

CHANGE THROUGH COLLECTIVE ACTION

For the last 15 years, Tearfund has lobbied, campaigned and resourced others to campaign on issues such as climate change, food security, water and sanitation, HIV, and governance and corruption. Based on our experience, learning and knowledge about the devastating effects of climate change, we have decided to increase resources given to shifting public attitudes to, and social norms around, an understanding of how poverty, environment and our economy interact, as well as influencing policy and practice on these issues. We have taken with us our supporters, people within the wider church and high-level influencers on a journey with those in poverty.

More widely, there has been great success in alleviating poverty in the last 50 years, mainly through economic growth, yet it has been at a high cost to the planet and has caused inequality to rise. We believe it is possible to lift people out of poverty in a way, which does not cost the earth and lasts for generations to come.

We know that what happens across the world has a big impact everywhere else, and we know that what we do here – how we live, how we shop, how we structure our economy – impacts the rest of the world significantly. To make the shift, we need a movement of people who think differently about the world and their place within it.

So, we have launched *Ordinary Heroes*, a campaign to mobilise and inspire ordinary citizens across the world to make changes to their lifestyle habits and call for change, creating a mandate for politicians and policy-makers based on behaviour change instead of relying solely on traditional lobbying and petitions. We will report with more detail on the impact of this campaign in next year's report.

What change have we seen so far?

In 2014 to 2015, we achieved the following:

- Developed a foundational report called *The restorative economy*.¹² This draws together contemporary theological and public policy thinking. In addition, the process of developing the report has

helped us to reach out to groups within and outside the church. This will support our campaign, *Ordinary Heroes*, in the UK and internationally.

- Provided strategic advocacy advice, capacity and resources to national-level partners, networks and individuals in strategic countries including Brazil, India, South Africa and Nigeria. We are supporting initiatives that will help grow and strengthen social movements of Christians who demonstrate their compassion for people living in poverty and care for environmental sustainability through their lifestyles and their public support for policy change in these countries. We are also collaborating with NGOs in Europe and global networks to mobilise churches to build a grassroots social movement.
- Continued to see breakthroughs on long-running campaigns, contributing to pledges by key policy-makers and submitting reports to key bodies. For example, by engaging supporters and collaborating with others, we helped secure a cross-party pledge on climate and poverty action and we saw legislation on the 0.7 per cent aid commitment go through parliament. By submitting evidence and attending meetings, we secured recommendations in reports from the House of Commons Environmental Committee; and we helped secure UK anti-corruption regulations through our policy



Photo: Peter Caton/Tearfund (Bangladesh)

¹² http://www.tearfund.org/~/_/media/files/main site/campaigning/ordinaryheroes/restorative economy long report hr singles.pdf

and campaigns work. Tearfund currently has more than 13,600 active campaigning supporters in the UK; in 2014, we saw more than 4,600 supporters take campaign actions.

Case Study

Supporting Changemakers in South Africa

Changemakers is a programme run through Micah Challenge South Africa, which is increasing the capacity of young church and other Christian leaders in South Africa to engage in transformational advocacy. Tearfund has supported this programme which enables these young leaders to engage with the government at all levels in order to influence behaviours and policies that will lead to increased accountability and transparency. As a result, these leaders from across South Africa are equipped and inspired to play a constructive role in shaping local and national governance. They are also provided with the knowledge, skills and competencies to participate in governance processes, to influence decisions that affect their local communities and to play a role in strengthening democracy at a national level.

Case Study

Towards greater transparency

Billions of UK pounds are lost to corruption globally each year. The least developed countries typically secure just 10–20 per cent of Gross National Income in tax, compared with 30–40 per cent in the most developed countries. This tax funds the public goods which can deliver a step change in material poverty. Tearfund's *Unearth the Truth*¹³ and *Secret's Out*¹⁴ campaigns in 2012–2014 focused on delivering transparent data on government contracts to combat the corruption which affects the world's poorest people particularly. By bringing ordinary supporters from churches, church leaders and policy support to the campaign, we pushed the issue of corruption higher up the political agenda.

As a result of combined efforts from Tearfund and others, EU laws were passed in December 2013 which require all European mining, gas and oil companies to publish what they pay to the governments of countries where they operate. In December 2014, the UK government passed this into UK law and transparency is now in the G20's Anti-Corruption Action Plan to be worked on in 2016 and 2017. These directives should help ensure that more resources reach people living in poverty.

¹³ http://www.tearfund.org/en/about_you/campaign/unearth

¹⁴ <http://campaigns.tftech.org.uk>

Key Lessons

✓ It is not enough to influence power elites for individual policy changes

We have learnt that we need to shift the values and behaviour of individuals, families and the church, to shift social norms as well as seeking policy change. Politicians and businesses can't make the changes they know are needed because the general public won't accept the upfront costs involved. As one MP noted: 'It doesn't take much to sign a postcard with a campaigns action. MPs are often more concerned with people who have a genuine interest and demonstrate their concern through taking actions to live more sustainably.'

✓ There is increasing public support for a just and sustainable future

The climate march in September 2014 was the largest in history, with more than 675,000 people taking to the streets and 2,700 different events around the world. This included 40,000 people marching in London in September, supported by Tearfund. It built momentum, showing that people care about this issue, and demonstrates the potential energy for campaigning on this issue.