

T A R G E T

20

DFID Department for
International
Development

15

Halving World Poverty

TUC 

1,000,000,000

One billion people (one thousand million) live in absolute poverty. That means one in five people in the world have to survive on less than \$1 a day. That is 65p a day.



1 in 5 people

That will buy you a soft drink...
a bus ride...
half a sandwich...

65p a day

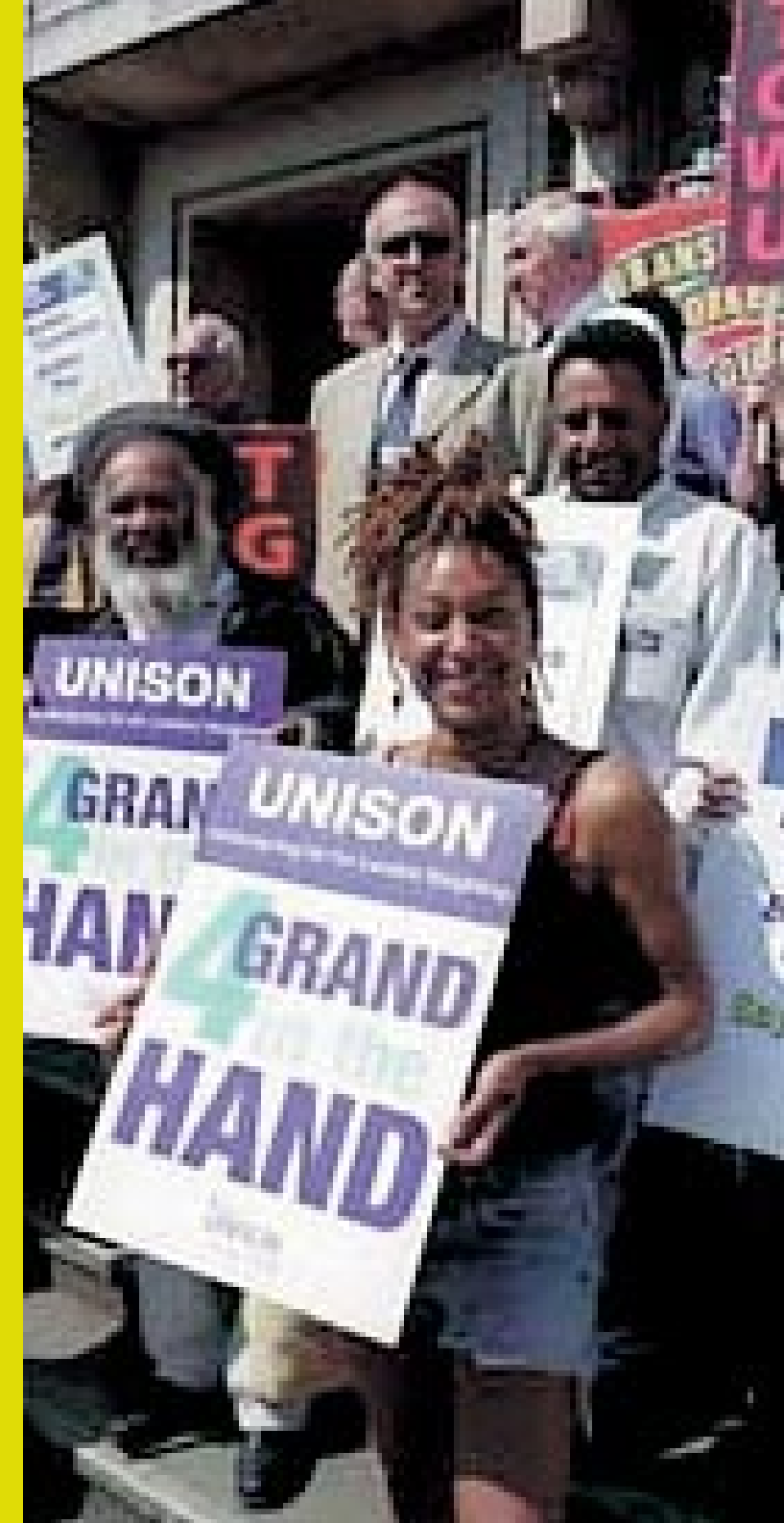


Trade unions have always stood for a fairer society: "a fair day's work for a fair day's pay" – still denied to hundreds of millions of workers. Trade unions campaign not only for their own members, but are concerned about the rights and dignity of all workers. They stand for important principles.

Trade unionists have applied these principles outside the UK too. For example, our movement campaigned against slavery in the 19th century and apartheid in the twentieth century. We think all people – every man, woman and child, anywhere in the world – deserve a decent life. Human rights should be respected – the right to a fair livelihood, adequate health, educational opportunity and access to water and energy.

The TUC has worked for these objectives for many years, particularly with international trade union organisations and the International Labour Organisation (ILO), part of the United Nations system.

We share these aims with the UK Department for International Development. Real change is possible – working together, we can reduce poverty. The UK government strongly supports the international commitment to cut by half the proportion of people who live in absolute poverty by 2015.



Target 2015 is ambitious. It can be achieved if governments, communities and trade unions work together.

Huge progress in tackling global poverty has already been made. On average, people live longer and are healthier than their parents were. In the last forty years, death rates of children in poor countries have more than halved and people have more to eat and more clean water. More people have escaped poverty in the last fifty years than in the previous five hundred.

We can be encouraged by these facts. But we should not be complacent. Many people, whole communities and even countries still suffer

appalling poverty and inequality. **More people live on less than \$1 a day than ever before in history.**

One dollar is about 65 pence. Think about surviving on 65 pence a day – for all your food, housing, health care. Every day. For all your life. We call this absolute poverty.

So while more people are escaping from poverty, more people are also living in poverty. Some countries are becoming more prosperous as a whole but the wealth is not fairly distributed.

It need not be like this. The world's governments have agreed on Global Targets for 2015 – Targets the TUC supports.

Global Targets for 2015

The Millennium Development Goals (formerly International Development Targets) are in fact eight goals. The first goal is very simple

- **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.

There are **7** other targets...



... the 7 other targets

- 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 2105
- 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.

These Millennium Development Goals were not just invented by DFID. They were agreed at UN conferences of the 1990s and were re-affirmed at the UN Millennium Summit in 2000.



Bull or Bullseye?

Are the targets just hot air?

Target 2015 has been developed as a result of international conferences – a load of hot air, surely? Well, there are many obstacles in the way. Financial and political crises, or events like September 11th can seriously affect progress towards the targets.

But, progress has been made, and lessons have been learned.

Twenty years ago, only 8 in 10 children in the world went to school. Today it is 9 in 10

In the last twenty years, infant mortality has fallen from 8 deaths in every 100 births to 5 deaths in every 100 births.

Twenty years ago, only 4 out of 10 people could drink clean water. Now 8 out of 10 people can.

It can be done. Much has been done already but we still need to do more.



Globalisation affects us all

For trade unionists, international solidarity is not just rhetoric for the conference hall. Behind the slogan “workers of the world, unite” is a recognition that our lives are connected to the lives of other people, who we will never meet, living in other countries.

The British economy does not operate in isolation. What happens in other countries has an impact here. It would be impossible to cut Britain off from the rest of the world economy.

This interconnection affects jobs and pay, but much more. Global warming is not something the UK, on its own, can avoid. It will affect all countries, especially some of the poorest like Bangladesh. Diseases like AIDS and tuberculosis can spread rapidly from one country to another. We cannot

insulate ourselves from what happens elsewhere. As the ILO has put it: “poverty anywhere is a threat to prosperity everywhere”

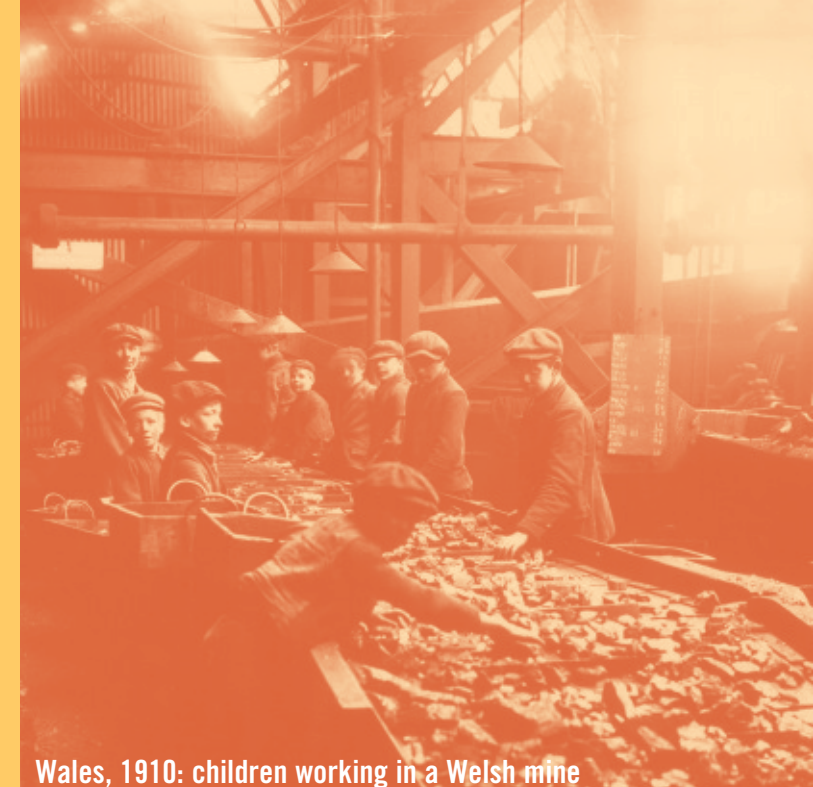


We could shrug our shoulders and say “it is a shame, but the world is like that – you cannot change it”. If we had taken that view in the nineteenth century, there would be no trade union movement, children would still work down mines and not go to school, workers would work 14 hours a day, six days a week, there would be no health service, no pensions. Just what still happens in many parts of the world in fact.

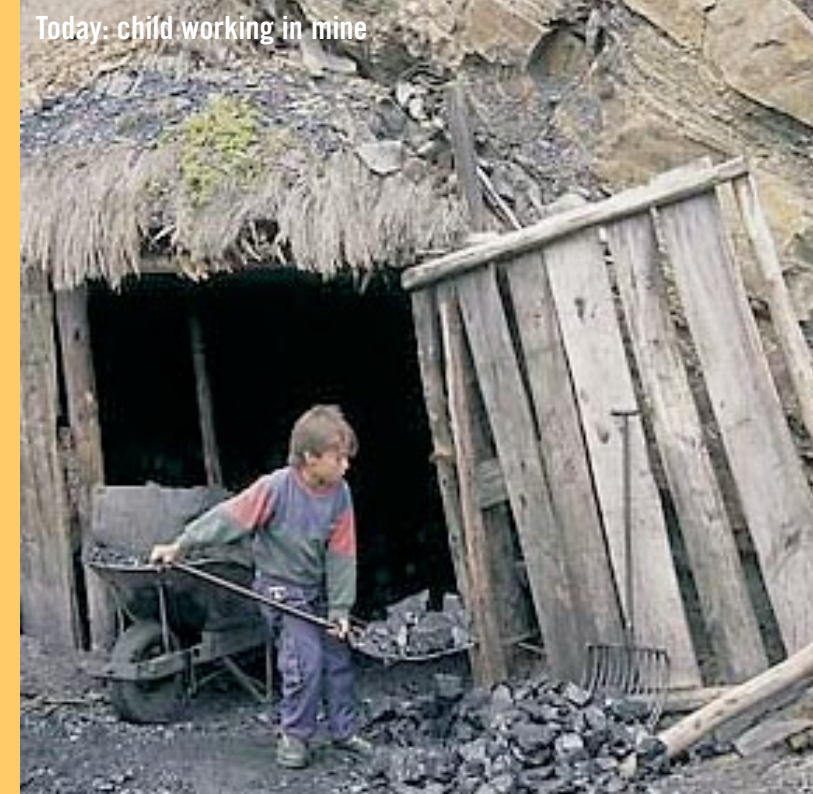
Trade unions helped change Britain then. In partnership with DFID, we can help make the world fairer.

If we do not make real progress in reducing world poverty, the whole planet – ourselves included – faces a more dangerous future. There could be conflicts over resources, diseases that cannot be treated, environmental catastrophe and huge movements of people fleeing collapsing nations. We can avoid that future if we act together. Our children’s future depends on action now.

www.tuc.org.uk/globalisation
www.dfid.gov.uk



Wales, 1910: children working in a Welsh mine



Today: child working in mine

A hand-up, not a hand down

Poor people do not want charity in return for nothing. They want to be independent. They may need help, but that does not necessarily mean money. In many cases, access to education, health care, security and justice, would help the poor to improve their incomes and services. DFID and the TUC support and promote the core labour rights of the International Labour Organisation:

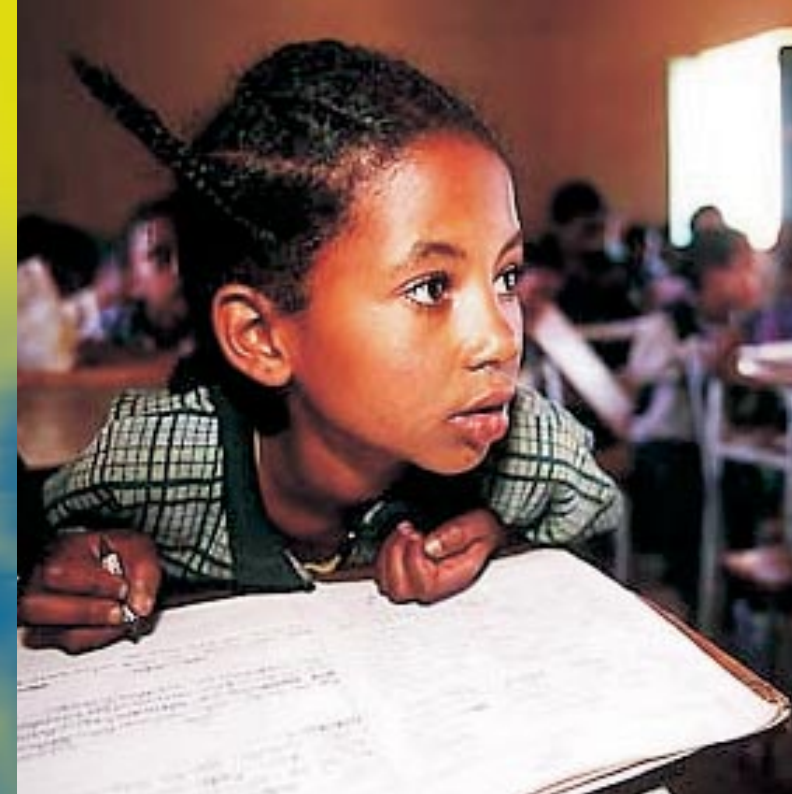
- the right of workers to form and join unions, and to negotiate with their employer;
- the elimination of all forms of slavery and forced or compulsory labour;
- the urgent abolition of the worst forms of child labour, as a step towards the elimination of all child labour; and
- the elimination of discrimination at work on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin.

Child Labour

The ILO estimates that 186 million children aged 5–14 are engaged in child labour which should be abolished.

111 million children are actually engaged in hazardous work.

Most of these children never get the chance to go to school. We need to protect children from the worse forms of child labour – and invest in their future by supporting education. Children out of work and into school!



We can't afford it!

Trade unionists are used to hearing employers say that!

But we can afford to meet the Millennium Development Goals. The United Nations estimates the cost as \$80 billion a year. That is half of one percent of global income.

If the world economy grows, that could create the wealth needed. That means proper economic policies, BUT it also means that the wealth needs to be shared fairly. In **too many countries, the gap between the rich and the poor is getting wider.**

The TUC and DFID believe that fair distribution of wealth depends on building respect for human and labour rights, democracy, good governance and corporate accountability.



Freedom to organise

In the UK, trade unions have helped to distribute wealth more fairly, through collective bargaining and campaigning.

For most workers in the world, that is not an option. They cannot join a trade union. In some countries, organising workers is a death sentence. The International Confederation of Free Trade Unions estimated that **more than two hundred workers were killed in 2001 for union activities.**

Without the right to organise, to speak out against poverty and corruption, the world's poor will not be able to access the resources they need.



Working with business

Foreign investment by British business in developing countries is triple the size of DFID's budget. If UK businesses use their financial muscle, that could make a huge difference. DFID and the TUC support the Ethical Trading Initiative, which is exploring how UK companies can ensure that goods on shelves in British shops are made without exploiting workers and using child labour.

Cutting the chains of debt

Many very poor countries are spending far more just paying the interest on debt than they spend on education and health. The UK government is leading global efforts to write off the debt of the poorest countries, on the condition that they use the money saved on helping to reduce poverty and meet the 2015 targets. The TUC actively supported the Jubilee 2000 campaign, one of the most successful movements for global justice in recent times.

Government support

DFID published a White Paper setting out its commitment to the International Development Targets in 1997. The budget for aid is rising substantially: the July 2002 Government spending review increased government spending on overseas aid by 35%. By 2003, **it will be 50% higher in real terms than in 1997, one of the biggest increases of any department.**

The United Nations has stated that each government should spend 0.7% of GDP on aid. The government is committed to meeting this target and will soon be spending 0.4% of GDP – the highest percentage for twenty years.

Priority is given to working with those countries which show real commitment to reducing poverty.

The fight to halve world poverty and to reach Target 2015 will be one of the great challenges of the 21st century. If we reach Target 2015, it will be one of the most important achievements of our lifetime. That is why the TUC supports DFID's work.

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You can help

If you want to know more, write to the TUC or DFID using one of these postcards. We will send you further information on the campaign against world poverty.

TUC Aid promotes trade union and human rights, fosters long-term development and provides humanitarian relief for victims of natural disasters and armed conflict. All activities are carried out in close collaboration with trade unionists in developing countries.

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Yes, I want to know more about DFID's work

Please send me the following:

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Making Globalisation Work for the World's Poor: an introduction to the Government's White Paper on Globalisation	NWP4	

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