



FIGHTING GLOBAL POVERTY

**War on Want  
Annual Review  
2009**

## **Vision**

**A world free from poverty and oppression, based on social justice, equality and human rights for all.**

## **Mission**

**To fight global poverty by working in partnership and solidarity with people around the world, and by campaigning against the root causes of poverty, inequality and injustice.**

## Greeting from the Executive Director

We are living through a time of profound turmoil for the global economy. Millions of people around the world are threatened with unemployment and increased poverty as a result of the economic downturn. It is the poorest who are most vulnerable at this time, and they need our solidarity more than ever.

This is why War on Want's work has never been more important than it is today. Our overseas partners provide essential support for workers and communities fighting against the structures which condemn them to poverty. The following pages tell the inspiring stories of women and men who give everything they have in the struggle for a better world.

War on Want also challenges the root causes of global poverty, and this year we have launched two major new campaigns for economic justice. At the same time, we continue to stand in solidarity with our partners living under occupation in Palestine, Western Sahara and Iraq. This report highlights the victories that these campaigns have won this year, as well as the challenges that still remain.

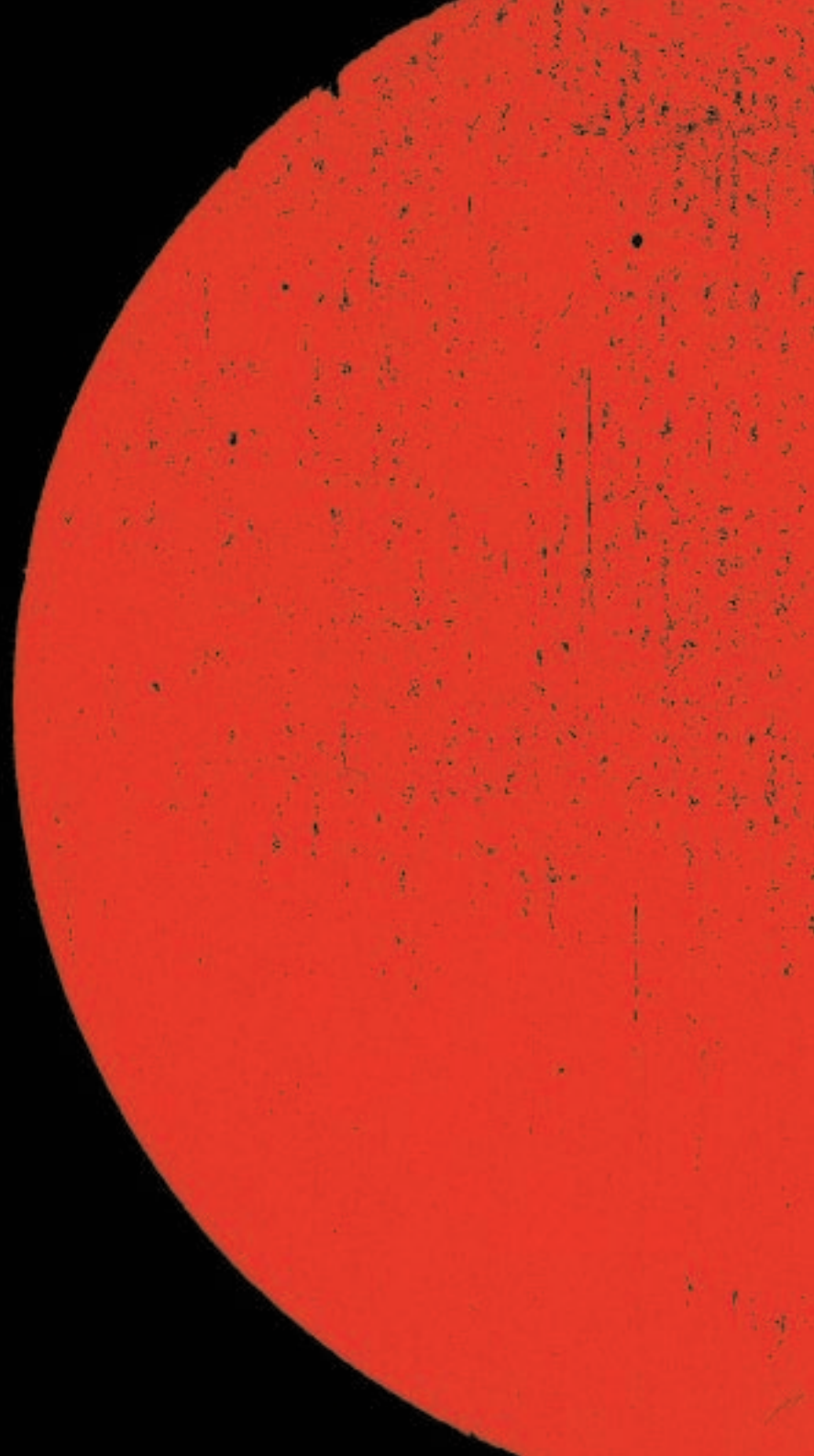
As a result of our successes, War on Want's work has been honoured with a number of awards. We were thrilled to be shortlisted as one of the Most Admired Charities of 2008 in the *Third Sector* annual awards ceremony – an amazing achievement to make the top five of a total 190,000 charities from all sectors in England and Wales.

Our campaign against sweatshops was honoured at the 2008 RE:Fashion awards in November, while our joint work with *The Guardian* to expose the exploitation of garment workers in Bangladesh won the prestigious One World Press Award in June.

War on Want's careful management of its finances means that we are in a strong position to withstand the economic downturn. War on Want is extremely fortunate to have a solid body of members, donors and supporters who know the importance of our long-term commitment to the people of the developing world. I know how passionately you feel about the work we do, and I thank you for your continuing support.

The following pages tell of the achievements which your generosity has made possible. We know that the coming months will bring new challenges to our partners in developing countries, and we will renew our commitment to them in these difficult times. War on Want will continue to work towards its vision of a world free from poverty and oppression, based on social justice, equality and human rights for all.

*John Hilary*  
*Executive Director, War on Want*



## **Overseas Work**

**War on Want's approach to fighting poverty is rooted in solidarity. We work directly with grassroots organisations in the developing world on the front line in the struggle against global poverty and injustice. Our view is that organisations on the ground – trade unions, farming collectives, social movements – are best placed to empower communities living in poverty. In 2008 we supported 31 partner organisations in 14 countries around the world.**

## Conflict Zones



### Fighting poverty under fire

War on Want supports social movements, labour groups and grassroots activists working in places of conflict and violence. In Colombia, Iraq and Palestine our partners risk their lives to defend the rights of the most vulnerable and marginalised people.

The massacre in Gaza at the start of 2009 has yet again shown the world the true horror of living under siege. Our partner Stop the Wall has mobilised activists in Palestine and around the world against the illegal occupation of the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The group organises communities to resist illegal house demolitions and land confiscations by Israeli forces.

Stop the Wall is also an organiser of the international Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign. This campaign has gained considerable support in the last year as a means to stop governments and businesses entering into trade deals

that prop up the Israeli occupation and violate Palestinian rights.

Palenque el Congal is a social movement representing Afro-Colombians, one of the poorest communities in Colombia. With the support of Irish Aid, we have helped Palenque mobilise these communities against the illegal seizure of their land by armed groups.

In Iraq, we have supported the Iraqi Federation of Oil Unions' tireless campaign to stop the passage of the unpopular oil privatisation law, which would see the country's oil being sold off to multinational companies. Despite the huge risks involved, the union has signed up thousands of new members in the past year, and now represents 30,000 oil workers in southern Iraq.

## Sweatshops and Plantations



### Standing up for the rights of sweatshop workers

As the global economy goes into meltdown, War on Want's partner organisations are on the front line defending the rights of sweatshop and plantation workers. These workers are vital to the world economy but struggle to survive on poverty wages, working excessively long hours in unsafe conditions.

Our partner the Asia Monitor Resource Centre supports grassroots organisations formed by Chinese migrant workers who are organising in defence of their rights despite state repression. These organisations have successfully pushed their agenda at a national level, and brought the issue of lack of legal redress for workers suffering from work-related illness or injury to a panel of government representatives and academics.

In Bangladesh the National Garment Workers' Federation (NGWF) has continued to help factory workers producing for export to fight for their rights, despite the state of emergency

in the country. The NGWF provides a range of services to workers, including legal counselling to activists who have been imprisoned for their trade union activities. War on Want and the NGWF jointly commissioned research on the conditions facing workers in the factories and sweatshops supplying top UK retailers Tesco, Asda and Primark. This research formed the basis for our acclaimed report *Fashion Victims II*, which was released in December 2008.

Our support for the women's organisation Colectiva de Mujeres Hondureñas (Codemuh) has helped them challenge the health and safety problems that are endemic in sweatshops in Honduras. As the leading organisation on this issue, in March 2008 Codemuh presented a proposal to the National Congress for the reform of the occupational health chapter of the country's outdated labour code. Codemuh has since secured the support of key decision makers including the Labour Minister and the president of the Supreme Court.

# Informal Economy



## Struggling to live and work in Africa's cities

Township residents, street vendors and market traders continue to work and live in unstable and insecure conditions in major cities in Kenya, South Africa and Zambia. War on Want's partner organisations have advocated for better access to housing and services for those living on the margins in these countries. A major challenge has been the existence of repressive legislation dating back to colonial times which makes it extremely difficult for poor people to live and work in urban areas.

In Kenya, War on Want started a partnership at the beginning of 2008 with the Kenya National Alliance of Street Vendors and Informal Traders to support its efforts to change legislation and introduce a licensing system for street vendors. This work became even more urgent following the January election crisis, which had a severe impact on the small businesses of street vendors.

Using the Millennium Development Goals as its justification, the South African government has introduced the Slums Act with the view to 'eradicating' all slums by 2014. Against this backdrop, War on Want has expanded its informal economy programme by forming two new partnerships with organisations that fight evictions among slum dwellers and council estate residents in South Africa's urban areas.

In South Africa's Western Cape province, the Anti-Eviction Campaign has consistently called for adequate public housing and a halt to the privatisation of public services. In Durban, the Abahlali baseMjondolo movement has developed a sustained voice for shack dwellers by mobilising them against forced removals and for access to education, health, water and electricity. War on Want is proud to be working with both new partners and supporting their vital campaigns.



## Food Justice



### The real recipe needed to grow enough food

In a year when the world has been hit by the global food crisis, War on Want's partners have continued to work towards ensuring that small-scale farmers are able to feed their families. We are working with organisations in Brazil, Sri Lanka, South Africa and Mozambique that support farmers to develop organic farming techniques as an alternative to intensive chemical farming, and advocate for policies that guarantee access to land, water, seeds and local markets.

Oswaldo Calodinao Leite is 35 years old. He lives with wife Andrea and 12-year old daughter, Aline. Oswaldo and his family live in the Brazilian state of São Paulo, where there is a sustainable development project run by our partner organisation MST – the Landless People's Movement. The project supported by War on Want is helping families and the community to improve productivity and obtain higher yields through better organisation and planning.

Oswaldo says the project, "has changed the way my family and other people in the settlement do things. For example, we are now able to plan what we are going to farm and reduce the costs to do this. This means that we are able to produce better quality food free from pesticides and chemicals, at a price that the poorest people can afford.

"Before we only used to grow beans, but now we are growing maize, cassava and peanuts as well, and we are also rearing pigs, goats and cows. Before I used to buy all of my food at market but now we only have to buy about 10% of our food from outside the settlement, because I am able to grow much of my own food or exchange items with my neighbours."

War on Want is proud to support Oswaldo and his family in their struggle to overcome poverty.

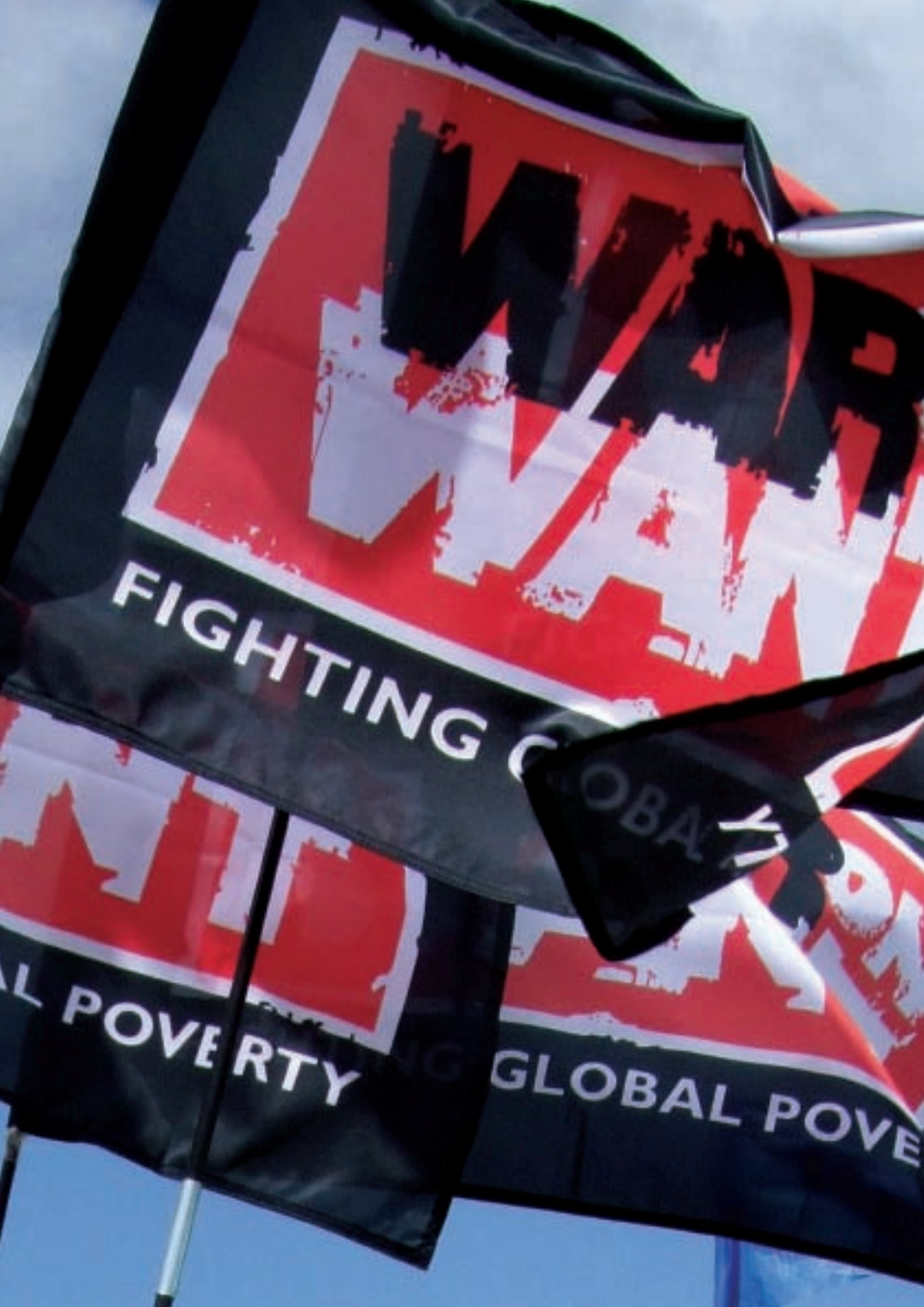


## **Campaigns**

**In solidarity with our global partners, we campaign against the government policies and corporate practices which keep people in poverty.**

**In 2008 we exposed the corporations which profit from war, and challenged rigged trade rules which favour the rich at the expense of the poor.**

**Our campaigns shamed UK retailers supplied by sweatshops, and spoke out against the Israeli occupation of Palestine.**



**WAR**

**FIGHTING**

**GLOBAL POVERTY**

**GLOBAL POVE**

**COBA**

## Corporations and Conflict



### Challenging the companies that profit from conflict

Our campaign on corporations and conflict exposes – and holds to account – the companies that profit from war. In November 2008 we released our groundbreaking report, *Banking on Bloodshed*, which uncovered for the first time the extent to which the five main British high street banks support the arms trade, a deadly business which causes poverty and massive loss of life.

War on Want has continued to take the lead on efforts to regulate corporate mercenaries, which are responsible for some of the most appalling human rights abuses in Iraq, Afghanistan and other countries mired in conflict. Despite stiff opposition from the government, we have made significant progress towards implementing controls on the use of mercenaries, as many MPs have joined our call for binding legislation to bring private military companies under democratic control.

We have seen real success in our campaign to oppose the theft of Iraq's oil by foreign companies. In solidarity with Iraqi oil workers, we have helped stifle the US-sponsored oil law which would hand over control of Iraq's most valuable natural resources to corporations such as Shell and BP.

War on Want stepped up its campaign work on Palestine in 2008, a year which marked the 60th anniversary of the 'nakba', or catastrophe, in which 750,000 Palestinians were forced from their homes prior to the creation of Israel. We continued to take action against the illegal Israeli occupation of Palestine, which is directly responsible for the extreme poverty and suffering of the Palestinian people. We joined the international condemnation of Israel's brutal assault on Gaza at the end of 2008, and spoke out against the UK government's complicity in war crimes against the Palestinian people.

# Trade Justice and Tax Dodging



## Taking on the corporate trade attack

The global financial system is in a state of crisis. While no country is immune to the economic meltdown, those in the developing world will continue to suffer the most. War on Want is at the forefront of efforts to change the policies and institutions responsible for the current crisis. We are campaigning against unfair trade rules that benefit the rich at the expense of the poor, and leading the fight against corporate tax dodging.

Developing countries are robbed of up to £250 billion annually through corporate tax dodging. Tax revenues provide critical funding for public services such as health care and education. Recognising that tax can be a vital weapon in the fight against poverty, especially in times of recession, War on Want is dedicated to eliminating tax havens and is calling on governments to collect the billions in taxes owed by corporations.

In 2008 War on Want launched a new campaign to oppose unfair trade deals, and is now one of the most active organisations working on this issue. Our new campaign focuses on the EU's 'Global Europe' strategy, which is driven by the demands of European companies seeking access to new markets around the world.

In April we released a first analysis of the EU's trade strategy, exposing how European trade policies have harmed workers in both the developing world and in Europe. Our joint actions with others in the global justice movement prevented the damaging conclusion of the WTO trade talks during 2008, a crucial victory for workers in the developing world.

# Supermarkets and Sweatshops



## Exposing corporate exploitation of workers

War on Want continues to challenge the companies which rely on sweatshop labour in overseas factories. In June 2008 we organised a rally outside the flagship store of the retail chain Primark to protest against the low wages and deplorable conditions facing the overseas workers who produce its clothes. On the day Banana Republic opened its first European store in London, War on Want brought to the public's attention the sweatshops in India supplying the store. At Tesco's AGM, we confronted company CEO Terry Leahy on his company's dismal record on workers' rights.

In December 2008 War on Want issued a follow-up report on the conditions and wages of Bangladeshi garment workers in the factories producing clothes for Tesco, Primark and Asda. The report showed how two years since the release of *Fashion Victims*, our landmark report on Bangladeshi sweatshops supplying top UK retailers, garment workers in these

factories still face gruelling hours, unsafe conditions and paltry wages.

Our campaign to hold supermarkets and clothing retailers to account for the treatment of overseas workers has put sweatshops firmly on the national agenda. We have generated significant media coverage on this issue, including a feature story on BBC's Panorama programme. War on Want was particularly proud to be recognised alongside Karen McVeigh of *The Guardian* by the One World Media Awards for documenting the exploitation of Bangladeshi workers making clothing for top UK retailers.

Recognising that the voluntary approach of corporate social responsibility has failed to deliver meaningful change, War on Want has stepped up its pressure on the UK government to regulate UK supermarkets more closely and end the flagrant abuse of workers' rights around the world.

## Making it happen!



The numbers opposite speak for themselves. With a small team of truly committed and experienced staff, we ensure that your support makes a genuine impact. War on Want pulls no punches in the fight against poverty and will always stay true to the people we work with. Here are some of the ways in which we have communicated our work and gained new support in 2008.

In February, a fantastic line-up of stand up comedians entertained a packed London theatre to raise funds for our important work. In May, War on Want hosted a launch for the release of *The Shock Doctrine*, the latest book by Naomi Klein. This event, held as a fundraiser for the Hands Off Iraqi Oil campaign and our partners in Iraq, was attended by hundreds of War on Want supporters and generated discussion and media attention on the role of corporations in war.

In October, our 'Childhood, Interrupted' photo exhibition in London showed the lives of Mayan child labourers in Guatemala and how our partner organisation Conrado de la Cruz is helping them transform their lives with education and play.

We have also been successful in securing new grants from trusts and foundations and have significantly increased our membership with various initiatives.

The main reason we can achieve what we do is you. Through regular donations, contributions to our appeals, campaign actions, attendance at events and demonstrations, we are able to help the poorest people to fight injustice and inequality and build better lives for themselves.

Thank you.



## War on Want in people

**1 office**

**24 members of staff**

**31 overseas partners**

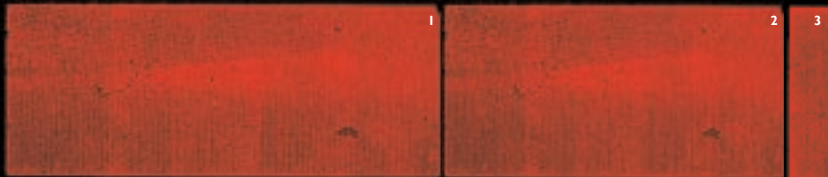
**6,000 regular givers**

**12,000 campaigners**

## War on Want in numbers

Total Income

£2,010,202



1 Donations and Legacies

£1,082,032

2 Grant Funding

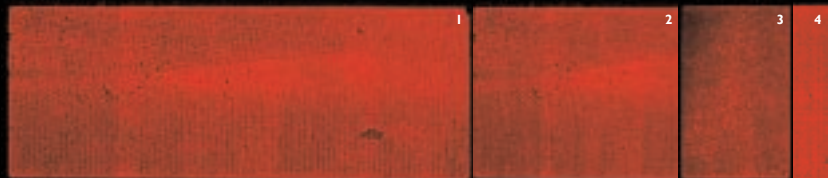
£861,965

3 Other Sources

£66,205

Total Expenditure

£2,047,627



1 Programmes Expenditure

£1,165,362

2 Campaigning Activity

£505,532

3 Fundraising

£317,226

4 Governance

£59,507

## War on Want in the year ahead



### Overseas work

War on Want will continue to develop and strengthen its partnerships with social movements and organisations in the global South.

As part of our sweatshops and plantations programme area, we will work closely with the National Garment Workers' Federation on producing new research on factory conditions in Bangladesh. In Honduras, we will support our partner organisation Codemuh as it continues to push for labour reforms to ensure that the health and rights of workers are protected. War on Want will also support an international conference in Nairobi focusing on the campaign for a living wage and fair working conditions in the African cut flower sector.

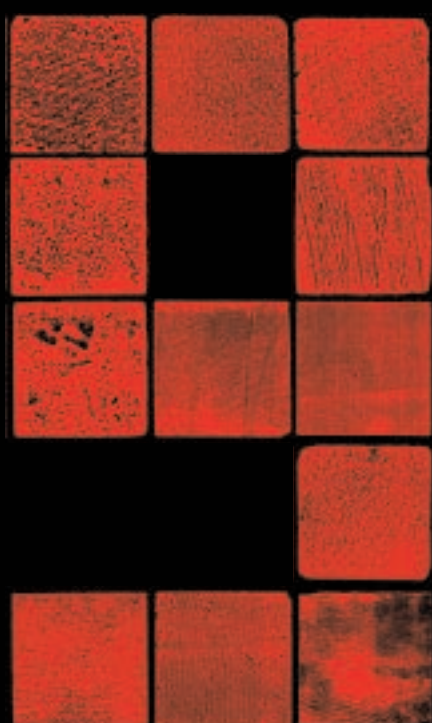
As part of our work in conflict zones, we will help organise the first ever conference for Iraqi civil society, an event at which we will strengthen our existing ties and look to build new ones. In the coming year War on Want will continue to fight for food justice for poor farmers and landless people around the world.

### Campaigns work

Our campaigns will build on successes from the past year. We will increase our pressure on the UK government to stop companies from exploiting overseas workers. War on Want will also keep up its pressure on corporate tax dodgers, whose actions deprive developing countries of vital funds for public services.

Our corporations and conflict campaign will hold to account the companies which profit from war. As a leading voice in the movement to end the occupation of Palestine, we will continue to lobby UK and EU governments to cease their unconditional support for Israel. We will also campaign in solidarity with the Saharawi people of Western Sahara in their struggle against the Moroccan occupation.

Our achievements in 2008 were made possible by the support of members and supporters who wrote letters, signed action cards and attended rallies with us. We will have many more ways for you to get involved in the fight for global justice in the year ahead.



**Thank you for your support and generosity.  
Without your contributions we could not  
help the millions of people throughout  
the world that fight poverty on a daily basis.**

**We would also like to thank the following  
institutions for their generous support:**

**European Union**

**Department for International Development**

**Comic Relief**

**Irish Aid**

**Isle of Man Overseas Aid Committee**

**Guernsey Overseas Aid Commission**

**Prospect**

**PCS**

**Medicor Foundation Liechtenstein**

**The Scurrah Wainwright Charity**

**The Rowan Charitable Trust**

**Thompsons Solicitors**

## Yes, I want to support War on Want by becoming a member.

Name

Address (please write in capitals)

Postcode

E-mail (please write clearly)

Phone/Mobile

Instruction to your Bank or Building Society to pay by Direct Debit

Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send to:

Freepost, RSAH-CUAZ-RRBS, War on Want, 56-64 Leonard Street, LONDON EC2A 4LT

Name and full address of your Bank or Building Society

To the Manager, Bank or Building Society

Address

Postcode

Name(s) of Account Holder(s)

Branch Sort Code

Bank / Building Society Account Number

Originator's Identification Number – 388240

Reference (to be completed by War on Want)

Please pay War on Want Direct Debits from the account detailed in this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit Guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with War on Want and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature(s)

Date

Please accept this Direct Debit of  £5 a month

£      My own monthly / quarterly / yearly (delete)

Commencing on the  1st  8th  15th  22nd      of      mm      y

(please tick as appropriate)

*In order to become a member of War on Want, we ask you to give a minimum of £20 a year in total, £5 if unwaged.*

### New Gift Aid Declaration

**I am a UK tax payer and would like War on Want to reclaim the tax on all donations I have made during the 6 years prior to this date and any future donations I make.**

NB: To qualify for Gift Aid, what you pay in income tax or capital gains tax must be at least equal to the amount we will claim in the next tax year (currently 25p for each £1 you give with a further 3p contribution from HMRC until 2011).

Thank you. We'll keep you up to date with news about our work and how you can help. If you don't want us to keep in touch, please tick this box.

## Yes, I want to support War on Want by making a donation.

War on Want relies on the generosity of its supporters to continue its work against the root causes of poverty around the world. Every pound counts in our fight against injustice and inequality and we are grateful for your support.

Please fill in the whole form using a ball point pen and send to:

Freepost, RSAH-CUAZ-RRBS, War on Want, 56-64 Leonard Street, LONDON EC2A 4LT

Yes, I can help. Here is my gift of £ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address (please write in capitals)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Postcode

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail (please write clearly)

I enclose a cheque / CAF Voucher / Postal Order made payable to War on Want  
Please debit my Mastercard / Visa / Switch

\_\_\_\_\_  
Card Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Valid From

\_\_\_\_\_  
Expiry Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Issue Number (Switch Only)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Security Code (The last three digits on your card signature strip.)\*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Cardholder

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature(s)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\*This number is not retained by War on Want once your gift has been processed.

### New Gift Aid Declaration

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