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***Contesting unfair international  
capitalism: Assessment of the  
effectiveness and impact of  
campaigning and advocacy from the  
NGO sector***

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## **Abstract**

Campaigning and advocacy are fundamental strategies that the NGO sector now employ to tackle the adverse effects of the international capitalist system, which has affected impoverished groups of people and countries in the last 30 years, imposing unfair rules and practices. The strategies of campaigning and advocacy (in principle based on the strong links between the North and the South, and between NGOs and community organisations) have been backed by some governments, the media and many other actors from the civil society, both at local and global level. However, these strategies have also been criticized and it has been argued that campaigns and advocacy work are more directed to NGOs own objectives. Issues regarding legitimacy, representation, autonomy, motivation and impact are at the core of that debate. This paper presents an assessment of all these issues from the point of view of the local activists themselves. Two main campaigns are used for the discussion, the Trade Justice and the Jubilee Debt campaigns. The evidence presented in this paper relies on the authors' reflections, interviews with campaigners and the Campaigns teams' documentation. We conclude that campaigning is effective for combating dominant international capitalism and increasing the accountability towards the poor.

**Keywords:** campaigns, community organisations, capitalism, advocacy, NGOs

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## **Campaigning as strategy for advocacy**

For many of us, and our organisations, campaigning has become a fundamental strategy used over the last 20 years to advocate on behalf of disempowered groups within a context where the economic international order has put rich (Northern) countries in a dominant position over (Southern) poor countries imposing on them unfair rules and practices of international trade and financial relations.

Our main concern with the international economic order is that neoliberalism translates into a set of rules and policies which threaten the capacity of poor countries to reduce poverty and produce some kind of sustainable development. As in many organisations of the NGO sector, in the Trade Justice Movement our approach of advocacy considers economic regulation and policy change as indispensable to the reduction of problems associated with free markets and the biased international financial system – which favour the creditors. We also think that regulation can be crucial in reducing the effects of perverse economic and political behaviour in Southern countries where problems such as governmental corruption undermine the efforts of the civil society in its attempts to establish a basis for a more just order. Such regulation, we suggest, cannot be achieved spontaneously. Rather, policy and institutional change – particularly in powerful countries that hold control of both the rules and the assets with which trade and financial transactions occur between rich and poor economies – can be provoked by means of campaigning.

Over the past 30 years of development interventions, we have observed that many of the groups of poor population in low income countries with which development and advocacy organisations work are not sufficiently empowered to negotiate or defend themselves. However we believe that NGOs, activists and campaigners in general can assume roles of collaboration, representation and advocacy in the international political arena. This advocacy role involves the execution of campaigns which directly aim to influence the policy making process. Such campaigns are intended to reflect the strong connections between organisations and actors from the North and the South. As such, NGOs' campaigns are political in nature, in so far as they try to influence the decision-making process in favour of those who they advocate for.

The following statements taken from a selection of regional (i.e. not central) member organisations of the Trade Justice Movement and the Jubilee Debt Campaign are useful to illustrate this way of working and the organisations' and activists' own understanding of campaigning as the strategy used for promoting advocacy.

### **Organisations' principles and campaigning aims**

'ActionAid International is about changing the relationship between rich donor countries and those in the developing world... We have broken the mould of a traditional development charity, where decisions were inevitably the property of the donor countries and receiving countries were expected to be largely passive. Now the two will come together around the same table, with the same agenda and a shared responsibility for decision-making'.<sup>2</sup>

'CAFOD speak out on behalf of poor communities, explaining the underlying causes of poverty and challenging governments and international bodies to adopt policies that promote social justice and end poverty... Through our partners in the South, we develop credible advocacy and lobbying positions. We lobby governments, the EU and international institutions on the development and reform of policies that affect the communities we

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<sup>2</sup> [www.actionaid.org.uk](http://www.actionaid.org.uk)

support ... We influence key decision makers and opinion formers by advocating for a more just distribution of the world's resources in the North and South'.<sup>3</sup>

'We [Christian Aid] strive for a new world transformed by an end to poverty and we campaign to change the rules ... and to challenge and change the systems which favour the rich and powerful over the poor and marginalised'.<sup>4</sup>

'Friends of the Earth seeks to influence the government to make changes to policies in favour of people and planet... We need to change the rules so that the economy works for people and the environment, not pit one against the other... We are all part of an unfair system of international trade that benefits big business at the expense of communities and the environment. Global trade needs to be rebalanced in favour of people and the planet'.<sup>5</sup>

'Jubilee Scotland campaigns for 100% debt cancellation for the world's poorest countries ... International lenders and debtor country governments must work together ... ensuring that governments are accountable to their citizens, and that the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund act democratically and openly, and are accountable to all citizens of the world.'<sup>6</sup>

[The New Economics Foundation] 'aims to expose the problems with the international finance and economic systems and create appropriate remedies ... researching and campaigning on changes to global governance to tackle international issues like climate change. ... jubilee research continues NEF's pioneering involvement in tackling international debt... transforming markets goes beyond corporate responsibility to set out a new vision for harnessing and channelling enterprise to meet social and environmental need'.<sup>7,8</sup>

'We OXFAM GB are a catalyst for overcoming poverty ... campaigning to achieve lasting change. We work at all levels from global to local, including international governments, global institutions as well as with local communities and individuals, to ensure that everyone's rights are fulfilled and protected ... Unjust policies and practices, nationally and internationally must be challenged and removed'.<sup>9</sup>

'The World Development Movement tackles the underlying causes of poverty. We lobby decision makers to change the policies that keep people poor. We research and promote positive alternatives. We work alongside people in the developing world who are standing up to injustice'.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> [www.cafod.org.uk](http://www.cafod.org.uk)

<sup>4</sup> [www.christian-aid.org](http://www.christian-aid.org)

<sup>5</sup> [www.foe.co.uk](http://www.foe.co.uk)

<sup>6</sup> [www.jubileescotland.org.uk](http://www.jubileescotland.org.uk)

<sup>7</sup> The NEF is not an NGO, however, as part of JDC has been included in this selection due to its significant participation in the Jubilee campaign and later on in JDC coalition.

<sup>8</sup> [http://www.neweconomics.org/gen/m1\\_1\\_i2\\_inteconomics.aspx](http://www.neweconomics.org/gen/m1_1_i2_inteconomics.aspx)

<sup>9</sup> [www.oxfam.org.uk](http://www.oxfam.org.uk)

<sup>10</sup> [www.wdm.org.uk](http://www.wdm.org.uk)

'World Vision is a Christian relief, development and advocacy organisation ... WV works to change the root causes of poverty through campaigning, church partnerships, education and influencing policy makers'.<sup>11</sup>

Campaigning can be defined as a set of actions (that involve mobilisation, lobbying, the production of information and research, and focused activities close to key events where target actors are due to be present) directed towards achieving an objective requiring some national or international political change. Although these activities take place during specific periods of time, seeking to gain momentum at strategic opportunities, they all contribute to a (usually) long-term strategy conceived by a central team – the NGOs' think tanks – according to the nature of the problems to be addressed.

The typical campaign team includes a mixture of inspired individuals – activists who are usually volunteers – and focused NGO staff who follow through the policies and strategic issues identified by their organisations, design the campaign, recruit volunteers, carry out the campaign activities and raise money. The most commonly used avenues to communicate their messages include: the public media and (through sponsors) the paid media, increasingly the Internet, protests, rallies and other similar public events, mass meetings with speakers, writing directly to members of the public (particularly on a small scale, but in widespread networks), communicating face-to-face with members of the public (with a large number of volunteers), distributing leaflets, and more recently writing emails to key political actors.

After the key events of a campaign, the networks formed and/or strengthened as a result of the campaign might become established as a new organisation – or at least as an institutionalised platform – reinforcing the social and institutional basis for continuing with the same or other campaigns. The development of new campaigning groups and the strengthening of existing groups could be taken as a signal of how local activists and organisations build large movements that both seek to achieve particular goals and open an institutional space for transnational interaction, building on and contributing to the formation of what is now called "global civil society". Notwithstanding such a positive development, there are also several issues and questions that arise both from the campaigns themselves and the institutions created after the campaign. These include: to whose interests does the campaign respond, what should the campaign seek to achieve, how appropriate are the chosen strategies, who should the new organisations represent, how are the local and grassroots campaigners involved, what kind of coordination is needed between the organisations to avoid competition and overlaps?

These issues regarding legitimacy, representation, autonomy and impact, underlie the core of the debate about NGOs' campaigns. This paper presents an assessment of some of these issues from the point of view of NGOs and local activists involved in two main campaigns carried out in the United Kingdom and elsewhere: the Trade Justice Movement and the Jubilee Debt Campaign. This paper is authored by activists and NGO campaigners involved in both campaigns; it is also a group reflection about campaigning as a means to change the terms in which international finance and trade operate in the current capitalist order, but also as a way of strengthening the local basis of civil society. Hence, this is a paper that discusses the links between the capitalist international order and civil society with focus on local activists and NGOs. After this introduction, the paper describes details of the two campaigns and emphasises the role and involvement of local activists and NGO agencies. It follows an analysis of the extent to which those campaigns have provoked policy change and the eventual impact they might have on the Southern groups they are supposed to advocate for, as well as the impact upon Northern communities that get involved in campaigning.

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<sup>11</sup> [www.worldvision.org.uk](http://www.worldvision.org.uk)

## **Anatomy of a campaign**

Two big long-term campaigns that have been significant in the NGO sector worldwide, and more particularly in Great Britain, are the Jubilee Debt Campaign (developed since the 1990s) and more recently the Trade Justice Movement. We use these two campaigns to reveal the diverse features that campaigning involves, the motivations and forms in which local movements are produced, and the particular ways in which the impact of these campaigns can be perceived.

### **The Jubilee Debt Campaign**

The Jubilee 2000 campaign was the highest point of a long-term movement advocating debt cancellation initiated in the mid-1990s by the Debt Crisis Network. Jubilee 2000 consisted of three years of public meetings, leafleting and campaigning to give continuity to the 1996 African leaders tour – led by Zambian ex-President Kenneth Kaunda and Archbishop Makhulu of Central Africa – speaking initially to large (student) audiences in London, Manchester, Edinburgh and Glasgow and then meetings with politicians and officials. Among those events a critical meeting was the one with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) (that involved Cardinal Hume from the Catholic Church in England and Wales) and led to the IMF agreeing to discuss a comprehensive debt relief programme with the World Bank (Greenhill *et al.*, 2003).

Jubilee 2000 led to mass movements involving a wide coalition of aid agencies, trade unions, churches and campaigning groups who began to raise the profile of debt issues amongst their own supporters. Responding to such high pressure, in the spring of 1996 the World Bank and IMF launched the ‘Heavily Indebted Poor Countries’ (HIPC) initiative, which aimed to reduce the external debt of eligible countries as part of a strategy to achieve “debt sustainability”. Despite this development – which to some extent was considered an achievement – the original HIPC initiative was soon widely criticised for providing too little relief too late. As a reaction, campaigners envisaged that ‘a socially broader-based [and] more international campaign was needed to press home these concerns’ (Greenhill *et al.*, 2003: 7). The growing momentum produced two effects, first was the implementation of locally-based campaigns (focused upon Jubilee 2000) where the leading role was taken by key NGOs working on the issue (Christian Aid, CAFOD, WDM, OXFAM GB and Tearfund); second was that it created the precedence which led to the formation of the Trade Justice Movement and for example the Make Poverty History Campaign.

Under the banner ‘Jubilee 2000’, campaigners aimed to ‘educate, educate, and educate [the general public and the media]’ (Greenhill *et al.*, 2003: 7). In the UK, Jubilee 2000 included a vast range of activities: meetings where staff and volunteers spoke to general audiences (the NGOs supporters mainly including retired people, migrants, people of migrant origin and students) the production of articles for the media, petition signings, stalls and rallies, etc. (see the examples below).

#### *Examples of actions for Jubilee 2000*

*Meetings* - Between campaigners to coordinate, between campaigners and supporters to inform, create awareness and spread the message, and between campaigners and politicians and officials to produce political influence.

*Leaflets* - Produced centrally or locally, leaflets have been one of the most widely used means to pass the message.

*Stalls* - Making use of public spaces to connect with the general public.

*Petitions* - By summer 1999, the Jubilee 2000 petition (launched in 1996) had collected 17 million signatures and by the end of Jubilee 2000, 25 million signatures worldwide.

*Rallies* - "Towards the Birmingham G8 Summit". On the 16th May 1998, around 70,000 Jubilee 2000 people (staff, volunteers and supporters) from Scotland, Manchester, Nottingham, Newcastle, Leeds, London and Cardiff; from the USA, Finland, Germany, France and Austria; and many people from Africa, Latin America and Asia brought by coalition partners; turned up in Birmingham to ask the most powerful government leaders for debt cancellation. 3000 journalists were also present to cover the event. Unexpectedly, due to the sudden change of venue, the media turned its attention to the campaigners.

*The involvement of activists and organisations at local level*

Although campaigns are decided and designed without much input from local groups in the North (activists, supporters, volunteers and local NGOs), or direct participation from counterparts in the South, once the campaign is launched, its success relies upon the campaigners' abilities to spread the message and gain the support and involvement of local communities, both in the North and the South. In the words of a campaigner talking about Jubilee 2000, this meant that:

'[O]rganisation members would be regularly informing their supporters about the progressing stages of the Jubilee 2000 campaign. At crucial intervals, like G8 meetings, supporters and the public [were] "called to action" to put pressure on world leaders. This happened [not only in local communities of the UK but also] in tens of countries, particularly in large movements in Southern countries. Mobilisation in the UK would normally involve a joined up communications plan between member organisations to contact supporters/public to take specific actions, [e.g.] turn up to rallies, etc. at important stages. Centrally organised public transport was often a feature, sometimes subsidised by organisations but mainly paid for by supporters. Another feature of mobilisation was the symbolism. Supporters were encouraged to 'display' the chain symbol.<sup>12</sup> Sometimes they wore chain badges and some carried real or pretend life size chains. The aim was always to unify supporters to the common goal.' (Chris, campaigner)<sup>13</sup>

As this supposes a linkage between campaigners' aims and people's motivations to participate, the immediate question is: why do people get involved in campaigning? As a matter of fact, it can be said that for campaigners – particularly activists and volunteers – 'campaigning with a local group can be both fun and rewarding, and makes a difference'.<sup>14</sup> In the Jubilee 2000, such conviction motivated campaigners to locally organise group demonstrations, run stalls at local events, look for press attention in their areas, and raise money. In the North-West of England, the Jubilee 2000 involved the mobilisation of local activists who, by personal or institutional commitment, became deeply involved in the campaign (as illustrated in the following testimony). Jubilee 2000 activity also involved the mobilisation of local and national financial resources.

'Because CAFOD and other major NGOs were flagging-up the issues and organising "do-able" projects – that is projects that would appeal to a lot of people – [my involvement] would be seen as manageable and not cost too much in time or money... [Making use] of the attractive promotional material and understandable briefings provided by them [the London based team] I organised the local (diocesan and parish) dissemination of publicity material and gave background talks to local groups wanting to get engaged. I also organised group transport in some cases and attended events myself, so as to report back

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<sup>12</sup> Which represented the 'chains of debt' that poor countries were bound by.

<sup>13</sup> At the time of Jubilee 2000, Chris was a volunteer campaigner for Oxfam; years later he became part of the campaigning staff.

<sup>14</sup> Declaration expressed by several campaigners during the trip from Manchester to the London rally on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2007.

to my 'constituency' on the highlights of the campaign... The NGOs involved provided resources, but the Diocese allowed me to allocate my time and office resources to publicising and leading the campaign locally, with card-signing, lobby of MPs, mobilising for big events like Birmingham in 1998 and Cologne later and holding briefing meetings.' (Kevin)<sup>15</sup>.

This type of testimony is also found in twelve other responses from interviewees which similarly represent the involvement of activists who frequently attended G7 and G8 rallies – from Birmingham in 1998, to Rostock or London in 2007. Such testimonies connect the national efforts displayed by leading NGOs with local organisations (regional NGO offices and other organisations – mainly churches and charities) which make up the coalition. As stated above, 'financial resources came from organisations both at national and local level, but the local activists also paid by themselves'<sup>16</sup>. For many activists and practitioners, 'the main task has been to provide information, suggestions and motivation for local and national groups to become more aware of the current situations [produced by international debt and trade] and 'to encourage groups to believe they can achieve certain goals if they act together'<sup>17</sup>.

### *Institutionalisation*

After Jubilee 2000, the involved organisations decided to create a more formal organisation with the aim of following-up, monitoring and continuing the work already done by the campaign. This gave birth to the Jubilee Debt Campaign (JDC), which is now a registered charity governed by an elected Board of Trustees and its mission remains the same: to bring an end to the unpayable debts of poor countries, by fair and transparent means. However, despite the continuity between Jubilee 2000 and the JDC, it is noteworthy that the coalition has framed the debt problem within a wider context. Indeed, it states that:

[The JDC work entails] 'a vision of justice – as a mirror of jubilee and freedom – where poor people and poor nations are set free from poverty; unjust and unpayable international debt is cancelled; debt relief is not used as an instrument of power and control; there are fair, democratic and open processes to deal with historic debt and prevent future crises; and loans and debt repayments do not damage people, their communities and their environment... [As such] it embodies aspirations and values shared by peoples of all faiths... (JDC).'<sup>18</sup>

In the UK<sup>19</sup> the Jubilee Debt Campaign is a coalition of local/regional groups and national organisations which focuses on changing UK government policy on debt, including an attempt to ensure that the maximum influence is brought to bear on the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) – on whose governing bodies the UK is represented. The work of the Coalition is co-ordinated by a London-based Secretariat under the strategic direction of an elected Board. Local/regional groups and national organisations are equal partners in the coalition, both when it comes to campaigning and as regards to policy and direction.<sup>20</sup> Funds for

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<sup>15</sup> Kevin from the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton.

<sup>16</sup> Edward from JDC/TJM Manchester.

<sup>17</sup> Nuala from the Faith & Justice Commission, Salford Diocese. Nuala's work involves liaisons with Cafod, Christian Aid, the World Development Movement and Friends of the Earth .

<sup>18</sup> [www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk/?lid=2916](http://www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk/?lid=2916) (accessed in April 2007).

<sup>19</sup> Jubilee Scotland is a separate entity that has a reserved place on the JDC Board

<sup>20</sup> [www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk/](http://www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk/) (accessed on April 2007). The JD Coalition is also known as the Jubilee Debt Campaign.



this type of coalition work mainly come from member organisations, although contributions from private donors are also quite common. Although there is a small central organising team or secretariat, most of the driving force comes from campaign staff at all levels in member organisations.<sup>21</sup>

The UK JDC was basically formed by eleven national organisations, including major NGOs, churches and the National Union of Students<sup>22</sup>. It also includes eight local and regional groups (each one a network in itself, involving more than 100 registered local groups). Some of these groups were born after Jubilee 2000 and, hence, took the same denomination. Others did exist before but joined the coalition. This has two implications: first, Jubilee 2000 has had a multiplicative effect in terms of organising local civil society groups; second, the amalgamation of existing and new organisations around a particular theme.

### **The Trade Justice Campaign**

The Trade Justice Movement (TJM) ‘followed on from Jubilee 2000 and the enthusiasm that had [been] engendered for international action. Church groups inspired by Jubilee 2000 naturally took it up; fairtrade groups accepted it as essential to their work, and campaigners went into the streets and lobbied MP’s’.<sup>23</sup> TJM emerged as a means to campaign for fundamental change in the international trade regime; the type of change that ‘will be of benefit to all’ as expressed in TJM’s declaration of principles:

‘The international trade regime needs fundamental change if it is to succeed and benefit us all. The world needs international trade rules, but to date these have favoured the narrow commercial interests of the most powerful trading nations and the largest corporations, at the expense of the wider public interest and smaller economic enterprises. In order to rebalance the global trading system, international trade rules and institutions must take their place within the broad system of international agreements aimed at sustainable development, poverty eradication and the promotion of human rights, and recognise the importance of local and regional trade as an engine for sustainable development and poverty eradication.’ (TJM, June 2002)<sup>24</sup>

Although for some activists the Trade Justice Movement (TJM) ‘has followed the same lines as Jubilee Debt Campaign, just with different emphases’,<sup>25</sup> it is somehow different in its nature and development. Indeed, TJM emerged as a specific platform built by several organisations who were also part of Jubilee 2000, but with the specific aim of addressing international trade issues as a way of reforming the international capitalist system based on “free trade principles”, that is aiming to improve the position of poor groups from Southern countries in international markets and international spaces for trade negotiations. However, as one of the campaigners stated, the several dimensions of the TJM campaigns also make the TJM somewhat diffuse and far more complicated to approach at the local level. For instance, one of the activists sees TJM in the following form:

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<sup>21</sup> Chris from the Oxfam campaign team in Manchester.

<sup>22</sup> CAFOD, Christian Aid, Islamic Relief, Jubilee Scotland, MPH Jewish Coalition, National Union of Students, Oxfam, Trades Union Congress, United Reformed Church, WDM, World Vision UK.

<sup>23</sup> Ann, Christian Aid supporter.

<sup>24</sup> [www.tjm.org.uk/about/statement.shtml](http://www.tjm.org.uk/about/statement.shtml) (accessed in June 2007).

<sup>25</sup> Ann, as quoted before.

'I do not see the campaign as having had – for us – a beginning, and certainly no ending! The Keswick Fair Trade campaign has, from its inception in 2003, had a commitment to Trade Justice. When it became clear within about a year that Trade Justice was not being adequately dealt with in our meetings, we set up a separate group that has met once a month for three years. Some members of the lobbying group also became involved in the local Make Poverty History Campaign and thus in Debt cancellation [I was not involved].'

'At the end of 2005, some members of the Make Poverty History organisation joined with the Trade Justice lobbying group, and we have made some attempt to keep tabs on the question of debt relief. For example, we have recently had a visit from a Christian Aid worker from Haiti and are now lobbying Hilary Benn about the dire debt situation of that country. However, we focus most sharply on the Doha Round of the WTO and have lobbied our local MP, and through him the Department of Trade, on related issues. We have recently made fruitful contact with a North West MEP to the same purpose. Our Fair Trade Campaign has strong connections with Ethiopian coffee farmers, and we are currently keeping a watching brief [monitoring] the drawing up of the new International Coffee Agreement, and lobbying the EU on that question.'

'As far as our contact with the local community is concerned, we keep the members of [the] Fairtrade campaign (nearly 300 people) abreast of trade justice issues through Newsletters, and we have held one TJ workshop open to all members. We have held lobbying meetings with the MP, and we write regularly to the local newspaper.'

'There is also a Cumbria Fair Trade network, and I have recently joined the steering group with express responsibility for Trade Justice issues. I shall be sending out e-mails to the network on current TJ concerns.' (Jo, campaigner)<sup>26</sup>

Despite the complexity that addressing trade issues implies, it has been clear to campaigners that a reform in the international trade system is the way to secure sustainable change in the livelihoods of poor people in Southern countries.

*The struggles for trade justice: failure to secure a development round which is responsible for 2000 deaths / day*

'2000 deaths a day: A moral imperative for a successful Development Round' was the core message delivered face to face with Pascal Lamy and Peter Mandelson when we presented our petitions for Trade Justice from TJM Manchester, calling for reaction to the critical consequences that current trade conditions produce in Southern countries. Indeed, in the wake of the Monterrey UN conference on Financing the MDGs, the UN used the figures that a successful development round would lift 100 million out of poverty, that is 10 per cent of the nominal 1 billion living in absolute (US1/day) poverty.

Given the chain of correlations between trade and poverty, poverty and diseases, and diseases and deaths, we focused our campaign on the number of lives that could be saved if trade conditions would be improved. Although, the usually quoted figure of deaths from the diseases of poverty is 20,000 a day (back in 2003 the figure quoted had been 19,000 without being clear if

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<sup>26</sup> Jo is co-ordinator of the Keswick and District Fair Trade Campaign / Trade Justice Lobbying Group in the North West of England.

this was children or total deaths)<sup>27</sup> our estimation shows that in 2001 deaths from poverty were in effect 30,000 total and 15,000 for children.

Despite discordance with official figures, what is important to highlight is that using the widely used figure of 20,000 deaths a day, if a development round were going to lift 10 percent out of poverty it should roughly save 10 percent of the deaths per day. So a successful development round should save 2,000 children a day. In other words, failure to deliver a successful development round is to condemn 2,000 children a day to death. Let's face it, it doesn't matter if the figure is 1,500 or 3,000, it is still morally unacceptable.

Based on this rationale, our point to the EU commissioners was that the power they carried came with a responsibility. They could not abdicate from their direct responsibility for the life or death of 2,000 children a day. That was their moral responsibility, far more than the protection of trade in Europe.

That was the core of our strategy: focus on this moral issue of trade justice. That was an indisputable moral argument, far too confrontational for the professional lobbyists to ever be able to use, and sidelining all the usual excuses of the complexity of trade negotiations.

### *Institutionalisation*

The Trade Justice Movement from the beginning has taken the form of a 'platform'. This involved a basic general agreement between member organisations on how the international trade system should be changed – trade as a means to achieve sustainability and poverty eradication – and henceforth the development of multiple campaigns orientated at producing policy change, educating the multiple stakeholders, and implementing market mechanisms to support local producers. This institutional form, as we will analyse below, responded to a purposeful design that would keep space for agencies independent campaigns and will open a new space for coordination.

Consequently, 'NGOs see the TJM as a way to access a body of public support at key moments, to present to influentials, and that is always done in addition to NGO specific work'.<sup>28</sup> In this same vein, the origin of TJM local branches – here, TJM Manchester – is more or less typical and replicates the underlying principles of pro-just trade mechanisms as well as the diffuseness of the national movement. This is recalled by one of the TJM campaigners for the North West:

[In Greater Manchester] 'the group began in 2001 when a conference was held to begin mobilising people from the North West of England. Our Group is quite typical of groups across the UK. Membership of the Group is NGO regional staff and volunteers. We meet every month to plan actions based on national TJM or NGO activities. Our contribution to the campaign is mainly to rally the interest and support of people in the region. We ask supporters to attend rallies, lobby politicians and write letters to newspaper editors. Occasionally we undertake something unique. For example on two occasions we have directly lobbied EU Trade Commissioners – Lamy and Mandelson. Both were arranged with the help of Chris Davies, Lib Dem MEP and by group member Dave Pearce. The internal organisation of TJM includes a central Secretariat with a small number of staff. Member organisations meet at regular intervals to plan campaign moments, responses, etc. Each member of TJM contributes financially to the running of the Secretariat and member

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<sup>27</sup> At the time WHO fact sheets for just low developing countries gave deaths above those figures, see <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs310/en/index.html> as a current set of data. By 2005, the agencies typically quoted 20,000 and specifically children.

organisations put up staff (mainly campaign managers/directors) to contribute to planning.' (Chris, NGO staff campaigner).

## **The issues surrounding campaigning**

### **1. The troubles of institutionalising campaigns**

Although the institutionalisation of campaigns brings opportunities for systematically influencing the policy-making process, it also entails some complications that make the contribution of NGOs and activists harder to achieve. One of those complications regards autonomy and branding. To highlight this point in the two campaigns analysed in this paper, it is crucial to understand the organisational differences between Jubilee 2000, the Jubilee Debt Campaign and the campaigns of the Trade Justice Movement, as well as their remit and their impact.

Jubilee 2000 was created by debt campaigners and agencies to co-ordinate and lead a long-term campaign (hence the 2000 Jubilee year). Although funded by grants from the agencies, it also existed as an independent campaign, it had employees doing research, and it determined the campaign message and strategy. Moreover, it created Jubilee 2000 groups throughout the country and had its own membership. It also generated its own subscriptions and funding to supplement the agencies. As a result of all these, it can be said that the agencies lost control of their child; the success of the campaign was not identified with the agencies.

At the end of 2000 when Jubilee 2000 was to close, it gradually dawned on supporters that it was the end; the campaign, the resources, the staff, everything was to be shut down. Towards the end of the year, a limited number of activists became concerned enough to start asking questions and proclaimed loudly that there was much more to do. Email discussion groups emerged to work towards keeping the campaign going. But it became clear that the agencies were determined that Jubilee 2000 was finished; whatever followed would be subjugated to the agencies. What emerged was a short-term operation called Drop the Debt with the specific remit of campaigning up to Genoa G8, and then a 'coalition' to co-ordinate future debt campaigning. That became Jubilee Debt Campaign (aka Jubilee Debt Coalition), which secured limited funding to maintain a small secretariat.<sup>29</sup> However, stemming from the commitment of the local Jubilee 2000 groups and activists, the board of JDC was formed on the basis of equal representation from the agencies and activists, six of each elected by their constituencies. Thus JDC, even today, retains a strong link to and influence from grassroots activists. JDC hosts an annual meeting, workshops and brings in overseas speakers.

The agencies recognised that the success of the debt campaign illustrated the need for a joint, co-ordinated and consistent campaign; when they formed the Trade Justice Movement for their trade campaign. TJM is a collaboration of agencies (80) with limited funding to support a limited secretariat (about 2 staff). The policies and campaigns run by TJM are the results of the meetings of the professional campaign managers of the agencies. There is no grassroots representation. There are no related TJM local groups affiliated. The board are elected representatives of six agencies. TJM members may agree a campaign event and then the member agencies each promote and organise it themselves. There are no TJM activist meetings.

These disparate forms of organisation for campaigning imply a strong reliance, either on broad grassroots networks (as in the case of JDC), or on the organisations' abilities to coordinate and avoid duplication (as expected in the TJM), which implies a certain division of roles when it

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<sup>29</sup> For the North West in those early days, D. Pearce (activist) provided and maintained the website for JDC.

comes to organising a single campaign. For the agencies the latter form gives more space for accomplishing their particular 'branded' campaigns, which can be carried out under the umbrella of – or in connection with – the platform's long-term campaign, but still allow individual branding. For instance, 'Oxfam, who sat on the Jubilee 2000 board (as it still does today under the Jubilee Debt Campaign), contributed as one member to the coalition planning but at the same time campaigned on the same issues under the name 'Education now!'<sup>30</sup> Similarly, Traidcraft ran its Right Corporate Wrongs campaign; the Fairtrade Foundation has three long-term running campaigns (Fairtrade fortnight, Fairtrade bananas and Fairtrade towns); Christian Aid launched a campaign in 1996 to British supermarkets called The Great Supermarket Till Receipt Collection, which continues to be monitored; and in "Vote for Trade Justice" (Spring 2005), Friends of the Earth took a slightly different angle to the other TJM organisations and produced a "Vote for Green Trade Justice" postcard<sup>31</sup>. However, this form of action has provoked discussion in the development literature in terms of NGOs' efficiency (wouldn't better coordination improve the use of resources?) and effectiveness (wouldn't better coordination increase the likelihood of impact?)<sup>32</sup>.

Our conclusion on this point is that institutionalising campaigns enables agencies to operate and exert some policy influence in a more "corporative" way. However, the independence that Jubilee 2000 had left less space for individual branding than TJM or JDC leave. Indeed, JDC and TJM respond more to existing institutionalities – and hence the agencies own purposes and accountabilities – than a more independent institution such as Jubilee 2000. This is not so say that agencies would not like to reach the highest impact influencing the policy making process acting together, but to acknowledge that for us – local activists – there is much more space that can be exploited if branding and autonomies were secondary to creating greater activists participation (both from the North and the South) and maximising impact as the first goal. Painful as that process must be, it seems that the Debt campaign shows that the payoffs can be more beneficial and rewarding.

## **2. Campaigning and the connections between the North and the South**

For the networks of organisations, activists and supporters involved in campaigning cross borders both nationally and internationally, the flow of ideas, resources, policies and actions do not always head in the same direction. Indeed, in terms of the decision about what to campaign for, it seems that the interaction – although imperfect – between organisations from the South and the North has developed over the many years of development interventions and the strategies used for one campaign are later replicated for others. Connections are made not only in terms of the methods to be used, but also in terms of the 'campaign themes' themselves, this gives campaigners some sense of continuity and follow-up. For instance, some campaigners have made connections between the Trade Justice campaign (initiated in the early 2000s) and the new Climate Change campaign (starting in 2007), as stated in the following declaration:

'As an international body we are very aware of the impact of the issues [debt and trade] on the developing world where many of our colleagues work. Their plea to us has always been to work for fairer trade systems and to promote issues related to the environment to prevent its degradation, which is impacting most severely on the poorest societies. As a result of their pleas we have moved to using similar methods (to those used to promote Trade

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<sup>30</sup> Chris from the Oxfam campaign team in Manchester.

<sup>31</sup> Liz from FoE. Manchester FoE distributed the postcards to members and used them at stalls in particularly during the Global Week of Action on Trade Justice where joined up with WDM.

<sup>32</sup> See, for instance Edwards and Hulme (1992), Hulme (forthcoming)

Justice) to encourage the care of Planet Earth, devising a programme of reflection and study, so that we can be more aware and more active in our efforts to halt the destruction of the planet and reverse the current trends' (Nuala).<sup>33</sup>

As such, campaigning enables organisations and campaigners to connect in a better way in terms of actions, policies and principles. For instance, as stated in one of the interviews, 'the design of the SEEDS Magazine – published quarterly – and the organisation of (small) groups of study on Trade Justice included scripture reflection and suggestions for action (my emphasis)'.<sup>34</sup> In practice that means not only involvement in all kinds of campaigning actions (described before), but also the promotion of fairly traded goods, targeting parishes and local schools – specifically those driven by the respective church.

Then, the campaigns not only provide a public space for participation, they constitute a space for linking each organisation's purposes with current affairs in the economic and financial world. In fact, agencies recognise that, in order to produce change on the international order and affect the structural causes of poverty, they need international campaigns. However, in all this the relationship between campaigning in the North and South (this simplistic abbreviation means as usual rich versus poor) is actually quite tenuous and flexible; there are few connections between Northern and Southern local levels.

Clearly the campaigns are intended to benefit the South and examples from the South are used to promote the campaigns in the North, but in general the weak inter-relationships between the local levels (some groups do link up with a single Southern group; often activists have been to or worked in the South) have meant that many groups in the South have recognised and paid tribute to the leadership of the campaigns in the North for providing the space and resources for a Southern campaign. The Jubilee campaign has to be the prime example, where the UK Jubilee 2000 campaign spawned affiliated campaigns not just throughout the North but also in many Southern countries. There are those who will attribute a rise in civil awareness and campaigning in the South to those embryonic movements (primarily in Africa).

Having said that, it is important to recognise that the debt and trade campaigns are not essentially about supporting campaigns in the South. The campaigns are calling for the injustices in the North to be corrected; they are about the morality of the Northern institutions and how they operate – notably the international financial institutions given their domination of the Northern governments in their constitution and voting rights even though they are supposed to be world bodies under the United Nations. Hence, campaigns could be described as calling for Northern governments and institutions to have a 'moral economic and trade policy'. In this sense, calls for closer links with the South are widely heard and it is also widely accepted – as a principle, at least among campaigners – that the South knows best how to solve its own poverty. That is why in the JDC the so-called Northern solutions (e.g. structural adjustment programs given by international organisations) have been strongly contested.

### **3. Relationships between organisations, activists and supporters**

The impact of campaigning is a numbers game, the bigger the numbers the bigger the political imperative. A few activists banging away on their own might create some local interest but this would fall beneath the radar of national/international politics. Campaigners know that impact is about gaining critical mass. So the campaign issue is: how to get critical mass?

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<sup>33</sup> Nuala from Faith & Justice Commission, Salford Diocese.

<sup>34</sup> Nuala, activist who also belongs to the Congregation of the Presentation Sisters.

The agencies can all lobby in the name of their members – some agencies can claim 10,000 and 100,000 members. Collectively especially if they can enlist the unions, they can claim to speak for millions. But politicians know the difference between the professional lobbyists and a grassroots campaign. A “critical mass” for a big campaign like debt or trade would be for between 500,000 to 1,000,000 people registering individual support (Jubilee 2000 collected 25 million worldwide; TJM collected about 800,000 votes for trade justice against a target of a million).

It is in the creation of the critical mass that the activists’ role becomes fundamental. For most agencies, sending out requests for even simple actions will not generate big enough numbers; probably less than 10 per cent of their nominal membership. Most organisations work through local groups, typically the faith groups through churches, others have local volunteer groups. But these local groups, especially the churches, still depend on an individual activist to motivate the supporters to take the campaign action. The success is critically dependent on the motivation of the local leaders for that issue. Some are very proactive, others take no action whatsoever.

The role of the activist is like a local amplifier. They may be putting up the posters, collecting the signatures, handing out the cards or booking the coaches. Most activists work within their own group, enlisting their support. An alternative scenario is where the activists take the message to the general public, building both a public awareness and public support for the campaign (the public is given information and for best results, asked to show commitment through a petition, postcard or letter). This will typically involve some form of public action, possibly a stunt, possibly with media involvement.

For mass civil campaigns, the linkage from the central campaign team, through their local organisation and activists motivates the mass supporter base and goes out to expand into the broader public awareness. Although at the core of the mass campaign is demonstrating broad public support, campaigns want to influence the political mood, to create a political environment where support for the campaign is evident at every level. Campaigns need to lobby the local MP as well as Ministers. Apart from simply creating an environment supporting the campaign, MPs can ask questions, support Early Day Motions and so on to raise the profile of the campaign politically. MPs can only be effectively lobbied by their own constituents. So any successful campaign needs to have local activists prepared to lobby their MP as well as to organise the coaches for rallies to join the mass lobbies.

Local activists can simply work to the guidelines from the agencies (many do work that way, especially where they are an integral part of the organisation, for instance a priest). Equally, other activists need to work in self-empowering local teams, working together to promote the campaign, either way, activists have to find inspiring actions and stunts for the media. They have to devise ways to attract the public. They have to be inspired.

Campaigners have to recognise that if the campaigns aspire to be a mass movement, then the parts are mutually inter-dependent. The agencies and professional campaigners and indeed the lobbyists need to motivate the mass of their own supporters and beyond to the general public. To achieve that, they need the supporters and the activists to amplify the message, the activists also know that they need the consistency and campaign collateral sourced from the agencies.

#### **4. How to understand impact? Changes in the economic international order, in Southern communities and Northern localities**

Campaigning and campaigns now need to be seen from a new angle and the assessment of their impact requires us to keep in mind that the effects (and the impact) should not be looked at only in terms of the effects upon Southern local communities, but also the level of Northern local groups. The first question, then, is about how we provide accounts of any changes and how to attribute those changes to NGOs’ campaigning actions. The second question regards the impact

of campaigning in local groups and communities in the North. So far in the literature, attention is only paid to the first question. That is in part due to the way in which NGOs introduce themselves and present their campaigns (as defenders of disempowered groups from Southern countries), but it is also due to a preconception on the part of academic contributors who look for impact only in groups with existing mechanisms of assessment (which may be 'too formal or formalised') rather than those used by campaigners and activists.

Edwards and Gaventa (2001), for instance, suggests that NGOs' records and achievements on advocacy work at the international level has been disappointing, among other reasons due to an overall absence of clear strategy and a failure to build strong alliances. Jordan and Van Tuijl (2002) argue that international campaigns can be highly problematic due to the diverse nature of transnational networks and this makes campaigning an unequal arena where the imbalances between Northern and Southern governments are somehow reproduced within NGO activist networks (Nelson, 1997).

To us (as activists), it is evident that campaigns do produce an effect and it is clear that politicians and officials do care about them. Whether by fear, embarrassment or conscience, campaigns and mass movements provoke reaction. For instance, the sudden change of venue for the 1998 G8 meeting<sup>35</sup> and the politicians' reactions afterwards; the mobilisation at this rally and its impact meant something in terms of the relationships between the activists and their respective national and local politicians, as well as the relationships between the global civil society and the officials – at least those who can be influenced – from international institutions and eventually their organisations (e.g. the IMF and World Bank).

Although the immediate impact of the Birmingham '98 mobilisation on the G7/8 was almost imperceptible – given that the most that the G7 leaders did was to produce a final communiqué announcing the continuation of discussions around the HIPC initiative – for campaigners the big achievement was 'to put the theme on the international political agenda'. Thereafter, the table was set for leaders to make new proposals for further debt relief and these succeeded one after another – at least to the level of media declarations<sup>36</sup>.

Tangibly, however, much of the expected impact is hardly perceivable in terms of what the multiple initiatives have contributed to the economies of poor countries and their prospects for social development. Clearly, by the end of the Jubilee 2000 campaign in December 2000, it was clear that policies on debt cancellation were not matching the rhetoric and that is why Jubilee movements in many countries vowed to continue the struggle. But what is undeniable is the impact on the relationships between civil society and politicians or/and international institutions and their officials. Indeed, the first debt relief initiative (HIPC I), although hugely criticised for its slowness and short scope, was significant in terms of changing the ways in which the debts of the poorest countries were seen and treated (mainly bilaterally) by the main creditors, and the inclusion in the package of 'preferred creditors' debts (the IMF and the WB) who were always paid first. (Greenhill *et al.*, 2003). More of these unquantifiable effects – and perhaps impact – is presented in Table 1.

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<sup>35</sup> The move from Birmingham to a 'secret venue' on the day before the meeting was made despite 'endless and exhausting' negotiations carried out by Jubilee 2000 with the Foreign Office, Birmingham City Council, Birmingham police and the CIA. (Greenhill *et al.*, 2003).

<sup>36</sup> For instance, the announcements in 1999 from Vice President Al Gore that the USA wanted more debt relief, Germany's Chancellor Schroder who proposed radical debt reduction and the UK's Chancellor Gordon Brown who proposed increased numbers for total debt cancellation within the HIPC initiative.



**Table 1: Outcomes, results and impact of Jubilee 2000/JDC**

<b>Key Campaign Events</b>	<b>Main Demands</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Impact</b>
Before Birmingham '98 G7	Debt cancellation for the poorest countries	Initial public awareness	A growing movement
Birmingham '98 G7		Broader public awareness	
Cologne '99 G8	'Democratisation of international financial relations':  A different, transparent and accountable way of resolving debt crises and of managing freed up money	The first time commitment of \$100bn of total debt cancellation for 42 HIPC's  The enhanced HIPC initiative  Bilateral cancellation of ODA debts	Debt cancellation subject to IMF conditionality  PR & GF (in the '80s style of SAP)
After Cologne '99 G8	Debt cancellation, additional to aid  Broader call for economic justice	PRSPs  Agreement to cancel 100 percent of the bilateral debts owed by the poorest countries  Some other 'miserly' amounts of additional debt relief.	Controversy about the degree to which PRSPs facilitate civil society participation on the economic decision-making.  HIPC is much too slow  IMF/WB continuous conditionality  Cynical over-estimation of export growth  An arbitrary list of HIPC countries  At 2003 total debt cancellation was less than a third of the total commitment  Cancelled debt has had positive effects on health, education and defence in 10 of the African countries that had reached Decision Point, and social spending across all HIPC's is estimated to have risen by about 20 percent.

Notes: PR&GF: 'Poverty Reduction and Growth Facilities'

PRSP: 'Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers'

SAP: Structural Adjustment Programme

The HIPC II ('enhanced' Heavily indebted poor countries) initiative differed from HIPC I in that it should allow more countries to be included and more 'realistic' thresholds for debt-to-exports and debt-to-revenue ratios.

There are two questions underlying the JDC's monitoring of debt cancellation efforts. These regard what happened to debt service payments and what has happened to the total transfer of resources to the countries. The conclusion of the JD coalition is that the impact on debt service payments and debt stocks has not been the same for all HIPC countries but it has occurred as expected given the slowness of the qualifying process and the various conditions imposed on candidate countries. In some cases (e.g. Mali, Niger, Sierra Leone and Zambia) the situation has become even worse; for others it remains at similar levels to 1998 (e.g. Ethiopia, Honduras, Nicaragua, Uganda and Guinea Bissau); for another group it may improve (e.g. Nicaragua, Mauritania and Honduras). In addition, the picture with regard to overall resource flows – the net resources (new loans and grants minus the amount that is paid in debt service) that poor countries need for their development is also discouraging, leading to the accusation that the JDC campaign only served to divert aid flows toward debt cancellation.

In regard to our second concern – the impact on Northern local communities – the JDC and the TJM campaigns show that people mobilised because they were calling for something more than debt cancellation or additional aid flows. 'They were calling for economic justice' (Greenhill *et al.*, 2003). This point is important to understand: that one of the most important motivations for Northern supporters is that campaign events and actions offer a public space where campaigners can express themselves through their common concerns and take part in protests against an economic and political regime that they consider to be wrong and unjust. The motivation for involvement may differ according to the supporters' origin and background, but overall the campaigners agree that the JDC and TJM both call for a new framework of justice (for JDC - resolving international debt crises and for TJM calling for just trade agreements).

In the North, beyond tangible results eventually observed in the South, a campaign success is about a framework of international relations that is less dominated by creditors and transnational companies and instead places more emphasis upon principles of fairness, transparency and independence, a framework that positions human development needs at its core. It is crucial to appreciate that achieving significant changes in international institutions takes time, a long time. Initially, campaigns need to change the political accepted 'norm' and establish the campaign objectives as the politicians' aspirations. First the issue has to be established on the political agenda (as the Birmingham G8 1998 demonstration achieved); then, gradually ensure that all the political parties at least support the campaign in their rhetoric; finally calling them to account for their progress. Today in the UK there is almost total support for debt cancellation (to gradually improving limits) and now even the EU rhetoric asserts that it is striving to achieve Trade Justice (even if the evidence shows that changes are slow or even questionable, as in the EPAs case).

Success is also seen in the opportunities open for networking and strengthening the basis of Northern civil society. For instance, initially in 2001 Manchester FoE was not involved in TJM, however given that some of its members who at the time were also members of other groups (like the WDM) participating in TJM, FoE was encouraged to take part in local and national TJM events and finally became a full member since 2005.

## **Conclusion**

It seems to us that the concept and practice of campaigning can be used as a good case to support what has been suggested about NGOs being 'a force for transformation in global politics and economics'. To judge from what has been seen in the work of JDC and TJM, the claim that NGOs need to build broad-based support groups and strong links with the media (Edwards and Gaventa, 2001) in order to carry out effective campaigns that achieve policy change, has

already been demonstrated with both the JDC and TJM campaigns. It also seems that impact can come not only from the multiplier effect of working together to leverage change in governments, transnational companies and international organisations, but also from what each NGO individually can do on the local level or particular space in which they are positioned.

Based on a comparison of the two campaigns analysed in this paper, we can suggest that campaigning is not an easy task and it requires particular conditions to be successful, and more importantly we can say that campaigns can produce disparate effects based on how specific the aims are and also the type of relationships established between those who get involved – organisations and activists. Perhaps the main difference between the two campaigns analysed in this paper is its focus, that is, a particular aim in the case of the JDC – debt cancellation – and a broad range of issues in the TJM. This difference has had implications for the ways in which member organisations have understood the platforms, designed their own ad-hoc campaigns and reached some impact.

The role that can be played by local activists and local organisations needs to be assessed in a way that reflects both the instrumental role that they play in campaigning activities and their own rationale when participation is decided. The collaborative work of activists and agencies contributes to shaping the international economic order in a way that reflects the agencies campaign design, as far as this translates common concerns, and is based on strong institutional linkages – clearly those related to churches and political parties. But, in addition, activists' and supporters' participation follows its own rationale, in the sense that, in the very end, participation only happens if the campaign does not conflict with their own beliefs and understandings of how the international economic order should be and how it should – or should not – affect their own lifestyles. Similarly, politicians' reactions and support for international campaigns is favourable (to campaigners) as far as campaigns do not really affect their domestic politics, hence, a motivation for their contribution may be to increase their connections with their constituents.

Understanding what motivates activists is a fundamental aspect of understanding what campaigning is about. This goes beyond the economics; the matter is emotional. The motivation behind campaigning is of course complex and diverse. For the vast majority of supporters and the public at large it can be called compassion and an inherent sense of justice. The compassion is usually exploited by the campaigns to collect money in response to the current crisis, and the public response is ample evidence that people do have compassion and pity and indeed will respond. Similarly human-interest stories are a key component of presenting the campaigns for debt and trade injustice.

There is an emotive strap line in campaigning “don't take pity take action”. It isn't enough for some campaigners to simply make a donation or sign a petition. There is a powerful emotional response to bring justice, to end the poverty, and some people across the spectrum will fight hard for whatever they feel strongly about. It is not enough to walk by on the other side, or to turn a blind eye.

Another important element of campaigns, at least those with a clear moral principle, is the belief that they can be successful. On the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade (not slavery) and after the long campaign to end Apartheid, campaigners know that in the end justice will prevail. Even in the early days of the debt campaign, there had been precedents for cancelling debts through the Paris club (albeit essentially recognising that they were unpayable rather than immoral). Gradually the debt cancellation was increased like a ratchet through HIPC, HIPC II and then the Multilateral Debt Relief Initiative - MDRI. It is encouraging for campaigners to see that even mighty institutions like the World Bank can change their position: when 100 percent debt cancellation was initially proposed, the Bank produced papers to explain how that

was impossible economically and financially; nevertheless, MDRI is 100 percent debt cancellation!

There is also a social element to campaigning, meeting and working with people with similar aspirations. As has been pointed out, campaigning has to be about numbers, so it has to be about networking and interpersonal communications. Whether these are local faith groups or secular, the groups do provide a social framework without which many people would not belong or take actions.

Nothing however compares to the emotive impact of joining a mass demonstration - crowds have a buzz. It is not just demonstrations; big concerts or football matches all get a lift from the group cohesion. Being part of a demonstration of a few thousand, knowing that 'you are not alone' is a rewarding experience. Being part of a demonstration of 250,000 is an awe-inspiring experience.

Mass actions are an important element of the campaigns. They are symbiotic. They are partly a visual and physical demonstration of the public support for the campaign, partly another opportunity to get media coverage to promote the campaign and its support, but equally they are part of maintaining the motivation of the supporters. They make the clearest demonstration of a wider public support. Any politician knows that for everyone who will take the time and trouble to go on a demonstration, there are thousands of passive supporters.

In that sense, given that the vast majority of campaign groups are faith groups, to local activists, supporters and politicians the campaigns for debt cancellation and trade justice are not about political ideology and they do not challenge capitalism. To be clear, they are not anti-capitalist campaigns; they are campaigns for economic justice. Hence, capitalism needs to be reformed, but not abolished. This does not deny that campaigns are strongly and often actively supported by groups with a strong 'left wing' or anti-capitalist agenda, indeed their supporters can be found at almost any campaign whatever the topic. However, although visible, they represent a minority of the campaign supporters and have no real influence on the campaigns.

The objectives of the debt and trade campaigns is to assert that morality and human rights should be recognised and that the 'rules' should ensure equal rights for every human being and not the historic/traditional rules based on power and particularly economic power. In particular the trade campaign strongly advocates the concept of world trade rules, but rules that protect the poor and less powerful from exploitation, not the other way round.

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