

# Go Italian for World Water Day

## 22 March 2009



### What's happening and why?

Throughout 2009, the Italian Government holds the presidency of the G8 – the group of eight most industrialised nations – and will host the G8 Summit on 8-10 July 2009. Sanitation and water will feature on the agenda of the Summit.

**Italy's leadership in this group is crucial** – they will shape the direction and level of ambition of the G8, and so they are needed as strong supporters of the *Global Framework for Action*. The timing around World Water Day is important too – as the G8 start to put plans together. In fact, the lead negotiators (the 'sherpas') meet to discuss plans for the summit on 23 March.

So, around World Water Day, we are encouraging End Water Poverty members to engage with the Italian embassy in your own country to ensure they hear strong voices from all over the world calling for their leadership. This could simply involve a meeting between a delegation from your campaign and the ambassador, or you could be to organize an event with them.

If you do not have an Italian embassy nearby, it will still be very valuable to organise events at the embassies of other G8 countries, not least those of Germany, USA or Japan.

A few ideas of what you could do include are below. If you are organising an event around the embassy, make sure you get the correct permissions.

### Some ideas for activities and events

- **Meet the ambassador** - Organise a small delegation to have a lobby meeting with the Italian ambassador in their Embassy. Why not include a range of organisations, local celebrities and even clergy from the Catholic Church, who have strong links to Italy?
- **Hold an event or rally outside the embassy** – Make it interesting and media-worthy with music, costumes or art installations. Get the ambassador to meet you, and present him or her with a letter outlining what you are asking them to do.
- **Invite the ambassador to visit a sanitation project** – Let them see communities that still do not have access to sanitation and water, and also those who have benefited from its provision. Let them hear the testimonies of people from those communities. Also take an expert with you who can explain the impacts that water and sanitation provision has on communities, and about what End Water Poverty wants to see happen at the G8.
- **Hold a discussion event** – Invite the ambassador to be on a panel of experts talking about what needs to be done to end the sanitation and water crisis. You could hold such

an event at your parliament so it can also be used to inform influential politicians, and/or somewhere that you can encourage the media to come along. Invite the ambassador to speak on what the Italian Government will do at the G8 to ensure sanitation and water for all. Make sure you include someone on the panel who can speak about what the End Water Poverty campaign is calling for.

### Don't forget to:

- **Tell the media.** Send out a press release before the event, if appropriate, inviting them to come along to your event. Send out another one after the event telling them what you discussed and what needs to happen.
- **Get others involved.** Events like these can be great opportunities to build your coalitions, so take the opportunity to invite others along.
- **Tell End Water Poverty.** Please tell the international secretariat what you're planning, and send us any reports and photos, so we can share it with everyone else.

#### What do we want the Ambassadors to do?

We want Ambassadors from a whole range of countries to be contacting the relevant officials in Rome, and express the following points:

1. There is a strong demand from civil society groups in your country for Italian leadership and strong action in tackling the sanitation and water crisis.
2. Sanitation and water are key building blocks of development. Investing in these areas is an extremely cost-effective way to drive poverty reduction, significantly improve child health, and remove barriers to girls' education.
3. The G8 should formally support the *Global Framework for Action on Water and Sanitation*, an agreement in which:
  - **Southern Governments** develop credible national plans to provide sanitation and water for all, and invest more in their implementation.
  - **Donor Governments** support the development of these plans, and ensure that *no credible national plan fails for lack of finance*
  - **International systems** are developed to monitor and drive progress in the sector, including specifically a *global task force*, an *annual review* and an *annual global high-level meeting*.

You can read a further briefing on the Global Framework for Action at [www.endwaterpoverty.org/globalframework](http://www.endwaterpoverty.org/globalframework)

For more information on the G8 process there is an online working group you can join to share information. Please contact [stevecockburn@endwaterpoverty.org](mailto:stevecockburn@endwaterpoverty.org) for details.