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Annual  
Review



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Dear Friends,

I am proud and happy to offer you this review of ActionAid International USA's work during the past year. In launching our program in the United States, ActionAid International USA has established a respected source of expertise and advocacy in support of the fundamental rights of poor people. Drawing on the experience and credibility of our ActionAid International colleagues in more than 100 countries, we have worked hard to bring the voices of communities and social movements from the streets to the halls of power in this country. This report details some of our recent efforts.

This past year witnessed significant advances in ActionAid International USA's work on human rights. We exposed the ways in which lending conditions imposed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank are forcing developing countries to educate their children or fight the scourge of HIV/AIDS. We showed the need for transparency and accountability in the governance of the international financial institutions. ActionAid International USA also opened a new policy area with the launch of a food rights program, focusing on how trade policies affect the capacity of people around the world to exercise their right to food.

You will also see reflected in these pages our efforts to use the powerful American media to bring attention to crucial rights issues from overseas - the plight of women in Afghanistan, the need for reproductive health and education accessible to all children, the importance of frank and meaningful dialogue between the United States and their governments.

2005 was also a year of transition for ActionAid International USA. After three years of leading the organization here, I thought it was about time to head back to my native Brazil with my family. My tenure with ActionAid International USA and my experience working in the U.S. The energy and passion for justice I found among activists in this country is an incredible source of strength for all of us. I look back with satisfaction on the progress we have made and the support and commitment. I hope you will join me in welcoming my successor, Peter O'Connell, as Executive Director in May, 2006. Knowing well his commitment and long history of work with social movements, I am confident that he will lead ActionAid International USA towards further advances in justice, peace and human rights.

With your help, ActionAid International USA has already accomplished a great deal, and we will continue to work with you here. We hope that these words and images will inspire you to redouble your efforts in fighting the basic rights of poor people everywhere - and that you will continue to work with us with the same effort!

With gratitude and best wishes,

Atila Roque  
Executive Director, ActionAid International USA, 2003-2006



# ActionAid International

Working in some 47 nations, ActionAid International has the unique vision of fighting poverty worldwide through the active engagement of individuals, communities, and decision makers. In so doing, we strengthen and set in place policies that enable the poor and marginalized to exercise their inalienable rights to food, healthcare, education, and

Such an approach enables sustainable change through the organizing and empowerment of those who lack a voice due to their poverty. In addition, ActionAid International works at the highest levels of governance-- from local governments to the WTO and beyond-- to ensure that the needs voiced by the poor are heeded in the formulation of international policies.

In times of disaster, ActionAid International provides direct assistance to ensure that the world's poorest have what they desperately need. And we stay long after many other agencies have left, so that lives and livelihoods are protected. If a disaster is man-made, ActionAid International's peace-building activities help heal entire communities, and ensure they live in the safety for which they yearn.

From the halls of power to the homes of the poor, ActionAid International will not stop until the injustices that perpetuate poverty finally overcome.



# About ActionAid International US





Located in Washington, DC, ActionAid International USA's mission is to create positive change on behalf of the poor and marginalized people of the world. ActionAid International USA is a non-profit, non-partisan, and non-aligned organization, franchised worldwide. In so doing, ActionAid International USA advocates reforms that speak directly to the needs of the poor and marginalized people of the world. ActionAid International USA works on policies such as poverty reduction, trade, education, agriculture, and the expenditure of federal, International Development Bank, and World Bank funds.

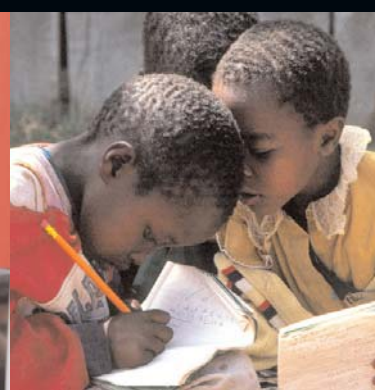
ActionAid International USA exists to build solidarity with communities, organizations, and movements worldwide. We influence governments on behalf of children, women, and men in need. Our vision is to bridge the gap between the United States and other nations and networks in the United States with their counterparts throughout the Global South. Acting as a catalyst for change, ActionAid International USA actively builds networks with counterparts in the South, to confront the root causes of poverty and policies underpinning and reinforcing poverty. In so doing, we serve as an instrument for bringing social and economic justice to the US domestic political scene, and contribute to the strengthening of a domestic support base that can effect changes within US foreign and economic policies.

Our work revolves around key themes that have been identified as essential in the fight against poverty. These themes include Governance and International Finance, Food and Hunger, HIV/AIDS, Education, Women's Rights, and Environment. In addressing these themes, the experts at ActionAid International USA provide targeted research, outreach, and advocacy designed to build global solidarity while influencing actual change that can be translated into healthier, happier, and self-sufficient lives for all.



# **A Year of Change, a Year of Growth**

**The year 2005 was a time of new directions for ActionAid International USA, from the inauguration of our Food Rights Program to increasing our influence on policies impacting the world's poorest people. On the following pages, we invite you to journey with us as we take a look back**



# Building Bridges Toward a Better World

7 For ActionAid International USA, 2005 was about linking social movements, grassroots activists, and organizations in the US with their counterparts in the Global South. As a result, our office became known as a bridge-builder through innovative programming that highlighted exchanges at the local, national, and international levels.

In addition, new and diversified funding and a broadening of international and domestic relationships significantly strengthened our capacity to create meaningful change.





## Solidarity in Education: Bridge-Building for a New Generation

In early 2005, ActionAid International USA, in association with a global education team and our partners from Just Associates (USA), launched a initiative designed to shape and inform the future of education and development with over forty nonprofit organizations, community groups, think tanks, and networks. The result: a unique International Education Roundtable.

Involving experts from the United States and Latin America, the roundtable addressed the crucial needs, opportunities, and challenges associated with international solidarity on behalf of the 100 million children who yearn for an education they cannot due to poverty.

As discussions evolved, US activists and scholars were energized by the Education for All movement and by international commitment to education as an essential human right. Many were also eager to deepen their understanding of how World Bank policies, International Monetary Fund (IMF) conditions, and the Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS), and other international trade agreements were restricting the capacity of citizens and governments in poor countries to fund public education.

A specialized website allowed participants to continue discussions after the round table had ended, enabling the collection of additional information and strengthening key relationships. A final report entitled, "Forging a Global Education Agenda: Rights and Strategies for the US and Beyond," was published and distributed worldwide, thus broadening the exchange of information.

Said ActionAid International USA's Executive Director, Atila Roque: "By bringing together experts from around the world, we built a solid framework that we can work together to ensure a brighter future for the world's children."

# Promoting Democratic Governance at International Finance Institutions

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In 2005, ActionAid International USA took a leadership role in organizing a new international network of organizations calling for democratic governance reforms of the IMF and World Bank. With an emphasis on building and supporting greater parliamentary involvement in scrutinizing IFI loan programs before they are ratified, the network also works towards building progressive, citizen-based advocacy towards fairer policies. In so doing, the new Democratic Governance and Parliamentary Oversight (DGPO) group seeks to establish a global network of leading civil society organizations, academic centers, and parliamentary groups to develop promising strategies for enhancing the democratic governance and parliamentary oversight of the IMF, World Bank and other regional development banks.

While many civil society initiatives are presently underway to address and to reform various aspects of IFI governance and parliamentary oversight, the broad, holistic approach of the DGPO will provide improved coordination and expansion of these ongoing efforts. Furthermore, the DGPO will expand the network of civil society organizations to develop consensus on medium and long-term objectives and strategies for enhancing parliamentary oversight of the international financial institutions (IFIs).



# Blowing the Bugle on a One-Horse

In March, 2005, Paul Wolfowitz, the US Deputy Secretary of Defense and architect of the Iraq war, was nominated by George W. Bush to be the President of the World Bank. The nomination was largely uncontested. ActionAid International USA joined with partners from Essential Action and Mobilization for Global Justice to conduct a 'one-horse race' outside the World Bank headquarters in Washington, DC. Staged on the day the Executive Board of the World Bank was confirming Paul Wolfowitz as its new president, the race served to denounce the undemocratic nature of the selection process by which the US unilaterally picks the only candidate.

The street theater stunt was a light-hearted but pointed jab at the untransparent process by which the United States government selects the World Bank President.

The occasion also served as a prime opportunity to demand fundamental governance reforms of the institution.

The widely publicized event featured an effervescent crowd that crowned a play-by-play to the trill of a live bugle. The race was staged directly in front of the World Bank building. It was an excellent, if lopsided start, thanks to the fancy legwork of ActionAid International USA policy analyst, Rick Rowden (the winner) and Essential Action Co-Director, Rob Weissman (the runner-up). After the wonky steed broke through a paper finish line, the crowd gave great applause and was crowned 'the winner' while the runner-up was crowned with a bouquet of flowers.

The event was a resounding success, gaining global attention and sending a message to the world that democratization is lacking at the highest levels of the IFIs.





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## Using Economic Policies to Fight HIV/AIDS

On the eve of the United Nations Millennium Summit, ActionAid challenged the slow achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

In the painstakingly-researched report, "Alternative Approaches to Achieving the MDGs and Fight HIV/AIDS," ActionAid shows how lending conditions imposed by international organizations are preventing countries from investing in health care personnel, infrastructure, and education. Countries separately need to combat the problem.

As a result of IMF-imposed budget cuts, for example, nations cannot hire enough doctors and nurses they need to treat HIV/AIDS. All the while, trained health workers are increasingly stretched to work long hours, demoralizing working conditions, and low wages. As a result, many public health workers have fled to ActionAid International USA, creating a massive "brain drain" in which



leaving public service for better-paying jobs in the private sector or abroad.

As noted by the Bretton Woods Project, "The report asks why, when there is a growing consensus amongst development economists, developing countries do not rebel against Fund prescriptions. Interviews with officials in the central banks, finance ministries, health and education ministries in Bangladesh, Ghana, Malawi, Uganda and Zambia revealed two difficulties. Firstly, most central bank and finance ministry officials have internalized Fund economics and do not "acknowledge the possibility of more expansionary fiscal and monetary policies." Secondly, health and education ministry officials are locked out of the process; the health ministry official in Malawi said that the ministry is given a spending ceiling, but "how the ceiling is arrived at is not known."<sup>1</sup>

1. <http://brettonwoodsproject.org/art.shtml?x=351466>>

## ...and how we c

ActionAid International USA's work on economic policies was based on the successful policy briefing in the Fall of 2004, called in 2005, ActionAid International USA received funding from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund to pursue research on the impact of macroeconomic programs. This culminated in a report released in 2005, titled "Changing Course: Alternatives to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals on HIV/AIDS." The report was launched at the September 2005 UN Millennium Summit.

Shortly afterwards, during the World Bank and Monetary Fund Autumn Meetings, ActionAid hosted a one-day conference on alternative economic policies in Washington, DC. Held at the Women in the Arts, speakers at the conference included representatives from UNAIDS, Medicins Sans Frontières, Physicians for Human Rights, and ISOD. The program also featured economists from universities in the UK and the US, as well as ActionAid's Africa Director, Charles Abani, and Head of International Policy, David Archer.

Lauded by experts, this work led to an invitation for ActionAid International USA to take part in an exclusive, closed-door session on macroeconomic policy with former US President Jimmy Carter. At this session, the presidents of Mali and Mozambique, ActionAid's Africa Director, Rick Rowden, as well as economists Joseph Stiglitz, Jeffrey Sachs, and Ha-Joon Chang discussed the impact of IMF and World Bank officials.



## ActionAid USA Introduces Food Rights Program

In 2005, ActionAid International USA launched its Food Rights Program to promote justice and to expose the role of corporations in shaping trade and agricultural policies and practices. Through solutions to global commodity price volatility and building meaningful bridges between the north and south, the program provides important information and sharing of information and resources.

### Building Solidarity on Behalf of the Poor

In launching our Food Rights Program, ActionAid International USA, in conjunction with trade activists, immigrants and grassroots organizations, convened a retreat with key trade negotiators from the US and Latin America. Through discussions and lessons learned, participants developed a common vision on trade and economic justice, a spoke of the importance of connecting local and global concerns.

“We support a different approach to trade policy,” said ActionAid International USA Policy Director, Hansen-Kuhn, “one that starts with the needs of the poor and working people in a global economy. We’re developing relationships with workers, activists and academics, to facilitate discussions on these issues.”

The discussions have since lead to stronger partnerships and a higher profile for ActionAid International on economic justice issues.

Throughout the autumn, ActionAid International trade specialists worked closely with our Food Rights Program on a report that revealed the heightened role that corporations play in WTO talks. The global media paid extensive attention to this work, which precisely detailed how corporate lobbyists are gaining privileged access and excessive influence over the WTO policymaking process, often to the detriment of the poor.

On the eve of the December, 2005 WTO meetings in Hong Kong, ActionAid International USA launched our newsletter, *Policy and Priorities*. This premier issue, developed in consultation with partners in Latin America, the UK and the United States, explained how the US trade agenda is being advanced in bilateral talks in a kind of “end run” around the global WTO negotiations. It was distributed at numerous trade-related events leading up to and including the WTO negotiations, enabling extensive discussions on the impact and future of globalization. A Spanish-language version was later distributed at the World Social Forum.



# The Afghan Women's Delegation Brings Women's Rights to the Forefront

Even the former deputy mayor of Kabul lived in desperation, smothered by oppressive codes that kept women deep underground during the Taliban's rule. Unable to leave their homes without a male escort and under voluminous burkas, Afghanistan's women dreamed of the possibility of change. With the fall of the Taliban, it was widely thought that the majority of Afghan women would be freed from their oppression. Unfortunately, that was not the case. To this day, a third of the women living in Kabul are not permitted to leave their homes. They and their peers enjoy no inheritance rights, find it nearly impossible to start businesses, and are struggling to regain their health, livelihoods, and a sense of place.

**15** To promote change, ActionAid International USA invited a delegation of female Afghan leaders, including the former deputy mayor of Kabul, to the United States. In Washington, DC and in New York City, the delegation was invited to speak directly to policy makers on Capitol Hill, at the World Bank, the State Department, the United Nations, and the Ambassador of Afghanistan, about the many challenges faced by their country. Over the course of a two-week period, the delegation successfully captured heart and minds, explaining to world leaders that the trafficking of women is on the rise in Afghanistan, as is rape, forced marriage, drug use, and sexual harassment and everyday violence. In the meantime, their stories were captured by the global media, reawakening public interest about how best to enable the women of Afghanistan to reclaim their rights and live self-sufficient and dignified lives.

“Today, due in part to the success demonstrated by this delegation, women's rights have been brought to the forefront of ActionAid International USA's priorities,” said Sandy Krawitz, ActionAid International USA's Communications Manager. “We expect much to come from this.”



# ActionAid International USA Raises Questions at the United Nations MDG Summit

Five years after the 2000 Millennium Summit, world leaders convened at the United Nations World Headquarters. Their mandate was to discuss and debate the progress – or lack of it – in attaining the eight Millennium Development Goals they had set in 2000 to end poverty. Understanding that poverty cannot be eliminated without fair and realistic policies, ActionAid International USA worked closely with ActionAid offices from around the world to stage demonstrations, host media events, commission important research, and ensure the voices of the poor were heard.

The first MDG, ActionAid International pointed out, which was to achieve equal access to schooling for girls and women, had been missed in over 70 countries. At the same time, the world as a whole was off-track on meeting the 2015 Millennium Development Goals. We at ActionAid International were gravely concerned.

**17** Attending the Summit on behalf of ActionAid International were every-day people from four continents, who spoke about the suffering they and their peers regularly experienced. In so doing, they poignantly relayed the life and death of the MDGs before it's too late.

In addition, several ActionAid International reports were launched at the Summit in order to point out exactly how far the world had gone so seriously off-track. “Changing Course: Alternative Approaches to Achieve the Millennium Development Goals on HIV/AIDS” discussed the key role played by World Bank and IMF policies in derailing public health goals (see page 10). The piece, “Contradicting Commitments: How the Achievement of Education for All is Being Undermined by the International Monetary Fund,” clearly pointed out that developing nations are often unable to hire the teachers or build the schools they need because of stringent lending conditions that tie the hands of local leaders. While many MDGs are still far from being met, ActionAid International is a key player in the progress towards the ultimate goal of ending poverty.



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# The World's Oldest Student Takes Manhattan

While 170 world leaders gathered to review their progress in achieving the eight global poverty goals agreed to be accomplished by 2015, Kimani N'ganga, 85, the world's oldest elementary school student, was brought by ActionAid to the United Nations to highlight some glaring facts of life: In the here and now, 100 million boys and girls around the world are denied a basic education because of poverty.

"It's my life dream to make sure nobody has to wait as long as I did to receive an education," he says. "It's a basic human right." As part of his visit, Kimani toured Manhattan Island in a yellow school bus, revealing and reflecting on stories of the poor and unschooled. Later, he would deliver the personal messages of over 100,000 of the world's school children to the steps of the United Nations, where he handed them directly to Nane Annan, the wife of UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan.

"I love being in school," Kimani told reporters. "To me, liberty means going to school and learning. All children should know such liberty."

Kimani's journey to the United Nations and his messages on behalf of those denied an education were widely received, with press coverage from outlets including USA Today, the New York Times, the Washington Post, CNN, BBC, Newsday, the Guardian (UK), the Hindustan Times (India), the South African Star, and the Nation (Kenya).



# Connecting Decision Makers to Civil Society

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As a key bridge-building activity, in 2005, ActionAid International organized an unprecedented meeting between the Minister of the Secretariat of the Presidency of Brazil, Luiz Dulci, and Brazil's Ambassador to the US, Roberto Abdenur, with representatives of the US nonprofit community.

Luiz Dulci, one of the closest advisors to Brazilian President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, is also among the founders of the PT, the Brazilian Workers' Party, and the CUT, Brazil's leading national labor confederation.

Dulci was surprisingly candid as he answered rounds of questions from the audience. "I feel very much at home here," he said. "This is my environment. Some people are here that I know personally from Brazil, including at this year's World Social Forum. We feel this meeting today is particularly important as our relationship with Civil Society plays an integral role in our country. It's not always a cozy relationship, and for that reason it's a special relationship."

Said Alexandra Spieldoch of Center of Concern, "this was a dialogue that we couldn't even have had with our own government. It was wonderful that officials speak directly with us about important concerns. This is a new step, and we hope there will be more spaces like this for creative dialogue."

Concluded Lori Wallach of Public Citizen "this has been an exciting opportunity, otherwise not possible if not for ActionAid International USA. It's the beginning of an important connection."

# Making a World of Change: Our Kind Contributors

## **Ambassadors**

Giles Goodhead and Claire Perry  
Janie Ligon  
Jennie Thompson and Bob Levy

## **Individual Supporters**

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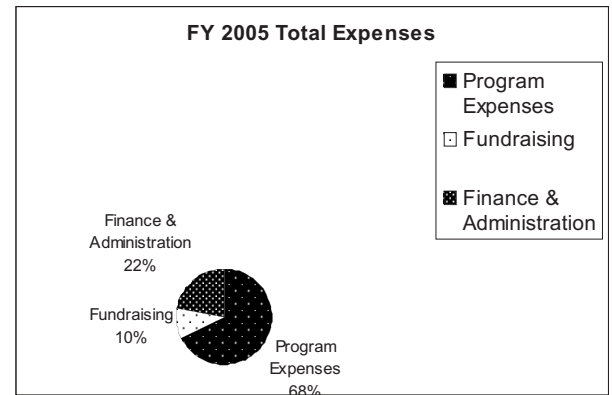
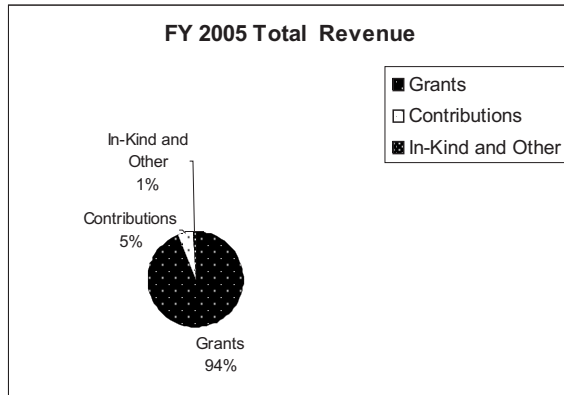


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The Rockefeller Foundation



# Financial Review



## ActionAid International USA Statement of Activities

For the Year Ended December 31, 2005  
With Comparative Totals for 2004

2005  
Total

### Current Year Operating Revenues and Expenses

#### Revenues:

Grants	1,313,905
Contributions	68,872
In-Kind Donations and Other	12,270

Total Revenues and Other Support

1,395,047

#### Expenses

Program Expenses	747,848
Fundraising	110,105
Finance and Administration	245,307

Total Expenses

1,103,260

Increase in Net Assets

291,787

Net Assets at Beginning of Year

50,498

Net Assets at End of Year

342,285





# ActionAid International USA Staff

Atila Roque, Executive Director

Brenna Kupferman, Deputy Director and Partnership Development Coordinator

Rick Rowden, Senior Policy Analyst

Karen Hansen-Kuhn, Food and Hunger Policy Analyst

Sandy Krawitz, Media and Communications Manager

Ilana Solomon, Program Associate

Nadia Salam, Finance Manager

# ActionAid International USA Board of Trustees

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Andrew Mott, Director, Community Learning Project

Cristina Lopez, Deputy Director, AIDS & Community Health, Academy for Educational Development

Jane Covey, Senior Advisor at World Education

Jennie Thompson (Board Secretary), Independent Consultant

John Zarafonetis, Director of Development Policy and Practice, Interaction

Ramesh Singh, Chief Executive of ActionAid International

Shilpun Patel (Board Treasurer), Division Controller for Quebecor World

For More Information and  
the Latest Updates, Please Visit:  
[www.actionaidusa.org](http://www.actionaidusa.org)

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**Photos from our Friends and Partners**  
pages 6 (top row, second from right),  
and pages 9-10, (c) Lilli Paquette  
Page 7-8 (c) Blendimages

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## Writers

Sandy Krawitz, Neal McKenna, Ilana Solomon, Karen Hansen-Kuhn,  
Peter O'Driscoll, Rick Rowden

## Layout and Design

Sandy Krawitz

## Special Thanks to

Lawrence Watts and David San Millan Del Rio,  
ActionAid UK Picture Desk





