

# Think Global

Act locally with the

World Development Movement



March 2010



**World  
Development  
Movement**

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# Letter from network development officer

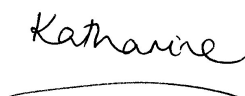
Dear groups

Welcome to the March issue of Think Global; fairtrade fortnight month! I know lots of groups will be out and about at events this week and next, talking to people about fairtrade and getting the tea action cards signed. Please do let me know how all your events went so I can give a round-up in the next issue.

Now we know the date of the RBS AGM (Wed 28 April) we can start planning our week of action in earnest. This will be the perfect opportunity to really ramp up the public face of our 'clean up the banks' campaign, and put RBS under pressure in the media. We are also hoping that groups and activists will use the upcoming general election as a chance to contact your parliamentary candidates and get development issues high on the agenda. We've enclosed a copy of our election toolkit to help you do this, and this guide can also be downloaded from our website.

And finally, don't forget to mark the date for our Activist Gathering in June – it's a special one, to mark WDM's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

All the best,



Katharine Talbot  
Network development officer

Tel: 020 7820 4900  
Email: [katharine@wdm.org.uk](mailto:katharine@wdm.org.uk)

## News bites

### Climate justice

- WDM held a protest outside DfID offices on Monday 15 February in solidarity with actions happening in Bangladesh that day, focussing on climate finance.
- DfID told us that the initial climate finance for Bangladesh would be a grant, but there would be loans later in the year, through a separate World Bank fund. There has been no official announcement made by either DfID or the Bangladeshi government.

### Clean up the banks

- The RBS AGM is taking place on Wed 28 April; we will be holding media stunts around the country that day and throughout the week.

### Financial crisis

- WDM is supporting the 'Robin Hood Tax' proposal; if agreed internationally this would raise billions of pounds by taking an average of 0.05% from speculative banking transactions.

# Action checklist

## Groups

### Climate change

Decide if you would like to hold a stunt on the RBS day of action (or during the week of action)

### Clean up the banks

Continue to circulate the 'clean up the banks' action cards and briefings, these are still current!

### Financial crisis

Support the 'Robin Hood' tax proposal by signing the petition at [www.makefinancework.org](http://www.makefinancework.org)

### General election

Discuss your plans for the pre-election period; are you able to organise a hustings event or visit your parliamentary candidates?

### At your next meeting

- Complete the trade evaluation questionnaire
- Decide if you would like to hold a discussion on campaign tactics using the enclosed papers and if so decide whether you would like to book in a facilitator to visit your group.

## Activists

### Climate change

If there is a WDM group near you why not contact them to find out about their plans for the RBS week of action stunts?

### Financial crisis

Support the 'Robin Hood' tax by signing the petition at [www.makefinancework.org](http://www.makefinancework.org)

## Who to contact at WDM

Katharine	General group queries	katharine@wdm.org.uk
Sarah	Training day bookings, 'Yes Men Fix the World' bookings, material orders	sarah.reader@wdm.org.uk
James	Activist gathering/AGM queries	james@wdm.org.uk
Pontus	Website	pontus.westerberg@wdm.org.uk
Kate	Press	kate.blagojevic@wdm.org.uk

## Campaign update: Climate justice

### Bangladesh update

On 15 February campaigners in Dhaka, Bangladesh, protested outside a meeting of aid donors and the Bangladeshi government.

Twenty-one organisations demanded that developed countries “pay their carbon debt”, and specifically that the UK government should stop insisting that the World Bank manage the ‘multi-donor trust fund’ for tackling climate change in Bangladesh.

On the same day, WDM staff and members of London local groups gathered with members of the European Action Group on Climate Change in Bangladesh outside the Department for International Development. We were also joined by Murad Qureshi, Labour London Assembly Member. The issue was covered in The Guardian, where the Bangladeshi government said: "If the money goes [via the bank] then it does not go to its real purpose. [We] want it to go through the UN."

DfID clarified that the initial money for Bangladesh through the multi-donor trust fund would be a grant, but there would be loans later in the year for tackling climate change, through a separate World Bank fund. Senior DfID officials came out to the protest and met with representatives from WDM and the European Action Group.

It was later reported in the press in Bangladesh that the government had reached agreement with DfID that the World Bank would give

‘technical assistance’ to the fund for the first few years of existence. However, no official announcement has yet been made by either the Bangladeshi government or DfID.

WDM ally from Bangladesh, Md Shamsuddoha of Equity and Justice Working Group, says they are demanding that an official statement is made. They continue to call for the World Bank not to be involved in the fund, but for donors to support the national programmes which already exist in Bangladesh for tackling climate change. Letters and emails from people in the UK have already forced DfID in Bangladesh to meet with Equity and Justice Working Group. Md Shamsuddoha emailed us saying “thanks for all your effort” to those who had written to DfID.

WDM continues to support Equity and Justice Working Group in their demands. See [www.wdm.org.uk/bangladesh](http://www.wdm.org.uk/bangladesh) for updates.



## Campaign update: Clean up the banks

### Gearing up for the RBS week of action: ‘Tar sand oil is blood oil’

Since 2007, RBS has underwritten over \$7.5 billion in loans to tar sands related companies. And Canada’s indigenous peoples are being hugely affected by this – they cannot continue

their traditional way of life, rates of cancer in the communities living down stream from the tar sands mines are unusually high and carcinogenic toxins including arsenic and mercury are found to be higher in the area, and the rights of those communities to determine the development of oil extraction on their land are commonly disregarded by oil companies. This is a flagship issue for achieving climate justice, as tar sands extraction is believed to be planned in the Republic of Congo (Brazzaville) in the future.

We are getting ready for RBS' AGM that will take place in Edinburgh on **Wednesday 28 April**. We are planning big stunts in Edinburgh and London that are co-ordinated and take place on the day of the AGM. We are also hoping that on the same day as many groups as possible take to the streets and set up outside the local RBS (or if there isn't a RBS branch, a NatWest branch) loudly demanding that RBS stops investing our money into tar sands and other projects that are having a devastating impact on indigenous

people and some of the poorest communities around the world.

## Take action

We are asking the WDM network to prepare for a stunt and protest that will have a 'tar sands oil is blood oil' theme. We will be producing the following materials for you to use which we will send to you in the April issue of Think Global if you order them

- template press release
- banners reading 'tar sands oil is blood oil'
- 'oily footprints' on paper to place on the pavement outside the bank
- A5 leaflets about the human impacts of RBS investments that you can give to passers-by

If your group would like to hold the stunt/protest described above, please let Katharine know on [katharine@wdm.org.uk](mailto:katharine@wdm.org.uk), as we will only produce materials specifically for those groups carrying out this action.

## Campaign update: Financial crisis

### The 'Dump Darling' competition

Around Valentine's Day on 14 February, we ran a competition on the WDM Facebook page - [www.facebook.com/worlddevelopmentmovement](http://www.facebook.com/worlddevelopmentmovement). Following Alistair Darling's secret meeting with top bankers during the World Economic Forum in Davos, we asked supporters to leave their best motivation why Darling would not be their valentine. The wittiest and most politically astute comment would win a chocolate hamper, kindly donated by Divine Chocolate.

The purpose of the competition was to use light-hearted humour to put across our message that Darling's soft-spot for the bankers has weakened his resolve to champion tough action, such as the financial transaction - 'Robin Hood' tax on big-money bank deals proposed by Gordon Brown and other European leaders. We also wanted to attract more support on Facebook,

which we think is a great alternative way of communicating with supporters.

The winner of the competition was Lauren Smailes. Congratulations!

### WDM and allies launch campaign for a Robin Hood tax

February saw the launch of a major UK campaign calling for a 'Robin Hood' tax on financial transactions. Supported by WDM and dozens of other anti-poverty, environmental and labour rights groups, as well as high profile celebrities such as the director Richard Curtis and the actor Bill Nighy, the campaign aims to build political support for a tiny tax on all financial transactions. If agreed internationally the proposal would raise billions of pounds by taking an average of 0.05% from speculative banking

transactions; enough to stop cuts in crucial public services in the UK and to help fight global poverty and climate change.

Political leaders such as Gordon Brown, Angela Merkel and Nicolas Sarkozy have all spoken out in support of the tax on financial transactions. Academic economists Joseph Stiglitz, Paul Krugman, Dani Rodrik, Geoffrey Sachs and Paul Volcker also support the idea. But a number of finance ministries across the G20 group of countries are opposed, as are Wall Street and the City of London.

The Robin Hood campaign is just one of a number of similar campaigns springing up around the world calling for a financial transaction tax. WDM is promoting an online global petition that aims to get tens of thousands of signatures in the run-up to the next G20 finance ministers meeting in Toronto, in June 2010.

You can take action to show your support for the Robin Hood tax by visiting <http://robinhoodtax.org.uk/> and sign the global petition at [www.makefinancework.org](http://www.makefinancework.org).

## Campaign update: General election

The upcoming general election is a key opportunity for meeting and talking to parliamentary candidates and to let them know that their response to global justice issues will be vital for getting elected.

'Ask the Climate Question' hustings are being organised by a coalition of various environmental and development organisations, and we are encouraging our members to attend these if there is one in your area; or you can organise your own hustings event. 'Ask the Climate Question' is focussing specifically on marginal constituencies.

We have produced a general election toolkit (enclosed – group contacts only) that gives you ideas and guidance on the various ways you can engage with your parliamentary candidates in the run up to the election; including suggestions on how to organise a hustings event. The toolkit includes templates for letters and press releases as well as important information on other UK campaigning initiatives that we are joining in with, such as 'Ask the Climate Question'.

If you would like a copy and have not been sent one (or your group would like further copies) they can be downloaded from our website

[www.wdm.org.uk](http://www.wdm.org.uk) or you can call us on 020 7820 4900.



### General election in Scotland

In Scotland, World Development Movement will be working in coalition to organise a number of hustings on different themes. Stop Climate Chaos Scotland are organising 'Ask the Climate Question' hustings in key marginal constituencies across Scotland. These will include the constituencies of Edinburgh North and Leith, Edinburgh East, Edinburgh South and Dumfries and Galloway. WDM will be supporting these (although not taking the lead in organising them).

WDM Scotland will also be involved in two further hustings. Working with a coalition of international development charities, we will be inviting Douglas Alexander to a Vote Global (international development) hustings together with international development spokespeople from each of the main parties (full details below).

We will also be organising a hustings on the financial crisis and banking reform in Alistair Darling's Edinburgh South West constituency, together with organisations who have been working with us up here on our 'cleaning up the banks' work (Friends of the Earth Scotland, SEAD and People & Planet). So, a busy election period for all of us here in Scotland! We should be able to let you know dates and venues of all of these events in the next Think Global.

### **A Fair Share: global poverty, climate change and Britain's carbon debt**

A public meeting with

- Douglas Alexander MP, Secretary of State for International Development
- Deborah Doane, Director of the World Development Movement
- Reverend Ian Galloway, Convenor of the Church of Scotland's Church and Society Council

Date: Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March

Time: 6 – 7.30pm, plus free tea and coffee afterwards

Venue: The Wynd Centre, 6 School Wynd, Paisley (<http://www.thewynd.org.uk/Location.htm>, 2 mins walk from Paisley Gilmour St station, which is 10 mins by train from Glasgow Central)

## **Campaign update: Judicial Review**

### **WDM takes the Treasury to court – again!**

Our efforts to challenge the Treasury management of RBS continue. Alongside, our original High Court appeal (which has been delayed until the beginning of March), we have also launched a fresh challenge on the recommendations of our legal team.

Following the November decision by Treasury to invoke an 'Asset Protection Scheme', we can put more heat on the treasury. The lawyers acting on our behalf believe that Treasury officials have again failed to carry out the proper human rights and environmental cost/benefit assessment of the government's decision to pour billions of pounds into RBS. But this time they've made an additional legal blunder. The Treasury has claimed they can't legally use the scheme to meddle in RBS' business affairs in pursuit of political objectives, like protecting human rights of people around the world or preventing catastrophic climate change. But that's exactly

what they have done by pushing RBS to curb bankers' bonuses and lend to small businesses. In this way, we'll be arguing that the Treasury has undermined its own defence.

So with Platform and People and Planet, we've put another case in to judicial review. Watch this space for further updates on how we get on in the courts.

In February 2010, in response to our campaign, UK Financial Investments (the company set up to manage the bailed out banks) finally caved in and published a sustainability policy. That they have accepted the need for action is to be welcomed, but the policy itself falls a long way short of standard industry best practice. In particular, it fails to describe any monitoring processes, does not put in place any positive strategic vision for RBS, and fails to recognise that the main shareholders in the bank - UK taxpayers - have interests other than their financial stake in the recovery of RBS' share value

## Campaign update: Water

In 2005-06, WDM supporters took part in campaign actions directed at DfID and privatisation consultants, to stop a proposed water privatisation in Sierra Leone, one of the poorest countries in the world. In November 2005, a WDM campaigner (Vicky Cann) visited Freetown and spoke to civil society organisations and communities about existing water provision. She found the water system to be in a shocking state with many people not connected to the network, whole communities reliant on community taps, and leaking water pipes running along the surface of unmade roads and pavements.

Four years later, Vicky has just got back from another trip to Freetown; so how has the situation changed?

“From what I could tell, some aspects of water provision seem to have improved for Freetown residents. Certainly there are not so many

leaking water pipes, and while people do still queue at community taps, local people report anecdotally that things are slowly getting better. Also the huge piles of rubbish that had been present on the streets before also seem to have gone, perhaps indicating improvements in waste management and sanitation too.

Back in 2005-06, WDM in the UK and civil society in Sierra Leone raised significant objections to the plans to privatise water. I think this has hit home as, to date, the proposed water privatisation has not taken place. Instead, DfID has supported the development of a strategic framework for the Guma Valley Water Company, Freetown’s public water company. The new strategy is a real improvement on the privatisation proposals, and while there is a huge amount that remains to be done, the emphasis on improving access and basic infrastructure seems like a far more promising way forward for water provision in Sierra Leone.”

## News & events

### ‘The Yes Men Fix the World’

We still have copies of the film ‘The Yes Men Fix the World’ available for groups to borrow to hold film nights. This light-hearted yet provocative film is a great way to get new people involved in your group and spark discussions about campaign issues and the different ways in which campaigners can create impact. The film is 90 minutes long.

Contact Sarah to order a copy.

### Campaigner skills training

The first two of our series of training workshops take place in March; we still have spaces left for the lobbying day on 27 March (as well as all training days later in the year) so get in touch

with Sarah to book your free place. These workshops are designed for all levels of experience and feedback from previous full day sessions has shown that skills training has an immediate, positive impact on your group’s activities. Full details below:

#### Media training day // Reading // 6 March

*Brush up your skills in writing press releases, giving interviews, taking photographs and regularly getting great media coverage.*

When: Saturday 6 March, 10.30 to 4.30

Where: Reading International Solidarity Centre, 35-39 London Street, Reading, RG1 4PS

Trainer: Joy Francis from Creative Collective

### **Lobbying training day // London // 27 Mar**

*How to get the most out of meeting with your MP, practice asking tricky questions and more!*

When: Saturday 27 March: 10.30 to 4.30

Where: WDM office, 66 Offley Road, London SW9 OLS

Trainer: Kathryn Tulip from Seeds for Change

### **Lobbying training day // Manchester // 17 Apr**

*How to get the most out of meeting with your MP, practice asking tricky questions and more!*

When: Saturday 17 March: 10.30 to 4.30 approx.

Where: Manchester (venue tbc)

Trainer: Kathryn Tulip from Seeds for Change

### **Media training day // Leeds // 24 April**

*Brush up your skills in writing press releases, giving interviews, taking photographs and regularly getting great media coverage.*

When: Saturday 24 April, 10.30 to 4.30

Where: Leeds (venue tbc)

Trainer: Joy Francis from Creative Collective

### **Media & online campaign training day // Glasgow // 22 May**

*Learn how to ensure you get really effective local press coverage, plus an insight into the world of online campaigning and how to make it work for your group.*

When: Saturday 22 May, 10.30 to 4.30

Where: Glasgow (venue tbc)

Trainer: Pontus Westerberg (WDM web officer)

## **Creating change, achieving justice Activist gathering and AGM, 19/20 June, Sheffield**

As mentioned in the February issue of Think Global, we are in the midst of planning for our exciting activist gathering in Sheffield in June. An outline of the programme is below to give you

an idea of what to expect. Plus we are delighted to confirm that our two guest speakers are **Paul Mason**, BBC Newsnight's economics editor and author of 'Meltdown: The end of the age of greed', and **Sue Branford**, an expert on Latin America who will give a talk on social movements.

### **Saturday 19 June**

10.30am – 6pm: A day of talks and workshops on global justice issues and practical campaigning skills; including a skill-share session specifically aimed at giving local groups the chance to share experiences and tips for effective campaigning.

12pm: Our AGM (with talk on WDM running concurrently for non-members)

7pm: 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary party, with a buffet, bar and live band

All events above will take place at St Mary's conference centre in Sheffield (less than 15 minutes walk from the train station).

### **Sunday 20 June**

Join us for a walk in the Peak District, led by Sheffield WDM (we'll be aiming to walk from mid morning to mid afternoon).

We will send you more information on booking travel and accommodation for this event in the next issue of Think Global. We will also send you flyers for this event (including a booking form) and you will be able to book online from the same time; but please put the date in your diary now to ensure you don't miss out on one of the highlights of WDM's 2010 calendar!

## **Festivals**

In this issue of Think Global we are sending all group contacts lists of summer festivals (divided into regions). Festivals are an ideal way of getting out and about with our campaign messages; so why not contact the organisers of any that are taking place near you and find out if you can book a stall space. If you would like any help with arranging stalls at festivals, please contact us; and remember if there is a cost for stalls then you can always apply to the groups' project fund for financial help.

# Groups

## Recent activities

**Watford WDM** hosted WDM's director Deborah, at a talk in February, where Deborah updated the group on challenges and opportunities for the year ahead.

Some members of **St Albans WDM** attended the initial meeting of a local branch of the Campaign Against Climate Change. The group's aims are to be an umbrella group linking local initiatives and to try and reach a new young audience including schools.

**Portsmouth WDM** hosted WDM's director Deborah, at a public meeting entitled 'After Copenhagen: where next for the movement against climate change?'

**Leeds WDM** are holding a joint meeting on 26 February on Fairtrade Normal Trade, looking at adopting Fairtrade in NHS and other public services. **South-East London WDM** are holding a public meeting entitled 'Beyond Fairtrade: where next?' on 4 March. Several members of **London WDM** groups will be holding a stall at the Strictly Fairtrade Tea Dance in Spitalfields on Saturday 27 February.

Several groups hosted screenings of the film 'Crude' at the end of January; giving talks and running stalls at the cinemas was a great opportunity to reach new audiences. Groups taking part in this activity were **South-East London WDM, Liverpool WDM, Oxford WDM, South-West London WDM, North London WDM and Cambridge WDM.**

## New group webpages

Our web officer Pontus has been working hard on developing the new group webpages and we are almost there! The new sites will be mini Wordpress sites; they are very user-friendly and will give groups the ability to post photos, video-links, links to other sites, event details and of

course your own contact and meeting information.

Our plan for the final stage of these new pages is as follows:

Week beginning 1 March: new template pages sent to five 'trial' groups

Week beginning 8 March: 'trial' groups send feedback to Pontus and Katharine

Week beginning 15 March: all groups sent template page to add details, plus guidelines for editing pages.

Pontus is very happy to offer training to groups who are not familiar with Wordpress sites, contact Katharine to arrange this.

## Trade campaign evaluation

You will find a short questionnaire enclosed in this mailing (groups only). This forms part of the evaluation of our trade campaign which we are currently undertaking. It would be very useful to us if you could spend part of your next meeting answering the questions as a group; we have deliberately designed a multiple choice questionnaire so as not to make this too onerous for groups to complete. Please see the enclosed questionnaire or if you would prefer you can complete the survey online at

<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/NR3T6JR>

## Campaign tactics discussion

As you may know, we are currently in the process of reviewing WDM's campaign tactics; specifically with the aim of forming a policy on non-violent direct action. We have enclosed a discussion paper on this topic (groups only) and encourage groups to spend a full meeting going through this paper over the next two months. Ideally we would like feedback from groups by the end of April. We realise that this we are asking you to give a lot of time to this (when there is lots of campaign planning to do!) but we feel that it is very important that we give an appropriate amount of time to this process as a movement.

There is a small working group of staff, group members and council members who have been working on this process. This group has met twice since September last year to run workshops as a basis for the discussion document and to test run the discussion. We are aiming to gather feedback from groups by May, at which point we will run a consultation discussion with staff, with the intention of drawing together a consensus from the movement to put to WDM's new Council in July.

One of the aims of forming this working group was to enable the group to act as facilitators at group discussions. Between us we are more than happy to visit your groups and help to facilitate the discussion. There are lots of complex issues which arise when discussing campaign tactics so you may well find a facilitator useful. You may

also like to contact Steve Rolfe (council member) who has been very involved in the process, to talk through some of the issues with him before your group holds a discussion. Steve can be reached on 07913 724854 or 0141 423 8276 at [sprolfe@googlemail.com](mailto:sprolfe@googlemail.com).

Additionally, we have a powerpoint presentation available which the facilitators will use to introduce the discussions but which we can also send out to groups for you to use yourselves. If you would like to arrange for a facilitator to visit your group, or if you would like a copy of the powerpoint presentation please contact Katharine.

## Diary dates

6 March	Media training day, Reading
27 March	Lobbying training day, London
17 March	Lobbying training day, Manchester
24 April	Media training day, Leeds & Scottish campaigner convention, Stirling
28 April	RBS AGM – day of action
22 May	Media & online campaigning training day, Glasgow
19/20 June	Activist gathering, AGM and 40 <sup>th</sup> anniversary party, Sheffield

## Current materials

<b>Action cards – live</b>
Clean up the banks & Fairtrade tea action
<b>Action cards – no longer live</b>
Climate debt invoice
<b>Briefings &amp; reports</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate debt (briefing)</li> <li>• Bullying and bribery in Copenhagen are wrecking the climate (press briefing)</li> <li>• The climate debt crisis: Why paying our dues is essential for tackling climate crisis (report)</li> <li>• Britain's response to the financial crisis; WDM's letter to the prime minister about the financial crisis</li> <li>• Greening the bailed-out banks (briefing)</li> <li>• Towards a Royal Bank of Sustainability (report)</li> </ul>