




International development and the trade union role



**A TUC Fact File and activities
pack for trade union tutors**

APRIL 2005



Acknowledgements

The TUC would like to acknowledge:

- the financial contribution provided by the Department for International Development through its Strategic Grant Agreement with the TUC towards the development of this Fact File
- Irene Magrath, Trade Union Educator, for drawing up the Fact File
- Trade Union Education Tutors and Union Officers on the Development Education Training event, January 2005 for their comments, suggestions and contributions.

The TUC wishes to thank Christian Aid and its photographers for the use of their images in this Fact File.

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Today the gap between the world's richest and poorest is bigger than ever. This situation is untenable. Past development successes show what is possible even in poor countries and today the world has greater resources and know-how than ever to tackle the challenges of development. The issue is how best to apply these resources and know how to benefit the poorest people.

Trade unionists have always demonstrated strong solidarity with fellow workers around the world. And we have an abiding interest in development as we seek to bring about sustainable improvements in the working and living conditions of workers and their communities through the protection and promotion of their economic and social rights.

However, the causes behind such gross inequality are multiple and can seem daunting. If we are to extend our efforts and continue to work towards a more equitable world, we need to make sense of our fast-changing world. Designed to enable trade union tutors to introduce reps to issues around International Development into the classroom and accompanied by activities, this development education Fact File tackles the history and ideas of development, key issues surrounding trade justice, aid and debt as well as the trade union role in Britain and around the world.

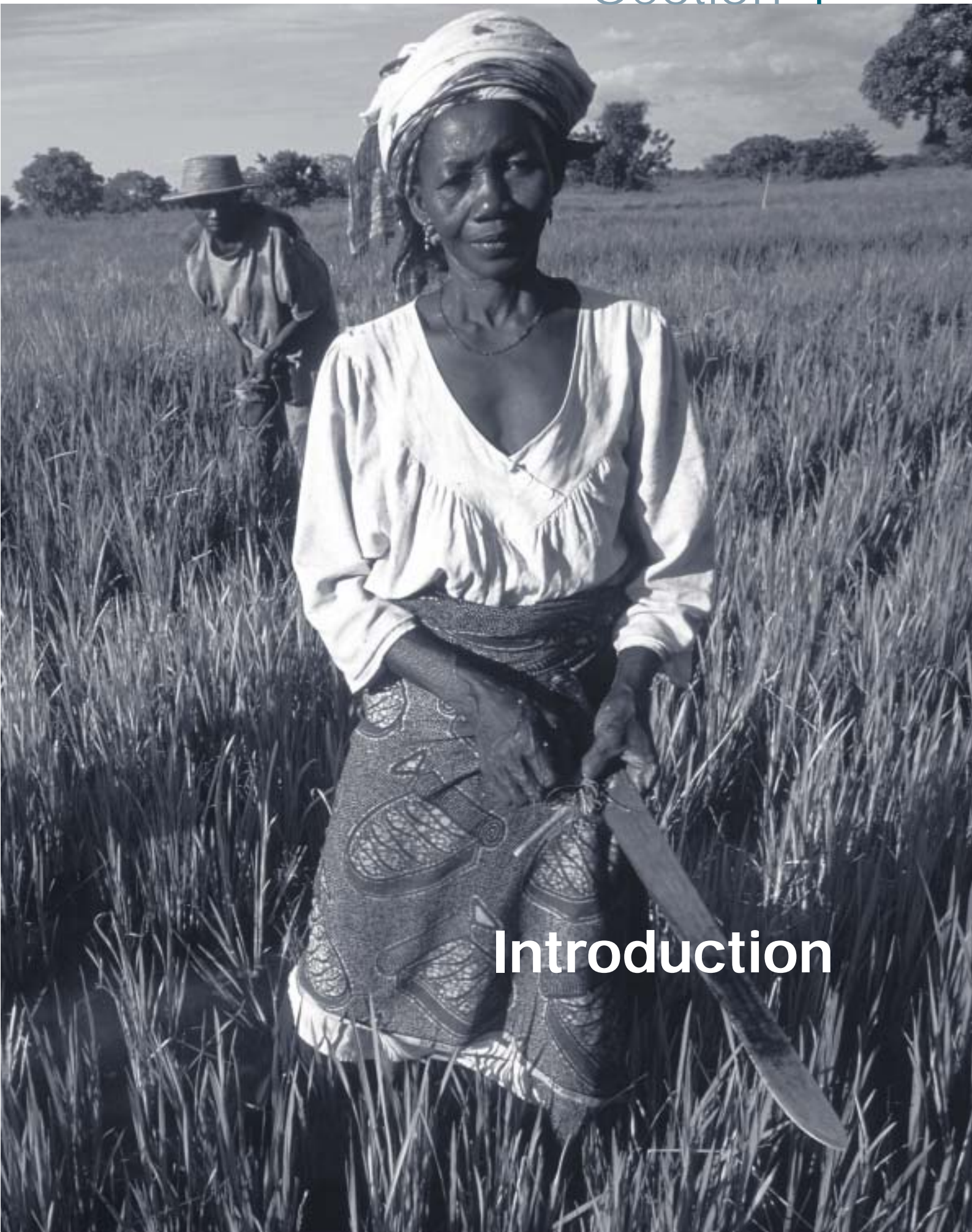
This Fact File is also timely because this year a mass coalition of civil society organisations, including trade unions, have joined together under one banner to demand that world leaders deliver policy decisions that will make poverty history and the Fact File offers information and activities on this too.

Trade unions have a particularly important role in sharing such information in the workplace. In recognition of this the TUC signed a three year Strategic Grant Agreement with the Department for International Development and is committed to raising awareness and building capacity on International Development. This Fact File is the third Development Education resource produced with DfID support and is designed to complement earlier work on Refugees and Migration and the newly updated International Health and Safety Workbook.

I hope that you find this a useful resource in taking this task forward.

Brendan Barber
General Secretary, TUC

Opposite page: GHANA 2003, Memunatu Issah and her son Rufai. Memunatu used to grow groundnuts but now grows rice as well. However she says it is still not enough to live on because she has to pay for food, clothing and help other family members should they need her help. © Christian Aid/Penny Tweedie



Introduction

Who this Fact File is for and why

This is the second in a series of Fact Files, designed to help trade union education tutors build awareness and activism among reps on issues related to international development. It is produced in response to tutors' feedback following earlier work on international development. Tutors were of the view that the effectiveness of teaching and learning on the topic could be enhanced by support in the form of:

- back-up materials on international development issues that could be easily incorporated into a range of existing courses
- short course material on international development that related to the role of the workplace rep
- teaching material and tips on dispelling myths about migrant workers
- practical guidance and materials on dealing with racism and xenophobia

The Fact File *Refugees and Migrant Workers*, and the revised and updated *Trade Unions and International Health and Safety* workbook have begun that process of support. This Fact File may be used in conjunction with them.

The TUC/DfID Strategic Grant Agreement

Since the initial work on poverty reduction that produced the feedback referred to above, the TUC has signed a Strategic Grant Agreement with the DFID. Amongst other things, this effectively continues DFID support for TUC education initiatives to promote *a better informed UK trade union movement, able to make a more effective strategic contribution to international development* for a further three years.

In making the Agreement the DFID has recognised the role of trade union reps as opinion formers in the workplace and the wider community. This makes the Agreement significant not only in facilitating the production of material such as this Fact File, (which can act as an important awareness raising tool), but also in helping reps develop and act upon their interest in global issues. It is produced with a view to wider use within the union movement. For example, by union education officers for use in their SGA-sponsored International Development Education Mini-Learning Fund projects, as an aid to branch development and tutor training.

What the Fact File Contains

The Fact File contains a series of Fact Sheets that provide a context and an overview of some of the key issues affecting international development, and the role of trade unions in particular. References and details of further information are provided to help readers pursue their interest and follow up new questions that will surely be formed as a result of discussion and work on the subject areas.

The title for the file is 'International Development and the Role of Trade Unions'. The content deals with concepts of development and poverty, the Millennium Development Goals (the global targets for poverty reduction), **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** (a mobilisation of civil society organisations for 2005, of which the TUC forms part), and trade union recommendations for a socially just international development process. Related activities for use with reps are also included.

The File is designed to:

- help trade union education tutors, and through them, union reps, to understand the interconnection between the lives of working people in the developed and developing world
- enable readers to make informed links between international development and social justice
- enable Tutors and Union Officers to feel confident in tackling related issues in the classroom or other learning forums
- build interest, understanding and activism among trade union reps

Using the Fact File and its activities

Tutors and Union Officers should use the Fact File in whatever way best suits their circumstances - whether this be as an information base and quick reference guide, a source of easy to copy fact sheets for reps, or to complement other activities, discussions and courses, or as a short course in itself. Hopefully reps will welcome the opportunity to develop an informed opinion on issues affecting the rights and well-being of working people everywhere.

Reading through ALL the Fact Sheets will help you in helping reps to understand and take action on international issues.

For those working on TUC programmes, here are some suggestions as to how the activities may be used or integrated into other courses - though clearly, opportunities will arise at many points on courses for drawing on the Fact File materials.

Union Reps 1		
Ref.	Topic	Use of Fact File
P1.12	Trade Unions in the Workplace	Task E – draw on Fact Sheets <i>Trade Union Perspectives in International Development</i>
P3.9	Taking Up Issues Through the Union	Potential issue using <i>Make Poverty History</i> Fact Sheet
P3.11	Wider Trade Union Issues	As above or draw on <i>Trade Union Perspectives on Poverty and Development</i> Fact Sheet

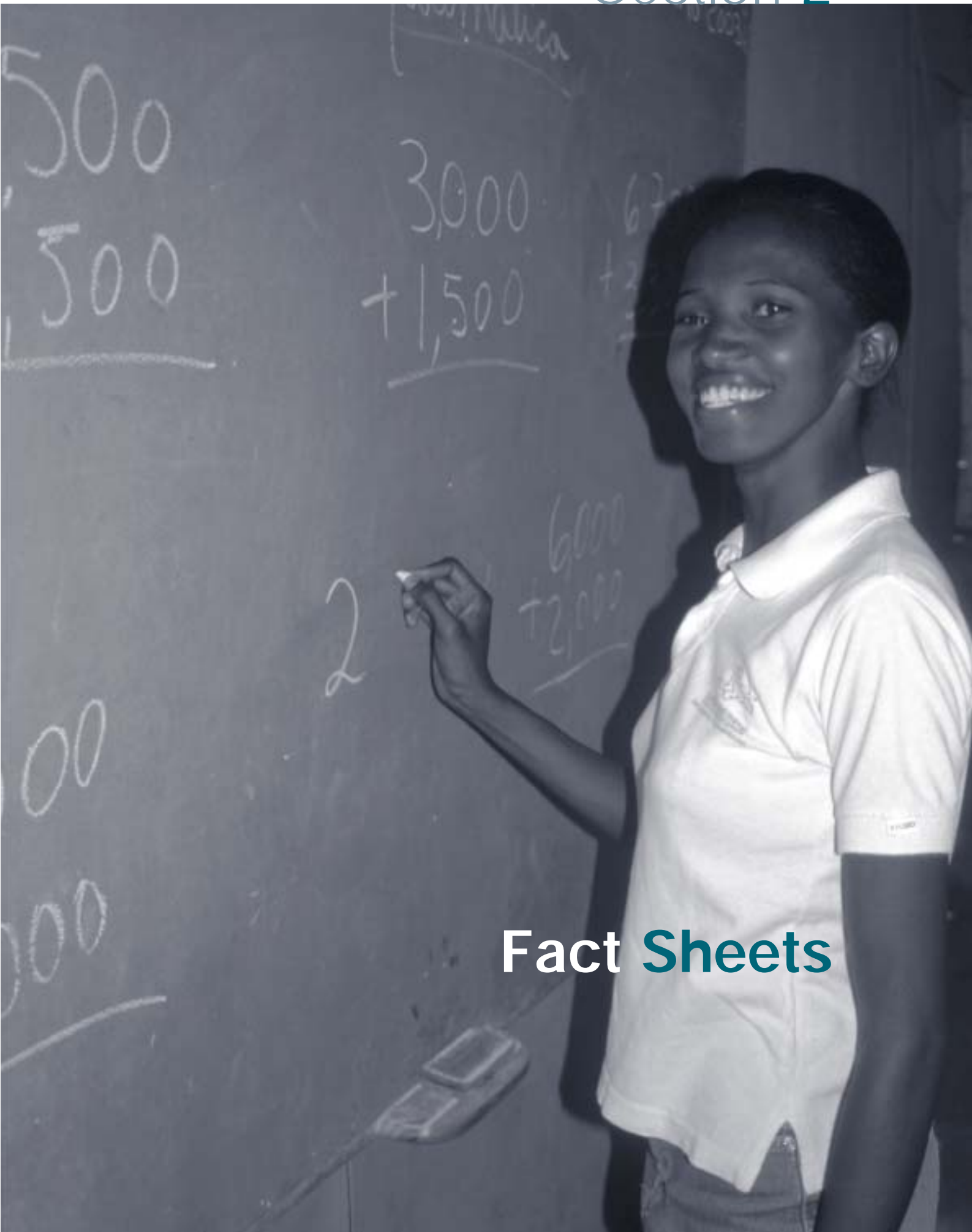
Stepping Up		
Ref.	Topic	Use of Fact File
TUCon P23	Resources for Trade Unionists	Draw on <i>Trade Union Perspectives on Poverty and Development</i> Fact Sheet as basis for research on core labour standards
TUCon P25,26	Union Links & Campaigns	Draw on <i>Make Poverty History</i> , <i>Millennium Development Goals</i> or <i>Trade Union Perspectives on Poverty and Development</i> Fact Sheets as a basis for the report
PI,Org, Camp P14	Planning a Campaign	Use <i>Make Poverty History</i> Fact Sheet as potential campaign focus
RatW p6	Sources of Rights	Supplement discussion with info from <i>Trade Union Perspectives on Poverty and Development</i>
RatW p7	Researching Employment Rights	Supplement discussion with info from <i>Trade Union Perspectives on Poverty and Development</i>

Certificate in Employment Law		
Ref.	Topic	Use of Fact File
Sec BP29	The Role Of International Organisations	Supplement discussion with info from <i>Trade Union Perspectives on Poverty and Development</i>

Certificate in Contemporary Trade Unionism		
Ref.	Topic	Use of Fact File
	Section on globalisation and trade Unions	May be drawn on for most activities

Opposite page: DOMINICAN REPUBLIC 2003, Ketya, a teacher at the 'Little School' in Haina. © Christian Aid/Peter Graystone

Section 2



Fact Sheets



International development, poverty reduction and trade unions – context and overview

Trade Unions

In almost every country of the world there are trade unions. They may vary in numbers, influence or degree of activity in specific areas, but the common thread is that they are independent groupings of working people who organise together to improve the condition of their lives. Although the focus for grouping together is work, trade union activity necessarily extends far beyond the workplace, as indeed do factors affecting members' lives and livelihoods.

In the UK trade unions have been behind almost every important advance in working people's lives – limits on the working day, gaining the vote, the health service, improvements in pay and conditions. Across the world trade unions are actively working on a whole range of issues of importance to working people – against child labour, for better social protection (health, education, unemployment, pensions), for equality and fairness in employment. Although such matters of social justice are central to our security and well-being, they cannot be taken for granted. They are not taken up or regulated as a matter of course, but usually as a result of persistent trade union campaigning and organising.

International Development

There are many definitions of development – reflecting different viewpoints about how society is organised and should function. How development is defined or understood matters, because that in turn determines policy at all levels and, ultimately, people's life experiences. (See Fact Sheet 'Development Strategies – ideas that change' for further detail).

Despite the differences in approach to development, there is broad agreement that development is about a general and sustainable improvement in people's lives and livelihoods, wherever they are. It is precisely in this area that trade unions are active.

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Poverty Reduction

Over the last 50 or 60 years the countries and organisations of the United Nations (UN) have come to concentrate on poverty reduction as a key focus for international development. In 2000 the member states of the UN adopted the Millennium Development Goals as specific, measurable development targets for reducing absolute poverty by half by 2015 (See TUC/DfID [2002], *Target 2015: Halving World Poverty*, TUC/DfID). They include – achieving universal primary education, promoting gender equality and empowering women, reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, combating HIV/AIDS, ensuring environmental sustainability and developing a global partnership for development. These targets were developed by the UK government and others and are supported by the TUC and the global trade union movement. See page 21, Fact Sheet Four, for more information.

International Development, Poverty Reduction and Trade Unions

In April 2004 the World Bank's (see glossary) first Global Monitoring Report on the Millennium Development Goals recognised that they will not be met by 2015 unless progress is speeded up. As supporters of the goals, trade unions are concerned that the targets – widely acknowledged to be achievable – should at this stage be cast into doubt.

Global Unions (see glossary) have always argued that the World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF – see glossary) and other development agencies, should think more broadly than economic growth and business interests. More attention needs to be given to the social dimensions of development – such as decent work and social protection.

As organisations of working people, whose 'core business' is improving lives and livelihoods, trade unions know that it cannot be taken for granted that economic growth is always or necessarily a 'good thing' for working people. Sometimes 'growth' entails wage cuts or job loss. Sometimes 'growth and prosperity' is felt more by shareholders than job holders. Prosperity doesn't always 'trickle down'.

As trade unionists in the UK, we know from experience that the freedom to organise, to bargain, and to lobby are livelihood issues. Thousands of us benefit everyday from hard won gains such as the minimum wage or health and safety standards. Thousands more working people all over the developing world similarly struggle to improve their own situation. They do not want charity – but the support and opportunity to make their voice heard, to secure decent work and social conditions.

The inability of workers to secure their rights to decent working and living conditions poses a danger for those elsewhere who think that their hard won rights are safe. As indicated in the founding document of the International Labour Organisation:

Conditions of labour exist involving... injustice, hardship and privation to large numbers of people ... The failure of any nation to adopt humane conditions of labour is an obstacle in the way of nations which desire to improve the conditions in their own countries

From the preamble to the Constitution of the ILO, Versailles, 1919

In the global market, where jobs and investment can be 'relocated' at speed, the International Labour Organisation's (ILO – see glossary) essential message of *poverty anywhere is a threat to prosperity everywhere* is not so much a warning as a call to action for all trade unionists wherever they are.



Development strategies – ideas that change

What is 'development'?

'Development' is an idea. It can refer to how a person, an organisation or a country should change over time. When it has 'international' in front of it, as in international development, it describes how it is thought countries in general should change over time. In this sense 'development' is also about political ideas because it deals societies organising for change.

This is basic and fundamentally important information for us as trade unionists.

'Development' or 'international development' is not an unchanging bundle of stages, processes, income levels or targets. It is a perception of how countries can change which, when translated into practice, has very concrete outcomes – in terms of what we can do, our life experiences and chances including what or how we work, whether we have public services or not and even what we eat.

Development is...

In the 60s and 70s, economist Dudley Seers made the case for an emphasis on human needs and equity, as well as economic growth. For him, development should include:

- the capacity to obtain physical necessities (especially food)
- a job (including studying, working on a family farm, keeping house)
- equality in society
- participation in government
- belonging to a nation that is truly independent, both economically and politically
- adequate educational levels (especially literacy)

Tim Allen & Alan Thomas, eds (2000) *Poverty and Development into the 21st Century*. OU/OUP

INDIA 2004, Village activists support an international conference, 'Out of work and into school: Children's right to education as a non-negotiable', organised by the NV Foundation (a community-based Indian NGO with a network of thousands of activists). © Simon Steyne, TUC

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Development is...

International development is the journey the world must take in order for more countries to become prosperous countries. At the very least it's about making sure that the most basic of things we take for granted can also be taken for granted by everyone else in the world. People in all countries should have food on their plate every day; a roof over their heads at night; schools for their children; doctors, nurses and medicines when they are sick; jobs which bring money into the home.

Department for International Development (2004) *The Rough Guide to a Better World. And how you can make a difference*. Available free from local post offices

Development is ...

Nobel Prize winner, Amartya Sen... sees development as the expansion of capabilities – increasing the possibility for more people to realize their potentials as human beings through the expansion of their capabilities for functioning. According to Sen's 'capability approach', development should be about the enrichment of human lives – not in the sense of 'having more things' particularly, but rather that of having the freedom to choose between different ways of living.

Tim Allen & Alan Thomas, eds (2000) *Poverty and Development into the 21st Century*, OU/OUP

What these different approaches to development really mean in practical terms for working people is of key concern to trade unionists. A questioning approach to development ideas that inform policies or issues is vital. As trade unionists our questions concern – development for what purpose, by whom and for whom?

Changing Ideas – a brief background note on development

Ideas about how countries should develop have always existed but has only recently been described as 'international development'. Discussion and planning for development at an international level was a key outcome to emerge from post-Second World War deliberations among the Allied countries on how to ensure peace and stability in the future.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank were established to help promote growth, economic development and reduce tensions between countries. The idea was that Governments would intervene in the market to achieve stable economic growth by borrowing and investing money in public services and other parts of the economy such as the private sector, to achieve their plans. The IMF would help ease countries' financial problems by providing loans and assistance where necessary. (At the same time, the American's funded the Marshall Plan post-World War II, which provided huge amounts of money to revitalise the war damaged European economies). Since then, a recurring theme within such international institutions has been that economic development leads to poverty reduction, however it is the key roles of the state and market within this that keeps changing.

The development route promoted by the World Bank was not the only route to social and economic improvement and some countries sought alignment with the Soviet bloc, which advocated a socialist path to development. In the context of the Cold War, developing countries were described as the 'Third World' – clearly not part of the First (the industrialised countries of the West), and not part of the Second (the Eastern bloc). The

Third World was described by Peter Worsley in 1964 as 'also a world of poor countries. Their poverty was the outcome of a more fundamental identity: that they had all been colonized.'

www.dfid.gov.uk

What is a developing country?

Today, there is no international binding list of developing countries. The United Nations, World Bank and other international institutions all apply similar criteria – chief among these is per capita income – but attach different weightings to those criteria.

Middle-Income Countries (MICs) are also critical to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Nearly a third of those living on less than US\$1 a day live in MICs and not all MICs are on target to meet them.

Total British official development assistance will rise to almost £6.5 billion by 2007/8. These additional resources will be used to increase bilateral aid to Africa to at least £1.25 billion a year by 2008, spend at least £1.5 billion on HIV/AIDS related work over the next three years and ensure that more children in the world's poorest countries are able to go to primary school.

The development strategy focus on growth and economic development was by no means a guarantee of reducing poverty. In the early '70s the World Bank proclaimed the fulfilment of 'basic needs' a more realistic means of eliminating poverty – a goal to be met by 2000.

The stagnation caused by successive oil crises in the 1970s created a situation where countries were obliged to borrow more and more to cover the interest payments on their borrowing. This led to cut-backs in public expenditure with direct effect on basic needs – cuts in the provision of health care, education, housing and food subsidies. Increased poverty and social tensions were frequently the result.

In the 1980s, the IMF and the World Bank increasingly made reductions in public expenditure and movement towards free trade a condition of granting loans or extending repayment periods. Leading countries at those institutions (including the UK) increasingly portrayed state intervention as part of the problem of development rather than the solution. Borrowing countries had to demonstrate their willingness to 'structurally adjust' their economies (i.e. cut government spending and privatise the public sector) to facilitate repayment. The previously commonsense idea of governments borrowing and investing money as a means of development was now regarded as government 'interference' in the 'free market'.

Today, much of civil society in Britain and globally is campaigning to stop this type of forced neo-liberal economic conditionality. In a small victory, as a result of growing pressure from NGOs and trade unions for example, DFID has recently reviewed its policies and has promised to no longer make aid to developing countries conditional on privatisation of their public services (See <http://waronwant.org/?lid=8740>).

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Development in a globalising world

The development strategy promoted by the World Bank since the 1980s takes place in a quite different context to that of the post-Second World War period. Originally concerned with achieving the peace and stability that would facilitate growth, development strategies have come to focus on creating a global, 'free' market by shrinking the role of the state and boosting private entrepreneurship and investment.

It is assumed that entrepreneurs and private business know best how and where to invest productively. This being the case, it is reasoned, there should be no barriers to trade and investment in the world. Economic growth will follow, creating a beneficial cycle of investment, jobs, and growth. People will then be able to afford to pay for services previously provided by the public sector.

Time for a change of ideas

Development policies change people's lives. They can do so for the better, but they don't always. Their impact across a range of countries has sometimes been so dramatic that the IMF and World Bank themselves have been the focus of widespread protest. Their insistence on a free trade/privatisation recipe for developing countries has fostered anti-globalisation actions.

There is ample evidence that the current approach to globalisation has aggravated the position of working people. But poverty existed prior to globalisation too. Trade unions believe that this situation is neither inevitable nor without solution.

There is more than one way to approach international development. Since the Second World War, the ideas that inform and drive international development strategies have changed. They can change again. This time they must take better account of the social dimensions of what it is that makes people poor and prevents them improving their lives.



Poverty in a global world

What is poverty?

There may be differences about what constitutes 'development', but it is generally agreed that reducing poverty has to be part of it. Many people feel they have a fairly clear idea about what poverty is, linking it to a lack of the basics in life – food, shelter, a means of livelihood. But there is far more to poverty than meets the eye.

The poverty of words

The English words 'poor' and 'poverty' are treacherous and deceptive. Covering a multitude of conditions, the words create a seamless continuity between 'natural' poverty and human-made poverty, an artificial link which the language seeks to pass off as though it were a natural phenomenon.

Jeremy Seabrook in *New Internationalist*, No 310 Mar 99

www.unesco.org/shs/poverty

Characteristics of poverty

...poverty may be defined as a human condition characterized by sustained or chronic deprivation of the resources, capabilities, choices, security and power necessary for the enjoyment of an adequate standard of living and other civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights.

United Nations Committee on Social, Economic and Cultural Rights, 2001

Who is in poverty?

Global poverty is a fairly new concept. Following the Second World War, the degree of 'development' countries would need to undergo was determined by measuring their income per head of population against that of the United States. By using the industrialised

Fact sheets

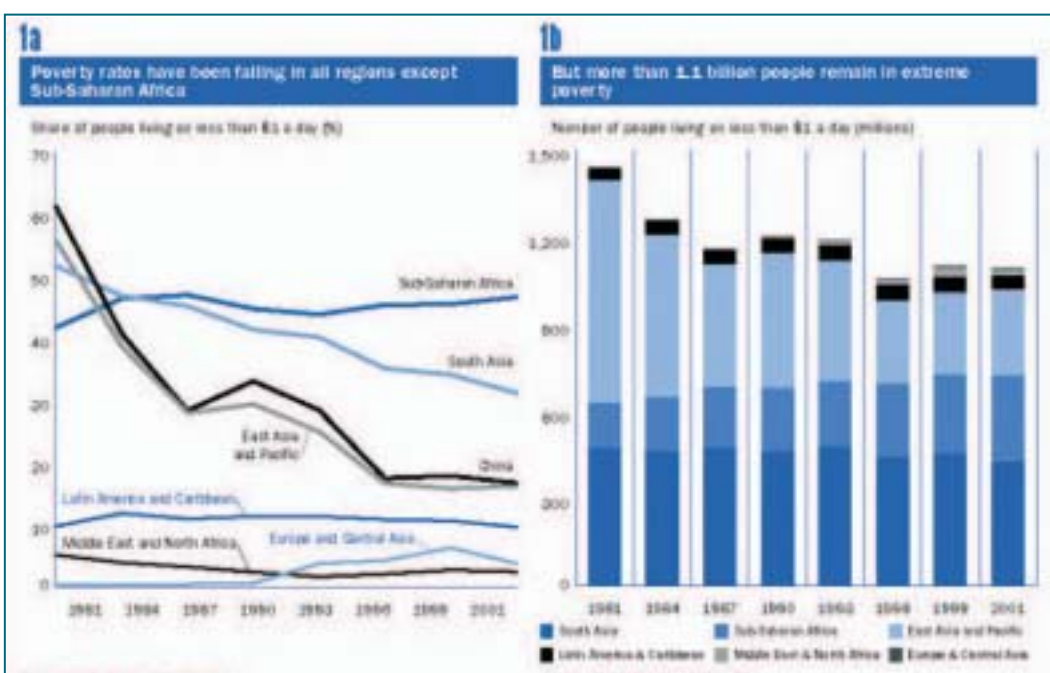
nations as a yardstick of 'development', the colonial and emerging independent states of Africa, Latin America and Asia came to be described as 'underdeveloped' and identified as suffering high levels of poverty.

At present the World Bank uses less than \$1 a day (65p-ish) as the level at which people can be considered to be in extreme poverty (See TUC [2000] *Target 2015: Halving World Poverty*, TUC/DfID). This is then used as an indicator for estimating what proportion of a country's population is in poverty.

www.undp.org

Facts and Figures on Poverty

- quarter of the world's population, 1.3 billion people, live in severe poverty
- Nearly 800 million people do not get enough food, and about 500 million people are chronically malnourished. More than a third of children are malnourished
- In industrial countries more than 100 million people live below the poverty line, more than 5 million people are homeless and 37 million are jobless
- Of the world's 23 million people living with HIV/AIDS more than 93% live in developing countries
- More than 840 million adults are illiterate – 538 million of them are women
- Around 2 million children died as a result of armed conflict in the last decade- In developing countries 160 million pre-school children are underweight
- 1.2 billion people live without access to safe drinking water
- 110 million landmines lie undetonated in 68 countries



Source: World Bank staff estimates <http://www.worldbank.org/data/wdi2004/Section1-intro.pdf>

Yet not everyone in developing countries is poor, just as not everyone in a developed country, such as the UK, is rich. Income measure is only a rough indicator of poverty. It does not give us the whole picture. Poverty has other forms and dimensions that it does not capture.

www.oxfam.org.uk

Marginalised Workers

Everything I have comes from the cashew. Cashews bought these clothes, they paid for oil to light the house, and they enabled my children to go to school.

Cashew farmer in Mozambique

In the mid 1990s, the World Bank and IMF forced the government of Mozambique to liberalise its cashew market and phase out a tax which disincentivised the export of unprocessed cashews. As a result, more than half of Mozambique's cashews were sent to India for processing and a total of 40,000 workers lost their jobs.

After Kenya opened its sugar cane market, growers experienced a drop in income of up to 37%. Communities were already reeling from the impact of HIV. The collapse of the sugar market has made them even more susceptible to the disease.

I sold all my livestock... to pay for my husband when he was sick. I can't afford to buy antiretro-virals... for me. There is much, much more HIV than five years ago because many parents are dead and since they were the breadwinners, the families left behind are in absolute poverty. So this makes the youth get involved in sexual practices in a bid to support their siblings.

Benta, sugar cane worker, Nyando, Kenya. From **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** Report.

www.roughguide-betterworld.com

Fighting for resources?

Sierra Leone, in the years following independence an African success story, is now one of the poorest countries on the planet, and faces many problems exacerbated by the surplus of weapons, connected to its role as a diamond exporter.

During the civil war, my family lived in constant fear. Guns were everywhere – automatic and semi-automatic rifles, machine guns, pistols – and so were hand grenades, rocket-propelled grenades, and other life-destroying tools of warfare... Schools closed down, businesses went to ruin, and investors fled the country. In such times your country's development soon grinds to a halt.

Isaac Lappia, Amnesty International Director in Sierra Leone.

Fact sheets

Of the 2.8bn people employed globally in 2003, HALF are living on less than \$2 (about £1.30) a day.

www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inf/pr/2004/54.htm

Are these people poor?

Labourers in the open-cast Serra Pelada gold mines in northern Brazil have a regular though very low income, working a 12-hour day carrying a 120lb sack up 200-foot ladders with considerable risk of injury or work-induced illness. How much choice do they have?

See also Tim Allen & Alan Thomas, eds (2000) *Poverty and Development into the 21st Century*

www.oneworldaction.org

Women – not in ‘real’ work?

The labour code in our country does not protect workers in domestic service; there is not even a minimum wage for domestic workers.

Esperanza Cárdenas, Nicaraguan Trade Unionist. From *Women Workers’ Rights – who is responsible?*

In many countries – in the developed as in the developing world – there is a general reluctance to recognise work around the home as ‘real’ work. Yet domestic service is a significant source of employment for many women. Hundreds and thousands of workers are effectively left without protection to the uncertainties of the ‘informal’ economy. The undervaluing of women – both at home and at work makes women vulnerable to exploitation and poverty. Seventy per cent of the world’s poor are women.

See also Refugees and Migrant Workers Fact File

Income measures can be useful in gauging the size of the poverty problem. They tell us about quantity, but not about poverty itself, its causes, or about poverty as an experience of people like ourselves.

What the income measures do though is to show us the collective nature of poverty. Poverty at the level of nations cannot be viewed as the result of individual failings. It has a collective, social dimension, and has identifiable, common causes. It also has solutions.

Do we have the resources to eliminate poverty?

In today’s environment, cost-cutting – on the part of governments on public services, on the part of companies in terms of staffing or ‘production overheads’, or on the part of households to make ends meet – is a regular feature of everyday life. In this context, many people may question whether, given the overall degree and extent of poverty, we have the resources to do much about it.

The member states of the UN believe this to be the case. To make a start on the task they agreed the Millennium Development Goals as targets for reducing poverty by half by 2015. The issue is not one of whether the resources exist to eliminate poverty, but when and how.

The statistics drawn up by the UN Development Programme help to put the issue of resources in perspective.

www.undp.org

Today's society has the resources to eliminate poverty...

- The net wealth of the 10 richest billionaires is \$ 133 billion , more than 1.5 times the total national income of the least developed countries
- The cost of eradicating poverty is 1% of global income
- Effective debt relief to the 20 poorest countries would cost \$ 5.5 billion – equivalent to the cost of building Euro Disney
- Providing universal access to basic social services and transfers to alleviate income poverty would cost \$80 billion, less than the net worth of the seven richest men in the world
- Six countries can spend \$700 million in nine days on dog and cat food
- Today's world spend \$92 billion on junk food, \$ 66 billion on cosmetics and nearly \$800 billion in 1995 for defence expenditure



The Millennium Development Goals

What are the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)?

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) summarize the development goals agreed at international conferences and world summits during the 1990s. At the end of the decade, world leaders distilled the key goals and targets in the Millennium Declaration (September 2000).

Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger By 2015, the proportion of people on the planet who are living in absolute poverty should be half what it was in 1990. In order to achieve this, we must lift one billion people out of the "one dollar a day" existence.

Seven other targets follow:

Achieve universal primary education Every child should have access to primary education by 2015

Promote gender equality and empower women Preferably by 2005, girls should have the same chance as boys to go to school – at primary and secondary level – and to all levels of education by 2015

Reduce child mortality Reduce by two thirds the under-five mortality rate by 2015

Improve maternal health The proportion of women dying as a result of childbirth must fall by 75% – by 2015

Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases Have halted and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS and the incidence of malaria and other major diseases by 2015

Ensure environmental sustainability Current environmental losses are effectively reversed – through effective sustainable development policies – by 2015

Develop a global partnership for development

SENEGAL 2003. A lunch of rice and tomatoes in a ground nut farming village close to Mekhe. The rice used is imported from Asia. © Christian Aid/Harriet Logan/Network

Why are the MDGs Needed?

The MDGs emerged from the global context of the 1990s. This was a period in which:

- free trade, neo-liberal development policies were applied extensively, particularly in the developing countries
- the practical effects of neo-liberal development led to widespread protests, which clearly identified the role of the IMF and the World Bank in imposing cutbacks in public services and privatisation
- the World Bank's own evaluations began to highlight some of the failings of its policy approach
- the gap between rich and poor increased enormously

In this context the United Nations committed themselves to poverty eradication as an ethical, social, political and economic imperative of mankind. The subsequent adoption of the MDGs presents a focus for practical action and achievement in addressing poverty reduction.

What Progress Is Being Made On the MDGs?

In setting the MDGs, member states of the UN agreed upon the fact that they were achievable. Around the world, progress is being made on the goals. Having targets has served to focus efforts to reduce poverty and some of the poorest countries have made good progress. Over the last 10 years net primary school enrolments have increased, and targets for the reduction of child mortality are almost on track. Other goals present more of a mixed picture. As the UN's Development Programme Human Development Report 2003 points out it is improved rich country policy not charity that will help achieve the Goals.

www.un.org/millenniumgoals

UN Report to 2004

According to Secretary-General Kofi Annan's September report on the Millennium Development Goals, a mixed picture of progress in transforming the world's social fabric by 2015 emerges.

'With only 11 years to go until the 2015 deadline, 2005 will be a critical year, particularly in Africa, affirmed the Secretary-General... most of Asia and Northern Africa, is largely on track for halving extreme poverty by 2015 and achieving other key goals. The second group, mainly in West Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, has been making good progress towards some individual targets such as achieving universal primary education, but has been less successful in reducing poverty. The third group, sub-Saharan Africa and least developed countries in other regions, is far from making adequate progress on most of the goals.'

On HIV/AIDS Mr Annan notes that new infections in the last calendar year were higher than ever before, 'raising serious concerns about the development prospects for whole regions of the world in which hundreds of millions of people reside.'

On the goal of forming a global partnership for development, he stresses that the collapse of trade talks in Cancun, Mexico, last year – when developing countries sought to eliminate the subsidies and tariffs used by the developed world – was 'a serious setback in efforts to create a level playing field' for the developing nations.



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continued...

'The Millennium Development Goals are still technically feasible in even the poorest countries, but the window of opportunity is rapidly narrowing, he warned, and the political will remains largely absent.'

See also International Development Matters, Sept 04 www.tuc.org.uk

What Do The MDGs Have To Do With Trade Unions?

The continuing existence of extreme poverty and the failure to meet many development goals is usually linked to lack of secure employment, poor wages and working conditions, and violations of workers' rights. In their most fundamental functions, work to combat these causes of poverty.

Trade union are frequently at the forefront in achieving other results that are part of the MDGs, such as campaigning for an end to discrimination against women, achieving universal primary education or combating the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Trade unions believe that for meaningful international development to take place, the current preoccupation with free market, free trade led growth is not enough. In many cases it is a hindrance. The insistence of international financial institutions on privatisation and the reduction in state spending is adversely affecting the lives of large numbers of people.

www.global-unions.org**Working at cross purposes?**

In June 2004 an IMF-World Bank Report noted that there were around 9,000 teaching vacancies in Zambia effectively preventing it from reaching the MDG2 target of universal primary education. The report does not mention that in Feb 2004 Zambia's education minister publicly declared that teachers had been trained to fill these posts, but that the government could not hire them because of the IMF-World Bank conditions of a public-sector wage bill ceiling attached to a loan for debt relief.

Global Unions (October 2004), *The Trade Union Role in Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*

Better progress on the MDGs could be achieved by increasing support for organisations such as trade unions that are strongly established in both the developed and developing world.

Trade Unions and the MDGs

Trade Unions have a dual role in helping governments achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Working in factories and workplaces, they have the potential to mobilise massive public support for action on poverty. They also have first hand experience of the contribution productive employment can make to poverty reduction.

ICFTU General Secretary Guy Ryder

www.dfid.gov.uk

The importance of workers' rights and labour standards to poverty reduction shows why we, in the development community, need to strengthen our links with the trade union and labour movement, at all levels from the local to the global. I strongly believe that trade unions – and other labour organisations which represent workers in the informal economy – have a major role to play in helping to achieve the vision set out in the Millennium Declaration.

The private sector, governments of developing countries and NGOs also have their roles to play in relation to labour standards, but our links with them are much better established. We therefore need particularly to improve our links with organisations that represent workers – whether small, local and informal associations, or big, national or international organisations.

Hilary Benn, Secy of State for International Development 2004, Labour Standards & Poverty Reduction 2004

www.millenniumcampaign.org

Unions can also be involved in fighting for the goals by campaigning:

- against child labour and forced labour
- for debt cancellation
- for quality public services
- for democracy, and accountability, and against corruption
- for active labour market policies
- for effective social protection
- for women's empowerment and decent work for young people
- as part of national coalitions to get governments to keep their promises



Trade union perspectives on poverty and development

Taking stock

www.icftu.org/pubs/globalisation/globguide.html

The global redistribution of wealth

The gap between the rich and the poor is widening all over the world. In 1960, the income gap between the 20% richest and the 20% poorest countries in the world was 30 to 1. This rose to 60 to 1 in 1990 and to around 75 to 1 at the end of the 20th century. At that same time, the World Bank said that income levels in Sub-Saharan Africa had fallen by 0.7% a year over the previous twenty years while average incomes in industrialised countries had grown by 2.0% a year. Over the last ten years, the highly paid within the industrialised countries have seen their incomes rise much faster than the average, while a growing number of families depend on insecure, low-paid jobs or social benefits.

ICFTU (2004) *A Trade Union Guide to Globalisation* 2nd ed.

In a global world, distance is no guarantee of escaping the detrimental effects of a development approach that focuses overwhelmingly on the interest of business. The same policies that are helping to widen the poverty gap between rich and poor nations are having a similar effect in widening the gap between the better and less well off in developed countries too.

Women from the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions celebrate International Women's Day. More and more women are gaining leadership roles in the Zimbabwean trade union movement, which upholds the principles of democracy, freedom of speech and equality in a country run by a brutal dictatorship.

www.ft.com/globalvillage

The challenge of the informal economy

Over the last 30 years the 'informal economy' (groups of workers operating outside the mainstream economy) has grown enormously. Excluding agriculture, informal work makes up around half to over three quarters of the developing world. In richer countries, such as the UK, it is estimated to be around 15% (although 25% in the USA).

The existence of large numbers of workers outside the formal economy is a challenge:

- for the workers involved, as they generally have no legal or other protection and are highly vulnerable to exploitation, harsh conditions and treatment
- for other workers, because the lower costs of the informal sector helps drive standards down
- for developing countries, because their vulnerability is a destabilising factor, outside legal, protective and contributory frameworks
- for trade unions, because informal workers (with some significant, hopeful exceptions) may be fearful, may produce resentment amongst formal and already organised workers – demanding a greater and more concerted organising effort

Financial Times. See also www.global-labour.org/trade_unions_and_the_informal_sector_wiego.htm

These simple facts add the issue of vital self-interest to humanitarian and solidarity-based concern for the experience of working people who cannot access the basic necessities and rights in life, that we should all be able take for granted.

Poverty anywhere – a threat to prosperity everywhere

As most people in the UK know, the prospect of a company setting up business locally generates optimism – the promise of jobs, incomes and opportunities, a better life. Developed and developing countries welcome investors, and offer incentives such as help with the costs of set-up or tax breaks. Lending institutions such as the World Bank often make labour reform a condition of loans to encourage 'flexibility' in the labour market and encourage foreign investment.

For developing country governments, desperate to generate growth in their economies, or for sub-contractors keen to secure contracts, 'flexible' working conditions and reduced wages represent a source of cost-saving – if not a condition of development aid. The opportunities for cost saving are all the greater where democracy is non-existent or weak, and where trade unions are repressed. This situation provides multi-national enterprises or brand owners with ready alternatives for ever cheaper production – and constant pressure on labour standards and incomes the world over.

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Race to the Bottom

Electronics workers in Mexico, like their bosses, have their eyes turned to the east:

That's the pressure – we have to work the way they work in China. That's what they always say. If we want to keep the maquiladoras (foreign-owned assembly plants) here in Mexico, we will have to work the way they do in China... Last year, the average production pay for production line workers was a not very generous 500 pesos (about US\$ 45) a week. This year, most people are being offered 450 pesos.

Productivity bonuses, once the norm, are getting rarer, as are opportunities to obtain loans against salaries. Contracts are getting shorter too.

ICFTU (2004) *A Trade Union Guide to Globalisation* 2nd ed

Getting the social dimension into development – the ideas

The trade union view is that people are not a commodity to be left to make the most of the 'free' market. Our lives and well-being are determined in the main by income and employment conditions, by our ability to access the needs of education, clean water, housing, health care.

If the same attention were paid to ensuring decent work and social protection as is paid to securing free trade, then this would be an enormous step in enabling people to improve their own lives. The trade union movement internationally believes it is time to 'globalise' social justice.

www.ilo.org/public/english/fairglobalization/report/highlight.htm

For decent work and social justice

As part of the tripartite International Labour Organisation (the specialist body on labour issues at the UN) the trade union movement emphasises 4 issues that are fundamental to socially just international development:

- Employment – the principal route out of poverty is work, so job creation and sustainable livelihoods should be a key concern for the economy.
- Rights – Poor people need to obtain recognition of rights and respect. They need representation, organization and participation. They need representation and laws that are enforced and work for, not against, their interests
- Protection – People living in poverty are unprotected and marginalized. New ways must be found to provide social protection, especially for vulnerable groups
- Dialogue – The poor understand the need to negotiate and that dialogue is the way to solve problems peacefully. Their own efforts merit greater attention. The trend towards the erosion of collective organisations and collective bargaining should be stopped.

See World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization, *A Fair Globalization*, ILO Toolkit, 2004

In their statement to the IMF and the World Bank in October 2004, Global Unions pressed our concern for the flagging progress on the Millennium Development Goals. The statement set out trade union views on stepping up progress in reducing poverty. These included:

- Recognising that to reduce poverty growth is not enough
- Labour and employment issues must be included in developing countries own plans for development
- The lending institutions' operations must be consistent with core labour standards (freedom to organise, elimination of forced labour, child labour, and discrimination at work)
- There is a need to correct the pro-business bias in labour reforms
- Public services should be supported, not dismantled
- There should be expanded debt relief and new financial mechanisms for achieving the MDGs (as in many cases current practice seems to work against this)
- There should be improved consultations with trade unions (that are meaningful and avoid the impression of a 'public relations' exercise)

www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/labourstandardsJune04.pdf

The importance of core labour standards

The 4 Core Labour Standards (freedom to organise, elimination of forced labour, child labour, and discrimination at work) are set out in 1998 *ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*. They are binding on all ILO member states. This is because they are seen as 'enabling rights' and also because they are represented in other human rights. They are seen as a basic minimum for acting to achieve a decent life.

The problem for working people is that they cannot be enforced at national level unless they have been incorporated in national law. The problem in terms of international development is that countries are often awarded aid while flouting these rights. Trade unions believe there can be no real development whilst this is the case, and that such basic rights could rightly be considered as a condition of development aid.

See DfID (2004) *Labour standards and poverty reduction*

Getting the social dimension into development – some examples

At all levels trade unions are working to press the case for a more socially just development that is responsive to people's needs, rights and own efforts to improve their lives. At an international level global unions are pressing for structures for consultation and negotiation that are productive. A greater awareness of international issues at a local trade union organising level around the world is also needed.

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See www.global-unions.org

Improving consultations with trade unions

In response to specific complaints submitted by two Global Union Federations (see glossary), Education International and Public Services International, the World Bank recently agreed to create 'contact points' within particular Bank units engaged in service restructuring, to ensure that unions are adequately informed and consulted on World Bank projects in their country and sector. Global Unions invite the World Bank to create similar contact points for trade unions within other specific sector departments of the Bank.

The international trade union movement, through solidarity campaigns, discussions with employers, and pressure on governments, has supported workers in many areas in their attempts to organise trade unions.

www.icftu.org

Protecting workers' rights

At the WTO summit in Cancún in September 2003, the ICFTU unveiled a new video detailing the physical and verbal abuse suffered by workers at the Corazón Apparel factory in San Pedro Sula, Honduras. This followed an organising campaign between Honduran workers, supported by Dutch unions and the global union federation for textile workers the ITGLWF.

Just six months later the same workers were celebrating the signing of a new collective agreement, only the second such deal in the Honduran *maquilas*. In addition to an increase in wages, the agreement brings many other benefits such as protective clothing, one week's paid maternity leave, loans for the purchase of bicycles, and time off when needed to visit the social security offices. But most important of all, from the workers' point of view, was the change of attitude on the part of the managers and supervisors. As union delegate José Santos puts it:

Now there is no more ill-treatment. We are treated like human beings, like proper workers.

Behind the Brand Names

International collaboration among trade unionists is crucial in helping people access and establish rights, particularly where the desperate need for work is leading to more and more 'labour flexibility', a process enabling business to get more from workers by giving them less.

As the largest, most representative voluntary organisations in most countries, trade unions can make the best of their international links and presence by underlining the case for, and taking, supportive action.

www.tgwu.org.uk

Working to end child labour

The Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI), with the support of the Department for International Development, was established because companies selling food and clothing to UK consumers were coming under increasing pressure – from trade unions, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and consumers – to ensure decent working conditions for the people who produce the goods they sell. One function of the initiative is to examine supply chains to ensure working conditions in developing countries are meeting the ETI standards, which includes core labour standards.

As part of the initiative, the T&G has raised the issue of child slavery in the Ivory Coast, where children have been engaged in the production of cocoa for the chocolate industry. Working with key employers' organisations, the union is campaigning to end this practice and ensure that the rights of children are properly protected.

www.tgwu.org.uk and www.ethicaltrade.org.uk

Addressing issues of poverty and development involve actions at all levels, and union websites and campaigns in the UK detail a range of initiatives and actions at local level.

www.amicustheunion.org.uk

Building awareness and activism

In a new project called Africa Matters, ACTSA has joined forces with AMICUS, to mobilise over one million British workers in support of economic development and workers rights in Africa. British workers will be encouraged to show solidarity and take campaign action around issues such as debt relief, privatisation of public services and HIV/AIDS. The Africa Matters guide explores such challenges faced by workers in Africa and provides a host of ideas as to how British workers can help bring about real change. British trade unionists will also be urged to develop partnerships with African workers through a series of conferences and visits by African trade unionists to British workplaces.

See www.actsa.org.uk and www.amicustheunion.org.uk

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www.world-psi.org

Campaigning against discrimination

PSI, the public services global union federation, has produced a video Pay Equity Now! for general use, that brings home the injustice and dangers of unequal pay. It compares the experiences of women in the Philippines, Namibia and North Yorkshire. It underlines the links between discrimination, low status and low pay. It also shows that women's poverty is not inevitable where unions are on the case and organise to combat pay discrimination. It is just 13 minutes long – ideal for lunch breaks, union meetings and group discussions.

See www.world-psi.org or TUC *Trade Union Digest of Organisations and Resources on International Development Issues* www.tuc.org.uk

www.makepovertyhistory.org.uk

The MakePovertyHistory Mobilisation

Trade unions have joined forces with other voluntary organisations in MakePovertyHistory as part of the Global Call to Action Against Poverty mobilisation. This aims to use the unique series of opportunities in the UK in 2005 to take a lead in the fight against poverty. By mobilising popular support across a unique string of events and actions, we will press our own government to compel rich countries to fulfil their obligations and promises to help eradicate poverty, and to rethink some long-held assumptions.

See www.makepovertyhistory.org.uk and the Make Poverty History in 2005 Fact Sheet number five.



MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY

What is MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY?

2005 holds a unique opportunity to MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY with the UK hosting the G8, holding the EU Presidency, the review of the Millennium Development Goals occurring in September and the next WTO Development Round in December.

MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY (www.makepovertyhistory.org) launched at beginning of 2005 and will run throughout 2005 and as of March 2005, over 350 trade unions, NGOs, faith groups and celebrities have joined to demand that in 2005 world's leaders commit to Trade Justice, Debt Cancellation and More and Better Aid. **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** is part of the Global Call to Action Against Poverty (www.whiteband.org), which is uniting groups, including the global trade union movement, around the world under one banner.

We recognise that for too long trade justice, debt and aid, have been discussed but left on the 'too difficult to deal with' pile. 2005 is a unique opportunity; that's why the unions are joining with faith groups, charities and campaigning groups to urge everyone to take action to make poverty history.

Brendan Barber, General Secretary TUC, at Congress Sept 2004

Why MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY?

In 2005 there are a unique set of opportunities to radically change the face of world poverty. There may never again be such a chance for a British Government, with the help of the British public, to transform the world for good. These opportunities include:

- **The G8 summit** In July 2005 the UK will be hosting the G8 summit in Gleneagles, in Scotland. Poverty in Africa will be a main topic for discussion and the MPH plan is to ensure your voice is heard there
- **The Commission for Africa** Launched by Tony Blair in February 2004 to help generate action for a strong and prosperous Africa - its report in March 2005 forms the key focal point of the British Chairmanship of the G8 summit (see <http://213.225.140.43/english/report/introduction.html>)
- **The EU Presidency** In the second half of next year the UK will be holding the chair of

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the European Union

- **UN General Assembly Millennium Development Goals Summit** plus 5, September 14–16 will review the progress since the 2000 Millennium Declaration of the MDGs to halve the proportion of people living in poverty by 2015.
- **The sixth WTO Ministerial December 13–18**, will try to succeed where the last of the so-called ‘development round’ in Cancun in September 2003 failed.

What are the aims of MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY?

As supporters of the poverty reduction targets that world leaders set themselves, the MPH members are appalled at the sluggish progress being made. World poverty is sustained not by chance or nature, but by a combination of factors – injustice in global trade, the huge burden of debt, insufficient and ineffective aid. Each of these is made worse by inappropriate economic policies imposed by rich countries.

MPH believes it doesn't have to be this way. These factors are determined by human decisions and can be changed. By mobilising popular support MPH aims quite simply to:



Trade Justice

World trade has increased ten-fold since 1970, but indicators in Africa alone show that poverty has doubled. The current trading system robs developing countries of £1.3 billion every day – 14 times what they get in aid.

Meanwhile, the rights and protection of ordinary people across the world – for example their right to join a trade union – have been eroded through a trading system that all too often sees human rights as an obstacle to the sacred working of the global market.

It isn't just a case of developing countries versus developed countries. The global trading system impacts on workers and the poorest in society across the West. It is at the heart of the race to the bottom – a downward spiral in which countries compete against one another to offer the lowest paid and most repressed workforce.

Today, most workers in the developing world have little protection, while the trade in the goods they produce, and we buy, is very well protected. To add insult to injury, workers across the world see what few rights they have, being eroded by the very same trading system.

The current trading system promotes ‘trade before everything’, ignoring the fact that trade should be a tool which used correctly can create a more equal world. But if it is used to trample over rights like the right to organise, people will be unable to demand their share of the benefits of globalisation. While democracy at the World Trade Organisation or WTO is formally democratic with ‘one member one vote’, real decisions are made in closed-room discussions amongst the world's richest states while developing countries are bullied and threatened to approve decisions contrary to their own interests.

This is a perfect reflection of the impact that the global trading system has had on the notion of democracy throughout the world. The results of the current trade agenda – privatisations, a patent system which allows millions to die of curable diseases ever year, subsidies which benefit mega-corporations while small farmers are forced into poverty – is proof of the absence of basic rights.

Trade justice is what we don't have at the moment. What we have are a series of contradictory policies that serve a few, but powerful, business interests in the richer countries, at the expense of the developing world and working people in particular.

The rules of international trade are decided by the richer countries (us included). These rules mean that our farmers and companies are paid subsidies to export food so cheaply that poor farmers are driven out of production in the developing world.

Mexico, agriculture and liberalisation

Under the drive for total liberalization of agriculture by 2008, rural Mexico has already lost some 2 million jobs. Subsidized corn from the US, dumped on the market at 30–35 per cent below the cost of production, has devastated local production. Reinforced by NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement), this has driven the price down by 75 percent.

From "Lessons and Lobster from Cancun", as published on the IUF web-site – October 2003

Yet in the developing world global trade rules and loan conditions effectively prohibit subsidies or any kind of protection that would enable them to build up their economies. Free trade, they are told, will do you good. It will help lift you out of poverty. But it isn't doing. And we don't practise what we preach.

www.e-alliance.ch/gwa_order.jsp

'I could no longer support my family.'

Muracin Claircin – one of thousands of farmers who have lost their livelihoods in the flood of cheap American imports. In return for World Bank and IMF money, the Haitian government had to eliminate almost all import restrictions. In 1995 the import tariff on rice was slashed to just 3%, leaving small Haitian farmers with no chance of competing with subsidised US farmers.

What sort of efficiency is it that leaves thousands of farmers unproductive, families hungry and parents unable to send their children to school?

Susie Ibutu works with poor farmers in Kenya. The economic reforms imposed by the IMF led to the spectacular collapse of the Kenyan cotton industry. Tariffs on imported clothing were removed and government support was drastically cut. By 2000, cotton production was worth less than 5% of its value in the 1980s.

Global Week of Action on Trade. Action Guide.

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Trade rules as they stand are not fair. They do not have to be like that. No country in the world has achieved 'developed country' status without some kind of protection to build up its agriculture or industries. The Trade Justice Movement which the TUC and an increasing number of unions are part of are working to:

- Fight for rules that ensure governments, particularly in poor countries, can choose the best solutions to end poverty and protect the environment. These will not always be free trade policies.
- End export subsidies that damage the livelihoods of poor rural communities around the world.
- Make laws that stop big business profiting at the expense of people

Drop the Debt

www.undp.org/mdg/faqs.html

Bank interest v. self-interest

A recent study of budgetary spending in over 30 developing countries found that two-thirds spend more on debt servicing than on basic social services. Some spend three to five times more on debt. In sub-Saharan Africa, governments spend about twice as much to comply with their financial commitment to external creditors than to comply with their social obligation to their people. To spend more on external debt than on basic social services – when tens of millions of people see their fundamental human rights denied – is ethically wrong and makes poor economics.

From UNDP site FAQs www.undp.org/mdg/faqs.html

Poor countries first got into debt in the 1960s and 70s. Their leaders took out loans from banks, countries such as the UK and through the IMF and the World Bank. Some were granted to leaders that didn't even have a democratic mandate and many were spent on projects that would only benefit the countries' elite (See www.jubileedebtcampaign.org).

The debt became unmanageable in the late '70s and early '80s when interest rates shot up, increasing the size of the debt. For many countries the interest was so great that they were left with more debt than they had started with, despite repayments.

To make matters worse, the lenders attached demanding conditions to the indebted countries. For example, poor countries had to drastically reduce their spending on public services, including health and education.

It is now widely accepted that many of these conditions are harmful to poor countries' economies and their people. Given the constraints imposed by debt, development and poverty reduction remain illusory. **It's time that the unpayable debts of the world's poorest countries should be cancelled in full, by fair and transparent means.**

More & Better Aid

By 'aid' most people understand funds or assistance given by the developed industrial economies or charities to developing countries. The vast majority of aid comes from governments and, in reality, is often tied in with commercial transactions.

It is not so much 'given', as tied in with conditions.

www.makepovertyhistory.org

Aid with strings attached

Between 1990 and 2002, sub-Saharan Africa received 212 billion US dollars in aid. But in return for this aid, African countries were required to deregulate and open up their economies. These countries are now more 'integrated into the world economy' than most rich countries, yet between 1990 and 2000 average incomes in sub-Saharan Africa declined resulting in increased poverty and hunger.

The conditions might involve privatising public utilities to cut down government spending, or agreeing to spend the aid on products the donor country wants to export, for example, arms.

To help promote poverty reduction, rich countries have promised to spend 0.7% of their income on aid. Only five countries such as Norway, Netherlands and Sweden have fulfilled the promise. The UK has recently 'untied' its aid and its contribution is growing, but in 2005 still stands at 0.39%, however this is twice the amount it was when Labour was elected 8 years ago and the plan is to reach 0.7% by 2013. However many campaigning organisations are demanding a deadline of 2010.

Aid needs to be better focused on poor people's needs. That means making organisations like the World Bank more democratic and accessible for poor people to express them. It also means ending the obligation upon countries to cut health and education spending or opening up their markets:

Donors must now deliver at least \$50 billion more in aid per year and set a binding timetable for spending 0.7% of national income on aid. Aid must also be made to work more effectively for poor people.

MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY – what you can do checklist

- Go the **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** website www.makepovertyhistory.org or to the TUC website <http://www.tuc.org.uk/international/index.cfm?mins=406>
- By March 2005, over 18 unions had signed up to **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** is your union one of them? What plans do they have to get involved?
- Discuss potential activities with your branch or workplace committee – why not invite a speaker from a local NGO or your unions International Department (where they exist)
- Get involved in the G8 mobilisation planned for 2nd July 2005 in Edinburgh – the **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** website has information about the demonstration or find out if your union is helping to get members to Edinburgh
- Wear a white wristband and help supply them to your work colleagues, friends and family to symbolise the fight against poverty. You can buy them for £1 from the TUC (all money goes back into **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** trade union campaigning). You can order them by through TUC publications. Minimum orders are 5 for £5 and all orders are in multiples of 5: write to Steve Mills, Publication Officer, Congress House, Great Russell Street, WC1B 3LS. Cheques should be made payable to the TUC. Telephone Steve on 020 7467 1294 to pay by credit card or go to www.tuc.org.uk/makepovertyhistory to order online. Or visit Bookmarks Bookshop, 1 Bloomsbury Street, London, WC1B 3QE (sold individually).
- Fill in an E-card action – white cards addressed to senior government ministers urging them to take action against poverty. These are available from the website.
- Write to MPs emphasising the importance of the trade union agenda and labour standards as key tools of poverty reduction.
- Find out more about any other relevant union campaigns or links and get involved.

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[TUC International Development Digest](http://www.tuc.org.uk/learning/tuc-7863-f0.cfm), www.tuc.org.uk/learning/tuc-7863-f0.cfm

A reference point for trade unionists and trade union tutors interested gaining a greater understanding of international development. It is updated every six months and is provided as a shortcut and guide to information and resources directly appropriate to trade unionists.

Tim Allen & Alan Thomas, eds, (2000) *Poverty and Development into the 21st Century*. OU/OUP

This presents a very readable overview of its topic, illustrated by key arguments and case studies, but notably lacking in information on trade unions.

DFID (2004) *The Rough Guide to a Better World: And how you can make a difference*, Rough Guides. www.roughguide-betterworld.com

Part of DfID awareness raising on poverty, aid and development. Available on the web-site or in printed form at Post Offices.

DFID (2004) paper on Labour standards and poverty reduction
www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/labourstandardsJune04.pdf

Global Unions (2004) *The Trade Union Role in Achieving the Millennium Development Goals*. Sept. www.global-unions.org

The trade union perspective as put to IMF and World Bank Annual Meetings in October 2004

www.tuc.org.uk/international

The international section of the TUC website. Sign up to **International Development Matters** to find out each month about TUC work on international development, trade unions challenges and successes in developing countries and more...

www.icftu.org

(2004) *Behind the Brand Names: Working conditions and labour rights in export processing zones*

(2004) *A Trade Union Guide to Globalisation*, 2nd ed.

www.jubileedebtcampaign.org.uk

For good background information, campaigns and activities on the debt issue. TUC is a member of this campaign

www.ilo.org

(2004) *The Report of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalisation*

This is a lengthy report – try the Toolkit for a shorter, usable summary

www.makepovertyhistory.org

Web-site of the coalition, including the TUC, **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** – using 2005 to focus campaigning on Trade, Debt and Aid

www.millenniumcampaign.org

Campaigning-friendly UN web-site – well worth a visit

TUC (2000) *Target 2015. Halving World Poverty*, TUC/DfID pamphlet

Highly readable awareness-raising booklet that sets out the trade union approach. Also available in hard copy.

www.un.org/millenniumgoals

Official web-site that sets out the Millennium Development Goals, their indicators, and progress on them

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Global Union Federations (GUFs)

The GUFs are federations of national trade unions that are grouped by industry or sector,

ICFTU

The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions represents the overwhelming majority of trade unions through the affiliation of their national centres e.g. TUC.

ILO

The International Labour Organization is the UN specialized agency which seeks the promotion of social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights. The ILO formulates international labour standards in the form of Conventions and Recommendations setting minimum standards of basic labour rights. It promotes the development of independent employers' and workers' organizations and provides training and advisory services to those organizations. Within the UN system, the ILO has a unique tripartite structure with workers and employers participating as equal partners with governments in the work of its governing organs.

IMF

The International Monetary Fund governs the international monetary system and monitors both the global economy and that of IMF members (184 in all). It provides financing for members who are experiencing problems with their balance of payments.

The Jubilee Debt Campaign

The JDC's mission remains to end to all unpayable poor country debts by fair and transparent means. It is a coalition of local/regional groups and national organisations including trade unions. Their focus is on changing UK government policy on debt, including 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 Trade Justice Movement

The Trade Justice Movement is a fast growing group of organisations including trade unions, aid agencies, environment and human rights campaigns, fairtrade organisations, faith and consumer groups. It is campaigning for trade justice – not free trade – with the rules weighted to benefit poor people and the environment.

World Bank

The World Bank was created to promote long-term economic development and poverty reduction, and provides technical and financial support to help countries reform particular sectors or implement specific projects. From the 1990s it came under strong pressure from the USA to lend more to the private sector and less to governments.

The UN operates on a 'country a vote' basis'. At the World Bank (and the IMF) voting power fluctuates in relation to how much a country contributes. The US vote counts for around 17%, the UK 5%, and India and China about 3% each. The voting weight of the North as a whole is well over 60%. (See Allen & Thomas, p204)

WTO

The WTO is essentially an organisation for liberalising trade, guided by two main principles:

- Countries may not discriminate between their trading partners. This means that if a WTO member grants another WTO member a special favour, it will have to do the same for all other countries that are WTO members;

- Countries may not treat foreign trading partners and national ones differently.

At the heart of the WTO are the WTO agreements, negotiated and signed by the members, and ratified in their parliaments. The agreements are the result of negotiation rounds - a ninth round, the 'Doha Development agenda' is (2004) currently ongoing - and they provide the legal ground-rules for international commerce. They are essentially contracts - or promises that governments have to respect.

The United Nations

Is based on its charter which is its constituting instrument setting out the rights and obligations of Member States and establishing the Organisation's organs and procedures. The purposes of the UN are to maintain international peace and security; to develop friendly relations among nations; to cooperate in solving international economic, cultural and humanitarian problems and in promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; and to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations in attaining these ends.



Workplace activity

Workplace activity

Researching Union International Campaigning

AIMS

This activity will help you to:

- Identify how your union or sector is involved in international issues
- Think about how this might affect your workplace and your work as a rep

TASKS

1 For the next session, try to find out as much as you can on your Union or sector's international work.

Starting points include:

- Branch or Regional Officers
- Your union web-site
- Your union magazine or union leaflets
- The web-site of the Global Union Federation to which your union is affiliated
- Resolutions made at Conference and follow-up

2 Bring any information or notes with you for use in the next session.



Activities

Tutor Note: International campaigns and local workplaces

SETTING THE ACTIVITY UP

This activity will work best if reps have had the opportunity to do prior research on international campaigning within their own union. If this has not happened, then it will need either resources that you have in your Centre, or access to IT to carry out the research. If this is the case, try not to rely solely on internet research, as the content of web-sites is not guaranteed to be up to date or necessarily have the detail that can be found in campaigning leaflets etc.

TIMING

If research has already been carried out individually, then around 1.5 to 2 hours, depending on group size, should be sufficient. If reps have to refer to documentation before they have their discussion on international issues, then you may need longer.

TAKING FEEDBACK

As workplace representatives, many reps will be keenly aware of the importance of local issues to their representative function and some may be tempted to feel at distance from international issues. Yet in a global world international issues touch us all (whatever our level of interest or awareness) - this is one of the key learning points the activity is designed to develop. Union campaigning on international issues is a good example of how effectiveness at all levels - global to local is dependent upon each being aware of the interests and activities of the other.

OWN NOTES

Activities

International campaigns and local workplaces

AIMS

This activity will help you to:

- Identify how your union or sector is involved in international issues
- Think about how this might affect your workplace and your work as a rep

TASKS

In small groups, drawing on your Workplace Activity and any additional materials supplied by your Tutor:

- 1 Make a list of the international work that your union or sector is involved in.
- 2 For each one, can you identify the significance for members? e.g. action or awareness raising required
- 3 What issues arise from these campaigns or from within your own workplace that you think require action?

Things to think about:

- Issues your members should know about
- Actions you or your members can take
- Things you need to follow up or find out more on

- 4 As a whole group discuss how and what you can do to progress international campaigns or issues.

RESOURCES

Tutor note: What's it got to do with us? quiz – perspectives on trade unions and global issues

SETTING THE ACTIVITY UP

This has been written as a warm-up/finding out where reps are at activity for quick, individual completion. It should help you identify areas for additional work, but you will need to emphasise that its purpose is not extended discussion at this stage at the outset. Alternatively it could be completed in pairs as a basis for more prolonged whole group discussion.

TIMING

Around 5 mins for individual completion and 10 mins is appropriate if you are using this as a warm-up, agenda identifying activity.

TAKING FEEDBACK

If you are using this for more extended discussion, it will help to keep focus if you make an outline for yourself of extracts from the back-up information that can be referred to, and key learning points to be developed. The topic area is potentially enormous and if discussion ranges too far and wide reps may be unsure about their learning outcomes.

OWN NOTES

Activities

What's it got to do with us?			
	Questions	Answer	Comments
1	Globally, the gap between rich and poor is getting narrower. True or false?	False	Gap betw 20% richest v. 20% poorest countries=30 to 1. 1990=60 to 1. 2000=75 to 1. See Trade Union Perspectives Fact Sheet
2	The cost of eradicating world poverty is:10%, 1% or 0.2% of world income?	1%	UNDP Facts & Figures
3	Which country contributes most in aid as a % of its GDI?Sweden, USA or UK	Sweden	Sweden contributes 0.8% and is aiming for 1%. UK 0.39%(2005), aiming for 0.7% by 2015
4	Poor people on less than \$1 (65p) a day are unemployed. True or false?	False	550m of them are employed. And 1.4billion people who work live on less than \$2 (£1.30) a day
5	Only trade unions believe that trade unions are vital to international development. True or false?	False	See DFID and UNDP comments on MDG Fact Sheet
6	Poor countries spend more on debt repayment than on social service. True or false?	True	See Make Poverty History (Drop the Debt) Fact Sheet
7	Poor countries are poor because they have corrupt governments. True or false?	True and False	Some. But more concretely because people don't have democracy or aren't helped to uphold their rights, or because e.g. trade rules are loaded against them. See Make Poverty History (Trade Justice) Fact Sheet
8	The UK government does not want trade unions to show interest in developing world issues. True or false?	False	It has supported the production of this pack & other t.u. projects. It has produced info for the general public available in POs, & needs support to intro & carry out international policy.
9	My union is not involved in international issues. True or false?	False	Check web-sites or relevant GUF.
10	At a local level trade unions cannot do anything about issues affecting global poverty. True or false?	False	See MPH Fact Sheet.

What's it got to do with us? quiz – perspectives on trade unions and global issues

AIMS

This activity will help you to:

- Clarify your thinking on the role of trade unions in international development

TASKS

- 1 In pairs, briefly discuss and respond to the questions in the table opposite.
- 2 As a whole group, your Tutor will go over and discuss responses with you.
- 3 What questions or issues has this quiz raised for you? And what will you do?

Activities

What's it got to do with us?			
	Questions	Answer	Comments
1	Globally, the gap between rich and poor is getting narrower. True or false?		
2	The cost of eradicating world poverty is: 10%, 1% or 0.2% of world income?		
3	Which country contributes most in aid as a % of its GDI? Sweden, USA or UK		
4	Poor people on less than \$1 (65p) a day are unemployed. True or false?		
5	Only trade unions believe that trade unions are vital to international development. True or false?		
6	Poor countries spend more on debt repayment than on social service. True or false?		
7	Poor countries are poor because they have corrupt governments. True or false?		
8	The UK government does not want trade unions to show interest in developing world issues. True or false?		
9	My union is not involved in international issues. True or false?		
10	At a local level trade unions cannot do anything about issues affecting global poverty. True or false?		

Tutor note: **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY****SETTING THE ACTIVITY UP**

This activity may be run in several different ways. If you have limited time, then reading/familiarisation with the issues could be set as a workplace activity – leaving more time for reflection on action as a group. If all the work is to be done within the group, then a brief summary or overview of the Make Poverty History campaign will help focus discussions in small groups. (The BBC web-site has the printed speech and video clip of Nelson Mandela at the MPH event in Trafalgar Square in February 2005, that might provide helpful extracts you can use. His message is simple, to the point and compelling as ever).

TIMING

About 2 hours depending on group size and work done previously.

TAKING FEEDBACK

Key points here are aspects of MPH that could be used as organising issues, and the point that everyone can do something. Actions do not have to be big ones that need lots of foreword planning (though they might be!) – wearing white bands, sending letters etc can also be very effective. As, of course, may be simply talking about these issues at work. For many workers it may well be the first they hear on the topic.

OWN NOTES

Activities

MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY

AIMS

This activity will help you to:

- Familiarise yourselves with the **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** mobilisation
- Draw up proposals for union action

TASKS

As a whole group, your Tutor will go over the **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY** mobilisation with you.

In small groups, and referring to the resources you have access to:

- 1** Discuss the mobilisation, and activities that may be appropriate for your union course group, workplace union or union branch.
- 2** Draw up a report and proposal for action.
- 3** Put the key points on a flipchart and be prepared to share with the whole group.

RESOURCES

Fact Sheets: **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY**, Trade Justice, Drop the Debt, More & Better Aid

Information on activities from www.makepovertyhistory.org and www.millenniumcampaign.org

Tutor note: What would you say?

SETTING THE ACTIVITY UP

This is a good activity for helping reps develop their capacity to talk about international issues – and confidence in their role as opinion formers in the workplace. You could ask small groups to develop their response to one point each. To help retain focus and engagement with each presentation, you could ask reps that, in addition to producing their own response, they formulate at least one comment or question to put to other groups.

TIMING

Depending on group size, around 1.5 to 2 hrs.

TAKING FEEDBACK

Some reps may feel that a single sentence is enough to respond to their comment, and that no real elaboration is needed. This is sometimes a result of lack of confidence or embarrassment in talking about an issue which may be new to them.

Yet, in developing their response, reps may need to be reminded that sometimes we all need things to be repeated or explained, several times for us to get a grasp of the real implications of what is being said. Their responses should reflect that this may well be the case of colleagues at work. The more simply that they can respond, open out and explain the issues, the more comfortable and confident they will feel with them.

OWN NOTES

Activities

What would you say?

AIMS

This activity will help you to:

- Understand links between workers in developed and developing countries
- Build confidence in talking about issues of international development

TASKS

In small groups, and referring to the relevant Fact Sheet, discuss and make notes on how you would respond to the following comments:

- 1 Poverty anywhere is a threat to prosperity everywhere
- 2 There's injustice everywhere – you'll never change anything!
- 3 Why should we give more in aid if they just get into more debt?
- 4 What have labour standards got to do with me?

Put your key points on a flipchart and be prepared to share with the whole group.

RESOURCES

Fact Sheets:

- 1 Trade Union Perspectives on Poverty and Development
- 2 Development Strategies - ideas that change and **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY**
- 3 **MAKEPOVERTYHISTORY**
- 4 Trade Union Perspectives on Poverty and Development



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