

Dial up Networking for Debt Cancellation and Development: A Case Study of Jubilee 2000

Introduction

“Jubilee 2000 has pioneered a new form of global net activism in which thousands of activists and communities are in regular contact, unleashing a form of solidarity which flexed its new political muscle during the WTO meeting in Seattle. In all of that lies a hope for the new millennium that the decisions which affect millions of lives will not all be made in board and committee rooms, but also on the street and increasingly at the computer terminal.”

(Editorial in British newspaper, *The Guardian*, 30th December 1999)

When Jubilee 2000, the campaign for cancellation of the unpayable debts of the poorest countries, was launched in February 1996, those involved knew that the only way to challenge the obtuse and secretive world of international finance was to mobilise public opinion on an unprecedented international scale. Taking the issue of debt to people on the street was not new: ever since 1985 when Julius Nyerere, President of Tanzania made an impassioned speech in which he appealed to creditors; “Must we starve our children to pay our debts?¹”, groups had worked to raise awareness of the impact of the crushing debt burden on the world’s poor. However, the efforts had sadly failed to dent the ever-increasing mountain of debt. The visionary founders of Jubilee 2000 were optimistic that their ‘big idea’ of linking debt cancellation to celebrating the millennium could be a catalyst to unite disparate efforts against debt bondage, with the potential to capture the imagination of people worldwide. What no-one fully appreciated, was that Jubilee 2000’s launch would coincide with an explosion in Internet use that provided an essential vehicle for communicating Jubilee 2000’s big idea. For the first time, the computer terminal would take a central role in carrying global issues onto the street. Caught almost unknowingly on the rising crest of a new media wave, Jubilee 2000’s direction has also inevitably been shaped by the Internet, providing experiences which will have valuable lessons for international campaigns in the future.²

This chapter explores both how and why the internet became central to the strategy of the Jubilee 2000 campaign - from being a vehicle to assist the initial communication of the ideas of the campaign, to becoming the central locus for sharing information in a global movement and co-ordinating around key decision-making events. However it also examines the limitations of the internet both as a medium of campaigning and for mass communication, and in particular in working closely with partners from indebted countries where internet use is highly restricted. It concludes by highlighting some of the lessons that can be drawn from Jubilee 2000’s experience and pointing to likely future developments in the world of global campaigning and the internet.

Virtual Take-off

It is not a coincidence that Jubilee 2000’s take-off from a bold and big idea to an international movement mirrors the explosion in Internet use. In 1996, Jubilee 2000 had the backing of 3 UK church aid agencies and about 180 supporters. The Internet had a global online population of 44 million (mostly based in USA) at the end of 1995. Four years later, the number of people online has gone up by 700%, ‘dotcom’ fever has broken out and the Internet has become part of everyday life for many people³. Jubilee 2000’s growth has been similarly dramatic. In less than 4 years, Jubilee 2000 has been

set up in over 60 countries, won the backing of tens of thousands of organisations, and handed over 20 million petition signatures to the leading creditor nations. Its collective impact forced the Group of 7 (G7) leaders to put debt top of the agenda at their Summit in Cologne in 1999 and Okinawa in 2000 and to start a process of debt relief for the poorest nations. In the words of Gordon Brown, the UK Chancellor, Jubilee 2000 is “a broad coalition which has moved the earth⁴.”

GRAPH OF J2000 WEBSITE STATS

Jubilee 2000's use of the Internet has evolved as both the technology and the number of people online has expanded. Jubilee 2000's online work has centred around email, the only Internet activity some campaigns in indebted countries can participate in. As soon as Jubilee 2000 opened an office in April 1996, email was used to circulate the campaign charter and petition to networks interested in international issues and email contacts from international meetings. In November 1998, the first conference of nascent Jubilee 2000 national campaigns decided against establishing an international secretariat in favour of maximising communication. Consequently an email listserv was established of over 300 key campaigners which has become the linchpin of the international movement's communication and co-ordination.

Jubilee 2000 UK campaign's website (www.jubilee2000uk.org) was launched in February 1997 to provide background information on the debt crisis and the campaign. In October 1998, it was re-launched in a lively newspaper format with weekly updates and actions. The website is now continually updated and receives between 8,000 and 15,000 international visitors each week, mainly from USA and Europe. Alongside the UK website is a popular 'Drop the Debt' site (www.dropthedebt.org) and a growing number of websites of Jubilee 2000 campaigns at both national level (including indebted countries) and regional level.⁵

These developments have put the Internet at the heart of Jubilee 2000's co-ordination work. Both National Secretariats and active national organisations now use the Internet for at least half of their debt campaign work. Nearly all material produced in the UK is relayed onto the website, and email has become the primary means for transmitting information, setting up meetings, and discussing developments and strategy. As more communication, even internally within the office, is done by the Internet, the ability to dial in to the computer server has also enabled leading activists to travel yet stay in touch with campaign developments.

Voluntary organisers at regional level spend much less time on the Internet, using it to gather information but relying on more traditional methods to liaise with their networks. Increasingly, however, local activists are using the Internet to develop new relationships worldwide - for example, the Birmingham coalition in the UK is in regular email contact with activists in USA, South Africa, Japan, Malawi and Germany.

Dial-up Networking – spreading the campaign with Internet technology

Jubilee 2000's success is predicated on communicating a big idea to as many people as possible, so dramatic changes in communications have inevitably brought major benefits for the campaign. The first

reason why the Internet has played such a crucial role is that its structure as a system of networked computers fits closely with Jubilee 2000's central strategy of reaching networks and individuals that can communicate the campaign message on to larger networks. Dial-up networking (networking by telephoning into a computer network) provided the perfect framework to realise this goal. Email allows information to be shared to large networks at the click of a button; and this information can be potentially multiplied to millions more networks. In this way, the campaign idea of Jubilee 2000 has been shared on an international scale at an unprecedented pace.

Secondly, the Internet allows cheap, fast and efficient communication on a global scale, which is vital for a movement with limited resources and a very tight deadline of the end of the year 2000. Petter Hveem, the Norwegian campaign's only full-time paid staff member, says that "the Internet is my best colleague" as it has helped multiply his campaign efforts. Email has been essential to responding to campaign developments. On April 13th 2000, 63 campaigners were arrested in Kenya during a debt march. News of their arrest was circulated via the Internet, prompting letters of protest from around the world, and the eventual dropping of the charges on 22nd May. Andre Hotchkiss, one of the arrested marchers said: "Without the avalanche of e-mail, fax, and letters that poured into Kenya, this thing may have pushed on for a longer time." The Kenyan campaigners' experience of international solidarity mobilised via the Internet reinvigorated the campaign in Kenya.

Thirdly, the Internet has enabled the accessing and sharing of high quality information. The maxim that "information is power" is particularly true in the world of international debt. Secretive deals between Northern governments and elites in the poorest countries are at the root of the debt crisis. Ordinary people in indebted nations have been excluded from knowledge about corrupt loans, but have paid all the costs as resources have been diverted from schools and hospitals to servicing debts to the rich North. The Internet has the potential to reverse the information poverty in the South. The ease of uploading and downloading information on the Internet has rapidly increased the volume of up-to-the minute information, crucial for any campaign. In indebted countries, activists have used the Internet to access information, from Jubilee 2000 and World Bank sites, about their country's debt situation and the current state of play amongst the creditors. This has strengthened their hand locally. In Britain, Jubilee 2000 has earned a reputation for extremely well-informed supporters. Russell Price, a member of the UK Coalition who works with church groups says that "providing high quality information through the Internet to busy people has given them confidence to articulate support for debt at church policy meetings."

Fourthly, perhaps most importantly, the Internet has become central to Jubilee 2000 because it is a flexible medium which can be controlled by campaigners. This is particularly crucial when other forms of media and communication are increasingly concentrated in a few hands, with news agendas and analysis set by criteria which often exclude intelligent examination of seemingly complex issues like debt. On the four British terrestrial TV channels, the total output of factual programmes on developing countries has dropped by almost 50% since 1989⁶. The Internet gives supporters control as they can access information almost instantly and at any time. Dynamic local supporters in Seattle used information from Jubilee 2000 UK's website to build a powerful local coalition which brought together a 30,000 strong human chain for debt cancellation on 29th November 1999, the first day of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) summit. Through its website, Jubilee 2000 has control of a medium which can potentially reach millions of people worldwide. This proved vital with the announcements made by the

G7 leaders at their Summit in Cologne in 1999, as Jubilee 2000 was able to provide detailed analysis and warn supporters not to believe the spin given by Government press spokespersons.

On the road to Cologne...

On 19th June 1999, 40,000 people from around the world gathered in a human chain to circle the Summit of the G7 leaders in Cologne. Joining the demonstration were over 60 coaches from Britain, 2 trains of supporters from Sweden, and a ship from the Netherlands. On the same day, 15,000 people in Stuttgart formed a parallel human chain. Friedel Hutz-Adams, Communications Director for Erlassjahr 2000 in Germany said: "Organising the international aspects of the Cologne summit would have been impossible without the Internet." Through regular international e-newsletters and posting of detailed information including maps, travel guidelines and contact details of coach and travel organisers on the Erlassjahr 2000 website (www.erlassjahr2000.de), Erlassjahr 2000 was able to organise and co-ordinate an international demonstration on an unprecedented scale. Through this immense mobilisation, the G7 leaders were put under serious scrutiny by the world and were forced to make the first steps towards debt relief through the Cologne Debt Initiative. Erlassjahr 2000 had also laid a precedent for future international meetings that would be dramatically followed up by demonstrations at the Seattle WTO conference in November later that year.

Celebrity.com – celebrities, Internet and campaigning

'Dial up networking' has been at the heart of Jubilee 2000's work, but in a world where membership organisations are generally on the decline it was clear that building a mass popular campaign would also mean securing coverage on mass media, in particular television. The concentrated ownership of mass media has a distinct disadvantage in limiting diversity of views. Conversely, however, if you are able to get coverage there is the potential to reach a massive global audience. Jubilee 2000 therefore invested considerable time into courting mass media's favourite partner: the global entertainments industry. The work paid off as celebrities, particularly from the music industry, started to give public backing to the campaign. The fact that Live Aid's \$200 million was being paid back by Africa every week in debt repayments shocked many in the music industry and propelled ex Live Aid stars like Bob Geldof and U2's Bono into active support.

TV coverage is still by far the most important medium for reaching a mass audience, particularly in the North. When the *Brits* music awards decided in 1999 to back the campaign after Muhammad Ali and Bono both said they would attend, their promotion of the campaign onstage reached a global TV audience of more than 100 million in 130 countries and massive coverage in popular tabloid media. This immediately raised awareness about the debt crisis to a significant new international audience and prompted political leaders to start addressing the issue. By contrast, the NETAID concert in October 1999 had a global online audience of only 2.5 million despite a larger line-up of stars performing in 3 international cities.

PHOTO OF ROME PRESS CONFERENCE

Despite the wider reach of television, connecting the Internet with the global and popular appeal of celebrities has had distinct advantages for the campaign. This mainly comes back to the Internet's

capacity to provide a flexible and controllable medium for communication. When Thom Yorke of pop group *Radiohead* went online for a chat in June 1999, he was able to talk to his large online fanbase in depth about the campaign. He even refused to answer questions about his new album because he wanted to talk about the ‘real’ issues – his unedited comments online are unlikely to have appeared in any other medium, yet reached a global audience, some of whom have since become highly committed campaigners. Similarly on September 23rd 1999, the meeting of the Pope with Bono, Bob Geldof, Professor Jeffrey Sachs, and Quincy Jones, received significant press coverage. However, much of the coverage reflected more on the personalities than the issues. Jubilee 2000 via the Internet was able to give full coverage, including a live webcast of the press conference, to emphasise not who was there, but why such a diverse range of people were speaking out on debt.

Netaid... bringing pop and politics together?

Netaid, the global concerts on October 1st linked to the website – www.netaid.org – was the biggest attempt to bring the global worlds of music and Internet together to tackle causes of poverty. Debt was one of the five ‘pillars’ identified as areas of action essential for reducing poverty and the Jubilee 2000 campaign was a leading partner in Netaid. The format of the website gave attention to the issues behind the concert and allowed individuals to discover for themselves about development issues at a level they were comfortable with. It channeled some new people into campaigning - the event tripled traffic to Jubilee 2000’s website, some of which has remained. However the difference between the actual number of visitors (2.5 million) and the hyped figure of 1 billion was a major disappointment. For Jubilee 2000, it reflected in part a failure of Netaid to provide a clear visual message for the concerts in the same way as Live Aid. Nevertheless, Netaid set an important precedent, and with a stronger focus, future online music events could reach massive global audiences, becoming powerful agents for social change.

Out with the old, in with the new? Does traditional campaigning still have a place?

With all the advantages of the Internet, it might be assumed that more traditional methods of campaigning would be dropped. Certainly the ease of using the Internet has ushered in new ways of campaigning. It is now possible to email many of the G7 leaders directly and easily, by cutting and pasting material off a website. In May 1999, UK Coalition partner Comic Relief inadvertently discovered the potential reach of the Internet when their Freephone number, advertised in a tabloid newspaper, found its way onto an email which promised that Tony Blair would cancel the debt if enough people called. Over 150,000 calls were made before the line was cut off. Beth Tegg, Education Officer for Comic Relief said: “At first when calls started to pour in, we were baffled, but when we understood what had happened we were thrilled that so many people responded positively. It shows a great potential for e-communications.” Using the Internet for local campaigning has also been an exciting experience for some local activists. Sue Errington, Jubilee 2000 organiser in Devon organised an ‘email mountaineering’ trip in January 2000. Campaigners climbed a nearby hill and emailed activists worldwide using a laptop and mobile phone. “For me the thrill was receiving messages from Malawi, Nigeria, Japan and Uganda in response to our emails. I think people enjoyed the day because it felt exciting and at the cutting edge,” she said.

For a movement allied to the communications revolution, Jubilee 2000 has, nevertheless, depended for the large part on historical and long-used techniques including public meetings, rallies, leaflets, posters and petitions – all of which were fundamental to the 19th Century campaign for the abolition of slavery. There is little evidence from Jubilee 2000's experience that traditional methods have seen their day. This is most starkly evident with the Jubilee 2000 Petition, a core action of all the campaigns. Despite the ease of signing online, only 250,000 of the total 17 million signatures handed to G7 leaders in Cologne were online signatures. The Peruvian campaign, which collected almost 2 million signatures, achieved this in 6 months through a systematic mobilisation of local networks, without the Internet. By contrast, an attempt by Jubilee 2000 UK to boost online signatures using the latest in animated and interactive technology in September 1999 won plaudits for its design, but failed to circulate widely as the attachment was rejected by most email systems.

The lack of direct e-campaigning is partly due to the insufficient number of people online. The German campaign, *Erlassjahr 2000* emails to only a few hundred supporters, yet has 6500 newsletter subscribers, and distributed over 1 million leaflets in the year before the Cologne G7 Summit. Sending emails directly to politicians is still less effective than drowning them with letters and postcards. Mary Bradford, Campaigns Officer at Christian Aid, an organisation in the UK coalition, only uses email as a backup to mailed actions. She says: "Decision makers can deal with electronic communications in a more sophisticated way than they can with piles of letters or postcards sitting in their offices!"

Perhaps the most significant limitation of the Internet in terms of using it for direct campaigning at local level is its impersonal nature. Barbara Crowther, campaigns director of UK coalition partner, CAFOD, comments: "Campaigning is ultimately about people. Internet and email can help bring people together but cannot replace it in my mind." All regional organisers recount that the most important and engaging events locally have involved bringing people together. The most powerful of these events have proved to be sharing of experiences between campaigners from North and South and the major demonstrations that have been held at international creditor meetings, particularly the G7 Summits. Equally, when 70,000 people formed a human chain around the Birmingham G7 Summit in May 1998, it not only woke up the world media to the debt problem for the first time, it also dramatically enthused local campaigners in a way that the Internet cannot achieve. James Stewart, a UK local campaigner and website designer says: "I think that the fact that the net doesn't provide anything tangible for users as a physical protest does, means that it can never entirely replace traditional ways of protesting. It's very inspiring to physically join up with people who share your convictions on the issue."

BIRMINGHAM HUMAN CHAIN PHOTO

The Internet has played a role in all of these major events. For the Birmingham Human Chain, Roger Chisnall, a coach organiser in London recounts that once his phone number was advertised on the web, he received 20-30 calls a day for about 10 days and rapidly filled his coaches. In Spain, the organisation of a referendum on debt, conducted by a citizens network in October 1999 (in which 1 million citizens voted), relied a great deal on the Internet. However, the Internet has mainly played a role in enhancing offline campaign actions rather than replacing them. The strength of Jubilee 2000's most successful activities has derived from engaging with people and tying them into active networks – this has involved a great deal of personal contact. The campaign may have had back up from the computer terminal, but its main arena has very much remained on the street.

Linking with the South

Jubilee 2000 is fundamentally based on educating people, especially in indebted countries, about the debt crisis. This education is essential for empowering ordinary people to take back control over resources, diverted through the collusion of elites in the North and South. Involving people in the South has been vital as the movement against debt first started in the South, and the only long-term solution to the debt crisis will come from the South. Consequently the campaign has had to confront the fact that poverty in indebted countries is worsened by information-poverty, particularly on the issue of debt, where all the data and decisions that impact on people are taken outside the country in Washington-based institutions like the IMF.

This information-divide is likely to be exacerbated, as the world's rapidly polarising economy and society is paralleled by a growing "technological apartheid".⁷ As Roger Chisnall, a London Trade Union activist summarises: "The Internet is so fast and easy to use, inevitably those with access are better briefed. Those we exclude tend to be the less affluent, the people we are working with in the first place.... this is a real challenge to us all."

At first glance, this does not seem to be the case with Jubilee 2000 – nearly all campaigns in the indebted countries state that the Internet has greatly assisted their campaigns and involved them further in international decision-making. The Internet's inherent advantages that made it so central to Jubilee 2000 UK's work apply equally, and sometimes even more so, to campaigns in indebted countries. Many Southern campaign organisations were among the first online users due to early investment by academic, research and NGO (non governmental organisation) networks.⁸ Sharing information and perspectives with an international movement cheaply and efficiently, as well as being able to access hitherto hidden information has made a dramatic difference for Southern campaigns. Camille Chalmers, Co-ordinator of the Haiti Debt Campaign, said that email had transformed his work, enabling him to send out information to thousands of people, that would otherwise have exceeded his entire budget and taken weeks to arrive. Christine Nantongo of the Uganda campaign says that using the Internet to talk to international campaigners "like they are my next door neighbours has been an inspiration and enables us to share information that we would otherwise not." The Zambian campaign has a website (www.jctr.org.zm) that it uses to inform journalists and northern campaigns, while it focuses on mobilising within Zambia.

Northern campaigning organisations report that email has greatly assisted the sharing of information and enhancing of relationships with Southern partners. Russell Price, of the church organisation, CMS, said that email had been "crucial for bringing raw data or stories from partners in Africa and Asia." This information laid the basis for CMS' education work on debt.

However experience of the Internet has been much more difficult for campaigns in the South than the North. Whilst writing this chapter, both the Haiti and Ugandan campaigns suffered serious problems with their Internet service providers (ISPs) that blocked emails for several days. Downloading web articles is a very costly and sometimes fruitless experience due to poor and relatively expensive communication systems. Several campaigns, including Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire do not have email access. Others like the West African Francophone countries and countries throughout Latin

America are sometimes excluded by the fact that more than 70% of the information shared, via the Internet, is in English. In few of these cases is another system of communication being used to replace a non-functioning email one.

Realisation that Internet could exclude as well as include quickly became apparent at an international Jubilee 2000 conference in Cologne in June 1999, where even campaigns with access to the Internet had not received key information and campaign updates. This is backed up by analysis of international audiences visiting the UK website - of the users from the 44 countries that regularly visit the site, only 12 are from southern countries and these are ranked near the bottom in terms of numbers. This has prompted a rethink in Jubilee 2000 UK office and the establishment of quarterly bilingual newsletters and a regular postal mailing to Southern campaigns of key articles that was hitherto only being shared via the Internet.

The repercussions of increasing reliance on Internet for communication in the context of a divided world are still being thought through. Barbara Crowther, of CAFOD says that: "There is a legitimate worry that Northern agencies will increasingly prioritise communications with those southern NGOs with resources to keep up with online partnership models, and others might get further excluded." Kofi Mawuli Klu, a Ghanaian debt activist warns that reliance on the Internet, could give a dominant voice to largely urban NGOs able and keen to respond to the North, rather than more representative organisations which concentrate their efforts on working with local communities in which the Internet is irrelevant. Even if popular organisations are online, there is a danger that varying experiences of email by North and South can distort perceptions of different campaign environments. For example, when a Northern campaign emails out a consultation document, it tends to have a deadline of a few days to respond. For Northern campaigns, this is easy to organise as it can be emailed onto coalition organisations for consultation. However for Southern campaigns, seeking a response is inevitably a longer process, and therefore valuable feedback may not be given. The Ugandan campaign report that any information received via the Internet, as valuable as it is, has to be simplified, translated into at least 5 languages and delivered in segments, before it is used publicly.

GORDON BROWN/ELINATA PHOTO

Elinata meets Gordon...

On 14th June 1999, a few days before the Cologne G7 Summit, the UK Chancellor Gordon Brown picked up the phone in the UK Treasury to talk about international debt. This was not an unusual topic of conversation in advance of a major summit. Except this time, his call was to Elinata Kasanga, a poverty-stricken mother of seven in the remote village of Balakasau in Zambia and his call was eavesdropped live on the Internet by thousands of people. The Internet had succeeded in bringing one of the most powerful men in contact with one of the most powerless – a woman who suffered directly from the effects of debt, talking to a man who had the power to stop collecting the poorest countries' debts. Elinata Kasanga, completely unawed by the experience, challenged Gordon Brown to cancel Zambia's debts to enable her children to go to school. This innovative project was put together by Tearfund, a Christian aid agency in the Jubilee 2000 UK Coalition, and demonstrated the enormous potential of the Internet in linking people across the globe, and even giving a voice to people who have traditionally been excluded. However the project also highlighted the practical difficulties in using new

media technology in impoverished countries. To realise the project, Tearfund had to rely on heavy financial backing from computer companies like MSN and Mediawave, satellite phones to do the link-up, and was forced to use audio and still-images as backup instead of a live video when the power supply in the village blew up!

Lessons for the future

When Jubilee 2000 climbed onto the vehicle of the Internet in 1996, it did not know where it was going to be taken. The Internet has certainly carried the campaign a long way and has been essential in driving Jubilee 2000 towards its goals. Four years later, it is also possible by looking back at the journey travelled, to have an idea of where we might be going next.

The first clear lesson is that future campaigns will not be able to ignore the vehicle of the Internet to be successful. The Internet has transformed the nature of the Jubilee 2000 campaign, and campaigning in general. It has rapidly internationalised the campaign – there are now not only national organisations in constant contact, local groups like Leeds Jubilee 2000 network are now regularly in touch with communities in Zimbabwe and Germany. This internationalisation will ensure that campaigns on global issues will not be contained within national boundaries. Popular and imaginative ‘big ideas’ are likely to become as global as Jubilee 2000.

This process of internationalisation also has a highly democratising dynamic. The sharing of information, ideas and perspectives via the Internet has led to extremely well-informed local campaigners. As local campaigners develop Internet links with activists worldwide and as the diversity of information increases, the ownership of campaigns is likely to become increasingly decentralised. For example, currently most British campaigners receive campaign information from a few national organisations – as the Internet develops, campaigners will be able to bypass these communication channels. Jubilee 2000 UK is already actively supporting this process by piloting community web pages in which supporters can link-up and share information, skills and ideas without involving national offices. This could substantially reduce pressure on tightly-stretched national organisations who too often act as ineffective networking hubs between local campaigners, when supporters could instead network directly and more efficiently. This bypassing of national offices could have a profound effect in terms of democratising ownership of campaigns.

Set against the empowering nature of increased knowledge dispersed via the Internet, is the danger of information overload. Many Jubilee 2000 campaigners already report an unsustainable growth in emails and Internet material. Marlene Barrett, Head of Campaigns at Jubilee 2000 UK, who currently receives around 50 emails daily, says: “Because it’s so easy and cheap to send an email, people often are not thinking who needs this information and how much detail they need. The more emails you receive the less likely you are to answer or act upon them.” As more and more campaigns take to the Internet, activists may become disempowered, daunted by the sheer weight of campaign requests arriving in their email inbox. People, however, will probably start to develop new Internet strategies to deal with this volume of information, and campaigns will need to become increasingly sophisticated in presenting information online in order to involve people.

Whilst future campaigns will be unable to ignore the vehicle of the Internet, it will be essential that they do not rely on it. Despite all the hype, the vast majority of the world's population are excluded from the Internet, particularly in the South. A digital divide, to match the vast wealth divide, is already opening up and the situation is difficult to remedy when one third of the world's population still has to survive on the equivalent of one dollar per day.⁹ Jubilee 2000 has publicly questioned prioritising the internet divide at a time where many people lack basic necessities, when they burnt a laptop computer at the G7 Summit in Okinawa in July 2000 in protest at attempts by the G7 leaders to obscure their failure to tackle the debt crisis by launching a new 'digital divide' initiative. Indeed the only way to tackle both the digital and wealth divide will be through campaigns like Jubilee 2000 that tackle the root causes of poverty and through long-term empowerment of people in impoverished countries. Consequently, if a campaign relies on a methodology that excludes people, it is stabbing itself in the foot.¹⁰ While campaigns against poverty are still needed, traditional campaigning and communication methods will need to run alongside Internet communication.

Most of all, campaigns in the future will need to hold onto the truth that changing society involves people and ideas. Campaigns should never mistake the vehicle for the message. Effective campaigning will continue to be based at heart on engaging people on the need for change, whether it is at street stalls, at public meetings, in dialogue with campaigners from different parts of the world, or from the collective energy of a massive demonstration for social change. However if campaigns get the right message, and relish the challenge of taking campaigns out to people on the streets, they will find the computer terminal a revolutionary backup.

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Photos: Rome press conference, Human Chain, Tearfund Gordon Brown/Elinata link-up

¹ Speech to OAU, 1985. In 1989, UNICEF in *State of the World's Children Report* said that the "debt crisis should not be discussed too politely, for polite discussion can imply a tacit acceptance of the unacceptable."

² Jubilee 2000, as an international movement, is a vast field to submit to a case study. This evidence in this chapter is based on conversations with, as well as questionnaires and surveys sent to, campaigners at regional, national and international level. However the study does focus in on the UK, due to the fact that it has led the way on using the Internet and for practical reasons as this study has been written in the midst of an ongoing campaign.

³ Press Release, *Computer Industry Almanac*, 18 August 1999 (www.c-i-a.com/199908iu.htm)

⁴ Gordon Brown, UK Chancellor of the Exchequer, speaking to the Commons International Development Committee, *Hansard*, 20 May 1999.

⁵ A full list of Jubilee 2000 websites can be found at www.jubilee2000uk.org/links.html

⁶ J. Stone, *Losing Perspective: Global Affairs on British terrestrial television 1989-1999*, (London: Third World Environment and Environment Broadcasting Project, May 2000)

⁷ M. Castells, *Information Technology, Globalisation and Social Development*, paper prepared for UNRISD conference, Geneva, 22-24 June 1999, p 3.

(www.unrisd.org/infotech/conferen/castelp1.htm). Gordon Brown, the UK Chancellor, in a speech in November 99 made the salutary warning that the communications revolution could lead to “a society divided between information-haves and information have-nots. A society with a wired up superclass and an information underclass.” *Internet Magazine*, Dec 1999, p14

⁸ D. Pruett & J. Deane, *The Internet and Poverty: real help or real hype?*, *Panos Media Briefing*, no 28, (April 1998), p4

⁹ M. Castells, *Information Technology, Globalisation and Social Development*, paper prepared for UNRISD conference, Geneva, 22-24 June 1999, p3 (www.unrisd.org/infotech/conferen/castelp1.htm)

¹⁰ Jubilee 2000 graphically highlighted the need to prioritise of

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