

What can we do to change the world? Campaign!



Why campaign?

World poverty is such a huge problem that sometimes we're tempted to despair and think nothing can be done. But there are things we can do.

Many of the decisions that affect poor countries and poor communities are made by politicians and business leaders in the rich world. And we can all use our influence on these people to make sure that the voices of the world's poorest people are heard.

The Christian gospel demands that we do all we can to challenge injustice and inequality, following the example of Jesus. Jesus said: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives... to let the oppressed go free' (Luke 4:18). To do that ourselves is a major challenge. Campaigning is a good place to start.

What difference does it make?

These are some of the results of campaigning by individuals and groups over the past few years:

- More than £18.5 billion of poor countries' debt has been cancelled, leading to a 70 per cent rise in spending on health care;
- Sales of fairly traded products by supermarkets have increased more than 15-fold; seven of the UK's largest supermarkets have committed themselves to working for better standards for producers in developing countries.

The campaign for trade justice was launched in 2001 and action by individual campaigners has helped it grow in an exciting way:

- In the UK, 54 organisations have joined the Trade Justice Movement.
- Supporters have sent 57,000 postcards to the Department of Trade and Industry.
- More than 12,000 people turned up for last year's mass lobby of Parliament at Westminster, lobbying over half the MPs.
- More than 36,000 Trade Justice badges have been worn and the badge often appears on TV.

And that's just the beginning. But thanks to ordinary people who take the time to write a postcard or come to a rally, or who simply wear a badge, trade rules are becoming news. Politicians have been shown in no uncertain manner that people want to see change.

What can we do next?

- **If you're not already doing so, wear the trade justice badge.** Why not order some to sell at your church, at coffee mornings, or Christian Aid week events? Badges cost £2 plus postage and packing: phone your order to 01252 669 628.
- **Become a Christian Aid campaigner.** You can do as much or as little as you like, from organising big events to signing an occasional postcard. Ring Christian Aid on 020 7523 2225 and ask to be registered as a campaigner, and be sent details of the latest action to take in support of the campaign.

- **Put 28 June 2003 in your diary.** That's the day when the trade campaign is launching a summer of action with a series of events across the country. Ring Christian Aid on the number above for more details. **Source: Christian Aid website: www.christianaid.org.uk**