



Review of Campaign Websites

Prepared for the GCAP Secretariat
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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background & Objectives

The online component of the GCAP campaign in 2005 consisted of 46 national coalition websites and two global sites. In order to help the International Facilitation Group assess the significance of the GCAP campaign, this review looked at the contribution of the 48 websites to the campaign. A preliminary needs assessment survey among coalition members identified the following five as the focus areas for the review:

- a) Best practices
- b) Users (profile and behaviour)
- c) Comparative analysis of websites
- d) Interactivity, and
- e) Collaboration between national campaigns

This entailed the reviewers to:

- Assess the role of online communication in the 2005 GCAP campaign
- Provide a broad picture of resources, products and audiences of the online advocacy component
- Review the role of the WhiteBand.org website in the campaign; and to identify how this site can best serve the online GCAP campaign
- Review the role of the national campaign websites in the overall global campaign
- Measure how the coalition of websites contributed to the mobilization of support for the campaign through individual action
- Gauge how much online content relates to each of the four campaign objectives; and to identify which are most/least appealing to web audiences
- Identify the most effective online campaign practices that can help improve the effectiveness of the future GCAP online campaigning; and to recommend ways to strengthen online campaigns, and
- Recommend a management strategy for the central campaign website in future

Methodology

Since information about websites can be stored in different ways and forms, this review adopted a series of processes and tools to extract such data. Online surveys were used as the primary tool to ensure quick and efficient data collection. Third party reviewing tools such as Google, Alexa and website spiders were used to access data that would not be available otherwise.

In order to get a clearer view of the information need from this review, as well as the information available for the purpose, a needs assessment survey was conducted among the national coalitions and other network members. Structured interviews were conducted with select campaign members.

Data was collected from national coalition website colleagues and third-party external sources for an in-depth view of the performance and relations of the campaign websites. This also compensated for limited access to website log files and to provide a comparative analysis with related or similar websites.

All the 48 websites were reviewed by independent evaluators who looked at content, design, navigation and interactive features etc. of the websites.

Three online surveys were conducted using an online survey service in order to get detailed responses from the focal points of national coalition websites and their users.

Limitations

- a) **Scope:** This review looked at the family of 48 websites taken as a whole and did not look at individual website's achievements or failures. However, because the WhiteBand.org has a role as a campaign hub, special attention is paid to it. This review should not be seen as an evaluation of the websites' performance either, as there was no monitoring system in place to provide baseline data for such evaluation. The review therefore is a one-off audit of the websites, their users and the overall online campaign, as they existed at the time of the review.
- b) **Coverage:** Due to the short timeframe of this review, the web focal points' surveys could be conducted only in English. This could have an impact on the response rate. The global user survey was conducted in English, French and Spanish; however, the other languages were not covered. Evaluations of the websites were also limited to certain extent because of limited language capacity.
- c) **Statistical accuracy:** The short timeline also meant the online surveys received very low number of responses, thus limiting the precision that a larger sample size would have offered. The responses to the online surveys were extremely low in number. Their count or percentage to the potential number of responses is not large enough to confidently draw conclusions. Our conclusions, therefore, should only be viewed as broad indicators. Third party data sources such as Google and Alexa are subject to sampling error.

Main findings & conclusions

In overall assessment, the success of the online GCAP campaign essentially relied on the following four pillars:

- **Make Poverty History:** The campaign itself, its website and its slogan had substantial influence on the GCAP campaign.
- **White band:** The white band became the unifying symbol and wearing it became the unifying act for the campaign.
- **Live8 concert:** The Live8 concert's endorsement of the GCAP campaign had a big role to play in the popularity and visibility of the campaign websites.
- **Celebrity endorsement:** National and international celebrities played an important role in raising the profile and awareness of the GCAP campaign.

The family of GCAP websites has made a huge dent in the landscape of cyberspace, at times surpassing websites of major world political institutions in creating a buzz. The websites were also very well placed in terms of their rankings by third-party analysis tools like Google and Alexa. The biggest five websites – the UK, USA, Germany, Japan and the WhiteBand.org site – were ranked very high by both. Most of the other websites in the network also scored 5 out 10 on Google's ranking scale, indicating their content was very relevant to the campaign.

However, the huge traffic received by the campaign websites was more a result of the offline media activities, including high-profile media events and campaigns, than because of the websites' own marketing and promotion strategies. Indeed, the online campaign as a whole suffered due to lack of a clear governance structure and lack of a holistic marketing strategy.

Capacity was an issue with many of the organizations hosting these websites, as they did not have the resources or the tools to manage them. While the loose alliance under the GCAP banner allowed the national members to design their online campaigns according to their local needs, it also led to lack of cohesion and unity. As a result, the GCAP as a brand and campaign was substantially diluted.

The coalition websites also failed to exploit the full potential of the global network by not explicitly creating linkages between the websites and building upon one another's strengths. The

low response rate to website review requests clearly shows the weak relationship within the GCAP campaign network.

One of the fallouts of the absence of a structured governance mechanism for the network was the difficulty in managing the WhiteBand.org website and the strained relationship between its stakeholders over this issue. Some of the key stakeholder groups felt they were not responsible for the website; others felt they had limited influence. Staff working on the website came from different organizations, with different institutional priorities, and communications and relationships between them were strained. These management issues clearly affected the overall performance of the website.

But despite the online campaign's weaknesses, the buzz around the websites because of the back links and spurts of huge traffic helped it in making poverty a popular issue on the Internet. Poverty reduction also became the most important issue for the website users.

The websites also influenced their users' awareness and understanding of the GCAP campaign issues. They quickly became credible sources of information about these issues and motivated users to take action. Signing online petitions was one of the most favourite means to take action on the Internet for users. A greater number informed their colleagues or friends about GCAP, which could have led to wider individual action in favour of the campaign. Buying white bands online – which was one of the more common action features on the websites – was not preferred much. Comparatively, more users bought white bands at a shop or event than online. People also participated in campaign-related public events and activities, including the White Band Day events, as a result of using the websites.

Recommendations

When considering whether or not to continue the GCAP campaign beyond 2005, the IFG needs to understand the value and potential of the online assets that were built up during 2005. Assuming the campaign will continue, the following recommendations outline some broad strategic directions for the websites:

- **Exploit and strengthen current online position:** The coalition websites should be linked to one another and to the WhiteBand.org site more strongly and explicitly.
- **Establish a clear brand and identity:** Building upon the existing value of the different components of the campaign, efforts must be made to establish a clear, unified identity of the campaign as a whole.
- **Improve coordination and governance:** An integrated governance structure, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, will be essential for realizing the full potential of such a campaign network. Given the loose nature of the alliance, such a structure needs to be based upon close coordination and broad partnership rather than centralized control. More efforts need to be invested in building strong relationships with the national coalition members and ensure their ownership of the campaign.
- **Build capacity of smaller coalition websites:** GCAP will gain a lot by providing national coalition members with website building capacity and tools. In the context of a long-term campaign, it will be worthwhile investing resources in an efficient content management system (CMS).
- **Look deeper into online advocacy & social mobilization:** There would be value in evaluating a number of social mobilization mechanisms, such as e-petitions, links to local politicians, event listings, or SMS2web services in order to identify what worked best and share it with the whole network. It would also be worth undertaking an in-depth evaluation of online advocacy methods.
- **Strengthen WhiteBand.org:** The value of a strong and vibrant central hub in an online campaign cannot be stressed enough. In order to enable the GCAP campaign network to exploit its full potential, the WhiteBand.org site needs to be converted

into that hub which will support the coalition websites and will be supported by them. A number of steps need to be taken to make this happen, starting with improving the relationship between the WhiteBand.org and coalition websites and within the network as a whole.

- The GCAP Secretariat should manage all content on the WhiteBand.org and seek to develop a content sharing arrangement with coalition websites through a content management system.
- In-source editorial work to the GCAP Secretariat. Editorial staff's knowledge of the campaign should be available to all GCAP Secretariat staff and factored into larger campaign issues.
- In-source user administration to the GCAP Secretariat. Website user administration should be seen as part of relationship building and this is a core job for any campaign secretariat.
- Outsource specialist skills such as graphic design, technical development, administration, marketing, etc. where there is no existing in-house capacity or need.

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- United Arab Emirates: Anish Kattukaran

3. BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Background

The GCAP campaign was planned in 2004 and took place through 2005. It focused on mass mobilization around the world on three key dates:

- **1 July 2005:** White Band Day 1 on and around the G8 meeting date; just before the Live8 on Saturday 2nd July, when concerts took place in 10 venues
- **10 September 2005:** White Band Day 2, just before the United Nations (UN) Millennium Summit +5 in New York
- **10 December 2005:** White Band Day 3, before the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Ministerial meeting in Hong Kong

On the Web, the campaign consisted of 46 national coalition websites, from 44 countries, with two global sites.

Objectives of the review

To help the International Facilitation Group assess the significance of the 2005 GCAP, this review looked at the contribution of the 48 websites to the 2005 GCAP campaign. In order to get a clearer view of the information need from this review as well as the information available for the purpose, a needs assessment study was conducted among the national coalitions and other network members. In order of importance, 21 coalition members requested that the study focuses on the following top five areas: a) best practices, b) users (profile and behaviour), c) comparative analysis of websites, d) interactivity, and d) collaboration between national campaigns. To see the full list of priority areas identified in the study, see [Appendix B](#).

On the basis of the needs assessment survey and consultations with the campaign members, this review set out to:

- Assess the role of online communication in the 2005 GCAP campaign
- Provide a broad picture of resources, products and audiences of the online advocacy component
- Review the role of the WhiteBand.org website in the campaign; and to identify how this site can best serve the online GCAP campaign
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- Measure how the coalition of websites contributed to the mobilization of support for the campaign through individual action
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- Recommend a management strategy for the central campaign website in future

4. METHODOLOGY

This review is based on the following three study subjects:

1. **Websites:** 46 national coalition websites and 2 global websites
2. **Website staff:** Focal points identified for the websites
3. **Website users:** Coalition members and general public using the websites

Since information about websites can be stored in different ways and forms, this review adopted a series of processes and tools to extract such data. Online surveys were used as the primary tool to ensure quick and efficient data collection. Third party reviewing tools such as Google, Alexa and website spiders were used to access data that would not be available otherwise and to put the GCAP campaign in perspective in relation to similar and related websites.

Primary consultations and needs assessment study

In order to get a clearer view of the information needed for this review, as well as the information available for the purpose, a needs assessment survey was conducted among the national coalitions and other network members. Structured interviews were conducted with select campaign members. Here is a summary of these two tools:

Research tool	Description	Target stakeholder
Needs assessment questionnaire	A short survey with 5 questions, to identify the priority areas for this review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global and national web site staff
Structured interviews	These were used to gain background information and identify knowledge gaps/needs that this study could fulfil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WhiteBand.org website stakeholders

Primary data collection from coalition and third party sources

For an in-depth view of the performance and relations of the campaign websites, data was collected from the national coalition website colleagues and third party external sources. This also compensated for limited access to website log files and to provide a comparative analysis with related or similar websites. This table outlines the three main website data sources:

Research tool	Description	Target object
Log file analysis	The hard data that provides overall web user and content demand statistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Websites
Third party ranking, benchmarking and analysis	These included data sources and benchmarking statistics from the Google and Alexa search engines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Websites
Site spidering and Social Network Analysis of interlinkages	This is a method of mapping the interlinkages between websites. This technique helps reveal the true positioning of a website within an interlinked online network.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Websites

Review of websites by evaluators

All the 48 websites were reviewed by independent evaluators who looked at content, design, navigation and interactive features. Here is an outline of this tool:

Research tool	Description	Target object
Evaluation form	This was a form with a series of questions that were answered by reviewers who visited each website. All the data was stored in one central database and consolidated to derive general trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Websites

Online surveys

Three online surveys were conducted using an online survey service in order to consolidate detailed responses from the focal points of national coalition websites and their users. The three online surveys are as follows:

Research tool	Description	Target stakeholder
Web focal points' survey (General feedback)	An in-depth survey to obtain detailed information about the resources, services and thinking behind coalition websites	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Global and national website staff
Web focal points' survey (Anonymous)	A simple survey with sensitive questions and space for open answers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Global and national website staff
Global user survey	An in-depth survey that provided users the opportunity to give their opinion about the websites and their relationship with GCAP	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Global and national website users

5. LIMITATIONS

Scope

- **Individual achievements:** This review focused on the overall campaign and did not aim to evaluate online campaigns within national context. It looked at the family of 48 websites taken as a whole and did not look at individual website's achievements or failures. However, because the WhiteBand.org site had the role of a campaign hub, special attention is paid to it.
- **Performance evaluation:** This review should not be seen as an evaluation of the websites' performance as there was no monitoring system in place to provide baseline data for such evaluation. The review, therefore, is a one-off audit of the websites, their users and the overall online campaign, as they existed at the time of the review.
- **Timeframe:** Due to short timeframe available for this review, the online surveys received very low number of responses, thus limiting the precision that a larger sample size would have offered.
- **Language:** Due to lack of time, the web focal points' surveys were conducted only in English. This could have an impact on the response rate, although our assumption was that all focal points could follow and respond to English questionnaires. The global user survey was conducted in English, French and Spanish; however, the other languages were not covered. Evaluations of the websites were also limited to certain extent because of limited language capacity.

Data and information availability

- List of web focal points did not exist, and was put together during this study. There was no capacity to verify the focal points' list and this limited the degree of participation.
- List of coalitions and their websites were incomplete and inconsistent with other lists. As such, this study had to draw up a larger coalition list than has been noted in other sources.
- The number of log files available was limited and generalizations about the websites' traffic had to be drawn from a small grouping.

Resources

- Due to limited resources, the original review plan had to be scaled down substantially as the review progressed. Individual follow-ups with national coalition website staff – which was earlier planned based on the understanding that the GCAP Secretariat had the capacity to do it – could not be undertaken. As the study was designed in a way that depended on this support, the response rate was lower than expected.

Response rate and statistical accuracy

- Only nine responses were received from web focal points, out of the potential of about 45. The response rate was even lower (only 6) in the anonymous survey, which is opposite to the usual trend in online surveys. The count or the percentage (13-20%) is too low for any conclusions to be drawn from these responses.
- Only a few websites actually put the user survey on their websites. This limited the potential of responses to the user survey, for which there was limited time. The user survey finally received about a hundred responses; this sample size is not large enough to draw definite conclusions and, therefore, our conclusions should only be viewed as broad indicators.
- Third party data sources such as Alexa and Google are subject to sampling error that is beyond this review's control.

- Since the review took place after the campaign ended, the global user survey was not able to reach as many website users as it would have in mid-2005.

Bias

- Numerous precautions were taken to prevent the review's objectives and findings from being influenced by any bias. To improve the impartiality of website evaluations, and minimize the potential for political bias, a range of stakeholder groups were consulted, and external quantitative tools were used for analysing websites' performances.
- To bolster linguistic and geographic representation, paid and volunteer evaluators enumerated websites in Spanish, French, Portuguese, German, Greek and other languages, while the global user survey was conducted in English, Spanish and French. However, it was not possible to represent all languages.
- Survey responses from the campaign members may be influenced by organizational and political interests; however, responses did not indicate this.

Confidentiality

- All efforts were made to focus on aggregate data in our reporting in order to avoid singling out any participant in a way that could be compromising for them.
- In order to preserve confidentiality, statistics from the review will be made available to the GCAP Secretariat only in aggregated form. No individual data, responses or meeting notes will be shared with the GCAP Secretariat or any member of the network.

6. FINDINGS

A. THE PEOPLE OPERATING GCAP WEBSITES

In most cases, GCAP websites were operated with a single webmaster who received outsourcing support to get their website project started off. Based on responses from 9 web focal points, in some cases only one person worked full time on the website; but more frequently, they worked on a part-time basis. A few websites did not engage volunteers or interns; however the majority had one or more persons working on their website.

Most of the human resources and expertise were outsourced. This may explain the lack of homogeneity and uniform branding to some extent, though the fact is that the websites were developed organically rather than strategically. One website reported outsourcing 7 staff and had no in-house web staff.

Most of the human resource was invested in the technical development and maintenance of the websites, followed by graphic design. While investment in editorial support and online campaigning was third in priority, no expertise was dedicated at all to online marketing.

B. THE PEOPLE USING GCAP WEBSITES

Website users represented a wide diversity of persons with numerous motivations and interests. Based on broad generalizations, website users can be described with the following statistical groupings:

Gender	52% female 48% male
Age	20% are under 25 (youth) 58% are 25-45 years old 22% are over 46
Internet access	48% from work 40% from home
Work	43% in civil society/NGO 26% students and academia

There was a slight mismatch between the web focal point responses and the global user survey responses. The web focal points considered the general public, campaign partners and youth to be their main target audience. But the user survey showed that only 20% of the respondents are under age 25 and only 26% of the respondents were students. Web focal points rated NGOs as their fourth most important target audience; however, the user survey showed that most respondents had an NGO background.

Most of the users had a positive attitude towards the website. A full 68% considered the websites helpful to their work or interests. And 87% considered the information on the GCAP websites to be credible.

The main reason people visited the websites were first, with 27%, to learn about GCAP, then 23% to participate in national events, followed by professional and personal interests. Their reasons for participating in the event differed somewhat, 69% participated for personal interest; 50% for issues in their country or region; and then 24% claimed they were motivated by information on the websites.

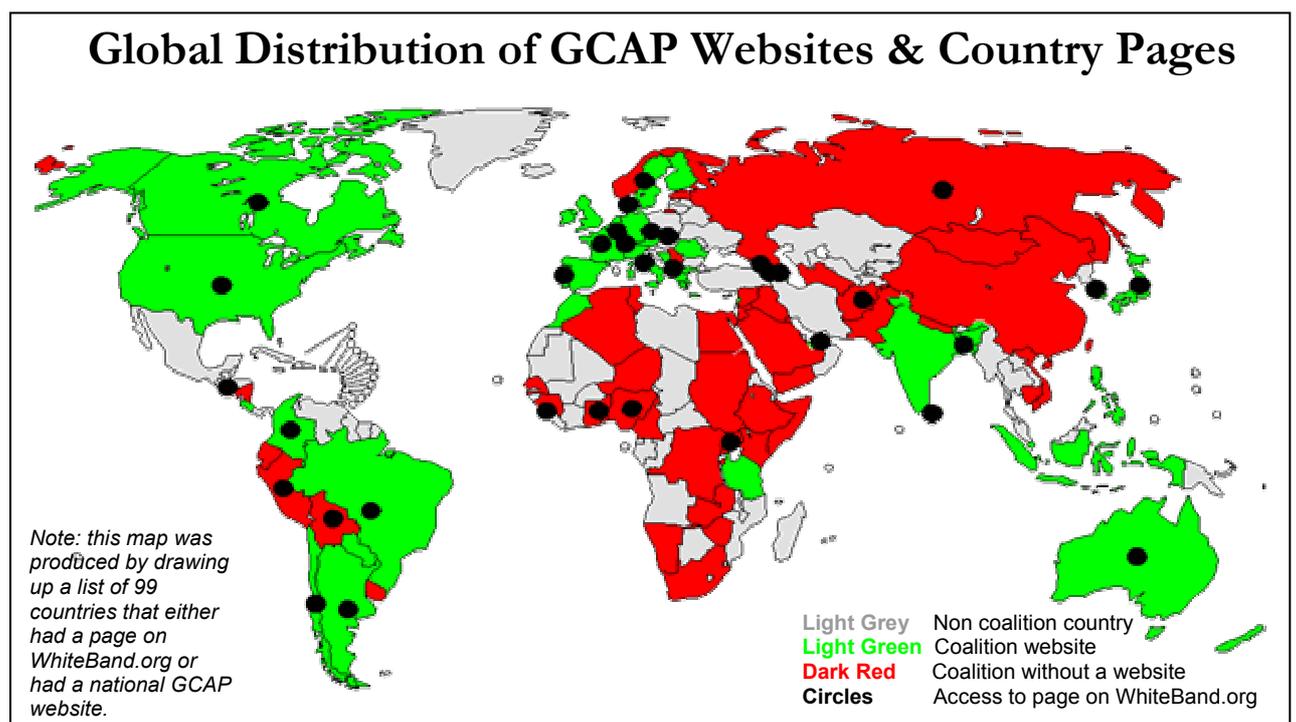
C. PHYSICAL DESCRIPTIONS

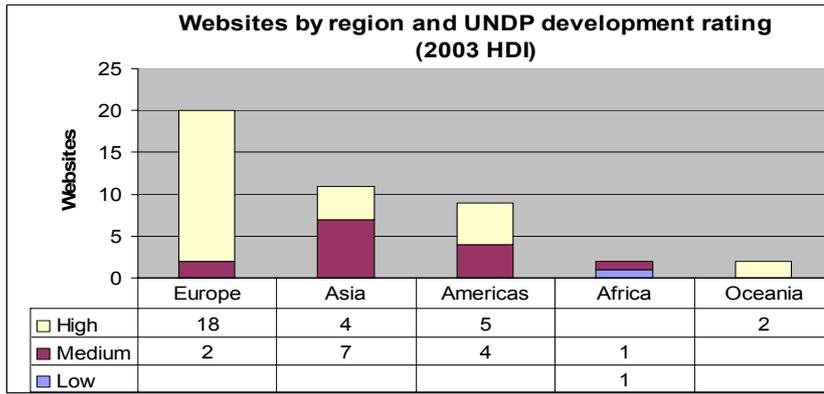
There were a total of 48 websites involved in the GCAP campaign, which represented 44 countries and two international websites. The global distribution of these 44 websites across countries is as follows: Europe 20, Asia 11, Americas 9, Africa 2 and Oceania 2. For a full list of countries, see [Appendix A](#).

Several websites posted content in multiple languages. Across the GCAP network, English was used on 36% of the websites, followed by Spanish 14% and French 11%. For a full list of languages, see [Appendix C](#).

Most of the campaign websites (74%) were pure campaigning websites—more or less, these sites focused exclusively on the four campaign objectives. A smaller group, 26% of the campaign websites, represented sub-sections in larger websites, which often related to the organization coordinating the campaign. Though some contained fully functional sub-sites, it was sometimes difficult to identify the GCAP section in others. In these sub-section websites, it would be easy for users to become distracted or quickly link out of the GCAP area.

The following chart shows the distribution of countries with GCAP websites, those with access to a country page on WhiteBand.org, and those with neither. WhiteBand.org provided country pages for coalition partners without websites. The circles in the chart show countries that had focal persons who were able to modify content on their country pages. However, not all partners actually used this option out of choice or otherwise. There was a clear consensus among the WhiteBand.org stakeholders that this capacity was under utilized.





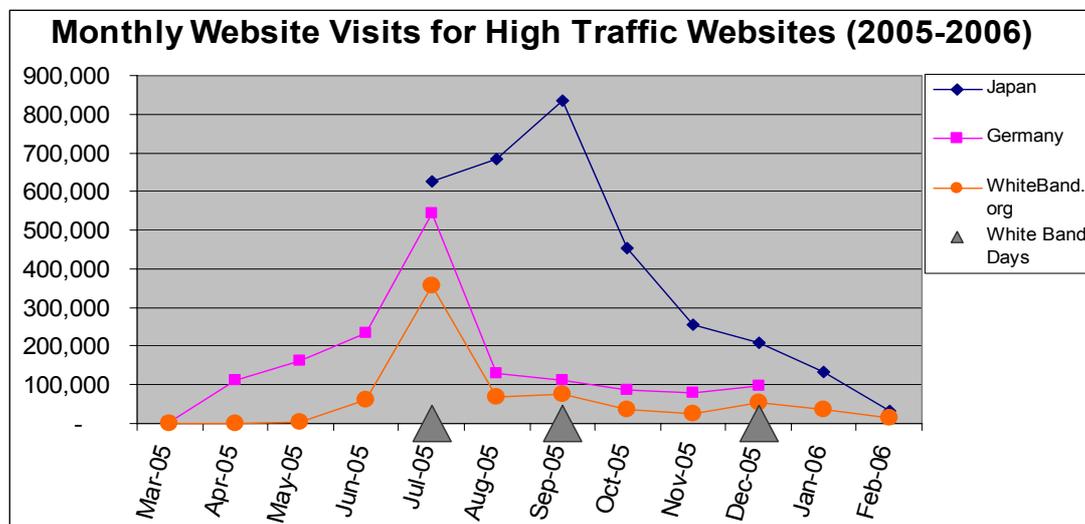
Of the 44 countries with websites, the vast majority were European or from highly developed countries. However, 34% were from less developed countries rated, by the UNDP, from middle to low.

D. WEBSITE TRAFFIC OVER TIME

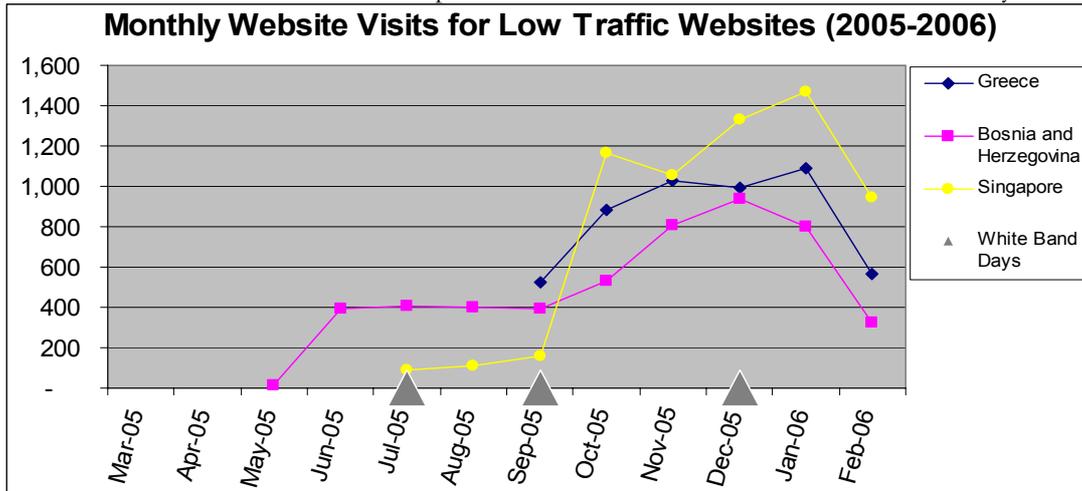
Several measures indicate that the online campaign reached its peak between the first and second White Band Days. The third White Band Day had an insignificant impact on the larger sites; however the sites with smaller traffic saw their visitors double during the third White Band Day. During the year, campaign websites generated an impressive volume of online attention, but then rapidly lost ground as the year progressed. At present, without an active on-the-ground campaign, the websites have very little traffic.

The aggregation of website log files, shown in the charts below, shows the dramatic movement of website visits from 2005 to 2006. The “visits” represents the total number of times the website has been visited, and not the total number of users. For technical reasons it is difficult to count actual people who visit a website, so it is standard practice to count visits. The cut-off time for any single visit is usually 30 minutes. For example, if you visit a website at 10:00 hrs and then again the next time at 10:20 hrs, these will be counted as only one visit. But if you visit the same site 30 minutes later again, at or after 10:50 hrs, this visit will be counted as a second visit.

The following table shows in incredible peak that took place at the time of White Band Day 1 and Live 8 concert, the huge peak that Japan achieved during the White Band Day 2, and the virtually insignificant impact of White Band Day 3. When comparing the following tables, note the huge scale difference. While the Japanese site reached almost 900,000 visits during their peak month, the most popular of the low-traffic website reached approximately 1,500 visits.



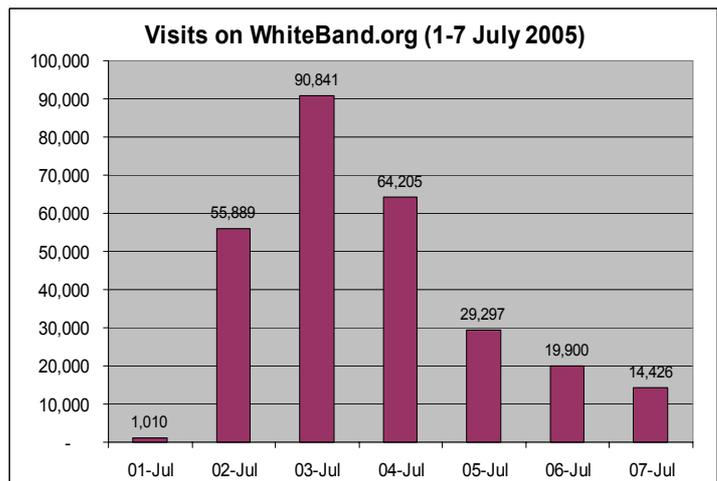
The low-traffic websites reached their peak around the time of the third White Band Day.



WhiteBand.org during the week 1-7 July

The WhiteBand.org site received an astounding boost in traffic on the Live 8 concerts day (2 July): from around 1,000 visits on White Band Day 1 the previous day (1 July) to nearly 56,000 visits. The following day, 3 July, saw the record number of visits to WhiteBand.org when it attracted 90,000 visits and served over 372,000 page views. During this week, from 1 to 7 July, the WhiteBand.org received 40% of its entire 2005 visits. The table on the right shows that there was virtually no traffic on White Band Day 1. Generally, the weeks before that day, the site was averaging about 2,000 visits per day, then in a few days it jumped to levels of traffic that are hard to imagine.

It is quite likely that the Live 8 concert contributed the majority of the coalition's website traffic during the week. There is little evidence that this jump was substantially due to any other major traffic source. And log files show that during the peak month of July, the Live 8 website was the number one external website that drove traffic to WhiteBand.org. This unbelievable volume of traffic could therefore be called Bob Geldof's gift.

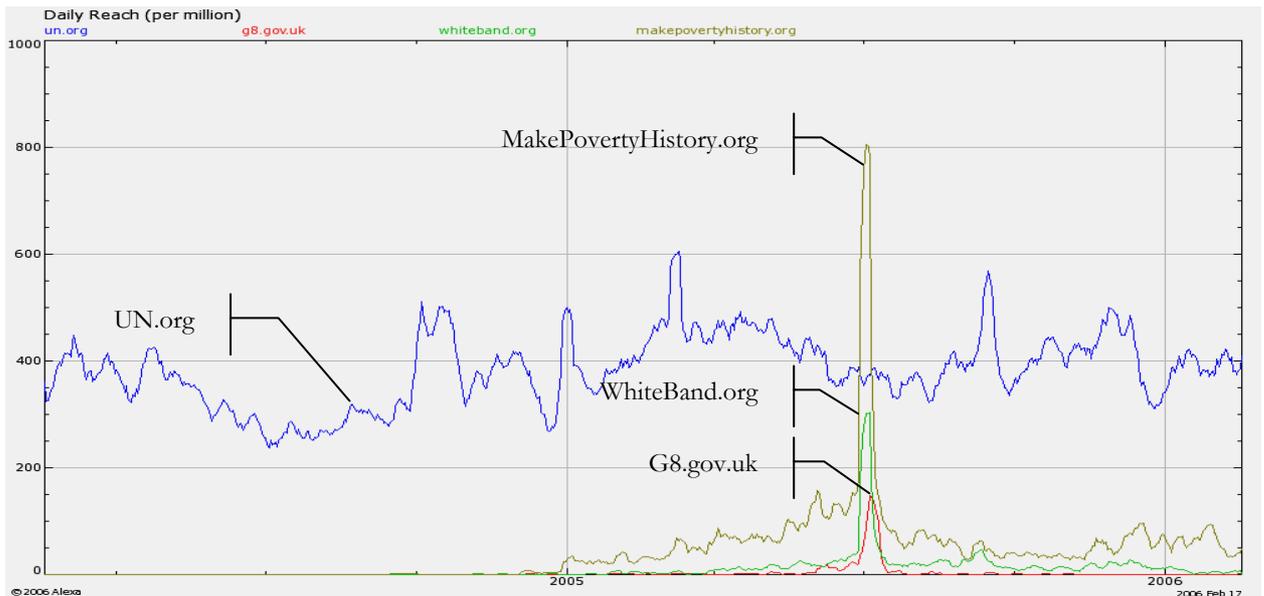


However, the low volume of traffic recorded on White Band Day 1 and the preceding days could also be the result of web server errors, which resulted in erroneous traffic data for the whole year, including no data registered at all for several days. In that case, the jump in traffic from 1 July to 2 July would not be so dramatic as it appears now.

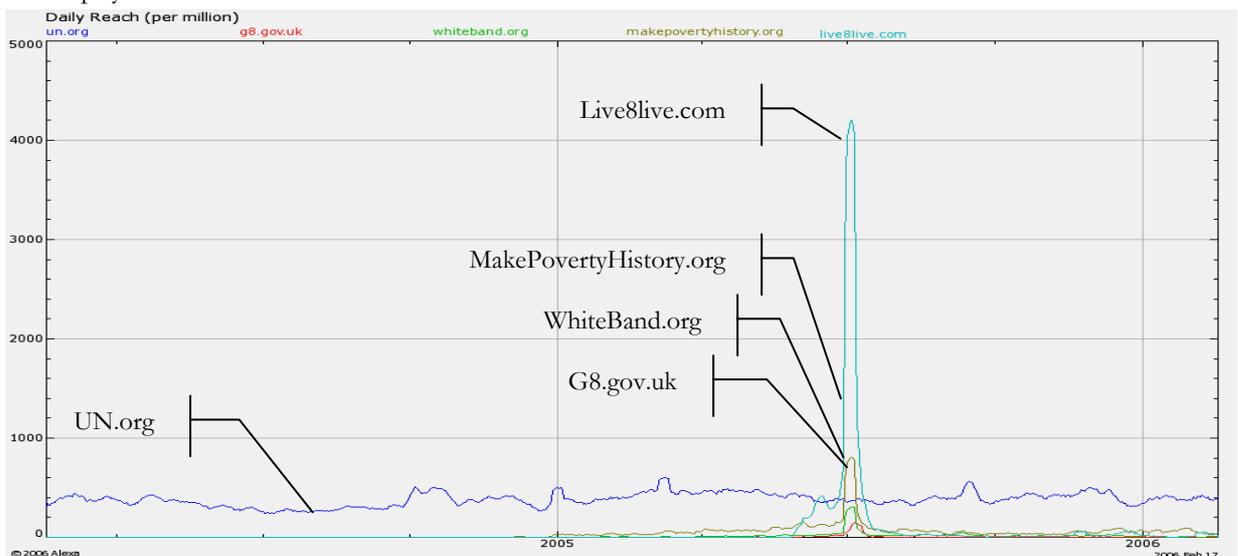
The key question, nevertheless, is how the website was able to help channel this large number of visitors' intentions into actions that could contribute to the campaign's objectives. We will look at this question in the following chapters.

White Band day, Live8 and G8

The following two Alexa charts show the emergence of the online GCAP campaign set against the main United Nations website, UN.org. The UN site was selected to provide a sense of the incredible volume of traffic that GCAP websites experienced during the week of White Band Day 1. This chart shows the daily reach, estimated as the number of visitors per million of global Internet users (there are approximately one billion Internet users at present). The blue line shows the United Nations website which is an extremely high traffic website. At the end of 2004, the MakePovertyHistory.org website started to appear, followed by the WhiteBand.org website. The G8 website just gained ground before their meeting. All these websites peaked during White Band Day 1, and impressively, the MakePovertyHistory.org website reached more viewers than UN.org.



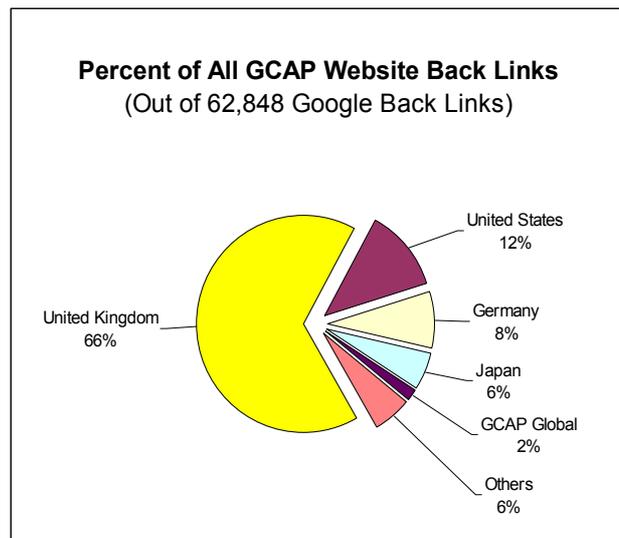
Moving one step further, the following graph shows the incredible peak that occurred on the Live 8 website during the concert series and White Band Day 1. At this time, the Live 8 website received an incredible volume of traffic – it attracted more public attention than the UN.org website and dwarfed the G8’s website. It generated incredible volume of Internet traffic and then abruptly ended.



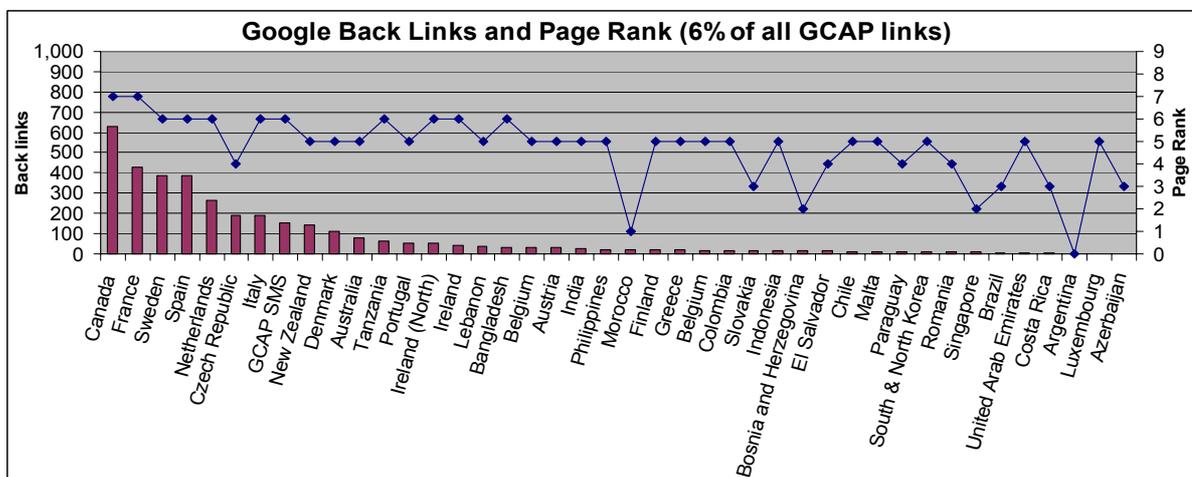
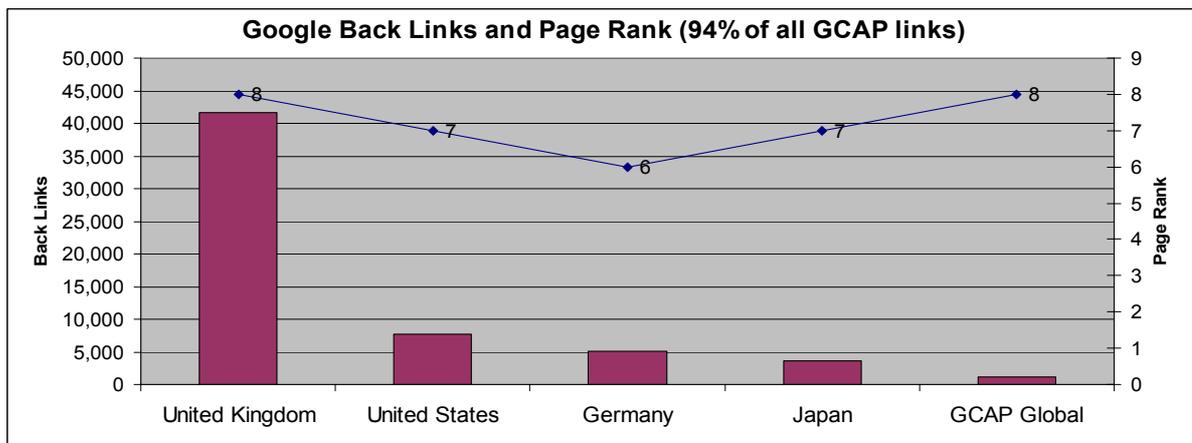
E. POSITIONING IN CYBERSPACE

Every external hyperlink to any website counts as a “back link”. In some sense, each link to a site can be counted as an indication of interest in that site. So, it is like a buzz about a site, or a soft measure of public interest. Generally, back links improve traffic to a site and improve the site’s ranking on Google’s search results. However, a site with low volume of back links can maintain considerable traffic if it drives people to the site through email or has links from just a few high traffic sites.

Out of the 48 GCAP websites, only five websites captured 94% of all back links: the UK, USA, Germany, Japan and finally WhiteBand.org sites. The chart to the right shows the distribution of back links.

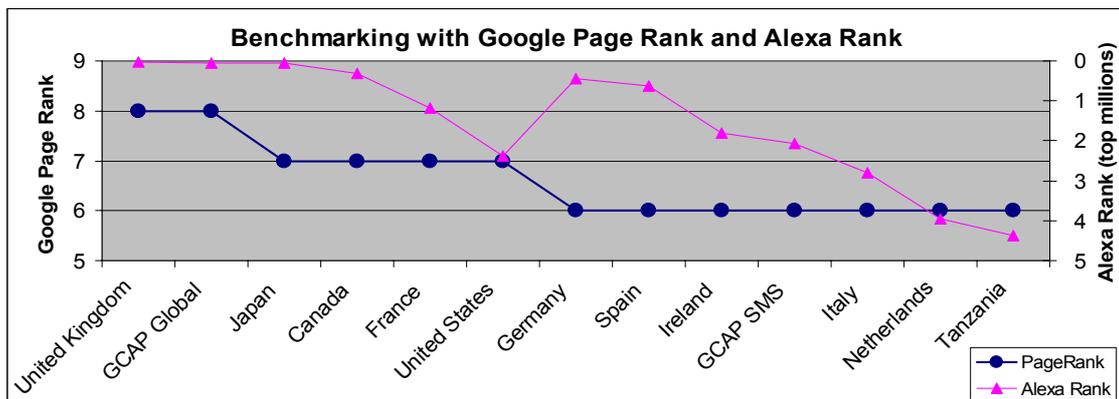


The following two charts show the ranking of websites by a combination of back links and page rank. Page rank is a score that Google assigns to websites for the sake of returning relevant search results, so this is Google’s measure of the importance of a website. So a website with a score of 8 out of 10 will be deemed a popular site and will be closer to the top Google query results. The following two charts show how Google has rated each of the coalition websites. The bars show the back links; the diamonds, the page rank.



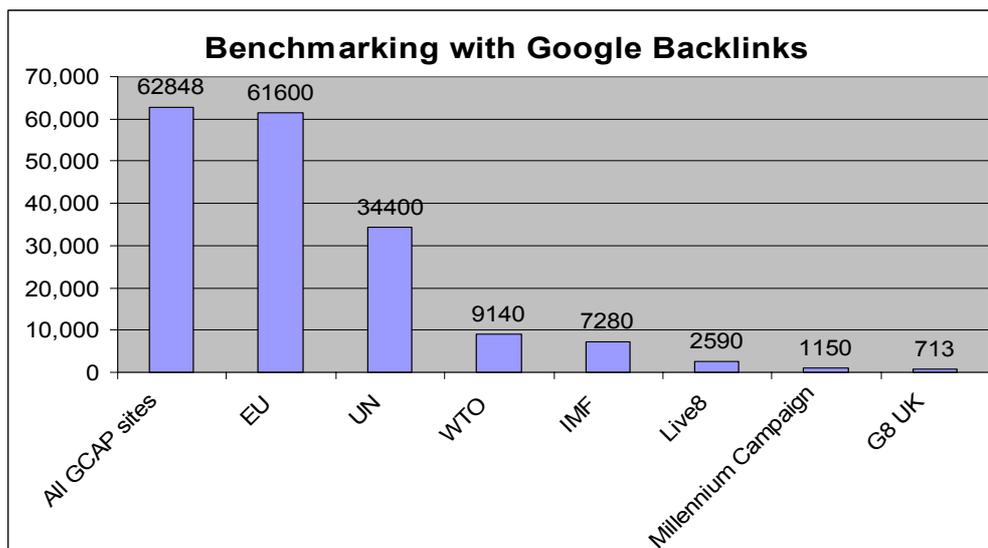
Of all the GCAP coalition websites, the UK site, MakePovertyHistory.org, is the most popular. It is the only coalition website that practically owns the word “poverty”. A Google search for the word “poverty” brings this website up in second place. See [Appendix E](#) for a full list. The UK site also dominates Google by being the site with the most back links. Although WhiteBand.org also had a page rank of 8, by owning 66 percent of the coalition back links and a page rank of 8, the UK website appears to be the most popular coalition website. We would need to analyse log files of the website to be certain, but this data was not available.

Another way of characterizing the websites’ popularity, and which produces slightly different results, is to do a combined ranking between Google’s page rank and Alexa’s rating system. The Alexa system ranks pages in the top millions in the world. This characterization still shows the UK website as the most popular coalition site; however, it places the WhiteBand.org website in the second position, followed by Japan and Canada.



The entire online GCAP campaign

As a whole, the family of GCAP websites has made a huge dent in the landscape of cyberspace. The table below compares the number of back links to the combined sum of all coalition websites to that of the European Union website, UN.org and a few other websites that were included for comparison. When contrasting the small number of back links to the Millennium Campaign website, it is possible to argue that the GCAP campaign provides the UN Millennium Campaign a communications network that is far beyond their existing capacity. Though to answer this question conclusively, there would be a need for more in-depth analysis.



F. CONTENT

Campaign goals

When adapting the four GCAP campaign objectives to different national contexts, there were slight differences in how these goals were presented, the importance that was placed on them and the inclusion of other issues. But content on most of the websites (68%) clearly presented the GCAP campaign objectives.

The table below shows how website focal points, users and search engines ranked each site according to the four goals. The Google ranking was derived by examining which GCAP coalition websites appeared in the top 100 websites returned when different keywords such as “poverty” and “debt” were used for search. Search results for keywords “trade” and “aid” did not include any GCAP website.

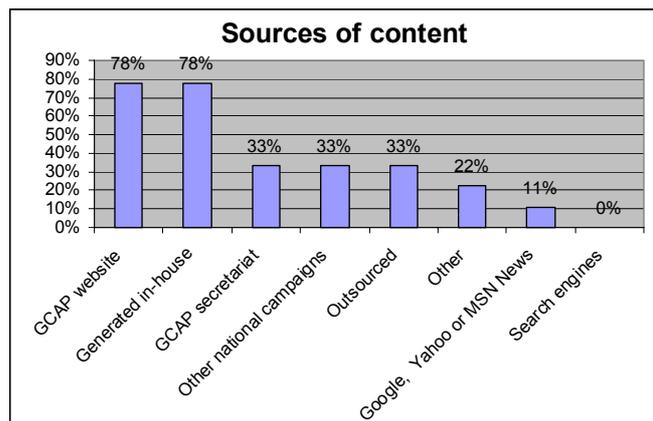
Clearly, the fourth goal – poverty reduction – stood out as the number one issue in the minds of web focal points, users and Google. Then the least popular goal with users and focal points was debt cancellation. Finally, there was a slight difference between the users’ and focal points’ ranking for the goals for trade justice and development aid.

	1. Trade justice	2. Debt cancellation	3. Development aid	4. Poverty reduction
Web focal point survey	3	4	2	1
User survey	2	4	3	1
Google keyword relevance	--	2	--	1

The users’ survey asked respondents about their interest and knowledge of the four campaign issues and their understanding of the importance of these issues. Respondents rated their knowledge of poverty reduction highest, followed by development aid, trade justice, and international debt. Clearly, poverty reduction was the most important issue for the respondents; and they seemed more aware of this issue compared to the other three campaign issues. It is important to note that respondents may have rated this high because of the very broad range of concepts associated with poverty reduction.

Sources of content

A large amount of the content (written and visual) was based on the WhiteBand.org website and was generated by national coalitions in-house. Some websites also used content available from the GCAP Secretariat and other national campaigns. However, many websites (62%) also provided original content produced locally. The table to the right shows the many sources of content.



Content appropriate to audiences

A little more than half of the websites (58%) had content that was relevant and engaging. In most cases (65%) the language was consistent and error and jargon free, and information was provided in a clear and concise manner. But not many websites (43%) published content written following standard web publishing practices. This was also reflected in the website users’ opinion. Only about half of them rated content/information quality to be “very good” or “excellent”. Only about one-third of the websites (35%) had up-to-date content at the time of the review. This may be attributed to the fact that the campaign effectively ended in December 2005.

G. ONLINE MARKETING

Overall design

The ten evaluators who reviewed all GCAP websites agreed that a large number of the websites (65%) were created with appealing and effective designs. And 75% of the time they effectively reflected the websites' association with a civil society cause/campaign. However, out of the users who commented on 16 websites and mainly WhiteBand.org, only 44% agreed that the websites layout and design was "very good" or "excellent". At this point it is worth noting that graphic design was one of the top three areas where maximum human resources were invested.

Strategic use of visuals

The websites' evaluation showed that only 44% the websites used visuals to support content and the campaign's message. When contrasting the imagery against the behaviour that campaigners wanted users to engage in, visuals often consisted of the white band itself and people – including celebrities – wearing them, and people participating in protest marches etc.

White band branding

There were a few differences and similarities between the ways users and website focal points perceived the GCAP brand. Irrespective of the many ways that white band were portrayed – be it as a stylized symbol, on the wrist of celebrities, as part of the GCAP logo, or in photos – website focal points and users both agreed that the main GCAP symbol was the 'white band'.

Apart from the symbol, user survey respondents associated the following with the GCAP campaign. First was the name, "Global Call to Action Against Poverty", followed by the slogan "Make Poverty History". The Live 8 concert and Bono rated low. So, even though traffic to GCAP websites peaked around the Live 8 concert, users may not have seen the association between the concert and the campaign. In short, web focal points thought the GCAP brand was about a global mass movement, poverty reduction and was symbolized by the white band.

Though there was consensus on what the main GCAP symbol was, the white band was used to only a certain extent with 43% of the sites using it as a symbol for the campaign. But 57% of the websites did not use the white band visibly or at all. The MakePovertyHistory.org website which adopted the white band as a key symbol became the campaign's brand leader. Their combination of imagery and use of the white band was adopted by many sites except WhiteBand.org where, apart from the logo, there was hardly a white band image to be found.

Campaign relations through branding

Campaign branding was divided among the coalition partners. It is likely that users who visited a few GCAP websites would not have realized they were all working together for a common set of goals. According to the website evaluations, in 75% of the cases, websites had a weak brand connection to the GCAP campaign. And in 79% of the cases, the websites did not significantly link to other websites in the GCAP network.

This branding divide is likely due to the fact that most websites seemed to base their branding on the MakePovertyHistory.org website and not the WhiteBand.org, and the fact that the white band generally superseded the GCAP logo. Most of the websites (70%) did not use the GCAP logo visibly or at all. Only 30% clearly branded their websites with the GCAP logo. Despite the fact that the white band became the dominant symbol, most website user respondents (84%) said they knew what the acronym GCAP stood for.

Search engine optimization

Good website marketing can be characterized by more than visuals, words and concepts; there are a number of technical features that are required and the design of interactive features that attract users. It was only possible to get WHOIS data about URL name registration dates only for 18 websites. Of the 18 websites, only two were created before 2004. The majority of websites

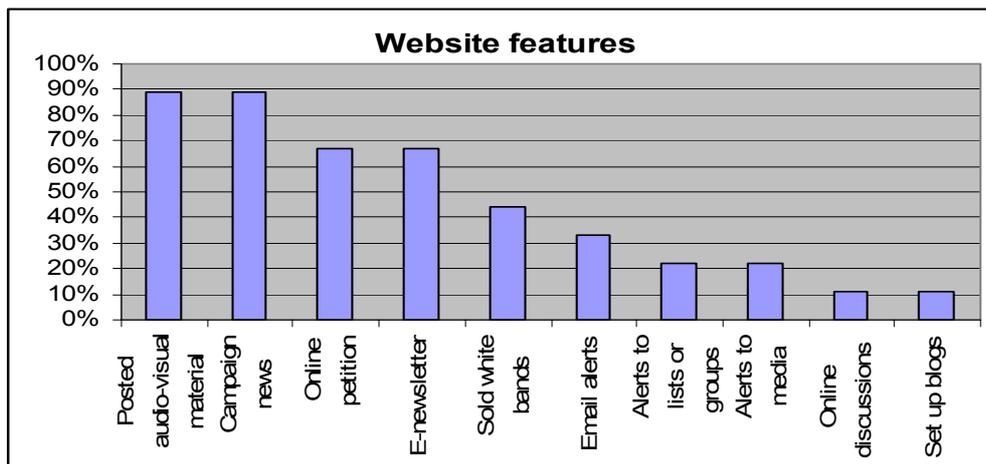
were created less than a year before the campaign started. Google ranks pages under one year quite low. As a result, most of these websites would have had a low relevance for search on Google.

Meta tags were not used effectively throughout the campaign. (Meta tags are used to provide a description and keywords of a web page. This data may then be used by search engines to generate and display a list of search results matching a given query.) This must have had a negative impact on the ability of campaign sites to reach local visitors through search engines. Only half the websites used meta tags and out of them, just 16% used them effectively.

Memorable and key word relevant URL names are essential for good website marketing. Nearly 65% of the websites used site names and URLs that reflected their campaign objectives. But, more than half (57%) did not use search engine friendly URLs to increase their ranking in search engines.

Interactive features

A number of interactive and engaging features were set up on many of the websites. One trademark of the GCAP campaign was the widespread use of audio-visual materials which, according to the web focal point survey, were the main website feature. The following table shows the distribution of these features:



Navigation

For a website to be user-friendly, it should have a simple navigational structure that aids user interactions. Indeed, 64 % of website users said they easily found the information they were looking for and almost two-thirds of the website users (71%) agreed that the websites were easy to navigate. In contrast, website evaluators found that in only about half of the websites (55%), the design aided the overall navigation of the sites. Navigation was as such found to be consistent and intuitive in 60% of the websites.

H. SITES' CAPACITY TO MOBILIZE ACTION

For an advocacy website to effectively engage users, it must show constituents where and how to respond positively to a campaign's objectives. There must be means by which website users can carry out actions that contribute to the campaign's objectives, a place where their good intentions and motivations can be realized.

On-the-ground mobilization

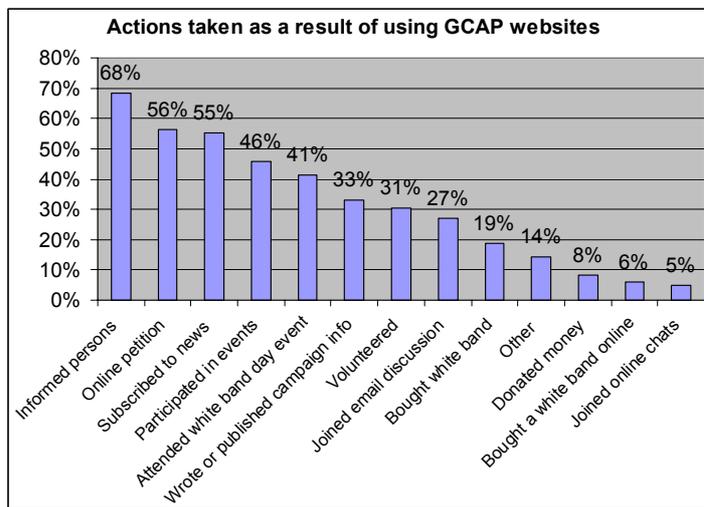
Calendar event listings provided the main outlet for the constituents' good intentions—mainly by mobilizing participation on the three white band days, and numerous smaller events. The surveys indicate that they were one of the main tools used to channel online interactions to on-the-ground actions. Most of the websites provided clear event listings and served as a medium between online information and on-the-ground action. Sixty per cent of the users said they participated in public events and activities associated with the websites. While 46% said they participated in GCAP events or activities as a result of using these websites, 41% said they participated in a White Band Day event.

Inter-activism

Across all the GCAP websites, there was a wide range of interactive online applications that provided an outlet for users to take action. These included signing online petitions, contacting local officials, sending emails to friends, placing campaign banners on websites, and the innovative GCAPSMS.org website that allowed constituents to place messages on the website by sending an SMS. Though there were many such features across the entire network, the evaluation process shows that only in about a third (35%) of the cases, interactive options were offered at a substantial level. When they were offered, though, they were prominently highlighted or featured on the websites (60% of the time).

About half the users highly rated the options available for taking actions. This indicated that online action features were good enough, but there was room for more innovation.

One of the most common means of user actions was online petition: 67% focal points said they offered this option. And it was popular with users too: 56% of them said they signed online petitions as a result of using the websites. The other online actions offered were: purchase of white bands (44%), online discussions (11%) and blogs (11%).



A greater number of users (68%) said they informed their colleagues or friends about GCAP (which probably contributed to wider participation) and subscribing to email newsletters. Online discussions featured very low in the users' action list: 27% joined them.

During the month of July 2005, when the WhiteBand.org website was at its peak viewership, the third most popular entry page was 'Take Action'. During June, this page attracted 5,872 visits and it contained an online email petition letter to the G8.

White bands

Purchasing a white band was one of the campaign's cornerstone actions--it was the main symbol and it was an action endorsed by celebrities around the world. While turning each white band wearer into a GCAP advertising channel, these bands also contributed a psychological impact to the wearers. It was a constant reminder of the campaign. And according to social marketing practitioners, once a target population is engaged in a small act related to an issue, they are much more likely to undertake a more demanding act later on down the road. In light of this theory, online white band sales may have contributed to user's GCAP involvement, far beyond the simple purchasing transaction.

However, the potential to distribute white bands online was not fully realized. Very few users (6%) said they bought white bands on these websites. And, this activity was one of the actions that website users took the least. Comparatively, more of them (19%) bought white bands at a shop or event as a result of using the websites. On the demand side, less than half of the web focal points (45%) said they sold white bands on their websites. The number of white bands sold on four websites (for which data was available) ranged from less than 50 to 670,000 on one site (Japan). It is, therefore, difficult to evaluate the overall impact of online sale of white bands.

Though purchasing a few white bands is a moderate effort act, in many cases, minimum orders or price incentives encouraged users to purchase white bands in bulk – this increased the effort required to order, pay, pick-up and then distribute the white bands to others. However, it is probable that bulk orders were distributed to coalition partners.

The cost of participation

When seeking to engage users, it is important that their motivation outweighs resistance from perceived personal costs. Or, in other words, that the time and cost of participating in GCAP activities is at an acceptable level for that person. Only 19% of the users considered that their actions required a low level of time and energy; however, 42% estimated GCAP demanded a high level of time and energy. It is therefore not surprising that signing online petition was preferred much more than buying white bands online. Wider use of online advocacy tools would have addressed this divide by providing website users with a bigger ‘shopping basket’ of advocacy options. So, someone who wanted to contribute to the campaign, but didn’t want to go through the effort of ordering a white band online, may have found the email petition was the right level of time and energy expenditure.

Internalisation of GCAP goals

One of the main goals of the campaign was to mobilize public participation to achieve the GCAP objectives. And if the campaign hopes to continue, there will have to have been a transformation in participants. An overwhelming majority of website respondents said that as a result of using a GCAP website, they noticed an increase in their intellectual understanding about the issues, their feelings about the importance of these issues, and most important, their willingness to take action. At the time these users were surveyed, the campaign was over, so it is likely that they are the most loyal and engaged of users; nevertheless, it does indicate that the online campaign did have an impact on the people who interacted on its websites.

Celebrities

As per the web focal points survey, a big number of the websites (67%) included celebrities in their campaigns online. Many of the web focal points (60%) said celebrities’ endorsement of the campaign was effective in motivating people to get involved in their countries. The users also agreed: 80% said that celebrity involvement helped increase public awareness about the campaign issues. However, only 8% cited celebrity endorsement itself as a motivation for participation.

Online networking

Networking online was an essential part of the GCAP campaign. Only about a third of the website users (37%) rated highly the networking options of the websites. This is not surprising considering that online chats were not popular and network constituents were not properly displayed or highlighted in about half of the websites (49%).

I. COALITION RELATIONSHIPS

In most cases, relationships between national campaigns and the larger GCAP campaign were unclear. Often, this relationship was limited to an occasional paragraph, a GCAP logo, or a link, or in rare cases, all of them.

The visual relationships between national coalition websites and the WhiteBand.org website, through common symbols and design motifs, was obscure. The WhiteBand.org website's symbolism and naming was not fully in tune with the coalition and users. The GCAP logo was quickly replaced by images of white bands. Beyond the white band itself, many national campaigns used powerful endorsements through the visual depiction of celebrities wearing the white band.

Interlinkages

Beyond visual and text relations, according to the website reviewers, 59% of the websites were not clearly and properly linked with other GCAP websites in the network. In less than half of the websites (49%), the network constituents were properly displayed or highlighted. This is also reflected in the analysis of linkages between the campaign websites, which shows that the WhiteBand.org website was clearly the campaign centre. It gave out and received more links than any other website in the network. Following WhiteBand.org, the German and Greek websites followed as the most generous websites that linked to other coalition websites.

Coalition partners linked to the UK's MakePovertyHistory.org website almost as frequently as the WhiteBand.org website. Though the UK website only linked to a few other coalition websites, it was so well linked that in many ways, it was the closest campaign centre, and thus the biggest beneficiary in the network. One reason for its popularity is probably due to the fact that it was the number one website that focal points turned to for resources, inspiration and ideas.

“The Make Poverty History Campaign of the UAE is the national branch of the largest anti-poverty campaign in the world: G-CAP (Global Call to Action against Poverty)”

The United Arab Emirates website summarized this relationship in a simple and powerful way with the above statement.

The following table outlines the top coalition websites that gave out, and received links with other coalition websites. For a full list of websites and to learn more about this analytical approach, visit [Appendix D](#).

Site	Link given	Link received
whiteband.org	39	25
deine-stimme-gegen-armut.de	18	4
stoppoverty.gr	10	1
makepovertyhistory.ca	3	8
makepovertyhistory.org	2	19
hottokenai.jp	1	8

Oxfam who paid for it, the GCAP Secretariat who owned it, and Choike who built, edited and administered it.

The contract for WhiteBand.org website was executed by Choike. They provided technical, editorial, and user management services. At present, it is not clear who is managing the WhiteBand.org website, though the former WhiteBand.org editor offers support; however this is on a voluntary basis as the management contract has recently expired.

The GCAP Secretariat and WhiteBand.org staff worked in different countries, for different organizations, with different institutional priorities – and clearly – communications between these organizations were strained. Some of the sources of these tensions may be attributed to the fact that some of the website services that are conventionally done in-house were out-sourced. Website projects often depend on standard outsourced services such as graphic design and technical development. Organizations generally keep user administration in-house. Though there are some editorial and content syndication services, as a rule, organizations usually do editorial work in-house.

The editorial staff on the WhiteBand.org site processed a huge volume of campaign content; as such, these editorial staff developed a birds' eye view of the campaign, far broader than the average campaign member. The fact that the editorial staff did not reside in the GCAP Secretariat meant the Secretariat probably could not take full advantage of the valuable knowledge of the campaign available with those staff. It is hard to imagine that the GCAP Secretariat was able to make well-informed decisions without frequent interaction with the WhiteBand.org editor.

An effective international campaign requires effective international relationships. The WhiteBand.org site had an extensive user area which allowed coalition partners who did not have a website to manage their country pages. There were some discrepancies about why it took so long for this to get moving. Lack of user verification (trust) was cited as a reason why it took long to give out passwords to national coalitions. Lack of motivation was cited as the reason why coalition partners did not frequently administer content on WhiteBand.org.

When trying to understand the relationship between the staff who provided national coalitions access to WhiteBand.org, it became apparent that this was treated as a technical act. But user administration is more than giving out passwords—it's about forming trust relationships and helping users to feel comfortable and confident using the system. No doubt, the act of giving out passwords to the system would have been better treated as an in-house function that is intrinsically part of the partnership building process—the most important, in fact, because this is the point when the GCAP Secretariat would say to a new partner “We trust you. Welcome aboard. Here are the keys. Let me know if I may help you out.”

Generally, for effective and memorable branding, websites are more successful when they unify various brand elements, such as site name, URL, campaign slogan and symbol. WhiteBand.org faced challenges in this area as there was a mismatch between its URL, website name and symbol. The URL name WhiteBand.org is separate from the website name which is Global Call to Action Against Poverty. The logo addressed this challenge with the Global Call to Action Against Poverty phrase overlapped on a white band, which may not be obvious and there were virtually no other white band to be seen on WhiteBand.org.

In addition, the URL name does not have a keyword of the campaign in it, such as ‘poverty’ or ‘trade’ and this greatly limited its potential to rank high in search engines. In all likelihood, the WhiteBand.org website was under pressure to be many things to many coalition partners. As such, its potential to be a pure marketing machine was secondary to its role in holding the network together. So it is understandable that this site walked a fine line and as a result it could not please everyone, but still played a key role with its mismatched personality.

7. GOOD PRACTICES, CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. GOOD PRACTICES

A number of good practices were followed across the GCAP campaign network, though often in isolation and by only a few coalition members. These good practices are recommended for wider adoption by the whole network in future:

- **Harmonization of branding:** By aligning the website name, URL and the campaign slogan and by keeping them linked to the issue, the UK's Make Poverty History campaign created a harmonized branding that not only established it in a strong position but also helped in marketing it effectively on the Internet. A number of national coalitions adopted the same approach successfully.
- **Unifying symbol:** White band became a unifying act and symbol for the campaign and many coalition partners used it very effectively on their websites. It also strengthened the identity of the part of the campaign that used the white band as a branding element.
- **Celebrity endorsements:** Support to the campaign's cause from national and international celebrities was effectively used by some coalition members on their websites. This created an important pull factor for the campaign.
- **Adaptation of MPH branding:** A number of national coalition members effectively adapted the Make Poverty History branding to suit their local context.
- **Use of audio-visual material:** A number of coalition websites used audio-visual material on their websites, in most cases adapting the material available from the UK website to national contexts.
- **Creation of country sections on WhiteBand.org:** The national campaigns pages on the WhiteBand.org are a very useful resource for users looking for information related to the campaign in their own countries. This feature could be better utilized by creating explicit linkages with coalition websites from and to these country pages.
- **Option to sign online petitions:** Only a few of the coalition websites offered users the option to sign online petitions in support of the campaign's issues. But wherever available, it was one of the most favourite means to take action. This online advocacy tool should be used more extensively across the network as it has a higher potential of impact at the level policy change level.

The authors of this review would also recommend implementing some of the following practices, which are established as standards in web publishing and online marketing:

- **Search engine optimisation:** All campaign websites should be optimised for better findability and ranking by popular search engines. This will ensure higher visibility on the Internet leading to larger traffic to the websites.
- **Viral marketing:** Users should be offered the option to forward and share information and action options from the websites to their colleagues and friends, through tools like "Email a friend", "Send an e-card" etc.
- **Interactive tools:** More interactive tools such as options to comment on articles, blogs, bulletin boards and discussion forums should be implemented to keep the website user involved in the campaign. These can be effective tools for sharing and networking among website users and thus can be an incentive for them to return to the websites and remain involved in the campaign.
- **Online advertising:** Numerous avenues are available today for effectively advertising websites on the Internet. Google's AdWords and AdSense, for example, are based on keywords and content relevance and are becoming very popular advertising tools.

- **Online marketing & promotion:** The websites should be marketed and promoted regularly through a consistent and planned way. Regular publication of newsletters, timely e-alerts and dissemination through various issue-related websites, communities, and mailing lists are some of the essential activities in this area. Professional email management systems should be used for best results.
- **Monitoring & evaluation:** The response to the websites and their marketing products – such as the newsletters, campaign alerts and news releases – should be monitored regularly. This will help evaluate the online campaign’s impact and improve it in a consistent and planned way. Professional web analytics programmes and email management systems can provide monitoring and analysis services, which should be the basis of regular evaluation.
- **Integrated content management:** For such a disparate and wide set of websites, it is essential to have an easy and effective content sharing mechanism to support coalition members who cannot afford the cost or who wish to get their websites up and running quickly. Provision of a content management system (CMS) will ensure that coalition websites do not have to spend scarce resources on building individual websites and maintaining them. National websites can be integrated better into the network without losing their own identity or perspective, and national members can focus their resources on generating information and content from their countries. This will also help keeping all the websites – including the global WhiteBand.org – updated at the same time, easily.

B. CONCLUSIONS

In overall assessment, the success of the online GCAP campaign essentially relied on the following four pillars:

- **Make Poverty History:** The campaign itself, its website and its slogan had substantial influence on the GCAP campaign. It was the most successful website in the campaign network and provided national coalition website valuable resources such as audio-visual products, the slogan and campaign ideas.
- **White band:** The white band became the unifying symbol and wearing it became the unifying act for the campaign. Buying or making a white band oneself was easy and simple enough to motivate people to accept it and adopt it. Although we have limited information about the total sale of white bands through the campaign websites, and very few users actually bought them online, the fact that 670,000 were sold through the Japan website and 50,000 through the New Zealand website points to the potential of this symbolic act.
- **Live8 concert:** The Live8 concert’s endorsement of the GCAP campaign had a big role to play in the popularity and visibility of the campaign websites. It was probably the single most important source of traffic for the online GCAP campaign. Within a short timeframe, GCAP websites that were linked to the Live 8 website received a huge number of visitors. How much of that traffic was converted into action on the part of the visitors is difficult to assess, but it certainly raised the visibility and status of the campaign in the cyberspace. The concert helped position the campaign in such a way that it can easily dominate search engines with a minimal effort. However, this capacity is rapidly depleting. It is unlikely that any event in the near future will generate online traffic anywhere near the levels that Live 8 generated.
- **Celebrity endorsement:** National and international celebrities played an important role in raising the profile and awareness of the GCAP campaign. Most websites used celebrities in their campaigns and this had a positive impact on peoples’ awareness of the campaign’s issues. However, this does not seem to have succeeded in motivating people to take action.

The overall success of the GCAP campaign in creating a buzz around it and the issues also benefited the online campaign. As a result, the family of GCAP websites has made a huge dent in the landscape of cyberspace. The online coalition has the number of back links equal, and in many cases greater, than the websites of major world political institutions. This is an incredible achievement. However, it needs to be noted that 94% of all back links were leading to just five websites: the UK, USA, Germany, Japan and the WhiteBand.org site.

The campaign websites were also very well placed in terms of their rankings by third party analysis tools like Google and Alexa. The biggest five websites – the UK, USA, Germany, Japan and the WhiteBand.org site – were ranked very high by both. Most of the other websites in the network also scored 5 out of 10 on Google's ranking scale, indicating their content was very relevant to the campaign.

Nevertheless, the huge traffic received by the campaign websites was more a result of the offline media activities, including high-profile media events and campaigns, than because of the websites' own marketing and promotion strategies. Although many of the websites published e-newsletters, most of them did not explore more effective marketing tools such as viral marketing, online discussion lists or boards and blogs.

Indeed, the online campaign as a whole faltered due to lack of a clear governance structure and lack of a holistic strategy. Most of the websites were developed organically and not in a planned manner. The smaller coalition websites were built much later in the campaign timeline. From the impact of the three White Band Days on the websites' traffic, it is clear that the online campaign reached its peak around the first and second White Band Days. These two White Band Days had the biggest impact on the large campaign sites, but the White Band Day 3 had an insignificant impact on them. In comparison, the smaller campaign websites, which came into being later in the campaign, received large number of visits around the White Band Day 3, but missed the opportunities of the first two White Band Days.

Capacity was an issue with many of the organizations hosting these websites, as they did not have the resources or the tools to manage them. While the loose alliance under the GCAP banner allowed the national members to design their online campaigns according to their local needs, it also led to lack of cohesion and unity. As a result, the GCAP as a brand and campaign was substantially diluted. For example, the relationship between national campaigns and the global GCAP campaign were unclear on the websites. Often this relationship was limited to the occasional paragraph, GCAP logo or a link to the WhiteBand.org website, but only in rare cases, all of them. The visual relationship was even more obscure, with most coalition websites replacing the GCAP logo with images of white bands.

The coalition websites also failed to exploit the full potential of the global network by not explicitly creating linkages between the websites and building upon one another's strengths. The low response rate to website review requests clearly shows the weak relationship within the GCAP campaign network.

One of the fallouts of the absence of a structured governance mechanism for the network was the difficulty in managing the WhiteBand.org website and the strained relationship between its stakeholders over this issue. Some of the key stakeholder groups felt they were not responsible for the website; others felt they had limited influence. Staff working on the website came from different organizations, with different institutional priorities, and communications and relationships between them were strained. These management issues clearly affected the overall performance of the website.

But despite the online campaign's weaknesses, the buzz around the websites because of the back links and spurts of huge traffic helped it in making poverty a popular issue on the Internet. The coalition websites appeared in the top 100 websites returned in search results for the words

“poverty” and “debt”; however, none of these websites appeared in search results for the term “trade” or “aid”. Poverty reduction also became the most important issue for the website users.

The websites also influenced their users’ awareness and understanding of the GCAP campaign issues. They quickly became credible sources of information about these issues. An overwhelming majority of website respondents said that as a result of using a GCAP website, they noticed an increase in their intellectual understanding about the issues, their feelings about the importance of these issues, and, most important, their willingness to take action.

Signing online petitions was one of the most favourite means to take action on the Internet for users. A greater number informed their colleagues or friends about GCAP, which could have led to wider individual action in favour of the campaign. Buying white bands online – which was one of the more common action features on the websites – was not preferred much. Comparatively, more users bought white bands at a shop or event than online. People also participated in campaign-related public events and activities, including the White Band Day events, as a result of using the websites.

Certain intangible assets, such as market position and reputation, are hard to evaluate. However, the GCAP campaign’s current online position should be seen as a strong asset that can be leveraged to further the campaign’s objectives in the future. However, this position will corrode rapidly without a strong marketing and promotion campaign for the websites.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS

When considering whether or not to continue the GCAP campaign beyond 2005, the IFG needs to understand the value and potential of the online assets that were built up during 2005. Assuming the campaign will continue, the following recommendations outline some broad strategic directions for the websites:

Exploit and strengthen current online position

- The coalition websites should be linked to one another and to the WhiteBand.org site more strongly and explicitly. By improving the number of interlinkages among the websites, each coalition site will improve their ranking on Google and other search engines. Thus the highly popular websites will share their ranking with the less popular ones and strengthen the campaign as a whole.

Establish a clear brand and identity

- The mismatch between a campaign’s name, logo, symbol and URL not only has an implication on its brand identity and value, but also on its marketability in the cyberspace. Building upon the existing value of the different components of the campaign, efforts must be made to establish a clear, unified identity of the campaign as a whole.

Improve coordination and governance

- An integrated governance structure, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities, will be essential for realizing the full potential of such a campaign network. Given the loose nature of the alliance, such a structure needs to be based upon close coordination and broad partnership rather than centralized control. More efforts need to be invested in building strong relationships with the national coalition members and ensure their ownership of the campaign.

Build capacity of smaller coalition websites

- Most of the national coalition members do not have the capacity for running an effective online campaign. GCAP will gain a lot by providing such members with website building capacity and tools. In the context of a long-term campaign, it will be worthwhile investing resources in an efficient content management system (CMS) that can be used by coalition members to establish their own online presence and in the process strengthen the GCAP campaign. Such a CMS will make it easier for the campaign members to share content across the sites, including the WhiteBand.org, and manage their own websites.

Look deeper into online advocacy & social mobilization

- As this review only took a broad view of the online holdings, it did not evaluate the impact of the campaign's social mobilization mechanisms. Since only half the users gave a strong response towards using online advocacy features, there would be value in evaluating a number of online social mobilization mechanisms, such as e-petitions, links to local politicians, event listings, or SMS to web services in order to identify what worked best and share it with the whole network.

Strengthen WhiteBand.org

The value of a strong and vibrant central hub in an online campaign cannot be stressed enough. In order to enable the GCAP campaign network to exploit its full potential, the WhiteBand.org site needs to be converted into that hub which will support the coalition websites and will be supported by them. A number of steps need to be taken to make this happen, starting with improving the relationship between the WhiteBand.org and coalition websites and within the network as a whole.

- The GCAP Secretariat should seek to develop a content sharing arrangement with coalition websites through a content management system. It should support coalition partners to use the system. This will retain knowledge where it is most needed, while providing a central point where relationships, ownership and trust can be fostered.
- All editorial work should be retained within the GCAP Secretariat. Editorial staff will normally know more about the network than most others staff; they normally have their ears to the tracks and a birds' eye view of the campaign. This knowledge should spill off beyond the website. It should be available to all GCAP Secretariat staff, factored into larger campaign issues, and find expression wherever needed.
- In-source user administration to the GCAP Secretariat. User administration is not a technical act. It is part of the process of building relationships—in fact it's the most important part of the relationship and should be the core job of any campaign secretariat. It represents the point where trust is extended and a series of interactions will ensue.
- Outsource specialist skills where there is no existing in-house capacity or need. Specialist website skills such as graphic design, technical development, administration, marketing, etc. are often done better and faster by specialist companies.

8. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: WEBSITES IN THIS STUDY

International websites

1. GCAP Global (www.whiteband.org)
2. GCAP SMS (www.gcapsms.org)

National coalition websites

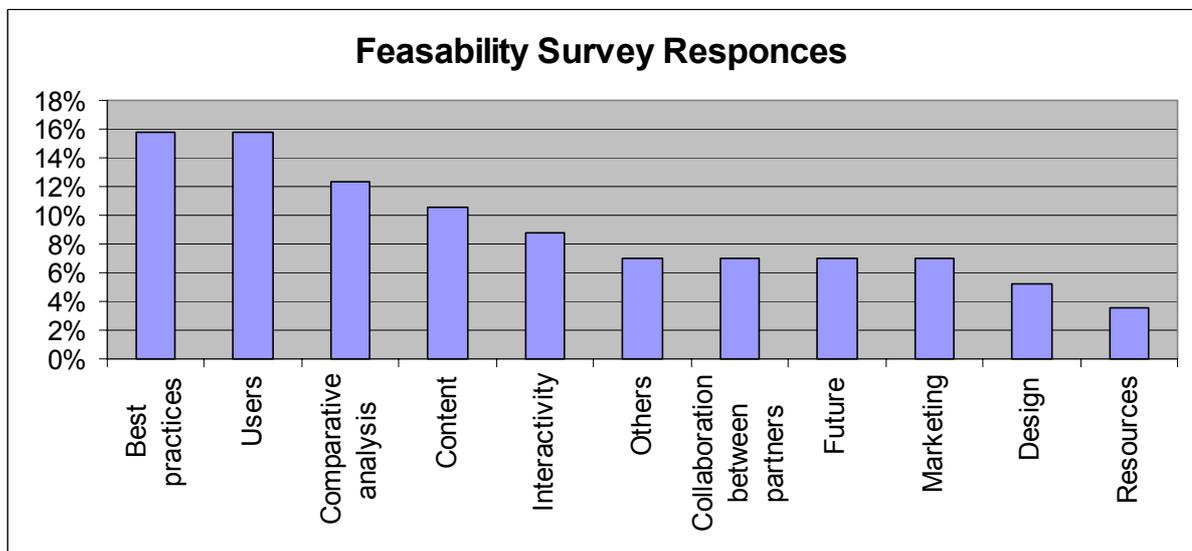
1. Argentina (www.nomaspobreza.org.ar)
2. Australia (www.makepovertyhistory.com.au)
3. Austria (www.nullkommasieben.at)
4. Azerbaijan (<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/azericoalition/>)
5. Bangladesh (www.campebd.org)
6. Belgium (www.desparolesauxactes.be)
7. Belgium (www.detijdloopt.be)
8. Bosnia and Herzegovina (www.zajedno.ba)
9. Brazil (www.chamadacontrapobreza.org.br)
10. Canada (www.makepovertyhistory.ca)
11. Chile (www.sinexcusas.cl)
12. Colombia (www.colombiasinpobreza.org)
13. Costa Rica (www.alforja.or.cr/centros/cep/odm/index.htm)
14. Czech Republic (www.ceskoprotichudobe.cz)
15. Denmark (www.makepovertyhistory.dk)
16. El Salvador (www.cidep.org.sv)
17. Finland (www.makepovertyhistory.fi)
18. France (www.2005plusdexcuses.org)
19. Georgia (www.whiteband.ge)
20. Germany (www.deine-stimme-gegen-armut.de)
21. Greece (www.stoppoverty.gr)
22. India (www.socialwatchindia.com)
23. Indonesia (www.gelangputih.org)
24. Ireland (www.makepovertyhistory.ie)
25. Ireland (North) (www.makepovertyhistory-ni.org)
26. Italy (www.nientescuse.it)
27. Japan (www.hottokenai.jp)
28. Lebanon (www.annd.org)
29. Luxembourg (www.bandeablanc.lu)
30. Malta (www.stoppovertymalta.org)
31. Morocco (http://je.free.ma/modules.php?name=News&new_topic=7)
32. Netherlands (www.maakhetwaar.nl)
33. New Zealand (www.makepovertyhistory.org.nz)
34. Paraguay (www.decidamos.org.py)
35. Philippines (www.endpoverty-philippines.com)
36. Portugal (www.pobrezazero.org)
37. Romania (www.anaconda.ro/world/make-poverty-history-en.htm)
38. Singapore (www.onesingapore.org)
39. Slovakia (www.svetbezchudoby.sk)
40. South & North Korea (www.endpoverty.or.kr)
41. Spain (www.pobrezacero.org)
42. Sweden (www.utrotafattigdomen.nu)
43. Tanzania (www.tango.or.tz)
44. United Arab Emirates (www.makepovertyhistory.ae)
45. United Kingdom (www.makepovertyhistory.org)
46. United States (www.onecampaign.org)

Sri Lanka's GCAP website, www.sunfo.org, was submitted as after this report was completed; as a result, it has not been included in any of the assessments. For www.onelatinamerica.org was submitted as a future campaign portal under construction.

APPENDIX B: FEASIBILITY STUDY

There were 21 responses to the feasibility study by the following coalition partners: Argentina (www.nomaspobreza.org.ar), Austria (www.nullkommasieben.at), Azerbaijan (groups.yahoo.com/group/azericoalition/), Bangladesh (www.campebd.org), Bosnia Herzegovina (www.zajedno.ba), Chile (www.sinexcusas.cl), CIVICUS, Czech Republic (www.ceskoprotichudobe.cz), Finland (www.makepovertyhistory.fi), GCAP Coalition Site (www.whiteband.org), Germany (www.weltweite-aktion-gegen-armut.de), Greece (www.stoppoverty.gr), Haut Commissariat d'Intervention GAcnAcrAle, India (www.socialwatchindia.com), Japan (www.hottokenai.jp), Korea (www.endpoverty.or.kr), Northern Ireland (www.makepovertyhistory-ni.org), Portugal (www.pobrezazero.org), Slovakia (www.svetbezchudoby.sk), The Netherlands (www.maakhetwaar.nl), and United Arab Emirates (www.makepovertyhistory.ae).

They identified the following focus areas:



APPENDIX C: LANGUAGES ACROSS WEBSITES

This list outlines the number of languages used on all the websites. There were 56 languages used on the 48 websites.

Language	Total	Percent
English	20	36%
Spanish	8	14%
French	6	11%
Arabic	2	4%
German	2	4%
Portuguese	2	4%
Azeri	1	2%
Serbo-Croatian	1	2%
Czech	1	2%
Danish	1	2%
Dutch	1	2%
Finish	1	2%
Flemish	1	2%
Georgian	1	2%
Greek	1	2%
Indonesian	1	2%
Italian	1	2%
Japanese	1	2%
Korean	1	2%
Romanian	1	2%
Slovak	1	2%
Swedish	1	2%
TOTALS	56	100%

APPENDIX D: COALITION INTERLINKAGES

Due to complexities associated with many websites, 33 out of the 48 coalition sites were included in a link analysis. Furthermore, due to the number of pages associated with applications in certain Content Management Systems (such as calendars with thousands of pages), the link analysis only indexed up to 5,000 pages. Websites that use frames, changing domain names, scripts, or non-traditional means of serving content may not have had links registered when in fact, they do have links. As such, the link analysis should be taken as an indication of overall trends.

Site	Link given	Link received
whiteband.org	39	25
deine-stimme-gegen-armut.de	18	4
stoppoverty.gr	10	1
bandeablanc.lu	6	1
makepovertyhistory.ie	4	5
makepovertyhistory.ae	4	2
onecampaign.org	4	1
makepovertyhistory.ca	3	8
maakhetwaar.nl	3	3
makepovertyhistory.fi	3	3
makepovertyhistory-ni.org	3	3
makepovertyhistory.org	2	19
utrotafattigdomen.nu	2	4
nientescuse.it	2	3
gelangputih.org	2	2
makepovertyhistory.dk	2	2
stopovertymalta.org	2	2
svetbezchudoby.sk	2	2
zajedno.ba	2	1
hottokenai.jp	1	8
endpoverty-philippines.com	1	2
makepovertyhistory.org.nz	1	2
sinexcusas.cl	1	2
chamadacontrapobreza.org.br	1	1
gcapsms.org	1	1
pobrezazero.org	1	1
makepovertyhistory.com.au		5
nullkommasieben.at		2
cidep.org.sv		1
colombiasinpobreza.org		1
decidamos.org.py		1
nomaspobreza.org.ar		1
whiteband.ge (domain problem with index)		1

APPENDIX E: GOOGLE KEYWORD RANKING

The following table shows the top 100 websites when searched by four keywords: poverty, trade, aid, debt. All GCAP websites were searched along with the following benchmarking sites: www.live8live.com, www.un.org, www.millenniumcampaign.org, http://europa.eu.int, www.g8.gov.uk, www.imf.org, www.wto.org. The queries were conducted on On 21 February 2006.

Rank	Page Title	Page URL	Group
Poverty			
2	Make Poverty History	http://www.makepovertyhistory.org	GCAP
10	The ONE Campaign	http://www.one.org	GCAP
15	Make Poverty History - 2005 - Abolissons la pauvreté	http://www.makepovertyhistory.ca	GCAP
17	index_html — gcap	http://www.whiteband.org	GCAP
39	MAKE POVERTY HISTORY	http://www.makepovertyhistory.com.au	GCAP
48	Make Poverty History - Edinburgh	http://www.makepovertyhistory.org/edinburgh	GCAP
54	International day for the eradication of poverty	http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/poverty/poverty_link3.htm	Benchmark
55	UN - CyberSchoolBus : Poverty Curriculum	http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/poverty2000/index.asp	Benchmark
64	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) - All Documents Sorted by ...	http://www.imf.org/external/np/prsp/prsp.asp	Benchmark
67	EUROPA - Employment and Social Affairs - Social Inclusion	http://www.eu.int/comm/employment_social/social_inclusion/index_en.htm	Benchmark
75	Factsheet - The Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility	http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/prgf.htm	Benchmark
Debt			
46	Factsheet - Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries ...	http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/facts/hipc.htm	Benchmark
92	Make Poverty History - What We Want - Debt	http://www.makepovertyhistory.org/whatwewant/debt.shtml	GCAP
Aid			
35	EUROPA - EuropeAid Co-Operation Office	http://www.eu.int/comm/europeaid/index_en.htm	Benchmark
60	EUROPA - ECHO - Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission	http://www.eu.int/comm/echo/index_en.htm	Benchmark
Trade			
1	World Trade Organization (WTO)	http://www.wto.org	Benchmark
15	EUROPA - TRADE	http://www.eu.int/comm/trade	Benchmark