

# GCAP Germany “Deine Stimme gegen Armut” Campaign Opinion Poll 2008 – an Analysis

## Introduction

Once a year GCAP Germany (“Deine Stimme gegen Armut” – “Your voice against poverty”) conducts a comprehensive public opinion poll (together with TNS Infratest GmbH) to assess the German public's knowledge and attitudes towards the MDGs and poverty. In a series of multiple choice questions, a sample of 1,001 were surveyed on their knowledge of the MDGs, the level of their commitment and which actions they would take to tackle poverty, to name but a few. The results provide the campaign with invaluable information on their target groups, their habits and attitudes. Here are some of the key outcomes of this year's poll from October 2008.

## Key Results

- Seven out of ten people (71.4 %) think it is important that the German Government keeps its promise to **increase spending on development** to 0.51% by the year 2010. For every third person it is even “very important.”
- Eight out of ten are of the opinion that present patent protection legislation for AIDS medicines need to be relaxed, in order to make medicines for people in developing countries affordable (81.2 %).
- Two-thirds of the people surveyed, expressed willingness to **pay more for food**, if the money were to benefit producers in developing countries (65.2 %)
- Six out of ten people claim to have learned little to nothing **at school** about the situation in developing countries and the relationship between industrialised and developing countries (59.9 %). For every third person it was at least adequate (29.7 %).
- **Political education** on development issues puts people in the position to think globally and act locally (to become mature global citizens). Those people, who are of the opinion that they can make a personal contribution to solving global problems also outstandingly often claim to have learned “a lot” or “adequate” about the situation in developing countries and the relationships between industrialised and developing countries at school.
- Every second German thinks that “too little” on the relationship between industrialised and developing countries, as well as on globalisation and development is **taught in schools today** (50.5 %).
- Almost half of Germany's citizens believe that they can **make a personal contribution** to solving global problems (44.9 %).
- To make a personal contribution to solving global problems, an outstanding majority of people polled, said they would be prepared to change their **personal consumption habits**: Respectively eight out of ten people (each 82.5 %) would buy fair-trade products and buy products from companies that show commitment for the environment or social issues. In addition to the changes in personal habits, **policy changes are still called for**. More than two-thirds would vote for a party that addresses poverty (68.5 %), the same amount would sign a respective petition or call to action (67.6 %).
- Every second German has **heard of the MDGs** (52.3 %). However only one out of ten knows what the specific goals are (11.6 %). These outcomes very much reflect the results of last year's identical poll.
- More than half of the Germans (57.9 %) **know the Campaign** “Deine Stimme gegen Armut” (“Your Voice against Poverty.”).

## Specific Focus „Political Parties and Development Policy“

- Three out of four people are of the opinion that a **Party's development policy profile is important for their decision whom to vote** for (75.2 %). In particular women, older citizens and people with basic school education place importance on this aspect.
- Those people, whose vote is dependant on a Party's development policy profile, place above average importance upon the **pledge to increase development financing** by the year 2010. (89.2 %).
- Those people, who claim a Party's development policy profile is especially important for their vote, tend to think that "too little" on the relationship between industrialised and developing countries as well as on globalisation and development is taught in schools today. Consequently, in their own interest, Party's should promote **political education on development**.
- To make a personal contribution to solving global problems, more than **two thirds would vote for a party** that addresses poverty (68.5 %). Voting for a party that addresses global poverty is a sizeable option especially for young voters (up to 29 years old; 71.7 %).
- Conversely: Those people, who believe that they can **make a personal contribution to solving global problems** place above average importance on a Party's development policy profile for their vote. This provides political parties with a largely untapped potential to engage with active and optimistic constituents.
- What is particularly remarkable is that those people, who cast their vote according to the development policy profile of a political party, also tend to be the most engaged. Their willingness to take action is outstanding in for every named response option (multiple choice), in particular to start up or join a local action group. They are also above average likely to seek a political option, i.e. by voting for a relevant political party, by signing a petition or call to action or by writing to an MP. Subsequently political parties who expand their development policy profile could win the support of very engaged and influential people.

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