

DEBT AND DEVELOPMENT COALITION IRELAND

Strategic Plan 2008 – 2011

photo: Jubilee Debt Campaign



Debt campaigners at the World Social Forum in Nairobi, 2007.

*'Mobilising Against Unjust
South-North Resource Flows'*



Acknowledgements

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“We remind the leaders of the world’s richest, most powerful nations that in truth, the North owes the South. The wealth of the North has been accumulated largely at the expense of the South – our land, our minerals, our forests and waters, our labour, our communities, our economies, our cultures, our governments, our freedom, our lives.”

Jubilee South – Network of Southern Justice Movements

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Purpose of the Document

This strategic plan covers the period from May 2008 – April 2011. The document provides a framework to guide a new era of work for Debt and Development Coalition Ireland (DDCI). It sets out the values, mission, and a new set of strategic aims and objectives for the network. In addition to outlining our new political direction, the plan outlines the organisational and financial capacity that are demanded to implement it and how it will be operationalised over this three year period.

How the Strategic Plan was formulated

The substantive content of the plan was formulated by the members of DDCI through a series of structured strategic planning consultations. Its political direction is as a result of a rigorous organisational evaluation carried out in the final quarter of 2007. The evaluation identified the strengths and weaknesses of DDCI's recent work and collected views from DDCI's stakeholders on the future direction of the organisation in the medium and longer term. In its recommendations, the evaluation proposed a significant shift in the direction of Debt and Development Coalition Ireland. This strategic plan seeks to put this new direction into action.

Language

Throughout the document we use the terms 'North/South', or 'Global North /Global South' rather than 'First World/Third World' or 'Developed/Developing' countries. When we write about countries of the 'North' we are broadly describing countries in the continents of Europe, North America and Australia and when we write about countries of the 'South' we are broadly referring to countries in the continents of Africa, Asia and Latin America. None of these terms fully describe the diversity within our global society (for example, the terms North and South minimise inequalities within Northern and Southern societies). We use them as a short hand in a way that seeks not to imply superiority or inferiority between people. When we use the term 'radical' to define any approach or analysis in our work, we are referring to approaches that seek to understand and challenge the power relationships which are causing the problems we highlight.

Who is Debt and Development Coalition Ireland

Debt and Development Coalition Ireland was established in 1993 to ensure a civil society voice in Ireland on the debt crisis affecting countries of the Global South. DDCI works in solidarity with like-minded groups in Ireland, Europe and the Global South. The core focus of the organisation to date has been highlighting the responsibilities of the governments and financial institutions involved in the debt crisis and putting direct pressure on the Irish government to contribute to a just resolution to the crisis.

DDCI has continuously framed its analysis within the context of imbalanced and unjust power relations between Northern and Southern governments and Northern dominated institutions. DDCI has prioritised building links of solidarity between people living in Ireland and in the Global South by working together for debt cancellation. DDCI has over 90 members comprised of religious congregations, development organisations, community groups, solidarity groups and trade unions.

Evaluation 2007

DDCI carried out a major organisational evaluation in 2007 which confirmed that Debt and Development Coalition Ireland is the leading organisation in Ireland in the area of debt advocacy and campaigning work. It found that our varied stakeholders hold the Coalition in high regard and trust in our work. However, a broad recognition was highlighted that new global dynamics and relationships are presenting different challenges to Southern countries. Changes were also highlighted that are occurring among the support base of DDCI and in the priorities of its funders. The evaluation found that the combination of these new circumstances requires that the Coalition be innovative and renew itself.

Evaluation Recommendations

The evaluation recommended a three-pronged approach:

- “The core thematic focus of DDCI should be broadened to the area of ‘financing for development’ in order to respond to the evolving set of challenges faced by Southern countries. This topic provides continuity in that it builds on the Coalition’s existing expertise on the debt issue. It provides the necessary innovation to renew the organisation in that it links debt to a set of inter-connected and relevant issues in the field of development today, fundamentally exploring issues of power between rich and poor countries”.
- “DDCI should build on its campaigning history and expertise to become a driver of a popular campaigning movement in Ireland, in collaboration with a number of other like-minded partners. This direction is supported by a broad number of its members. The aim of this work would be to build a movement of public activism on key issues within the area of development. In working to popularise the issue and mobilise mass activism on it in Ireland, DDCI should learn from successful campaigning mechanisms of international partners. To inform this campaigning work, DDCI should draw on high quality international research and ‘translate it into political messages for the Irish context’”.
- “DDCI’s innovative campaigning mechanisms should be underpinned by a highly focused and strategic programme of development education, which has less scope than previously, but greater impact, with a clear means of measuring its impact. This education programme should be centred around one high quality education resource on DDCI’s key theme. It should be used by DDCI through working agreements with a limited number of key partners, primarily development education organisations and third level institutions, as well as being available for public use”.

Regarding the governance of the organisation, the evaluation recommended that the DDCI board consider a change of governance model, and move from being an involved, “hands-on”, board to one that operates at a more strategic level.

Section 2

DDCI Values and Approach

DDCI is guided by a core set of values and a particular approach to our work. These values define our organisational identity and guide our engagement with members and stakeholders.

DDCI challenges unjust power in global relationships. By this we mean that we analyse global relationships with a focus on how imbalanced power relationships result in exploitation of others by powerful actors. DDCI is committed to being **courageous** in challenging unjust power relations by not shying away from naming unjust realities even where these views may be unpopular and uncomfortable to voice. Rather, we see it as our duty and function to expose injustice and exploitation in relation to the issues we work on.

DDCI works in solidarity with like-minded groups in the Global South. We understand solidarity as meaning being rooted within the political concerns of groups in the Global South. DDCI recognises that there are a diverse range of views among groups in the Global South regarding the issues we work on. We believe that real political solidarity involves **engaging in democratic dialogue and debate** with groups in the Global South; developing inclusive and democratic approaches to collaboration with Southern groups; and ensuring our work is driven by the core concerns that colleagues in the South voice through these processes.

DDCI seeks **justice and equality** between people in the North and South. We believe that **radical changes in the global system** will be required to achieve this. Because of this, we will endeavour to adopt a long-term perspective in developing our political positions. This means that we will pursue credible policy changes in the short and medium term, but will strive to ensure our positions are consistent with progressing long-term and transformative shifts in power relationships.

DDCI takes an **action orientated and participatory approach** in our work. We believe that **grassroots, people centred education and action** can directly affect political change. We seek to nurture the **creative possibilities** of being a membership organisation in particular through creating positive spaces among our members for learning and planning political action. In our strategic planning, a long term member described this experience of collaboration with DDCI as one of “contagious enthusiasm”. We are committed to strengthening these spaces and initiatives consistently in the long term. And we are committed to **linking with groups in Ireland and in the South who adopt similar approaches**. DDCI also recognises the need for a channel for people in Ireland to voice their anger and concern about global injustice in a non-violent manner.

DDCI will strive to be an **inclusive and diverse organisation** that actively seeks involvement in our work of people from a variety of class, gender, Global North-Global South and urban-rural backgrounds. In doing this, DDCI seeks to create opportunities for people to feel confident and welcome in engaging in the struggle for global justice. DDCI has since its inception benefitted greatly from the **participation and leadership of women** within our structures. DDCI is conscious of the need for a feminist perspective in our analysis that highlights the disempowerment of women through unjust South-North resource flows.





Activists at World Social Forum, Kenya 2007

DDCI's Mission

● Our Role:

DDCI seeks to empower people in Ireland to take informed action for greater global justice. We do this by increasing people's understanding of the global justice issues we work on. We do this in solidarity with other like-minded groups, guided by our principle of being South-led in our analysis and action.

● What We Want:

We want to challenge structures of power that perpetuate injustice and exploitation of people in the Global South. Specifically, we want to challenge unjust transfers of wealth from the South to the North, which we see as one aspect of a wider global economic and political system that creates unacceptable inequalities between people.

● How We Will Achieve It:

We are a public activism network. We will be effective in this role by carrying out good analysis of the issues we work on and by creating debate and raising awareness on these issues with the public, decision makers and the media. Most importantly, we will support our members and interested people in deepening their understanding of the issues we work on, and provide creative opportunities for members to engage in informed public activism.

Section 3

‘Mobilising Against Unjust South-North Resource Flows’



DDCI Strategic Theme 2008 – 2011:

‘Mobilising Against Unjust South-North Resource Flows’

DDCI’s strategic political theme for the three year period of this plan will be: **‘Mobilising against unjust resource flows from the South to the North’**. This takes the theme of ‘financing for development’, which was proposed as DDCI’s future theme in the organisational evaluation findings and defines it in a way suited to DDCI’s values and mission.

Since the 1970s the traditional focus of development NGOs regarding direct resource flows between North and South has been primarily to focus on advocating for increased investment of aid from the North to the South. In the 1990s, DDCI filled a gap in the Irish NGO sector by introducing the question of direct resource flows from the South to the North, through highlighting the negative impact of debt repayments on the lives of people in the South. Over the past 14 years, DDCI pursued, with significant success, putting debt cancellation for the Global South on the political agenda of successive Irish governments.

Civil society organisations around the world are now broadening their investigation and understanding of resource flows between the South and the North, to incorporate a wider set of issues in addition to the areas of aid giving and debt repayments. This is a broad agenda which encompasses a range of serious problems affecting Southern economies and Southern countries’ relations with Northern governments, companies and financial institutions. Some of these problems include the areas of foreign investment; income from natural resource extraction and trade; the volatility of aid flows; aid conditionalities and the governance of financial institutions; capital flight and corruption; and emigrants’ remittances from the North to the South.



The resource flows theme is therefore a very substantive agenda covering a wide array of issues. Some of the components of this theme, such as trade-related issues, are being thoroughly worked on by other organisations in Ireland. And there is some work being pursued by some DDCI members on other aspects of this agenda. However, many of the issues relating to this theme are not highly developed areas of work among the majority of DDCI members.

Clearly DDCI cannot attempt to cover the whole menu of issues. Instead, we will utilise the concept of *unjust South-North resource flows* as a 'menu' of issues from which to select those areas for campaigning and education which are most pertinent, but whose relative importance may change every few years. We will be guided by our values and mission statement in making these choices to ensure that our areas of focus continue to expose any abuse of power by Northern actors and the exploitation of Southern countries by Irish actors in particular. DDCI is therefore not adopting this theme to influence financial relationships only, but to challenge the power relations that lie behind North-South financial relationships.

The theme of unjust South-North resource flows is of great interest to DDCI members as it allows DDCI to continue to carry out our work on debt which persists as a massive and unjust loss of resources for Southern countries. Widening DDCI's strategic theme will also allow us to build a more coherent view of the international financial system among the membership; better understand the role of debt in relation to wider financial resource flows; and begin to specifically address a larger number of issues relating to the financial exploitation of the South.

The small size of DDCI organisationally, means that for the period of this strategic plan, decisions will be made to ensure that our debt work is strengthened while introducing learning periods on new areas before increasing the scale of the organisations work. DDCI is committed to working collaboratively with member organisations and others in Ireland who choose to focus on similar aspects of this agenda in order to strengthen the impact of this work.

Overall Strategic Goal

To challenge Ireland's role in the exploitation of Southern countries by Northern countries and Northern dominated institutions

- through unjust flows of resources between the South and the North
- and particularly through injustice in the international lending system

Specific Objectives

Objective 1: Policy and Advocacy

To advocate for the reversal of unjust flows of resources from the South to North through

- The cancellation of illegitimate debts of the South
- Responsible lending practices by multi-lateral lending institutions
- The control by Southern countries in charting their own development
- More responsible practices by identified actors within the Irish private sector toward countries in the South

photo: SLUG/Jubilee Norway



Approach

Our recent evaluation found that “the membership of DDCI expressed a very high degree of satisfaction with how the organisation positions itself in relation to official bodies. Some comments included: DDCI is ‘out enough to be close to the Southern partners, in enough to be credible with policy makers’.” We will continue to position ourselves in this way by advocating well researched positions to government and other advocacy targets in a way that does not compromise our political aim and identity as a public campaigning organisation.

The evaluation found that DDCI’s research is regarded as one of DDCI’s core strengths. For this strategic plan period however, DDCI will not prioritise producing significant new research. This is due to the high priority that will be allocated to building our public activism identity during this period, in addition to protecting our restricted organisational capacity for other areas at the outset of the period of this strategic plan. Instead, DDCI will produce user friendly and accessible briefings by using relevant research produced by key allies. This approach will emphasise translating existing research into DDCI political messages for the Irish context. This position can be reviewed if a high level of new resources is secured during the period of the plan.

Issue 1:

The Cancellation of illegitimate debts of the South

Multi-lateral Debt and Illegitimate Debt

Over the past decade some progress has been made on achieving multi-lateral debt cancellation, namely in 1996, 1999 and 2005. Some of these initiatives have succeeded in freeing up policy space and resources for some countries in the South. However, official debt relief initiatives have remained strictly conceptualised within the framework of ‘unpayability’, meaning that cancellation has been ‘granted’ because Southern countries were viewed as unable to pay. Southern debt groups have always been vocal in strongly promoting an alternative analysis – of the illegitimacy of debt. The analysis of illegitimacy highlights that the debts of Southern countries have been accumulated through unjust South-North relationships and often in the interests of the lender. Led by Southern groups, this is now the central analysis globally for debt groups including DDCI.

Tackling debt cancellation from the point of view of lender self-interest and irresponsibility has been recognised in official circles, notably by the Norwegian and Ecuadorian governments and the United Nations. The World Bank, after much external pressure, has recently even written a paper discussing the issue.

DDCI’s approach to this area will be to establish the concept of illegitimate debt as a serious area of concern to which the Irish government must respond, with particular focus on their responsibilities as a lender in multi-lateral institutions. This approach will be underpinned by working to secure greater public and parliamentary understanding and support for illegitimate debt cancellation.

The existence of irresponsible and self interested lending raises the question of how to ensure responsible lending and borrowing in future. The issue of responsible financing has become highly discussed in official circles, in particular due to the attention being paid by traditional lenders to 'new' players such as China or Venezuela as lenders to the South. Among some official initiatives is a G8 commitment made in 2007 to produce a responsible lending charter in collaboration with the G20. Concern regarding this area has also been heightened due to high profile examples of opportunistic vulture fund legal actions in the South. DDCI will pursue securing support for the new Eurodad Responsible Finance Charter which suggests standards in this area and will seek to ensure that the responsible finance discussion is linked to the need for illegitimate debt cancellation.

Debt Initiatives

Other initiatives relevant to multi-lateral debt, such as official debt sustainability initiatives, and debt swaps, are being monitored at the Eurodad level. Southern groups are monitoring the impact of the current Multi-lateral Debt Relief Initiative (MDRI). DDCI will keep abreast of this work and draw on it where relevant to the Irish political context.

International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and the Environment

Clear examples of irresponsible lending can be seen in many disastrous IFI supported projects which have demonstrated the lack of commitment by the World Bank and other regional banks to environmental safe guards or, to responding seriously to climate change. Many NGOs are challenging World Bank projects which have resulted in environmental disaster and high levels of social conflict. DDCI will collaborate with other groups in Ireland working in this area.

International Finance Corporation (IFC)

Serious concerns have long been raised by NGOs regarding negative developmental impacts of IFC (a commercial lending arm of the World Bank Group) projects and the lack of developmental focus of its projects. It appears that the Irish government is currently restructuring its approach to funding the IFC. We will seek to present a clearer view to the Irish government regarding its decision-making in this area.

Issue 3:

Control by Southern countries in charting their own development

World Bank and IMF Conditionality

The practice of economic policy conditionality in the World Bank and IMF has undermined the independent decision making power of Southern governments. The World Bank has expressed a desire to reduce and streamline their application of policy conditionality. Some governments, such as the UK and Norway have stated that their aid should not be linked to sensitive economic policy conditions such as privatisation and liberalisation. In 2007, the then Irish Finance minister decided to increase Ireland's support toward the World Bank yet added no words of caution regarding the issue of economic policy conditionality at the Bank.

Jubilee South, a key partner of DDCI, is highly concerned not only about economic policy conditionality, but about the practice of IFI policy conditionality as a whole. This is in tune with DDCI's overarching concern about the entrenched and inappropriate level of power and influence of the IFIs in Southern government policy formulation. It is clear that the main block to achieving progress on conditionality policy is not lack of information but lack of political will within the IFIs and among their members to reduce the power of the institutions. DDCI is committed to continuing to oppose the undue influence of the IFIs in the Global South.

Role of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)

The IMF is still an enormously influential institution in the Global South by directly and indirectly setting conditions on government spending and on the disbursement of aid flows. The IMF is also highly influential in debt management processes. This is a hugely important institution but requires a high capacity within DDCI to track and monitor its policies and impact. DDCI will remain a member of the global campaign on the IMF. The 2010 review of the controversial IMF Poverty Reduction Growth Facility represents an opportunity to work towards policy change in the IMF. We will carry out strategic advocacy in this area with support from Eurodad, the Bretton Woods Project UK and the global IMF campaign. As DDCI members often wish to learn about the functions of the IFIs, general education about the role of the IMF will be incorporated into DDCI's education programme during the strategic plan period.

Governance of the World Bank and IMF

DDCI has continuously challenged the undemocratic and Northern dominated governance structures of the World Bank and IMF. Recent opportunities to reform the leadership selection at the World Bank and IMF have been missed by Irish and European governments. Traditional responses by rich members of the institutions are restricted to tinkering around the margins of governance reform. We will continue to raise this matter with the Irish government and in particular focus on media work where political opportunities arise.

Ireland's Membership of Regional Banks

There are well organised consortia monitoring regional banks in Europe and in the Global South – in particular regarding the activities of the Asian Development Bank and the European Investment Bank. DDCI will not develop new programmes in these areas but will carry out advocacy and media work occasionally with support from these consortia to ensure civil society monitoring of Ireland's membership of these institutions.

Issue 4:

More responsible practices by identified actors within the Irish private sector toward countries in the South

Debt and Development Coalition Ireland has traditionally focused on the problem of debt and the role of the international financial institutions in the South. The global financial landscape that impacts on the economies of poor countries is clearly much broader than the debt problem and the actions of the major IFIs alone. Wealth transfers are being made from Southern countries to rich countries in a wide variety of ways involving a mounting number of actors.

Because of our commitment to widen our political agenda beyond debt and the IFIs, DDCI will identify a select number of new issues to work on in this area in the future. For the period of this strategic plan, DDCI will explore a limited number of new issues in order to identify which is the most relevant to the Irish context at this time.

The priority in 2008 will be given to exploring the area of tax justice and the responsibilities of Irish companies and the Irish government in this area. This is not an area of expertise of the traditional development sector in Ireland. DDCI will seek support from more experienced groups. We will also work collaboratively with interested DDCI members and actors in Ireland to increase learning and solidarity in this area and bring it to a wider audience. If we find that this area is less relevant to the Irish context, DDCI will open up new areas to explore drawn from the wide menu of issues outlined within the 'South-North Resource Flows' theme.

Objective 2: DDCI and Public Activism

To grow a radical global justice movement in Ireland by

- deepening and expanding the engagement of our membership and campaigners in our work
- building new, innovative alliances with like-minded partners informed by the South

Re-energising Our Campaigning Identity

As a membership organisation, DDCI has always prioritised bringing its message to its members and to the public. Our evaluation found that the majority of DDCI stakeholders view public campaigning as the key strength and “lifeblood” of DDCI. This is why we have decided to commit our organisation explicitly to growing as a public activism network. DDCI has adopted a wide range of public campaigning approaches over the years. At the heart of our campaigning, is supporting members to take up the issues in their local areas and backing this up at the national level through our lobbying and media work. DDCI has been part of some major international campaigns over the years. Most notably, the



Jubilee 2000 campaign and the debt aspect of the Make Poverty History Campaign in 2005. Our evaluation noted that members viewed DDCI’s campaigning successes as “a double edged sword” as they present challenges regarding how to maintain that level of energy in campaigning with a critical message. This is particularly relevant in the area of debt as it may be unlikely that Northern governments and official bodies will proactively push for more multi-lateral debt cancellation agreements in the near future.

DDCI will therefore take a two-pronged approach of pursuing some focused ‘quick win’ campaigning approaches, combined with training of activists, and action on, more long term areas of work such as illegitimate debt or on new areas. Widening our political agenda will support this approach. Our commitment to working on illegitimate debt will also provide the opportunity to build our capacity as a network to campaign by adopting a longer term focus - to shifting the boundaries of the debt debate to a more radical perspective - which is an approach that fits well with our organisational values.

There is general fatigue among the membership with individual letter writing and email actions. DDCI will seek to be creative in developing new approaches to informed public action in a more collective way. To support this, we will strengthen the work of existing campaigners active in DDCI. Particularly active and loyal, have been the religious sector within DDCI. We will work to develop more tailored campaigning materials and actions for this section of our membership in addition to working more strategically with the global justice structures among our religious members.

In addition to re-energising our campaigning base, we will widen our campaigning constituency. DDCI members in the religious sectors themselves are concerned about their capacity to continue functioning as the core campaigning grouping in DDCI. We will proactively seek to identify new sectors to work with during the period of this plan. Our evaluation noted, for example, DDCI's absence from the youth sector. We will need to create the capacity to carry out the building of new relationships in a meaningful way. Where new relationships are formed for collaboration, we will seek to take a partner-oriented approach in planning future programmes.

The guiding principle in our campaigning work will be to optimise the use of our limited resources by establishing mechanisms that assist involvement of other groups in our work. Key to this area will be the new campaigning alliance being formed with other like-minded campaigning groups in Ireland (outlined below). An annual campaigning calendar will be developed early each year to enable campaigners volunteer for certain tasks. In addition a volunteer 'speakers group' will be formed to respond to once-off campaigning speaking engagements.

Clarity of campaign focus and regular feedback on campaigning progress will be implemented through an improved communications approach (this is outlined under objective 4).

Growing a Global Justice Movement in Ireland: Building a new form of Solidarity

DDCI has adopted a new model of campaigning by working to position the organisation as one key driver of a popular campaigning movement in Ireland, in collaboration with a number of other like-minded and similar sized partners. DDCI is building a formal collaborative campaigning relationship with these groups which we view collectively as the beginning of building a global justice campaigning movement over the long term. We are deliberately using the term 'movement' in order to direct our attention to the need to take a long term approach to building political activism with others in Ireland and to create an initiative that is both popular and critical in its political identity.

We are currently developing the scope and purpose of the alliance. This will enable us develop a long term plan which will identify how the alliance will grow and occupy the space which is open to it. While the alliance will create a new campaigning platform, the purpose of the alliance is also to support the work of the under resourced organisations involved by opening up new audiences to their ongoing work. DDCI's role will be to lead within the alliance on our core themes. Development of this collaboration will be given high priority over the next three years and rooted in our annual workplans. Lessons from other similar models within Europe and internationally will be actively sought. We have secured seed funding for this initiative for 2008.

Objective 3: DDCI and Development Education

To strengthen critical perspectives in Ireland on DDCI issues of focus by

- **establishing a high quality development education programme that is informed by our organisational aim**
- **establishing strategic and long term partnerships with key identified development education groups and institutions**

Building a High Quality Education Programme

As a membership organisation, DDCI is responsible for delivering education programmes to our members and to the public who wish to learn about the issues we work on. This is a very important aspect of our work as DDCI is the only organisation in Ireland that follows our issues on a full time basis applying advocacy, education and campaigning approaches. In the past, DDCI has carried out development education work by strategically targeting other groups in addition to our members such as overseas volunteers and transition year secondary school students. However, our recent organisational evaluation found that “DDCI does not currently have a ‘development education programme’, per se, but rather a series of individual interventions. A more programmatic approach to education would be welcomed by stakeholders. This may involve a focused, limited development education programme within a campaigning organisation”.

A New Approach with New Partners

DDCI will develop this ‘programmatic approach’ to delivering development education over the next three years. This programme will be distinct from our campaigning work, use good practice development education methods and be directed at strategically chosen target groups with whom we can build sustained relationships. This will involve re-directing some expectations from our membership as it may mean declining requests for ‘front line’ speaking work from groups other than those strategically identified.

Consultations with development education organisations which have expertise in working with specific target groups will be carried out to scope out potential collaborative relationships that are rooted in good practice development education approaches and a strong knowledge and relationship with the target groups in question. One model may be to develop 1 new mutually beneficial sectoral relationship per year around a South-North training programme. This approach was piloted in ‘07-‘08. Some of these sectors may be with universities; youth initiatives; women’s groups; or development education centres. Securing predictable and long term funding for development education capacity in DDCI will be necessary to deliver this.



DDCI is often requested to provide inputs on our issues to existing development education programmes and lecture series' as part of existing development education programmes in Ireland. On these occasions, DDCI is specifically requested to present our political analysis regarding the issues we work on, in order to provoke political debate and discussion. We will continue to make ourselves available for these kinds of public debates and apply good practice approaches to our methodology, communications, and follow up research support to students.

We are also conscious of the interest of our members in schools work. We will seek to build strategic relationships with other resource groups who may be in a position to support teachers directly. This may be achievable with a minimal but strategic level of input from DDCI in terms of the development of education material initially while training can be delivered by other groups to teachers. The development of an up to date 'South-North resource flows' education pack (potentially in a series, with one 'issue based' pack being produced per year)

will be developed to assist this. The education pack will be updateable and apply the organisations knowledge in a creative and participative way. These will be useful education tools relevant to the needs of a variety of different users with 'session plans' adaptable to various circumstances and available in hard copy and as an online resource.

Relationship between Education and Campaigning Work

DDCI is viewed primarily as an organisation with a public campaigning agenda. Reorganising our education work will represent a significant shift in the organisation's approach. As our members clearly support our public activism identity, clarity from the outset regarding the relationship between our development education programme and public campaigning is necessary. We believe that we can pursue building a stronger activist organisation while developing and protecting a distinct development education programme which provides a space for long term learning and unhindered exploration of the issues we work on. This will also provide learning opportunities to ensure that campaigners and non-campaigners alike have the option to continue and deepen their learning in open educational fora separate from political action agendas.

Objective 4: Organisational Strengthening

To strengthen the organisational capacity of DDCI by

- Strengthening the governance of DDCI to ensure high political and financial accountability to our members and stakeholders
- Diversifying and strengthening our long term resource base
- Prioritising membership development and methods of engagement in the Strategic Plan
- Ensuring strong Southern involvement in our planning
- Increasing the capacity and engagement of our membership



Governance

DDCI will implement a new role for the board which will ensure the board operates at a more strategic level. By this we mean that the board will meet less regularly, but focus on ensuring that our organisational legal obligations are met; that our political direction within our strategic plan reflects the desires of the membership; and that all aspects of the DDCI structure are functioning coherently in implementing it. This has recently been documented through a governance review. Some of the specific changes which this strategic plan will address will be to ensure a more strategic role for the board in governing and providing strategic leadership to the organisation. Part of this will be to implement the recent governance review which clarifies the role of the board vis-à-vis the co-ordinator. In addition clearer roles and responsibilities within the board will be identified, in particular to ensure more equal distribution of work among board members. Priority will be given to expanding the board membership to include new board members, in particular where important skills are missing. The board will implement a more systematic internal evaluation process to ensure that the implementation of the strategic plan is fulfilled. Board level sub-committees may also be formed to carry out specific timebound pieces of work that are strategic to the governance of the organisation.

We will pursue expanding the written policies of the organisation, following on from the introduction of our new employment policy. This will ensure a documented set of procedures of the legal obligations and internal management practices of the organisation. Staff and board training needs will be identified on an annual basis. A board membership pack will be developed to provide new board members with an induction to the work of the organisation.

Strengthening DDCI Structures

This plan will prioritise strengthening the structures of the DDCI network. Reviving the membership toward a more active involvement will be a key area of focus. Underpinning this will be a review of what membership of DDCI involves so that members are clear about what can be gained from being a member of DDCI, in addition to what is expected from them. Included in this will be a review of the membership fee system. A membership pack will also be produced. We will also prioritise the development of the structures within the organisation, such as creating new member working groups as a way of increasing the involvement of the membership and interested volunteers.

photo: ActionAid



Campaigners at the IMF and World Bank annual meetings in Singapore protest at the silencing of the South

New Communications Approach

DDCI will implement a new communications approach during this period. This will respond to the findings in our evaluation that members are not always clear on our campaigning focus, and the progress being achieved toward campaigning goals. We also wish to ensure that members are more aware of our upcoming plans in order to provide them with advance notice of new areas of work within the organisation. A quarterly newsletter will therefore be introduced. This may be distributed by email or in hard copy. The newsletter will be distinct from the *Campaigners Update* as it will provide members with updates on the internal work and plans of the organisation and provide them with options for getting involved. New resources will need to be secured to implement this.

Our website will also be redesigned to ensure a more streamlined and user friendly format. The design will enable internal updating of the website so that the site is kept more up to date. In addition, the DDCI database of contacts will be reviewed to ensure that it is up to date and restructured where necessary so that we have easy access to contact lists of various stakeholders in our work.

Because DDCI is re-orientating our direction in this strategic plan, consideration will be given in our communications to ensure that this is clear to our stakeholders.

Diversifying our resource base

At the outset of this plan, DDCI's financial situation is highly fragile and human resource capacity is constrained with funding for only 1 staff member. Priority will be given during this period to secure long term commitments to covering the core costs of running DDCI in order to ensure that the organisation's continued existence is secure. This is urgent in order to overcome constant concerns over whether the organisation can survive in the long term.

While DDCI's members, especially from the religious sector, generously provide fees to the organisation annually, these funds are not enough to guarantee the core costs of the organisation. While we hope continued support will be forthcoming from our members as we develop a clearer set of services that will be available to them, DDCI cannot continue to survive on annual additional funding appeals to these already financially overstretched members. DDCI will therefore initiate strategic discussions with key development organisations from within our membership who have a policy interest in our work and who have traditionally sourced higher level grants for the organisation. Based on our new strategic plan, these partners will be requested to collectively cover the basic minimum running costs of the organisation so that our core costs are secure for the next three years.

Additional donors will then be needed to fund the new DDCI programmes in the areas of policy, campaigning and development education. A scoping exercise has been carried out through our evaluation which identifies donors who may be amenable to DDCI's new approach. These donors will be actively pursued to provide support toward the organisation. A core challenge to DDCI's funding needs is lack of availability of funding for policy and advocacy work. In this regard, dialogue with Irish Aid and others will be initiated. DDCI will also explore again the option of European Commission funding. However, this will require significant preparation work in building new relationships within Europe and the South on a niche theme of interest to the European Commission in order to develop a proposal that may be positively considered.

Our evaluation highlighted that our donors are interested in seeing greater emphasis on indicators of impact of our work. We will therefore build in clear indicators in our funding proposals.

How the Strategic Plan will be Implemented

The plan will be implemented in a sequential fashion. Priority in year 1 will be given to strengthening our funding relationships that will ensure the financial basis for delivery on the overall plan. DDCI will mix approaches of working with highly supportive networks, such as Eurodad, Jubilee South and the wider global network in order to deliver our work on core issues. Where new issues are being undertaken, a scoping period will be undertaken to identify what issue DDCI can add most value to. This will be followed by a learning period which will then be followed by outreach work with the membership and other allies. Crucial to this will be ensuring the building in of consultation mechanisms with Southern organisations to ensure the authenticity of our work, rooted in a solidarity approach.

Annual operational plans will be developed in the last quarter of each year outlining the work for the coming year. These plans will enable the board and staff to monitor progress and to make adjustments when necessary.

An annual internal review will be carried out at the end of each year and an external mid-term evaluation will be carried out in 2009.

Financial Management

The organisation is managed on a very tight financial basis, achieving a high level of cost effectiveness. Board members are presented with a financial report and cashflow projection for the coming 6 months at each board meeting. Annual activity reports are provided to members at our AGM in addition to annual audited accounts. DDCI will continue to encourage our members who make financial grants to us to make them unpegged to particular activities and within our January – December financial year to enable easier financial management and reporting.

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