to end extreme poverty remain unfulfilled," said Salil Shetty, Director of the UN Millennium Campaign.

"It's incredible to see that in times of economic instability people are even more motivated to show their leaders that they want poverty eradication to remain at the top of the agenda. From the smallest villages to city streets, sports events and political lobbies, the sheer diversity of actions is staggering. We are showing the power of our growing movement in an unprecedented way this year," said Kumi Naidoo, Co-Chair of the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (GCAP).

Amongst the tens of millions of people standing against poverty are individuals with compelling stories to tell, such as activist and journalist Jenerali Ulimwengu, who has dedicated his life to exposing and fighting bad governance in Tanzania. As the result of his hard-hitting reporting, his citizenship in Tanzania was temporarily revoked.

During Stand Up and Take Action this year, Ulimwengu will spearhead demands for the government to fulfill the MDGs by ensuring that poor people have access to clean portable water, improving access to healthcare (particularly for women and children), putting in place pro-poor development policies and improving service delivery in all key sectors.

James Njoroge Gitau, who lives in the Kariobangi slums in Kenya, surviving on less than one dollar a day has mobilised more than 100 schools and churches to Stand Against Poverty and is organising a medical camp to care for sick people in his community. Gitau is calling on his government to put in place pro-poor policies, stop corruption and allocate resources for programs for the poor.

In Madhya Pradesh, Bhopal, India, Yogesh Jain will once again Stand Against Poverty. Last year, Jain mobilised more than 200,000 people to Stand Up in protest of the districts' lack of healthcare, clean drinking water and resources for education.

As a result of the massive mobilisation, government officials conducted surprise inspections which resulted in the allocation of funding for infrastructure repairs and the allotment of government land for school construction.

In Badarpur Khadar, a village 15 km from Delhi with no electricity, water, sanitation or health facilities, members of the National Conference of Dalit Organisations will open a school in a tent on October 18, providing local children with the opportunity to attend school in their village for the first time.

- **Stand Up and Take Action" events include:**

Africa

In Lagos, **Nigeria**, 100,000 people are expected to gather on October 17-19 for a concert by Femi Kuti to commemorate the life of renowned Nigerian Musician Fela Kuti and demand that the government pay closer attention to the country's pro-poor development programs.

In Pretoria, **South Africa** on October 17, an expected 5,000 campaigners led by the workers' trade union COSATU and the South Africa Council of Churches will march to Union Buildings, the official seat of government in South Africa, to demand guaranteed state social security schemes covering all children under eighteen. They will also call for the abolition of the value added tax on basic foodstuffs, the abolition of user fees on water, and the ratification of the UN Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

In Harare, **Zimbabwe**, 5,000 people are expected to gather when Pastor G and Victor Kunonga perform at "Do the Right Thing" on October 18 to call on the government to improve service delivery in health, water and sanitation.

In Togo, caravans will travel around the country to towns and villages, with each visit focusing on a specific MDG. The tour will culminate at a beach where 5,000 people are expected to gather to Stand Up together on October 19.

In Nairobi, **Kenya** on October 18, several top artists including Sarah Mitaru, Jua Kali and Jaky Malley Ringtone will join hands to host a concert aimed at protesting rising costs and reminding world leaders that Africans will not accept a new slavery through retrogressive trade policies such as the Economic Partnership Agreements.

Asia

In Delhi, **India**, members of the National Conference of Dalit Organisations and Amnesty International, India will meet with Parliamentarians on October 17 to demand resources for the most vulnerable and socially excluded groups. Also in Delhi, celebrities and more than 10,000 people are expected to gather for a mass mobilisation on Parliament Street.

In Daltonganj, Jharkhand, **India** more than 30,000 people from 600 villages and 18 districts are expected to gather on October 17 and 18 to demand poverty alleviation measures from the government and the achievement of the MDGs. The gathering, called Mahapanchayat, will be addressed by the Chief Minister of Jharkhand.

In **Indonesia** on October 17, Muslims will Stand Against Poverty at more than 400 mosques in a statement of solidarity to encourage the government to commit to more pro-poor policies.

In the **Philippines**, the National Anti-Poverty Commission and other civil society actors are expected to mobilize more than 10 million people at events including a National People's Day on October 18, which will offer medical services and a job fair. Also in the Philippines there will be a "Stand Up and Take Action" Rap Contest for community youth groups in metro Manila on October 17 and a bike run on October 19.

In **Thailand**, at least 180,000 people living below the national poverty line are expected to participate in poverty reduction clinics organised by the Ministry of Interior, which will encourage domestic and individual savings, health promotion, and empowerment of the poor.

In **China**, a Poverty and Migration Forum hosted in Beijing will include large numbers of people Standing Up.

In **Singapore**, bands including Vertical Rush and Jack and Rai will play at Youth Park on October 18 to express their demands to end world poverty and a new 2015 Countdown Clock will be launched to show leaders how much time - person by person, second by second - is left to achieve the MDGs.

Europe

In **Italy**, 80,000 people are expected to take part in 10 simultaneous Stand Up events in 9 cities including Venice, Bologna, Florence, Milan and Rome on October 18. Nine huge chairs without seats will be installed simultaneously in 9 squares to signify that people will not remain seated until their government delivers more and better aid. On October 19, 300,000 supporters are expected to Stand Up at the Italian Premier League football match. Also on October 19, sea dolphins will Stand Against Poverty at the Oltremare Park in Riccione.

In **Portugal**, members of the Star Trackers group will parachute over Évora, a UNESCO World heritage site, on October 17 to raise awareness of the MDGs and demand more and better aid.

In Scotland, **UK**, the Glasgow City Council has passed a motion to recognise the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty and will call on all Glaswegians to "Stand Up and Take Action" against child poverty in Scotland. A march from Glasgow Cathedral to Glasgow's George Square aims to mobilise 3,000 people.

In **Spain**, thousands of people are expected to gather to march against poverty in Madrid on October 17 under the "Rebélate contra la Pobreza" initiative. Simultaneous anti-poverty mobilizations will occur on October 17 and 18 in more than 20 cities, including Palma de Mallorca, Sevilla, Zaragoza, Donosti, Bilbao, A Coruña, Badajoz, Cuenca and Valencia.

In **Germany**, video messages from members of the World Future Council who received alternative Nobel prizes will be shown at the Sony Center in Berlin on October 17 to demand more and better aid. At the end, the pop group Culcha Candela will lead the Stand Up moment.

In **Belgium**, at the beginning of nine football matches on October 18-19, tens of thousands of fans will be asked to recite a pledge and Stand Against Poverty.

North America

In the **United States** and **Canada**, students will join campus programs and challenges to build political will to end extreme poverty by hosting teach-ins, Stand Up rallies, and other campus events.

Faith groups across these two countries are organising Sabbaths, Sevas, and Sadaqas to rally believers of all faiths - Christians, Jews, Muslims, Hindus and others - to learn about and take action on behalf of people living in extreme poverty and dying from preventable diseases.

Middle East

In **Palestine**, 500,000 pupils are expected to Stand Up in schools. Students in 15 university branches will organize media debates to demand a lending fund for poor students. **Latin America and Caribbean**

In Santiago, **Chile** there will be a walk between Arms Square and Constitution Square on October 17 featuring a moving wall on which people can take action by writing messages. At the event, citizens will ask municipal candidates to sign a commitment against poverty.

In **El Salvador**, citizens will Stand Up at a Presidential Candidates Forum on October 17.

Global Members of the Art of Living Foundation, one of the largest spiritual movements in the world, will mobilise to plant more than 100 million trees around the world.

Screenings of the independent film "The End of Poverty?" by Cinema Libre Productions will take place in about 15 locations worldwide including the Sao Paulo Film Festival, London, Sydney, Washington DC, and Brussels.

WFWO's Communications Team